

Hampton Roads Planning District Commission

Executive Committee Meeting

Minutes of March 15, 2012

The Executive Committee Meeting of the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission was called to order at 9:30 a.m. in the Regional Boardroom, 723 Woodlake Drive, Chesapeake, Virginia, with the following in attendance:

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

Thomas Shepperd, Chairman (YK)
James O. McReynolds, Treasurer (YK)
Randy Martin (FR)
Brenda Garton (GL)
Mary Bunting (HA)*
Dee Dee Darden (IW)

Mary Jones (JC)
McKinley Price (NN)
Marcus Jones (NO)
J. Randall Wheeler (PQ)
Selena Cuffee-Glenn (SU)
Louis R. Jones (VB)
Clyde Haulman (WM)

Executive Director:

Dwight L. Farmer

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE (ABSENT)

Alan Krasnoff (CH)
Molly Joseph Ward (HA)
Paul D. Fraim (NO)

Kenneth Wright, Vice Chairman (PO)
Michael W. Johnson (SH)
Tyrone Franklin (SY)

OTHER COMMISSIONERS:

Ella P. Ward (CH)
Barry Cheatham (FR)
Ross A. Kearney (HA)
Douglas Caskey (IW)
Robert Middaugh (JC)

Neil Morgan (NN)
Sharon Scott (NN)
Robert M. Dyer (VB)*
Harry E. Diezel (VB)
Jackson C. Tuttle, II (WM)

*Late arrival or early departure.

OTHERS RECORDED ATTENDING:

Louis Guy, John Gergely - Citizens; Betty Meyer, Earl Sorey, Eric Martin (CH); Jimmy Gray (HA/UAWG); Brian DeProfio (HA); Jeff Raliski, Ron Williams (NO); Jackie Kassel (NN); Paul Holt (PO); Eric Nielson (SU); Robert Matthias (VB); Sheila Noll (YK); Ellis James - Sierra Club Observer; Ray Taylor - FHR; William Ginnow - HRMMRS; Wayne Welch- Pirnie/Arcadis; Peter Huber, Willcox & Savage; Cathy Aiello, Aiello Enterprises, Inc.; Staff: John Carlock, Camelia Ravanbakht, Shernita Bethea, Curtis Brown, Rick Case, Nancy Collins, Katie Cullipher, Kathlene Grauberger, Greg Grootendorst, Lisa Hardy, Julia Hillegass, Frances Hughey, Jim Hummer, Whitney Katchmark, Sara Kidd, Mike Long, Benjamin McFarlane, Brian Miller, Kelli Peterson, John Sadler, Tiffany Smith, Jennifer Tribo, Joe Turner, Chris Vaigneur.

Chairman Shepperd called the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission Executive Committee meeting to order and welcomed Mr. Randy Martin from the City of Franklin.

(Commissioners Bunting and Dyer arrive)

PUBLIC COMMENT

One person requested to address the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission.

Ellis W. James

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My name is Ellis W. James. I'm a lifelong resident of Norfolk here in Hampton Roads. I would like to do two things this morning and then I might sneak in a third one. Mr. Chairman, I especially wanted to thank you for your comments and your urging of the localities to pay close attention to the question of waste and the funding and so on, and as I understand it from you, the funding was not cut. So I think that's important. A lot of expressions of concern about that issue came our way, and I appreciate what you did. There are several things that are happening in our area that I hope that all of the communities will pay close attention to. For those of you who did not know, we had a pretty significant TMDL meeting at the Central Library in Virginia Beach on Tuesday night. A hundred people turned out. I have been going to meetings like that for a long time, and I promise you the cross section of both young and old, as well as activists as well as decision makers, made up that audience of approximately a hundred people. It was sort of surprising to a lot of us when Congressman Rigell announced that he was an Environmentalist, but we welcomed him. The discussion was thorough, the exchanges were reasonable and well thought out, and the questions that were asked by the public that attended were also excellent questions. I hope if you did not get a chance to read about it, it is on page twelve of the Virginian-Pilot on the 14th of March. Now, on my favorite subject, the moratorium for uranium mining has been, as you well know, put off this year. The Governor appointed his new group and commission. Unfortunately, they didn't get the full message apparently. We need to do these studies and these deliberations in the full light and sun light for the public to be able to participate fully and effectively. I think it is sad that we have the announcement that they will hide part of these deliberations in the category of the Governor's working papers. I and many other people and other groups have urged people from all of the localities from across the Commonwealth to contact their senators and their delegates to urge them to ask the Governor to be sure and change that. Those of us who worked on offshore drilling issues in the past have not had pleasant experiences with mines and mineral services at times, and I think that this decision that has been announced is a mistake, and I would urge each of the localities to pay close attention to it. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

APPROVAL/MODIFICATION OF AGENDA

Chairman Shepperd asked if there were any modifications or additions/deletions to the agenda. Hearing none he asked for a motion to approve the agenda.

Commissioner Kearney Moved to approve the agenda; seconded by Commissioner E. Ward.
The Motion Carried.

CONSENT AGENDA

The Consent Agenda contained the following Items:

Minutes of January 19, 2012 Quarterly Commission Meeting

Summary of February 16, 2012 Retreat

Treasurer's Reports

Regional Reviews

A. PNRS Items Reviews

Empowering Low Income Students to Restore the Elizabeth River – The Elizabeth River Project

Virginia's NO2 Near-Road Monitoring Program – Department of Environmental Quality

B. Environmental Impact Assessment/Statement Review

Commercial Renewable Energy Transmission on the Outer Continental Shelf Offshore Mid Atlantic - DOI/Bureau of Ocean Energy Management

Air Field Clear Zone Management Plan, Naval Station Norfolk – DOD/U. S. Navy

Commercial Leasing for Wind Power Development on the Outer Continental Shelf Offshore - DOI/Bureau of Ocean Energy Management

Authorizing Resolution and Certifications for FY 2011 Metropolitan Medical Response System Grant Application

2012 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Regional Priorities

Coastal Zone Management Program – FY 2013 Grants

Chairman Shepperd stated he wanted to make a few comments on Item 9 and Item 10. Item 9 under the Emergency Management Program is under the Metropolitan Medical Response System (MMRS). HRPDC receives about \$1 million dollars that allows the localities to work together to prepare for major disasters and HRPDC has been receiving these funds for about ten years from the federal government; these funds are no longer available. As representatives of localities, you should not have to wonder if there was a major catastrophic event how would it be handled. The funding was used to place equipment in the event of a catastrophic event.

Chairman Shepperd stated for Item 10, the Department of Housing and Community Development requests HRPDC to rank regional priorities for the Virginia CDBG program and provide a list of anticipated project proposals for non-entitlement localities. There are only two localities applying, Franklin and Southampton. The important point is that you have to participate.

Chairman Shepperd asked for a motion to approve the Consent Agenda.

Commissioner Kearney Moved to approve the Consent Agenda; seconded by Commissioner Price. The Motion Carried.

Chairman Shepperd asked Mr. Farmer if he had any comments.

Mr. Farmer stated Curtis Brown, HRPDC Emergency Management Administrator, came from a position working as a lead staff person in the U.S. House of Representatives. Mr. Brown will talk about two items that are in jeopardy of having all of their funding lost from the federal government: the Metropolitan Medical Response System, and Urban Area Security Initiative. This is something the Commission should pay close attention and decide if it will walk away from some of this, or step up and do what needs to be done if the funds are lost. Mr. Brown has constant communication through his networks to see if HRPDC can get some reconsideration in its federal funding.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AND HOMELAND SECURITY SUSTAINMENT

Mr. Brown stated he would provide an update on the Urban Area Security Initiative Grant Program and the recent decision of the Department of Homeland Security to eliminate funding to Hampton Roads. He stated as background information, the Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) is a post 9/11 response to terrorism that provides the region with the funds to build capabilities to respond to major natural disasters, as well as man-made disasters. It brings together a cross discipline group of First Responders to identify gaps and to build capabilities. Hampton Roads was provided with the designation as an urban area initiative region in FY 2007 and has received funding over the last five years.

There have been a lot of activities this year related to the Urban Area Security Initiative Program; the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has had to deal with cuts, largely to state and local grant programs. In January, the HRPDC Chairman sent a letter to the Congressional Delegation requesting their support to urge the Secretary of Homeland Security to continue funding to this region. On February 16th, the HRPDC staff provided an overview of the UASI program. On February 17th, HRPDC was notified that the Department of Homeland Security had eliminated the Hampton Roads from FY 2012 funding. HRPDC staff has a lot of concerns with how DHS made this decision. Hampton Roads has received a lot of attention because of the great work of our military forces in the region. We are also at risk of a natural disaster and HRPDC has requested the Department of Homeland Security review their decision.

Mr. Brown stated on March 1st, HRPDC sent a letter to the Congressional Delegation asking them to review the decision that DHS made and to advocate for sustainment funding in the FY 2013 budget. When you look at what this region has received over the last five years, approximately \$33 million to build capabilities, averaging \$7 million a year with a slight drop off in FY-11. This grant program provides direct funding to this region, and has enabled us to build important capabilities that have helped in recent emergencies, including Hurricane Irene, as well as day-to-day operations. Several capabilities have been funded through this grant, most importantly emergency communications.

Mr. Brown stated this region has received accolades from the Department of Homeland security for our emergency communications efforts, and when you look at it from a post 9/11 response, the ability for First Responders to communicate is critical to their ability to save lives. UASI built other capabilities, including citizen evacuation, looking at the possibility of a hurricane requiring that, as well as on-site incident management and building our response to health-related hazards. These funds have been used effectively and have helped to build capabilities.

Mr. Brown stated the biggest concern now is how to sustain this and move forward given the loss of funding. One of the best features of the Urban Area Security Initiative Program is it builds regional collaboration. Prior to the Urban Area Working Group (UAWG), there had never been a group that brings together all the disciplines that worked together with emergency management and Homeland Security efforts. UASI wanted to make sure that continues despite the loss of funding. The interoperable and operable communication capabilities that were built still need to be maintained. Regular maintenance needs to continue on these tools. UASI helped to enhance our detection and decontamination capabilities with the additional ships coming into the port and we need to maintain the ability to detect weapons of mass destruction. A lot of work has been done with medical surge and special needs planning and that will continue to be a high priority given the risk that comes from hurricanes in the region.

The collaboration is an important feature of this grant, a capability that is at risk. The UAWG for Hampton Roads works together and meets monthly to identify gaps as well as to identify priorities for funding, priorities for the region, and brings together law enforcement, fire, health, as well as representation from the Governor's office and the Virginia Department of Emergency Management. Chief Jimmy Gray of Hampton is the chair of this committee and has been working hard the last few years to make sure that we fund the priorities that are needed and build the capabilities that are required to prepare this region. Chief Gray held a conference call and several meetings with the leadership of the different grant programs in the region, as well as the Urban Area Working Group, and a couple of sustainment strategy goals have been identified.

Despite the loss of funding, we still need to make sure we are working together to plan, assess and prioritize capabilities. Continuing to advocate for sustainment funding is very critical and need to ensure we are updating our Congressional Delegation. Four cities across the country who were eliminated in FY 11 from the Urban Area Security Initiative Grants program were added back to the program in fiscal year 2012. Those four localities were able to talk with their Congressional Delegation and they advocated before DHS and were able to return back to the program. There is a possibility if we are able to advocate effectively, let them know what we are doing with the funds, Hampton Roads can be added back to the program. The Department of Homeland Security has put forward a budget proposal that would give a block grant to the state for Homeland Security funds. The Governor's office understands how important this region is, and if we can work together to advocate to the Governor's office, we should be able to secure a lot of that funding that is part of a sustainment strategy that had been identified so far.

Mr. Brown stated the recommended action is to authorize the Hampton Roads Urban Area Working Group in collaboration with the Regional Emergency Management Technical Advisory Committee, Hampton Roads Interoperable Communications Advisory Committee and other homeland security stakeholders, to develop a sustainment plan that prioritizes homeland security investments and identifies funding opportunities. This will provide us with a plan of action. The grant funds that we do have run out in September of 2014. We have a little over two years before we are going to really be in a difficult situation, so we want to begin planning now to identify the resources we are going to need to move forward and ensure that we maintain the capabilities necessary for both man-made and natural disasters.

Chairman Shepperd asked for questions.

Commissioner Diezel asked if the sustainment plan is based around the grants and funding; what is Plan B in the collapse of all these funds? Are we going to go back to the old system? Some might be familiar with the mutual aid context and if so, are there expenses with that? One jurisdiction did not want to foot the bill for the governor's mutual aid. He is supportive of what has been put up, but under the sustainment plan, that does not come to fruition; Plan B has got to be something to look at.

Chairman Shepperd stated his anticipation was Plan B would be included. If we do not get the money, what would be the cost and the formula to fund this project?

Mr. Brown stated we would look at all funding options, including local support, but first we would try the federal grant system and maximize those opportunities.

Chairman Shepperd asked if HRPDC was going to continue to work to try to convince federal funding to continue past 2014.

Mr. Brown stated yes.

Chairman Sheppard stated looking into the future and seeing that does not happen, which as he understands is a strong probability, that we go to plan B if we want the funds to continue. Chairman asked Mr. Brown to come back with a formula to the Board and give an update.

Mr. Farmer stated Plan B is going to involve a couple components, working with the Urban Area Working Group and REMTAC as indicated in the recommended action. They are going to have to watch and see what grants are going to be real and which ones are going away. There could be some federal funds from other sources and maybe some state funds but not at any significant level. Sustainment at the local level which is going to be in dollars, the Commissioners and their representatives are going to have to determine which programs are going to stay and at what cost collectively, because we cannot do this alone, particularly in a major event.

Chairman Shepperd stated one of the things not being answered - why did we fall off the list? When you consider the proximity of the military and the military people living in the region and not have this ability because we are not in the top 35. He was asking to find out why and let us know what happened.

Mr. Farmer stated we have tried to find out as aggressively as we could why we were not on the list to begin with. This happened several years back, when UASI monies were there, and we were not on the list. This area is a target with the military here. The rumor was the military can take care of themselves, but that is not necessarily the case.

Commissioner Scott stated she went to Washington and she had an opportunity to talk to some of the representatives from Homeland Security, and they suggested we need to talk to our congressional leaders to see why we were dropped off the list. More importantly, she had contact information for three people and she would share that information with Mr. Brown. They indicated there will be grants funding on an application basis and there is a list that you can get on that would let you know in advance if there is a grant available in order to take the opportunity to apply.

Mr. Farmer stated the HRPDC staff has taken the initiative to send a letter to all of our Congressman asking to help us understand what is going on and if they could help us work through this initiative help us restore some of the funds.

Chairman Shepperd asked for a motion.

Commissioner Diezel Moved to authorize the Hampton Roads Urban Area Working Group in collaboration with the Regional Emergency Management Technical Advisory Committee, Hampton Roads Interoperable Communications Advisory Committee and other homeland security stakeholders, to develop a sustainment plan that prioritizes homeland security investments and identifies funding opportunities; seconded by Commissioner Cuffee-Glenn. The Motion Carried.

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION PROGRAM

Chairman Shepperd introduced Ms. Julia Hillegass to present the Environmental Education Program update.

Ms. Hillegass stated she would give a brief update on the Environmental Education efforts and get approval to move forward with the new regional initiatives and priorities in the coming fiscal year. HRPDC staff continues to strive to improve their delivery methods to our stakeholders and general public. The various topical websites, online news items, reports and important studies are some of the major methods utilized by the PDC as a whole as well as for the educational initiatives. In the coming year, we would like to explore greater opportunities to coordinate with local public information officers and municipal cable channels to increase the impact of the regional messages. In addition to a regional forum there may be an opportunity to provide panels of experts on topics of regional significance on environmental, economic, emergency management, housing, planning and legislative issues.

Ms. Hillegass stated the tool in environmental education is askHRGREEN.org. The user will find a one stop source of information on all aspects and environmental improvements. The site is full of tips and useful facts to raise awareness and identify opportunities to get involved. Localities and HRPDC staff members provide thoughtful blog items on a daily basis, and welcome guest bloggers. Featured on the site are plans for the Great American Cleanup. Hampton Roads was selected as one of ten national kick-off communities. We are excited to let you know that most localities are participating at some level in this featured event with the transformation for cleanup, planting and other volunteer opportunities.

Ms. Hillegass stated some new things on the horizon is an askHRGREEN.org tabloid style newspaper called the Hampton Roads Green Living Guide. It is going to be distributed to the entire region on April 18th. A similar publication is planned for students to debut this fall and will be distributed to all local schools for the sixth grade level student. There is an app for the cell phone where people can subscribe to a new service called Tap It, which directs users to participating locations where they can refill their travel cup or re-useable bottle with clean safe local tap water. The idea is to help them save money and to help them kick the bottled water habit. Also, coming up this fall are market research plans.

Ms. Hillegass stated this is the next phase of our askHRGREEN.org campaign. We hope to gain greater insight into how effective previous campaigns have been, as well as new ways to start messages and delivery on those messages throughout the region. In the coming year, the program priority will focus on the critical messages of each of our environmental education committees. In stormwater, the TMDL work brings opportunities for more targeted water quality messages based on those TMDLs. Recycling residents want to know more on what can be recycled, how and where. The fats, oil and grease messages will take a slightly different turn, discouraging use of home garbage disposals as a mean to prevent sanitary sewer backups and overflows. Finally, we will continue to enhance our message regarding the values of our great tasting, safe, local tap water.

Ms. Hillegass wanted to remind everyone there are lots of reasons why our efforts have more of an impact when they are regional in scope and consistency. There are greater economies of scale to be gained by consistent messages that cover our shared media market. We do not have the resources for competing or redundant messages in this sort of economic climate. Perhaps most importantly, the bulk of our messages help all localities comply with a variety of federal and state mandates, such as recycling participation, the regional special order by consent to eliminate sanitary sewer overflows, local stormwater permits, water conservation and TMDL. With these things in mind, she was asking the Commission to approve the earlier mentioned concept of conducting a series of regional forum on topics of regional significance, approve greater coordination with local PIOs and cable stations and also approve environmental messaging priorities for the upcoming fiscal year.

Chairman Shepperd asked if this is basic education on recycling.

Ms. Hillegass answered yes.

Chairman Shepperd asked in this program, do you have interaction with the recycling business?

Ms. Hillegass stated yes we have some.

Chairman Shepperd stated the reason he brought this up is this is a forum where we share points and because of the budget in York County, they may get out of the recycling business except for those mandatory things that are required by the state and the reason is money. The idea of spending the money and half the stuff ends up in the landfill, and the questionable facts of whether we are getting any kind of return on that investment has raised the issue where our community may actually eliminate the recycling program. When we talk about the education side of this, it comes back to the communities and he would like to give communities information of the real value, not just this intrinsic idea that the greatness of recycling is going to save the world, but give some practical understanding of how recycling is really going to work and benefit their communities.

Chairman Shepperd asked for a motion to approve the priorities and research for FY 2013.

Commissioner Cheatham Moved to approve program priorities and research for FY 2013; seconded by Commissioner L. Jones. The Motion Carried.

COASTAL ZONE MANAGEMENT AND LOCAL COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING PROGRAMS

Chairman Shepperd introduced Mr. Benjamin McFarlane to present an overview of the Coastal Zone Management and Local Comprehensive Planning Program.

Mr. McFarlane stated he would like to give a brief overview of the HRPDC Coastal Zone Management Program. This program supports HRPDC assistance to local governments to address the local planning needs in addition to regional issues. Coastal zone management planning is a cornerstone of HRPDC's regional planning efforts. Virginia's Coastal Zone covers the entire Tidewater Region, as defined in the Code of Virginia, and includes its shores, tidal rivers, watersheds and territorial seas. Fourteen Hampton Roads cities and counties, as well as five incorporated towns are included in the coastal zone. By law, federal lands are excluded from the coastal zone, but activities in those areas must be consistent with the programs, policies, and regulations. The Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program provides funding to HRPDC and the other coastal zone PDCs to accomplish ongoing program goals as well as specific projects. HRPDC's technical assistance program is funded annually to help coordinate the region's participation in the coastal Zone Management Program as well as to provide technical assistance to local governments and other stakeholders. In recent years, HRPDC has also received both focal area and section 309 grants to fund specific projects. Currently those funds support efforts in water quality, coastal resiliency to sea level rise and change and addressing the Chesapeake Bay TMDL.

The annual technical assistance program includes six components: regional coordination between local government staff, state agencies, and stakeholders; environment impact review of state and federal projects in the region; informing and educating the public about our work products, and efforts; providing training opportunities to local government staff; small scale technical studies; and providing technical assistance to localities upon request. HRPDC staff conducts technical studies on important issues for local governments or the region. This past year, HRPDC used geographic information systems (GIS) to identify federal facilities in the region and then assessed their impacts on locality Watershed Implementations Plan for the Chesapeake Bay TMDL.

HRPDC also provided technical assistance in the form of GIS mapping, data analysis, and issue research to local governments to help with local issues, planning efforts and other needs. Through monthly meetings with the Joint Environmental Committee, HRPDC staff regularly coordinates with staff from local governments, state and federal agencies, and non-governmental stakeholders on issues that are regionally significant, such as state and federal regulations, grant opportunities, and data and research needs. This program allows HRPDC to address and respond to both the immediate and long-term local and regional needs.

Mr. McFarlane stated HRPDC staff recommends approval of the FY 2010-2011 Coastal Resources Management Program Technical Assistance Report for publication and distribution, and approve the Comprehensive Planning Program for FY 2012- 2013.

Chairman Shepperd asked for a motion.

Commissioner Kearney Moved to approved FY 2010-2011 Coastal Resources Management Program Technical Assistance Report for distribution and approved Comprehensive Planning Program for FY 2013; seconded by Commissioner E. Ward. The Motion Carried.

HRPDC ACTION ITEMS: THREE MONTH TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

Chairman Shepperd stated in April we have the HRPDC Unified Planning Work Program, Chesapeake Bay TMDL and Sea Level Rise. The TPO retreat will be held in May and there will be no HRPDC meeting, and then in June we will have HRPDC budget amendments and other reports. Chairman Shepperd stated if there was anything you wanted HRPDC staff to report on please let them know.

Mr. Farmer stated in April the HRPDC staff will have for the Commission approval of the Unified Planning Work Program, and for those who have not been through many cycles throughout the years, if you go through the document you will see everything in there the localities, state and the Feds are funding on your behalf. The HRPDC will begin working on this document on July 1st for FY 2013. This is a very important document and HRPDC staff has worked with localities staffs in developing this.

PROJECT STATUS REPORTS

Chairman Shepperd stated Item 16C Project Status Reports item number 6, Uranium Mining, the concern was a financial boom for the far west part of the state around Danville, it could possibly be a disaster if not appropriately studied for Virginia Beach and that area of the water system. If you have not seen the report on Chernobyl, keep in mind that a 30 kilometer circle around that plant is dead.

CORRESPONDENCE OF INTEREST

Chairman Shepperd stated there is a letter from Senator Thomas K. Norment indicating that for the Litter Control Recycling Advisory Board, the General Assembly basically pulled the cut out of consideration.

OLD/NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Farmer stated the HRPDC staff hopes to be fully transitioned on July 1st for electronic distribution of the agenda packet. For those who need a hard copy please let the staff know and we will accommodate the request.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to come before the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission, the meeting adjourned at 10:15 a.m.

Thomas G. Shepperd
Chairman

Dwight L. Farmer
Executive Director/Secretary