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Northeastern Pennsylvania Alliance

NEPA

September 28, 2023

NEPA's Board of Directors 2023-2024

CARBON COUNTY

Kathy Henderson	610-379-5000	khenderson@carboncountychamber.org
Wayne Nothstein (County Commissioner)	570-325-3611	waynenothstein@carboncounty.net
Harold Pudliner	570-427-8640	weatherlyboro@gmail.com
Joseph Sebelin (Executive Committee-Past Board Chairperson)	570-657-8205	jsebelin@ptd.net
Garry Wentz	570-325-2462	gawentz@ptd.net

LACKAWANNA COUNTY

Philip Condron	570-344-6888	phil@condronsweda.com
Tom Donohue	570-347-2056	tdonohue@lamar.com
Dr. Katie Leonard	570-702-8903	kleonard@johnson.edu
John McNulty	570-561-6961	jackie6741@gmail.com
Jerry Notarianni (County Commissioner)	570-963-6800	notariannij@lackawannacounty.org
(Brenda Sacco - Alternate)	570-963-6830	saccob@lackawannacounty.org
Alex Stark (Executive Committee-Assistant Secretary)	570-558-5113	astark@id-logistics.com

LUZERNE COUNTY

Stephen Barrouk (Executive Committee-1st Vice-Board Chairperson)	570-814-9114	stevebarrouk@gmail.com
Joseph Lettiere	570-455-1508	jlettieri@hazletoncando.com
Mary Malone	570-455-1509	mmalone@hazletonchamber.org
Tim McGinley (County Council)	570-825-1500	tim.mcginley@luzernecounty.org
Michelle Mikitish	570-655-1424	mmikitish@pittstonchamber.org
Kerry Miscavage	570-704-3953	kmiscavage@timesleader.com

MONROE COUNTY

Christopher Barrett	570-421-5791	cbarrett@poconos.org
John Christy (County Commissioner)	570-517-3102	jchristy@monroecountypa.gov
Charles Leonard	570-839-1992	cleonard@pmedc.com
Mary Frances Postupack (Executive Committee-Secretary)	570-422-7920	mpostupack@esu.edu
Marynell Strunk	570-460-4772	read4fun@ptd.net

PIKE COUNTY

Cynthia DeFebo	570-296-2909	cdefebo@pikepa.org
William Kerstetter (Executive Committee-Treasurer)	570-832-1578	cobk@ptd.net
Matthew Osterberg (County Commissioner)	570-296-7613	mosterberg@pikepa.org
Antonio Perito		antonioeperito@gmail.com
Peter Wulfhorst	570-296-3405	ptw3@psu.edu

SCHUYLKILL COUNTY

Robert Carl	570-622-1942	rcarl@schuylkillchamber.com
Courtney Fasnacht	570-622-0992	cfasnacht@nepamaec.com
Micah Gursky	570-645-8118	micah.gursky@sluhn.org
George Halcovage (County Commissioner)	570-628-1202	ghalcovage@co.schuylkill.pa.us
(Executive Committee-2nd Vice-Board Chairperson)		
Bud Quandt	570-544-4775	bquandt@quandt.com

WAYNE COUNTY

Jocelyn Cramer (County Commissioner)	570-253-5970	jcramer@waynecountypa.gov
James Hockenbury	570-251-6680	hockenbury@wmh.org
Craig Rickard	570-253-5970	crickard@waynecountypa.gov
Michael Rollison	570-253-8571	mike.rollison@waynebank.com
Mary Beth Wood (Executive Committee-Board Chairperson)	570-253-2537	mbw@wedcorp.org

AT-LARGE

Carl Beardsley	570-602-2000	cbeardsley@flyavp.com
Christopher Doherty	570-815-4918	chrisdoherty250@gmail.com
Ricky Durst	570-646-2300	rdurst@poconoraceway.com
Anthony Gabello	570-746-8779	agabello@psbanking.com
Vincent Galko	570-751-3798	vgalko@mercuryllc.com
Larry Malski	570-963-6676	lmalski@pnrra.org
Kit Pappas	570-629-1665	kpappas@kslresorts.com
Alana Roberts	570-348-1622	aroberts@pplweb.com

EX-OFFICIO

Jeffrey Box	570-655-5581	jbox@nepa-alliance.org
Maria Montoro Edwards (NCAC Board Chair)	570-826-1777	mmedwards@mfhs.org
Kelly O'Brien (PNE Board Chair)	570-752-3612	kobrien@bida.com
(John Augustine - Alternate)	570-883-0504	jaugustine@pennsnortheast.com

EMERITUS

David Donlin	570-624-1796	dadmatd515p@comcast.net
Ernest Preate	570-558-5970	epreate@comcast.net

BOARD OF DIRECTORS REPORT
SEPTEMBER 28, 2023
4:00PM



AGENDA

- I. **Call to Order** – Mary Beth Wood, Board Chairperson
- II. **Pledge of Allegiance** - Mary Beth Wood, Board Chairperson
 - * Welcome Anthony Gabello, President & CEO, PS Bank
- III. **Board Discussion & Action Items**
 - * June 28, 2023, Meeting Minutes - Mary Beth Wood, Board Chairperson 1-6
 - * Financial Report - Wendi Holena, CFO 7-8
 - * Re-approval of the March 3, 2021, and June 30, 2021, meeting minutes regarding a RCAP project - Jeffrey Box & Kurt Bauman 9-18
 - * President & CEO Report - Jeffrey Box 19-34
- IV. **Open Discussion** - Mary Beth Wood, Board Chairperson
- V. **Adjournment to Networking Reception** –
Mary Beth Wood, Board Chairperson
- VI. **Next Meeting** - November 1, 2023

**Board of Directors Report
Minutes of
Wednesday, June 28, 2023
In Person/Video Meeting**

OFFICERS

Mary Beth Wood, Board Chairperson
Stephen Barrouk, 1st Vice-Board Chairperson
Comm. George Halcovage, 2nd Vice Board Chairperson
Mary Frances Postupack, Secretary
Alex Stark, Assistant Treasurer
Comm. Wayne Nothstein
Joseph Sebelin, Past Board Chairperson

CARBON

Kathy Henderson
Garry Wentz

LACKAWANNA

Jack McNulty

LUZERNE

Michelle Mikitish

MONROE

Chuck Leonard

PIKE

Cynthia DeFebo
Peter Wulfhorst

SCHUYLKILL

Robert Carl
Courtney Fasnacht
Micah Gursky

WAYNE

Comm. Jocelyn Cramer
Craig Rickard
Mike Rollison

AT-LARGE

Carl Beardsley

EX-OFFICIO

John Augustine
Jeffrey Box

STAFF

Alan Baranski
Kurt Bauman
Wendi Holena
Donna Hritz
Michael Skowronski
Steve Ursich

**Board of Directors Report
Minutes of
Wednesday, June 28, 2023
In Person/Video Meeting**

The NEPA Alliance held a Board of Directors Meeting on Wednesday, June 28, 2023, in-person and via video meeting. Board Chairperson Mary Beth Wood called the meeting to order at 1:00pm.

Board Chairperson Mary Beth Wood asked the Board of Directors to join her in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

Board Chairperson Mary Beth Wood welcomed Commissioner Jocelyn Cramer to the Board of Directors representing Wayne County. Commissioner Cramer stated that she is excited to participate on the NEPA Board.

A roll call was given by Donna Hritz acknowledging those participating in today's meeting in-person and/or via video call.

ACTION ITEMS

Minutes - A motion was made by Commissioner George Halcovage and seconded by Michelle Mikitish to accept the minutes from the Board of Directors Meeting of March 1, 2023, as presented. **Motion carried.** Commissioner Cramer abstained from the motion.

Financial Report – Wendi reported as of May 31, 2023, NEPA has total revenues and expenses of approximately \$8.4 million. She further reported that NEPA is showing an increase in net assets of \$48,841. Wendi stated that NEPA only budgeted an increase of \$1,359. She noted that NEPA is over budget, but she expects to end the year at approximately \$60,000. Wendi reported that the increase is primarily due to additional loan processing fees that are received from the Business Finance Center (BFC). Wendi reported that NEPA's Statement of Financial Position has an unrestricted cash balance of over \$1.3 million and net assets of approximately \$1.7 million.

A motion was made by Michelle Mikitish and seconded Mike Rollison by to accept the Financial Report as presented. **Motion Carried.**

Fiscal Year 2023-2024 NEPA Budget Adoption – Jeff reported that NEPA is in a sound financial position and that the Budget is balanced. He stated that NEPA is in a program growth mode. He noted that the Budget has three (3) new positions (an Accountant, Business Finance Specialist and Community & Economic Development Specialist). Wendi reported that NEPA is budgeting total revenues and expenses at approximately \$5.1 million. She noted there is a small increase in net assets of \$1,814. Wendi reported that the budget is \$3.5 million less than last year's budget, primarily due to CDBG contract ending. She reported that there is an increase in the ARC PREP contract of \$61,425. Wendi also reported that there is an increase in loan processing fees from the NEPA BFC of approximately \$216,000. Jeff stated that it is NEPA's mission to build the cash balance to have a rainy-day fund.

A motion was made by Michelle Mikitish and seconded Michelle Mikitish by to approve the Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Budget as presented. **Motion carried.**

Fiscal Year 2023-2024 NEPA Work Plan Adoption - Jeff stated that the By-Laws requires NEPA to submit a Work Plan annually to the Board of Directors for consideration and adoption. He stated that in coordination with the budget that was just adopted, the NEPA Work Plan is on pages 8-18 in the packet, which explains the five (5) operating divisions of NEPA and all the programs and activities. Jeff thanked Commissioner George Halcovage for the startup non profit program in Schuylkill County.

**Board of Directors Report
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Wednesday, June 28, 2023
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Commissioner George Halcovage thanked Steve Ursich and the staff for their work on the CDBG program in Schuylkill County and the work around the region.

A motion was made by Jack McNulty and seconded by Michelle Mikitish to accept the Fiscal Year 2023-2024 NEPA Work Plan as presented. **Motion Carried**

Presentation – Steve Ursich provided a power point presentation on the Community Advantage Lending Program. He reported that some of the criteria are as follows: 60% of loans must be in underserved markets, loans are made and serviced by the lending institutions, owner occupied real estate 51% or more, guaranties and the guaranteed portion of SBA CA loans can be sold on a secondary market. A copy of Steve power point is available upon request.

Resolution 2023-6 – Steve reported that NEPA soft opened the program last week and is currently working on five (5) loan applications. He noted that there had been several inquiries regarding the program. Steve stated that he could see NEPA having ten (10) applications in a week. He noted that the five (5) in-house are at \$300,000, which already exceeds what NEPA has as pure liquidity. Steve stated that the BFC pledged \$125,000. He further stated that it would be better to have a larger amount of capital available coming out of the gate. Jeff stated the NEPA BFC Board of Directors approved a similar resolution. He also noted that NEPA Alliance would be the guarantor.

A motion was made by Commissioner Wayne Nothstein and seconded by Steve Barrouk to accept the Approving Community Advantage Lender Warehouse Financing as presented. **Motion Carried**
Mike Rollison abstained from the motion.

Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Nominating Committee Recommendations for Board Membership - Steve Barrouk reported that the Nominating Committee's recommendations for Fiscal Year 2023-2024, which was received from the respective counties and/or recommended by the Nominating Committee for appointment/reappointment to the Board of Directors beginning July 1, 2023.

Carbon County

Joe Sebelin, (Retired) Pocono Workforce Investment Board
Garry Wentz, (Retired) Pocono Workforce Investment Board

Lackawanna County

Tom Donohue, Vice President/General Manager, Lamar Advertising
Dr. Katie Leonard, President & CEO, Johnson College

Luzerne County

Steve Barrouk, Associate Broker, Lewith & Freeman Real Estate
Mary Malone, President, Greater Hazleton Chamber of Comm
Kerry Miscavage, Publisher, Times Leader Media Group

Monroe County

Chuck Leonard, Executive Director, Pocono Mts Economic Dev Corporation
Mary Frances Postupack, Vice President, Economic Development & Entrepreneurial Innovation Center

Pike County

Cynthia DeFebo, Director, Pike County Workforce Development

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Schuylkill County

Micah Gursky, Director of Development, St. Luke's Hosp. Miners Campus
Bud Quandel, President, Quandel Enterprises Inc.

Wayne County

Jim Hockenbury, Director of Ancillary Services, Wayne Memorial Health System
Mike Rollison, Vice President, Wayne Bank

The following recommendations have been received from the counties and/or recommended by the Nominating Committee for **new appointments** in their respective counties for a 2-year term beginning July 1, 2023.

Pike County – Antonio Perito, Assistant Community Office Manager, Wayne Bank

The following have been recommended by the Nominating Committee to the Board Chairperson for her action to **reappointment** them to **At Large Board Seats**.

Carl Beardsley, Executive Director, Wilkes-Barre/Scranton International Airport
Chris Doherty, Doherty Strategies
Ricky Durst, Senior Director Marketing & Ticketing, Pocono Raceway
Vince Galko, Senior Vice President, Mercury Public Affairs
Larry Malski, Executive Director, PA NE Regional Railroad Authority
Kit Pappas, Vice President, Asset Performance East, Camelback Resorts
Alana Roberts, Regional Affairs Director, PPL Electric Utilities

The following have been recommended by the Nominating Committee to the Board Chairperson for his **appointment** to an **At Large Board Seat**.

Anthony Gabello, President & CEO, PS Bank

The following have been recommended by the Nominating Committee to be **reappointed** to **Ex-Officio Seats**.

Maria Montoro Edwards, President and CEO, Maternal & Family Health Services (Representing NCAC)
Jeffrey Box, NEPA Alliance and Kelly O'Brien, Penn's Northeast (John Augustine alt.)

The following have been recommended by the Nominating Committee to be reappointed to **Emeritus Seats**.

Dave Donlin and Ernie Preate

The following have been recommended by the Nominating Committee to serve as Officers for the coming year beginning July 1, 2023.

Mary Beth Wood, Board Chairperson
Stephen Barrouk, 1st Vice-Board Chairperson
Commissioner George Halcovage, 2nd Vice-Board Chairperson
Bill Kerstetter, Treasurer
Mary Frances Postupack, Secretary

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Alex Stark, Assistant Treasurer
Commissioner Wayne Nothstein, Assistant Secretary
Joe Sebelin, Past Board Chairperson

A motion was made by Michelle Mikitish seconded by Jack McNulty to accept the Nominating Committee recommendations for Board Membership as presented. **Motion carried.**

Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Committee Memberships – Mary Beth reported that the Committee Membership report is located on pages 22-24. She stated that each Board member has been assigned to a committee. She noted that if you wish to serve on a different committee, please let Jeff and/or Donna know.

A motion was made by Commissioner Wayne Nothstein seconded by Mike Rollison to accept the Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Committee Membership recommendations as presented. **Motion carried.**

Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Board Meeting Schedule – Mary Beth stated that on page 25 is the Board Meeting schedule for next fiscal year. Jeff noted that a June meeting is more practical for NEPA from a financial standpoint.

A motion was made by Steve Barrouk and seconded by Michelle Mikitish to accept the Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Board Meeting Schedule as presented. **Motion carried.**

Business Development Services – Steve Ursich reported that the Bring the World to Pennsylvania is scheduled for Monday, October 2, 2023, and additional information is forthcoming. He also reported that the APEX Accelerator staff will be participating in the Tobyhanna Army Depot Industry Day on August 24, 2023, at the Depot, NEPIRC's Industry Day scheduled for October 13, 2023, at Mohegan Pennsylvania and DOD Industry Day on October 6, 2023, at the Hilton in Scranton. Steve reported that SBA 504 loan portfolio is at \$33 million since the last meeting. He stated that he expects to fund \$2.7 million in July/August. He noted that volume continues to be very brisk. Steve stated that the portfolio exceeds \$50 million for the first time.

Community & Economic Development Services – Kurt reported that the state hosted broadband sessions regarding information gathering and finding underserved areas throughout the Commonwealth. He noted that Carbon and Lackawanna counties were selected randomly. Kurt reported that NEPA is excited to be working on the Schuylkill County Non Profit Grant Program and will be initiating it around July. He noted that there is approximately \$500,000 set aside for the program. Kurt stated that on page 32 is a list of ARC projects and that half have been funded and the other half are under review at ARC. Kurt reported that he participated in an ARC/DCED webinar regarding ARC funding across the state. He noted that the GetConnected Program helps provide websites to various businesses. Kurt stated that the Angle Fund has made three (3) investments to date. He noted that they are all outside the NEPA region and are currently looking at two (2) businesses inside the region. Kurt stated that under the RACP Program he is expecting the Governor to announce a new round in July. He noted that NCAC was asked to engage in a small project in West Scranton by local legislators for a building owned by a non profit that received money, but was never revitalized to a community center and has been dormant for many years. Kurt noted that the Monroe County Community Foundation received its 501C3 status from the IRS. He reported Tobyhanna Defense Technology Partnership is relaunching the website under the new name. Kurt thanked Rear Admiral (Ret.) Nancy Lescavage and Peter Witmer from the Pennsylvania PA

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Military Community Enhancement Commission for allowing administrative costs to be allowed. He noted that Steve Zaricki prepared all the data for the ESU Summits.

Communications & Membership – Donna reported as of May 31st, NEPA has 375 members for a total of \$271,543. She noted that NEPA's goal is 450 members. She also reported that NEPA held a media event with NeighborWorks Northeast Pennsylvania in Lackawanna County on June 23rd. She stated that NEPA's Annual Networking Reception is scheduled for Thursday, September 28, 2023, at the Woodlands Inn in Wilkes-Barre and that invitations will be going out after the upcoming holiday. Donna noted that The Tobyhanna Defense Technology Partnership (formally known as the Blue Ribbon Task Force) website has been completed and that staff has begun working on the Community Impact Fund (CIF). She stated that the Grantmakers website will be the last site to be redesigned.

Transportation Services – Alan reported that the NEPA MPO 2023 Transportation Improvement Program was approved. He noted that the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program was submitted to the federal agencies for approval, which was received from USDOT on September 29, 2022. He further noted that the 2023 TIP went into effect on October 1, 2022. Alan reported that PennDOT and FHWA have announced that all MPOs and RPOs will be required to develop a one-year 2024-2025 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Development Process to incorporate program activities and goals cited in the current Transportation Reauthorization Bill Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA). He stated that staff has been working with the Congressional offices and PennDOT to identify appropriate Congressionally directed transportation projects for possible inclusion in the Fiscal Year 2024 Appropriations bills. Alan noted that the NEPA MPO kicked off the update of the Long Range Transportation Plan last April and that the development will be guided by our consultant Michael Baker International. He noted that the development of a regional freight study has been identified as a task in the current UPWP. Alan reported that the five MPOs have agreed to conduct a joint freight plan as the Eastern Pennsylvania Freight Alliance NEPA MPO, Lehigh Valley MPO, Lackawanna-Luzerne MPO, Reading MPO and Lebanon MPO. Alan stated that the group developed a framework, submitted an application to Central Office for supplemental planning funds for the initiative and was awarded \$280,000 in supplemental planning funds to be leveraged by a \$70,000 match provided by the participating MPOs. Alan reported that PennDOT's Transportation Alternatives Set Aside (TASA) Program is now open. The program provides funding for projects that enhance pedestrian and bicycle facilities, improve access to public transportation, create safe routes to schools, preserve historic transportation structures, provide environmental mitigation, create trails that serve a transportation purpose, and promote safety and mobility.

President & CEO Report – Jeff reported the DDAA Summer Board Meeting will be held at Camelback Resort July 17th-20th. He noted that his colleagues from thirteen (13) states in the Appalachia region will be in attendance. Jeff thanked everyone for their support for the past fiscal year.

Respectfully submitted,
Donna Hritz
Vice President of Communications & Operations
August 24, 2023

Statement of Activities

August 31, 2023

	Prior YTD	Current YTD	Budget	Percentage of Budget
Revenues:				
Grants/Projects	\$ 743,824	\$ 462,593	\$ 4,716,659	10%
Membership Fees	39,367	39,625	237,750	17%
Rental Income	4,820	4,820	28,921	17%
RLF Admin. Fees	2,650	2,700	25,000	11%
Match from Other Sources	34,834	58,388	44,000	133%
Other Receipts	2,159	7,676	18,900	41%
Contributed Services	-	840	28,000	3%
Total Revenues	827,654	576,642	5,099,230	11%
Expenses:				
Personnel	337,652	369,049	2,181,050	17%
Benefits	140,032	147,445	959,662	15%
Contractual	278,820	3,920	1,287,765	0%
Professional Fees	70	-	29,500	0%
Travel and Per Diem	9,125	3,676	49,320	7%
Meetings and Seminars	8,869	3,291	111,170	3%
Postage	1,967	785	4,200	19%
Supplies	4,053	292	46,190	1%
Publications and Memberships	7,300	2,733	63,356	4%
Printing	580	1,012	4,700	22%
Advertising	3,833	4,730	18,500	26%
Occupancy	7,444	12,172	65,050	19%
Equipment Rental & Maintenance	2,828	1,818	13,164	14%
Depreciation	9,469	9,469	59,102	16%
Telephone/Internet	4,314	4,705	27,930	17%
Insurance	-	-	35,200	0%
Interest	6,665	6,351	37,271	17%
Other Costs	4,017	3,849	76,286	5%
Contributed Services	-	840	28,000	3%
Total Expenses	827,038	576,137	5,097,416	11%
		-		
Increase (Decrease) in Net Assets	\$ 616	\$ 505	\$ 1,814	

Net Assets	
Beginning Balance	\$ 1,774,236
Increase (Decrease)	505
Current Balance	<u>\$ 1,774,741</u>

Statement of Financial Position

August 31, 2023

Assets	Prior Year	Current Year	Liabilities	Prior Year	Current Year
Unrestricted Cash Invested	\$ 875,477	\$ 868,346	Accounts Payable	372,276	316,768
Restricted Funds Invested	376,138	168,467	Deferred Project Funds	376,138	168,467
Membership Fees Receivable	69,575	76,725	Employee Benefits Payable	196,043	217,697
Advances/Deposits/Prepays	44,168	41,762	Payroll Withholdings	4,978	4,892
Accounts Receivable-Projects	1,204,174	1,432,159	Deferred Membership Fees	129,333	145,595
Depreciable Assets (Net)	616,134	559,318	Capital Lease Payable	544,714	518,617
			Total Liabilities	<u>1,623,482</u>	<u>1,372,036</u>
			Net Assets *	<u>1,562,184</u>	<u>1,774,741</u>
Total Assets	<u><u>\$ 3,185,666</u></u>	<u><u>\$ 3,146,777</u></u>	Total Liabilities & Net Assets	<u><u>\$ 3,185,666</u></u>	<u><u>\$ 3,146,777</u></u>

*Net Assets represents NEPA's equity. It is the surplus of Total Assets less Total Liabilities. Net Assets is not equivalent to cash.

**Board of Directors Report
Minutes of
Wednesday, March 3, 2021
Conference Call/Zoom Meeting**

OFFICERS

Joseph Sebelin, Board Chairperson
Stephen Barrouk, 2nd Vice-Board Chairperson
Comm. George Halcovage, Treasurer
Mary Frances Postupack, Assistant Treasurer
Alex Stark, Assistant Secretary
Philip Condron, Past Board Chairperson

CARBON

Maryln Kissner
Comm. Wayne Nothstein

LACKAWANNA

Tom Donohue
Jack McNulty
Brenda Sacco

LUZERNE

Michelle Mikitish

MONROE

Chuck Leonard
Marynell Strunk

PIKE

Cynthia DeFebo
Juliette McKerrell
Peter Wulfhorst

SCHUYLKILL

Bob Carl
Micah Gursky

WAYNE

Comm. Joe Adams
Dave Hoff
Craig Rickard
Mary Beth Wood

AT-LARGE

Carl Beardsley
Ricky Durst
Vince Galko
Larry Malski
Alana Roberts

EX-OFFICIO

Jeffrey Box
Maria Montoro Edwards

STAFF

Alan Baranski
Kurt Bauman
Wendi Holena
Donna Hritz
Michael Skowronski
Steve Ursich
Steve Zaricki

GUEST

Phil Keaney

**Board of Directors Report
Minutes of
Wednesday, March 3, 2021
Conference Call/Zoom Meeting**

The NEPA Alliance held a Board of Directors Meeting on Wednesday, March 3, 2021, via Conference Call/Zoom Meeting. Board Chairperson Joe Sebelin called the meeting to order at 1:00pm.

Board Chairperson Joe Sebelin welcomed everyone and noted that today's meeting is being recorded.

Board Chairperson Joe Sebelin asked the Board of Directors to join him in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

Board Chairperson Joe Sebelin asked the Board of Directors and staff to join him in a moment of silence for Mark Graziadio & Paul Maher, Board Members who recently passed away.

ACTION ITEMS

Minutes - A motion was made by Marynell Strunk and seconded by Commissioner Wayne Nothstein to accept the minutes from the Board of Directors Meeting of January 6, 2021. **Motion carried.**

Review of the 2019 Audit – Phil Keaney, CPA, J.H. Williams & Co. reported that the financial statements and schedules for the year ending June 30, 2020, were a clean unqualified opinion. He reviewed the various statements and opinions within the NEPA Audit. Phil stated that there were no material weaknesses found in the internal controls. He stated that the Audit did not detect any questions, costs or issues of noncompliance.

A motion was made by Phil Condron and seconded Michelle Mikitish by to accept the 2020 Audit Report as presented. **Motion carried.**

Treasurers Report – Wendi reported that on the Statement of Activities as of January 31, 2021, NEPA has total revenues and total expenses of approximately \$1.9 million. She noted that there is a small increase in net assets of \$993. Wendi stated that NEPA is seven months through the fiscal year. She noted that NEPA's revenues and expenses are at 55% and she anticipates ending the fiscal year on target. Wendi stated that NEPA's Statement of Financial Position shows a cash balance of approximately \$1 million with \$959,689 of unrestricted cash. She noted that NEPA has a healthy balance of \$533,000 in the accounts receivable. Wendi noted that NEPA will begin working on the 2022 Budget that will be presented at the May Board meeting.

A motion was made by Commissioner George Halcovage and seconded by Marynell Strunk to accept the Treasurer Report as presented. **Motion carried.**

Resolution 2021-1 - Adopting the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Annual Performance Report for the Years 2019-2020 – Jeff reported that NEPA prepares the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) as required by the Economic Development Administration (EDA), which is one of NEPA's key funding agencies. He noted that between the five-year plan, NEPA is required to prepare an update.

**Board of Directors Report
Minutes of
Wednesday, March 3, 2021
Conference Call/Zoom Meeting**

A motion was made by Chuck Leonard and seconded by Commissioner Joe Adams to accept the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Annual Performance Report as presented. **Motion carried.**

Resolution 2021-2 – NEPA’s Hotel Fauchere RACP Application – Kurt reported the resolution is confirming the actual amount of the RACP award. He noted that Hotel Fauchere received a \$500,000 allocation of state funds for their expansion project. Kurt stated that this resolution will allow them to submit a post award application and business plan so the project can get under contract and move forward, assuming it meets the state requirements. He stated that the Board approved a resolution in August approving the pre-award amount. Kurt stated that now that Hotel Fauchere knows the exact funding amount a post award resolution will be submitted with the post award application. Kurt noted that NEPA is serving as the fiscal sponsor.

A motion was made by Cynthia DeFebo and seconded by Michelle Mikitish to accept Resolution 2021-2 NEPA’s Hotel Faucherer RACP Application as presented. **Motion carried.**

Resolution 2021-3 – NEPA’s Little Leaf Farms RACP Application – Kurt reported that the Little Leaf Farms RACP pre-award will result in a \$2 million project. He noted that they are headquartered in and Massachusetts produces lettuce. He further reported that they are constructing a new greenhouse in the McAdoo Industrial Park. Kurt reported that the total investment is over \$100 million for the new facility and the state has provided them a \$2 million RACP Award. He noted that NEPA also served as the fiscal sponsor.

A motion was made by Commissioner George Halcovage and seconded by Tom Donohue to accept Resolution 2021-3 NEPA’s Little Leaf Farms RACP Application as presented. **Motion carried.**

Resolution 2021-4 – NEPA’s Downtown Shenandoah Inc. RACP Application - Kurt reported that the project is for the Downtown Shenandoah Center for Business, Education & Arts, which will be an incubator, education and community center. He stated that Downtown Shenandoah Inc.’s RACP award was for \$1.5 million. Kurt noted that NEPA was the applicant and the grantwriter. He noted that they also hired NEPA to apply for New Market Tax Credits for the project.

A motion was made by Bob Carl and seconded by Commissioner George Halocavage to accept Resolution 2021-4 NEPA’s Downton Shenandoah Inc. RACP Application as presented. **Motion carried.**

Appoint Chuck Leonard to the MPO Technical Planning Committee as the NEPA Board designee representing Monroe County – Jeff reported that Chuck Leonard volunteered to serve on the MPO Technical Planning Committee representing Monroe County. He stated that the committee is structured, to rotate every two years between Carbon, Pike, Monroe and Schuylkill counties.

A motion was made by Steve Barrouk and seconded by Marynell Strunk to appoint Chuck Leonard to the MPO Technical Planning Committee representing Monroe County. **Motion carried.**

Appoint Alana Roberts and Marynell Strunk as NEPA Board representatives to the NCAC Board of Directors - Jeff reported that NEPA has been working over the past few months to restructure the NCAC Board of Directors. He noted that NCAC is a 501(3) affiliate and NEPA’s landlord. He noted that the nonprofit assistance programming is through NCAC. Jeff reported that several longtime Board Members have recently resigned from the NCAC Board. He stated that in the Operating Agreement

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Wednesday, March 3, 2021
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between NEPA and NCAC there are three NEPA Board Members who also serve as NCAC Board Members.

A motion was made by Ricky Durst and seconded by Phil Condron to appoint Alana Roberts and Marynell Strunk to the NCAC Board of Directors. **Motion carried.**

Committee/Affiliate Reports

Business Development Services - Steve Ursich reported that the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania launched a COVID Hospitality Industry Recovery Program (CHIRP) where the counties receive funding to assist the hospitality industries (ie. hotels/restaurants). He reported that the counties will decide how to distribute the funds and will also decide what Certified Economic Development Organization (CEDO) or Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFI) will distribute the funds. Steve stated that NEPA has contracted with Pike and Schuylkill counties. Steve noted that the application period will be opening up very shortly. Jeff thanked Commissioner George Halcovage for partnering with NEPA. Commissioner George Halcovage noted that NEPA has done an outstanding job getting the program up and running. Steve reported that NEPA received \$1.98 million for the EDA COVID loan program. He noted the funds opened on September 1, 2020, however, to date NEPA has uncommitted funds of only \$10,000. Steve further reported that NEPA's first report was accepted by EDA. He noted that NEPA will be funding two loans through the SBA504 Loan Program for just over \$2 million next week, which will bring NEPA's portfolio total to 22 loans at \$20,771,000 effective next week.

Steve reported the PTAC Government Showcase has been cancelled this year due to COVID and because the federal agencies have travel restrictions. He also reported that the Bring the World to PA event will be virtual sometime in September.

Communications & Membership – Alex reported as of February 28, 2021, NEPA has 91 members for a total of \$178,375. He noted that last year at this time we had 167 members for a total of \$197,275 so NEPA is behind 76 members and \$18,900. Alex reported that Jeff is currently revising the membership letter so the invoices will be sent a little later than usual. He noted to date NEPA only received municipality and county memberships. Alex further noted that NEPA should be back on target in the next couple months.

Donna reported that NEPA has the capability to accept electronic payments for membership on the NEPA website. She noted that staff is also reviewing options to combine the membership and the database into a more efficient and user-friendly process. Donna reported that NEPA is currently preparing a membership spotlight to feature members in the NEPA Newslines and on the NEPA website. She noted that a membership questionnaire will be sent to Board in the next few days. Donna noted that the internal website committee continues to meet to revise the scope of work for the website RFQ, which will be going out shortly. Donna reported that the NEPA Nominating Committee met on February 25th to review the upcoming Board slate for the new fiscal year beginning July 1st, which will be presented at the May meeting. Jeff noted that NEPA will be scheduling a Membership/Communications Committee meeting in the near future to demonstrating the Membership HUB on the NEPA website.

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Community & Economic Development Services – Kurt reported that NEPA continues to seek it's own allocation for New Markets Tax Credit. He noted that there are currently four clients under contract to help find allocations. Kurt stated that the clients are Da Vinci Science Center, Allentown; Hyatt Place, Wilkes-Barre; Pocono YMCA, Stroudsburg and Downtown Shenandoah, Inc., Shenandoah. He noted that he continues to work with Steve Ursich on the Angel Fund launch, which is up to \$300,000. Kurt reported that a Grantmakers Forum is scheduled for March 23rd to discuss the new initiatives in the region as well as some of the challenges nonprofits are experiencing. He reported that the state is looking for additional ARC projects.

Transportation Services – Alan reported PennDOT is currently facing an imminent project funding shortfall. He noted that reductions in road traffic due to the COVID-19 pandemic have significantly reduced gasoline tax revenue this year. Alan stated that PennDOT's received \$407 million in federal COVID relief funds. He noted that these funds will allow the state to fund transportation projects for the remainder of the fiscal year. Alan noted that the development of a regional freight study has been identified as a task in the current UPWP. He noted that given the regional nature of freight movements, particularly due to the warehousing and distribution growth in the adjoining Lehigh Valley and Scranton/Wilkes-Barre MPOs, staff has been in discussions with neighboring planning partners about developing a collaborative regional freight plan. Alan noted that the Transportation will be going through a full review by the federal and state agencies, which will be going on throughout the Spring. He reported that staff held a virtual meeting with state and federal delegation, Schuylkill County Commissioners and MPO representatives to discuss projects and issues in Schuylkill County.

President & CEO Report – Jeff reported that the staff will continue working remotely until March 31st. He noted that he will revisit the issue based on federal and state guidelines. Jeff noted that he anticipates the staff returning to work two days a week beginning in April. He thanked the staff for all programs running smoothly while working remotely. Jeff also thanked the Board of Directors for their guidance and support.

Presentation – Kurt and Steve Zaricki presented a power point on the NEPA 2019-2020 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Annual Performance Report. They highlighted on the following: Why Prepare a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS); Regional Topics Addressed in the CEDS; Population for the United States, Pennsylvania, and Northeastern Pennsylvania Counties 2010 and 2019 from the U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division; Manufacturing Industry Employment for the United States, Pennsylvania, and Northeastern Pennsylvania Counties, 2008 and 2013 from U.S. Census Bureau, "2008 and 2013 County Business Patterns and Manufacturing Industry Employment for the United States, Pennsylvania and Northeastern Pennsylvania Counties 2013 and 2018 from U.S. Census Bureau, 2013 and 2018 County Business Patterns. A copy of the power point is available upon request. Mary Frances Postupack suggested expanding on the diversity section.

There being no further business Board Chairman Joe Sebelin adjourned the meeting at 2:08pm.

Respectfully submitted:
Donna Hritz, Communications & Operations Manager
March 22, 2021

**Board of Directors Report
Minutes of
Wednesday, June 30, 2021
Conference Call/Zoom Meeting**

OFFICERS

Joseph Sebelin, Board Chairperson
Mary Beth Wood, 1st Vice-Board Chairperson
Stephen Barrouk, 2nd Vice-Board Chairperson
Comm. George Halcovage, Treasurer
William Kerstetter, Secretary
Mary Frances Postupack, Assistant Treasurer
Alex Stark, Assistant Secretary
Philip Condrón, Past Board Chairperson

CARBON

Kathy Henderson
Comm. Wayne Nothstein

LACKAWANNA

Tom Donohue
Jack McNulty
Brenda Sacco

LUZERNE

Michelle Mikitish

MONROE

Chuck Leonard

PIKE

Cynthia DeFebo
Comm. Matt Osterberg
Peter Wulfhorst

SCHUYLKILL

Micah Gursky

WAYNE

Comm. Joe Adams
Dave Hoff
Craig Rickard

AT-LARGE

Carl Beardsley
Matt Connell
Vince Galko

EX-OFFICIO

Jeffrey Box

STAFF

Alan Baranski
Kurt Bauman
Wendi Holena
Donna Hritz
Michael Skowronski
Steve Ursich

GUEST

Mike Brown
Chris Chapman
Ryenne Jennings
Matt Jones
Kim Walker
Comm. Chris Lukasavage

**Board of Directors Report
Minutes of
Wednesday, June 30, 2021
Conference Call/Zoom Meeting**

The NEPA Alliance held a Board of Directors Meeting on Wednesday, June 30, 2021, in person and via Conference Call/Zoom Meeting. Board Chairperson Joe Sebelin called the meeting to order at 1:00pm.

Board Chairperson Joe Sebelin welcomed everyone and noted that today's meeting is being recorded.

Board Chairperson Joe Sebelin asked the Board of Directors to join him in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

ACTION ITEMS

Minutes - A motion was made by Bill Kerstetter and seconded by Michelle Mikitish to accept the minutes from the Board of Directors Meeting of March 3, 2021 as presented. **Motion carried**

Treasurers Report – Wendi reported that on the Statement of Activities as of May 31, 2021, NEPA has total revenues and total expenses of approximately \$4.6 million. She noted that there is an increase in net assets of \$3,260. Wendi further reported that NEPA has exceeded its budgeted revenues and expenses due to an influx of revenue that was unbudgeted. She noted that NEPA received approximately \$1.6 million from Schuylkill County to administer their COVID Hospitality Industry Recover Program (CHIRP). Wendi also noted that NEPA received additional COVID related grants that increased the revenue and corresponding expenses. She reported that NEPA's Statement of Financial Position shows a very healthy unrestricted cash balance of approximately \$900,000 and total net assets of \$1.4 million,

A motion was made by Michelle Mikitish and seconded by Jack McNulty to accept the Treasurer Report as presented. **Motion carried**

Fiscal Year 2021-2022 NEPA Budget Adoption – Jeff reported that the FY2021-2022 budget has been prepared conservatively in terms of revenues and expenditures. He noted that NEPA has a solid financial footing going into the new fiscal year. Jeff stated that the proposed budget does have additional revenue for a COVID Response Pandemic Recovery Coordinator position. He noted that he is unsure if it will be funded by ARC. Jeff stated another position in the proposed budget is for an accountant for part of the year to replace Kevin Kwiatek when he retires in December. Wendi noted it is a balanced conservative budget assuming there is level funding. She noted total revenues are \$3.9 million and corresponding expenses of \$3.9 million. Wendi noted that there is a small increase in net assets of \$2,615. Wendi noted that there are 2 vacancies in the budget for a total of 25 staff positions. She reported that a couple new items from last year are in the budget (ie. COVID-19 response and CDBG). Wendi noted that NEPA adjusted some of the expenses to reflect post pandemic (ie. travel expenses). Jeff noted that the PREP Program received level funding. He also noted that the Budget & Finance and Executive Committee reviewed the proposed budget prior to today's Board meeting.

A motion was made by Bill Kerstetter and seconded by Steve Barrouk to accept the proposed adoption of the FY2021-2022 Budget as presented. **Motion carried**

Fiscal Year 2021-2022 NEPA Work Plan Adoption - Jeff stated that the By-Laws require that NEPA submit the Work Plan annually for the NEPA Board's consideration and adoption. He stated that in

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coordination with the budget that was just adopted, the NEPA Work Plan is on pages 9-18 in the packet, which explains the five (5) operating divisions of NEPA and all the programs and activities.

Comm. George Halcovage thanked NEPA for their evaluation, administration and distribution of the Schuylkill County CHIRP funds to businesses in Schuylkill County. Jeff noted that NEPA will be also assisting with the administration of the Schuylkill County with their CDBG program.

A motion was made by Comm. George Halcovage and Phil Condrón seconded by to accept the Fiscal Year 2021-2022 NEPA Work Plan as presented. **Motion carried.**

Resolution 2021-06 - Approving the Appalachian Regional Commission Project Priority List for 2021-2022 – Jack McNulty thanked the Committee for their participation. He noted that there were 9 area development projects and 3 local access road projects. Jack stated that the ranking was unanimous among the Committee. He noted that 2 projects were not ready and were placed at the bottom of the list. Jeff noted that this is an annual resolution, which is presented to the Board for approval. He reported that NEPA is still accepting applications. Kurt noted any new projects received will be added to the list. He further noted NEPA will be submitting the list to Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) in July for evaluation. Kurt stated that staff is still wrapping up last year's full application.

A motion was made by Michelle Mikitish and seconded by Phil Condrón to approve the Regional Project Review Priority List as presented. **Motion carried.** Mary Beth Wood abstained.

Resolution 2021-07-Supporting the Senate and House bipartisan bills to protect the current status of designated Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSA) – Jeff reported the issue effects the 4 MPO counties (Carbon, Monroe, Pike and Schuylkill). He noted that the U.S. Census Bureau and the U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) were looking to tinker with the formulas of the population size and what would be allowed for an MPO. He noted currently it is 50,000 in populated density. Jeff stated the 2 agencies wanted to raise the population to 100,000, which has created tremendous push back from other MPO's across the Commonwealth and across the country. He noted that there are 9 MPO's in the Commonwealth and approximately 144 MPO's across the country affected.

A motion was made by Steve Barrouk and seconded by Mary Beth Wood to support the Senate and House bipartisan bills to protect the current status of designated Metropolitan Statistical Areas as presented. **Motion carried.**

Comm. George Halcovage requested a copy of the resolution.

Fiscal Year 2021-2022 Committee Memberships - Jeff noted that the Committee Membership Report is located on pages 24-26. He stated that each Board Member has been assigned to a committee. He noted that if you wish to serve on a different committee, please call Jeff and/or Donna.

Fiscal Year 2021-2022 Board Meeting Schedule - Jeff stated that on page 27 is the Board Meeting schedule for next fiscal year. Jeff noted that the next meeting will be September 16th and will be combined with the Networking Reception at Kalahari Resorts and Conventions.

**Board of Directors Report
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Committee/Affiliate Reports

Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) Project Update – Kurt reported on page 34 of the packet includes a project update that was reviewed last year by the Regional Project Review Committee and forwarded to DCED. He noted that Orwigsburg Borough, City of Scranton, Johnson College, tecBRDIGE and Earth Conservancy projects have been approved since the last Board meeting. Kurt reported that NEPA is also assisting, Downtown Shenandoah Inc., the City of Hazleton, Wyoming Valley Chamber of Commerce, and Pike County with EDA requests.

Community & Economic Development Services - Kurt reported that NEPA is waiting for a response from the U.S. Treasury to announce its allocation of New Market Tax Credits for 2021. He noted that last year's pot was \$3.5 billion and this year's pot is \$5 billion. Kurt noted that NEPA is working with 3 clients to secure an allocation. He noted that the 2 projects in the NEPA region are Pocono YMCA and the Shenandoah Innovation Center. Kurt also noted that the project outside the region is the Da Vinci Science Center (Allentown, PA). He reported that NEPA has raised \$500,000 in support of the Angel Fund initiative and continues to meet with potential investors and expects to be at \$600,000 by July, 2021. Kurt reported that NEPA's CED's was recently acknowledge as a best practice on the StatsAmerica website. He also noted that NEPA and NCAC recently participated in the NEPA Gives by helping get new community foundation partners.

Business Development Services - Steve Ursich reported that the Bring the World to Pennsylvania (BTWPA) will be held virtual again this year. He noted that the proposed dates are September 13th - 24th. Steve noted that additional information on the webinars is forthcoming.

Steve reported that the PTAC program worked with Congressman Matt Cartwright to expand access to the NASA SpaceX Program with manufacturers in the NEPA region. He noted that NEPA will be a host organization on a virtual manufacturing matching making event on October 27th and 28th. Steve further reported that additional information will be sent out shortly.

Steve reported that through the Schuylkill County CHIRP Program, NEPA assisted 64 businesses and deployed approximately \$1.6 million to businesses in Schuylkill County.

Steve noted that NEPA received confirmation that the first of 2 EDA Defederalization requests were approved. He noted that he expects the second approval any day.

Steve reported that NEPA's total portfolio as of May 31, 2021, is \$32 million (\$11 million internal funds and \$21 million in the SBA portfolio). He noted that the loan volume as hole, NEPA has been doing more loans than ever before. Steve reported that Dave Nat has been busy with the PEDDA program. He reported to date NEPA has 14 SBA approvals with another quarter remaining, which surpassed last years.

Communications & Membership – Donna reported that the NEPA Annual Dinner will be a networking reception this year. She noted that the event is scheduled for Thursday, September 16th at Kalahari Resorts in the Poconos. Donna further noted that sponsorship information will be sent out shortly. Donna reported that the NEPA Year in Review Video will be produced by the Pocono Mountains Visitors Bureau. Jeff

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reported that NEPA received 3 proposals for redesigning of the multiple NEPA websites. He noted out of the proposals and after an internal discussion the staff selected Design Done Right based out of Lake Ariel. He noted that NEPA is in the process of executing an agreement.

Alex reported as of May 31, 2021, NEPA has 331 members for a total of \$250,900. He noted that last year at this time NEPA had 350 members for a total of \$254,730, therefore NEPA is behind 19 members and \$3,830. Alex reported that NEPA received 33 memberships for \$8,975 in June. He noted that NEPA's goal remains 450 members.

Transportation Services – Alan encouraged all counties to pass a similar resolution supporting the Senate and House bipartisan bills to protect the current status of designated Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSA). He also reported PennDOT is currently developing its Pathways Program, an extensive initiative to examine possible near and long-term funding solutions. Alan reported Governor Wolf has established the Transportation Revenue Options Commission (TROC) to develop funding recommendations for replacing the state gas tax. He noted that 2 representatives from MPO/RPO agencies are on the commission. Alan reported that the House and Senate committees are drafting transportation reauthorization legislation to extend transportation programs and funding for the next 5 years. He further reported that the House and Senate are expected to consider the legislation this summer. He stated that the House and Senate bills will include funding for member-designated projects. Alan noted that the 2023 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) development has begun. He also noted that the development of a regional freight study has been identified as a task in the current UPWP. Alan reported that five MPOs have agreed to conduct a joint freight plan as the Eastern Pennsylvania Freight Alliance (NEPA MPO, Lehigh Valley MPO, Lackawanna-Luzerne MPO, Reading MPO and Lebanon MPO). He further reported that the group has developed a framework and submitted an application to Central Office for supplemental planning funds for the initiative and was awarded \$280,000 in supplemental planning funds to be leveraged by a \$70,000 match provided by the participating MPOs.

Presentation – A multi-county Broadband discussion by Comm. Chris Lukasavage (Carbon County), Michael Brown (Lackawanna County), Chuck Leonard (Monroe County), Comm. George Halcovage (Schuylkill County) and Mary Beth Wood (Wayne County) discussed many issues in their respective counties including, broadband deficiencies, internet deficiencies, lack of service providers, connectivity to low density areas, affordability to low income families, the need of a feasibility study, high fees and successes in the public/private partnerships.

There being no further business Board Chairman Joe Sebelin adjourned the meeting at 2:35pm.

Respectfully submitted:

Donna Hritz, Communications & Operations Manager
July 28, 2021

Board of Directors Report

September 28, 2023



Dear Board Members,

Here is a brief update on some NEPA activities we have been working on over the last few months.

Staffing

As a follow up to the passage of the 2023-2024 Fiscal Year Budget, we have been moving forward to fill vacancies and add staff to deliver programming. Tyler Day will be transferring to the Community & Economic Development Services Division effective October 2nd. We have hired a new Specialist as a replacement for the division and who will start in October.

We have extended an offer to our accounting intern to join us full-time. She has accepted and will start in January.

Our Business Finance Team will also be expanding with addition of at least one person to work on our expanding financing programs. We hope to have this position filled this fall. We have posted and advertised for a replacement for Tyler in our APEX program.

Federal Budget

The latest version of the federal budget has moved some ARC funding out of Northern Appalachia (New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Maryland). This means the funds will go elsewhere in the ARC region to other states. This is a loss of approximately \$2 million in available ARC funds for projects in Pennsylvania. It's unclear if any projects will go unfunded in the NEPA region.

State Budget

We were level funded in the PREP program, as were our partners, but we did receive a \$1 million increase for our International Business Development Program. The ten (10) Regional Export Networks (REN's) will each receive an equal share of the increase.

RCAP Program

Many of you have benefited from the RACP program over the years in various projects. NEPA has been expanding our role in this program by being the fiscal sponsor and sometimes the author of the grants. We earn fees on this work, and it helps the region. Governor Shapiro has announced administrative changes to the program. We are hopeful that the changes will streamline the process and get the money out sooner.

DDAA Meeting

We hosted the annual Summer Board meeting of the Development District Association of Appalachia Conference (DDAA) at Camelback Resort in Monroe County in July. I chaired the DDAA Board from July 1, 2022, until June 30, 2023. It was my turn to host the event and proud to bring twenty-five (25) of my colleagues to Pennsylvania. Thanks to Chris Barrett and his team for their support for the event! Thanks also to Kit Pappas and his team at Camelback for being a great host!

Board of Directors Report September 28, 2023



Community Advantage Program

As authorized by the Board of Directors at the June meeting, we have negotiated a \$1.5 million line of credit for the startup of the program. The successful proposal was from PS Bank. We are moving forward to closing and the startup of the program. The finance team has several clients in waiting for this program to kick off in our region. Thanks to new board member Anthony Gabello for supporting our new program with the line of credit.

Annual Networking Reception and Board Meeting

As a reminder, the NEPA Annual Networking Reception will be held on Thursday, September 28th at the Woodlands in Wilkes-Barre. The evening will commence with the Board Meeting at 4:00pm. The Reception starts at 4:30pm and runs until 6:00pm. We will have a 30-minute program and the evening will conclude at approximately 7:30pm. We appreciate all of you who have committed sponsorships and we hope to see you all at the event! Additional sponsorships are available!

Schuylkill County Non Profit Grant Program

Kurt is working with Schuylkill County to establish a Non-Profit Grant Program utilizing the County's ARPA funds. The program should kick off in September.

There is much more information on our programs and deliverables in the following report and in the Annual Report, which will be distributed at the Reception.

Thank you for the opportunity to work for NEPA Alliance and our great region of the Commonwealth.

Respectfully,

Jeff

Board of Directors Report September 28, 2023



APEX Accelerator

Counseling Activity (5-01-2023 to 08-31-2023)	
New Active Clients for the Period:	28
Active Clients for the Period	237
Initial Introductory Counseling Sessions for the Period	28
Follow-up Counseling Sessions for the Period	655
Events held during the Period	8

The APEX Accelerator assisted clients registering in the PA Supplier Portal, to do business with the Commonwealth, and the System for Award Management to be able to sell to the Federal Government. Follow-up sessions aided client registration updates, and new/renewal certification applications such as but not limited to: HUBZone, 8(a), SDVOSB/VOSB, and WOSB. Support was also provided in government contracting areas such as: solicitation reviews; bid matching; and marketing.

Contract Awards Activity (5-01-2023 to 08-31-2023)			
Award Type	Number of Awards	Number of Clients	Total Value
Federal Prime	4,092	22	\$71,389,593.40
State/Local Prime	5	2	\$954,695.76
Subcontracts	10	6	\$2,261,394.94

During this period, Active APEX Accelerator clients received contract awards primarily from Federal Agencies acting as a prime contractor. Contract award reporting follows Department of Defense Office of Small Business Program terms. The APEX Accelerator collaborated with clients during this period on three types of SBA certifications for their business.

Certification Activity (5-01-2023 to 08-31-2023)		
Certification Type	Applications Submitted/Pending	Certifications Approved
SD/VOSB	1	0
WOSB	1	0
HUBZone	0	0

Board of Directors Report

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International Business Development Program

The International Business Development staff recorded fifteen (15) Export Actions and generated fifteen (15) International Projects to Pennsylvania's Authorized Trade Representatives from July 1 through September 12, 2023. Staff processed four (4) Global Access Program (GAP) applications and two (2) reimbursement packets during this timeframe. GAP is an export promotion grant administered by the Pennsylvania Office of International Business Development (OIBD) under a State Trade Expansion Program (STEP) award from the U.S. Small Business Administration.

The International Business Development Program will host Bringing the World to Northeastern Pennsylvania on Monday, March 11, 2024. This is the Program's premier annual event when NEPA hosts Pennsylvania Authorized Trade Representatives for one-on-one meetings with companies. More information will be available soon.

PA Office of International Business Development Performance Measurements FY 2023 -2024		
Performance Measurement	Goal	YTD Totals
Active Clients	50	13
Export Actions	105	15
Exporting Companies	13	0
Export Sales	\$22,609,296.90	\$0
Projects	101	15
ATR Attributed Sales	\$9,269,811.73	\$0
New Clients	7	2
Total (weighted and capped measure) <i>Calculated 9/12/23</i>		10.47%

Business Finance Center

The Business Finance Center has been able to close 12 loans totaling \$3,472,399. Through these loan closings, the small businesses are expected to create 36 jobs and retain 33 jobs in the next 3 years within the service area of NEPA Alliance and NEPA Alliance BFC. Loans closed since that last meeting include the following business sectors:

- Professional Services
- CNC Machine Shop
- Retail Stores
- Medical Suppliers

Board of Directors Report

September 28, 2023



SBA 504		
	Number	Balance
Approved Loans	19	\$ 28,714,000.00
Closed Since Last Meeting	3	\$ 2,361,000.00
Outstanding Loans	43	\$ 32,672,733.37
Total	56	\$ 63,747,733.37
SBA Community Advantage		
	Number	Balance
Approved Loans	4	\$ 243,000.00
Closed Since Last Meeting	0	\$ 0
Outstanding Loans	0	\$ 0
Total	3	\$ 243,000.00
PIDA*		
	Number	Balance
Approved Loans	2	\$ 1,136,000.00
Closed Since Last Meeting	2	\$ 496,399.00
Outstanding Loans	45	\$ 9,106,122.00
Total	49	\$ 10,738,521.00
Internal Funds		
	Number	Balance
Approved Loans	7	\$ 730,750.00
Closed Since Last Meeting	7	\$ 615,000.00
Outstanding Loans	138	\$ 7,226,329.00
Total	152	\$ 8,572,079.00

*Decrease due to CWCA balloon payments.

Other Items:

- CDFI Application
- SBLC Designation

Board of Directors Report September 28, 2023



Twenty-six (26) out of twenty-nine (29) LDD Customer Satisfaction Survey forms were completed by NEPA clients who received assistance through NEPA's Business Financing, APEX Accelerator (formerly Procurement Technical Assistance Center) and International Business Programs for assistance received during the 4th quarter of 2022-2023 which represented an 90% response rate. Twenty-six (26) clients indicated they were very satisfied/satisfied with the assistance they received through NEPA. **This gives an overall satisfaction rate of 100% from surveys received for the 4th quarter of 2022-2023.**

The following represents the number of responses from clients who indicated they were very satisfied / satisfied with the specific assistance they received:

	*Timeliness of Assistance	*Quality of Assistance	*Value of Assistance
Loans	2	2	2
APEX Accelerator	23	23	23
International	5	5	5

Board of Directors Report

June 28, 2023



COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DIVISION

EDA

Development District (LDD) for the Economic Development Administration (EDA), NEPA provides technical assistance to those organizations seeking EDA grant assistance.

Organization	Project	CO	EDA Grant Request Amount	Funding Leveraged	Status
City of Wilkes-Barre	Parking Garage	LU	\$3M	\$3M	In Progress
Lackawanna College	Center for Technology Innovation	LA	\$2M	\$14M	Waiting on final design

Appalachian Regional Commission

As the designated Local Development District (LDD) for the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) and the Pennsylvania Department of Community & Economic Development (DCED), NEPA provides technical assistance to those organizations seeking ARC grant assistance.

2023 Current Projects

Board of Directors Report

June 28, 2023



Organization	Project	CO	ARC Grant Request Amount	Funding Leveraged	Status
NEPA Alliance	PREP	RE	\$400,000	\$400,000	Funded
Johnson College	Flying High to New Careers in Aviation Technology	LA	\$126,186	\$126,186	Funded
Lackawanna County	Montage Mountain Economic Development Plan	LA	\$100,000	\$100,000	Funded
Maternal and Family Health Services	Circle of Care Maternity Medical Home	LA	\$200,000	\$200,000	Funded
Scranton Cultural Center at the Masonic Temple	Sound Enhancements for the Weinberg Theater	LA	\$125,000	\$125,000	Funded
Wayne County	Wayne County Food Locker Pilot Program	WA	\$239,223	\$239,223	Funded
Downtown Shenandoah, Inc.	Shenandoah Innovation Center	SC	\$136,000	\$136,000	Funded
Lackawanna County	Stauffer Road Paving Project Phase 3	LA	\$630,294	\$282, 574	Funded
NEPA BFC	Community Advantage Loan Program	LA	\$200,000	\$200,000	Funded
Lackawanna College	Center for Innovation Technology	LA	\$1M	\$1.5M	Funded
Salem Township	Salem Township Public Water Expansion Project	LU	\$129,350	\$130,350	Funded
Lehigh Valley Child Care Center	Carbon County Child Care Expansion	CA	\$138,000	\$138,000	Funded

ENGAGE!

On behalf of the Northeast Pennsylvania Partnerships for Regional Economic Performance (PREP) partners, NEPA annually applies for the *Engage!* initiative. *Engage!* is a Pennsylvania statewide business retention and expansion (BRE) program designed to interact with targeted companies regularly and proactively. The overall goal of *Engage!* is to retain existing businesses and to help them grow and expand by building solid relationships with business owners or key decision makers and economic development partners. NEPA received \$195,000 for *Engage!* for FY 22-23 and has subcontracted with 13 partners to complete the project deliverables. NEPA has applied for \$198,000 for FY 23-24 and award is pending.

In response to the COVID-19 Pandemic, NEPA is offering, through the “Get Connected” initiative, e-commerce technical assistance to businesses. NEPA has contracted with three web development/tech firms to assist the launch of this initiative, which offers a free suite of services to develop an online sales platform that will assist in stabilizing the business and generate sales and clients during the pandemic. Thus far, NEPA has assisted over 70 businesses. Phase 5 business recipients are listed below. Clients in Phase 5

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received \$3,500 in consulting support and training services from the University of Scranton SBDC and the Wilkes University SBDC for their business and e-commerce platform. Funding in the amount of \$141,500 was received from the Lackawanna County Department of Planning and Economic Development for Phase 5. This funding will allow us to assist 32 firms in Lackawanna County through the Get Connected program. **Funding in the amount of \$72,334 for Phase 6 has just been approved by the Pennsylvania Department of Community & Economic Development. This funding will allow us to assist additional firms throughout the seven-county region. NEPA received an Impact Award from the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) for its Get Connected program. This award was under its Technology category.**

StartUp NEPA

NEPA has raised \$750,000 in support of our Angel Fund initiative. The official launch meeting was held in January 2022, and member meetings have been held monthly. To date, over 10 businesses have made pitches, and four investment commitments have been made. NEPA staff continue to recruit new investors and vet potential pitches from businesses and entrepreneurs.

In November 2022, \$50,000 was invested to Conservation Labs, a water management company based in Pittsburgh. Their technology, H2know takes measurements from your pipe every second and uses a patented technology and machine learning approach to translate those signals to accurate water flow estimates, leak alerts, and water insights. In March 2023, \$50,000 was invested in Buoy, a health and wellness company that produces clean hydration drops that can be added to any beverage. The drops have been used to treat individuals with chronic illnesses to aid in their hydration and overall wealth. The company is based in California and was referred to StartUp NEPA through the Angel Fund Network. In May 2023, \$185,000 was invested into LifeAire, an air purification company based in the Lehigh Valley. In August of 2023, the fund invested \$50,000 in Gilson Snow Boards, located in PA.

Capital Financing Services – Pennsylvania Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program (RACP)

NEPA has partnered with CBO Financial, our NMTC consultant, to offer RACP grant writing assistance and Financial Request Package support for the clients in the table below.

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Client	Location	NMTC Request	RACP Request	Status
2022 (Application August 19, 2022)				
Riverfront Sports Complex*	Scranton, PA	NA	\$2,000,000	Under State Review
WVIA*	Jenkins Twp	NA	\$2,250,000	Funded
Hyatt Place*	Scranton, PA	NA	\$3,000,000	Under State Review
NexUS-1*	Hazleton, PA	NA	\$3,000,000	Under State Review
Interstate Building & Supply*	Pittston, PA	NA	\$750,000	Funded
2022 (Application March 13, 2021)				
Keystone Human Services*	TBD, Luzerne County	NA	\$2,700,000	Awarded \$1.25M
Little Leaf Farms, LLC*	McAdoo, PA	NA	\$2,000,000	Awarded \$1.4M
2021 (Application August 13, 2020)				
Downtown Shenandoah, Inc.*	Shenandoah, PA	\$8,000,000	\$3,000,000	Awarded \$1.5M RACP

*NEPA is serving as the applicant.

NORTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA NONPROFIT & COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE CENTER

NCAC Membership: NCAC currently has over 100 active members. Membership renewal notices are being sent prior to the end of the month, and most all members that receive renewal notices do continue their membership.

NCAC has provided technical support and grant writing assistance to the Scranton Cultural Center, West Scranton Wrestling Alumni Association (WSWAA), and the NEPA Youth Arts Coalition. In total NCAC leveraged \$300,000 for the WSWAA project in West Scranton.

NCAC is now providing custom subject area searches (beginning at \$250) to interested nonprofit organizations in the area. These in-depth searches provide local, state, and federal funding opportunities on the specific topic.

Monroe County Community Foundation: The Community Foundation public launch date will be held in October 2023.

TOBYHANNA DEFENSE TECHNOLOGY PARTNERSHIP / TOBYHANNA ARMY DEPOT

NEPA manages the Tobyhanna Defense Technology Partnership (TDTP), which was organized in 1992 to provide regional community support for the preservation and protection of Tobyhanna Army Depot from the base closure process known as Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC). NEPA received several grants

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from the Pennsylvania Military Community Enhancement Commission to support the Depot. The funding will be used for various initiatives including legislative outreach, economic impact studies, fundraising, etc.

The NEPA Alliance annually prepares an Economic Impact Analysis of the Depot. The most recent update determined the impact of the Depot is an estimated \$2.4 billion in economic activity, an estimated 6,820 jobs, which can be either full-time or part-time, and an estimated \$596.9 million in labor income within an eleven (11) county region in Northeast Pennsylvania.

RESEARCH & INFORMATION CENTER

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy: The NEPA Alliance’s Research & Information Center composed and continues to update the “2019 – 2024 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Five-Year Plan for Northeastern Pennsylvania.”

Economic Impact Modeling Services: NEPA provided several economic impact modeling reports summarized in the table below. Note: In the Studies Column, O is for Operations, C is for Construction and V is for Visitation.

Impact Studies						
#	Client	Project Title	Purpose	CO	Month - Year	Studies
1	Geisinger Health System	School of Nursing	Expansion	RE	July 2023	O/C/V
2	SEDCO	Highridge Business Park	Expansion	SC	Sep. 2023	O/C/V
3	PA DCED OIBD	Regional Export Network (REN)	Annual Performance Report	PA	Aug. 2023	O

Social Media

July 1, 2023 – August 31, 2023

facebook

**1,439K
Followers**

**6,788K
Reach/Views**

Instagram

**1,562
Followers**

**797
Reach/Views**

LinkedIn

**1,799
Followers**

**7,309K
Impressions/
Views**

twitter

**1,850
Followers**

**2.7K
Impressions/
Views**

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TRANSPORTATION PLANNING SERVICES DIVISION

Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Development

- The [NEPA MPO 2023 Transportation Improvement Program](#) was submitted to the federal agencies for approval which was received from USDOT by letter dated 9/29/2022. The 2023 TIP went into effect on October 1, 2022.
- The NEPA 2023 TIP totals \$677.5 million and includes:
 - ❖ 96 Bridge and Highway projects, totaling \$250.7 million.
 - ❖ 22 Transit projects, totaling \$11.3 million.
 - ❖ 11 Interstate projects, totaling \$415.5 million.
- The development of the 2025-2028 Transportation Improvement Program is underway. Staff participated in the Financial Guidance Work Group and General and Procedural Work Group which help guide the Commonwealth's MPOs and RPOs with development of their respective TIPs. Final guidance documents from both work groups were recently issued. The timeline for developing the guidance documents has been accelerated to provide more time to the PennDOT districts and Planning Partners to develop the draft TIP. Meetings with the PennDOT Districts to begin discussing carryover projects and new potential projects will be held with NEPA staff and the county planners in October for District 5 and early November for District 4.

2024-2025 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Development Process

- PennDOT and FHWA have announced that all MPOs and RPOs will be required to develop a one-year 2024-2025 UPWP to incorporate program activities and goals cited in the current Transportation Reauthorization Bill – Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA). This will be an opportunity to break the UPWP development task off the same two-year TIP update schedule and thereafter will be back on a two-year UPWP cycle.
- A kickoff meeting with the UPWP Steering Committee was held on August 15th. The meeting included a presentation and a review of the current UPWP activities. A draft UPWP will be provided to the Technical Committee later this month. Following review by the Technical Committee, it will be provided to FHWA for a 30-day review. The Technical Committee is expected to endorse the UPWP in December and the Policy Board is expected to approve it in early January. The NEPA Board of Directors will then take action by resolution to authorize NEPA to engage contractually with PennDOT.

Congressionally Directed Community Project Funding

- This spring, NEPA staff worked with the Congressional offices and PennDOT to identify appropriate Congressionally-directed transportation projects for possible inclusion in the Fiscal Year 2024 Appropriations bills. Congressman Cartwright, Senator Casey and Congresswoman Wild submitted the following requests to the House and Senate Appropriations Committee for consideration. Funding of these projects is not guaranteed and will need to be included in the final version of the Appropriations bills which are expected to pass by the end of the calendar year.
 - SR 6 over Delaware River Matamoras Bridge, Pike County- \$5 million (Rep. Cartwright) and \$2 million (Sen. Casey)
 - Hamilton West (SR 209) Resurfacing, Monroe County- \$5 million (Rep. Cartwright)
 - 903 over Mud Run Bridge, Carbon County- \$3.2 million (Rep. Wild)

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Long Range Transportation Plan Update

- The NEPA MPO kicked off the update of the Long Range Transportation Plan last April. Due to our Air Quality Conformity status, our LRTP is required to be updated every four years. The LRTP development will be guided by our consultant, Michael Baker International. A background profile of the region has been developed. A series of over 20 stakeholder interviews were conducted with county planners, PennDOT, transit providers, airports and freight operators and our federal partners. Public outreach sessions in each county were held in August and September. A meeting of the LRTP Steering Committee will be held on September 19th.
- A draft plan is expected in November and will be followed by a 30-day public comment period. Adoption of the LRTP is on track for early January.

Eastern PA Regional Freight Study

- The development of a regional freight study has been identified as a task in the current UPWP. Given the regional nature of freight movements, particularly due to the warehousing and distribution growth in the NEPA MPO and the greater region, staff has been in discussions with neighboring Planning Partners about developing a collaborative regional freight plan.
- Five MPOs have agreed to conduct a joint freight plan as the Eastern Pennsylvania Freight Alliance – NEPA MPO, Lehigh Valley MPO, Lackawanna-Luzerne MPO, Reading MPO and Lebanon MPO. The group developed a framework, submitted an application to Central Office for supplemental planning funds for the initiative and was awarded \$280,000 in supplemental planning funds to be leveraged by a \$70,000 match provided by the participating MPOs.
- WSP USA, Inc. was selected as the consultant for the plan. WSP has gathered GIS data on freight conditions including existing freight generators and planned warehousing developments and developed a profile of the freight operations in the 10-county region. A survey of freight issues available to stakeholders and the general public is currently open. [Click here](#) to complete the survey.
- Two stakeholder roundtable sessions are scheduled for September 26th in East Stroudsburg and Pottsville. These sessions will be attended by county planning staff, PennDOT, economic development agencies and freight generators. Completion of the plan is expected later this year.

Transportation Funding Opportunities

- PennDOT's Transportation Alternatives Set Aside (TASA) Program is now open. TASA provides funding for projects that enhance pedestrian and bicycle facilities, improve access to public transportation, create safe routes to schools, preserve historic transportation structures, provide environmental mitigation, create trails that serve a transportation purpose, and promote safety and mobility. The maximum award is \$1.5 million.
- During the past months, NEPA staff has been discussing the feasibility of using the TASA application process for soliciting eligible Carbon Reduction Program (CRP) and Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) eligible projects within the NEPA MPO. Since many similarly eligible project types can be funded within these programs, efficiencies would be gained to solicit projects within our MPO and then vet them through the PennDOT project proposal and review process platform for possible funding under the most appropriate program. The NEPA MPO receives annual formula funding under the CRP and CMAQ programs and are allocated on the

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TIP. Applications for TASA projects located within the NEPA MPO would compete for statewide TASA funds. The CRP and CMAQ project application framework would follow the statewide TASA project submission, review and timeline process. CMAQ eligible projects would be restricted to Carbon County.

- A pre-application for the above program funds was due by July 17th. Four applications were submitted in the NEPA MPO region. Following submission of the pre-application, project sponsors met with local PennDOT district staff and MPO staff to discuss their project. The final project applications were due September 15th.

Intercity Passenger Rail Service

- The Pennsylvania Northeast Regional Railroad Authority (PNRRA) in cooperation with PennDOT has prepared a funding proposal to the Federal Railroad Authority (FRA) for an extension of passenger Inter-City rail service from Scranton to New York City within the Northeast Corridor. A joint application by PennDOT, New Jersey Transit and PNRRA was submitted in March. Amtrak is expected to announce the first next-step project selections through this program in September. NEPA staff will continue to monitor and provide support for the reestablishment of this important mode of transportation in the region.

Highway Performance Monitoring System (HPMS)

- NEPA is responsible for the collection of data for the Highway Performance Monitoring System (HPMS). The HPMS is a national level highway information system that includes data on the extent, condition, performance, use and operating characteristics of the nation's highways. MPOs are required to update and confirm data included in the HPMS on an annual basis. The collection involves fieldwork at over 90 locations within the NEPA MPO region roadway network identified by PennDOT Central Office.
- PennDOT is transitioning to an electronic HPMS collection platform this year. Staff attended an HPMS Mobile App training on May 24th. Staff attended full HPMS training on July 25 and 26 in Clearfield. Staff are now collecting data at various locations assigned by PennDOT. The completed HPMS dataset is due to Central Office in December.

Geographic Information Systems (GIS)

- GIS staff is continuing to complete mapping activities for the transportation program. Staff recently developed a map of the bridge and highway projects on the 2023 TIP- <https://arcg.is/4WHz50>
- Staff has created a HUB site for the transportation program and the 2023 TIP and Environmental Justice- <https://nepa-gis-nepa-alliance.hub.arcgis.com/pages/transportation>
<https://nepa-gis-nepa-alliance.hub.arcgis.com/pages/tip-ej>
- Staff developed a NEPA Membership Hub with statistics about NEPA Members and the benefits of membership. <https://arcg.is/1vHW5z>

Regional Meetings

Staff attended the following regional meetings and conferences-

- Schuylkill Chamber Infrastructure Committee Meeting- July 13

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- Schuylkill Chamber Luncheon with PennDOT Secretary Carroll- August 29
 - Pike County Road Task Force Meetings- June 15, July 20, August 17
 - Lackawanna-Luzerne MPO Meeting- July 12
 - PennDOT Planning Partners Calls- July 19
 - Regional Operations Plan: PennDOT District 5-0 July 25
 - Regional Operations Plan: PennDOT District 4-0 July 27
 - Pike County Road Safety Audits – August 22
 - I-80 Bridge over the Lehigh River Project Update – August 28

Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP)

- NEPA has partnered with PennDOT to deliver the LTAP training series in the Lackawanna-Luzerne Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) region, the NEPA MPO region and Wayne County. Twelve classes were held in fiscal year 2022-2023, with 196 attendees. <https://www.nepa-alliance.org/additional-plans-and-programs/>. Scheduling for Fall 2023 is underway. LTAP will also continue to offer courses in an online format.

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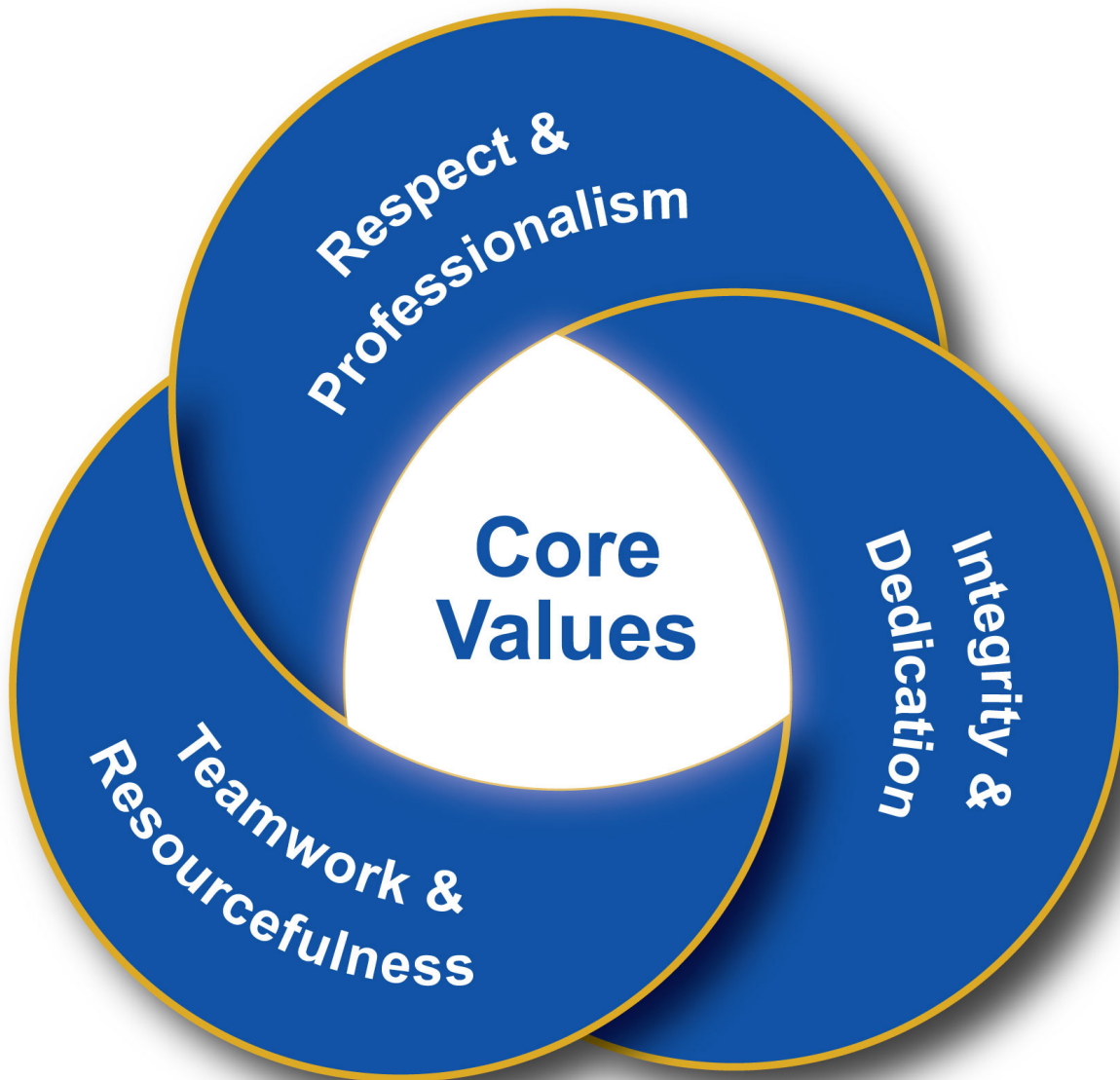
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NEPA's Mission

The Northeastern Pennsylvania Alliance (NEPA) is a regional, multi-county, community and economic development agency providing leadership, planning, and services to businesses, communities, entrepreneurs and institutions lacking adequate access to capital and financial resources that enhance and revitalize distressed communities within the region.



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