

**THE DRAFT SUMMARY OF THE MEETING OF THE
HRPDC COASTAL RESILIENCY COMMITTEE
March 24, 2017**

1. Summary of the December 9, 2016 Meeting of the Hampton Roads Coastal Resiliency Committee.

The summary of the September 23, 2016 meeting of the Hampton Roads Coastal Resiliency Committee was accepted as distributed.

2. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

3. Update on Discussions with FEMA Region III Regarding Requirements for Permitting Development in Special Flood Hazards Areas

Mr. Ben McFarlane, HRPDC, updated the Committee on the status of discussions with FEMA Region III and headquarters regarding development permit requirements in special flood hazard areas. The HRPDC has requested that FEMA Region III staff attend a meeting of the chief administrative officers or commission to discuss the proposed permitting requirements, but a meeting has not yet been scheduled. Hampton city staff also reported that they have not heard back from FEMA regarding the city's FOIA request for other community assistance visit reports with similar findings. The HRPDC staff will keep the localities informed if any developments occur.

4. Legislative Update

Mr. McFarlane reported that the commission voted in January to include the three priorities voted on at the December committee meeting in the regional legislative agenda. The priorities were:

- 1) Supporting appropriation of funds for the Virginia Shoreline Resiliency Fund
- 2) Supporting the appropriation of funds to match federal funding for U.S. Army Corps of Engineers 3x3x3 projects
- 3) Supporting the creation of a standalone state chief resilience officer

During the 2017 legislative session the General Assembly included \$500,000 in FY18 for matching funds for 3x3x3 studies in Hampton Roads and the Northern Neck. The other two priorities were not passed by the legislature. Governor McAuliffe has not signed the budget bill yet.

5. Storm Surge Modeling and Water Level Sensors

Dr. Derek Loftis, Virginia Institute of Marine Science, gave a presentation to the committee on the StormSense project, which is a proposed network of sensors for calibrating a VIMS-developed flood model. Currently, the project is active in Newport News, Norfolk, and Virginia Beach. The Newport News component consists of 8 sensors funded by grants, whereas the Norfolk and Virginia Beach components are locally funded. Dr. Loftis has also been using data from the Wetlands Watch Sea Level Rise app to feed into the model. One of the goals of the project is to test various types of low-cost sensors in different environments to help identify a cost-effective approach to water level monitoring. When calibrated, the model should be able to predict flooding at the neighborhood street level. The current project funded by a Smart Cities grant is scheduled to end in fall 2017.

Currently, 19 sensors have been funded across the three participating cities (3 in Newport News, 10 in Virginia Beach, and 6 in Norfolk). The HRPDC staff had previously requested that Dr. Loftis estimate the number and location of additional sensors to develop an effective region-wide network. Dr. Loftis has evaluated 85 potential sites, including assessing the optimal distance between sensors in different locations. Dr. Loftis estimates that an additional 22 sites would provide regional coverage. The cost per sensor would depend on the type, but is estimated at between \$3,000 and \$4,000.

The HRPDC staff will continue to work with Dr. Loftis on the proposal for additional sensors to bring back to the committee.

6. RISE Coastal Resilience Accelerator

Dr. Paul Robinson, RISE Executive Director, briefed the committee on the new 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, the idea for which was included in the Commonwealth's application for the National Disaster Resilience Competition. Dr. Robinson is currently working with the state to develop and execute an agreement. The goal of RISE is to enhance community resilience by protecting, growing, and diversifying the regional economy, with a special focus on the fields of resilience and coastal adaptation. For example, RISE will be able to loan to or invest in small businesses. The first year plan for the organization is to support the state's NDRC work, establish a resilience campus, and to start working on financing of innovative projects.

7. Revised Proposal to Establish a Benchmark Network for Subsidence Monitoring

Ms. Whitney Katchmark, HRPDC, briefed the committee on a revised proposal for working with the U.S. Geological Survey to use annual benchmarking to monitor and measure land subsidence across southeastern Virginia. The revised proposal features additional funding from USGS, so the total local contribution would be \$35,000 each year for five years. Prior to the meeting, the City of Norfolk had suggested reaching out to the Commonwealth Center for Recurrent Flooding Resiliency to ask them to fund the project. At this point, the CCRFR is not able to commit to funding the project. The HRPDC staff will reach out to CCRFR to get a final determination. If the CCRFR can fund the project, the HRPDC will inform the committee. If not, the committee will finish voting on the proposal via email.

8. Coastal Hazards Grant Update

Mr. McFarlane briefed the committee on a coastal hazards project funded by the Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program. The project is assessing the current state of local planning and sea level rise in Virginia localities. The core of the project is an assessment of current efforts in Virginia and best practices from inside and outside the state. The HRPDC staff will also provide a workshop for local staff. The assessment of the state of planning in coastal Virginia included 47 communities, including all Hampton Roads PDC members and all cities and counties in Tidewater. This deliverable has been completed. Case study identification and assessment is underway.

Mr. McFarlane also updated the committee on other CZM-funded projects in Hampton Roads and future plans. Coastal Hazards is one of three priority strategies the program is working on for the FY16-20 timeframe.

9. Joint Land Use Studies

Mr. McFarlane briefed the committee on the status of several Joint Land Use Studies underway in the region. JLUS projects are funded by the Department of Defense's Office of Economic Adjustment to help communities identify and address incompatible land uses and other issues that adversely affect military operations and readiness. The HRPDC is managing two projects in South Hampton Roads with the Navy, one for Norfolk and Virginia Beach, which is underway, and one with Portsmouth and Chesapeake, which will be starting soon. Newport News is also coordinating a JLUS on the Peninsula for Joint Base Langley-Eustis. Each study is looking at sea level rise and flooding. The HRPDC staff will keep the committee informed of any relevant findings or developments.

Mr. Greg Johnson, Virginia Beach, mentioned that Virginia Beach has had a meeting with NAS Oceana staff to discuss the city's master drainage study and sea level rise work.

10. Update on Federal and State Efforts Related to Sea Level Rise and Recurrent Flooding

Mr. McFarlane reported on several topics:

- Last year the HRPDC submitted an application to receive authorization for Corps 3x3x3 coastal resiliency studies for all of coastal Virginia. The proposal made it through the Corps internal review process and was included in the 2017 Report to Congress on Future Water Resources Development.
- A FEMA workshop on resiliency and non-regulatory products is scheduled for the afternoon of April 27th. The workshop will be held at the HRPDC.
- CZM funding, which is a significant contributor to the HRPDC's budget for coastal planning, is currently zeroed out in the President's proposed budget.

11. Updates on PDC and Local Efforts Related to Sea Level Rise and Recurrent Flooding

Mr. McFarlane reported that the next Hampton Roads Adaptation Forum is scheduled for May 19 at VMASC.

Mr. Johnson reported that the city has made progress with DEQ on discussions regarding energy balance in the runoff reduction method.

Mr. Eric Martin, Chesapeake, reported that there is typically no minimum finished floor requirement for multi-family residential, since they are considered commercial. The city is discussing the issue with TBA. Also, residential construction appears to be trending toward more slab-on-grade, which would remove the factor of safety that a crawlspace provides.

12. Other Matters

The next meeting of the Coastal Resiliency Committee will be held in June 2017.