Chairman’s Message

As we conclude 2017 and begin 2018 the RIC staff has been hard at work over these past few months. I would like to take this opportunity to share some important accomplishments and events with you.

I would like to begin by mentioning the community development accomplishments and events. In my home town of Belle, the wastewater plant is now under construction, as well as the Pack Fork Waterline Extension in Clay County. In addition, RIC has begun handling the financial administration of the Upper Kanawha Valley Economic Development Corporation (UKVEDC) in Montgomery. RIC will also be starting a new regionwide GIS cluster mapping project funded by a POWER grant from the Appalachian Regional Commission that will include every industrial site in the region and will be used to help attract new businesses to the area.

In transportation, I would like to mention that RIC has entered into a contract with HDR to do a twelve-month update of the Kanawha-Putnam Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. I would also like to note that the General Obligation Bond passed the state referendum in October, which will likely lead to an influx of transportation projects within the state.

I hope to see you at the Annual Meeting on March 8, 2018 and I look forward to the year to come, as we work together to promote local communities, regional solutions and statewide impacts.

Glen “Buck” Chestnut
RIC Chairman
Update of Construction Projects in 2017
Administered by the Regional Council

The Regional Council has been busy administering construction projects this year. Hopefully, next year will be as productive.

The Nitro Regional Wastewater Utility Treatment Plant upgrade and line replacement was completed in the fall of 2017. Reserve funding will allow additional upgrades.

The Boone County PSD Morrisvale/Cameo Waterline project was bid and awarded this summer. Approximately 25% of construction is now completed.

The Clay County PSD Pack Fork and Independence Road Waterline extension was bid in June and awarded in September. Construction began on October 2, 2017. This project is at approximately 10% construction with a June 2018 completion date.

The Town of Belle awarded their new Sewer Treatment Facility in the summer and have just begun construction. Lead time is needed to provide the manufacturing of the prefabricated plant before assembly.

The Clay Roane PSD Camp Creek Water Tank replacement and booster upgrade has been completed and is awaiting approval for its use of contingency funds to make minor improvements to its system. This project was completed entirely in 2017.
Transportation Staff Updating Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan

The RIC transportation planning staff, in conjunction with the planning professionals of HDR, Inc., are currently updating the Kanawha-Putnam Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. The plan will be the first update to the plan developed in 2008 and will focus on identifying potential locations within the two-county planning area for bicycle and pedestrian improvements. Community outreach and public engagement will be widespread throughout the entire planning process to ensure a well-balanced plan. Community groups, city and county officials and bicycle advocate groups are all included as anticipated participants for the plan.

Once the study team concludes their analysis of regional data and public input, a list of potential improvement projects will be developed. The recommendations will be prioritized using methodology specific to bicycle and pedestrian considerations. The kick-off period for the plan update will commence January 2018. The plan will continue to develop throughout the new year, with an anticipated completion date near Winter 2019.

Welcome New Board Member

Heather Raines, Citizen Representative
BridgeValley Community & Technical College

New RIC Officers for 2017-2018

Anne Cavalier - Second Vice-Chairman
Mayor Bill Cunningham - Third Vice-Chairman
Median Household Income in the United States

Note: A state abbreviation surrounded by the “O” symbol denotes the value for the state is not statistically different from the U.S. median.

Source: 2016 American Community Survey, 2016 Puerto Rico Community Survey
www.census.gov/acs
Roads to Prosperity

West Virginia voters were asked to approve the sale of $1.6 billion in general obligation bonds in a special election held on October 7, 2017. The bonds are part of Governor Jim Justice’s Roads to Prosperity plan. The Governor’s infrastructure plan utilizes General Obligation Bonds, Grant Anticipation Revenue Vehicle bonds and increased taxes to fund roadway projects throughout the state. Lawmakers raised the wholesale gas tax by three and a half cents a gallon, increased the vehicle sales tax from 5 percent to 6 percent and hiked the motor vehicle registration fee from $30 to $50.

Voter turnout on the bond issue was extremely low, only 10% of West Virginia registered voters cast a ballot compared to 58% of voters from the most recent presidential election. According to the West Virginia Secretary of State, there were 122,419 votes on the amendment with 89,186 for and 33,233 against.

County-by-county unofficial results in our region are as follows:

**Boone County**
For the amendment: 996 (71%)
Against the amendment: 407 (29%)

**Clay County**
For the amendment: 347 (62%)
Against the amendment: 210 (38%)

**Kanawha County**
For the amendment: 12,523 (80%)
Against the amendment: 3,052 (20%)

**Putnam County**
For the amendment: 3823 (82%)
Against the amendment: 858 (18%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Millions ($)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boone</td>
<td>$ 10.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clay</td>
<td>$ 6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kanawha</td>
<td>$ 282.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Putnam</td>
<td>$ 181.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Broadband Plans Moving Forward for Clay County as Part of the CCR Group

The CCR Broadband Development Committee plans to distribute pamphlets to the schools in Calhoun, Clay and Roane counties to gauge the attitudes and needs of the citizens and whether there is broadband, internet, or no service to their homes and businesses. This brochure will be distributed in January, requesting the recipient take a speed-test, contact a 24-hour telephone response, or write a letter explaining the need for broadband service. The Committee is trying to capture the locations of all responses and map them for future use. This information will be useful when applying for funding to show the need for the service. The Committee plans to meet on at least a monthly basis and will rotate sites between counties. The next meeting will be held the middle of January in Calhoun County. If you are interested in the committee’s successes, please visit them at www.bb4wv.org or on Facebook at https://www.facebook.com/bb4wv.

Meet the Regional Intergovernmental Council Staff

Kara Greathouse has been with the Regional Intergovernmental Council for 10 years, she began working at the Council in July of 2007. Kara attended Ripley High School and graduated from West Virginia University in 2007 with a degree in Environmental and Natural Resource Economics. She lives in Ripley with her husband Scott and their three children Keller, Victor and Scarlett. When Kara is not at work she can be found running around with her family, leading a troop of Girl Scouts or burying her nose in any nearby book. Kara states that what she likes most about working at RIC is that she really enjoys helping people solve problems in their communities.
TechConnectWV Receives its Newest US EDA POWER Grant

The West Virginia Coalition for Technology-Based Economic Development, Inc, (TechConnectWV), is a non-profit coalition committed to the advancement of the innovation economy in West Virginia, focused on four technology sectors: advanced energy, chemicals and advanced materials, biosciences, and biometrics. With broad representation from private industry, the public sector, and higher education, TechConnectWV seeks to diversify the state’s economy, promote economic prosperity and create high-paying jobs.

TechConnectWV has developed two previous assistance programs, StartUpWV and ScaleUPWV, which have been very successful in developing products and processes for entrepreneurs and small companies by the use of regional partners and mentors.

TechConnectWV has been awarded a third U.S. Economic Development Administration grant through the POWER Initiative to continue this growth in West Virginia. This new program called NextUpWV will begin in February 2018.

2018 RIC Meetings

March 8, 2018
June 14, 2018
September 13, 2018
December 13, 2018
Upcoming Annual Meeting
March 8, 2018

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Chairman: Glen “Buck” Chestnut
Executive Director: Colt Sandoro

Newsletter prepared by Joanna Keller

The preparation of this newsletter is financially aided by grants from the Economic Development Administration, the U. S. Department of Transportation and the Appalachian Regional Commission.

Local Communities / Regional Solutions / State-wide Impacts