

NEW RIVER VALLEY REGIONAL COMMISSION
Minutes of the Commission Meeting
held on
April 25, 2024
6:00 p.m.— Pulaski County Innovation Center, Fairlawn

I. CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Covey, Vice-Chair, called the meeting to order.

PRESENT: Ms. A. Covey, New River Community College, Vice-Chair; Mr. L. Law, Giles County, Treasurer; Ms. S. Anderson, Town of Blacksburg; Ms. L. DeVito Kuchenbuch, Floyd County; Mr. A. Grafsky, Montgomery County; Ms. T. Hockett, Town of Christiansburg; Mr. R. McCoy, Giles County; Mr. M. Maslaney, Floyd County; Mr. J. Martin, City of Radford; Ms. L. Morris, Virginia Tech and Ms. M. Trigiani, Virginia Tech Foundation.

ABSENT: Mr. H. Johnson, Town of Christiansburg, Chair; Mr. C. Bond, Town of Floyd; Mr. D. Breslau, Town of Blacksburg; Mr. L. Clevinger, Town of Pulaski; Ms. A. Davis, Town of Pearisburg; Mr. W. Griffin, Town of Floyd; Mr. D. Horton, City of Radford; Mr. R. Jones, Town of Rich Creek; Dr. A. Joyner, Radford University; Mr. R. Lawson, Town of Pembroke; Mr. M. Reis, Town of Pulaski; Mr. J. Reeves, Pulaski County; Mr. T. Spangler, Town of Narrows; Dr. D. Warren, Pulaski County and Mr. B. Wheeler, Montgomery County

Staff Attendees: Kevin Byrd, Bethany Peters, Julie Phillips, and Elijah Sharp.

Other Attendees: Charlie Jewell

II. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Approval of Minutes for March
Due to a lack of quorum no action was taken.
- B. Approval of Treasurer's Reports for March
Due to a lack of quorum no action was taken.

III. COMMONWEALTH INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVIEW PROCESS

- A. Projects (Signed-off by the staff)
None
- B. Regular Project Review
 - 1. Reissuance of VPDES Permit VA0060844 for Lower Troubles Creek WWTP in Montgomery County

IV. PUBLIC ADDRESS

None

V. CHAIR'S REPORT

Ms. Covey congratulated Mr. Byrd on running the Boston Marathon earlier this month. She reported attending an event which featured the author Adriana Trigiani, Mary Trigiani's sister, at Mountain Empire Community College. She also explained Commissioners will be receiving an email with the Executive Director's evaluation instrument. She asked that everyone please return it directly to Chair Johnson by May 10th.

VI. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Byrd provided a summary report in the Regional Commission agenda packet. The NRV Recovery Ecosystem Program submitted the FY25 regional program application ahead of the April 1st deadline. A couple of highlights for next year include transitional housing solutions and rural transportation service expansion. Many of the FY24 activities will be rolling forward with full implementation since the current year funds were not under contract until mid-year. Technical teams are established and meeting regularly. These include Mobile Outreach & Treatment, Justice Involved, Transportation, Housing, and Education and Training.

The first quarterly report that involves construction reimbursement is being submitted for the Montgomery/Bland broadband project.

The NRV/Danville Tech Hub's two-part consortium meeting had very strong attendance. A logo for the Additive Manufacturing and Advanced Materials (AM2) Tech Hub is nearing completion and will be released soon.

The NRV Passenger Rail Station Authority did not meet in April; however, the May 23rd meeting is anticipated to be held as scheduled. The Virginia Passenger Rail Authority (VPRA) held the second public input meeting for the project on April 18th at the Montgomery County Government Center. Public participation was good, and the format allowed for public question/discussion following two presentations. VPRA also held tabling exercises at Radford University, Blacksburg Farmers Market, Virginia Tech, and the Fork and Cork event, and attended Story Time at Radford Public Library. Another public survey was released and will be open until May 17th. This survey focuses on station location preferences. VPRA will be meeting with the three transit providers in the region on May 2nd to begin discussions on connections to the proposed station.

Based on feedback received so far, it appears that the Regional Housing Trust Fund program will be in position to launch in FY25. Non-governmental partner commitments are still in development and anticipated in July.

The New River Water Trail Expansion project hosted a consultant team in early April to discuss governance models since the program will expand from one county to three additional local governments. Over 25 participants took part in the half-day facilitated session. A second facilitated session is being scheduled to affirm next steps and layout the roadmap for implementation.

The annual regional training event for Planning Commissioners was held on April 17th with nearly 70 local government planning commission members in attendance which continues to be a remarkably high participation level. The two topics for the workshop were Housing and an interactive review of relevant meeting scenarios. This event reflects the regular convening the Regional Commission provides for the local government planners across the region. Thank you to all the NRVRC staff that contribute to organizing this event and a significant thanks to Montgomery County Planning Department for hosting and putting in extra effort.

Next month, Regional Commission staff will be bringing a revised FY24 budget to the board for consideration. This will capture revenue and expenses added during the year to reflect the financial operations more accurately.

The FY25 budget is taking shape with a strong revenue position and will be ready for review/consideration at the June 27th meeting.

VII. REVIEW OF MUTUAL CONCERNS AND COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS

Mr. Graftsky reported Montgomery County held a kickoff meeting for their comprehensive plan. The theme of the plan will be Montgomery Matters and it will be an 18-month process. They also passed their FY25 budget.

Ms. Anderson reported the Town of Blacksburg passed their FY25 budget.

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

None

IX. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Pyramid Healthcare, Inc.- Overview of Services Provided in the New River Valley
Mr. Drew Wallace delivered a presentation on Pyramid Healthcare, a company that recently located in the region providing substance use disorder treatment services. The Pyramid Healthcare family of companies offers a treatment continuum that spans throughout multiple states, providing comprehensive behavioral healthcare specialties that include substance abuse, mental health, autism and eating disorder treatment. Pyramid Healthcare serves clients across the eastern United States. They currently operate over 1,800 withdrawal management and residential beds while covering over 7 million miles a year transporting clients to treatment services.

Pyramid Healthcare's New River Valley location, once fully operational, will have 160 inpatient residential beds for men and women struggling with substance abuse and mental health issues. They are currently at about 70% completion of bringing the beds online and operating all levels of care outside of Medically Managed Detox, which will become available in the next 60 days.

B. FY25 VDOT Rural Transportation Work Program & Resolution

Mr. Sharp explained the Virginia Department of Transportation allocates funding each year to the Regional Commission to deliver transportation planning assistance for non-urbanized areas outside the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) geography. Mr. Sharp provided a brief presentation overviewing the proposed work program included in the meeting packet.

Motion: Ms. DeVito Kuchenbuch moved to approve the Rural Transportation Work Program for FY25 and ratify the vote at the May meeting. Ms. Anderson seconded the motion.

Action: Motion carried unanimously.

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

H. Johnson, Chair
New River Valley Regional Commission