

NEW RIVER VALLEY REGIONAL COMMISSION
Minutes of the Commission Meeting
held on
June 25, 2026
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. S. **Anderson**, Town of Blacksburg, Vice-Chair; Mr. L. **Law**, Giles County, Treasurer; Mr. C.B. **Andrews**, Town of Pembroke; Dr. R. **Brandon**, New River Community College; Mr. L. **Clevinger**, Town of Pulaski; Mr. A. **Grafsky**, Montgomery County; Mr. M. **Harvey**, Town of Blacksburg; Mr. D. **Horton**, City of Radford; Mr. M. **Mann**, Town of Rich Creek; Mr. M. **Maslaney**, Floyd County; Ms. L. **Ramsey**, Pulaski County; Mr. J. **Reeves**, Pulaski County; Mr. T. **Spangler**, Town of Narrows and Mr. B. **Wheeler**, Montgomery County.

VIRTUAL ATTENDEES: Mr. W. **Seagle**, Town of Dublin, remote from Ormond Beach, FL.

ABSENT: Mr. B. **Dawson**, Town of Pulaski; Ms. A. **Davis**, Town of Pearisburg; Ms. L. **DeVito Kuchenbuch**, Floyd County; Mr. R. **Gibson**, Virginia Tech Foundation; Mr. W. **Griffin**, Town of Floyd; Ms. T. **Hockett**, Town of Christiansburg; Dr. A. **Joyner**, Radford University; Ms. L. **Morris**, Virginia Tech; Mr. R. **McCoy**, Giles County; Mr. J. **Martin**, City of Radford; Mr. P. **Martin**, Giles County.

Staff Attendees: Kevin Byrd, Julie Phillips, Leo Priddy, Elijah Sharp, and Will Shelburne.

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. Horton moved for the approval of the minutes. Ms. Anderson seconded the motion.

Action: Motion carried, one abstention- Mr. Grafsky.

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. Grafsky moved for approval of the Treasurer's Reports. Mr. Horton seconded the motion.

Action: Motion carried unanimously.

III. COMMONWEALTH INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVIEW PROCESS

A. Projects (Signed-off by the staff)

None

B. Regular Project Review

1. Lhoist Inc. Facility Kimbalton Plant - VPDES Permit VA0000523

IV. PUBLIC ADDRESS

None

V. CHAIR'S REPORT

Mr. Johnson reported the Nominating Committee did not receive additional nominations for the Executive Committee.

VI. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Byrd provided a summary report in the Regional Commission agenda packet. The AM2 Tech Hub \$40M application to the US Economic Development Administration (EDA) is still under review. EDA sent follow-up questions in late May with a June 18th deadline. This required quick coordination among project partners. The responses provided clarity to questions surrounding construction versus non-construction activities. A meeting is scheduled for June 29th in Danville with US Senator Mark Warner.

The Regional Commission submitted a separate GO Virginia grant in April for expansion of the GO TEC program in partnership with Montgomery County Public Schools and the Institute for Advanced Learning and Research in Danville. It was recommended for approval by the Region 2 Board. The state board responded with follow-up questions pertaining to long-term operations of the program and maintenance of grant-funded equipment. Responses were submitted and the state board decided to defer the grant award to a subsequent round.

Radford University secured an ARC POWER planning grant entitled, "AI-Driven Cybersecurity Career Pathways." Two key deliverables will be an AI Workforce Feasibility Report, and a Regional Implementation Roadmap outlining future workforce training, micro-credentials, professional development opportunities, and pathways to implementation funding.

Governor Spanberger's administration is in the process of developing the State Comprehensive Economic Development policy. This is required within the first year of each administration. Regional input meetings are being held by GO Virginia geography.

The Small Business Development Center (SBDC) is hosting a workshop series in response to Hurricane Helene. The Ready for Anything series will provide practical tools and strategies to help businesses prepare for unexpected challenges. Classes will be hybrid format, allowing businesses to participate in-person at The HUB at Radford University or virtually.

The Regional Commission submitted two grants to assist with preparing the updated Regional + Local Housing Study. Virginia Housing, one of the two funders, recently changed funding guidelines that do not allow PDCs to perform work on housing studies. Staff is working with leadership at Virginia Housing to better understand this change and determine whether an exception can be provided for the NRV, particularly since a significant amount of internal capacity exists based on previous Virginia Housing investments for that purpose.

The Legacy on Main project in Blacksburg is anticipating construction completion the second week of July. Invitations will be going out to Commissioners for a site visit/tour on 7/22 at 10:00am.

The VA Dept of Housing and Community Development sent planning grant award letters in response to Hurricane Helene Disaster Recovery to the counties of Giles, Pulaski, and Montgomery and the City of Radford. \$155K will be made available to each community for disaster recovery planning work. An inquiry was submitted last week to DHCD asking why Floyd County did not receive a similar letter for planning funds. The communities have 18 months to prepare the plans.

The NRV Recovery Ecosystem submitted its FY27 grant request to the Virginia Opioid Abatement Authority (OAA) in the spring. Recently, OAA responded with a budget reduction in order to “right-size” the award based on past spending and funds being carried forward between fiscal years. Demand for the OAA program has increased across the state. Local governments are meeting this week to review the “right-sized” budget and determine budget reductions which will promptly be communicated to project partners.

The staff continues to add significant value to projects for partners in the region through online project resources. Please visit [EngageNRV](#) to see how the Regional Commission team makes projects available to people beyond public input meetings. The project pages have schedules, surveys, background information, and final reports once complete.

The office construction project continues to make good progress following the project schedule. Inspections were passed last week for rough-ins for plumbing, walls/framing, and mechanical. A site visit was held recently with an audio/visual company to determine meeting room needs.

The state budget was passed and includes an increase in water supply planning funds.

The Community Foundation surpassed its goal for the annual Give Local Day by receiving over \$1M in donations for nonprofits in the region.

The Regional Commission Annual Awards nominations are due August 14th.

VII. REVIEW OF MUTUAL CONCERNS AND COMMISSIONERS’ REPORTS

Mr. Graftsky reported Montgomery County received a comprehensive study on Fire and Rescue Services. The report is available on the county’s website. Mr. Horton added that the region should consider regional training and services.

Ms. Anderson reported the Legacy on Main project has begun accepting resident applications.

Mr. Reeves shared concern for ground water levels and citizens on private wells during the current drought.

Mr. Law reported Mountain Lake Lodge held its 175th anniversary.

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

None

IX. NEW BUSINESS

A. Regional Economic Strategy – FY26 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 serve as the foundation of the strategy document. This year, the RES was heavily influenced by the AM2 vision to create a region that is a globally competitive market for advanced manufacturing.

Motion: Mr. Horton moved to approve the Regional Economic Strategy FY26 Update. Dr. Brandon seconded the motion.

Action: Motion carried unanimously.

B. Proposed Budget for FY27

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 FY27 budget. Mr. Maslaney seconded the motion.

Action: Motion carried unanimously.

C. Officers for FY27

Mr. Johnson shared the slate presented by the nominating committee to serve July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2027.

The nominations include:

Chair: Hil Johnson, Town of Christiansburg

Vice-Chair: Susan Anderson, Town of Blacksburg

Treasurer: Leon Law, Giles County

At-Large: David Horton, City of Radford

At-Large: Linda DeVito Kuchenbuch, Floyd County

At-Large: Larry Clevinger, Town of Pulaski

Past Chair: Mike Maslaney, Floyd County

Mr. Reeves moved to elect the slate of officers as presented. Dr. Brandon seconded the motion.

Action: Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Johnson called to adjourn the meeting at 7:05 pm.

H. Johnson, Chair
New River Valley Regional Commission