

NEW RIVER VALLEY REGIONAL COMMISSION
Minutes of the Commission Meeting
held on
September 28th, 2017
6:00 p.m. – New River Valley Business Center, Fairlawn

I. CALL TO ORDER

PRESENT: Mr. J. Carpenter, Radford University, Chair; Mr. M. Harvey, Vice-Chair, Montgomery County; Mr. L. Law, Giles County, Treasurer; Mr. L. Clevinger, Town of Pulaski; Mr. H. Collins, Town of Christiansburg; Mr. G. East, Town of Pulaski; Mr. T. Garrett, Town of Narrows; Mr. F. Gerald, Floyd County; Dr. H. Harvey, City of Radford; Mr. H. Johnson, Town of Christiansburg; Mr. W. Kantsios, Town of Rich Creek; Mr. C. Kiwus, Virginia Tech; Mr. M. Maslaney, Floyd County; Ms. H. Lesko, Town of Blacksburg; Mr. R. McCoy, Giles County; Mr. K. Marshall, City of Radford; Ms. C. Newcomb, Town of Blacksburg; Mr. M. Patton, Town of Floyd; Ms. A. Perkins, Montgomery County; Mr. H. Showalter, Town of Christiansburg; Mr. K. Sullivan, Virginia Tech and Dr. D. Warren, Pulaski County.

ABSENT: Mr. C. Bopp, Pulaski County and Ms. S. Journell, Town of Pearisburg.

Staff Attendees: Kevin Byrd, Janet McNew, Michael Gottfredson, Patrick O'Brien and Julie Phillips.

II. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Approval of Minutes for August

Mr. Carpenter called for approval of the consent agenda item if there were no questions or changes.

Motion: Mr. Garrett moved for the approval of the minutes. Mr. Johnson seconded the motion.

Action: Motion carried unanimously.

B. Approval of Treasurer's Report for August

Mr. Carpenter called for approval of the consent agenda item if there were no questions or changes.

Motion: Mr. East moved for the approval of the Treasurer's Report. Mr. Kantsios seconded the motion.

Action: Motion carried unanimously.

III. COMMONWEALTH INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVIEW PROCESS

A. Projects (Signed-off by the staff)

1. Reissuance of VPDES Permit No. VA0025992 Floyd-Floyd County PSA WWTP

C. Regular Project Review

None

D. Environmental Project Review

1. FY2018 Water Quality Management Planning Program

2. Reissuance of VPDES Permit No. VA0075361 Mountain Lake Biological Research Station WWTP
3. Municipal Hydroelectric Project – City of Radford
4. Construction of three new buildings at Virginia Tech Corporate Research Center

IV. PUBLIC ADDRESS

None

V. REVIEW OF MUTUAL CONCERNS AND COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS

Ms. Newcomb reported the Town of Blacksburg received a development plan to rezone the old middle school property. She also noted the Town's public assembly permit process is being reviewed by the Police Chief and County Sheriff. Dr. Harvey shared an ABC book created by Giles County with the intention of increasing early childhood literacy along with awareness of assets in their community. She explained the Smart Beginnings NRV program is applying for ARC funding to create ABC books for the remaining counties and the city. The Giles County ABC books can be purchased on Amazon. Mr. Patton reported Floyd will be hosting a craft fair September 30- October 1, and it is the 50th year the fair has been held in Floyd. Mr. Carpenter reported the Radford University freshman class enrollment is up 100 students, out of state student enrollment is up 22%, and the freshman class has the highest GPA since 1996. On September 9th, the Governor visited Radford University to announce the competency-based education program in cyber security. Radford University's homecoming will take place October 6-7. Mr. Marshall reported the Highlander Festival will be held October 21st. Mr. Kiwus reported Virginia Tech President Sands will hold a State of the University event on Friday September 29. Also, ESPN College Game Day will be on campus Saturday, September 30 for the home football game which will serve as a draw to the area and national media coverage of the community.

VI. CHAIR'S REPORT

Mr. Carpenter reported the NRV Rail 2020 Legislative Reception was held at Radford University on September 20th with strong participation from local, state and federal elected officials. The NRV Mayor's and Chair's meeting hosted by the Regional Commission was well attended and the topic of convening Public Information Officers from each locality was discussed. Lastly, he congratulated Mr. Byrd on being elected as the Second Vice President of the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO).

VII. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Byrd provided a summary report in the Commission agenda packet. He reported the GO Virginia Region 2 Regional Council is currently accepting Letters of Interest for projects. Appalachian Regional Commission grants will be due October 18th and Smart Beginnings NRV is submitting a grant for the ABC books mentioned earlier in the meeting. Mr. Byrd congratulated the Town of Pulaski for receiving a Community Development Block Grant implementation award. The Regional Commission staff will continue to work with the towns of Narrows and Pembroke to either resubmit their applications in the next cycle and/or pursue alternative funding programs. The ARC contract

between the Regional Commission and the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development for the Prices Fork School Reuse project was signed in September. The Regional Commission will be hosting Mr. Court Rosen, the Commonwealth Transportation Board member for Rural-at-Large, on October 11th for local governments to meet one-on-one and discuss transportation projects. Smart Beginnings NRV is kicking off the revamped Reading Hour program next week and a coordinator is still needed for Floyd County. This is the first year the program will be offered in Pulaski County. Lastly, NRV Rail 2020 will begin planning for the next steps regarding station ownership, operation, and maintenance.

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

A. New River Community College Membership with the Commission

Mr. Byrd explained in 2014 the Regional Commission Board of Directors invited New River Community College to become a full member of the Commission. At that time, the College declined due to financial considerations; however, the Commission left the option for membership open should the College wish to pursue it in the future. Recently, Dr. Huber expressed a desire to join the Commission and requested information on the process.

With the addition of a non-elected official representing the College, the Commission will fall below the required 51% elected officials on the Board. At least one more elected official will be needed in order to accomplish the 51% representation. Mr. Byrd explained the Commission may choose to re-engage and extend membership to the three eligible local governments that are not current members or exercise an option available in the Commission Charter to add a rotating elected official. This will ensure a 51% majority of elected officials on the Board and will keep the organization in line with the Charter agreement and Virginia State Code.

The Community College's membership will become official once an appointed representative is identified and dues are paid. It is anticipated their membership will become effective in January, 2018.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

A. ReNew the New River Clean-up Recap

Mr. Gottfredson gave an overview presentation of the regional ReNew the New Clean-up held on August 26th, 2017. This was the second regional clean-up and the event was held at five separate locations across the New River Valley. There was a total of 475 volunteers, 12 tons of trash and tires removed from over 30 miles of waterway, streambank, and road. The steering committee will meet in October to discuss lessons learned and begin planning for next year's event.

B. CEDS Consumer Version

Mr. O'Brien explained the Regional Commission completed the annual update to the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), and submitted the full report to the US Economic Development Administration (EDA) in June 2017. The 'consumer version' of the CEDS provides a user-friendly overview of the content for public distribution. This includes

information about the region's economic development goals and top-ranked projects along with select regional demographic and economic data.

C. Regional and Local Housing Study Proposal

Mr. Byrd explained the need for a regional and local housing study in the New River Valley has become apparent to Regional Commission staff following projects with several communities across the region. The topic was discussed at the recent NRV Mayors and Chairs meeting along with the Local Government Managers. It was apparent there was support from both groups to pursue the study. Preliminary conversations have taken place with the Virginia Housing Development Authority and the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development regarding funding for a study. He asked the Commissioners to identify topics they would like explored on a regional and/or local basis. Responses discussed included an evaluation whether housing options align with salaries provided by local employers; housing options for aging populations (ie-patio homes); strategies for housing updates/remodeling for older housing stock; affordability, particularly for first-time home buyers; and the desire to conduct a survey of the homebuyer's experience in the past 12-24 months in the regional marketplace.

D. FY17 Annual Report for the Regional Commission

The FY2017 Annual Reports were distributed to the Commission members. A copy will be mailed to every elected official in the New River Valley in the coming weeks.

Mr. Carpenter called to adjourn the meeting.

L. J. Carpenter, Chair
New River Valley Regional Commission