

NEW RIVER VALLEY REGIONAL COMMISSION
Minutes of the Commission Meeting
held on
January 27, 2022
6:00 p.m.— Pulaski County Innovation Center, Fairlawn

I. CALL TO ORDER

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

PRESENT: 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. A. Covey, New River Community College; Mr. S. Fijalkowski, Montgomery County; Mr. T. Franklin, Radford University; Mr. M. Harvey, Montgomery County; Mr. D. Horton, City of Radford; Mr. J. Martin, City of Radford; Ms. L. Morris, Virginia Tech; Mr. W. Griffin, Town of Floyd; Dr. D. Warren, Pulaski County and Mr. T Wilson, Town of Christiansburg.

ABSENT: Mr. D. Breslau, Town of Blacksburg; Ms. C. Clark, Town of Pearisburg; Mr. T. Clontz, Town of Pulaski; Mr. L. Cox, Floyd County; Ms. L. DeVito Kuchenbuch, Floyd County; Mr. R. Lawson, Town of Pembroke; Mr. R. McCoy, Giles County; and Ms. C. Potter, Virginia Tech.

Staff Attendees: Kevin Byrd, John O’Shea, Julie Phillips and Elijah Sharp.

Other Attendees: Kalinda Bechtold, Casey Jenkins and Linda Millsaps.

III. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Approval of Minutes for September and November

Mr. Maslaney 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. Johnson seconded the motion.

Action: Motion carried unanimously.

B. Approval of Treasurer’s Reports for September, October, November and December.

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

Motion: Mr. Harvey moved for 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)

1. NRVSS Vehicle Purchase STAFF

2. Giles Health & Family Center Vehicle Purchase STAFF
3. NRVCS Vehicle Purchase STAFF

B. Regular Project Review
None

C. Environmental Project Review

1. NRV Regional Water Authority WTP Public Notice for Reissuance of VPDES Permit VA0052850

V. PUBLIC ADDRESS

None

VI. CHAIR'S REPORT

Mr. Maslaney reported the Commission will have eight new board members once all appointments are made. He thanked the following for their service to the Commission, Charles Bopp, Pulaski County; Sarah Thwaites, Town of Narrows; Michael Patton, Town of Floyd; Merissa Sachs, Town of Christiansburg; Billy Kantsios, Town of Rich Creek; Jason Ballard, Town of Pearisburg and Tyler Clontz, Town of Pulaski. He welcomed three new members, Mr. Franklin, Radford University; Mr. Griffin, Town of Floyd, and Mr. Wilson, Town of Christiansburg, who were in attendance. Since all Commissioner slots were not appointed prior to the January meeting, a new Commissioner orientation meeting will take place prior to the February Commission meeting.

VII. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Byrd provided a summary report in the Commission agenda packet. The Regional Commission's broadband application to the Virginia Telecommunications Initiative (VATI) program covering Bland, Montgomery and Pulaski counties was funded at \$68M.

The NRV Revolving Loan Fund committee met in December and January. Both meetings yielded great progress. Program guidance was updated with considerable input by the committee members. Committee members from Pulaski County and Giles County needed to resign due to position changes, so there are two openings to be filled.

The NRV Passenger Rail Station Authority organization documents are continuing to be adopted by the future members. The VA Passenger Rail Authority is conducting the environmental analysis on potential station locations. Public input meetings are planned for February 28th and March 1st.

Development of the Huckleberry Trail Plan is in full swing. In December, there was a meeting of local governments and Virginia Tech to discuss their approaches to operations/maintenance. A meeting with NOVA Parks to gain insight on their operations of the Washington and Old Dominion Railroad Regional Park since it crosses numerous jurisdictions was also held.

The New River Water Trail implementation plan is nearing completion with an anticipated ARC POWER application to be submitted in April. ReNew the New is tentatively planned to take place in August 2022.

The Business Continuity Team remains busy as the pandemic evolves. They are continuing to coordinate vaccination clinics with employers, provide outreach/education work sessions, provide testing resources and closely watch policy developments. Each Tuesday the BCT hosts a southwest Virginia Superintendents conference call, so schools have the latest information, particularly on policy and operating guidance.

John O'Shea was hired in December to fill a newly created position, Project Manager – Infrastructure, to lead the three-county broadband project along with water related projects in Montgomery County. John comes to the Commission after 13 years with the town of Blacksburg Public Works Department serving as the Safety and Special Projects Manager.

As the Commission staff continues to grow, we are taking on additional office space in the Pulaski County Innovation Center with 13 staff in the suite and 7 in external offices in the building. In February, we will be reconfiguring a conference room to host 3 employees with space for a fourth, if needed. The Executive Committee continues to discuss space needs.

In January, we implemented a reorganization plan by promoting four senior planners into director of program areas with each having at least one direct report. This will greatly aid in day-to-day coaching, leadership development, administrative process support, and allow for exploration of new funding programs for Commission members. Promotions include Jennifer Wilsie, Director of Housing; Christy Straight, Director of Environmental Resources; Aphi Fancon, Director of Community Development, and Joy Rumley, Director of Economic Development.

Mr. Byrd presented a plaque to Julie Phillips for ten years of service.

VIII. REVIEW OF MUTUAL CONCERNS AND COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS

Ms. Anderson reported Mr. Byrd facilitated a goal setting retreat for the Blacksburg Town Council earlier in the week.

Mr. Wilson reported the Town of Christiansburg is making good progress on development of the new park project. Mr. Johnson added Earth Fare is now open at The Marketplace shopping center.

IX. OLD BUSINESS

- A. Ratify FY23 Per Capita Assessment Rate (Dues)
Motion: Ms. Anderson moved to ratify the FY23 per capita assessment rate of \$1.32. Dr. Warren seconded the motion.
Action: Motion carried unanimously.

X. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Montgomery Museum
Mr. Jenkins provided a presentation on activities underway at the museum. The Montgomery Museum is undergoing significant change as it prepares for a relocation to a new facility in

downtown Christiansburg. The move will take place this summer and the museum is currently engaged in a capital campaign with a goal to raise \$1.6 million. The new 15,000 square-foot building will offer greater programming capacity and exhibit space. Additionally, the building will accommodate special event and meeting space. The Regional Commission has supported the museum in its pursuit of an Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) planning grant which they are currently executing. The \$100,000 ARC planning grant is being used to develop architectural designs that will inform needed renovations including ADA accessible restrooms and an elevator. Additionally, the process will include stakeholder engagement designed to solicit community input on a variety of museum and building features.

B. FY21 Audit Report

Mr. Byrd provided an overview of the FY 21 Audit Report. The report did not include any findings or deficiencies. He thanked the finance team for their hard work throughout the year which helps to ensure a smooth and successful audit process.

Motion: Mr. Horton moved to accept the FY21 Audit Report. Ms. Anderson seconded the motion.

Action: Motion carried unanimously.

C. Personnel Manual Update, adding Director of Program Area positions

Mr. Byrd explained the Commission implemented a reorganization of the Commission team. Four senior planners were promoted into Director of Program Area roles, each with at least one direct report.

Motion: Ms. Anderson moved to amend the Personnel Manual to include the Director of Program Areas position. Mr. Johnson seconded the motion.

Action: Motion carried unanimously.

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

M. Maslaney, Chair
New River Valley Regional Commission