



**SEDA-Council of Governments
Board of Directors
Meeting Minutes**

**Wednesday, September 22, 2021
Start Time: 1:00 P.M.**

MEMBERS

County	Member	Present
Centre	Commissioner Mark Higgins	✓
	Ms. Lisa Strickland	✓
Clinton	Commissioner Jeffrey Snyder	✓
	Mr. Steve Stevenson	✓
Columbia	Commissioner Richard Ridgway	✓
	Mr. George Forese	
Juniata	Commissioner Mark Partner	✓
	Mr. Scott Fritz	✓
Lycoming	Commissioner Scott Metzger	✓
	Mr. Howard Fry III	✓
Mifflin	Commissioner Kevin Kodish	✓
	Mr. Jim Shilling Jr.	
Montour	Commissioner Kenneth Holdren	✓
	Mr. Chris Benjamin	✓
Northumberland	Commissioner Samuel Schiccatano	
	Mr. Greg Klebon	
Perry	Commissioner Brenda Watson	
	Mr. Larry Reisinger	✓
Snyder	Commissioner Joseph Kantz	
	Mr. Dennis Van Benthuyzen	✓
Union	Commissioner Preston Boop	
	Mr. David Cooney	✓

STAFF

Kim Wheeler, Rose Orner, Betsy Lockwood, Bo Hornberger, Amanda Owens, Jim Saylor, Kristen Moyer, Jeff Stover, Tina Showers, Mandy Fox, Doug Wilburn, Don Kiel

GUESTS

None

CALL TO ORDER

The SEDA-COG Board of Directors virtual meeting was called to order at 1:01 p.m., by President Partner, there being a quorum present.

MEETING MINUTES

Commissioner Holdren moved for approval of the August 25, 2021, meeting minutes as presented. Commissioner Snyder seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

OPEN FORUM

Opportunity for Public Comments

There were no public comments.

Non-Agenda Items of General Interest to the Members

Commissioner Higgins offered his thanks to SEDA-COG for assistance with Centre County's Small Business Grant Program. To date, the program has allocated \$1.5 million of the \$3.0 million grant total.

In regard to planning for future projects, Commissioner Higgins reported on the Build Back Better regional challenge. At this time, SEDA-COG will not be pursuing an application for funding; but will continue working on the variety of other American Rescue Plan projects currently underway. Should something be pursued at a later time, Commissioner Higgins suggested the Board may wish to consider a multi-county submission, in an effort to have the application be given a higher priority.

OLD BUSINESS

SEDA-COG Natural Gas Cooperative Agreement Update

Ms. Kim Wheeler, Executive Director, presented an update on the SEDA-COG Natural Gas Cooperative Agreement. On June 23, 2021, the Board of Directors approved a repayment plan for the remaining debt balance, which was to begin this September, with an expected full repayment by the 3rd quarter of 2022. Additionally, Mr. Don Kiel's time would be supported by the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) through June 2022, with 50% of his time going to Transportation and 50% to the Natural Gas Cooperative.

Ms. Wheeler reported that the Cooperative Board of Directors did not move forward with executing this repayment plan as the PA Options Wellness project, which was critical to the repayment schedule, is having development delays. The anticipated completion date has been moved to the 1st quarter of 2022. It was recommended that the SEDA-COG Executive and Finance Committee's, along with related staff, meet with the Cooperative's Executive Committee to discuss a strategy for moving forward. Ms. Wheeler anticipates having a recommendation for the October meeting of the SEDA-COG Board of Directors.

President Partner requested staff move forward as presented by Ms. Wheeler.

NEW BUSINESS

Local Loan Review Committee Report

UNIPAR, Inc

Mr. Doug Wilburn, Director of the Business Finance Department, presented the request on behalf of UNIPAR, Inc., for a \$451,296 SEDA-COG EDA COVID-19 loan. UNIPAR, INC., established in 1969, is a 3rd generation family owned and operated Rotomolding manufacturing, design and distribution company located in Reedsville, PA, and is a leading producer of rotational molded plastic products.

Commissioner Ridgway moved to approve the loan request on behalf of UNIPAR, Inc., for a \$451,296 SEDA-COG EDA COVID-19 loan, for a term of 10 years at a 3% fixed rate for the life of the loan. Commissioner Higgins seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

Heritage Hills Retirement Community, Inc. and Atrium Investment Group, LLC

Mr. Wilburn presented the request on behalf of Heritage Hills Retirement Community, Inc. and Atrium Investment Group, LLC, regarding changes in the project sources, uses and collateral for an SBA 504 application. Following the submission of the application, the SBA is requiring changes to the structure of the eligible project to meet guidelines. They now require the cost and associated financing be reflected in the eligible project.

Commissioner Ridgway moved to approve the request for changes in the project sources, uses and collateral. All other terms and conditions of the loan will remain the same. Commissioner Holdren seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

Board Member Appointment

President Partner presented the Board with the appointment of the new Montour County Additional Representative, Mr. Chris Benjamin. Mr. Benjamin has been with Fulton Bank since 2005, with his most recent position as Financial Center Manager, in the Danville office.

Commissioner Holdren moved to approve the appointment of Mr. Chris Benjamin, Additional Representative, Montour County. Mr. Fry seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

COMMITTEE & STAFF REPORTSBusiness Finance Director Report

Mr. Wilburn presented the Business Finance Director report to the Board of Directors. The past year has seen a majority of time and resources spent on assisting small businesses with COVID loan funding. The EDA COVID-19 loan program, which totaled \$5.75 million, is expected to be fully disbursed by December 2021. To date, over \$4.5 million has been distributed to local businesses within the eleven county region.

Additionally, the Board has approved 43 loans to 38 different businesses, totaling \$20.9 million, with a projected job creation and retention total of 323 jobs. Staff have closed 44 loans to 34 different businesses, totaling \$12.4 million, with a projected job creation and retention total of 338 jobs.

This year has also seen a significant increase in the Small Business Administration (SBA) loan production, with a year-to-date total of ten SBA approvals, totaling \$7.3 million. This total exceeds the past two years total loans combined.

Mr. Wilburn stated that the department has an opportunity to secure new loan funds through the State Small Business Credit Initiative. Additionally, staff have begun assisting with the American Rescue Plan efforts, by providing revenue loss calculations services.

Mr. Wilburn credited the successes to his staff for their exceptional work this past year.

Fiscal Update

Mr. Bo Hornberger, Fiscal Controller, provided a fiscal update to the Board:

- Balance Sheets – provides a comparison of July 31, 2021, versus July 31, 2020.
- Income Statements – provides a review for the periods July 1, 2021 – July 31, 2021, as compared to July 1, 2020 – July 31, 2020.
- Due to the reimbursement structure for grants, and with only one month of data, the current statement is reflecting a deficit.

Mr. Hornberger also noted a new account reflected in the check register report, pages 15-19, for the Centre County Business grant. Over 160 businesses have been funded through this program, totaling just over \$1.8 million to date.

Executive Director Report

Ms. Kim Wheeler, Executive Director, provided an agency update to the Board of Directors:

- Central Susquehanna Valley Transportation Project (CSVT)
 - SEDA-COG MPO and the Williamsport Area Transportation Study, along with PennDOT and consulting firm Michael Baker International, prepared an impact study, for the \$865.0 million project. It is currently the largest transportation investment in the state. The study may be viewed on the Lycoming County website <https://www.lyco.org/CSVT>.
- American Rescue Plan (APRA)
 - Staff have continued to meet with counties and municipalities regarding ARPA funding usage.
 - SEDA-COG has started contracting for revenue loss calculation services, along with providing draft scopes of services as requested by counties and municipalities.
- Economic Development Administration (EDA) American Rescue Plan
 - The American Rescue Plan allocated \$3.0 billion to EDA in supplemental funding to assist communities nationwide with economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and building local economies that will be resilient to future economic shocks.
 - There are six Notice of Funding Opportunities (NOFOS)
 - Statewide Planning Research & Networks
 - Build Back Better Regional Challenge
 - Travel, Tourism, & Outdoor Recreation
 - Economic Adjustment Assistance
 - Indigenous Communities
 - Good Jobs Challenge

- SEDA-COG will be supporting the PA Wilds application for transformative development of the outdoor recreation cluster, by leveraging impactful recreation projects with innovative new technologies, to support the growing outdoor recreation cluster, and establishing workforce training programs.
- Ms. Wheeler and Ms. Betsy Lockwood recently met with EDA to discuss adding the post-pandemic economic opportunities, along with the CSVT impacts, to the annual CEDS report. Additionally, a meeting with each of the County Planning Directors will be scheduled, to discuss possible collaboration with other economic development agencies and institutions, to further grow the conversation.
- Ms. Wheeler will be working with the Personnel Committee over the coming months in regard to the vacant Assistant Executive Director position. No action will be taken until after the new year, to allow time to assess the needs of the agency.
- Strategic planning will be a focus over the next few months, assessing the initial work done by the prior administration and determining the goals for the future.

CORRESPONDENCE/INFORMATION ITEMS

President Partner noted the items listed under the Correspondence/Information Items section.

President Partner called for an Executive Session at 1:48pm. Commissioner Metzger moved to approve the request for an Executive Session. Commissioner Snyder seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

The Executive Session concluded at 2:02pm.

ADJOURN

Commissioner Higgins moved to adjourn the Board of Directors meeting at 2:02pm. Commissioner Ridgway seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,



Larry Reisinger, Secretary
SEDA-COG Board of Directors