

**THE DRAFT SUMMARY OF THE MEETING OF THE  
HRPDC COASTAL RESILIENCY COMMITTEE  
March 26, 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 committee members, staff, and the general public, the Coastal Resiliency Committee meeting was held electronically via Webex. These electronic meetings are required to complete essential business on behalf of the region. A recording of the meeting is available on the website.

**1. Attendance**

A complete attendance list is available. In addition to several non-voting committee members and other interested parties, the following voting members participated electronically:

**Coastal Resiliency Committee Voting Members:**

Doug Beaver, NO	Lamont Curtis, NN
Crystal Bloom, CH	David Kuzma, IW
Tammie Clary, SM	Brent Payne, GL

**2. Summary of the December 11, 2020 Meeting of the Hampton Roads Coastal Resiliency Committee**

The summary and attendance record for the December 11, 2020 meeting of the Hampton Roads Coastal Resiliency Committee were approved as distributed.

**3. Public Comments**

There were no public comments.

**4. Virginia Coastal Resilience Master Plan**

Ms. Whitney Katchmark, HRPDC, provided an overview of the Virginia Coastal Master Plan Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). The TAC was established by the Governor in EO-71 and is being overseen by the Coastal Resiliency Officer, Matt Strickler, and Special Assistant to the Governor for Coastal Adaptation and Protection, Ann Phillips. The first Coastal Master Planning TAC was held on December 14, 2020. Recently it was announced that Dewberry has been selected as the contractor to develop the next phase of the Virginia Coastal Resilience Master Plan, which is scheduled to be completed by the end of this year. Seven subcommittees have been established for the TAC: (1) Project Identification, (2) Project Evaluation, (3) Finance, (4) Community Outreach, (5) Studies, Research, and Best Practices, (6) Federal Installation Partnerships, and (7) Aligning Economic Development. For more information about upcoming TAC subcommittee meetings and to register to participate as a member of the public, visit <https://www.naturalresources.virginia.gov/initiatives/technical-advisory-committee-for-coastal-resilience/>.

Ms. Katchmark reviewed the chair and vice chair assignments, issues, and HRPDC insights for each subcommittee. HRPDC staff are participating in several subcommittees. Ms. Katchmark is the Vice Chair for the Federal Installation Partnerships subcommittee and serves on the Project Evaluation subcommittee and the Studies, Research, and Best Practices subcommittee. Mr. Robert Crum, HRPDC Executive Director, serves on the Finance subcommittee, and Greg Grootendorst, HRPDC Chief Economist, serves on the Aligning Economic Development subcommittee.

Mr. Kevin Du Bois, NAVFAC Mid-Atlantic, asked if the Department of Defense (DOD) is participating in the Aligning Economic Development subcommittee, and Ms. Katchmark confirmed there is not a DOD representative. Mr. Ben McFarlane, HRPDC, noted that the first Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) auction was held earlier this month, resulting in around \$40 million to the Commonwealth. A portion of this money will be assigned to the Community Flood Preparedness Fund. Rear Admiral Ann Phillips noted that the grant manual for the Fund will be released for public comment next month.

## **5. Regional Legislative Proposals – Update**

Mr. McFarlane provided an update on the HRPDC legislative proposals related to resiliency. These include the following: (1) creation of a Commonwealth Flooding Board; (2) updating precipitation data products; (3) requiring flood disclosure on real estate transactions; and (4) adding resilience to SMART SCALE project scoring criteria.

The proposed legislation for the Virginia Commonwealth Flood Board (SB1352) was stricken at the request of Senator Lewis', the sponsor of the bill, due to a lack of agreement upon several amendments that were proposed by the Secretary of Natural Resources. Legislation regarding incorporating resilience into transportation (SB1350) was approved by the Governor on March 11, 2021, and is effective July 1, 2021. This legislation incorporates resiliency into the Six-Year Improvement Program in the Statewide Transportation Plan and transportation design standards, but does not address the SMART SCALE program specifically. Legislation regarding real estate disclosure for flooding (SB1389) was sent to the Governor on February 24, 2021, and has not yet been signed. This bill would require sellers to disclose knowledge of repetitive loss status for residential properties and require the development of a "Flood Risk Information Form" to educate buyers about general flood risk. Delegate Hodges had sponsored legislation (HB2187) related to developing a flood resilience "Clearinghouse." The final version of the legislation was signed by the Governor on March 18, 2021 and is effective July 1, 2021. This requires a report to evaluate the development of a Flood Resiliency Clearinghouse Program. The report will be developed by the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation and the Commonwealth Center for Recurrent Flooding Resiliency and will be submitted to the General Assembly by November 1, 2021.

Mr. McFarlane noted that the HRPDC Coastal Resilience Subcommittee of elected officials will be meeting on March 30, 2021, and discussing legislative efforts. Mr. McFarlane also noted the Hampton Roads Transportation Organization (HRTPO) is working on incorporating resilience into transportation planning.

## **6. State Regulatory Developments – CBPA and Tidal Wetlands**

Mr. McFarlane provided an overview of recent state regulatory developments related to coastal resiliency planning. Proposed amendments to the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Area Designation and Management Regulations are currently available for public comment. A revised draft comment letter, developed by HRPDC staff with input from localities, for the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act (CBPA) draft regulatory amendments was shared with the HRPDC Regional Environmental Committee for review. On Thursday April 1, 2021, the Regional Environmental Committee will be voting to approve the draft comment letter for further approval by the HRPDC Board. Mr. McFarlane reviewed a comparison of various sea level rise projection curves that is available on the AdaptVA.org, and noted the challenges of relying specifically on the NOAA Intermediate-High scenario for CBPA regulations. For a 30-year planning horizon (2050), the NOAA Intermediate-High scenario curve projects sea level rise of nearly a foot higher than the Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS) projection based on observed mean sea level trends. Mr. McFarlane noted that smaller, less permanent structures may not need to be subject to the same standard as more permanent infrastructure, such as state-owned buildings. To address these concerns, the HRPDC comment letter for the CBPA draft regulatory amendments recommends the VIMS quadratic trend based on observed sea level trends may be more appropriate for short-term projects than the NOAA Intermediate-High scenario.

Meeting participants noted the impact of sea level rise planning requirements on accessibility design considerations and suggested consideration of adding exceedance curves for given years. Mr. Du Bois noted that it is important to consider a cascade of impacts in the Resource Protection Area, such as vegetation removal, that could have negative consequences. Mr. McFarlane recognized the complexity of the issues and practical considerations with implementation that need to be addressed to mitigate potential legal challenges. Ms. Katchmark noted that the fast timeline for implementation of the new regulations has been challenging for providing input.

The Virginia Marine Resources Commission released revised Wetlands Guidelines for public comment on March 1, 2021, and the public comment period closes April 16, 2021. Mr. McFarlane noted that the information related to sea level rise in the revised guidelines references the proposed CBPA regulatory amendments, which would be adopted on a later timescale. The primary HRPDC staff comments are that more guidance on sea level rise considerations, with regards to wetlands protection and conservation, is needed, and regulations that have not yet been adopted should not be referenced. A copy of the comment letter will be shared with both the Regional Environmental Committee and Coastal Resiliency Committee, and will be submitted on behalf of HRPDC staff only and not the HRPDC Board. Meeting participants noted the importance of public trust, balancing private property protection and ecological considerations, and the value of a robust stakeholder engagement process. A stakeholder meeting will be held by the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality in May, following the request of the State Water Control Board.

## **7. Resilient Design Standards Update**

Mr. McFarlane provided an update on the HRPDC's efforts to develop resilient design guidelines. Products will include maps of projected future floodplains based on sea level rise projections, design tailwater elevations by watershed, and building design flood elevations that incorporate sea level rise. Regarding floodplain mapping, HRPDC staff is also working to identify riverine base flood elevations and corresponding GIS layers that could be integrated with the regional

floodplain maps. The resulting GIS layers will be shared with localities for review, and localities can contact HRPDC staff if interested in viewing interim products.

A draft of the design tailwater elevations has been completed, covering multiple recurrence intervals from the 1-year to 500-year event and including 1.5ft, 3ft, and 4.5ft sea level rise. The resulting tables for each coastal community will be shared with the Committee for review. It was asked if NOAA tide gauge data has been compared to the draft design tailwater elevations, and Mr. McFarlane noted this is being considered in the review process.

Mr. McFarlane referenced a table of development standards and potential stormwater BMPs appropriate for different elevations that has been developed as part of the Charleston Dutch Dialogues effort. HRPDC staff are interested in researching how this could be adapted to the Hampton Roads region. Meeting participants noted efforts to update the Charleston elevation-based standards and that similar standards were used in the 2008 Matthews County Comprehensive Plan.

Currently the Chesapeake Bay Program and RAND are working to develop Intensity-Duration-Frequency (IDF) precipitation curves based on downscaled climate projections. The analysis has been expanded to include all of Virginia. Following completion of the RAND analysis, HRPDC staff will likely host a working group meeting to discuss if a 20% or alternative adjustment factor would be appropriate to apply to NOAA Atlas 14 guidelines for the region.

During Mr. McFarlane's presentation, participants also noted the importance of considering the useful design life for structures and infrastructure when choosing a sea level rise scenario. An example from the North Carolina Department of Transportation was noted, and Ms. Katchmark added that VDOT is in the process of developing design standards for the transportation network.

## **8. Roadway Flooding Sensors Update**

Ms. Katchmark provided an update on the HRPDC's effort to develop a network of regional roadway sensors that determine if roads are flooded and relay real-time information to WAZE. Xylem has been awarded the contract to develop a 20-sensor pilot project, which covers multiple localities and military commuting corridors. The total budget for the pilot project is \$220,000. A potential implementation grant from the Office of Economic Adjustment (OEA) could provide around \$198,000 in funding, and the additional pilot project costs (\$22,000) would be covered by locality contributions through the Coastal Resiliency Program. Ms. Katchmark has reached out to localities to begin coordinating pilot sensor installation. It is anticipated the pilot sensors will be operational by the fall of 2021. Mr. Chris Swanson, VDOT, invited Ms. Katchmark to share information about this topic with VDOT. An example from a similar project in Texas that includes AI/machine learning was also noted for further research.

## **9. Get Flood Fluent Update**

Ms. Ashley Gordon, HRPDC (filling in for Ms. Katie Cullipher HRPDC), provided an update on the regional flood insurance outreach initiative. The regional flood insurance outreach website, [GetFloodFluent.org](http://GetFloodFluent.org), was launched in 2019, and several months later, a flood risk calculator to estimate flood insurance premiums was added to the website. The flood risk calculator was developed in collaboration with Dr. Daniel Richards at Old Dominion University, and funding for the calculator and website was provided in part by two grants from the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation. Three separate paid media campaigns have been conducted as part

of the regional flood insurance outreach effort. These have included radio, TV, advanced TV (streaming), digital (i.e. social media) and print advertising. GetFloodFluent.org has experienced around 13,000 visitors, with the greatest amount of visitors occurring during the summer 2020 paid media campaign. Flood insurance policy data, provided to the HRPDC by FEMA via Virginia DCR, has shown a net increase of around 7,800 policies in force (12%) between March 2018 and August 2020.

New content for GetFloodFluent.org is currently under development. This includes a mapping application to find your flood zone, information on how to protect your home and personal property, and information to support safety during a flood event. Ms. Gordon shared a draft version of a new 1-minute animated video that highlights facts about flood risk, flood insurance, and the flood risk calculator. For 2021, a new paid media campaign is being planned that replicates the format of the summer 2020 campaign. Social media outreach was recently conducted in coordination with the local PIOs during Virginia Flood Awareness week (Mar 14-20, 2021) and will continue during other notable flooding preparedness weeks this year. Ms. Gordon also noted that HRSD has previously generously provided printed GetFloodFluent.org rack cards as a paper bill insert in 2019 and 2020. If there is interest in continuing this outreach strategy, the HRPDC would be responsible for the printing cost. HRPDC staff will coordinate with local floodplain managers to determine how many communities are currently earning CRS credits for this effort.

HRPDC staff is monitoring the development of FEMA's Risk Rating 2.0, which will change how flood insurance is calculated. When more information is available, HRPDC staff will assess the impact on the current flood risk calculator. Regarding flooding disclosure, a template is also being developed for GetFloodFluent.org to request a property's flood loss history report from FEMA. Mr. McFarlane noted that only the owner of the property, or a previous policy owner for the property, can request the flood loss history report, but those interested in buying a home could request the seller obtain this information. Mr. McFarlane noted that HRPDC staff are happy to provide presentations about the regional flood insurance outreach effort to other groups.

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

Mr. McFarlane stated the grant manual for the Community Flood Preparedness Fund will be released for public comment in April, and more information about FEMA's Risk Rating 2.0 is anticipated in the next few months.

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

Mr. McFarlane noted the regional comment letter for the CBPA draft regulatory amendments will be voted on by the Regional Environmental Committee on Thursday, April 1, 2021, and pending approval by the Committee, will be voted on by the HRPDC Board of Commissioners on Thursday, April 15, 2021.

The City of Hampton is hiring a Resiliency Officer, and more information is available on the City website.

#### **12. Other Matters**

The next meeting of the Coastal Resiliency Committee will be held June 25, 2021.