

**Eastern U.P. Regional Planning & Development Commission  
Executive Committee Meeting**

**Friday, March 12, 2021**

**Virtual Zoom Meeting**

**Attendance**

Dean Reid            Jeff Holt            Mike Patrick            Richard Timmer

**Guest**

Ken Talsma, Anderson Tackman

**Staff:**

Jeff Hagan            Kim Wilcox

**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 11:01 a.m. by M. Patrick.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Prior to the approval of the agenda, CEO J. Hagan requested that an item be included under New Business regarding a potential update to the Personnel Policy. The revised agenda was approved following a motion by R. Timmer with support by D. Reid. On a voice vote, the motion carried.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment addressed at this meeting.

**2020 Audit Presentation – Ken Talsma, Anderson Tackman**

Ken Talsma from Anderson, Tackman & Company provided a presentation of the EUP Regional Planning & Development Commission's audit and financial statements for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2020. The audit indicates that the financial statements and reports follow the government auditing standards and is classified as a clean audit. It was also highlighted that there were no concerns with the status of the pension plan. There were no significant findings. He also expressed appreciation to the EUPRPDC staff with their assistance during this audit. R. Timmer moved to approve the audit report for fiscal year ending September 30, 2020. D. Reid supported. The audit report was then approved unanimously upon a roll call vote.

## **Financial Report/Program Updates**

Upon review of the financial report, CEO J. Hagan provided a brief overview of current program updates. He provided a brief overview of the recent American Rescue Plan which indicates that EDA will be receiving an increase of approximately \$3.0 billion in their budget. This funding could foresee an increase in project applications as this Rescue Plan includes projects in the travel, tourism, or outdoor recreation sectors. It could be possible that EUPRPDC's EDA Planning Grant may receive supplemental funding to assist in the application process to potential applicants.

## **Old Business**

It was noted that there was a sizeable increase in the cost of this year's audit. As in the previous years, staff completed a checklist provided by the auditors prior to the audit to offset auditor costs; but this year's audit fee was \$11,000 compared to last year's fee of \$8,000. Regional Planning may wish to consider working on an RFP for next year's audit. CEO Hagan will also contact other agencies as a cost comparison and to determine if this increase is reasonable.

## **New Business—COVID-10 Office Operations Update**

EUPRPDC has completed its move to the new location at the Sault Ste. Marie SmartZone. Staff is currently on a hybrid work system by working both remotely and in office. It is anticipated that the State's remote work recommendations will be updated soon, and staff will be able to return to working in the office in the near future.

Committee Members asked about the rules for in-person meetings. It was noted that the Open Meetings Act Amendment is set to expire March 29, 2021, and it does not appear that it will be extended. The next Board Meeting is scheduled to be held on April 28, 2021 and will be held in-person with a virtual option available. According to the Board's Bylaws, a quorum requires that ½ of the members be in person. Staff will be reviewing options to determine the coordination of the number of members to attend in person and virtually.

## **New Business—Cooperative Agreement—Chippewa County EDC EDA Public Works Grant**

A cooperative agreement between the Chippewa County EDC and EUPRPDC was reviewed. This agreement will allow EUPRPDC to assist in the administrative requirements of the Chippewa County EDC's EDA Public Works Grant. The total funding of this agreement totals \$25,000 which would be paid to EUPRPDC in installments. D. Reid moved to approve the Cooperative Agreement with a September 30 date added to the 1<sup>st</sup> bullet point describing the responsibilities of the EUP--which was inadvertently omitted. J. Holt supported. A roll call vote followed, and the motion passed with R. Timmer abstaining.

### **Member Updates**

R. Timmer mentioned that the Chippewa County EDC has many upcoming projects and expressed appreciation of the assistance from EUPRPDC.

D. Reid mentioned that Bois Blanc Township may be requesting assistance with a possible EDA grant application.

J. Holt noted that Sault Ste. Marie is anticipating being very busy with upcoming projects— Carbide Dock, Soo Locks, and CFRE. He also answered questions regarding the Brownfield Authority process.

### **Personnel Policy Potential Update**

CEO Hagan indicated that the Personnel Policy may have to be updated to reflect a change in the probationary period of new employees. It is currently a 90-day probation for new employees yet Blue Cross requires the probation be 30-days. This segment of the policy will be reviewed and presented at the next meeting.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 11:50 a.m. following a motion by J. Holt and support by D. Reid.