

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

Monday, August 16, 2021
4:15 PM (ET)
Via Zoom Audio/Videoconference

NAME	Present, voting	Present, non-voting	Absent
Robert Nousiainen, Chair, Ontonagon County			X
Joe Bonovetz, 1 st V.C., Gogebic County	X		
Patti Peretto, 2 nd Vice Chair, Iron County	X		
Bill Rolof, Treasurer, Baraga County			X
James Vivian, Jr., Secretary, Keweenaw County	X		
Del Rajala, Alternate, Keweenaw County			X
Albert Koskela, Member, Houghton County	X		
Marlene Broemer, Alternate, Ontonagon County			X
MaryEllen Hyttinen, Office Manager, WUPPDR		X	
Jerald Wuorenmaa, Executive Director, WUPPDR		X	

Call to Order: Joe Bonovetz, Vice Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 4:15 PM (ET)

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

Roll Call of Members: The following commissioners responded to roll call done by Hyttinen.
Patti Peretto, James Vivian, Jr., Albert Koskela, Joe Bonovetz.

Approval of Agenda: Moved by Koskela, supported by Peretto to approve the agenda with additional agenda item. Motion carried.

Approval of Minutes - (June 21, 2021, Executive Committee): Moved by Peretto, supported by Koskela to approve the minutes as presented. Motion carried.

Approval of Bills Paid: Moved by Koskela, supported by Peretto to approve the bills paid as presented from June 3, 2021 – July 30, 2021, totaling \$93,876.75. Roll Call Vote: **Ayes:** Peretto, Vivian, Koskela, Bonovetz. **Nays:** None. Motion carried.

Public Appearances: None

Project Updates: Wuorenmaa stated the CEDS update for EDA was due in October, but he requested to submit it in December so that additional information can be included. Other projects for the Pandemic Response and Resiliency Plan (PRRP), (the Cares Act grant) are the housing strategy, tourism strategy and the labor force assessment. Committee meetings for each are set up for next week but Wuorenmaa is not sure if they will still be held. Lastly, the City of Houghton has put out an RFP for a MEDC grant which WUPPDR will be applying for.

Staffing update: Wuorenmaa informed the committee that he originally was going to inform them about the departure of Angela Yu who has left WUPPDR to work for the state but now Miles Roblyer also resigned to work for a township downstate. Wuorenmaa stated he plans to hire three people, but some projects will slow down a bit until then. There are three candidates currently that are interested in working for WUPPDR, but Wuorenmaa feels that their starting salaries may need to be increased due to inflation and the labor market.

TLD Contract sole source procurement approval: Wuorenmaa explained WUPPDR had applied for a grant in partnership with Taste the Local Difference (TLD), with the intention that TLD perform some of the work on a contractual basis. Technically this requires sole source procurement, and there are two conditions in the procurement policy that allow it in this case. Wuorenmaa recommended sole source procurement of TLD. Moved by Peretto, supported by Koskela to approve the TLD Contract for sole source procurement. Motion carried.

U.P. Michigan Works! facility lease approval: Moved by Koskela, supported by Peretto to approve the U.P. Michigan Works! facility lease for another 3 years. Roll Call Vote: **Ayes:** Peretto, Vivian, Koskela. **Nays:** None. **Abstain:** Bonovetz. Motion carried.

MERS deficit: Wuorenmaa informed the committee that the WUPPDR 2020 actuarial valuation showed that our funding ratio had dropped even more than it was under in the previous actuarial valuation. Wuorenmaa and Hyttinen set up a call with MERS and Jim Lorensen also joined the call. Allegedly this is due partially to the changed assumptions and people living longer, but the actuaries did not actually change their approach to account for WUPPDR's 100% funding requirement, as discussed previously with MERS. MERS is looking into why the actuarial approach is not what we were expecting it to be. WUPPDR can make additional monthly payments to make up the shortage.

Other Business: Wuorenmaa stated how he has seen and heard articles regarding Mercy and Bay ambulance service not be able to find enough people to maintain their level of service. State policy may be behind some of it. Wuorenmaa also said the Futures for Frontliners program will pay for technical college for certain people and he will look into this grant program.

Adjourn: Moved by Koskela, supported by Peretto that the meeting adjourn at 4:44 PM (ET). Motion carried.

James Vivian, Jr., Secretary