CapCOG Board of Delegates

Monday, May 17, 2021 - 7:00 PM

M I N U T E S

**DELEGATES IN ATTENDANCE:**

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| East Pennsboro Township, Terry  Watts  Hampden Township, Al Bienstock  Harrisburg City, Hillary Greene  Lemoyne Borough, Sue Yenchko  Lower Allen Township, Rick Schin  Lower Paxton Township, Norm  Zoumas, Robin Lindsey | Middle Paxton Township, Jim Fisher  Monaghan Township, Vicki Aycock  Monroe Township, Carl Kuhl  New Cumberland Borough, Rob Kline  Royalton Borough, Terry Watts  South Hanover Township, Stephen Cordaro | South Middleton Township, Cory  Adams  Swatara Township, Tom Connolly  Upper Allen Township, Ken Martin  Wormleysburg Borough, Sue Stuart |

**MUNICIPALITIES NOT IN ATTENDANCE:**

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| Annville Township  Camp Hill Borough  Carlisle Borough  Carroll Township  Conewago Township  Dauphin Borough  Derry Township  Dillsburg Borough  East Hanover Township | Fairview Township  Goldsboro Borough Highspire Borough, Mark Stonbraker  Hummelstown Borough  Londonderry Township  Lower Swatara Township  Marysville Borough  Mechanicsburg Borough  Middletown Borough | North Middleton Township  Paxtang Borough Penbrook Borough  Shiremanstown Borough  Silver Spring Township  Steelton Borough  Susquehanna Township  West Hanover Township |

**NON-VOTING IN ATTENDANCE:**

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| John Mizerak, Dawood Engineering | CapCOG STAFF  Gary Myers, Executive Director  Rhonda Campbell, Administrative Assistant |

Meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Cory Adams, President.

Adams asked for a moment of silence to honor Mark Ryder, CapCOG Vice President, who passed away recently.

Adams led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roundtable introductions were made.

**Presenter**

John Mizerak, Dawood Engineering

* Mizerak previously worked at Upper Allen Township in Community Development.
* Now works with municipalities through Dawood Engineering.
* Spent time working with Borough of New Cumberland as well, and also DCED working on the Land Use program.
* Mizerak has lot of experience working with municipalities and disasters.
* Previously disasters had been physical. You could see and tell where the disaster was. We've had "high water in our buildings" for the last year.
* Now the water is starting to recede and we now need to discuss the impacts and evaluate them.
* We are starting to see help wanted ads, going out of business signs, shortfalls in revenues may impact municipalities. School districts and counties are also seeing this due to the impact on the economy.
* Lost nearly 3.3 B of the world's workforce -out of work. Nationally as of December $3.2T in the US GDP. Destroyed 13 months of job growth.
* Job losses impact our municipalities because residents are out of work and unable to spend.
* Rural and suburban areas saw migration of people going to rural areas for eco-tourism and people from cities looking to move out of populated areas.
* Dramatic drop in restaurants. Thirty PA restaurant chains declared bankruptcy this year.
* Entire retail market is changing; more online ordering, buying groceries, clothing, etc. online.
* Some sizeable, taxable businesses in retail are likely going to go fully direct sales in the next few years. That will impact municipalities with vacant buildings; blight.
* Residential market - lots of houses for sale. People from cities are moving to Central PA to get out. Residential market is exploding. National builders from everywhere are in Central PA right now trying to buy up every available tract of land along every major highway exit in PA. $190,000 - $250,000 houses and could attract a lot of people to the area. Projections are for this to continue for the next two years.
* May be seeing smaller warehouses coming in - areas closer to denser populations to allow for UPS and FedEx trucks to come in for deliveries (not 18 wheelers).
* Local governments have the ability to manage and control land use in your communities.
* You can continue the way you are operating now; maybe stop what is happening and try to prevent some of the growth; or chart a course to embrace what is happening and how to grow.
* 2020 Census coming out soon, so a whole new set of demographics will be available.
* Planning code is your tool; don't have to go through two- year plan; don't really have time to do that. Need to make strategic plans now for how to move forward.
* Look at quantitative data - look at numbers then talk to key people in community. How many vacancies in community, how many businesses shut down, what positive things have occurred that you can capitalize on? Look at different market data to see what is thriving; what is lacking and you could use more of? Do you have too much of one industry? Too much office space? Urge you to spend time talking to key stakeholders in community: school districts, business owners, residents, property owners, county, etc.
* Spend time developing tangible, strategic items to move forward. Is there a property that needs redeveloped? Something need spruced up? Is there an area that will need sewer and water infrastructure improvements?
* A lot of money is coming out ($1.9T from American Rescue Act of 2021) to municipalities to help offset economic impacts from Covid; broad band, sewer and water projects. What are your plans for the money? The money has to be used by 12/31/24. That may sound like a long time, but large projects (broadband, water lines, sewer, etc) require time to execute.
* Something will come out from Federal Government for infrastructure bill 1.5 and 2.5T dollars (hard infrastructure) probably in the fall. Transportation funding will be coming out - enormous push for electronic vehicles and charging stations.
* Opportunities for bridges, roads, corridors, bridges, etc.
* As money is spent, goods will be used/purchased, jobs will be created.

Q & A

* Sue Stuart - Any thoughts on density issues? It is a constant battle to keep it at a manageable level. Mizerak - I've been hearing some numbers coming down are smaller family units. It's important to have a diverse set of housing types; the more density the more houses the developers sell. Sometimes smaller properties are better because they are more affordable. Home ownership is one key element in communities to minimize blight, crime rates, etc. due to creating a sense of ownership and buy in.
* Vicki Aycock - Commercial office space - I've heard from several friends who work for large companies that there is no plan to bring employees back. Employees working from home is working for the employees and economic benefit to the companies in cost savings in overhead. Mizerak - I saw an article last week talking about when the big companies come back the smaller ones or ones who support them will start to come back as well. Trickle down effect. I believe there will be a hybrid; millennial are looking for flexibility. Some businesses will be able to function well with 90% of workforce home; others will not. Key is to talk with businesses in your community to see what their thoughts are. This also impacts supporting businesses (restaurants, dry cleaners, gas stations, etc.)
* Ken Martin - Vacant and blighted properties; how do you repurpose or reuse these properties? Mizerak - Talk to property owners if you can to see what opportunities may be there to redevelop properties. May require some changes to rules, regulations to support repurposing. Mary Kuna -Cumberland County Housing is looking for ways to work with local communities. George Conner in Dauphin County. Both can help with blighted areas through HUD money. Sue Stuart shared that when you get HUD money thru CBDG you can't do anything with the property for 5 years; can only flatten it.
* Hillary Greene - Harrisburg has a lot of smaller retail space; any indication of what smaller companies may go into those spaces? Mizerak - retail market is really uncertain. Boutique retail may see some opportunities, places where you can't get the same things you can get elsewhere. Some retail places you have to schedule an appointment to get help (e.g., Best Buy). Big retail could take a significant hit. This area is growing so fast so we may not be hit as hard here.

**Consent Agenda**

The April 2021 Minutes and Treasurer's Report were reviewed. Motion by Rick Schin; seconded Jim Fisher. Unanimously approved.

**Executive Director’s Report – Gary Myer**

* No word on SAFER grant. Hope to hear something next month or two.
* July 21is our Auction - all forms went out May 5 to all Public Works professionals in our database and to Managers. It will be held in South Middleton Township at Leaman Park.
* A few months ago we had POLCO here doing a presentation to the Board. Any interest in the community surveying? Campbell will reach out to Managers once again.
* Attended 911 Enhanced Advisory Board meeting in April. Now appointed to the Board.
* Working with two municipalities with replacement of managers; reviewing resumes, and helping with interviews. If that is something that comes up for you, I'm happy to help.
* Due to untimely death of Mark Ryder - we have a vacancy on the Executive Committee so we will need to fill that VP position. Mark was active in his community, borough council, fire department, schools. He had a heart for service and he will be greatly missed.
* Next month's speaker is Congressman Perry.

**County and Planning Commission Reports**

**Cumberland County** - Report was emailed to all Cumberland County Members.

**Dauphin County** - Doug Brown submitted a report via email. It was available at the meeting and is provided below.

* CHIRP Program (COVID Hospitality Industry Recovery Program):
  + - Awarded $3.15 million to 129 businesses.
    - CREDC is currently processing agreements and awards.

* SBA Restaurant Revitalization Fund Program
* Hosted a webinar with SBA and food/beverage businesses.
* LHACC is offering an additional Spanish-language webinar.
* Program currently open through SBA (not a Dauphin County program) online portal. [www.sba.gov](http://www.sba.gov/)
* Offers grants up to $5 million per location. Minimum award is $1,000.

* Continuing to Administer Emergency Rental Assistance Program - $18 million.

* Currently Processing American Rescue Plan county allocation and drawing up plan to spend funds.
* Direct municipality allocation expected to go through state.
* Treasury guidance looks to be more restrictive than CARES at this point.

* Dauphin County Gaming Grant currently open. Applications due in beginning of September.
* Planning to Launch 3 new infrastructure programs: small bridge program, transportation infrastructure safety improvement program, expansion of general infrastructure program.
* More information to come in the summer.

**York County** - No Report.

**PACOG** - Gary Myers

* Myers added to the 911 Advisory Board.

**UCC** – Terry Watts

* Heard a case last month; sprinkler for a building going from two apartments to three and couldn't meet water supply. Put in an additional holding tank and then agreed to a service contract to inspect annually.
* Myers shared what a great job the UCC Board does and how professional and knowledgeable they are.

**Public Safety Committee** - No Report

**Good of the Order**

* Nothing

**Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at Ken Martin @ 7:45 PM. Al Bienstock, seconded. Adjourned.