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**To:** TJPD Commissioners  
**From:** Stephen Williams, Executive Director  
**Date:** September 23, 2009  
**Re:** Status Report on ARRA Energy Initiatives

**Purpose:** To brief the Commission on the status of regional initiatives related to energy which are proposed to be funded through competitive grants from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA).

**Background:** At previous meetings the Commission directed staff to work with member governments to develop regional proposals for funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (stimulus package). Local governments in Virginia not receiving direct allocations of funds will be eligible to compete for \$9.2 million in energy efficiency funding. At the end of July staff was informed that the Virginia Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy (DMME) had announced that it would administer the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) through an agreement with the 21 Planning District Commissions. In August, the DMME and the planning district commissions reached agreement on a scope of work and Memorandum of Understanding for PDC activities in the administrative role. Throughout the development of the scope and MOU staff from TJPDC and other PDCs had consistently requested that the PDCs be eligible applicants for the funds. Staff at DMME stated several times in the course of the process that they were open to PDCs submitting regional applications, but needed to get approval from the U.S. Department of Energy (USDOE).

**Issues:** On September 9, a meeting was held with representatives of the eligible member governments (Fluvanna, Greene, Louisa and Nelson Counties) to inform them about the application process for EECBG funds and to discuss potential applications. At the meeting, TJPDC staff described the application process and eligible project categories. During the discussion, the representatives of each of the counties stated that they intended to submit applications for a local project. TJPDC staff raised the possibility of a regional application for EECBG funding. The representatives of the member governments stated that they saw no problem with TJPDC preparing and submitting a separate, regional application for a project that would benefit all four counties equally. Further, they suggested that given the limited time period that would be available to prepare and submit applications (likely one month), that they believed it would be difficult to obtain approval from all four county boards of supervisors to support a regional

application. They suggested that TJPDC work with the HOME Consortium to develop an application for funds to benefit low income households. Based on that suggestion, TJPDC raised the issue with members of the HOME Consortium at the Housing Directors meeting on September 15. At that meeting, Howard Evergreen, Fluvanna/Louisa Housing Foundation, and George Krieger, Nelson County Community Development Foundation, agreed to assist TJPDC staff in developing the proposed program (a first follow-up meeting with them was held three days later).

On September 21, staff attended a meeting at which the PDC role in the EECBG program was discussed. At that time, TJPDC once again raised the issue of PDC participation in EECBG applications. Contrary to previous responses, staff was told that PDCs would not be eligible to submit or participate in EECBG applications. When asked why the position on this issue had changed, staff was informed that DMME believed that PDC participation in an application would be a conflict. Further clarification later indicated that this was the result of a decision by the USDOE.

As a result of this decision, TJPDC will play two roles in the EECBG process. Prior to application submittal, TJPDC will assist member governments in the development of applications. If member governments are successful in securing EECBG funding, TJPDC then will be responsible for collecting required information from grant recipients and preparing reports and public information that is required under ARRA.

At this time, it is not known when the EECBG applications will be released. The current delay is a result of USDOE review of the DMME program application for the EECBG funds. Once the USDOE has approved the state's program application, DMME expects to release the application to the PDCs for distribution to local governments. It is expected that there will be a one month time period for submittal of applications.