



Franklin Regional Council of Governments

Finance Committee — *MINUTES*

Date /Time:	Thursday, May 20, 2020 / 5:30 p.m.
Location:	Open meeting accessed remotely on Zoom, by video or telephone or both.
Zoom Link:	https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89556063462?pwd=MmtRMEdhU1hpcWd0bTU2ejl0Zy9pdz09
Facilitators:	John O'Rourke, Vice Chair

ATTENDEES Finance Committee:

- **John O'Rourke**, Conway
- **Jay DiPucchio**, Regionally-Elected
- **Michele Giarusso**, Leyden
- **Kevin Fox**, Colrain
- **Ellen McKay**, Shutesbury

ATTENDEES Executive Committee:

- **Bill Perlman**, Regionally-Elected

STAFF:

- **Linda Dunlavy**, Executive Director
- **Rebekah Boyd**, Admin Services
- **Claire McGinnis**, Finance Director
- **Phoebe Walker**, Dir Community Services

1. Review and adopt 1/9/20 and 4/9/20 Meeting Minutes

Vice Chair John O'Rourke opened the Finance Committee meeting at 5:31 p.m. **Ellen moved to adopt 1.9.20 and 4.9.20 meeting minutes. Jay seconded the motion, which passed with all in favor.**

2. Discussion of collective purchase of PPE

Linda reported that FRCOG received state guidance for reopening, but learned that the state will not provide Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) purchasing assistance to municipalities, except to provide a pre-approved vendor list. FRCOG has been talking to the Franklin County Chamber of Commerce, the Communities Involved in Sustaining Agriculture (CISA), and the Franklin County Community Development Corporation (FCCDC), and the four agencies would like to work together to do a collective purchase to help Franklin County towns, businesses, and organizations attain PPE.

All are well suited for such a project: FRCOG has expertise in collective procurement and the agency's Health and Medical Coordinating Coalition (HMCC) has been distributing equipment to healthcare providers for three years. The FC Chamber of Commerce, (CISA), and the (FCCDC), all know how to reach area businesses.

FRCOG has no firm plan yet, but is considering a collective purchase of a 30-day supply of PPE for Essential or Phase 1-prioritized businesses, based on the governor's requirements for the opening, that identify sector of the economy, number of employees, and more. Announcement of Phase 2 reopening would trigger a second procurement, and so on. Staff of the FRCOG and other agencies feel the urgency of making the initial purchase quickly, to meet the region's need to open safely.

Linda explained that the idea is to make an initial up-front purchase to sell to businesses. All businesses, towns, and organizations will then need to reimburse FRCOG, as outlined in an agreement made beforehand and vetted by attorney Donna McNichol. All businesses and organizations will need to understand that FRCOG can't guarantee success in finding needed PPE -- though staff will do their best -- and that FRCOG can't be held liable for the failure or success of the products.

Kevin asked how FRCOG would price the sale. Staff will have to figure outreach, distribution, ordering, apportioning, payment, and pick-up. If grants covers staff time, we will be fronting just the cost of PPE. If staff time isn't grant-funded, the administrative budget might be able to cover the cost, or FRCOG could collect an upcharge from businesses to do so. The governor's guidance and the recent PPE survey will help staff estimate the amount of PPE needed.

We know that this initiative provides good service for the region, is helping the economy recover, and is good PR for the FRCOG, said Linda. Although fronting the money would be a financial risk to the FRCOG, she acknowledged, we made it very clear that this is not a freebie. She asked the finance committee to consider the idea, and if in agreement that it is a vital project, to recommend to the Council that they approve the measure and use reserve to front the initial purchase.

Michelle asked if anyone had reached out to the businesses to ask if they were struggling to get PPE, and if FRCOG has had this kind of relationship with businesses before. Linda reported that a survey was sent to all Chamber members. Of the 100 respondents, 96 asked for assistance, saying either that they can't find PPE or that they hoped for discounted prices. FRCOG has worked indirectly with businesses on the economic development plans and the complete streets grant, but never this closely, she said. Our charge is to serve municipalities.

Jay said it's an important project, and a way FRCOG can be uniquely useful to towns. He wondered if feedback after the first round could help staff to decide if it's reasonable to ask for an up-charge for staffing the project. He noted his comfort proceeding with the initiative, as did Kevin. John O'Rourke asked if the Chamber will help with time or cost. Linda answered that beyond outreach, the Chamber's role was not clear yet, however CISA will help, and the FCCDC can help with storage and distribution.

Jay made a motion to propose to the full Council use of reserve of up to \$100,000 for a collective purchase of personal protective equipment for the county. Kevin Fox seconded the motion, which passed with all in favor.

3. Business not reasonably anticipated 48 hours in advance

Linda told the committee that MJ Adams, planner from Greenfield, will join the FRCOG Council meeting to announce Greenfield's effort to obtain and distribute CDBG grant funding.

Michelle made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Ellen. The meeting adjourned at 5:53 PM

DOCUMENTS DISTRIBUTED:

- Agenda
- Minutes of the 1.9.20 meeting and the 4.9.20 meetings

Minutes taken by Rebekah Boyd