



Executive Committee Meeting

Wednesday, April 8, 2020

8:30 a.m.

Via Zoom

Present: J. Fairfield, N. Klein, J. Martin, R. Paradkar, D. Pickford, K. Thompson

Staff: E. Darak, K. Nativi, K. Woodward

J. Fairfield called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. and requested review of the minutes from the previous meeting. J. Fairfield moved to accept the minutes as written; K. Thompson seconded the motion. Approval was unanimous.

President's Report: D. Pickford commented the region has changed the way it works because of the pandemic and the statewide shutdown. All except essential workers are teleworking, demonstrating telework's usefulness as a business continuity strategy. DATA has been cooperating closely with Fairfax Economic Development Authority to promote telework and recently conducted a successful webinar with FCEDA, the Dulles Regional Chamber of Commerce and Telework!VA. Other chambers in the County – notably the Mount Vernon-Lee Chamber - have requested DATA's assistance in setting up telework presentations.

The second webinar in DATA's teleworking series will feature three organizations that have implemented successful telework programs and focus on how they overcame challenges.

DATA is also wrapping up some grants that were not renewed like SchoolPool (DATA subsequently requested and was granted an extension until December 31, 2020). DATA only received the Employer Outreach grant for FY21; funds in the Operating Grant to cover the cost of producing @livemore were not awarded and so publication has ceased. D. Pickford also noted the Fairfax County contract will probably not be renewed. He cautioned that in these uncertain times, DATA needs to be prepared to possibly cut back staff hours and/or furlough some employees. However, the Association has applied for the SBA Disaster Relief Loan – see below.

DATA received a letter from a lawyer threatening to sue for copyright infringement over a picture (of Reston Town Center) used in a 2018 edition of @livemore; the picture was incorrectly credited to the Visit Fairfax. N. Klein reviewed the letter and felt it read like a "shakedown." He will consult with a litigator and – with D. Pickford and J. Fairfield – draft a response within the timeline mentioned in the letter, stressing that DATA is a non-profit with no ownership equity. J. Fairfield commented he appreciated the pro bono efforts on behalf of DATA.

K. Thompson commented that the Covid-19 presented DATA with opportunities to promote telework and expressed concern about how the regional transportation system is going to respond. D. Pickford mentioned strategizing for post-pandemic Phase 2, including conversations with the Tysons Partnership; getting people back on transit is going to be difficult. He pointed out that 36% of essential employees rely on public transportation. DATA will be working with DRPT to reach out to hospitals and other organizations that employ essential workers, possibly utilizing grant money as incentives for ridesharing.

Financial: D. Pickford pointed out DATA continues to struggle financially from pay period to pay period. If DATA gets pushback from DRPT on hours it submits, again the Association might need to make tough decisions on staffing.

J. Fairfield suggested Fairfax County residents contact their supervisor's office to express support for DATA. K. Thompson questioned what DATA can do for Fairfax in "time of need" and perhaps receive modest funding as FY2021 budgets are being discussed.

D. Pickford pointed out the focus now is on business continuity and telework. He is involved in phone calls with a group organizing under the Washington Board of Trade to encourage transit use and help ensure workers do not all "flock back" to SOV (Single Occupant Vehicle) commuting and exacerbate regional congestion.

J. Fairfield commented there will be a future and DATA can and should plan now how to manage it.

Loan Application: D. Pickford reviewed DATA's opportunity to apply for a loan from the Ruth and Hal Launders Charitable Trust which would need to take place in April. J. Fairfield is the Executive Director of the Trust and brought DATA to the attention of the Launders Trust Board. The loan would be at a much lower interest rate than DATA's line of credit with Sandy Springs Bank and – if approved – could help with DATA's cash flow issues

This loan would be a program-related investment in a 501(c)(3) allowed under the federal tax code. If authorized unanimously, the Launders Trust would loan DATA \$100,000 for two years at 2.75% instead of Sandy Springs current rate of 6.75%, 4 points on prime. J. Fairfield assured the Launders Board that DATA has the ability to repay loan.

D. Pickford noted he needed authority from the Executive Committee to pursue application. K. Thompson pointed out the lower rate is good, but DATA still needs a strategy to "rebound" and raise the funds that are needed.

J. Martin moved DATA proceed with the application; K. Thompson seconded and the Executive Committee authorized D. Pickford to apply. J. Fairfield noted it was not uncommon for private foundations to convert a loan to an outright grant...no commitment but it is a possibility. The motion was approved 4-0, with J. Fairfield recusing himself from the vote. D. Pickford will proceed with application but also (J. Fairfield) draft plan on how the debt would be serviced over the next two years.

D. Pickford was also authorized to pursue the SBA Loan Application as well as the Payroll Protection Program (through Sandy Springs Bank) which would cover 4 pay periods and hopefully prevent the necessity to furlough staff. J. Fairfield moved to pursue both loan applications and D. Pickford seconded; approval was 4-0.

J. Fairfield pointed out DATA needs to schedule a virtual Board of Directors meeting. D. Pickford will reach out to Supervisor Walter Alcorn for a meeting in early May. J. Fairfield commented County will have adopted the budget by then.

D. Pickford also commented DATA has received confirmation from Victor Hoskins (President of FCEDA) to participate in a webinar on economic recovery.

Old Business: The Committee discussed the interim appointment of FCEDA's Jatinder Khosla to the Board of Directors. D. Pickford moved to approve the appointment and K. Thompson seconded. Approval was unanimous with J. Fairfield making note of J. Khosla's support of DATA.

D. Pickford commented on the newsfeed from McKinsey & Company he has been monitoring and wondered if anyone had any contact DATA might use to involve McKinsey in an upcoming webinar. R. Paradkar indicated he might be able to help.

D. Pickford moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:41 a.m. with J. Fairfield seconding.