



**Executive Committee  
January 27, 2021  
Virtual Meeting via Zoom  
Land of Sky Regional Council  
339 New Leicester Highway, Suite 140, Asheville, North Carolina 28806**

**AGENDA**

**1. Call to Order (11:00am)**

**2. Consent Agenda**

*Consent Agenda items are considered routine and noncontroversial in nature, and are considered and approved by a single motion and vote. If any member of the Executive Committee requests an item be removed from the Consent Agenda for separate consideration and action that item will be placed under the Business, Updates and Discussion section of the agenda.*

- A. December 2, 2020 Executive Committee Meeting Minutes
- B. FY 2020/2021 Budget Amendment #5

**3. Business**

- A. WRP Holiday Bonus
- B. Audit Presentation by Anderson Smith & Wike PA
- C. Land of Sky Regional Council Employee Handbook
- D. Racial Disparity in the Land of Sky Region
- E. Resolution for Land of Sky Regional Council's Annual CEDS update 2020
- F. Staff promotion from Planner II to Planner III

**4. Other Items**

- A. Executive Director Report
- B. Land of Sky Regional Council Office Status
- C. COVID-19 Regional Response Effort

**5. Adjournment**

**Land of Sky Regional Council  
Virtual Meeting via Zoom  
Executive Committee  
December 2, 2020**

**Minutes**

Land of Sky Regional Council's Executive Committee held a virtual meeting via the Zoom platform on Wednesday, December 2, 2020. Executive Committee members participating in the meeting remotely included Chair Barbara Volk, Norris Gentry, Bob Tomasulo, Preston Blakely, Patrick Fitzsimmons, Larry Harris, Albert Gooch, John Mitchell, and Mike Hawkins; constituting a quorum.

Land of Sky staff participating included Nathan Ramsey, Danna Stansbury, Vicki Jennings, Glenda Brown, Christina Giles (Zoom Host), and Zia Rifkin (Minutes). Land of Sky Regional Council staff attending the meeting remotely included Charlotte Sullivan, Erica Anderson, and LeeAnne Tucker. Land of Sky's legal counsel; Susan Russo-Klein (remote participation) was also present.

**Call to Order** –Chair Volk called the meeting to order at approximately 11:05am.

**Business**

**Approval of Consent Agenda** – The consent agenda composed of items A. October 28, 2020 Executive Committee minutes; B. FY 2020/21 Budget Amendment #4; and C. Pratt & Whitney Resolution was presented for approval with no modification requested.

The purpose of Budget Amendment #4 is to incorporate additional funding for Workforce Development (WFD) amounting to \$50,486 and Economic, and Community Development for \$37,109. The budget amendment provides \$87,595 more in estimated revenues.

***Albert Gooch moved to approve the consent agenda as presented. John Mitchell seconded and the motion carried unanimously, and without further discussion.***

**Business**

**Transportation Demand Management Program Grant**

Council is requested to authorize LOSRC to submit and accept the annual TDM grant application to NCDOT. There was a delay in funding allocations due to the budget impacts to NCDOT for FY2021.

NCDOT has made \$47,500 available from State TDM funding for the FBRMPO region (Buncombe, Haywood, Henderson, Madison and Transylvania Counties). The local match, provided with STP-DA funding from the FBRMPO at an equal amount, not to exceed \$50,000 is also available for the TDM program.

Erica Anderson shared that notice has been received that the grant has been approved and the resolution supports submitting this grant.

***Larry Harris moved to authorize the Executive Director of Land of Sky Regional Council or his designee to submit a grant application for state funding, provide the required local match, make the necessary assurances and certifications and be empowered to enter into an agreement with the NCDOT to provide TDM management***

**services and activities. Norris Gentry seconded and the motion carried upon a roll call vote and without further discussion.**

Resolution for EDA's Partnership Planning Investment

One of Land of Sky's responsibilities is to serve as the Economic Development District (EDD) for the region and develop the regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). The CEDS is revised every 5 years and reported on annually. Implementation of the CEDS is the primary function of the EDD; as well as assistance developing priority projects, providing technical assistance, and identifying opportunities in regional resilience. Land of Sky applied for and has received \$210,000 every three years to administer these programs. There is a cost share of an additional \$210,000 in cash and in-kind to leverage this federal investment.

Erica Anderson shared that this business item concerns the submission and acceptance of an award from EDA. This is a partnership with the Southwestern Commission. Positive news regarding this funding might be heard in January. This is a grant to support the outdoor recreation sector in the western region.

**Albert Gooch moved to authorize and support the submission and acceptance of the award of the Partnership Planning Investment application to the US Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration. Larry Harris seconded and the motion carried upon a roll call vote and without further discussion.**

Land of Sky Regional Council FY 19-20 Audit Update

Anderson Smith & Wike, PA will present the Council's audit at the January 27, 2021 Executive Committee and Board meetings. Charlotte Sullivan provided an update to the Executive Committee about the audit.

Charlotte Sullivan shared that she is in the process of reviewing the financials and she noted the potential need to change the Brownfields Loan Fund. She also mentioned the finding regarding the posting of revenues from last year's audit, communicating that she has begun the training process to learn how to run additional reports in the MIP system. She informed the Executive Committee that the second finding concerned the submission of the audit to the LGC, which was not made in a timely manner by the previous auditors, leading to the finding.

Chair Volk noted that while audits do not always go the way we would want those to, the findings have been sufficiently explained and a plan is in place to move forward.

Nathan Ramsey informed the Executive Committee that the current auditors plan to be at the January meeting to present the audit.

**Information item. No action requested.**

Land of Sky Regional Council Holiday Bonus

Nathan Ramsey communicated that Council annually awards a holiday bonus to staff based on longevity and the schedule as listed below. He shared that the Council has paid holiday bonuses given out near Christmas for many years. In 1991, a progressive system was established to determine the amount of bonus for each employee based on his or her years of service as follows: Less than 3 years-\$ 50.00; 3 years but less than 5- \$ 75.00; 5 years +- \$100.00.

The Council pays both the employer's and the employee's share of FICA taxes so that the net amount of the check is equal to the amount listed above.

Based on the above system, bonuses for 2020 would cost the Council approximately \$4,619.54 (\$4,025.00 plus employee FICA of \$333.27 and employer FICA of \$333.27).

For others who serve the Council directly, monetary gifts (checks paid through Accounts Payable) would be given to express appreciation for their contributions to LOSRC. The following individuals are recommended for this form of recognition at the amount shown:

Terry Albrecht	WRP Program Mgr.	\$ 50.00
Tracy Wahl	Brownfields Program	\$ 50.00
Leslie Clay	Maintenance	\$ 50.00
Derrick Edwards	Workforce	\$ 50.00
Julia Costa	Aging	\$ 50.00
Edward Jones	Aging	\$ 50.00
Jim Meyer	Aging	\$ 50.00
Sierra Thomas	Aging	\$ 50.00
TOTAL		\$400.00

***John Mitchell moved to approve the staff holiday bonus as presented. Bob Tomasulo provided the second to the motion.***

Discussion occurred regarding the FY21 budget ordinance and Nathan Ramsey confirmed that the 2.5 COLA took effect July 1 and no additional action is required for that matter.

***The motion carried upon a roll call vote and without further discussion.***

#### Other Items

##### Executive Director Report

Nathan Ramsey shared that his current report was in the agenda packet and he encouraged Executive Committee members to reach out with any questions or comments regarding the report. He reported on the awards being conferred on elected and other officials in the region, noting that and former Representative Chuck McGrady has a time constraint. Stacy Saunders (Buncombe County Health Director) has been called into a meeting beginning at 1pm and Nathan Ramsey proposed recognizing the special recognition awardees first. He also shared that Zia Rifkin has been named an Ethics Liaison Superhero by the NC Ethics Commission. She is the first one in the state, and the Ethics Commission plans to make this a regular honor among Ethics Liaisons going forward.

Nathan Ramsey communicated that the three Ombudsman have returned to in-person visits to the facilities. Previously, under the COVID Executive Orders, they had been barred from visiting the facilities in person. LeeAnne Tucker shared that an Ombudsman cannot visit facilities that have active COVID cases. Overall, residents are thrilled that the Ombudsman for their facilities are making in-person visits again.

Additionally, other items from the Executive Director's Report included: Dogwood Health Trust (DHT) plans to match The Recovery To Work Grant, if that is awarded. Nathan Ramsey is serving on the interview team for Western Carolina University's Director of Engagement (Dr. Salido's former position). Training for Collective Impact is planned in January, led by Leslie Anderson. Nathan Ramsey also gave a shout out to Erica Anderson and Sara Nichols for their work with the Broadband Initiative.

Erica Anderson noted that there are many unknowns at the state-level right now, including stopping the grant awards under the CARES Act. She noted a potential for matching funds from DHT for an ARC grant, which could assist to develop more tools for broadband.

For the January meeting, Clark Duncan with the Asheville Chamber would like to share with the Board information about the Pratt and Whitney project. He noted that he plans to reach out to Brittany Brady about making a presentation to the

Board at the January meeting, too. An invitation has been extended to the interim DHT Executive Director (Dr. Susan Mims) to provide an update to the Board about the latest developments at DHT.

#### Land of Sky Regional Council Office Status

Nathan Ramsey shared that the office remains closed to the public and staff are encouraged to telework as much as possible, but they may come to the office as necessary with permission from their supervisor. He noted that the organization has been fortunate to not have any additional cases of the virus. The goal is to keep everyone safe and healthy.

#### COVID-19 Regional Response Effort

Nathan Ramsey shared an update on the COVID-19 Regional Response effort and noted that the weekly call is tomorrow at 1pm. Anyone interested in attending may contact him for the Zoom meeting information.

This week's call will have an update from State Treasurer Dale Folwell, who will share about the State Retirement System.

Nathan Ramsey shared that weekly calls are ongoing, and he encouraged Executive Committee members to reach out with any suggestions or concerns. The goal is to support local governments during this time.

Chair Volk noted that this is Chairman Hawkins last meeting with LOSRC. She extended her sincere appreciation to Chairman Hawkins and wished him well personally and on behalf of the Board. She noted that this will leave a vacant position on the Executive Committee and the decision will need to be made whether to fill the position or leave it vacant until the new officers are installed July 1, 2021.

Larry Harris wondered about beginning the formal evaluation process for the Executive Director. He requested Susan Russo-Klein provide direction on this matter. Susan Russo-Klein communicated that she would confer with Billy Clarke and return at the January meeting with next steps in the process. Chair Volk shared that she and Mayor Harris did do an informal; six-month review.

Chairman Hawkins commented that he would like to bring up under new business, using the advocacy committee to look at the Department of Commerce's County Tier System, which is important since it affects grants. The new tier system has many changes, which may not reflect the status of the counties. He encouraged the advocacy group to ask the legislature to make a formal review/analysis of this new tier system. Tier designations can make counties ineligible to apply for certain grants. Nathan Ramsey shared that hopefully, before the holiday; the committee could convene and meet with the advocate for the COG Association. He noted that his conversation with Clark Duncan at the Asheville Chamber included that topic. He shared that the formula used to determine a county's tier is complicated and many people are not happy with the current system. He noted the difficulty of coming up with an equitable system that could satisfy everyone politically and economically.

Nathan Ramsey gave a shout out to Commission Chair Mike Hawkins, as a tireless advocate for LOS and the region. He noted that it is LOSRC's loss that Chairman Hawkins would not longer be a part of the Regional Board.

#### Adjournment

***Chair Volk adjourned the meeting, as there was no further business.***

Respectfully submitted by Zia Rifkin

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**BUDGET AMENDMENT RESOLUTION #5**

BE IT ORDAINED by the governing board of the Land of Sky Regional Council that the following amendment be made to the annual budget ordinance for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2021.

**SECTION I.** To amend the appropriations as follows:

Area Agency on Aging	\$188,044
Workforce Development	150,000
Economic & Community Development	141,931
General Operations	
<b>Total Appropriations</b>	<b>\$ 479,975</b>

**SECTION II.** It is estimated that the following revenues will be available for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2020 and ending June 30, 2021.

Federal	\$ 371,484
State	(39,001)
Local	54,241
Local Dues	
Private Grants, Contracts & Sponsorships	93,350
Fees	
In-Kind	(99)
Other	
<b>Total Estimated Revenues</b>	<b>\$479,975</b>

**SECTION III.** The finance officer is authorized to allocate the amounts of projects, programs and functions to appropriate objects of expenditures in accordance with the requirements of the contract concerning each project, program or function. The Finance Officer is authorized to reallocate departmental appropriations among various line item objects of expenditures and revenues as necessary during the budget year. However, any changes to salary or compensation of any employee for any reason shall be approved by the Executive Director and the Executive Committee before such changes takes effect.

**SECTION IV.** The Chairman and/or appropriate officers are authorized to execute all contracts or grants necessary to implement this budget, including federal and state grants, contracts for assistance to local governments and agencies, and subcontracts to local entities necessary to implement Council programs and activities.

**SECTION V.** Copies of this resolution shall be furnished to the finance/budget officer as directions in carrying out her official duties.

*Approved at the January 27, 2021 Executive Committee meeting of the Land of Sky Regional Council.*

**Land of Sky Region Council  
Revenue and Expenditures**



Fiscal Year → **FY21**  
Amendment → **Five**

Amendment Date → **1/27/2021**

**Revenue and Expenditures**

Program Area	Proposed Budget as of Current Amendment -- 'Five'	Budget as of Previous Amendment -- 'Four'	Increase or (Decrease) between Current and Previous Amendment	Percent Change between Current and Previous Amendment	Percent Change between Current Amendment Proposed Budget and FY Start
AAA - Area Agency on Aging	\$6,982,492	\$6,794,448	\$188,044	2.8%	3.0%
ECD - Economic and Community Development	\$4,561,308	\$4,419,377	\$141,931	3.2%	4.0%
MAWD - Workforce Development	\$2,762,445	\$2,612,445	\$150,000	5.7%	8.1%
MNG - General Operations	\$198,866	\$198,866	\$0	0.0%	0.0%
<b>Land of Sky Regional Council</b>	<b>\$14,505,111</b>	<b>\$14,025,136</b>	<b>\$479,975</b>	<b>3.4%</b>	<b>22.3%</b>

**Revenue by Source**

Funding Source	Proposed Budget as of Current Amendment -- 'Five'	Budget as of Previous Amendment -- 'Four'	Increase or (Decrease) between Current and Previous Amendment	Percent Change between Current and Previous Amendment	Percent Change between Current Amendment Proposed Budget and FY Start
Federal	\$9,468,594	\$9,097,110	\$371,484	4.1%	5.0%
State	\$1,741,751	\$1,780,752	(\$39,001)	-2.2%	-2.0%
Local	\$1,941,902	\$1,887,661	\$54,241	2.9%	3.0%
Local-Dues	\$452,129	\$452,129	\$0	0.0%	0.0%
Private	\$480,883	\$387,533	\$93,350	24.1%	40.9%
Other	\$149,546	\$149,546	\$0	0.0%	0.0%
In-Kind	\$110,167	\$110,266	(\$99)	-0.1%	-0.1%
Fees	\$160,139	\$160,139	\$0	0.0%	0.0%
<b>Land of Sky Regional Council</b>	<b>\$14,505,111</b>	<b>\$14,025,136</b>	<b>\$479,975</b>	<b>3.4%</b>	<b>22.3%</b>

Land of Sky Region Council  
Revenue and Expenditures



FY21 Fiscal Year

Five  
1/27/21

Amendment Number  
Amendment Date

FY21 Budget at Start; Total for AAA	FY21 Budget at Amendment One; Total for AAA	FY21 Budget at Amendment Two; Total for AAA	FY21 Budget at Amendment Three; Total for AAA	FY21 Budget at Amendment Four; Total for AAA	FY21 Budget at Amendment Five; Total for AAA	FY21 Budget this Amendment as Percent of FY21 Budget Start
\$6,229,613	\$6,738,774	\$6,743,128	\$6,794,448	\$6,794,448	\$6,982,492	109.1%

Area Agency on Aging

Unit	Grant Number	Grant Name	FY21 Budget at Start	FY21 Budget at Amendment One	FY21 Budget at Amendment Two	FY21 Budget at Amendment Three	FY21 Budget at Amendment Four	FY21 Budget at Amendment Five	FY21 Budget this Amendment as Percent of FY21 Budget Start
AAA	520	Home & Community Care Block Grant (PT)	\$2,830,311	\$2,830,311	\$2,830,311	\$2,830,311	\$2,830,311	\$2,986,355	100%
AAA	521	Senior Center General Purpose Funding	\$70,485	\$70,485	\$70,485	\$70,485	\$70,485	\$70,098	100%
AAA	525	CARES Act	\$0	\$1,311,677	\$1,311,677	\$1,311,677	\$1,311,677	\$1,272,964	--
AAA	531	Family Caregiver Event	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$600	--
AAA	538	DHT-Homebound Seniors Grant	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$70,000	--
AAA	574	Donations	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$500	--



Land of Sky Region Council  
Revenue and Expenditures



FY21 Fiscal Year

Five Amendment Number  
1/27/21 Amendment Date

FY21 Budget at Start; Total for ECD	FY21 Budget at Amendment One; Total for ECD	FY21 Budget at Amendment Two; Total for ECD	FY21 Budget at Amendment Three; Total for ECD	FY21 Budget at Amendment Four; Total for ECD	FY21 Budget at Amendment Five; Total for ECD	FY21 Budget this Amendment as Percent of FY21 Budget Start
\$3,583,488	\$4,236,781	\$4,382,268	\$4,382,268	\$4,419,377	\$4,561,308	122.3%

ECD Economic and Community Development

Unit	Grant Number	Grant Name	FY21 Budget at Start	FY21 Budget at Amendment One; Total for ECD	FY21 Budget at Amendment Two; Total for ECD	FY21 Budget at Amendment Three; Total for ECD	FY21 Budget at Amendment Four; Total for ECD	FY21 Budget at Amendment Five; Total for ECD	FY21 Budget this Amendment as Percent of FY21 Budget Start
ECD	422	DHT-Marketing	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$22,250	--
ECD	423	AACC-CBF	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$15,000	--
ECD	431	EDA Planning Grant - 1/1/21 - 12/31/23	\$70,000	\$70,000	\$70,000	\$70,000	\$70,000	(\$16,500)	76%
ECD	444	Mars Hill Downtown WiFi	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$3,000	--
ECD	454	Towns of Andrews - T/A Zoning	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$5,000	--
ECD	461	Woodfin/Fletcher 205J	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$17,700	--
ECD	954	Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Coord	\$95,482	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$95,481	--



Land of Sky Region Council  
Revenue and Expenditures



FY21 Fiscal Year

Five Amendment Number  
1/27/21 Amendment Date

FY21 Budget at Start; Total for MNG	FY21 Budget at Amendment One; Total for MNG	FY21 Budget at Amendment Two; Total for MNG	FY21 Budget at Amendment Three; Total for MNG	FY21 Budget at Amendment Four; Total for MNG	FY21 Budget at Amendment Five; Total for MNG	FY21 Budget this Amendment as Percent of FY21 Budget Start
\$198,866	\$198,866	\$198,866	\$198,866	\$198,866	\$198,866	100.0%

General Operations

MNG

Unit	Grant Number	Grant Name	FY21 Budget at Start	FY21 Budget at Amendment One	FY21 Budget at Amendment Two	FY21 Budget at Amendment Three	FY21 Budget at Amendment Four	FY21 Budget at Amendment Five	FY21 Budget this Amendment as Percent of FY21 Budget Start



## BOARD OF DELEGATES AGENDA ITEM

- Item Number:** 3A – Waste Reduction Partners (WRP) Holiday Bonus
- Nature of Item:** Action Requested
- Attachment(s):** Waste Reduction Partners (WRP) management team request
- Background:** Waste Reduction Partners (WRP) offers statewide services through the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). Waste Reduction Partners, a team of highly experienced staff and volunteer retired engineers, architects and scientists, provides North Carolina businesses and institutions with waste and energy reduction assessments and technical assistance.
- WRP services are typically grant-sponsored or supported through technical service contracts to provide technical assistance to its clients at no cost. All services are nonregulatory and confidential. The WRP mission is to work for a sustainable economy, healthy environment, and better quality of life throughout North Carolina.
- .
- Responsible Staff:** Terry Albrecht, Waste Reduction Partners Director, NC DEQ
- Suggested Motion:** To approve the bonus as presented.

1/25/2021

Agenda Item:

Holiday Bonus for WRP Staff

The Waste Reduction Partners management team is requesting board approval of \$50.00 holiday bonus for each of the active WRP assessors. The WRP team is composed of senior engineers and technical professions who provide their consulting time to businesses and institutions for the improvement of environmental performance across the state. The WRP assessors are paid only a modest stipend for their contributions. The requested bonus is well deserved professional courtesy for their participation with LOSRC. A list of the 33 active WRP assessors follows. Bonus will be paid for appropriate program funds (account 320). This request missed submission at the last board meeting on November.

Recommend: Approval of bonus for WRP active staff team

Requesting staff: Terry Albrecht.

WRP Holiday Bonus Attachment:

Below is a list of the WRP Assessors proposed to receive a \$50 holiday bonus. There are 33 in all w/o Jan Hardin, Russ Jordan and Dee Hanak who previously received LOSRC bonus.

1. Michael Acquesta
2. Paul Bartlett
3. Lynn Bestul
4. Adrian Boutwell
5. Kent Davis
6. Dale Denny
7. Chris Dobbins
8. Dan Falkenstein
9. Martin Ferris
10. Mary Fling
11. Bob Gilbreath
12. Marshall Goers
13. Greg Goodman
14. Barry Hanak
15. W. Ronald Haynes
16. Bruce Helwig
17. Leslie Hewlett
18. Dick Kabis
19. Tom Kimmell
20. Richard Krulikas
21. Dave Lowles
22. Elaine Marten
23. Paul McConocha
24. Mark Medlin
25. Conrad Meyer
26. Jack Noor
27. John Rees
28. Richard Sloane
29. Eric Soderberg
30. Ernie Swanson
31. Judy Thomson
32. George Tregay
33. Kent Wiggins



## **BOARD OF DELEGATES AGENDA ITEM**

- Item Number:** 3B – Land of Sky Regional Council Audit Presentation
- Nature of Item:** Action Requested
- Attachment(s):** Land of Sky Regional Council FY19-20 Financial Statements
- Background:** Anderson Smith & Wike conducted an external audit of the Council for FY19-20.
- Responsible Staff:** Nathan Ramsey, Executive Director and Charlotte Sullivan, Finance Director.
- Suggested Motion:** Approve the FY19-20 Land of Sky Regional Council Financial Statements as presented.



## **BOARD OF DELEGATES AGENDA ITEM**

- Item Number:** 3C – Land of Sky Regional Council Employee Handbook/Manual
- Nature of Item:** Action Requested
- Attachment(s):** Land of Sky Regional Council Employee Handbook/Manual
- Background:** For the past several months, Admin staff have been working on the final changes to the updated Council Policy Manual/Handbook. The edits include all suggestions from the Council attorney. Staff recommends approval of updated document.
- Responsible Staff:** Nathan Ramsey, Executive Director and Danna Stansbury, Deputy Director
- Suggested Motion:** To approve the Council Manual as a living document.





### AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

**Items:** 3D – Racial Disparity in the Land of Sky Region

**Nature of Items:** Information

**Attachment(s):** N/A

**Background:** Racial Disparity in the Land of Sky Region

Land of Sky Regional Council Economic & Community Development staff developed a report on racial disparities in Buncombe, Haywood, Henderson, Madison, and Transylvania Counties based on eight key metrics. The metrics include population, income, poverty, homeownership, educational attainment, health and technology. The purpose of this report is to highlight racial disparities to foster a regional conversation based on the most accurate data available.

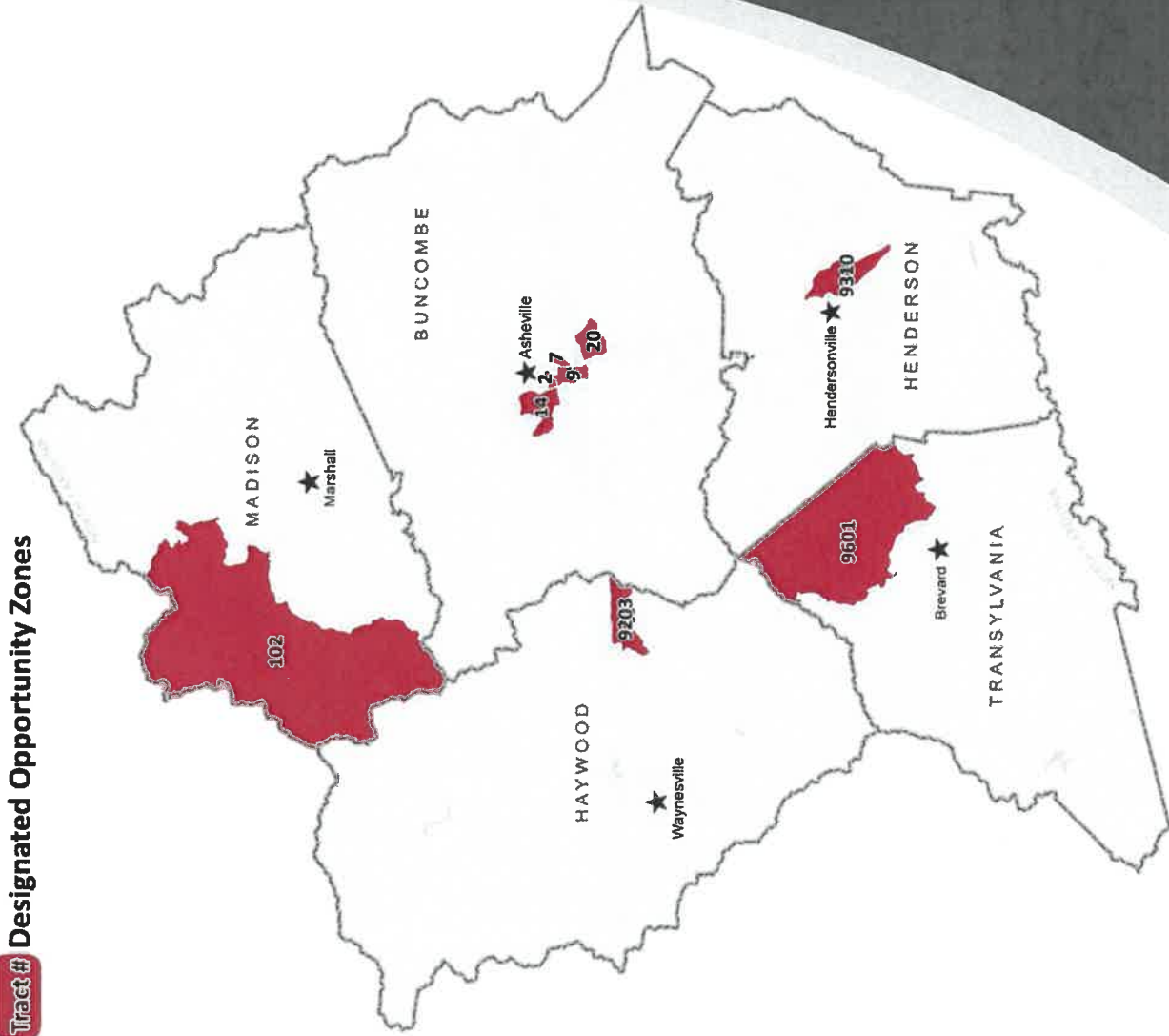
**Responsible Staff:** Nathan Ramsey, Executive Director

**Suggested Motion:** N/A



## BOARD OF DELEGATES AGENDA ITEM

- Item Number:** 3E – Resolution for Land of Sky Regional Council’s Annual CEDS update 2020
- Nature of Item:** Action Requested
- Attachment(s):** Opportunity Zones in the Land of Sky Region
- Background:** One of Land of Sky’s responsibilities is to serve as the Economic Development District (EDD) for the region and develop the regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). The CEDS is revised every five (5) years and reported on annually. Implementation of the CEDS is the primary function of the EDD; as well as assistance developing priority projects, providing technical assistance, and identifying opportunities in regional resilience. We have made updates to the CEDS and included Opportunity Zone information:  
<https://losrc.maps.arcgis.com/apps/Cascade/index.html?appid=3db8474da7e24f36b59ea25af4b6916e>
- Responsible Staff:** Erica Anderson, Director, LOSRC Economic & Community Development
- Suggested Motion:** To approve the resolution to authorize and support the annual update for the Land of Sky CEDS.



# Opportunity Zones

By definition, an Opportunity Zone is an economically-distressed community (based on a census tract scale) where private investments, under certain conditions, may be eligible for capital gain tax incentives. Opportunity Zones were signed into law in December 2017 to stimulate economic development and job creation. Each of our Region's counties contains at least one Opportunity Zone, with Buncombe County having five.

The Economic Development Administration made investment in Opportunity Zones one of its five investment priorities in 2019 to catalyze strategic investments and ultimately foster job creation and attract private investment. More information about EDA and Opportunity Zones can be found at <https://www.eda.gov/opportunity-zones/>



### AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

- Items:** 3F – Pay Adjustment for Land of Sky Rural Planning Organization (RPO) Director
- Nature of Items:** Action and/or Information
- Attachment(s):** Staff promotion memo
- Background:** Pay and Staffing Adjustments for RPO staff

The ECD Director proposes to promote the RPO Director to a Senior Transportation Planner III from Planner II. This will bring the current position in line with the adopted Transportation Planner classification approved in January 2020. The current RPO Director does an outstanding job and has served in this role since 2014. She has become a trusted leader within the region for local government officials, as well as within the state. She is now serving as the President of the NC Association of Rural Planning Organizations and one of the longest serving Directors. She has developed the RPO to exceed NCDOT expectations and excels in annual DOT reviews. This proposal is consistent with the Land of Sky Regional Council Pay and Classification Study that was completed in 2017. This promotion is covered in our budget and there would not be any additional cost to the local jurisdictions. The pay increase would be from \$52,992.48 to \$60,000.00. This pay adjustment is to be effective at the next pay period.

- Responsible Staff:** Nathan Ramsey, Executive Director and Erica Anderson, Director, Economic & Community Development
- Suggested Motion:** Move to approve the RPO pay adjustment as proposed above.

**ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**  
**Staff Promotion Request**

To: Nathan Ramsey  
From: Erica Anderson  
Date: Monday, January 25, 2021

Employee: Vicki Eastland, RPO Director

Vicki does an outstanding job as the RPO Director. She has served as the Director since 2014 and has become a trusted leader within the region for local government officials, as well as within the state. She is now serving as the President of the NC Association of Rural Planning Organizations and one of the longest serving Directors. She is well respected among all partners, a technical expert and a tremendous asset to the region. Her energy is a vital part of the success of the entire ECD Team. She is a natural leader and encourages and supports colleagues on a daily basis. She has developed the RPO to exceed NCDOT expectations and excels in annual DOT reviews.

**ECD Director Recommendation:**

Promote Vicki to Senior Transportation Planner at a salary of \$60,000 annually.

Land of Sky Regional Council  
Executive Director Report  
Respectfully submitted by Nathan Ramsey  
January 27, 2021

1. Economic & Community Development/Transportation  
Development & Transportation
  - a. ECD
    - Welcomed Paul Moon – Regional Planner, to the Team as a Regional Planner for Land of Sky.
    - We will be sending off Bill Eaker in a zoom retirement on Feb. 12 at 11:00am. He has served Land of Sky and the region for nearly 40 years!
    - ECD Director, Erica Anderson is serving on the statewide Steering Committee for the Regional Resilience Program with DPS and NCORR. The kick-off meeting was held January 6, 2021.
    - ReCONNECT for the Future – IEI Forum will be held on Feb. 15-18. Staff will be participating in panel discussion.
    - Digital Inclusion Plan Forum was held on January 13, 2021 with over 100 participants. This plan is sponsored by a grant from BAND NC and Institute for Emerging Issues.
    - The Grey Mill Apartments in Hendersonville has been awarded a NC Main Street award for best Adaptive Reuse project. LOSRC applied for and administered NC Commerce Neighborhood Revitalization Program funding (\$500,000) for the project.
    - The 5-Year Strategic Consolidated Housing and Community Development Plan has been completed and submitted to HUD for the Asheville Regional Housing Consortium to guide the use of HOME funds for the region and CDBG funds for the City of Asheville.
    - LOSRC is leveraging this experience to support the newly formed HOME Consortium in Region A, and launching their consolidated planning process in January.
    - NC DEQ 205j funding has been awarded for stormwater system inventories for the towns of Fletcher and Woodfin, as well as for an integrated Inspection and Maintenance documentation system.
    - LOSRC has been selected to participate in USEPA’s Greening America’s Communities program, which will provide a conceptual level design for a hazard mitigation project.
    - Phase 3 of the Regional Resilience Assessment has been completed, which includes a vulnerability and risk (V/R) assessment for residential properties and flooding, landslide and wildfire hazards. Both hazard exposure and V/R for multiple types of land uses and community assets can be explored via the interactive web application AccelAdapt (<https://landofsky.acceladapt.com/>).
    - Received \$22,250 grant from DHT for broadband survey marketing support for Land of Sky and Southwestern Commission.
    - Submitted technical assistance applications for EDA and ARC totaling \$316,538 in requests.

- Submitted CDBG-Infrastructure grant application for the City of Brevard.
- Completed and submitted the regional Housing Analysis and Plan to HUD for the City of Asheville.
- Assisted submit several GREAT broadband applications on behalf of our region and providers. Two projects in the region were selected for funding – Transylvania County and Buncombe County!
- Submitted multiple competitive grants to EDA, ARC, FEMA, and DEQ, including reshoring manufacturing focused on the outdoor gear sector in collaboration with Southwestern Commission and High Country Council of Governments.
- Waste Reduction Partners has been hosting webinars on COVID-19 reaching over 500 participants.
- Partnering with the AAA team to assist administer the CARES Act funds.
- Submitted a \$160,000 grant application to the FEMA BRIC program through NCDPS in partnership with several entities.
- Initiating the WNC Stormwater Partnership for training, education, and stormwater inventories for member governments.
- Partnering with the Chambers of Commerce, Small Business Support Agencies, nonprofits, and economic developers to assist small businesses through COVID-19 impacts.
- Facilitating the Regional Solid Waste Managers Forum and Recycling Program.
- Contracting with several towns for zoning and mapping assistance including Flat Rock, Marshall, Mars Hill, Andrews, and Montreat.
- Working with regional partners to identify Affordable/Workforce Housing opportunities for short-mid term solutions.

b. Transportation

- MPO staff is participating on NCDOT’s Statewide Resiliency Planning Workgroup to help identify how resiliency challenges to transportation infrastructure (rockslides, floods, wildfires) can be incorporated into the planning process to evaluate transportation needs and planned improvements
- MPO staff is participating on a VMT reduction work group with NCDOT. The work group is looking at the potential efficacy in a number of efforts to reduce the amount that people drive in metropolitan areas in North Carolina.
- The MPO held a call for planning projects to be incorporated into its FY 22 Planning Work Program. Bike/ped plans, feasibility studies, and corridor studies are eligible for this call for projects. Local governments that are awarded funds for these studies will be notified in March.
- The MPO is currently programming a number of projects into the Transportation Improvement Program, utilizing its direct allotment of federal transportation funds. These projects includes:
  - Engineering and Construction for three phases of the Ecusta Trail
  - Construction funding for improvements on Coxe Avenue
  - Additional funding for construction of the North RAD Greenway
  - Engineering and Construction for the Clear Creek Greenway

- Construction funds for bike/ped upgrades on Haywood Road in West Asheville
- Construction funds for an extension of sidewalk on Broadway Avenue
- Construction funds pedestrian improvements at the I-240/Charlotte Street Interchange
- Construction funds for pedestrian safety improvements at various sites around the City of Asheville
- Construction funds to add a signal at Biltmore Avenue and White Fawn Drive
- Additional construction funds for the Riverwalk Greenway in Black Mountain
- The MPO held a call for projects to utilize federal 5310 and Job Access Reverse Commute Funds in the MPO area. These are transit funds that are programmed on an annual basis to transit providers and non-profits that provide trips to seniors, individuals with disabilities, and transit routes that help residents access jobs.
- Continuing to work with the City of Asheville on the Close the GAP Plan (Greenways, ADA, and Pedestrian)

## 2. Workforce Development

- Annual recognition event was held December 1, 2020. The event recognized outstanding employers, job seekers, youth and workforce partners in our region. Employers recognized include Atlas Precision Inc, Brevard/Transylvania County Chamber of Commerce, Printpack Medical, Eaton, Friday's Staffing, and Demmel Inc.
- Christy Cheek, Education and Work-Based Learning Coordinator with MAWDB, will be a presenter at the NC Apprenticeship Accelerator 2.0 event. This event is a partnership between ApprenticeshipNC, NC Department of Public Instruction, and ACT Work Ready Communities. I've shared the registration link in the MAWDB newsletters and I encourage you to join if your schedule allows.
- Our Financial Monitoring by DWS is wrapping up and we will have an exit call with our monitor this week. The board's financial monitor has changed and we will have another financial monitor for the upcoming program year. I appreciate the work of Charlotte Sullivan, Finance Director at Land of Sky Regional Council as well as the work of Zia Rifkin and Melissa Wright to ensure our Board remains in compliance with all federal and state mandates.
- We submitted a grant application in partnership with Southwestern Workforce Development Board for \$500,000 to the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) for their Inspire (Investments Supporting Partnerships in Recovery Ecosystems) grant to support recovery to work. Dogwood Health Trust has provided a professional grant writer for this project and they have agreed to match the grant award (1:1) from ARC if we are successful.
- We appreciate everyone who joined our Annual Recognition Event on Tuesday, December 1. Board Chair Dr. Abe Pallas and Peyton Holland, executive director of the National Technical Honor Society, did a great job leading this virtual recognition meeting.



- Our Board staff are working closely with multiple partners, including but not limited to the Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce, NC Community College System and AB Tech, to support the Pratt & Whitney project. Mountain Area Workforce Development Board provided workforce studies, letters of support and other assistance to this project over the last 18+ months during the recruitment phase. Now the hard work really begins. Kevin Kimrey, AB Tech Director of Economic & Workforce Development will make a presentation at the board meeting on the status of this project and the workforce development efforts to support the talent needs of Pratt & Whitney.
- We are in the early stages of planning the spring 2021 WNC Career Expo. We would like to hold some type of in-person hiring event in the spring consistent with COVID19 restrictions. It may be a drive-thru job fair or some other type of set up that will allow for social distancing and separation. There will also be an online component to the career fair in addition to the in person career fair.
- We have purchased a virtual career fair tool, Workbay, which we hope will be deployed to our region's NCWorks Career Centers soon. This tool will allow each of our NCWorks Career Centers to host virtual hiring events as they deem appropriate for one or multiple employers.
- Despite the tens of thousands of layoffs impacting our region, we still have many employers hiring. Our board is maintaining a list of current job openings to highlight that there are still jobs available. This list is in addition to the thousands of job opportunities in our region available through NCWorks.gov. We are trying to share the news that despite a historically elevated unemployment rate, many employers in our region are now hiring.
- The goal of My Future NC is to increase the number of postsecondary credentials earned, which are aligned with our region's workforce needs. Our region is the pilot for the first multi-county postsecondary credential attainment effort in NC. The Workforce Alignment committee has held two meetings (in December and January) as part of this effort. Robert Foster, Chief Operating Officer at Virtelle Hospitality is chair of the committee. We are grateful for the engagement from MAWDB members.
- The Finish Line Grant program is beginning the third year of this statewide program. We do not have to use our board funds for these grants as it is a separately funded program. Over 150 students at AB Tech and Blue Ridge Community College have received a Finish Line Grant to help them complete their education. The state has allocated about \$7 million for this program so there is effectively unlimited funding to support eligible students with these funds. The students must have completed 50% of a continuing education or curriculum program and encounter an emergency expense which can be paid for by a Finish Line Grant.
- NCWorks Career Center signs have been installed at all of the career centers in Asheville, Flat Rock, Brevard and Marshall. The state replaced our existing signs at no expense to our Local Area.

- Our Board received \$70,000 to support staff with COVID19 contact tracing in Madison County and Transylvania County. We hope that these contracts will be executed soon and the process to hire these individuals will begin. The individuals must be dislocated workers and they must be enrolled into Title I WIOA.
- We have updated our board website with Winnow Creative and the new and improved version is now live. We are working to share more news updates on the website and our social media platforms. I want to thank Rodney Embler, Career Center Manager of the NCWorks Career Center Asheville, for his leadership in helping support our board website.
- We are working on developing a more professional NCWorks newsletter that will be sent to over 18,000 individuals in our Local Area registered on NCWorks.gov. This is one of our most effective and least costly ways to reach job seekers.
- The Board submitted our updated Infrastructure Funding Agreements to the state for their approval. The purpose of these agreements are to share the infrastructure cost of operating the one-stop system (NCWorks Career Centers) among required partners. Over the past few years our board has made a significant payment as part of our share of the expense. Our cost will decline this year since we have less WIOA Title I staff in the career centers due to budget cuts and funding reductions to our board.
- The Board has released a Request for Proposals for NCWorks Dislocated Worker Outreach. The purpose of this outreach is to connect more dislocated workers in our region with the NCWorks Career Centers. Our region has over 2x the number of unemployed workers than last year at this time but unfortunately we are not seeing a large number visit our career centers. Many employers are hiring and they are struggling to meet their talent needs. The goal of the outreach campaign is to connect more dislocated workers with employment, education and training. The board has ample funds to serve dislocated workers and many of these funds expire on June 30, 2021. The proposed budget for this outreach is \$40,000.

### 3. Administration

- Continuing to host weekly COVID19 calls on Thursday at 1:00 pm, next call on Thursday, January 28 will feature an economist from the NC Department of Commerce, Labor & Economic Analysis Division.
- Hosted the Western Prosperity Zone event for Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina (EDPNC) “Onward as One” roundtable.
- Served on the search committee for Western Carolina University’s Executive Director of Economic Development and Regional Partnerships.
- We are still in the due diligence phase evaluating proposals for IT Managed Services. We have extended VC3 contract by six months and we anticipate announcing the decision soon to select a vendor in response to our Managed IT Services RFP.
- Diversity, Equity & Inclusion committee is continuing to meet biweekly with support from Craft HR Solutions. The committee is focused on staff training, external outreach, review of our personnel policy and employee handbook, hiring practices among other efforts. One goal of this effort is by 2022 our staff will reflect the diversity of our region.

- We offered collective collective impact training to staff on January 14 and 15. Leslie Anderson provided the training. 20 LOSRC staff participated and 5 staff from Southwestern Commission joined us.
- We have contracted with Deborah Miles to provide Equity, Diversity and Inclusion training to staff. Deborah was selected based on evaluation from the Council's EDI committee. No dates have been set for the training. This training will be mandatory for all staff.
- Planning staff handbook training for all staff, this training will be mandatory. Training is being offered by LOSRC Executive Director, Deputy Director, Craft HR Solutions and Council's Attorney Susan Russo-Klein.
- Released report "Racial Disparity in the Land of Sky Region"
- Held a virtual MLK Remembrance Day event for staff which included a discussion of the regional racial disparity report. About 30 staff participated in this event.
- Submitted a request to the John M Belk Endowment (JMBE) for \$200,000 to support the Land of Sky Education & Workforce Collaborative. JMBE has already provided \$200,000 and they have been very pleased with the work of our region.
- Made presentations to the Buncombe County Commissioners and the Transylvania County Commissioners.
- Monthly staff evaluations are in process following the tool developed with the assistance of Craft HR Solutions.
- Danna held new employee orientation meetings for new staff members
- Supporting staff telework needs and many virtual meetings.
- Hosted multiple meetings on behalf of the NC Association of Regional Council of Governments (NC ARCOG).
- Working with Susan Russo Klein on moving forward with the LOSRC nonprofit "Friends of LOSRC" .
- Working with the five Chambers of Commerce in Buncombe, Haywood, Henderson, Madison and Transylvania Counties. The chambers would like to retain an outside firm to review the strategic plans of the chambers and local governments to determine areas of agreement for potential focus. LOSRC will assist in securing funding to support this effort and is incorporating this work into the CEDS.

#### 4. Area Agency on Aging

Welcome Ginger Hill to the Area Agency on Aging Team. She is the new Money Follows the Person Transitions Coordinator. This new position helps to transition residents out of long term care facilities into the community. Ginger comes to us with experience as a case manager with Community Alternatives Program in Sylva, a case worker at Jackson County Department of Social Services, and was the Director of the Family Resource Center in Webster. She is a Western Carolina University graduate with a bachelors of science in sociology and a minor in special education.

**CARES Act:** Per a Federal Major Disaster Declaration related to the coronavirus pandemic, funding was awarded to the Land of Sky Regional Council from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and

Economic Security Act, or CARES Act for older adults. The Area Agency on Aging administers the CARES Act funding for the region. This work involves implementing COVID-related programs and services for the older adult population in our four county region. Land of Sky was funded a total of \$1,234,251 dollars. The two main categories of funding are nutrition programs and supportive services programs. These funds are being utilized to make one-time grants available to organizations that provide eligible services for those people age 60 years or older, that are especially vulnerable to the virus. Notices were sent out to area providers requesting proposals. Proposals for these services from providers were then reviewed and awarded. There are still some remaining monies within the supportive services category. Funds were also provided to assist with Land of Sky’s existing Ombudsman and Family Caregiver programs.

**HCCBG:**

**Impact Report Numbers**

**July 2020-December 2020**

Adult DayCare/Health	Meals	In-Home Aide Hours	Legal HOURS	Transportation Trips	Home Improvement Projects
2,732	65,768	12,342	428	16,364	10

**Family Caregiver Program: The six week course Powerful Tools for Caregivers, led by Family Caregiver Associate Carol McLimans and AARP Volunteer Kim Dickens, is being offered virtually again starting January 22.**

**AARP developed a Tech Teaser to help market the Harnessing Tech to Connect for Caregivers Series [https://fb.watch/2Udlvnl\\_SQ/](https://fb.watch/2Udlvnl_SQ/).** The Technology Committee will be offering a second series starting in March.

**Senior Companion Program:** The Senior Companion Program continues to be on “pause” due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Volunteers participate with in-service trainings through the mail. The program was gifted by Charter Communication boxes for the holidays which included weather

radios, first aid kits, and house safety supplies. Staff continue to reach out to clients through phone calls, running errands, and socially distanced “front porch” visits.

Support Specialist, Kathy Maney, has been doing interviews with our Senior Companion volunteers. These are posted on our Facebook page and website. It has been a fabulous connection for volunteers to speak to their purpose in the program.

**Ombudsman Program:** The Ombudsmen received a final re-entry plan from NCDHHS which outlined the safe procedures and protocol that are to be followed when resuming facility visits. However, facility visits have not been able to be completed on a consistent basis due to the County Positivity Rates and COVID-19 Outbreaks.

Ombudsmen continue to advocate for residents through phone calls, email, and video calls. Ombudsmen are also in contact with facility staff to provide information, support, and review of new regulations. Informational emails regarding COVID-19 vaccinations, activities, and compassionate care visits were sent to facility Administrators, Social Workers, and Activity Directors.

Ombudsmen stay up-to-date on facility regulations around COVID-19 by attending numerous meetings. The State Ombudsman Office holds biweekly meetings for all NC Ombudsmen, and on alternate weeks, the North Carolina Ombudsman Members meet to discuss pertinent issues. The Ombudsman Program is also holding virtual meetings to discuss issues around COVID-19 and how various states are handling the pandemic.

Other updates:

- The Community Advisory Committee (CAC) continues to not be able to visit facilities however committee meetings are being held virtually and educational opportunities are being provided.
- CARES Act Funding will be utilized to provide personal amplifiers to facilities. animatronic animals will also be provided to Special Care Units within the region.
- Three Aging Sensitivity classes was taught by Ombudsmen to Blue Ridge Community College nursing assistant students in Henderson and Transylvania Counties.

Foster Grandparent Program: In December, Charter Communications donated Safe & Healthy Home boxes to our Foster Grandparent volunteers. These boxes included a weather radio, first aid kit, night light, and more. Volunteers were appreciative of these gifts. Thank you again, Charter Communications, for your partnership and generous donation.

The volunteers also received a holiday recognition gift as a “thank you” for their service and dedication to the program. Their gifts included masks and hand sanitizer, a bag of mandarin oranges, crossword puzzles, chocolate, and more. Staff continue to reach out to the volunteers as much as possible, while the program remains on pause, and offer information and activities to help volunteers combat social isolation. Volunteers miss serving and being active in the region.

Project C.A.R.E. (Caregiver Alternatives to Running on Empty): Sixty-two family caregivers across a fifteen-county region (including Buncombe, Henderson, Madison and Transylvania counties) caring for a person living with Alzheimer’s disease or a related dementia have received funding for respite care services. The amount of funding distributed so far is nearly \$47,000 with individual caregivers receiving \$500 to \$1500 each. In addition, each of these caregivers has received or is receiving care consultation services. Approximately 335 dementia caregivers have received assistance/information/referral services. Thirty-two caregivers are waiting to be enrolled for services. The state respite funds allocated to the Western Project C.A.R.E. region are nearly depleted but the Project C.A.R.E. Family Consultant has access to an additional \$17,000 from the North Carolina Lifespan Respite Program and \$16,000 from the Dogwood Health Trust-Homebound Seniors Grant and will be enrolling and funding respite for additional caregivers. The program’s Family Consultant receives new referrals weekly from MAHEC, MemoryCare, CarePartners, and Four Seasons (providers of home health, hospice and palliative care services), family and internal medicine practices, home care agencies, senior centers, and others.

#### 5. Mountain Mobility

- Mountain Mobility is working with Buncombe County HHS to assist with transportation to and from the COVID vaccine sites.
- The administrative team has secured CARES Act funding to provide care packages to approximately 400 senior adults in Buncombe County who are at risk for isolation due to quarantine. The first package should go out the last week of January or first week of February.

#### 6. NEMT

- There is significant uncertainty at the state level with Medicaid Transformation and LOSRC will be prepared to support Buncombe County as needed.
- Preparing a plan to provide NEMT services in FY20-21 as needed by Buncombe County.

## 7. Finance

- Held a conference call with Bob Lloyd (Federal Grant Consultant) with leadership team members. New regulations on procurement, contracts, and facility usage have been implemented.
- UNC Asheville management and accounting student will join the finance team spring 2021 as an intern.
- Preparing for Finance Staff transitions that will take place later in 2021.
- Meeting with departments for status updates and financial reviews.
- Working with auditors for the board presentation to the Executive Committee on January 27.