

**Hampton Roads Planning District Commission
Summary Minutes of January 21, 2021**

Pursuant to the declared state of emergency in the Commonwealth of Virginia in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and to protect the public health and safety of the Commission members, staff, and the general public, the January 21, 2021 Hampton Roads Planning District Commission (HRPDC) Meeting was held electronically via Zoom with the following in attendance:

Commissioners in Attendance

Andria McClellan, Chair (NO)	Larry “Chip” Filer (NO)*
David Jenkins, Vice-Chair (NN)	Mamie Johnson (NO)
Randy Keaton, Treasurer (IW)	Shannon Glover (PO)*
Stephen Best (CH)	LaVoris Pace (PO)
Robert Geis (CH)	Gordon Helsel (PQ)
Christopher Price (CH)	Randall Wheeler (PQ)
Debbie Ritter (CH)	William Gillette (SH)*
Ella Ward (CH)	Michael Johnson (SH)*
Amanda Jarratt (FR)*	Michael Stallings (SM)
Frank Rabil (FR)*	Leroy Bennett (SU)*
Brent Fedors (GL)*	Albert Moor (SU)
Steve Brown (HA)*	Melissa Rollins (SY)
Mary Bunting (HA)	Patrick Duhaney (VB)*
Donnie Tuck (HA)	Robert Dyer (VB)*
William McCarty (IW)	Guy Tower (VB)
Jim Icenhour (JC)	Sabrina Wooten (VB)
Scott Stevens (JC)	Douglas Pons (WM)
McKinley Price (NN)	Andrew Trivette (WM)*
Cynthia Rohlf (NN)	Neil Morgan (YK)
Courtney Doyle (NO)*	Sheila Noll (YK)

Commissioners Absent:

Phillip Bazzani (GL)	Barbara Henley (VB)
Kenneth Alexander (NO)	Louis Jones (VB)
T. Carter Williams (SM)	Rosemary Wilson (VB)
Robert Elliott (SY)	

Executive Director:

Robert A. Crum, Jr., Secretary

Other Participants:

Theresa Danaher (CAC)

*Late arrival or early departure.

Others Recorded Attending:

Brian DeProfio (HA); Brad Rinehimer (JC); Doug Smith (Hampton Roads Alliance); William Saunders (Windsor); Diane Kaufman (Senator Tim Kaine's Office); Drew Lumpkin (Senator Mark Warner's Office); Caleb Smith (Congresswoman Elaine Luria's Office); and Keith Cannady, Kelli Arledge, Rob Cofield, Katie Cullipher, Logan Grimm, Greg Grootendorst, John Harbin, Whitney Katchmark, Benjamin McFarlane, Krista Lauro, Cynthia Mulkey, Katherine Rainone, John Sadler, Joe Turner, and Sheila Wilson (HRPDC/HRTPO Staff)

Chair Andria McClellan asked Mr. Robert Crum, HRPDC Executive Director, to brief the Commission on the provisions and acceptable practices of electronic meetings.

Mr. Crum stated that pursuant to the declared state of emergency in the Commonwealth of Virginia and in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and to protect the health and safety of the Commission members, staff, and the general public, the HRPDC meeting was being held electronically via Zoom. These electronic meetings are required to complete essential business on behalf of the region.

Per the requirements of the Code of Virginia, the meeting notice, agenda, and supporting documentation were posted on the HRPDC website for public review. HRPDC staff also provided electronic copies of this information to Commission members and other interested parties. Additionally, the meeting was live-streamed and available for viewing on the Regional Connection YouTube channel. A recording of the meeting will be available on the HRPDC website.

The general public was provided an opportunity to comment on the meeting agenda via two options:

1. Members of the public were invited to submit comments to the Commission via email.
2. Members of the public were also invited to call into a dedicated phone line where comments could be recorded for the Commission.

No public comments were received as of 48 hours before the meeting.

Mr. Crum reviewed a few important housekeeping rules in order for the electronic meeting to run smoothly:

1. All Commission members were asked to remain on mute before and after providing input.
2. All Commission members were asked to identify themselves by name and locality when speaking and/or providing a motion or second.
3. All votes must be made by roll call and recorded in the minutes.

On behalf of the HRPDC staff, Mr. Crum thanked everyone for their attendance, commitment to the region, and cooperation and patience during the electronic meeting.

HRPDC staff indicated that a quorum was present.

Call to Order

The January 21, 2021 meeting of the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission was called to order by Chair Andria McClellan at 12:32 p.m.

Approval/Modification of Agenda

Chair Andria McClellan indicated that there had been a request to modify the HRPDC Agenda to add "COVID-19 Response Update" as an agenda item following the Consent Agenda.

Motion: Commissioner Donnie Tuck Moved to approve the Agenda as amended; seconded by Commissioner Ella Ward.

With no questions or comments, a roll call vote was conducted and the votes were recorded as follows:

Chesapeake	Mr. Stephen Best	Aye
	Ms. Debbie Ritter	Aye
	Dr. Ella Ward	Aye
	Mr. Christopher Price	Aye
	Mr. Robert Geis	Not Recorded
Franklin	Mayor Frank Rabil	Aye
	Ms. Amanda Jarratt	Aye
Gloucester County	Mr. Phillip Bazzani	Absent
	Mr. Brent Fedors	Aye
Hampton	Mayor Donnie Tuck	Aye
	Mr. Steve Brown	Aye
	Ms. Mary Bunting	Aye
Isle of Wight County	Mr. William McCarty	Aye
	Mr. Randy Keaton	Aye
James City County	Mr. Jim Icenhour	Aye
	Mr. Scott Stevens	Aye
Newport News	Mayor McKinley Price	Aye
	Mr. David Jenkins	Aye
	Ms. Cynthia Rohlf	Aye

Norfolk	Mayor Kenneth Alexander	Absent
	Ms. Courtney Doyle	Aye
	Ms. Mamie Johnson	Aye
	Ms. Andria McClellan	Aye
	Dr. Larry “Chip” Filer	Aye
Poquoson	Mayor Gordon Helsel	Not Recorded
	Mr. Randy Wheeler	Aye
Portsmouth	Mayor Shannon Glover	Aye
	Mr. LaVoris Pace	Aye
Town of Smithfield	Mayor T. Carter Williams	Absent
	Mr. Michael Stallings	Aye
Southampton County	Mr. William Gillette	Aye
	Mr. Michael Johnson	Aye
Suffolk	Mr. Leroy Bennett	Aye
	Mr. Albert Moor	Aye
Surry County	Mr. Robert Elliott	Absent
	Ms. Melissa Rollins	Not Recorded
Virginia Beach	Mayor Robert Dyer	Aye
	Ms. Barbara Henley	Absent
	Mr. Louis Jones	Absent
	Mr. Guy Tower	Aye
	Ms. Rosemary Wilson	Absent
	Ms. Sabrina Wooten	Aye
	Mr. Patrick Duhaney	Not Recorded
Williamsburg	Mayor Douglas Pons	Aye
	Mr. Andrew Trivette	Aye
York County	Ms. Sheila Noll	Aye
	Mr. Neil Morgan	Aye

The Motion Carried with 36 votes in favor, none against, and no abstentions.

The roll call vote also served as the record of attendance and a quorum was confirmed.

Submitted Public Comments

Chair Andria McClellan noted that there were no Submitted Public Comments.

Public Comment

Chair Andria McClellan indicated that the public was provided an opportunity to comment in advance of the meeting by email or phone. Chair McClellan stated that HRPDC staff received no comments via either option as of 48 hours before the meeting.

Executive Director's Report

Mr. Robert Crum, HRPDC Executive Director, referenced his monthly report and provided an update on the HRPDC Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) Committee's efforts in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, including a public outreach campaign to stop the spread of the virus and a public service announcement to inform Hampton Roads' residents of federal utility relief assistance available for those impacted by the pandemic and unable to pay their utility bills.

Approval of Consent Items

Chair Andria McClellan asked Mr. Robert Crum, HRPDC Executive Director, to provide a brief description of the items on the Consent Agenda, which included the following:

- Meeting Minutes – November 19, 2020 Commission Meeting
- Treasurer's Report – November 2020
- Fiscal Year 2021 Budget Amendment
- 2021 Regional Meetings Schedule
- Invitation to Join RVA-757 Connects
- Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Program 2020-2024
- Contract with Old Dominion University for Emergency Medical Supplies Inventory System
- Consultant Services Contract Task Order – Hazard Mitigation Plan Update
- Consultant Services Contract Task Order – Military Installation Resilience (MIR) Review

Motion: Commissioner Ella Ward Moved to approve the Consent Agenda Items as presented; seconded by Commissioner William McCarty.

With no questions or comments, a roll call vote was conducted and the votes were recorded as follows:

Chesapeake	Mr. Stephen Best	Aye
	Ms. Debbie Ritter	Aye
	Dr. Ella Ward	Aye
	Mr. Christopher Price	Aye
	Mr. Robert Geis	Aye

Franklin	Mayor Frank Rabil	Aye
	Ms. Amanda Jarratt	Aye
Gloucester County	Mr. Phillip Bazzani	Absent
	Mr. Brent Fedors	Aye
Hampton	Mayor Donnie Tuck	Aye
	Mr. Steve Brown	Aye
	Ms. Mary Bunting	Aye
Isle of Wight County	Mr. William McCarty	Aye
	Mr. Randy Keaton	Aye
James City County	Mr. Jim Icenhour	Aye
	Mr. Scott Stevens	Aye
Newport News	Mayor McKinley Price	Aye
	Mr. David Jenkins	Aye
	Ms. Cynthia Rohlf	Aye
Norfolk	Mayor Kenneth Alexander	Absent
	Ms. Courtney Doyle	Aye
	Ms. Mamie Johnson	Aye
	Ms. Andria McClellan	Aye
	Dr. Larry "Chip" Filer	Aye
Poquoson	Mayor Gordon Helsel	Not Recorded
	Mr. Randy Wheeler	Aye
Portsmouth	Mayor Shannon Glover	Aye
	Mr. LaVoris Pace	Aye
Town of Smithfield	Mayor T. Carter Williams	Absent
	Mr. Michael Stallings	Aye
Southampton County	Mr. William Gillette	Aye
	Mr. Michael Johnson	Aye
Suffolk	Mr. Leroy Bennett	Aye
	Mr. Albert Moor	Not Recorded
Surry County	Mr. Robert Elliott	Absent
	Ms. Melissa Rollins	Aye
Virginia Beach	Mayor Robert Dyer	Aye
	Ms. Barbara Henley	Absent
	Mr. Louis Jones	Absent
	Mr. Guy Tower	Aye

	Ms. Rosemary Wilson	Absent
	Ms. Sabrina Wooten	Aye
	Mr. Patrick Duhaney	Aye
Williamsburg	Mayor Douglas Pons	Aye
	Mr. Andrew Trivette	Aye
York County	Ms. Sheila Noll	Aye
	Mr. Neil Morgan	Aye

The Motion Carried with 38 votes in favor, none against, and no abstentions.

COVID-19 Response Update

Mr. Robert Crum, HRPDC Executive Director, reported that throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the HRPDC Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) Committee, led by Commissioner Mary Bunting as Chair and Michael Johnson as Vice-Chair, has met on an ongoing basis to align efforts and coordinate regionally on how to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and its impacts on Hampton Roads' communities and residents. More recently, the CAO Committee's focus transitioned to COVID-19 vaccinations and the confusion regarding the vaccine rollout, frustration regarding the speed of the rollout, and inconsistent messaging and approaches of various Health Districts across the region.

Mr. Crum reported that the CAO Committee had recently appointed a subcommittee to more specifically address regional vaccination rates. One of the subcommittee meetings was with Dr. Danny Avula, who was recently appointed by Governor Northam to oversee the Commonwealth's COVID-19 vaccine rollout. The subcommittee identified many continuing concerns, and with HRPDC leadership, drafted a letter to Governor Northam, which was distributed that morning to Commission members for their review and consideration. Mr. Crum indicated that staff was requesting authorization for Chair McClellan and Vice-Chair Jenkins to send this letter to the Governor on behalf of the region.

Mr. Crum presented the draft letter written on behalf of the HRPDC, representing 17 local governments, respectfully requesting Governor Northam's immediate assistance to increase the rate of vaccinations in Hampton Roads. The letter expressed concern that the Commonwealth ranks very low as compared to other states in the per capita rollout of vaccinations. At the current rate, it would take approximately 12 to 16 months for the regional population to be vaccinated. The letter stated that Hampton Roads' cities and counties were ready and willing to assist with available staff that can administer vaccinations as well as offer spaces as clinics to administer large-scale vaccinations. However, to do so requires State assistance, support, and written agreements providing the necessary authorizations.

Mr. Crum reviewed some of the issues raised within the letter, including the following:

- Health Districts are approaching the vaccination effort in an inconsistent manner causing confusion and frustration across the region.

- If the vaccination program continues on its current path, low income and disadvantaged populations could have less access to vaccines due to the Health District in which they may be located.
- The pandemic has illustrated that Health Districts are underfunded and without the resources or structure to respond in a timely manner.
- As vaccinations increase, it is imperative to also maintain adequate resources and staff to continue testing.

Mr. Crum commented that the letter not only outlined concerns but offered suggestions, including the following:

- Consider engaging the Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM) to provide strategic oversight for the statewide vaccination effort.
- Offer clear guidance to Health Districts to stratify and prioritize personnel who should be considered in Phase 1(b). Interpretations and policies need to be consistent across Health Districts.
- Consider a public information campaign with a clear and consistent message to residents identifying the who, where, and when of the vaccination program.
- Establish protocols that tie vaccine distribution numbers to the localities that can produce maximum through-put to ensure the limited vaccines are administered as quickly as possible.
- Propose a State reimbursement program to offset local funds re-appropriated to prioritize support of the vaccine rollout.

Mr. Crum stated that the letter also requested clarification regarding if the reported per capita rollout of vaccination numbers include active/retired military personnel and their families, who represent over 300,000 people in Hampton Roads.

Mr. Crum reported that the letter also recommended that Governor Northam appoint a small committee of six to eight CAOs from across Virginia, including two from Hampton Roads, to meet with the Governor weekly to provide status updates and recommendations.

Commissioner Mary Bunting stressed that the fundamental issue was the lack of a steady vaccine supply. She stated that the Health Districts are underfunded and overburdened, which is stressing the system. Commissioner Bunting specified that the Peninsula has six localities with one Health District, where some single localities have a dedicated Health District. She added that some Health Districts have accepted help faster than others leading to social inequity issues.

Commissioner Bunting indicated that all of the CAOs have been willing to contribute supplies and resources. She suggested that the letter's reference to tying vaccine distribution numbers to the localities with the most through-put needed to be clearer that every district could produce maximum through-put if locality assistance was accepted.

Commissioner Courtney Doyle expressed her support of the letter to the Governor. She shared her concern that the region is the last in the Commonwealth to move to Phase 1(b) and

commented that it is in large part due to the capacity and capability of the region's Health Districts.

Mayor Tuck thanked Commissioner Bunting for the clarification regarding what appeared to be a contradiction in the letter regarding through-put and supply.

Chair McClellan agreed and asked Mr. Crum to work on clarifying the through-put language in the letter.

Commissioner Debbie Ritter agreed with Commissioner Doyle's comments and asked Commissioner Bunting how many Health Districts are within the Hampton Roads Region.

Commissioner Bunting indicated that she was not familiar with each Health District but commented that some cities have their own district. She stated that the City of Hampton used to have its own Health District but the State merged Hampton into the Peninsula Health District, which already included five other localities.

Commissioner Ritter commented that the military allocation of vaccines is a Federal distribution and separate from the State distribution allocation.

Commissioner Bunting agreed and added that the request for clarification is to determine if the counts on the State dashboard include how many residents the Federal government is vaccinating. If not, then the regional numbers reflected are underrepresented.

Commissioner Ritter expressed concern that the inclusion of the Federal distribution numbers would hinder the efficacy of the request for additional supply from the State.

Chair McClellan presented a map of Virginia depicting the Health Districts and each district's current phase. She asked if Chesapeake was still in 1(a) or in 1(b) as shown on the map.

Commissioner Christopher Price responded that Chesapeake is largely in Phase 1(a), but the district chose to prioritize teachers in Phase 1(b) over others in 1(a).

Mr. Crum responded to Commissioner Ritter's earlier question regarding the number of Health Districts in the region. He reported that there are seven different Health Districts in the Hampton Roads Region. He added that some localities are in Health Districts with other localities that are not in the Hampton Roads Region.

Chair McClellan commented that the Health District in Fairfax County reports to the county as opposed to the majority of Virginia Health Districts, which report to the State.

Commissioner Price confirmed that Fairfax County went through a process a few years ago requesting permission from the Commonwealth to transition the Health District from a State entity to a county entity.

Commissioner Ritter commended the CAOs for their initiative and expressed her support of the letter to the Governor. She asked if the letter would be copied to Dr. Avula.

Chair McClellan confirmed that the intention was to copy Dr. Avula as well as the Hampton Roads Delegation.

Commissioner Ritter responded favorably to the approach and commented that those in the higher levels of State government may not fully understand what local government representatives are trying to do on behalf of their communities.

Commissioner Ella Ward expressed her support of the letter, and she asked if the specific numbers of vaccinations received and expected were available.

Commissioner Bunting indicated that the Peninsula Health District was receiving approximately 1,000 per week. She clarified that the number did not include the number that hospitals were receiving directly.

Commissioner Patrick Duhaney indicated that the City of Virginia Beach, outside of its health systems, had been told to expect between 5,500 and 5,800 per week. He commented that the amount is not nearly enough for the Virginia Beach population. He relayed Commissioner Larry Filer's statement that Norfolk had been told to expect approximately 7,000 per week. He added that the combined total population within the Peninsula Health District is substantially larger than Virginia Beach but only receiving 1,000 per week.

Commissioner Filer specified that the clinic the City of Norfolk set up for vaccinations is matching up almost directly with the number of inoculations Norfolk can perform each week. Commissioner Filer agreed that the through-put language in the letter should be modified for clarity and commented that there needed to be a more consistent connection between the capabilities of a health clinic and the amount received.

Chair McClellan thanked Commissioner Scott Stevens for providing a suggested revision to the through-put language of the letter via the Zoom chat function. She encouraged Commission members to review the language and commented that it addressed the raised concerns.

Commissioner Robert Dyer expressed his support for the letter. He encouraged conveying a sense of urgency, not only due to COVID-19 illnesses and death, but due to the correlated challenges such as increased depression, alcohol and drug abuse, domestic violence, children missing a vital part of their education, and the economic vitality consequences.

Chair McClellan shared her particular concern that all of the Health Districts' resources are being diverted from testing to vaccinations. As vaccinations increase, it is imperative to also maintain adequate resources and staff to continue testing. She also expressed concern about a technical glitch in the registration process allowing non-priority registrants. She stated that the registration system needs to be updated and working properly.

Commissioner Douglas Pons commended the efforts on the letter. He stated that it was well-organized and well-written but a little long. Commissioner Pons remarked that he supported copying the local delegation to amplify the message. He asked if the local government leaders should also submit letters.

Chair McClellan encouraged additional letters but deferred to Mr. Crum.

Mr. Crum agreed and specified the next steps. He stated that following the meeting, HRPDC staff would revise the letter and with approval affix Chair McClellan and Vice-Chair David Jenkins' electronic signatures. Staff would then email the letter to the Governor's staff that day with a copy to the entire Hampton Roads Caucus. He also recommended authorization for the HRPDC to issue a press release in concurrence with the letter.

Motion: Commissioner Courtney Doyle Moved to approve sending the modified letter to the Governor and issuing a press release on behalf of the region; seconded by Commissioner Ella Ward.

With no additional questions or comments, a roll call vote was conducted and the votes were recorded as follows:

Chesapeake	Mr. Stephen Best	Aye
	Ms. Debbie Ritter	Aye
	Dr. Ella Ward	Aye
	Mr. Christopher Price	Aye
	Mr. Robert Geis	Aye
Franklin	Mayor Frank Rabil	Aye
	Ms. Amanda Jarratt	Aye
Gloucester County	Mr. Phillip Bazzani	Absent
	Mr. Brent Fedors	Aye
Hampton	Mayor Donnie Tuck	Aye
	Mr. Steve Brown	Aye
	Ms. Mary Bunting	Aye
Isle of Wight County	Mr. William McCarty	Aye
	Mr. Randy Keaton	Aye
James City County	Mr. Jim Icenhour	Aye
	Mr. Scott Stevens	Aye
Newport News	Mayor McKinley Price	Aye
	Mr. David Jenkins	Aye
	Ms. Cynthia Rohlf	Aye

Norfolk	Mayor Kenneth Alexander	Absent
	Ms. Courtney Doyle	Aye
	Ms. Mamie Johnson	Aye
	Ms. Andria McClellan	Aye
	Dr. Larry “Chip” Filer	Not Recorded
Poquoson	Mayor Gordon Helsel	Not Recorded
	Mr. Randy Wheeler	Aye
Portsmouth	Mayor Shannon Glover	Not Recorded
	Mr. LaVoris Pace	Aye
Town of Smithfield	Mayor T. Carter Williams	Absent
	Mr. Michael Stallings	Aye
Southampton County	Mr. William Gillette	Aye
	Mr. Michael Johnson	Aye
Suffolk	Mr. Leroy Bennett	Aye
	Mr. Albert Moor	Not Recorded
Surry County	Mr. Robert Elliott	Absent
	Ms. Melissa Rollins	Aye
Virginia Beach	Mayor Robert Dyer	Aye
	Ms. Barbara Henley	Absent
	Mr. Louis Jones	Absent
	Mr. Guy Tower	Aye
	Ms. Rosemary Wilson	Absent
	Ms. Sabrina Wooten	Aye
	Mr. Patrick Duhaney	Aye
Williamsburg	Mayor Douglas Pons	Aye
	Mr. Andrew Trivette	Aye
York County	Ms. Sheila Noll	Aye
	Mr. Neil Morgan	Aye

The Motion Carried with 36 votes in favor, none against, and no abstentions.

**Commissioner Patrick Duhaney departed*

Chair McClellan noted that the vote had unanimous approval and thanked the Commission members for their support and comments. She also commended the efforts of the HRPDC staff and the CAO committee. Chair McClellan asked Mr. Crum to ensure that any communication in response to the letter, including in the press, is distributed to the Commission members.

Commissioner Ritter challenged the CAO Committee to develop a regional plan for submission.

Chair McClellan referenced the portion of the letter that suggested engaging VDEM to provide strategic oversight for the statewide vaccination effort. She commented that VDEM has a regional planning component.

Commissioner Stephen Best was unable to comment due to technical difficulties but responded in the affirmative by nodding and displaying thumbs up.

Commissioner Bunting stated that every individual locality has a plan for mass vaccinations or medical distribution which is practiced as part of a larger emergency management plan. However, to put the practice into effect would require State approval. She added that she was not aware of one combined document.

Hampton Roads 2021 Economic Forecast

Chair Andria McClellan introduced Mr. Greg Grootendorst, HRPDC Chief Economist, to brief the Commission on the current economic landscape and the Hampton Roads 2021 Economic Forecast.

Mr. Grootendorst reported that each January since 1990, HRPDC Economics Staff has delivered a presentation on the current state of the regional economy with thoughts on what we might expect in the coming year.

Mr. Grootendorst began his presentation by providing a review of national and local trends. Mr. Grootendorst reported the stock market has been performing extraordinarily well. The S&P 500 Stock Market Index continually fluctuates by nature but has experienced consistent growth up to 417 percent from the recession low and 145 percent from the pre-recession high.

In contrast, the gross domestic product and unemployment rate fluctuations better reflect the impact that the pandemic has had on the economy. The gross domestic product was up 18 percent from the pre-recession high but decreased significantly due to COVID-19. The numbers rebounded quickly but remain 3.5 percent below pre-pandemic numbers. The unemployment rate increased from full employment levels at 3.5 percent to 14.7 percent at the height of the shutdown. The rate has since declined but at 6.9 percent, it remains almost twice as high as it was pre-pandemic. National payroll employment numbers increased three percent from before the recession high but are down 6.5 percent from February 2020. In 2020, employment decreased by 22.2 million jobs, rebounded by 12.3 million, and settled with a net loss of nearly 10 million jobs. Nationally, only two employment industries saw growth in 2020, the Federal Government and Finance and Insurance. All other industries realized losses with Leisure and Hospitality impacted the most.

Regionally, growth in the inflation-adjusted gross domestic product has been relatively flat over the past decade. Hampton Roads compares poorly to other metropolitan regions with

one to four million residents, ranking in the bottom ten percent growth in gross product, population growth, employment growth, income growth, and wage per worker growth. While the broad measures of the region's economy have been relatively flat, different industry clusters in Hampton Roads have had vastly different experiences. Over the past year specifically, the Transportation and Utilities, Scientific and Technical, Federal Government, and Construction industries have seen growth; all other industries have declined. The Administrative and Support industry positions declined the most, and the jobs lost have not rebounded. Similarly, the Local Government, Healthcare and Social, Retail Trade, Leisure and Hospitality, Manufacturing, and many other industries experienced job losses. The Leisure and Hospitality industry experienced significant losses in the United States and in the Commonwealth; however, while the Hampton Roads Region also experienced losses, it fared better than all other comparable metropolitan areas.

**Commissioner Leroy Bennett departed*

The numbers of initial and continued unemployment claims related to the pandemic are unprecedented nationally, statewide, and regionally. As with other areas of the economy, there was an initial rebound, but more recently, the initial claims are increasing again. The number of employed people decreased by approximately 50,000, where 30,000 people left the workforce, and another 20,000 people are unemployed but looking for a job., resulting in the civilian labor force in Hampton Roads decreasing by approximately 30,000 people. With respect to incomes, Hampton Roads has not experienced much growth in salaries and wages and is continuing on a declining trend when compared to the nation.

The Department of Defense (DoD) constitutes a large part of the region's economy. Following sequestration, cuts to military personnel and DoD contracting severely limited regional economic growth. Over the past few years, an increase in defense contracts and military pay has helped the Hampton Roads economy experience some growth. The Port of Virginia has done relatively well, rebounding from pandemic lows to set a record in September and October of 2020. Leisure and Hospitality is another large component of the region's economy. Mr. Grootendorst reported that tourism expenditures decreased in the past year due to the pandemic but that the numbers reflecting the full extent of the decrease were not yet available. Over the past decade, regional tourism expenditures are up 16.6 percent with hotel revenue and tourism employment up five percent and eight percent respectively.

Mr. Grootendorst also provided a brief overview of retail sales. The annualized growth rate of 2.3 percent regionally in retail sales since 2006 decreases significantly to 0.5 percent when adjusted for inflation. The unexpected increase in retail revenue is a result of the new tax revenues generated from internet sales that resulted from a supreme court decision and is not reflective of a significant increase in the number of purchases. New sales tax revenues have helped the localities in Hampton Roads and across the nation throughout the pandemic.

There was a significant increase in average home prices from 2019 to 2020 surpassing the pre-recession high in 2007. Home prices continue to rise and the number of days on the market continues to drop, evidence of a seller's market. Rent prices are decreasing in large cities across the nation but are increasing in Hampton Roads. Notwithstanding the thriving

housing market, there are several areas of concern as affordability is decreasing and those with limited means are unable to maintain or gain access to housing.

**Commissioners Brent Fedors and Courtney Doyle departed*

Mr. Grootendorst continued his presentation with the forecast for the year ahead. The most significant area of concern is the continued health risks and related adverse effects on wellbeing and quality of life. Additional areas of concern looking forward include increased disparity, structural unemployment, ballooning debt and deficit, small businesses survival, and local revenues. Possible positives looking forward include vaccinations and a potential return to normalcy, positive restructuring, low interest rates, a strong housing market, and the continued flow of federal expenditures in the short term.

Nationally, the growth rate is expected to increase to 4.2 percent, and interest rates are expected to remain low. Regionally, the growth rate is expected to increase at a lower rate of 2.2 percent, civilian employment numbers will continue to struggle to rebound, the unemployment rate will decrease, the gains in retail sales will slow, and the value of single-family residential building permits will increase, but at a more measured pace. Looking beyond 2021, the Federal budget is a significant concern. At some point, the nation will need to reign in its spending and address the national debt. Mr. Grootendorst presented an overview of daily COVID-19 cases and deaths in the United States, Commonwealth, and Hampton Roads. The current trends are not positive. He encouraged Commission members to visit the HRPDC's Hampton Roads COVID-19 Data and Dashboard for additional information.

Mr. Grootendorst concluded his presentation with an overview of ongoing regional initiatives that can positively impact the long-term local economy including the \$5 billion in transportation infrastructure projects, regional fiber network, economic development site readiness, regional branding initiative, regional economic development restructuring, revenue-sharing model, and offshore wind development.

Mr. Crum commented that the Hampton Roads Economic Forecast is often used for planning purposes by staff from member jurisdictions as well as other regional organizations. He recommended the Commission approve the release of the Hampton Roads 2021 Economic Forecast.

Motion: Commissioner Ella Ward Moved to approve the release of the Hampton Roads 2021 Economic Forecast; seconded by Commissioner William McCarty.

With no questions or comments, a roll call vote was conducted and the votes were recorded as follows:

Chesapeake	Mr. Stephen Best	Not Recorded
	Ms. Debbie Ritter	Aye
	Dr. Ella Ward	Aye
	Mr. Christopher Price	Aye

	Mr. Robert Geis	Aye
Franklin	Mayor Frank Rabil	Aye
	Ms. Amanda Jarratt	Aye
Gloucester County	Mr. Phillip Bazzani	Absent
	Mr. Brent Fedors	Absent
Hampton	Mayor Donnie Tuck	Aye
	Mr. Steve Brown	Aye
	Ms. Mary Bunting	Aye
Isle of Wight County	Mr. William McCarty	Aye
	Mr. Randy Keaton	Aye
James City County	Mr. Jim Icenhour	Aye
	Mr. Scott Stevens	Aye
Newport News	Mayor McKinley Price	Aye
	Mr. David Jenkins	Aye
	Ms. Cynthia Rohlf	Aye
Norfolk	Mayor Kenneth Alexander	Absent
	Ms. Courtney Doyle	Absent
	Ms. Mamie Johnson	Aye
	Ms. Andria McClellan	Aye
	Dr. Larry "Chip" Filer	Aye
Poquoson	Mayor Gordon Helsel	Not Recorded
	Mr. Randy Wheeler	Aye
Portsmouth	Mayor Shannon Glover	Aye
	Mr. LaVoris Pace	Aye
Town of Smithfield	Mayor T. Carter Williams	Absent
	Mr. Michael Stallings	Aye
Southampton County	Mr. William Gillette	Aye
	Mr. Michael Johnson	Aye
Suffolk	Mr. Leroy Bennett	Absent
	Mr. Albert Moor	Not Recorded
Surry County	Mr. Robert Elliott	Absent
	Ms. Melissa Rollins	Aye
Virginia Beach	Mayor Robert Dyer	Aye
	Ms. Barbara Henley	Absent
	Mr. Louis Jones	Absent

	Mr. Guy Tower	Aye
	Ms. Rosemary Wilson	Absent
	Ms. Sabrina Wooten	Aye
	Mr. Patrick Duhaney	Absent
Williamsburg	Mayor Douglas Pons	Aye
	Mr. Andrew Trivette	Aye
York County	Ms. Sheila Noll	Aye
	Mr. Neil Morgan	Aye

The Motion Carried with 33 votes in favor, none against, and no abstentions.

Environmental Education Program Update

Chair Andria McClellan introduced Ms. Katie Cullipher, HRPDC Principal Environmental Education Planner, to provide the Commission with an update on the Environmental Education Program askHRgreen.org.

**Commissioners Michael Johnson and William Gillette departed*

Ms. Cullipher provided an overview of the askHRgreen.org program, which consists of four environmental education subcommittees, including Stormwater; Recycling and Beautification; Water Awareness; and Fats, Oils, and Grease. She reported that many members of the subcommittees have been working together on these initiatives for over twenty years. In 2011, the Environmental Education program combined the four subcommittees using the askHRgreen.org website and branding. These topics are multi-jurisdictional and the localities benefit from a comprehensive environmental public outreach initiative administered through the HRPDC. The combined regional efforts help to provide brand awareness, consistent messaging, larger audiences, greater access to resources, and economies of scale.

The askHRgreen.org website is the cornerstone of the Environmental Education program. Using the website address as the brand name of the program helps to direct the public to the website, which includes topic information, local events, and an online media toolkit. The askHRgreen.org program participates in local events to engage with citizens throughout the region. The program has a 20-foot trailer to tow to outdoor events and local volunteers staff the events and interact with the public. These volunteers attend approximately 30 events across the region in a typical year and make every effort to accommodate all requests. Additional efforts include an active social media campaign utilizing Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube; public relations with local and regional media, and a large variety of promotional materials.

The program executes ten to twelve themed paid media campaigns throughout the year, including television, radio, digital, streaming, and print. Mass media campaigns are expensive but are more attainable through the shared resources of the program. Student outreach efforts include the Environmental Education Mini-Grant program, the Green Learning Guides,

and a Pet Waste Station Grant program. The Environmental Education Mini-Grant program is popular, provides up to \$500 in grant funding for local projects, and is available to any education provider or group working with K-12 students in the region. Last year, the program awarded over \$10,000 in grants affecting over 8,000 students across the region. The Green Learning Guides created for third and sixth grade students incorporate the SOLs with creative and interactive environmental education material. The Pet Waste Station Grant program provides community pet waste stations, which the grant recipient is responsible for installing and maintaining. Some recent askHRgreen.org campaigns include:

- Write as Rain – Environmentally-themed messages using superhydrophobic spray on sidewalks and streetscapes only visible when wet. Due to the popularity and resulting media coverage, the \$6,600 program budget produced \$61,116 in exposure.
- Great American Cleanup – Coordinating with local representatives of the Great American Cleanup to organize regional cleanups in local jurisdictions. In 2019, the campaign engaged over 1,000 volunteers, cleaned up 71 public spaces, and removed 15 tons of litter from the landscape.
- Imagine a Day Without Water – Partnering with 23 local coffee shops and breweries to promote water awareness by challenging citizens to imagine a day without beer or coffee. Custom coaster and coffee sleeves were distributed as promotional material to the participating businesses.

Special projects include the getfloodfluent.org flood insurance outreach campaign; a messaging campaign offering buildings reopening after a COVID-19 shutdown regional guidance regarding flushing the pipes; and a regional public outreach effort to promote the municipal utility relief program for residents experiencing economic hardship due to COVID-19. The HRUtilityRelief.com website domain was secured as a central hub for all regional utility relief information.

Ms. Cullipher concluded her presentation with two of the program's current promotions including Start Smart, Recycle Right, and a #NoButtsAboutIt cigarette litter campaign.

**Commissioners Frank Rabil, Steve Brown, Larry "Chip" Filer, and Shannon Glover departed*

Chair Andria McClellan thanked Ms. Cullipher for her presentation and commended the program's extensive and high-quality efforts. She commented that the program has grown beyond askHRgreen.org into a marketing and communications department for the HRPDC. Chair McClellan expressed interest in expanding askHRgreen.org to include Energy Efficiency.

Mr. Robert Crum indicated that the askHRgreen.org program is supported by the local governments on a per capita basis. He suggested distributing Ms. Cullipher's presentation to Commission members and continuing discussions to review the potential opportunities and what may be next for askHRgreen.org in more detail.

Legislative Update

Due to time constraints, Mr. Crum's full Legislative Update was deferred.

Mr. Crum reported that Commissioner Andrew Trivette informed him of a new Senate Bill introduced by Senators T. Montgomery Mason and Thomas K. Norment regarding COVID-19 vaccinations. Mr. Crum stated that Senate Bill 1445 provides immunity for vaccinators and allows localities with fire departments or emergency services departments employing full-time non-volunteer emergency medical technicians or paramedics to establish and staff COVID-19 vaccine administration clinics.

Commissioner Trivette commented that he received the information regarding Senate Bill 1445 from one of his contacts during the Commission meeting. He stated that the issue of immunity is illustrative of one of the challenges the CAO Committee had been working to address with the Virginia Department of Health. He indicated concerns regarding the level of protection for local governments and individual employees administering vaccines. He said that this bill directly addressed those concerns and provided an opportunity to add a short paragraph that would more clearly enable the localities to launch their own vaccination clinics using those EMT, EMS, and paramedic providers that all localities already employ. He added that this bill would also allow those clinics to receive vaccination distributions directly. He stated that even if the suggested amendments to the bill are not successful, it will bring the existing issues to the attention of the State legislature.

**Commissioner Robert Dyer departed*

Motion: Commissioner Ella Ward Moved to authorize the Executive Director to prepare and send a letter addressed to the Hampton Roads Caucus of the Virginia General Assembly, signed by Chair Andria McClellan and Vice-Chair David Jenkins, offering regional support for amendments to Senate Bill 1445 that will facilitate the ability of local government staff to administer vaccinations; seconded by Commissioner Jim Icenhour.

With no questions or comments, a roll call vote was conducted and the votes were recorded as follows:

Chesapeake	Mr. Stephen Best	Aye
	Ms. Debbie Ritter	Not Recorded
	Dr. Ella Ward	Aye
	Mr. Christopher Price	Aye
	Mr. Robert Geis	Not Recorded
Franklin	Mayor Frank Rabil	Absent
	Ms. Amanda Jarratt	Aye
Gloucester County	Mr. Phillip Bazzani	Absent
	Mr. Brent Fedors	Absent
Hampton	Mayor Donnie Tuck	Aye
	Mr. Steve Brown	Absent

	Ms. Mary Bunting	Aye
Isle of Wight County	Mr. William McCarty	Aye
	Mr. Randy Keaton	Aye
James City County	Mr. Jim Icenhour	Aye
	Mr. Scott Stevens	Aye
Newport News	Mayor McKinley Price	Aye
	Mr. David Jenkins	Aye
	Ms. Cynthia Rohlf	Aye
Norfolk	Mayor Kenneth Alexander	Absent
	Ms. Courtney Doyle	Absent
	Ms. Mamie Johnson	Aye
	Ms. Andria McClellan	Aye
	Dr. Larry "Chip" Filer	Absent
Poquoson	Mayor Gordon Helsel	Not Recorded
	Mr. Randy Wheeler	Aye
Portsmouth	Mayor Shannon Glover	Absent
	Mr. LaVoris Pace	Aye
Town of Smithfield	Mayor T. Carter Williams	Absent
	Mr. Michael Stallings	Aye
Southampton County	Mr. William Gillette	Absent
	Mr. Michael Johnson	Absent
Suffolk	Mr. Leroy Bennett	Absent
	Mr. Albert Moor	Aye
Surry County	Mr. Robert Elliott	Absent
	Ms. Melissa Rollins	Aye
Virginia Beach	Mayor Robert Dyer	Absent
	Ms. Barbara Henley	Absent
	Mr. Louis Jones	Absent
	Mr. Guy Tower	Aye
	Ms. Rosemary Wilson	Absent
	Ms. Sabrina Wooten	Aye
	Mr. Patrick Duhaney	Absent
Williamsburg	Mayor Douglas Pons	Aye
	Mr. Andrew Trivette	Aye

York County

Ms. Sheila Noll

Aye

Mr. Neil Morgan

Aye

The Motion Carried with 26 votes in favor, none against, and no abstentions.

Chair McClellan asked if there were any other legislative items related to COVID-19.

Mr. Crum encouraged Commission members to consider engaging legislative support regarding a possible State reimbursement program to offset local funds re-appropriated to prioritize support of the vaccine rollout.

**Commissioner Andrew Trivette departed*

Mr. Crum reported that there are at least three bills in the General Assembly that are advancing legislative priorities of the HRPDC, including the formation of the Virginia Commonwealth Flooding Board, incorporation of resiliency issues into the SMART SCALE program, and an amendment of Virginia's property disclosure requirements to include the property's flood insurance claims.

Ms. McClellan referenced a bill by Delegate Jeion Ward addressing clutter on properties as well as a bill by Delegate Nancy Guy to incorporate requirements for replacement and conservation of trees during development.

Three-Month Tentative Schedule

Chair Andria McClellan highlighted the Three-Month Tentative Schedule. She indicated that the next Commission meeting is scheduled for February 18, 2021 and that there is no meeting scheduled for March.

Advisory Committee Summaries

Chair Andria McClellan noted that the Advisory Committee Summaries were provided for information purposes.

**Commissioner Amanda Jarratt departed*

For Your Information

Chair Andria McClellan referenced the For Your Information section, which included a letter from the Elizabeth River Project.

Mr. Crum reported that the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission was recognized as a Sustained Distinguished Performance River Star Business by the Elizabeth River Project for its efforts relating to the Regional Building. He highlighted some of the updates and commended

the efforts of Ms. Katie Cullipher, HRPDC Principal Environmental Education Planner, and Mr. Andrew Margason, HRPDC General Services Manager.

Old/New Business

There was no old or new business.

Adjournment

With no further business to come before the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission, the meeting adjourned at 2:39 p.m.

Andria P. McClellan
Chair

Robert A. Crum, Jr.
Executive Director