

Hampton Roads Planning District Commission

Retreat Summary

February 16, 2012

The Retreat of the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission was called to order at 11:30 a.m. by Chairman Shepperd with the following in attendance:

COMMISSIONERS:

Thomas G. Shepperd, Jr. Chairman (YK)
Kenneth Wright, Vice Chairman (PO)*
Alan P. Krasnoff (CH)*
William E. Harrell (CH)
Amar Dwarkanath (CH)*
Dr. Ella Ward (CH)*
Barry Cheatham (FR)
Mary Bunting (HA)
Ross A. Kearney (HA)*
W. Douglas Caskey (IW)
Dee Dee Darden (IW)
Mary Jones (JC)

Robert Middaugh (JC)
McKinley Price (NN)*
Sharon Scott (NN)*
Stanley Stein (NO)
Selena Cuffee-Glenn (SU)*
John Seward (SY)*
Robert M. Dyer (VB)*
Barbara M. Henley (VB)*
Louis R. Jones (VB)
James Spore (VB)
John Moss (VB)*
Clyde Haulman (WM)*

Executive Director:

Dwight L. Farmer

*Late arrival or early departure.

ABSENT:

Clifton Hayes (CH), June Fleming (FR), Brenda Garton (GL), Ashley Chriscoe (GL), Molly Joseph Ward (HA), Neil A. Morgan (NN), Anthony Burfoot (NO), Paul D. Fraim (NO), Marcus Jones (NO), Thomas Smigiel (NO), Theresa Whibley, MD (NO), J. Randall Wheeler (PQ), W. Eugene Hunt (PQ), Kenneth L. Chandler (PO), Michael W. Johnson (SH), Ron West (SH), Linda T. Johnson (SU), Tyrone W. Franklin (SY), Harry E. Diezel (VB), John E. Uhrin (VB), Jackson C. Tuttle II (WM), James O. McReynolds (YK).

OTHERS RECORDED ATTENDING:

Brian DeProfio (HA); Stanley Stein (NO), Michael King (NN), Jim Oliver - HRCCE; Ellis James - Sierra Club Observer; Staff: John Carlock, Camelia Ravanbakht, Shernita Bethea, Melton Boyer, Curtis Brown, Rick Case, Jennifer Coleman, Nancy Collins, Katie Cullipher, Mary Donny, Natalie Easterday, Greg Grootendorst, Lisa Hardy, Julia Hillegass, Frances Hughey, Jim Hummer, Rob Jacobs, Whitney Katchmark, Sara Kidd, Robert Lawrence, Mike Long, Jai McBride, Brian Miller, Kelli Peterson, John Sadler, Tiffany Smith, Jennifer Tribo, Joe Turner, Chris Vaigneur.

Chairman Shepperd called the retreat to order and welcome everyone. He then gave a schedule on the order of the retreat. Then open to meeting for public comments.

Public Comment

One person requested to speak.

Mr. Ellis W. James

Thank you Mr. Chairman my name is Ellis W. James I reside in the City of Norfolk. I want to call something to the Commission's attend that I think is going to be growing and a very serious problem. I hope some of you had the opportunity yesterday to hear the eloquent discussion and concerns but forward by Senator Yvonne Miller. Now the black caucus represents in this part of the Commonwealth a large number of people. There are people who are getting hammered as we speak. Those of us who are comfortable should be thankful, as I am sure you are, but there is a growing concern that women's health issues, funds for the safety net for the poor and a number of other issues that would fall into that category are now in serious jeopardy and are now under attack. I happen to agree with that assessment and I think because of the voice of the black caucus is important to each of our communities both our cities and counties that we should pay close attention. Let me give you two quick examples of something that should not be happening but is happening. Gas prices are going up dramatically and unfortunately the front page of I believe it was USA Today talks about \$4.00 gas. Now that is strange because the refinery capacity in this country right now has a surplus, somebody is playing games and the people who are getting hammered are the people who can least afford it. Our good friends in Portsmouth have called attention to a very critical part of this issue it has to do with the question of tolls, and I recognized that you are not the TPO, however you need to address these issues I believe in each one of the communities. The second thing is the cost of drugs are going through the roof. Hello, did anybody mention, I think they did, that we have a growing population of seniors and people who depend upon those medications and they are being charged in many, many rip-off schemes and I think we need to pay some attention to that also. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

(Commissioners Dwarkanath and E. Ward arrive)

APPROVAL/MODIFICATION OF AGENDA

Chairman Shepperd stated he would like to change the order of items #15 and #16 and have item #16 come before Item #15. Chairman asked for a motion to change those items.

Commissioner Cheatham Moved to approve the modification to the agenda; Commissioner Ward seconded. The Motion Carried.

Chairman Shepperd opened the retreat discussions by encouraging the Commissioners' engagement to enhance the value of this and future meetings. He briefly reviewed the newly revised Commissioner Handbook and the resources contained in it. Executive Director, Dwight Farmer offered to provide individual briefings and orientations to Commissioners to accommodate their schedules as needed. Mr. Farmer also reviewed the duties and responsibilities of Planning District Commissions as outlined in the State Code of Virginia. He stressed the Chairman's desire to bring the most important topics to the board for discussion, deliberation and decision-making.

ELECTRONIC AGENDAS

Data was provided regarding the cost savings associated with converting to electronic agenda packages. Chairman Shepperd stressed that this would be voluntary and those that prefer hard copies of the packet can still continue to receive them. It was decided that those who wished to receive hard copies should notify the HRPDC and electronic notification would begin with the March meeting materials.

AGENDA NOTES/MEETING STRUCTURE

Mr. Farmer reviewed the utility of the agenda packet, in particular the agenda note format, in assisting Commissioners in preparing for meetings. The Chairman and Mr. Farmer encouraged members to provide feedback regarding any changes they would like to see.

STAFF COMPENSATION

Chairman Shepperd and Mr. Farmer led a discussion about a placeholder for a 2.5% merit-based salary adjustment for staff in FY13. The Personnel and Budget Committee will meet to consider a recommendation for Commission action.

(Commissioner Dyer arrives)

OPERATING BUDGET – FY 13

Ms. Nancy Collins, Chief Financial Officer, provided a brief presentation on the anticipated operating budget for fiscal year 2013. The HRPDC overhead rate which is less than 22%, is well below half of typical government and university overhead rates. The budget as presented accommodates a 2.5% merit increase, while also providing a reduction in local contributions. Additional discussion centered on local compensation challenges and approaches to consider.

(Commissioner Moss arrives)

REGIONAL ECONOMIC ANALYSES

Chairman Shepperd reviewed the methodology associated with the typical regional economic benchmark study and broached the subject of developing local-specific economic benchmarks and indicators that might be helpful at the local level. HRPDC Chief Economist, Greg Grootendorst reviewed the various information and formats utilized for regional economic data and analysis. Mr. Farmer reiterated the staff will make concerted efforts to pull out information in a disaggregated format for use by localities. Mr. Grootendorst also provided additional information regarding the impact of defense expenditures in Hampton Roads.

(Commissioner Dyer departs)

WATER RESOURCE STUDIES

Principal Water Resources Engineer, Whitney Katchmark presented an overview of ongoing HRPDC work in Chesapeake Bay TMDLs. Ms. Katchmark also provided insight into an EPA initiative in Integrated Water Resources Planning which hopes to develop better processes to help localities to evaluate and prioritize water quality projects. Groundwater mitigation and analysis efforts were also highlighted. Further Commission discussion on water resources issues centered on the next steps in the Watershed Implementation Plan process and concerns about a potential lifting of the moratorium on uranium mining. The Commission has supported maintaining the moratorium, but Commissioners felt it might be time to take a stronger position on this issue. It was suggested that the staff convene local legislative liaisons to discuss what could be done and report back at a future meeting.

(Commissioners Wright, Haulman, Kearney and Price depart)

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT SUSTAINMENT

Curtis Brown, Emergency Management Administrator reviewed the capabilities brought to the region by the Urban Areas Security Initiative (UASI) grant funds and the risk of losing those funds in the future. Key concerns now focus on how best to sustain the region's increased capacity to prevent, protect, respond and recover from acts of terrorism, as well as natural disasters. The UASI process is the only vehicle in the region which brings together fire, emergency management and law enforcement to collaborate on cross-jurisdictional responses. Commissioners reaffirmed the need to maintain collaborative efforts.

(Commissioners Krasnoff, Seward, Cuffee-Glen, Henley and Spore depart)

HAMPTON ROADS STRATEGIC PLAN

Chairman Shepperd proposed coordination of the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission (HRPDC), Hampton Roads Military and Federal Facilities Alliance (HRFFA) and Hampton Roads Partnership (HRP) to work more closely to develop a regional strategic plan. Deputy Executive Director, John Carlock provided a presentation on potential approaches. Discussion followed regarding the importance of such an approach to remain regionally competitive and that the Commission is the logical body to coordinate such an effort. It was also suggested that Commission meetings be restructured to allow more time for deliberation of critical strategic issues in the region.

(Commissioner Ward departs)

Due to time constraints, the following items will be discussed at a later date.

- Environmental Education Program
- Housing Studies
- Comprehensive Planning

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 1:50 PM.

Thomas G. Shepperd
Chairman

Dwight L. Farmer
Executive Director/Secretary