

WUPPDR EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING
Western U.P. Planning and Development Region

Monday, May 18, 2020

4:15 PM (EDT)

Via Zoom Audio/Videoconference

Members Present:

Albert Koskela, Chairperson (Ho. Co.)
Robert Nousiainen, 1st Vice Chairperson (Ontonagon County)
Joe Bonovetz, 2nd Vice Chairperson (Gogebic County)
Bill Rolof, Secretary (Baraga County)
Sandra Gayk (Keweenaw County)

WUPPDR Staff Present:

Jerald Wuorenmaa, Executive Director
MaryEllen Hyttinen, Office Manager

Call to Order: Albert Koskela, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 4:19 PM (EDT)

Pledge of Allegiance: The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag was spoken.

Approval of Agenda: Moved by Rolof, supported by Bonovetz to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried.

Approval of Minutes - (March 16, 2020 Executive Committee): Moved by Bonovetz, supported by Rolof to approve the proposed Executive Committee minutes as presented. Motion carried.

Approval of Bills Paid: Moved by Rolof, supported by Bonovetz to approve the bills from April 1 – April 30, 2020, totaling \$38,181.96. Roll Call Vote: **Ayes:** Bonovetz, Rolof, Koskela. **Nays:** None. Motion carried.

Public Appearances: None

COVID-19 Impacts:

- a. **Response Activities in Region** – Wuorenmaa stated he has had many meetings discussing business needs and reopening, education, and hardships for the ISD and local governments. All EDO's have been on calls set up through Invest UP. (Gayk entered the meeting at 4:24 PM (EDT)) Wuorenmaa has been reviewing grant and loan applications, which took an enormous amount of time. MEDC has been contacted through Invest UP to discuss the amount of time taken up reviewing these and the value of the regions and EDO's in doing so.

Wuorenmaa also stated he was on a committee with KEDA for the Houghton and Keweenaw counties RLF to give out grants trying to cover cash flow for businesses.

Wuorenmaa is also on a committee for the PHF to discuss reopening and bringing back the economy.

Rachael Pressley has been working on the regional and local food systems projects regarding the food insecurities.

MEDC projects – WUPPDR is administering two in Calumet, Elm Street project and facade project, and one in Ironwood. Elm street has been dormant so far this year due to Covid-19. There has been a bit of concern proceeding with the other two construction projects due to Covid-19 and funding but are now moving forward.

- b. **Implications for WUPPDR, including COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Plan** - Wuorenmaa stated WUPPDR will use MI Works plan with some fine tuning for returning to work. Everyone so far has been working from home and that has been working well. Steve Rouser will be drawing unemployment due to social distancing and MDOT projects. WUPPDR intern was not working out, so he was let go. (Nousiainen entered the meeting at 4:34 PM [EDT])

EDA CARES Funding and Projects: WUPPDR is expected to receive up to \$400,000 with no match requirement over a two-yr. period but Wuorenmaa still needs to write the application for it. EDA funding will be awarded for construction projects for commercial benefits specific to job creation and retention on public property. Match money will be required for most projects. Wuorenmaa will be training staff on how to administer these types of grants.

Draft Bylaws Amendment (for discussion): The committee will review and discuss further at the June meeting.

Website Update: Wuorenmaa inquired if there is a willingness to budget money to hire someone to work on this with an approx. wage of \$10,000 - \$15,000, which would come from the general fund or indirect expenses. Bonovetz suggested to get some bids. Wuorenmaa will put this out to bid and include them into the June meeting agenda.

Other Business: Treasurer position - Moved by Rolof, supported by Bonovetz to appoint Gayk as WUPPDR Executive Committee treasurer. Motion carried.

Adjourn: Moved by Bonovetz, supported by Rolof that the meeting adjourn at 4:58 PM (ET) Motion carried.

Bill Rolof, Secretary