

PANHANDLE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Minutes

March 31, 2009

The regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the Panhandle Regional Planning Commission was held on Tuesday, March 31, 2009, at 1:30 p.m. in the PRPC Board Room, 415 South West Eighth Avenue, Amarillo, Potter County, Texas.

Judge Jay Mayden, Chairman, presided.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

- Don Allred, Oldham County Judge
- Mr. Tom Bailiff, Greenbelt Municipal & Industrial Water Authority
- Juan Cantu, Lipscomb County Commissioner
- Pete DeSantiago, Perryton
- Bob Gober, North Rolling Plains RC&D
- Ronnie Gordon, Hartley County Judge
- David Hale, Mayor, City of Perryton
- Mark Irwin, Mayor, City of Gruver
- John James, Collingsworth County Judge
- Harold Keeter, Swisher County Judge
- Zelda Lang, Councilwoman, City of Dalhart
- Jay Mayden, Childress County Judge
- Wayne Nance, Briscoe County Judge
- Gene Parker, Randall County Commissioner
- Martha Rincon, Commissioner, City of Hereford
- Tom Simons, Deaf Smith County Judge
- Tom Velasquez, Wheeler
- Arthur Ware, Potter County Judge

MEMBERS ABSENT:

- Vernon Cook, Roberts County Judge
- Jack Hall, Donley County Judge
- David Logan, Commissioner, City of Canyon
- Debra McCartt, Mayor, City of Amarillo
- Harvey Perez, Hart
- Tresa Whaley, Vega

OTHERS PRESENT: Paul Simpson, U.S. Representative Mac Thornberry's Office; David Parkman, Edgin, Parkman, Fleming and Fleming; Kevin Welch, Amarillo Globe News

STAFF PRESENT: Ms. Cindy Boone, Finance Director; Ms. Cristy Henderson, Accounting Manager; Ms. Julie Lyles, Accountant II; Ms. Melissa Carter, Area Agency on Aging Director; Mr. Sean Hardman, Regional Services Assistant Director; Mr. John Kiehl, Regional Services Director; Mr. Tom Dressler, Workforce Development Director; Ms. Rebecca Rusk, Executive Assistant; Mr. Gary Pitner, Executive Director

1. CALL TO ORDER

Judge Jay Mayden, Chairman, called the meeting to order and noted that a quorum was present.

2. INVOCATION

Judge Don Allred gave the invocation.

3. MINUTES

Judge Harold Keeter moved to approve the minutes from the meeting held on February 26, 2009, as received. Commissioner Gene Parker seconded the motion; the motion carried by unanimous vote.

#### 4. VOUCHERS

Judge Tom Simons moved to approve the vouchers for the month of February, 2009. Commissioner Juan Cantu seconded the motion; the motion carried by unanimous vote.

#### 5. 2008 AUDIT PRESENTATION AND ACCEPTANCE

Ms. Cindy Boone and Mr. David Parkman with Edgin, Parkman, Fleming and Fleming presented the Planning Commission's Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for the period ending September 30, 2008.

Judge Arthur Ware moved to accept the Panhandle Regional Planning Commission's Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for the 12-month period ended September 30, 2008. Judge Don Allred seconded the motion; the motion carried by unanimous vote.

#### 6. H.B. 2507 SUPPORT RESOLUTION

Mr. John Kiehl stated that for the past four years, the PRPC has been working on the implementation of the regional interoperable communications project called PANCOM. When it's complete, PANCOM will be a true regional system capable of being administered and maintained from the regional level not unlike the way the regional 911 system is currently being managed. The final cost of completing PANCOM will top \$6 million; all of which should be paid through the annual allocations of homeland security funding the region has received and will receive in the future through the Homeland Security Grant Program (HSGP).

Presently, the cost of maintaining those elements of PANCOM that have already been installed is being drawn from the region's annual HSGP allocations. That arrangement can work as long as there are HSGP funds available. At some point in time, the HSGP will cease to exist but the annual costs of maintaining PANCOM will remain.

When that day comes, the region would have two obvious options to consider for keeping the system maintained. One would be to transfer title to the PANCOM equipment over to those jurisdictions in which the equipment is located and then assign the equipment maintenance duties to the jurisdiction(s) as part of the transfer agreement. Another option would be to ask each city/county in the Panhandle to make a pro-rata contribution toward the system's annual costs.

Recently a third option for maintaining PANCOM surfaced and that came in the form of HB2507 which was recently introduced by Rep. Warren Chisum. HB2507 essentially creates a new monthly service charge that would be added to phone bills; for both land lines and cell phones. The amount of this monthly service fee would be capped at 25¢.

Mr. Kiehl discussed the bill in detail with the Board. He stated that this particular bill, if passed, will provide regions like the Panhandle with the resources necessary to keep regional interoperable communications systems maintained well into the future. PRPC staff estimates that it will cost approximately \$800,000 a year to keep PANCOM maintained once the system is fully completed. That estimate includes the cost of a full-time system manager, the costs of maintaining site leases in the PANCOM system, monthly networking charges, insurance, and a sinking fund to replace equipment as it wears out. The potential savings to the region that would be created by this bill would be significant.

The Panhandle Regional Emergency Management Advisory Committee (PREMAC) reviewed this bill during a meeting held on March 11 and recommended that the Board of Directors support this bill by way of a resolution.

Judge Tom Simons moved to pass the resolution in support of H.B. 2507 by Warren Chisum to establish a statewide funding vehicle for the ongoing maintenance and operation of interoperable emergency radio communications in Texas. Mayor Mark Irwin seconded the motion; the motion carried by unanimous vote.

#### 7. PANHANDLE REGIONAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

Mr. John Kiehl reminded the Board that in a typical year, PRPC staff would present a slate of names to the Board in July for consideration of appointment to the Panhandle Regional Emergency Management Advisory Committee (PREMAC). However, 2009 will not be a typical year.

This year, for the first time ever, the regional Homeland Security Grant Program (HSGP) is being opened to consideration of other regional projects from around the region. For the past four years, the predominance of the region's annual allocations of HSGP funding has been dedicated toward completion of the regional interoperable communications project PANCOM. However, it appears that the majority of the PANCOM infrastructure work will be completed with the funding received in 2008. The work that remains to be done can be completed in smaller incremental pieces over the next several years without fully consuming the annual allocations of HSGP funding the region will receive. The PREMAC is recommending that for 2009 the program be opened up to other potential regional homeland security-related projects.

As currently scheduled, the PREMAC will meet on August 7 to evaluate and prioritize the 2009 HSGP proposals. If we wait until the July Board meeting to replace vacant PREMAC seats then the first meeting the new PREMAC members will participate in will be the 2009 prioritization meeting. The PREMAC believes that it would be beneficial to bring any new members on now so that they can be oriented on the goals and objectives of the program and of our regional preparedness program before they're asked to prioritize competitive funding requests.

Staff has contacted the following individuals and they have expressed a willingness to serve on the PREMAC if appointed by the Board: Rob Roach, City of Panhandle; Teri Cook, Panhandle Regional Advisory Council; Mr. Jon Sessions, City of Wellington; and Mr. Terry Coffee, Panhandle EMS.

Mr. Bob Gober moved to appoint the recommended individuals to serve on the PREMAC. Mr. Tom Velasquez seconded the motion; the motion carried by unanimous vote.

#### **8. FY10 REGIONAL CRIMINAL JUSTICE PROGRAM PRIORITIZATION APPROVAL**

Mr. Sean Hardman informed the Board that the Panhandle Regional Criminal Justice Advisory Committee (CJAC) met to consider and prioritize the grant applications from the Panhandle that were submitted to the Criminal Justice Division (CJD) of the Governor's Office under the FY2010 General Victim Assistance – Direct Services programs and for law enforcement, prosecution, court and training programs targeting victims of domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking.

The application process was conducted a little differently this year than in years past. This year's applicants did not necessarily apply directly for VOCA or VAWA funds as they have historically. This year, after the priority lists are submitted, CJD will then break the grants out themselves into what they consider qualifies for VOCA or VAWA. Their reasoning behind this relates to the differences between the two funding sources.

The overall purpose of the VOCA and VAWA programs is to provide services and assistance directly to victims of crime to speed their recovery and aid them through the criminal justice process. The difference is that the primary purpose of VAWA funding is to assist in developing and strengthening effective law enforcement and prosecution strategies to combat violent crimes against women and to develop and strengthen victim services in such cases. In other words, VAWA funding is more centered on the law enforcement and prosecution strategies and is specifically designed to assist crimes against women only.

Recently, CJD has seen a problem in some grants that have been applied for under the VAWA program that would be a better fit for a VOCA grant and vice-versa; therefore, some worthy applications were forced to be denied due to the fact that they were applied for under the wrong funding source. This also, at times, made them go against the priority list that was submitted to them by different COGs around the State. CJD's solution to this problem was to give themselves the power to break up the grants that were submitted under the General Victim Assistance grant program so as to better match the grant application to the funding source.

This year, nine different Panhandle organizations filed for a total of 14 applications for FY10 Victim Services funding. Also a change that was made by the CJAC for this year was to put a \$45,000 cap on all victim services grants that are applied for.

The CJAC evaluated the applications against a set of prioritization criteria established and published prior to the start of the grant competition. Even so, the committee found it very difficult to weigh one organization against the other. Despite the fact the CJAC must prioritize the projects; the committee members felt that each of the applicant organizations is fulfilling a necessary need in the Panhandle. Further, the CJAC felt that the loss of funding to any one organization would be detrimental to the Panhandle.

The CJAC is submitting the following prioritization recommendations to the PRPC Board of Directors for consideration.

<b>Applicant Organization</b>	<b>CJAC Ranking</b>	<b>Funds Requested</b>
The Bridge	1	\$45,000.00
Panhandle Crisis Center	2	\$45,000.00
Tralee Crisis Center	3	\$45,000.00
Panhandle Assessment Center	4	\$45,000.00
Hutchinson Co. Crisis Center	5	\$45,000.00
Family Support Services	6	\$44,980.14
Safe Place, Inc.	7	\$45,000.00
Potter County	8	\$40,508.00
Tralee Crisis Center #2	9	\$25,000.00
Hutchinson Co. Crisis Center #3	10	\$20,833.00
Family Support Services #2	11	\$34,657.64
Tralee Crisis Center #3	12	\$10,000.00
Hutchinson Co. Crisis Center #2	13	\$5,156.00
Deaf Smith Co. Crisis Center	14	\$45,000.00
<b>TOTAL FY10 FUNDS REQUESTED:</b>		<b>\$ 496,134.78</b>

Judge Ronnie Gordon moved to approve the prioritization recommendations for the FY10 General Victim Assistance funds as submitted by the Panhandle Regional Criminal Justice Advisory Committee. The motion further encouraged the Criminal Justice Division to make every effort to fund each of the projects submitted from the Panhandle in 2010. Judge Harold Keeter seconded the motion; the motion carried by unanimous vote.

**9. WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM TRAINING AGREEMENTS**

Mr. Tom Dressler stated that procurement of most degree and certificate training for workforce development program participants is provided for through the Eligible Training Provider System (ETPS), a highly structured process overseen by the Texas Workforce Commission. However, some customers need short-term, abbreviated or specialized course work to improve their employability or earning ability. This training is often made available through projects developed by PRPC in conjunction with specific employers and post-secondary education institutions. Training may be provided to promising job applicants, incumbent workers, or laid-off individuals. Similarly, some participants need counseling or other related services to be competitive in the job market. Procurement of these types of training and activities is not subject to the requirements of the ETPS.

To ensure availability on a prompt and flexible basis, staff has developed a list of entities that can provide such services. Potential providers were solicited through a public process; and eligibility was limited to secondary and post-secondary educational institutions, licensed career schools, and other non-profit and for profit entities that are specifically exempt from Texas proprietary school laws. The solicitation stated that PRPC could not guarantee any referrals or pay for training or activities otherwise available at no cost. Eight providers responded and are currently on our vendors list. Included are Amarillo College, Childress Regional Medical Center, Clarendon College, Clovis Community College, Frank Phillips College, Family Support Services and Heart to Heart In-Home Counseling. Staff proposes to accept additional providers in the future upon receipt of requested information. Judge John James moved to authorize staff to provide training and activities for workforce development program participants as described and authorize the Executive Director to enter into associated agreements as required. Commissioner Juan Cantu seconded the motion; the motion carried by unanimous vote.

## **10. WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM FUEL PURCHASE AGREEMENTS**

Mr. Tom Dressler stated that one of the most important services we provide to workforce development program participants is transportation assistance. Funds are primarily used to purchase gasoline to help clients search for work, retain employment and participate in training.

Various methods have been used to provide for these purchases, but all have been cumbersome for clients, vendors, and PRPC and contractor staff. To address this situation, staff issued a solicitation seeking vendors that could supply pre-paid fuel cards limited to fuel purchases and not redeemable for cash. The solicitation stated that PRPC would make no guarantee regarding the number of cards to be bought or their amounts. Toot'n Totum and Valero Energy were the only two vendors that responded. Both met the critical requirements of the solicitation. Together, they have outlets in most of our region's cities. The terms of our arrangement with these two retailers would be established in "Letters of Understanding" which would remain in effect for up to two years. PRPC would reserve the right to use alternative providers in any community when necessary.

Councilwoman Zelda Lang moved to approve the purchase of fuel cards from vendors as described for workforce development program participants. Commissioner Juan Cantu seconded the motion; the motion carried by unanimous vote.

## **11. WORKFORCE SOLUTIONS HEREFORD OFFICE FURNITURE PURCHASE**

Mr. Tom Dressler informed the Board that during a roof replacement at the leased space for the Hereford Workforce Center, a heavy rain on October 5, 2008 caused water damage to the interior of the facility. A portion of our modular furniture was damaged. The replacement materials and repair costs would be \$11,368.98. These items would be provided through General Office Supply, the original vendor and Amarillo's Steelcase dealer. Insurance coverage through Paul Blake Roofing would reimburse PRPC for the associated expenses.

Commissioner Gene Parker moved to approve the purchase of office furniture from General Office Supply for the Hereford Workforce Solutions Center in the amount of \$11,368.98. Commissioner Martha Rincon seconded the motion; the motion carried by unanimous vote.

## **12. CHILD CARE FUNDING APPLICATION**

Mr. Tom Dressler stated that a portion of the State's annual allocation to the Panhandle for child care programs is contingent upon securing local matching funds. For the past several years, a significant amount of these matching funds has been secured through a competitive grant under the City of Amarillo's Consolidated Plan for Housing and Community Development.

This year, the Planning Commission proposes to submit an application for \$120,000 in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds for this effort. This will allow us to access \$251,226 in additional federal child care monies. The combined amount of \$371,226 will be used to purchase child care services for over 100 youngsters from low-income Amarillo families each day.

Judge Ronnie Gorgon moved to authorize the Executive Director to sign and submit an application to the City of Amarillo for \$120,000 for Community Development Block Grant Funds to support the delivery of childcare services in Amarillo. Commissioner Gene Parker seconded the motion; the motion carried by unanimous vote.

## **13. FOOD NET PROGRAM FUNDING APPLICATION**

Ms. Melissa Carter stated that in February of this year the City of Amarillo provided the Area Agency on Aging of the Panhandle (AAA) notice of the opportunity to re-apply for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Funds. The AAA uses these funds to expand the Food Net program, which serves congregate and home delivered meals to seniors and disabled persons in Amarillo and Canyon. The CDBG grant can only be used to support home delivered meals within the Amarillo city limits. The AAA plans to submit an application in the amount of \$40,000 to continue serving home delivered meals to the nutritionally at-risk, low and moderate income elderly and disabled adults residing in Potter and Randall counties.

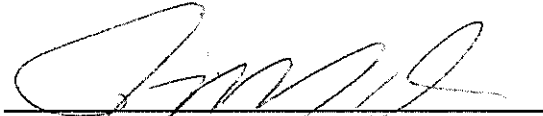
Judge Harold Keeter moved to authorize the submittal of an application to the City of Amarillo for Community Development Block Grant Funds in the amount of \$40,000 to partially support the delivery of meals to qualified individuals in Amarillo. Judge Arthur Ware seconded the motion; the motion carried by unanimous vote.

14. MISCELLANEOUS NON-ACTION INFORMATION ITEMS

- A. Mr. Gary Pitner reported on the status of proposed action related to regional councils currently being considered by the Texas Legislature.
- B. Mr. Gary Pitner reported on the recent and upcoming Planning Commission sponsored regional meetings.

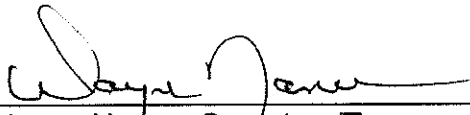
15. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 2:40 p.m.



Jay Mayden, Chair  
Panhandle Regional Planning Commission  
Board of Directors

ATTEST:



Wayne Nance, Secretary/Treasurer  
Panhandle Regional Planning Commission  
Board of Directors