

NEW RIVER VALLEY REGIONAL COMMISSION
Minutes of the Commission Meeting
held on
September 23, 2021
6:00 p.m.— Pulaski County Innovation Center, Fairlawn

I. CALL TO ORDER

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

PRESENT (in-person): Mr. M. Maslaney, Floyd County, Chair; Mr. H. Johnson, Vice-Chair, Town of Christiansburg; Mr. L. Law, Giles County, Treasurer; Mr. C. Bopp, Pulaski County; Mr. D. Breslau, Town of Blacksburg; Mr. L. Clevinger, Town of Pulaski; Ms. A. Covey, New River Community College; Mr. S. Fijalkowski, Montgomery County; Mr. D. Horton, City of Radford; Ms. L. DeVito Kuchenbuch, Floyd County; Ms. L. Morris, Virginia Tech; Mr. M. Patton, Town of Floyd; Ms. C. Potter, Virginia Tech and Dr. D. Warren, Pulaski County.

ABSENT: Ms. S. Anderson, Town of Blacksburg; Mr. J. Ballard, Town of Pearisburg; Mr. T. Clontz, Town of Pulaski; Mr. J. Coleman, Floyd County; Mr. T. Franklin, Radford University; Mr. M. Harvey, Montgomery County; Mr. William Kantsios, Town of Rich Creek; Mr. R. Lawson, Town of Pembroke; Mr. R. McCoy, Giles County; Mr. J. Martin, City of Radford; Ms. M. Sachs, Town of Christiansburg and Ms. S. Thwaites, Town of Narrows.

Staff Attendees: Kevin Byrd and Julie Phillips.

Other Attendees: Jim Drader.

III. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Approval of Minutes for August

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

Motion: Mr. Patton moved for the approval of the minutes. Mr. Horton seconded the motion.

Action: Motion carried unanimously.

B. Approval of Treasurer's Report for August

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

Motion: Mr. Patton moved for the approval of the Treasurer's Reports. Mr. Johnson seconded the motion.

Action: Motion carried unanimously.

IV. COMMONWEALTH INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVIEW PROCESS

A. Projects (Signed-off by the staff)

- None
- B. Regular Project Review
 - None
- C. Environmental Project Review
 1. Implementation of Master Planning Actions at the Industrial Core District, Radford Army Ammunition Plant, Virginia
 2. Virginia Tech Baseball New Pitching Lab

V. PUBLIC ADDRESS

None

VI. CHAIR'S REPORT

Mr. Maslaney reported area hospitals are nearing full capacity and encouraged everyone to stay safe.

VII. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Byrd provided a summary report in the Commission agenda packet. The Regional Commission was asked to be the grant applicant for a broadband application to the Virginia Telecommunications Initiative (VATI) program on behalf of Montgomery, Pulaski and Bland counties. The proposal was in partnership with AEP (electric utility), Gigabeam and All Points Broadband to deploy universal fiber to the premise for all unserved locations in the three counties. The grant request was for \$69M and a total project cost of \$138M.

The NRV Passenger Rail Station Authority organization documents were discussed at the Mayors/Chairs meeting last month. Local governments will begin to consider adopting organizational documents in a October/November timeframe. Outreach to higher education members is underway.

The Valley to Valley Trail project will begin soliciting public input within the next month. Focus will be on potential trail corridors.

The NRV Metropolitan Planning Organization approved a task order for the Regional Commission to prepare the first master plan for the Huckleberry Trail. Friends of the Huckleberry recently produced a high quality map and installed mileage markers along the entire length of the trail.

The Business Continuity Team (BCT) held two workshops for businesses and a webinar with Cowan Perry, legal advisors on employment law. The BCT continues to facilitate weekly conference calls with school superintendents across southwest Virginia.

The Economic Development Planner position is being filled by Joy Rumley. She will start October 1st and is coming to the Commission following 17 years of experience with the VA Dept of Housing and Community Development. She will be a tremendous resource for our members given her depth of knowledge with Community Development Block Grants, the Appalachian Regional Commission , Virginia Main Street programs and several others.

The Finance Technician applications are currently under review. The Commission is also hiring at least one additional grant management position, if not two.

The Regional Commission annual dinner event will be held on October 28th at 6:00pm at Moon Hollow Brewing at the Old Prices Fork Elementary School. Mobile workshops will take place in the afternoon.

VIII. REVIEW OF MUTUAL CONCERNS AND COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS

Mr. Bopp reported the first annual Smilin Jack Acres Truck show was held September 3rd and 4th at Logan Field. He explained it will be an annual event that he hopes to grow attendance.

Mr. Johnson reported the Town of Christiansburg will hold a public hearing for two proposed buildings at the Marketplace, one for residential and the other for a hotel.

Ms. Ms. DeVito Kuchenbuch reported Floyd County held a groundbreaking for the US EDA investment at the Floyd Commerce Center.

Mr. Fijalkowski reported a historical marker for the Crockett family will be dedicated on October 17th at 2pm. The property will also be named a century farm.

Ms. Morris reported Virginia Tech will hold homecoming October 11th – 16th. During homecoming they will kick off the sesquicentennial anniversary celebrations.

IX. OLD BUSINESS

None

X. NEW BUSINESS

A. Habitat for Humanity of the NRV

Mr. Drader provided an update on Habitat for Humanity of the NRV. The organization has recently completed The Homes on Church Street, a Blacksburg townhouse project which was their first multifamily project. Also, a strategic plan was launched that is providing focus for future projects and programs such as a townhome project in Floyd County on Newtown Road. Habitat has long been a partner with the Regional Commission and the NRV HOME Consortium as an implementer of affordable housing in the region.

B. NRV Passenger Rail Station Authority- Upcoming Process

Mr. Byrd provided an overview presentation of the NRV Passenger Rail Station Authority process. The presentation covered the major milestones accomplished with passenger rail to date to include the ridership and station location study, the ownership and operations study, and enabling legislation to create the station authority followed by a review of the organizational documents authority members will be considering. Potential authority members will be taking action on the organizational documents in the October/November timeframe.

C. Next Commission Meeting

- a. Need to cancel October meeting due to Annual Dinner event conflict

Motion: Mr. Horton moved to cancel the October meeting. Ms. Johnson seconded the motion.

Action: Motion carried unanimously.

- b. Next meeting will be November, need to set date, typically 3rd Thursday to avoid Thanksgiving holiday

Motion: Mr. Patton moved to move the November meeting to November 18, 2021.

Mr. Horton seconded the motion.

Action: Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Maslaney called to adjourn the meeting at 7:25 pm.

M. Maslaney, Chair
New River Valley Regional Commission