



Leadership Development Committee

Meeting Minutes

Friday, November 12, 2021

Members present: Mike Aspacher, Doris Herringshaw, Rhonda Sewell, Sandy Spang, Mark Stahl, Craig Stough; **Excused:** David Thompson; **Guest(s):** Brian Dicken, Toledo Regional Chamber of Commerce; Ellen Heinz, OEDA Ohio; Tom Mackin, City of Perrysburg; Russ Mills, BGSU Center for Regional Development; Michelle Velazquez, USED A Chicago Region; **Staff present:** Tim Brown, Bill Best, Nate Reiter, Jennifer Allen

Call to Order/Welcome/Introductions – The Leadership Development Committee met on Friday, November 12, 2021, at 9:30 a.m. via GoToMeeting. Chair Mark Stahl called the meeting to order after a quorum was confirmed.

Approval of Minutes – Minutes from the October meeting will be tabled for the next in-person meeting.

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

Formation of a NW Ohio Economic Development District – As a follow-up to the October 8 meeting regarding the possibility of TMACOG expanding its role and taking on the responsibilities of an economic development district, Michelle Velazquez with the US EDA Chicago regional office, was invited to the meeting to discuss further discuss what this opportunity would entail. Ms. Velazquez presented a PowerPoint presentation entitled the Roadmap to Becoming an EDD. Ellen Heinz with the U.S. Economic Development Administration and Dr. Russell Mills with BGSU's Center for Regional Development were also in attendance commented on the benefits of having an EDD in the region. Following the presentation, the committee posed several questions including the following.

Q1: Tim Brown noted that if TMACOG's leadership decided to take on the role of an EDD, the organization would want to be able to represent its full membership area. In Ohio vs. Michigan, Michigan law requires that every county be a member of their COG, but in Ohio membership is voluntary. There are some counties in northwest Ohio that are members of TMACOG, and some counties that are not. Would this pose any structural problems for TMACOG if we were to accept the role as an EDD? Can a community have dual membership in more than one CEDS or EDD? Three of the counties that are represented under TMACOG—Lucas, Ottawa, and Wood counties—are members of the Toledo Region CEDS. However, Monroe County, Michigan, who is also a member of TMACOG, is not. Dr. Mills noted that during the initial planning stage for the Toledo Region CEDS, EDA advised the Strategy Committee to not include Monroe County because the county was going to be included in the Southeastern Michigan Council of Government (SEMCOG) CEDS.

Answer: Ms. Velazquez stated that the area covered by the CEDS needs to be the same as the proposed EDD. The EDA does run into structural situations whereby an organization doesn't serve contiguous geographies or whereby the organization's planning and program area versus the EDD are not contiguous. For example, an organization's transportation programs may cover a 5-county area, but their EDD only covers three counties. There is the ability to have subcommittees and other sorts of structures. Once an EDD has been established, an EDD has the ability to amend its boundary to include another county. This would involve a formal request for a boundary modification that would involve updating the district's CEDS, which would be subject to approval by EDA.

Q2: Lucas and Wood counties are bound are part of TMACOG statistical area for transportation planning. Ottawa County is a discretionary member. Counties that are members of TMACOG is automatically a part of our governing structure. Is it possible for a county that is part of a CEDS could fall out of membership standing with TMACOG? **(Question not answered.)**

Q3: How many people would be needed on staff to complete the work of an EDD? What kind of financial assistance, if any, is there from EDA, and would this require some membership payment? Does Lucas, Ottawa, and Wood counties contribute anything financially to be part of the CEDS region?

Answer: In terms of capacity, university centers assist EDDs with completing work and alleviate the need for additional staff. If TMACOG decides to take on the role of an EDD, BGSU's Center for Regional Development. BGSU with the help of TMACOG's team of planners could assist with completing, updating, and monitoring the CEDS. Staffing varies from region to region and depends on the staff capacity that already exist within an organization to fill in the work plan for running the partnership grant. In more rural regions, an EDD's staff may include one economic development officer or an economic development officer plus an administrative assistant or entry level planner. Another staffing model includes scattering the existing staff expertise to cover the program. An EDD may have enough expertise on staff to contribute work on the partnership planning grant and a percentage of each individual time contribute to work on the CEDS. For example, there may be a GIS specialist who contributes to the development of the CEDS and charges a percentage of their time and/or a transportation planner who contribute some of their time because of some of the information getting folded in the CEDS. EDA does permit contracting on a case-by-case bases just as long as the EDD does not contract out the majority of its work.

In terms of financial assistance and funding the EDD, each year, EDA awards a \$75,000 grant that requires a local match of \$70,000. Typically, EDD matches come from local membership contribution, and those contributions are enough to meet the local match. EDA does permit in-kind contributions when EDDs are unable to generate local match. The most common in-kind contribution is time. Each of the three counties that comprise the Toledo Region CEDs contributed \$5,000 towards the short-term partnership planning grant. The n of number of grants secured and the amount of funding awarded in EDA competitive grants far exceed the amount received in membership contribution and result in a larger return on their investments. When a district is awarded funding for infrastructure projects, those dollars get infused into the region.

Q4: Mr. Brown asked EDA representatives if TMACOG would be competing or replicating members' and local economic development organizations (LEDOs) in their processes or regional efforts.

Answer: EDA officials explained that that an EDD's activities would not be in competition with local LEDOs. LEDOs provide feedback on regional CEDS and are EDDs' connections to best practices. Dr. Mills noted that BGSU has been filling the void in NW Ohio in the absence of an EDD during the development and monitoring of the Toledo Region CEDS. Members of the CEDS committee have been appreciative of BGSU's initiative as none of the members are interested leading the effort. Much of the funding that is in the pipeline is for future infrastructure projects and having an organization to coordinate and facilitate the region's effort will be a critical for our region moving forward.

Action Item: *Ms. Velazquez will email her PowerPoint presentation to Jennifer Allen to distribute to committee members.*

Annual Review of TMACOG President's Contract – A ***motion*** was made by Craig Stough and ***seconded*** by Doris Herringshaw at 10:45 a.m. for committee members to exit the public meeting and sign to another GoToMeeting for an executive session to discuss TMACOG President Tim Brown's contract. The motion carried unanimously. The committee members returned to the public meeting at 11:42 a.m.

2022 General Assembly Update – Tim Brown gave an update on the planning efforts for the 2022 General Assembly. He sought feedback from the committee regarding their thoughts on rotating caucus staff and caucus moderators for the upcoming event. The committee concurred that the staff assignments should remain the same, as the current staff are familiar with the issues and concerns of their assigned caucuses. However, Mike Aspacher has some suggestions that he would like to share with Mr. Brown. In the interest of time, he will share those thoughts with Mr. Brown after the meeting.

Any and All Other Business – There was no other business discussed.

Next Meeting/Adjournment – The next regularly scheduled committee meeting will take place virtually via GoToMeeting on Friday, February 11 at 9:30 a.m. Chair Stahl adjourned the meeting at 11:45 a.m.