

Action Summary
Hampton Roads Planning District Commission Meeting
February 18, 2021

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by HRPDC Chair Andria McClellan at 12:33 p.m.

Mr. Robert Crum, HRPDC Executive Director, stated that 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 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.

Mr. Crum indicated that the meeting was being live-streamed and would be available for viewing on the Regional Connection YouTube channel. The meeting was also being recorded and would be available after the meeting through the HRPDC website.

Members of the public were invited to submit comments to the Commission in advance of the meeting via email and phone call. 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 commitment to the region and for their cooperation and patience during the electronic meeting.

Approval/Modification of Agenda [Action Requested]

Chair McClellan indicated that there had been a request to modify the HRPDC Agenda to remove Consent Item 7E, regarding Procurement of Consultant Services – Roadway Flooding Sensors, from the Consent Agenda to allow for additional discussion. The item would be discussed in conjunction with Agenda Item 9, regarding Roadway Flooding Censors Project Update.

A roll call vote was conducted and the Commission approved the agenda as amended.

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

Submitted Public Comments

There were no submitted public comments.

Public Comment Period

Members of the public were invited to submit comments to the Commission in advance of the meeting via email and phone call. 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 action taken by the Commission in January approving correspondence to Governor Northam expressing concerns about the rate of the vaccine rollout in the Hampton Roads region. A copy of this correspondence and the Governor's written response, as well as the Governor's written response to the Hampton Roads Chamber and the Virginia Peninsula Chamber of Commerce, were included in the Executive Director's monthly report.

As a follow-up to this correspondence, the leadership of the HRPDC Board, CAO Committee, and the HRPDC Executive Director met virtually with the Governor and his staff on January 27 to discuss the HRPDC's comments and recommendations. Additionally, Mr. Crum worked with the Governor's office to establish an advisory council comprised of Chief Administrative Officers from eight regions around the State to meet with the Governor's team regularly to provide on-the-ground feedback on the vaccination rollout at the local level and how to increase the rate of these vaccinations. Mr. Crum reported that the Hampton Roads region's representatives were Commissioner Mary Bunting from the City of Hampton and Commissioner Larry "Chip" Filer from the City of Norfolk.

Mr. Crum also provided an update on additional action taken by the Commission in January approving correspondence to the Hampton Roads Caucus offering regional support for amendments to Senate Bill 1445 to facilitate the ability of local government staff to administer vaccinations. Mr. Crum reported that Senate Bill 1445 passed and was approved on February 15, 2021.

Consent Agenda [Action Requested]

The following items were on the modified Consent Agenda for approval:

- *Meeting Minutes – January 21, 2021 Commission Meeting*
- *Treasurer's Report – December 2020*
- *Investment Account*
- *2021 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Regional Priorities*
- *Procurement of Consultant Services – Regional Construction Standards Program Support*
- *Procurement of Consultant Services – Regional Board Room Audiovisual System Evaluation, Improvement, and Maintenance Services*

A roll call vote was conducted and the Commission approved the modified Consent Agenda as presented.

Emergency Management Program Update

Mr. John A. Sadler, HRPDC Emergency Management Administrator, briefed the Commission on the Emergency Management Program and current initiatives being supported by HRPDC staff.

Mr. Sadler reported that the program serves as a resource to foster and support emergency preparedness throughout the Hampton Roads region. The HRPDC Emergency Management Department consists of a two-person staff and is funded through HRPDC locality per capita contributions, MMRS Sustainment, and Grants. Following an all-hazards approach, staff facilitates cooperation between local, state, and federal partners. Staff supports the All-Hazards Advisory Committee (AHAC) and its subcommittees and working

groups on a variety of subjects including Inclusive Emergency Planning, Public Information, Cybersecurity, and Interoperable Communications. Mr. Sadler described grants management and strategic planning efforts as well as the current initiatives of each committee, subcommittee, and working group.

Roadway Flooding Sensors Project Update [Action Requested]

Ms. Whitney S. Katchmark, HRPDC Principal Water Resources Engineer, briefed the Commission on the Roadway Flooding Sensors project and the related procurement of consultant services recommended by staff.

Ms. Katchmark reported that the HRPDC developed a roadway flooding sensor project through the Coastal Resiliency Committee, and locality representatives on the committee identified over 200 locations where roadways frequently flood. The roadway flooding sensors will provide real-time data when the roadway is flooded at each location. The data will be distributed via WAZE through text or email alerts. The new sensor data will be available to localities and researchers to improve flood models as well as real-time response.

This project was recommended by Joint Land Use Studies on the Peninsula and Southside making it eligible for an implementation grant from the Office of Economic Adjustment (OEA). The total budget for the pilot project is approximately \$220,000. The HRPDC staff is seeking approximately \$198,000 in federal funds and proposes using existing Coastal Resiliency funds to provide the match of approximately \$22,000. The exact allocation of federal and match funds will depend on the final grant award from OEA.

HRPDC staff recommended Commission authorization to accept the grant from OEA and sign a contract with Xylem to procure and install sensors at 20 locations as a pilot project. Xylem was selected based on the RFP issued in May 2020. The consultant will provide the sensor equipment, installation, maintenance, and data management services. The contract includes setting up communication with WAZE to identify flooded roads to drivers in real-time. The initial one-year contract may be renewed upon written agreement of both parties for up to four successive one-year periods, under the terms of the initial contract.

A roll call vote was conducted and the Commission authorized the HRPDC Executive Director to sign the contract with Xylem and accept the grant from OEA.

Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act (CBPA) Amended Regulations

Ms. Whitney S. Katchmark, HRPDC Principal Water Resources Engineer, briefed the Commission on the schedule and process for developing regional comments regarding the proposed regulatory amendments to the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act presented to the State Water Control Board in December 2020.

Ms. Katchmark reported that the amendments incorporate resiliency and sea-level rise and mature trees into the criteria in response to House Bill 504 from the 2020 Virginia General Assembly session. The draft regulations are available for public comment in the Virginia Register until May 3, 2021. Additional information on the public comment for the two proposed regulatory amendments can be found here:

<https://townhall.virginia.gov/l/viewstage.cfm?stageid=9192> [Climate Adaptation]

<https://townhall.virginia.gov/l/viewstage.cfm?stageid=9193> [Trees]

Ms. Katchmark outlined the schedule, which included a briefing to the HRPDC Chief Administrative Officers Committee on March 3, followed by a briefing to the Regional Environmental Committee and feedback on the initial draft comment letter. The revised draft letter will then be sent to the localities for

review with comments due March 22. After briefing the Coastal Resiliency Committee and the Planning Directors, the Regional Environmental Committee will vote on endorsing the comment letter. Finally, the Commission will vote at its April 15, 2021 meeting on submitting the letter to the State Water Control Board.

2021 General Assembly Session Update

Mr. Robert A. Crum, Jr., HRPDC Executive Director, briefed the Commission on the 2021 Virginia General Assembly session focusing on the following items of interest to the Hampton Roads region:

- *Mr. Crum expanded upon his earlier report regarding Senate Bill 1445, which passed and was approved on February 15. The bill defines eligible health care providers qualified to administer vaccinations and more clearly enables the localities to launch vaccination clinics using the health care providers that all localities already employ as well as qualified volunteers. The bill also addressed the issue of immunity for individuals administering vaccines.*
- *Commissioner Michael Johnson briefed the Commission on a legislative item of interest to Southampton County. He reported that legislation was passed during the 2020 Virginia General Assembly session authorizing counties, for the first time, to levy taxes on the sale of cigarettes; however, the effective date was delayed until July 21, 2021. Senate Bill 1326, introduced during the 2021 Virginia General Assembly session, would require counties to become members of regional cigarette tax boards encompassing at least ten member localities in order to impose the tax. Commissioner Johnson shared concern that the language was overly prescriptive, and in effect, limited a county's ability to exercise the new authority. Mr. Johnson stated that the bill had been amended on the Senate floor on February 5 to no longer include the mandate to participate in a regional cigarette tax board, but the bill did stipulate that it is the policy of the Commonwealth to encourage participation, where practical, in the regional cigarette tax boards encompassing at least six member localities. The bill further directs the Department of Taxation to establish a task force to develop methods for modernizing the local cigarette tax collection system, provide assistance as appropriate to localities seeking to form a new regional cigarette tax board, and submit its recommendations to the General Assembly by November 21, 2021.*

Mr. Crum encouraged early planning for the next General Assembly session to begin in the spring.

Chair Andria McClellan proposed a future discussion regarding a possible Government Relations Subcommittee to spearhead regional advocacy efforts.

Three-Month Tentative Schedule

This item was for informational purposes.

Advisory Committee Summaries

This item was for informational purposes.

For Your Information

This item was for informational purposes.

Old/New Business

There was no old/new business.

ADJOURNMENT