

NEW RIVER VALLEY REGIONAL COMMISSION
Minutes of the Commission Meeting
held on
June 24, 2021
6:00 p.m.— Hybrid Meeting via Zoom/In-person

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Maslaney, Chair, called the meeting to order.

PRESENT (in-person): Mr. M. Maslaney, Floyd County, Chair; Mr. H. Johnson, Vice-Chair, Town of Christiansburg; Mr. L. Law, Giles County, Treasurer; Ms. S. Anderson, Town of Blacksburg; Mr. L. Clevinger, Town of Pulaski; Ms. L. DeVito Kuchenbuch, Floyd County; Mr. J. Martin, City of Radford and Ms. C. Potter, Virginia Tech.

PRESENT (zoom): Mr. J. Ballard, Town of Pearisburg; Mr. J. Coleman, Floyd County; Ms. A. Covey, New River Community College; Mr. D. Breslau, Town of Blacksburg; Mr. M. Harvey, Montgomery County; Mr. D. Horton, City of Radford; Dr. A. Joyner, Radford University; Ms. L. Morris, Virginia Tech; and Dr. D. Warren, Pulaski County.

ABSENT: Mr. C. Bopp, Pulaski County; Mr. T. Clontz, Town of Pulaski; Mr. S. Fijalkowski, Montgomery County; Mr. William Kantsios, Town of Rich Creek; Mr. R. Lawson, Town of Pembroke; Mr. R. McCoy, Giles County; Mr. M. Patton, Town of Floyd; Ms. M. Sachs, Town of Christiansburg and Ms. S. Thwaites, Town of Narrows.

Staff Attendees: Kevin Byrd, Nicole Hersch, Julie Phillips, and Elijah Sharp.

II. ELECTRONIC MEETING PARTICIPATION – Commission Action

Mr. Maslaney called for approval of the electronic meeting participation policy. Section 2.2-3708.2 of the Virginia State Code, 1950, as amended, Section 3. Any public body may meet by electronic communication means without a quorum of the public body physically assembled at one location when the Governor has declared a state of emergency in accordance with § [44-146.17](#).

Motion: Mr. Martin moved for the approval of the policy. Ms. Anderson seconded the motion.

Action: Motion carried unanimously.

III. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Approval of Minutes for April and May

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

Motion: Ms. DeVito Kuchenbuch moved for the approval of the minutes. Ms. Anderson seconded the motion.
Action: Motion carried unanimously.

B. Approval of Treasurer's Report for April and May

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

Motion: Ms. Anderson moved for the approval of the Treasurer's Reports. Mr. Martin seconded the motion.

Action: Motion carried unanimously.

IV. COMMONWEALTH INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVIEW PROCESS

A. Projects (Signed-off by the staff)

None

B. Regular Project Review

None

C. Environmental Project Review

1. Burchard Plaza ADA Life Safety Improvements
2. Proposed PSD Significant Amendment Permit for Volvo North America Group LLC

V. PUBLIC ADDRESS

None

VI. CHAIR'S REPORT

Mr. Maslaney reported the Executive Committee met the week previous and discussed how much of the work program for the Commission in FY22 will involve helping members with administering federal funds, particularly those coming through the American Rescue Plan Act.

VII. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Byrd provided a summary report in the Commission agenda packet. As local governments are receiving their American Rescue Plan Act funding, the Commission is available to assist with administration of the funds and/or facilitating investment prioritization for members. ARPA administrative requests have been received from the towns of Narrows, Pearisburg, Pembroke, and Rich Creek.

On July 1st the NRV Passenger Rail Station Authority bill will become law which will enable the Commission to begin work on preparing organizational documents and working with local governments and higher education institutions on forming the authority.

The Valley to Valley Trail planning project held a stakeholder meeting in May to discuss upcoming public engagement opportunities. Launching public engagement will wait until mid-to-late August to ensure broad participation once summer travel wraps up and students return to the region.

The NRV Public Health Task Force held its last meeting on 6/14. The Task Force will meet in the coming weeks to debrief on the regional pandemic response. This will also be an opportunity to discuss best ways to continue deploying the Business Continuity Team resources that will be available through December 2022.

Earlier this month the Commission submitted a scope of work for the recently announced Virginia Housing program dedicated for planning district/regional commissions in Virginia. The initial focus will be on a top regional priority from the Regional + Local Housing Study, establishing a regional housing trust fund. A large portion of the Virginia Housing funding will go toward affordable housing implementation projects in the region.

The Commission will host an in-person local government managers meeting on July 15 and a Mayors and Chairs meeting on August 12.

The Commission's Annual Dinner will be October 28th at the Prices Fork Moon Hollow Brewery.

VIII. REVIEW OF MUTUAL CONCERNS AND COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS

Mr. Maslaney reported the Town of Floyd has started its Small Town Summer Program and will have live music every other week through August.

Ms. Potter reported Elizabeth McClanahan started her position as CEO of the Virginia Tech Foundation on June 1st.

Ms. Anderson reported the Town of Blacksburg has started the music on Henderson Lawn program for the summer. The Steppin Out festival will also be back in August.

Mr. Johnson reported the Town of Christiansburg will have a 4th of July celebration. Ms. DeVito Kuchenbuch reported the Town of Floyd will also have a fireworks show on July 3rd at the high school.

Ms. Morris reported Virginia Tech will be returning to full in-person classes in the fall. All students are required to be vaccinated. Staff is strongly encouraged to be vaccinated. Students will begin move in on August 14th with classes starting August 23rd. There will be a home football game on September 3rd with 100% capacity permitted at Lane Stadium.

Mr. Horton reported the City of Radford will have a fireworks show at Bissett Park on July 4th with social distancing grids in place. There will be concerts at Bissett throughout the summer.

Mr. Law reported the Newport Fair will take place in August.

Dr. Joyner reported students will return to Radford University in mid-August and are required to be vaccinated. Staff is strongly encouraged to be vaccinated. The groundbreaking for the Highlander Hotel took place and has a scheduled completion date of August 2022. The Artis Center for Adaptive Innovation and Creativity is also moving forward. The College of Humanities and

Behavioral Sciences building will now be known as Hemphill Hall. Radford University is 75% complete on its capital campaign goal of raising \$100 million.

IX. OLD BUSINESS

None

X. NEW BUSINESS

A. Natural Resources Program Update

Ms. Hersch provided a presentation on the Commission's Natural Resources Program. She explained the natural resource program includes the New River Watershed Roundtable which continues to serve as a conduit of collaboration and relationship building for the region. The program also includes a technical assistant grant from the Appalachian Regional Commission to determine pathways forward to expand the New River Water Trail beyond Giles County.

The Commission was also awarded funds from the VA Department of Environmental Quality to implement stormwater best management practices within the Crab Creek watershed. Most recently, the Virginia Outdoors Foundation announced grant funds to support the Plant Southwest Virginia Natives Campaign.

B. NRVRC Personnel Policy Update

Mr. Byrd overviewed the changes proposed in the personnel manual which was included in the packet.

Motion: Ms. Potter moved to approve the personnel manual update. Ms. Anderson seconded the motion.

Action: Motion carried unanimously.

C. Consideration of Proposed FY22 Budget

Mr. Byrd explained the proposed budget was included in the agenda packet and provided additional details on both the budgeted expenditures and the anticipated revenue.

Mr. Harvey noted the revenue from the higher education members needs to be corrected in the spreadsheet.

Motion: Mr. Law moved to approve the FY22 budget with the correction. Mr. Harvey seconded the motion.

Action: Motion carried unanimously.

D. FY22 Nominating Committee Report- Slate Presented

Mr. Maslaney reported the nominations for the slate of officers for Fiscal Year 2022 are as follows:

The nominations include:

Chair: Mike Maslaney, Floyd County

Vice-Chair: Hil Johnson, Town of Christiansburg

Treasurer: Leon Law, Giles County
At-Large: Angie Covey, New River Community College
At-Large: Steve Fijalkowski, Montgomery County
At-Large: Catherine Potter, Virginia Tech
Past Chair: Mike Harvey, Montgomery County

Ms. DeVito Kuchenbuch moved to elect the slate of officers as presented. Mr. Martin seconded the motion.

Action: Motion carried unanimously.

- E. July Commission Meeting (Historically it is cancelled.)
Motion: Mr. Johnson moved to cancel the July meeting. Ms. Potter seconded the motion.
Action: Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Maslaney called to adjourn the meeting at 7:15 pm.

M. Maslaney, Chair
New River Valley Regional Commission