

PANHANDLE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

Minutes

February 23, 2023

The meeting of the Board of Directors of the Panhandle Regional Planning Commission was held at 1:30 p.m. on Thursday, February 23, 2023. This meeting was held in hybrid format by videoconference pursuant Texas Government Code Section 551.127 with more than three counties in the State of Texas being represented on the Board. Board members and individuals from the public who desired to attend in person, accessed the meeting at 415 SW 8th Avenue, Amarillo, Potter County, Texas.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

- Cleo Castro, Citizen Representative, City of Cactus
- Rank Cogdell, Briscoe County Judge
- Steven Cortez, Citizen Representative, Hereford
- Christy Dyer, Randall County Judge
- Ronnie Gordon, Hartley County Judge
- Dr. Bill Hallerberg, Canadian River Municipal Water Authority
- Dr. John Howard, Donley County Judge
- Greg Lewellen, Mayor, City of Friona
- Dan Looten, Carson County Judge
- Oscar Ostos, Citizen Representative, Amarillo
- Sal Rivera, Sheriff, Castro County
- Dan Sams, Mayor, City of Wheeler
- Winston P. Sauls, City of Borger
- Phillip Self, Greenbelt Municipal & Industrial Water Authority
- Pat Sims, Commissioner, City of Dumas
- Nancy Tanner, Potter County Judge

MEMBERS ABSENT:

- Shawn Ballew, Oldham County Judge
- Juan Cantu, Lipscomb County Commissioner
- Buster Davis, Mayor, City of Gruver
- Kimberly Jones, Childress County Judge
- Harold Keeter, Swisher County Judge
- Ginger Nelson, Mayor, City of Amarillo
- Karen Price, Citizen Representative, Pampa
- Walter "Four" Price, Texas State Representative, District 87
- Tobe Shields, Mayor, City of Spearman
- Kerry Symons, Mayor, City of Perryton
- Yolanda Robledo, Alderwoman, City of Bovina

STAFF PRESENT: Mr. Trent Taylor, Director of Finance; Mr. Alex Guerrero, Local Government Services Director; Mr. Marin Rivas, Workforce Development Director; Mr. Mike Peters, 9-1-1 Network Director; Mr. Christian Campbell, Dispute Resolution Program Specialist; Ms. Heather Reid, Workforce Development Contracts/Accounting Manager; Ms. Sundee Rossi, Area Agency on Aging Director; Ms. Lori Gunn, Regional Services Director; Ms. Daphne Morcom, Regional Services Program Specialist; Christy Henderson, Accounting Manager; Heike Bowen, Accounting Systems/Payables Program Specialist; Stephine Neuwirth, Accounting Systems/HR Payroll Program Specialist; Natasha Clower, Accountant II; Ms. Corinna Morris, Local Government Services Program Specialist; Ms. Delaney Pruett, Regional Emergency Management Planning Program Coordinator; Mr. Jarian Fred, Local Government Services Program Specialist; Ms. Melissa Whitaker, Executive Assistant

OTHERS PRESENT: Mr. Carter Estes, Mr. Tracy Shae

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Sal Rivera called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. and noted that a quorum was present.

2. **INVOCATION**

Mr. Winston Sauls gave the invocation.

3. **PUBLIC COMMENT**

No public comments were made.

4. **MINUTES**

Dr. John Howard moved to accept the minutes from January 26, 2023. Mr. Pat Sims seconded the motion; the motion carried by unanimous vote.

5. **FINANCE DEPARTMENT RECOGNITION**

Mr. Mike Peters provided recognition of the outstanding performance by the PRPC Finance staff who has received the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting from the Government Finance Officers Associations for the 37th consecutive year. The Finance staff consists of the Director Trent Taylor, Accounting Manager - Christy Henderson, Accounting Systems/Payables Program Specialist - Heike Bowen, Accounting Systems/HR Payroll Program Specialist - Stephine Neuwirth and our newest member Accountant II - Natasha Clower. The Certificate of Achievement is the highest form of recognition in governmental accounting and financial reports. Its attainment represents a significant accomplishment by a government and its management

Informational item only. No action necessary.

6. **VOUCHERS**

Mr. Pat Sims moved to approve the vouchers for the month of January, 2023. Mr. Winston Sauls seconded the motion; the motion carried by unanimous vote.

7. **DISPUTE RESOLUTION CENTER INTERLOCAL COOPERATION CONTRACT FOR ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION FUNDING PROVIDED IN TEXAS GOVERNMENT CODE 135.**

Mr. Christian Campbell informed the board as discussed in the last meetings, in accordance with section 135 of the Texas Local Government Code, PRPC is reaching out to the 26 County Courts of the Panhandle to try and establish an interlocal agreement whereby the Dispute Resolution Center (DRC) is agreeable to provide dispute resolution services for the county courts. The County can agree through the use of an interlocal agreement to remit county funds to DRC in accordance with the following sections of the Texas Local Government Code:

135.101: \$213 on filing any civil case except a probate, guardianship, or mental health case. \$35 on any action other than an original action for a case. 7.0423% to county dispute resolution fund.

135.102: \$223 on filing any probate, guardianship, or mental health case. \$75 on any action other than an original action for a case. 6.7265% to county dispute resolution fund.

135.103: In addition to all other fees and court costs, a person shall pay a local consolidated filing fee of \$33 on filing of any civil case in a justice court. 15.1515% to county dispute resolution fund.

Several counties are currently in various stages of adopting the Interlocal Agreement with the Panhandle Dispute Resolution Center to utilize funds allocated for dispute resolution services in accordance with Texas Local Government Code 135. Counties that have passed or are considering this agreement include: Dallam County. Staff recommends that the Board of Directors consider favorable approval of the Interlocal Agreement with the above referenced counties in relation to dispute resolution and Texas Government Code 135 by authorizing the Executive Director to execute this document.

Dr. John Howard moved to approve the Interlocal Agreement and authorize the Executive Director to execute the document. Ms. Nancy Tanner seconded the motion; the motion carried by unanimous vote.

8. **DISPUTE RESOLUTION CENTER PROGRAMATIC AND FINANCIAL UPDATE**

Mr. Trent Taylor updated the board on area programs, funding streams and regional activities from the Dispute Resolution Center. Current statistics to date were shared. The next step would be to sign the remaining counties with the Interlocal Agreement as well as educating the Panhandle about the DRC.

Informational item only. No action is necessary.

9. **INTERLOCAL COOPERATION CONTRACT FOR SUB-CONTRACTUAL SERVICES WITH THE SOUTH PLAINS ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS FOR THE PRPC REGIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE ACCELERATOR PROGRAM**

Mr. Alex Guerrero informed the board In April 2022, LGS staff prepared an application to the Build America Bureau's 2022 Regional Infrastructure Accelerator (RIA) Program. The Build America Bureau has been in operation since 2016 and is affiliated with the US Department of Transportation. This program was established as part of the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act and is focused on providing technical assistance to cities, counties, special districts, and other entities to rehabilitate and repair surface transportation facilities. Facilities include county roads, municipal roads, non-TxDOT owned bridges, etc. PRPC would be committing to provide technical assistance in the form of environmental reviews, engineering procurement, planning studies, and preparation of applications to funding programs. Staff has coordinated a partnership with the South Plains Association of Governments (SPAG) in order to expand the boundaries of this regional program. PRPC has successfully collaborated with these regions in the past in revolving loan programs, economic development, and transportation. Expanding the region to include 46 counties will provide better opportunities for cross-region collaboration on projects, possible project bundling opportunities, and better success of projects for funding. In August 2022, the PRPC was selected as 1 out of 5 agencies in a nation-wide competition to establish an RIA program in the Panhandle and South Plains regions of Texas. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has been assigned to administer the funding of this program over the next two years in the amount of \$454,852.00 with no matching requirement from the grant recipient. This agenda item is an Interlocal Sub-Cooperative Contract for \$50,000.00 dedicated to contractual services with SPAG for their partnership with the RIA program to provide information and assistance in the Lubbock region. PRPC staff recommends that the Board of Directors authorize the Executive Director of the PRPC to execute an interlocal sub-cooperation contract to partner with the South Plains Association of Governments for the PRPC Regional Infrastructure Accelerator Program.

Mr. Pat Sims moved to authorize the Executive Director to execute an interlocal sub-cooperation contract to partner with the South Plains Association of Governments for the PRPC Regional Infrastructure Accelerator Program. Mr. Winston Sauls seconded the motion; the motion carried by unanimous vote.

10. **BRIEFING AND OVERVIEW OF THE OGALLALA COMMONS - STEWARDING OUR AQUIFER FIELD DAY**

Mr. Jarian Fred presented to the board an overview of the Local Government Services on the Ogallala Commons Program held at the Amarillo Civic Center in February that examined management practices that reduce or stabilize groundwater depletion in the region.

Informational item only. No action necessary.

11. **FAIR HOUSING MONTH PROCLAMATION**

The Panhandle Regional Planning Commission (PRPC) is under contract with the Texas Department of Agriculture to provide community and economic planning activities for the Texas Panhandle. Through the Community and Economic Development Assistance Fund (CEDAF) contract, PRPC receives a grant to provide technical assistance to communities in the Panhandle regarding community and economic development programs. Under the requirements of the contract, PRPC is required to conduct a Fair

Housing Activity in the region. Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968, The Fair Housing Act, prohibits discrimination in the sale or rental of units in the private housing market against any person on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, physical/mental handicap, or familial status (i.e. children under 18) and provides for relief including the award of monetary damages where discriminatory housing practices are found. Staff recommends that the Board of Directors adopt the Fair Housing Proclamation, which designates March 2023 as Fair Housing Month and encourages equal housing opportunity to all citizens of the Panhandle.

Mr. Pat Sims moved to adopt the Fair Housing Proclamation. Judge Ronnie Gordan seconded the motion; the motion carried by unanimous vote.

12. **BRIEFING AND OVERVIEW OF THE REGIONAL SERVICES EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT MASS CASUALTY EXERCISE**

Ms. Delaney Pruett informed the board about the Emergency Management Mass Casualty Exercise performed in Borger in January, 2023. The Potter County Sheriff Department gave a presentation on the Tri-State Fair Shooting incident during the meeting.

Informational item only. No action necessary.

13. **FY22 STATE HOMELAND SECURITY GRANT PROGRAM PURCHASE AUTHORIZATION AND EQUIPMENT DISTRIBUTION APPROVALS**

Ms. Lori Gunn informed the board PRPC staff is requesting Board authorization to issue purchase orders for new Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS) equipment and software which is being paid for with funding we've received under an FY23 State Homeland Security Program (SHSP) grant. Second, the Board is being asked to consider the Panhandle Regional Emergency Management Advisory Committee's (PREMAC) recommendations concerning the agencies that should receive this new AFIS equipment and software. In 2022, the regions began replacing old, outdated workstations with new AFIS technology that included facial recognition software integrated along with the ability to search on fingerprint whorls and ridgelines to dramatically enhance the value of AFIS. With this new generation of software, fingerprint examiners will be able to process multiple complex biometric transactions with high accuracy and link face recognition to fingerprints. SPEX Forensics, located in Edison, NJ, is the sole proprietor of the PrintQuest AFIS system on which the regional AFIS database and the AFIS workstations rely. We've been working with SPEX since the initial installation of the region's AFIS system in 2005. That year, the PRPC went through an extensive procurement process to determine which make/model of AFIS would best serve the region's needs. The SPEX equipment was deemed to be the "lowest/best" of all the equipment proposed and evaluated. SPEX equipment was used to create the 26-county AFIS system and it's also being used to support the operation of the regional database. So, from point-to-point, the entire regional system has been built on SPEX equipment. Since each AFIS manufacturer uses proprietary software, it's not possible to mix & match AFIS makes/models; the equipment is not interoperable. The point being is because of the decisions made back in 2005; our wagon will remain hitched to SPEX whenever AFIS equipment has to be replaced. That's not a bad thing; SPEX has been nothing but a valued partner in ensuring the reliability of our regional AFIS system. This is pointed out simply to confirm the legitimacy of this purchase as it applies to the PRPC purchasing policies. At this point, the only way we could purchase workstations other than those manufactured by SPEX would be to completely scrap the current system and rebuild using some other vendor's system. The PREMAC considered locations for the new workstations at their last meeting in December and is recommending that Canyon Police Department, Deaf Smith County Sheriff's Office, Dumas Police Department, Pampa Police Department and Ochiltree County Sheriff's Office each receive one new workstation.

If this recommendation is approved, the PRPC staff will develop agreements to transfer ownership of the equipment and software over to Canyon PD, Deaf Smith SO, Dumas PD, Pampa PD and Ochiltree SO once it has been purchased and properly installed.

PRPC staff recommends the following that:

- a) The PRPC Board of Directors authorize PRPC staff to issue a purchase order to SPEX Forensics for the software and related services (installation) needed to complete the PRPC's State Homeland Security Program (SHSP)-funded FY23 AFIS Upgrade projects.
- b) The PRPC Board of Directors authorize PRPC staff to proceed with the purchase of the computer equipment needed to complete the PRPC's SHSP-funded FY23 AFIS Upgrade projects utilizing the DIR State contracts.
- c) That the PRPC Board of Directors approve the distribution of new workstations to the Canyon Police Department, Deaf Smith County Sheriff's Office, Dumas Police Department, Pampa Police Department and Ochiltree County Sheriff's Office.

Dr. Bill Hallerberg moved to authorize the PRPC staff to issue a purchase order to SPEX for the software and related services. Mr. Winston Sauls seconded the motion; the motion carried by unanimous vote.

Judge Rank Cogdell moved to authorize the PRPC staff to proceed with the purchase of the computer equipment to complete PRPC's SHSP-funded FY23 AFIS Upgrade projects utilizing the DIR State contracts. Judge Ronnie Gordon seconded the motion; the motion carried by unanimous vote.

Mr. Winston Sauls moved to authorize the PRPC staff to proceed with distribution of the new workstations to the above referenced cities and counties. Judge Nancy Tanner seconded the motion; the motion carried by unanimous vote.

TEXAS ASSOCIATION OF REGIONAL COUNCILS LEGISLATIVE UPDATES - INFORMATIONAL

Mr. Michael Peters informed the board PRPC staff attended the Texas Association of Councils (TARC) Bi-Annual Staff Training and Board of Directors meeting this month in Austin, Tx. Discussed was new legislative information of bills introduced in the 88th Texas Legislature.

Informational item only. No action necessary.

14. MISCELLANEOUS NON – ACTION INFORMATION ITEMS

A. Comments from the Executive Director.

Deputy Director, Mr. Michael Peters, updated the board that Dustin is doing very well and back to working full time in the office as of February 1st. He is scheduled for surgery on his Jaw next Thursday in Fort Worth and is really hoping to be back to run the March meeting.

PRPC Dues were sent out in October. As of Mid-February, we have collected 96% of the total \$69,378. We are reaching out to the 8 cities who have not yet paid their dues and hope to once again have 100% collection rate for 2023.

New Board Members, Dustin is excited to hold a new member orientation upon his return. He would like to find a time to have the new board members spend a little time at PRPC visiting with each of the Department Directors and take them to lunch. Our goal is to have this in April, however if you have any questions in the meantime please feel free to reach out to me or Dustin.

Next month we will have the presentation of the PRPC Annual Financial Audit. We will be calling on the Audit Committee to meet prior to the meeting next month (11:00 a.m.) and will be providing lunch for the Audit Committee and reviewing the Financial Audit. As a reminder the selected audit committee is: Judge John Howard, Judge Kim Jones, Winston Sauls, Juan Cantu and Oscar Ostos.

B. Report on the following recent Planning Commission sponsored regional meetings:

- 1/30/2023 – Low Income Medicare Savings/TSAP
- 2/8/2023 – Ogallala Commons Stewarding our Aquaphor Field Day
- 2/13/2023 – Panhandle Water Planning Group Agricultural Committee
- 2/13/2023 – Panhandle Water Planning Group Executive Committee
- 2/16/2023 – Medicare Fraud & Abuse Presentation
- 2/17/2023 – AAA services/MIPPA/TSAP Presentation
- 2/17/2023 – Panhandle Regional 9-1-1 Network Advisory Committee
- 2/21/2023 – Medicare Fraud & Abuse Presentation

C. Announcement of tentatively scheduled Planning Commission sponsored regional meetings:

- 3/8/2023 – Texas Panhandle Inspectors Association
- 3/9/2023 – Panhandle Water Planning Group – Interregional Council
- 3/16/2023 – Destination Medicare Event
- 3/21/2023 – Destination Medicare Event
- 3/23/2023 – PRPC Board of Directors Meeting

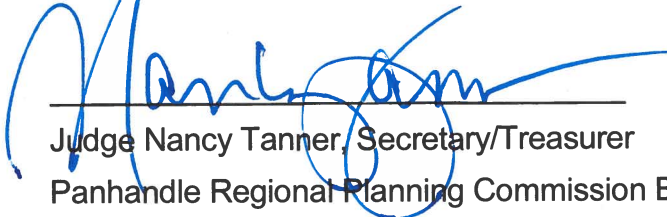
16. **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:48 p.m.



Sherriff Sal Rivera, Vice Chairman
Panhandle Regional Planning Commission
Board of Directors

ATTEST:



Judge Nancy Tanner, Secretary/Treasurer
Panhandle Regional Planning Commission Board of Directors