

SOUTHERN TIER WEST REGIONAL PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT BOARD

MINUTES – MARCH 21, 2024

The regular monthly meeting of the Southern Tier West Regional Planning & Development Board was held on March 21, 2024, at 1:00 PM at the Southern Tier West Offices. There was a Zoom location at 1703 Magnolia Avenue Lot 1, South Daytona FL 32119.

Board Members

Kier Dirlam, Vice Chairman
Deb Root
Jerry Scott
Deb Root
Robert Keis, Secretary
Chuck Couture
Crystal Abers
Norm Marsh
Donald Benson
Don McCord, Chairman
Rebecca Wurster
Tom Harmon
Donielle Lovell

Representing

Allegany County
Allegany County
Allegany County
Allegany County
Cattaraugus County via zoom
Cattaraugus County
Cattaraugus County
Cattaraugus County
Cattaraugus County
Cattaraugus County
Chautauqua County
Chautauqua County
Chautauqua County
Seneca Nation of Indians via zoom

Others Attending

Kortney Keyes
Richard Zink
Kimberly LaMendola
Sarah Phearsdorf
Fileve Palmer
Jon Mayr
Sarah Swinko
Megan Hageney

Representing

Seneca Nation of Indians
Staff
Staff
Staff
Staff
Staff
Staff
Economic Development Corps Fellow

Chairman Don McCord called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. Introductions were made, and a sign-in sheet was circulated.

Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Chuck Couture made a motion to accept the January 18, 2024, minutes as distributed. Jerry Scott seconded the motion and it carried.

Correspondence

Letter from Seneca Nation of Indian President Ricky Armstrong appointing Donielle Lovell as the Seneca Nation Representative to the Southern Tier West Board and appointment of Kortney Keyes in the case of Donielle's absence.

Project Review Report

There were no new project review reports.

Executive Director's Report

1. FY2024 Appropriations Update

The report accompanying the final approved bill contains the following instructions governing the allocation of the ARC funding. The set-asides are identical to those in effect in FY23, though distribution of SAAW funds is somewhat different from last year's.

\$65 million for POWER

\$13 million for INSPIRE

\$16 million for industrial site and workforce development in South and South Central Appalachia focused primarily on the automotive supplier sector and the aviation sector

\$16 million for basic infrastructure in distressed counties in Central Appalachia

\$10 million for broadband deployment in distressed counties in Central Appalachia

\$15 million for broadband deployment in distressed counties in North Central and Northern Appalachia Not less than

\$15 million for counties in Northern Appalachia

No specific dollar figure, but language encouraging ARC to continue to focus on capacity building with local development districts. Additional language encourages ARC to continue targeting resources to persistent poverty or distressed communities.

2. IIJA (Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act) Funding

NYSDOS assured Southern Tier West that IIJA as well as area development projects are moving through the state process and will be sent to ARC Washington as soon as possible.

3. CEDS Meetings

Kimberly LaMendola has transitioned all the materials that Stephanie Beneng had been working on related to the CEDS and the committees. Kimberly is formulating a calendar for the committees to start meeting. It is anticipated the meetings will start in late April/Early May. Kimberly has also reached out to EDA to discuss the CEDS update requirements and what is required to be submitted.

4. Climate Smart Communities

Sarah Swinko is looking for communities to participate in the Climate Smart Communities Program to develop operational and community climate adaptation and resilience plans. The Town of Pomfret was interested and started the process with Sarah but has since decided to delay the project for the foreseeable future. The City of Jamestown declined to participate in the process.

5. NYS Broadband Outreach

STW started the process of outreach to communities concerning broadband availability. Maps were distributed with requests to update them to each town in Allegany County to start the process and determine what success is found by using that approach. STW has been asked to track:

- 1) County requests for FCC Fabric data, including when a request is made and confirmation of receipt of data,
- 2) the name and contact information for the entity leading GIS work for each County, and
- 3) challenges submitted by STW or Counties, including dates of submission, number of challenges, number of unique addresses challenged, and types of evidence used. STW will make this information available to ConnectALL on request.

STW encourages each County in the region to consider submitting letters of support for BEAD Applications as appropriate and support the development and submission of those letters if the County intends to submit.

6. Southern Tier West Budget – Cash Flow

Due to lateness of the Federal budget, ARC funding is not expected to be available to late April or Early May. Executive Director Richard Zink requested that the Board ask STERA for \$60,000 to be used as monies for economic development purposes, namely matching the EDA planning grant to provide the needed match for the program. Jerry Scott so moved, Tom Harmon seconded the motion and it carried.

7. OATS (Olean Areas Transit System)

Richard Zink received a call from Cattaraugus County Administrator Jack Searles; Jack inquiring if Southern Tier West would consider looking into options to manage the OATS System. Discussion followed.

8. Mineral Basin Solar Project

The U.S. Department of Energy announced there is up to \$475 million in funding for five projects in Arizona, Kentucky, Nevada, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia to accelerate clean energy deployment on current and former mine land.

One of the five projects selected for award negotiation is the Mineral Basin: Coal-to-Solar Project in Goshen and Girard townships in Clearfield County. The local project was awarded \$90 million. Southern Tier West was a named partner in the application that was submitted last summer. They will now begin the negotiation phase with USDOE.

Southern Tier West Program Reports

Program reports can be found in the Southern Tier West Newsletter – March 2024.

Southern Tier West Affiliation Reports

1. **STEDO**

STEDO meets bi-monthly. There are currently 2 loan closings.

2. **STERA**

STERA will meet on March 25, 2024, at the Southern Tier West offices.

Committee Reports

The **Local Government Conference Committee** will meet in July/August to discuss topics for 2024 Fall Planning & Zoning Training.

Public Comment

Chuck Couture reported that the upcoming weekend is Maple weekend in Cattaraugus County.

Kortney Keyes reported that the Seneca Nation of Indians has an event scheduled at the cultural center for the solar eclipse coming up.

New Business

Chairman Don McCord reported that Southern Tier West needs a **Finance Committee**, members being Deb Root, Allegany County; Crystal Abers, Cattaraugus County; and Don McCord, Chautauqua County to oversee and evaluate the financial structure of Southern Tier West. The Committee will meet prior to the April Board Meeting.

The Southern Tier West Program Committee needs to meet.

Megan Hageney, Economic Recovery Corps Fellow reported that she will be working on eco-system mapping, strategy, fostering and creating small business development, in the next few months.

Executive Director, Richard Zink gave an in-depth presentation on the Southern Tier West Program areas.

Audit Abstract

Chuck Couture moved to accept the February/March Audit Abstracts. Don Benson seconded the motion and it carried.

Next Board Meeting

The next regular monthly meeting of the Southern Tier West Board of Directors will be held on April 18, 2024, at 1:00 PM at the Southern Tier West Offices.

Adjournment

Jerry Scott made a motion to adjourn, Crystal Abers seconded the motion and it carried.

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