NEW RIVER VALLEY REGIONAL COMMISSION

Minutes of the Commission Meeting
held on
September 26, 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; Mr. L. **Law,** Giles County, Treasurer; Ms. S. **Anderson,** Town of Blacksburg; Mr. L. **Clevinger,** Town of Pulaski; Ms. A. **Davis**, Town of Pearisburg; Mr. A. **Grafsky,** Montgomery County; Ms. T. **Hockett**, Town of Christiansburg; Mr. D. **Horton**, City of Radford; Dr. A. **Joyner,** Radford University; Ms. L. **DeVito Kuchenbuch,** Floyd County; Mr. P. **Martin**, Giles County; Mr. M. **Maslaney,** Floyd County; Ms. L. **Morris**, Virginia Tech; Mr. M. **Reis**, Town of Pulaski; Mr. J. **Reeves**, Pulaski County; Mx. E. **Shawish**, Town of Blacksburg and Mr. B. **Wheeler**, Montgomery County.

ABSENT: Ms. A. **Covey**, New River Community College, Vice-Chair; Vacant, Pulaski County; Mr. W. **Griffin**, Town of Floyd; Mr. R. **Jones**, Town of Rich Creek; Mr. R. **Lawson**, Town of Pembroke; Mr. R. **McCoy**, Giles County; Mr. J. **Martin**, City of Radford; Mr. T. **Spangler**, Town of Narrows and Ms. M. **Trigiani**, Virginia Tech Foundation.

Staff Attendees: Kevin Byrd, Emma Carroll, and Julie Phillips
Other Attendees: Kayleigh Hall, Angie Hill, and Kenneth King, Jr.
Zoom Attendee: Courtney Rogers

II. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Approval of Minutes for August

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. Mr. Spangler seconded the motion.
Action: Motion carried

B. Approval of Treasurer's Reports for August

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

Motion: Ms. DeVito Kuchenbuch moved for approval of the Treasurer's Reports. Mr. Maslaney seconded the motion.
Action: Motion carried.

III. COMMONWEALTH INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVIEW PROCESS

A. Projects (Signed-off by the staff)

1. Reissuance of VPDES Permit No VA0062685 Pepper's Ferry RWTA WWTP

B. Regular Project Review

1. Virginia Tech Greenlink Priority 3 Project

IV. PUBLIC ADDRESS

None

V. CHAIR'S REPORT

None

VI. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Byrd provided a summary report in the Regional Commission agenda packet. He began his report by introducing a new staff member, Emma Carroll, Regional Innovation Officer.

The NRV Recovery Ecosystem holds a monthly leadership team meeting that consists of approximately 20 partners including local governments, agencies, and nonprofits delivering services. On a quarterly basis this group meets in-person to learn more about a specific program. The last meeting was held at the 401 Center which is a Peer Recovery Center at New River Valley Community Services facility in Radford. The peer recovery center is essentially a community center for those at various stages of their recovery journey. Two additional peer recovery centers will be added in the coming year in Floyd and Giles counties.

The two VATI 2022 awards for Montgomery/Bland and Pulaski counties had site visits from the Department of Housing and Community Development. The site visits are an oversight requirement for all grantees and they serve as an opportunity for all project partners to meet in-person to observe progress in the field.

The Virginia AM2 Tech Hub, short for Virginia's Additive Manufacturing & Advanced Materials Tech Hub, has two events coming up. A webinar will be held on 10/3 at 2:00 on the topic of Talent Development. Partnerships between GO TEC, New River Community College, and MELD manufacturing will be highlighted. The next all-hands in-person meeting for the Tech Hub is being scheduled for 11/15 and will be hosted by Virginia Tech.

The NRV Passenger Rail Station Authority received a project briefing for the new Cambria station location at their meeting in August. As the project is moving toward financial commitments for the station in the not too distant future, the focus of the September meeting was providing important background information on the project to ensure all members are up to date. Information will also be shared about financial participation scenarios, a grants update, and the role of Amtrak in station operations.

Local governments all received notice recently from the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) regarding amended Water Supply Planning Regulations. The Regional Commission received notice as a partner to local governments in this work. One principal change in the regulation was designation of Regional Planning Areas (RPU) which follows watershed boundaries. The regulation requires the local governments to identify contact information for a RPU representative, alternatively if a PDC assumes the RPU role, then contact for the PDC should be submitted. Contact information is required by December 8, 2024 and kick-off meetings are required by April 7, 2025. Based on these changes and the potential role being asked of PDCs across the state, VAPDC will be discussing this at a statewide meeting on 9/27.

Partners for Progress: Shaping a Shared Future, a coordinated project between Virginia Tech, Montgomery County, Blacksburg and Christiansburg, kicked-off in September. The consultant team held several focus group meetings and a larger steering committee meeting. A community survey will be distributed in the coming weeks, likely in October.

The Regional Commission Annual Dinner is set for October 9th at the Floyd Center for the Arts. A mobile workshop will be held 4:30-5:45 and will feature community and economic development iniatiatives underway at the Town and County of Floyd. The dinner event is scheduled for 6:00-8:00. We are excited to recognize the 2024 award recipients: Dr. Pat Huber, Citizen of the Valley; Ms. Sandy Davis, Citizen of the Valley; and Mr. Jonathan Sweet, Champion of the Valley.

The Regional Commission team held interviews for two vacant positions: GIS Planner and Graphic Designer/Community Engagement Specialist. Employment offers are being extended with hopes to bring on new talented employees soon.

VII. REVIEW OF MUTUAL CONCERNS AND COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS

Mr. Horton reported ReNew the New in Radford had over 120 volunteers. The Highlander Festival will be held at Radford University on October 12th.

Mr. Martin reported Giles County had over 300 volunteers at ReNew the New.

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

None

IX. NEW BUSINESS

A. VDOT Update

Mr. Ken King, PE, Salem District Engineer, provided an update on projects underway in the district. The VDOT website is a good resource to keep up-to-date with projects. Selected projects underway include the Route 8 Park and Ride Lot in Christiansburg, Roundabout at Cougar Trail Road and Newbern Heights Drive in Pulaski County, Valley to Valley Trail Study, I-81 New River Bridge replacement, and the Interstate 81 Corridor Improvement Program.

B. Resolution of Support for Pulaski SMART Scale Application

Mr. Byrd explained the Virginia Department of Transportation requires regional planning organizations to pass a resolution of support for Round 6 SMART Scale applications. SMART Scale is a process that helps Virginia meet its most critical transportation needs using limited tax dollars. The competitive program evaluates projects based on key factors including safety, congestion, accessibility, contributions towards economic development, land use, and the environment. The resolution of support for Pulaski County: US Route 11 (Lee Highway) Improvements at Hatcher Road was included in the packet.

Motion: Mr. Horton moved to approve the Resolution of Support for the Pulaski Smart Scale Application. Ms. Anderson seconded the motion.
Action: Motion carried; 16 aye, 1 nay.

C. Regional Commission Building Purchase: Select Financing Option

Mr. Byrd explained at the June Regional Commission meeting the board authorized 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 agency's office. Since that meeting, Davenport and Associates, financial advisors for the project, were engaged to assist with determining the cost to the members and the best financing option to pursue. The recommendation is to pursue VRA financing because of the ability to secure a low interest rate for the entire 20-year term.

In order to pursue the VRA financing program, the Regional Commission will need to adopt the VRA Pool Revenue Bond Resolution by roll call vote; take action authorizing the Board Chair to execute the Support Agreement between the New River Valley Regional Commission, Montgomery County, and the Virginia Resources Authority; and authorize the Executive Director to execute the Reimbursement Agreement between the New River Valley Regional Commission and Montgomery County.

Motion: Ms. Anderson moved to approve the Local Bond Sale and Financing Agreement. Mr. Reis seconded the motion.
Action: Motion carried; one abstention, Mr. Horton.

Motion: Mr. Grafsky moved to adopt the VRA Pool Revenue Bond Resolution. Mr. Reis seconded the motion.
A roll call vote was taken:
Susan Anderson- aye
Larry Clevinger- aye
Amanda Davis- aye
Anthony Grafsky- aye
Linda DeVito Kuchenbuch- aye
Tanya Hockett- aye
David Horton- abstain
Hil Johnson- aye
Angela Joyner- aye
Leon Law- aye
Michael Maslaney-aye
Perry Martin- aye
Liza Morris-aye
Jeffery Reeves- aye
Micheal Reis- aye
Em Shawish- aye
Brian Wheeler- aye
Action: Motion carried.

Motion: Ms. Hockett moved to approve the Support Agreement between the Regional Commission and Montgomery County. Mr. Maslaney seconded the motion.
Action: Motion carried; one abstention, Mr. Horton.

Motion: Ms. DeVito Kuchenbuch moved to approve the Reimbursement Agreement between the Regional Commission and Montgomery County. Ms. Hockett seconded the motion.
Action: Motion carried; one abstention, Mr. Horton.

D. Next Meeting- Cancel October and Adjust November Meeting

Motion: Mr. Horton moved to cancel the October meeting and move the November meeting to November 21st due to the conflict with Thanksgiving. Mr. Reis seconded the motion.
Action: Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Johnson called to adjourn the meeting at 7:33 pm.

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H. Johnson, Chair
New River Valley Regional Commission