

NEW RIVER VALLEY REGIONAL COMMISSION
Minutes of the Commission Meeting
held on
October 22, 2020
6:00 p.m.— Hybrid Meeting via Zoom/In-person

I. CALL TO ORDER

PRESENT (in-person): Mr. M. Maslaney, Floyd County, Chair; Ms. A. Covey, New River Community College; Ms. L. DeVito Kuchenbuch, Floyd County; Mr. S. Fijalkowski, Montgomery County; Mr. M. Harvey, Montgomery County; and Mr. J. Martin, City of Radford.

PRESENT (zoom): Ms. S. Anderson, Town of Blacksburg; Mr. J Ballard, Town of Pearisburg; Mr. C. Bopp, Pulaski County; Mr. D. Breslau, Town of Blacksburg; Mr. L. Clevinger, Town of Pulaski; Mr. D. Horton, City of Radford; Dr. A. Joyner, Radford University; Mr. C. Kiwus, Virginia Tech; Ms. C. Potter, Virginia Tech; and Dr. D. Warren, Pulaski County.

ABSENT: Mr. H. Johnson, Vice-Chair, Town of Christiansburg; Mr. L. Law, Giles County, Treasurer; Mr. T. Clontz, Town of Pulaski; Mr. J. Coleman, Floyd County; Mr. T. Garrett, Town of Narrows; Mr. W. Kantsios, Town of Rich Creek; Mr. R. Lawson, Town of Pembroke; Mr. R. McCoy, Giles County; Mr. M. Patton, Town of Floyd; and Ms. M. Sachs, Town of Christiansburg.

Staff Attendees: Kevin Byrd and Julie Phillips

Other Attendees: Charlene Cover and Jim Drader

II. ELECTRONIC MEETING PARTICIPATION – Commission Action

Mr. Maslaney called for approval of the electronic meeting participation policy. Section 2.2-3708.2 of the Virginia State Code, 1950, as amended, Section 3. Any public body may meet by electronic communication means without a quorum of the public body physically assembled at one location when the Governor has declared a state of emergency in accordance with § 44-146.17.

Motion: Mr. Harvey moved for the approval of the policy. Ms. Covey seconded the motion.

Action: Motion carried unanimously.

III. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Approval of Minutes for September

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

Motion: Mr. Harvey moved for the approval of the minutes. Mr. Fijalkowski seconded the motion.

Action: Motion carried unanimously.

- B. Approval of Treasurer’s Report for September
Mr. Maslaney called for approval of the consent agenda item if there were no questions or changes.

Motion: Ms. Anderson moved for the approval of the Treasurer’s Reports. Ms. Covey 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. Mountain Valley Pipeline & Equitrans Expansion Project
Initial comments were prepared by the Executive Committee and distributed to board members for their review and feedback. Additional comments were provided along with a general position of preferring option one, no action. Comments from the board were provided to the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality for inclusion in the environmental review report.
 2. Tentative Variance for the Thompson Landfill, SWP038

V. PUBLIC ADDRESS

None

VI. CHAIR’S REPORT

Mr. Maslaney reported the I-81 advisory committee will meet tomorrow, October 23 at 9am. He explained that the executive committee recommends holding the additional special recognition award until the spring to be presented with the regular award cycle.

VII. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT

Mr. Byrd provided a summary report in the Commission agenda packet. Giles County will be hosting a series of community engagement workshops October 26-29 for its technical assistance project to grow the outdoor recreation economy through a US EPA program entitled Recreation Economies for Rural Communities. The workshops were postponed since initially scheduled in March.

VDOT and the Department of Rail and Public Transportation are conducting a fall commuter survey, which will be very insightful regarding the impact of the pandemic on travel patterns. The survey is open through October <https://vafallcommutersurvey.metroquest.com/>.

The BCT expanded last month to include a Public Health School Liaison position. Holly Lesko was hired for the position. Ms. Lesko’s role is evolving as it moves forward. One item which has been

identified is to work with student teachers to help them engage with students. Commission staff continues to work closely with the NRV Public Health Task Force by supporting the website www.nrvroadtowellness.com and providing the data dashboard three times weekly. A meeting was held earlier this week to discuss overall website layout updates needed to keep relevant information organized appropriately for residents to easily find. Commissioners were added to the distribution list for the three times weekly update from the Task Force.

Staff continued working with Telework!VA on developing the telework policy for the agency. The draft policy is included in the packet for the board to consider adopting.

The Commission received an Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) POWER grant for coal impacted communities to conduct an action plan for expansion of the New River Water Trail. The Workforce Development Board also received an ARC POWER grant that will focus on a return to work program for individuals with substance use disorders. The Commission will provide fiscal agent services for the Workforce Development Board ARC grant.

VIII. REVIEW OF MUTUAL CONCERNS AND COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS

Mr. Maslaney reported 1/3 of the registered voters in Floyd County have voted early. Mr. Harvey added the early voting in Montgomery County is working well. Mr. Byrd explained the Business Continuity Team is doing infectious disease training with electoral boards in the region so all poll workers are safe as well as providing masks and pens. Ms. Covey reported the Radford City Chamber of Commerce donated \$2,000 to the ACCE program.

IX. OLD BUSINESS

None

X. NEW BUSINESS

- A. The Salvation Army, New River Valley Overview
Captain Charlene Cover gave a presentation on the programs The Salvation Army offers in the New River Valley. Ms. Cover explained The Salvation Army operates a soup kitchen, a family store in Fairlawn, as well as the angel tree, virtual bell ringers, and conducts a coat drive, all of which will operate during the holiday season this year.
- B. Setting FY22 Per Capita Assessment Rate (Dues)
Mr. Byrd explained the current assessment rate of \$1.29 per capita is based on annual population estimates from the Weldon Cooper Center. The FY22 proposed rate of \$1.29 is unchanged from the past four fiscal years and no adjustment is recommended at this time. Utilizing the 2019 population estimates from the Weldon Cooper Center provides for a net positive adjustment of \$423.12 for the Commission.

Mr. Maslaney called for approval of the FY22 Per Capita Assessment Rate to be set at \$1.29.

Motion: Ms. DeVito Kuchenbuch moved for the approval of the FY22 rate at \$1.29. Mr. Fijalkowski seconded the motion.

Action: Motion carried unanimously.

C. Regional Commission Telecommute Policy

Mr. Byrd explained staff worked with Telework!VA to help develop a telecommute policy for the Regional Commission. Development of a policy has been of interest for a while and the onset of the pandemic caused work from home with a temporary policy. This circumstance brought about the need to prepare a more formalized program. It is important to point out the Regional Commission plans to allow for Intermittent Teleworker and Teleworker status while not anticipating Remote Office Worker status at this time. Teleworker status will allow for a routine schedule to be established, perhaps one day per week.

Motion: Mr. Harvey moved to approve the Telecommute Policy. Mr. Martin seconded the motion.

Action: Motion carried unanimously.

D. November Commission Meeting Date

Mr. Byrd explained the November meeting date is historically moved to the 3rd week in November to avoid a conflict with the Thanksgiving holiday.

Mr. Maslaney called for approval of holding the meeting November 19th at 6:00pm.

Motion: Ms. DeVito Kuchenbuch moved to hold the meeting November 19, 2020. Ms. Covey seconded the motion.

Action: Motion carried unanimously.

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

M. Maslaney, Chair
New River Valley Regional Commission