



Leadership Development Committee Meeting Minutes Friday, May 13, 2022

Members present: Mike Aspacher, Tom Mackin, Rhonda Sewell, Sandy Spang, Mark Stahl, Craig Stough, Dave Thompson; **Excused:** Doris Herringshaw; **Guests:** Russ Mills, BGSU and Ellen Heinz, USED A Ohio Office; **Staff present:** Jennifer Allen, Alex Aspacher, Tim Brown, Bill Best, Dave Gedeon, Nate Reiter

Call to Order/Welcome/Introductions – The Leadership Development Committee met on Friday, May 13, 2022, at 9:30 a.m. via GoToMeeting. Chair Mike Aspacher called the meeting to order after a quorum was confirmed.

Approval of Minutes – A *motion* was made by Sandy Spang and *seconded* by Craig Stough to approve minutes from the April 8, 2022, meeting. Tom Mackin abstained. The motion carried.

Public Comment Period – There were no representatives from the public present for comments.

NW Ohio Economic Development District Discussion – At the last meeting, committee members reviewed a draft job description for a full-time, economic development coordinator/transportation planner position. The individual hired for this hybrid position would be responsible for the running the day-to-day activities of the EDD as well as performing some planning work in TMACOG's Transportation department. With regards to applying for the EDD designation, it was noted that TMACOG's initial application to USED A would only include the existing Toledo Regional CEDS members, Lucas, Ottawa, and Wood counties. Once the EDD has been established, TMACOG would seek to expand the CEDS to more adequately match its current planning area.

Dr. Russell Mills from the BGSU Center for Regional Development and Ellen Heinz from the USED A Ohio Office were in attendance to answer questions about the structure and functionality of an EDD.

- **How does an EDD deal with multiple applicants in its CEDS region competing for the same grant funding?** Dr. Mills and Ms. Heinz noted that the role of an EDD is to provide a roadmap and to help guide project applicants in their region through the application process. This includes determining if a project is eligible for funding and to help them make their projects more competitive before they are submitted for funding.
- **Is there training available for EDD coordinators?** Dr. Mills and Ms. Heinz mentioned university centers as well as state and national economic development associations as resources for training programs and opportunities. BGSU's Center for Regional Development coordinated the development of the Toledo Region CEDS and would continue to be available to support the EDD economic development coordinator.
- **Would a part-time economic development coordinator position be adequate to meet the needs of the EDD?** Dr. Mills strongly advocates for a full-time coordinator position as there are work products and deliverables that will need to be completed annually by the EDD. In addition to project development and identifying eligible projects, the other critical role of the economic development coordinator is monitoring, updating, and re-developing the CEDS. Sandy Spang concurred that if TMACOG members find value in the EDD, they would support a full-time coordinator position.

- **How would TMACOG pay for this position under its existing organizational structure? Do Toledo Region CEDS members currently pay an assessment to complete the work performed by BGSU CFD?** In total, \$150,000—a \$75,000 federal match from USED A and a \$75,000 local match—would be needed to fund the economic development coordinator position. TMACOG has in place a financial model that is used to calculate and collect assessments from its current members to support of the organization’s transportation program. Likewise, it that model could be used to assess the member counties and organizations that are vested in the CEDS to come up with the necessary local match. Dr. Mills stated that during the initial CEDS process, each member county contributed towards the required match for a one-time grant that enabled BGSU CFD to complete the CEDS. Since then, BGSU has provided the funds to match the USED A grant in order for the CFD to complete the work. The EDD could assess the CEDS members annually as a solution for meeting the annual local match.

Ms. Heinz was asked if she is aware of any COGs in Ohio that function as EDDs for a portion of their planning regions, and if so, how those COGs generate the local match to fund their economic development coordinator positions. Ms. Heinz noted that although she works with COGs that function as EDDs from a project standpoint, she is not aware of how they operate from an administrative and financial standpoint.

- **Is the \$75,000 annual federal partnership grant from USED A guaranteed? Has there ever been an EDD/USED A partnership dissolved as a result of the USED A deciding to no longer fund an operation?** Ms. Heinz noted that the \$75,000 federal grant from USED A is not guaranteed. However, USED A invests a lot of time and effort to identify and establish EDD partnerships and does what it can to maintain those partnerships, as long as EDDs uphold their end of the agreement. Ms. Heinz noted that in addition to the \$75,000 partnership grant, other grants are available through the USED A for other special projects such as conducting a study, a recovery coordinator position, etc. Ms. Heinz is not aware of an EDD/USED A partnership that was dissolved. Dr. Mills stated that when an organization applies for an EDD designation, they are in essence entering into a partnership with USED A. He also noted the only way an EDD will grow and expand is for that economic development coordinator to seek and pursue USED A grants, help its applicants to meet their community needs, and bring much needed funding and capacity back to the region. Thus, the individual hired for the coordinator position should be a good grant writer. The entire budget for the EDD position should not be thought of as just the \$150,000 in federal and local matches. There are opportunities beyond the initial USED A grant that can exist, and some of those grants, depending on the opportunity, have an 80/20 grant match.

Next Steps: The Leadership Development Committee strongly supports TMACOG’s application to USED A for an EDD designation. Ms. Heinz recommended TMACOG reach out to an existing EDD for guidance and feedback from lessons learned during this process.

Follow-Up Item: *Dr. Mills will give an update at a quarterly meeting of the Toledo Region CEDS Strategy Committee on May 16. He will then coordinate and facilitate a working group consisting of himself, members of the Toledo Region CEDS Strategy Committee, members of the Leadership Development Committee, and key TMACOG staff, to discuss a job description for the economic development coordinator position and how to raise the local match to draw down the USED A grant match to cover the coordinator’s salary within the EDD structure.*

Follow-Up Item: *Dr. Mills and Ms. Heinz will follow-up with Michelle Velazquez regarding the following items.*

- *Should the economic development position be part-time or full-time?*
- *What training opportunities, if any, are available through USEDA for EDD economic development coordinators?*
- *What are some of the creative ways that COGs like TMACOG have undertaken to come up with a local match, and how do they function as a EDDs financially?*
- *Has there ever been an EDD/USEDA partnership dissolved as a result of USEDA deciding to no longer fund an operation?*

Follow-Up Item: *Ellen Heinz and Russell Mills will discuss connecting with some states that have a much more comprehensive district representation to give the working group a snapshot of what a NW Ohio EDD should be striving for.*

Follow-Up Item: *Staff to employ TMACOG's model for collecting transportation assessments to determine how much each of the CEDS members would need to contribute in order to meet the local match requirement. This would be accomplished by generating a list of member communities that are located within the CEDS counties and estimating their local share.*

Non-governmental Members Caucus Board Nominees – At the April 25 General Assembly, the Non-governmental members caucuses nominated members to represent them on this year's Board of Trustees, including nine trustees and five alternates. A ***motion*** was made by Dave Thompson and ***seconded*** by Tom Mackin to accept and appoint the Non-governmental Members Caucus's representatives to the Board of Trustees. The motion passed unanimously. Rhonda Sewell recommended inviting Ambrea Mikolajczyk, a Toledo Regional Chamber of Commerce board member, to serve on the TMACOG Board of Trustees.

Follow-Up Item: *Rhonda Sewell will forward Jennifer Allen contact information for Ambrea Mikolajczyk.*

Approve the FY 2023 Board of Trustees Weighted Vote Table of Representation – The FY 2023 Board of Trustees Weighted Vote Table of Representation was presented to the committee for approval. Since its last update, the table has been updated to reflect changes in cities votes by +3 due the addition of the City of Wauseon and the reinstatement of the City of Fremont's membership in TMACOG. A ***motion*** was made Craig Stough and ***seconded*** by Tom Mackin to approve the table and to recommend its acceptance by the Executive Committee and subsequent adoption by the Board of Trustees. The motion passed unanimously.

Committee Membership – Mr. Brown proposed adding an additional elected official on the committee. It was suggested that an invitation be extended to Sandusky County Commissioner Scott Miller. This would give Sandusky County a greater voice in some of the decisions made by TMACOG leadership and a way to the county involved in TMACOG. It was noted that the committee's operating procedures does not limit the size of the committee. The TMACOG chair has the authority to appoint new members when necessary to accomplish the mission and goals of the committee. It was noted that the committee's composition should account for an odd number of members for quorum purposes.

Follow-Up Item: *Tim Brown will extend an invitation to Sandusky County Commissioner Scott Miller to gauge his interest in serving on the Leadership Development Committee.*

General Assembly and TMACOG Tech Recap – Attendance was light at this year's General Assembly and may be attributed to the fact that the event was rescheduled from the month of January to April and reluctance of some members to attend in person events. Overall, members who attended were pleased to return to an in-person meeting. There was good discussion at all of the caucuses, and the workforce development discussion was well received. Caucus notes as well as presentation slides from the panel discussion are available on TMACOG's website. A follow-up TMACOG Tech was held a week after the General Assembly that was attended by a handful of folks. There was good discussion on how to train and meet the workforce needs in the region. A recording can be accessed at www.TMACOG.org.

Any and All Other Business – ODOT recently announced that the Route 23 Connect study to improve the highway connection between Toledo and Columbus was ending, and that none of the six potential projects that could solve the issue is feasible. TMACOG invested \$250,000 in the study and will continue to pursue and advocate for better access to Columbus as a priority for our region. Staff is working on a response to ODOT as well as a 1-page fact sheet that will serve as a call for action to members and regional partners to continue to pursue this matter. Members are asked to spread the word, write letters, and pass resolutions to support TMACOG in this effort.

Next Meeting/Adjournment – The next regularly scheduled committee meeting will take place on Friday, June 10 at 9:30 a.m. via GoToMeeting. A ***motion*** was made by Rhonda Sewell and ***seconded*** by Tom Mackin to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried unanimously.