

AGENDA NOTE – HRPDC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

ITEM #21: FOR YOUR INFORMATION

A. SEA LEVEL RISE LISTENING SESSIONS

The HRPDC staff has been working with the University of Virginia Institute for Environmental Negotiation, Wetlands Watch, and the City of Virginia Beach to hold a series of listening sessions for the public to learn about and discuss the impacts of flooding and sea level rise on their community. The meetings will be held March 30 and 31, 2011 in Virginia Beach at four sites:

March 30, 1:00pm – Virginia Aquarium
March 30, 5:30pm – Red Mill Elementary School
March 31, 1:00pm – Meyera E. Oberndorf Central Library
March 31, 5:30pm – Bayside Recreation Center

Information from the Listening Sessions will be reflected in the ongoing HRPDC Climate Change studies, as well as in a report from the UVA Institute for Environmental Negotiation. The UVA work is supported by a grant from the Virginia Sea Grant Program.

B. AIR QUALITY STANDARDS

In March 2010, Mr. Tom Ballou of the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality briefed the HRTPO Board on the reconsideration of the ozone standard by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). EPA proposed in January 2010 a new, more stringent standard and requested comments by late March 2010. The new standard, which was expected to be in the range of 0.060 – 0.070 parts per million (ppm) versus the current standard of 0.075 ppm, was to be promulgated by August 2010. Promulgation of the new standard was subsequently delayed until October and then to December 2010.

DEQ has recently advised the HRPDC staff that EPA has now requested that the court again extend the deadline until July 31, 2011. EPA indicates that the extension will allow the Agency's Clean Air Science Advisory Committee adequate time for further review of the epidemiological and clinical studies used as the basis for the proposed new standard. The HRPDC staff is continuing to monitor this process.

C. HAMPTON ROADS H2O – HELP TO OTHERS – PROGRAM

The Hampton Roads H2O – Help To Others – Program (H2O Program) was established by the HRPDC and the participating jurisdictions in 1999. It was incorporated as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation under Virginia law in 2007. The Board of Directors of the Hampton Roads H2O Program consists of the Director of

Utilities of the participating localities and the General Manager of the Hampton Roads Sanitation District. The HRPDC staff provides staff support for the Program.

In late February, the HRPDC staff was advised that the Internal Revenue Service has approved the tax exempt status of the H2O Program, thus future contributions to the program will be tax deductible. Based on this determination, the HRPDC staff is developing appropriate educational and donation materials so that the program may once again be an active contributor to the quality of life in the region.