

NEW RIVER VALLEY REGIONAL COMMISSION
Minutes of the Commission Meeting
held on
June 27, 2024
6:00 p.m.— Pulaski County Innovation Center, Fairlawn

I. CALL TO ORDER

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

PRESENT: Mr. H. Johnson, Town of Christiansburg, Chair; Ms. A. Covey, New River Community College, Vice-Chair; Mr. L. Law, Giles County, Treasurer; Ms. S. Anderson, Town of Blacksburg; Ms. A. Davis, Town of Pearisburg; Mr. W. Griffin, Town of Floyd; Mr. D. Horton, City of Radford; Dr. A. Joyner, Radford University; Ms. L. DeVito Kuchenbuch, Floyd County; Mr. J. Martin, City of Radford; Mr. M. Maslaney, Floyd County; Mr. M. Reis, Town of Pulaski; Mr. J. Reeves, Pulaski County; Mr. T. Spangler, Town of Narrows and Ms. M. Trigiani, Virginia Tech Foundation.

ABSENT: Mr. C. Bond, Town of Floyd; Mr. D. Breslau, Town of Blacksburg; Mr. L. Clevinger, Town of Pulaski; Mr. A. Graftsky, Montgomery County; Ms. T. Hockett, Town of Christiansburg; Mr. R. Jones, Town of Rich Creek; Mr. R. Lawson, Town of Pembroke; Mr. R. McCoy, Giles County; Ms. L. Morris, Virginia Tech; Dr. D. Warren, Pulaski County and Mr. B. Wheeler, Montgomery County.

Staff Attendees: Jessica Barrett, Kim Bonner, Kevin Byrd, Chris Owens, Kelly Patton, Julie Phillips, Leo Priddy, Elijah Sharp, Christy Straight, and Emily Warren

II. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Approval of Minutes for May

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

Motion: Mr. Martin moved for the approval of the minutes. Ms. DeVito Kuchenbuch seconded the motion.

Action: Motion carried; one abstention, Mr. Horton.

B. Approval of Treasurer's Reports for May

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

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

Action: Motion carried.

III. COMMONWEALTH INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVIEW PROCESS

A. Projects (Signed-off by the staff)

None

B. Regular Project Review

None

IV. PUBLIC ADDRESS

None

V. CHAIR'S REPORT

Mr. Johnson asked everyone to observe a moment of silence in remembrance of Dr. Doug Warren, citizen representative from Pulaski County.

VI. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Byrd provided a summary report in the Regional Commission agenda packet. The NRV Recovery Ecosystem was successful in securing \$3.5M in funding for the second year of the substance use disorder program. The second year will continue implementing projects that were launched this spring and will add two new partners, New River Community College and Instill Mindfulness. A recovery support specialist will be added at the College for students and a peer recovery specialist will be added in Pulaski through Instill Mindfulness. A mailer to promote the NRV Recovery Ecosystem will go out to a targeted audience in mid-July.

All Points Broadband is continuing through the make-ready pole evaluation process in Pulaski County with Appalachian Power. GigaBeam made their first connections in the Eastern Montgomery County area and started building out the network in Bland County focusing on the county seat area of Bland.

The NRV/Danville Tech Hub Consortium has a site visit set up for August 13th in Danville to visit the Institute for Advanced Learning and Research (IALR). The facility is home to additive manufacturing training for Navy Sailors and Marines. The asset is leveraged by numerous private companies and serves as an education hub for public schools as well. More information about IALR can be found by visiting www.ialr.org.

The Virginia Passenger Rail Authority (VPRA) board received a presentation recently announcing a change in location for the NRV Passenger Rail Station from Cinnabar Rd/NRV Mall to Cambria in Christiansburg. This is a significant change which moves the service from the Virginian Line to the Norfolk Southern Main Line. VPRA representatives attended the NRV Passenger Rail Station Authority meeting on 6/27 to brief the region on the change.

A planning grant was submitted at the end of May to the Appalachian Regional Commission ARISE program for funds to plan the water trail expansion from the headwaters in North Carolina through Virginia into West Virginia.

ReNew the New is scheduled to take place on Saturday, September 14th. More information will be posted on www.renewthenew.org.

Be sure to submit nominations for the Regional Commission awards program. Nominations are due August 13th.

The Dublin Middle School Revitalization project was awarded \$14 million in low-income housing tax credits to support the development of affordable housing in the area.

VII. REVIEW OF MUTUAL CONCERNS AND COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS

Mr. Spangler reported the Town of Narrows received a grant to purchase 107 acres adjacent to approximately 100 acres already owned by the town for the Mill Creek Natural Area. The additional acreage will expand property utilized for recreation and conservation purposes. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) recently revised their floodplain maps. The new maps decrease the floodplain by seven feet in the downtown area.

Mr. Horton reported the City of Radford will have activities in Bissett Park all day on the 4th of July, followed by fireworks in the evening.

Mr. Reis reported that the Town of Pulaski received a Virginia Outdoors Foundation grant to convert land on Draper Mountain into a park which will include improved mountain bike trails.

Dr. Joyner reported that Radford University received a GO Virginia grant to start an IT Certification Center which is planned to open in the fall. The Governor's School for Arts and Humanities is underway at the Radford campus and Health Sciences is taking place at the Roanoke Campus. Radford University is currently hosting Camp Invention along with the Boys State program.

Mr. Law reported Pembroke Telephone Cooperative (PemTel) completed fiber to the premise in the Newport area. PemTel is awaiting a grant announcement that will allow for expansion of fiber internet into the Ripplemead area of Giles County. There will be fireworks at the Newport Agricultural Fair in August.

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

None

IX. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Regional Economic Strategy Update – FY24 Update for US EDA
Mr. Priddy explained each year the New River Valley Regional Commission reviews and updates the region's Regional Economic Strategy (RES). The purpose of the RES is to continue federal and local partnerships to address economic development in the region. The RES also documents planning efforts to identify economic development needs in the region which serves as the foundation of the strategy document.

Motion: Mr. Horton moved to approve the Regional Economic Strategy FY24 Update. Mr. Martin seconded the motion.

Action: Motion carried unanimously.

B. Commuter Assistance Program Strategic Plan

Ms. Bonner explained that in 2023 the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) announced that agencies operating a commuter assistance program must submit a Commuter Assistance Program Strategic Plan (CAPSP) by November 2024. An overview of the plan was presented at a NRVMPPO meeting in April and a stakeholder's meeting in June. The full document is also available for citizens and stakeholders to download at www.engagenrv.org/cap-strategic-plan. Ms. Bonner presented an overview of findings and the five-year goals.

Motion: Ms. DeVito Kuchenbuch moved for the approval of the Commuter Assistance Program Strategic Plan. Ms. Anderson seconded the motion.

Action: Motion carried unanimously.

C. Proposed Budget for FY25

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.

Motion: Mr. Horton moved to approve the FY25 budget. Mr. Maslaney seconded the motion.

Action: Motion carried unanimously.

D. Officers for FY25

Mr. Johnson shared the nominating committee report. The slate presented is below.

The nominations include:

Chair: Hil Johnson, Town of Christiansburg

Vice-Chair: Angie Covey, New River Community College

Treasurer: Leon Law, Giles County

At-Large: David Horton, City of Radford

At-Large: Susan Anderson, Town of Blacksburg

Past Chair: Mike Maslaney, Floyd County

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

Action: Motion carried unanimously.

E. July Commission Meeting (Historically it is cancelled.)

Motion: Mr. Horton moved to cancel the July meeting. Ms. DeVito Kuchenbuch seconded the motion.

Action: Motion carried unanimously.

F. Executive Session- Acquisition or Disposition of Real Property – Project # 2024-001

Enter into Closed Meeting for the purpose of discussing the following:

Section 2.2-3711

Acquisition or Disposition of Real Property

Project # 2024-001

Motion: Mr. Horton moved to go into closed meeting. Ms. Devito-Kuchenbuch seconded.

Action: Motion carried unanimously.

Return to Regular Session and end the Closed Meeting

Motion: Mr. Reis moved to return to regular session. Ms. Anderson seconded.

Action: Motion carried unanimously.

WHEREAS, The New River Valley Regional Commission has convened a Closed Meeting on this date pursuant to an affirmative recorded vote and in accordance with the provisions of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act; and

WHEREAS, Section 2.2-3711 of the Code of Virginia requires a certification by the Board that such Closed Meeting was conducted in conformity with Virginia law.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the New River Valley Regional Commission hereby certifies that to the best of each member's knowledge (I) only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements by Virginia law were discussed in the closed meeting to which this certification resolution applies, and (II) only such public business matters as were identified in the motion conveying the closed meeting were heard, discussed or considered by the board

Motion: Mr. Martin moved to certify the closed meeting. Mr. Reis seconded the motion.

A roll call vote was taken:

Susan Anderson- aye

Amanda Davis- aye

Angie Covey- aye

Linda DeVito Kuchenbuch- aye

David Horton- aye

Hil Johnson- aye

Angela Joyner- aye

Leon Law- aye

Jeff Martin- aye

Michael Maslaney-aye

Jeffery Reeves- aye

Micheal Reis- aye

Tom Spangler- aye

Mary Trigiani- aye

Action: Motion carried unanimously.

Motion: Mr. Martin moved to allow the Executive Director to execute a purchase agreement for real estate located at 2950 Market Street NE in Christiansburg for the purposes of relocating the office of the New River Valley Regional Commission. Ms. Anderson seconded the motion.
Action: Motion carried unanimously.

Motion: Ms. DeVito Kuchenbuch moved to allow the Executive Committee to negotiate financing terms for the acquisition of real estate located at 2950 Market Street NE in Christiansburg. Ms. Anderson seconded the motion.
Action: Motion carried unanimously.

Motion: Mr. Martin moved to allow the Executive Director to initiate a process by which the members of the Regional Commission could amend the Charter Agreement to allow for a geographic change in office locations. Ms. Anderson seconded the motion.
Action: Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Johnson called to adjourn the meeting at 7:51 pm.

H. Johnson, Chair
New River Valley Regional Commission