

**Hampton Roads Planning District Commission
Chief Administrative Officers Meeting
Summary Minutes of October 7, 2020**

The Chief Administrative Officers (CAO) Committee Meeting was called to order by Mary Bunting, CAO Committee Chair and Hampton City Manager at approximately 11:30 a.m. Ms. Bunting asked Mr. Crum to provide background information on this electronic meeting.

Mr. Crum indicated 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 committee members, staff and the general public, today's CAO Committee meeting is being held via conference call.

The following members of the CAO Committee were in attendance via this Conference Call:

Mary Bunting	Hampton
Brent Fedors	Gloucester County
Wynter Benda (for Dr. Larry Filer)	Norfolk
Amanda Jarrett	Franklin
Randy Keaton	Isle of Wight County
Chris Price	Chesapeake
Cynthia Rohlf	Newport News
Scott Stevens	James City County
Randy Wheeler	Poquoson
LaVoris Pace	Portsmouth
Michael Stallings	Smithfield
Al Moor	Suffolk
Melissa Rollins	Surry County
Andrew Trivette	Williamsburg
William Saunders	Windsor
Neil Morgan	York County

Others in Attendance

Robert Crum, HRPDC/HRTPO
Keith Cannady, HRPDC
John Sadler, HRPDC
Robb Braidwood, HRPDC All Hazards Advisory Committee and Chesapeake Emergency Management Coordinator
Mark Geduldig-Yatrofsky, Portsmouth Resident

Approval of Minutes

Ms. Bunting referred CAO Committee members to the Summary Meeting Minutes from the September 2 Committee meeting, and asked if there were any additions or revisions. There being none, the Summary Minutes were approved by consensus.

Public Comment

Ms. Bunting asked if there were any public comments from today's meeting attendees.

Mr. Mark Geduldig-Yatrofsky commented that he would recommend the CAO Committee transition from conference calls for the Committee meetings to the use of Zoom for meetings. He noted that it is much easier for the public to view and participate in Zoom meetings, and noted that this format has worked very well at both HRPDC and HRTPO Board meetings.

Mr. Geduldig-Yatrofsky also commended former Suffolk City Manager Patrick Roberts for his service to the City, noting that he made significant contributions to the community. He noted that he appreciated Mr. Robert's professionalism and kindness during their interactions.

Sheltering During COVID-19 Pandemic

Ms. Bunting asked Mr. Crum to introduce this item.

Mr. Crum reviewed that on July 29, 2020 the CAO Committee sent correspondence to Governor Northam requesting the Commonwealth of Virginia's assistance to help our region's local governments plan and prepare for emergency sheltering operations during the COVID-19 pandemic. He noted that this correspondence was included in the CAO agenda mailing, and outlined potential strategies to address challenges related to sheltering during a pandemic environment. On September 3, correspondence was received from the Commonwealth with their response and input on the strategies outlined in the CAO Committee's correspondence.

Mr. Crum noted that the HRPDC All Hazard Advisory Committee (AHAC) has reviewed and discussed the responses received. He introduced Mr. Robb Braidwood, Emergency Management Coordinator with the City of Chesapeake, to review and discuss the State's response to the region's proposal. Mr. Braidwood noted that overall, the AHAC and regional emergency management officials are very pleased with the State's response to our region's suggestions. He discussed the five areas where the region requested the State's assistance, and the responses the State provided (a summary providing the five areas that the region identified for assistance and the State response is attached as an official record of these Summary Minutes). He concluded by noting that the region's emergency management coordinators look forward to continuing to work with the Virginia Department of Emergency Management on sheltering issues.

Other COVID-19 Discussion Items

Ms. Bunting and Mr. Crum noted that the next agenda item will be a roll call discussion among the CAO Committee on any COVID-19 related items. Mr. Crum proceeded with this roll call, asking each CAO to raise any questions or issues. Topics raised during this discussion included the following:

- Budget revisions and plans for mid-year salary adjustments for locality staffs
- COVID-19 regional messaging campaign
- Locality plans for Halloween and upcoming holiday parades/events

Review of the October 15 HRPDC/HRTPO Meeting Agendas

Mr. Crum reviewed the agendas for the upcoming regional board meetings. He noted that both of these meetings will be remote/virtual meetings. For the HRTPO agenda, he noted that the Board would receive a briefing/update on the Hampton Roads Bridge Tunnel (HRBT) project from the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT). In addition, the HRTPO will receive briefings from Hampton Roads Transit (HRT), the Williamsburg Area Transit Authority (WATA) and Suffolk Transit on plans and opportunities related to their transit systems. Mr. Crum noted that this presentation is in response to the recent legislation approved by the General Assembly which creates a transit funding source for the HRT localities and also requires the HRTPO to coordinate efforts between the three regional transit systems. In addition, Mr. Crum noted that the HRTPO Board will be asked to endorse its Regional Legislative Agenda for the 2021 General Assembly session.

Mr. Crum noted that the HRPDC will also consider approval of its Regional Legislative Agenda. Additionally, the HRPDC will view the inaugural release of a video which illustrates the advantages the Hampton Roads region offers for jobs related to supporting the emerging offshore wind industry. The Commission will also review the Regional Messaging Campaign that was coordinated by the CAO Committee and the region's Public Information Officers. Mr. Crum also noted that the HRPDC will consider a mid-year budget adjustment. He reminded the CAOs that at the May 2020 meeting, the HRPDC approved a budget extension to the end of October due to uncertainty regarding anticipated revenues from local, state and federal funding sources. He noted that the budget approved in May did not include a salary adjustment for staff. Mr. Crum reported to the CAOs that the budget adjustment that he will be presenting to the HRPDC and HRTPO Boards on October 15 does include a mid-year pay increase of two percent (2%) for staff that would go into effect January 1, 2021. He noted that the Organization has been very careful financially, which has resulted in cost savings. Mr. Crum reported that 1.5 positions that were previously occupied have been eliminated, and even with the proposed two percent salary adjustment, the HRPDC/HRTPO Personnel Line Item would still experience an approximate decrease of \$8,000. He mentioned that the budget proposal, proposed pay increase for staff and the Organization's Annual Audit would be discussed at a HRPDC/HRTPO Personnel and Budget Committee meeting that would occur before the Board meetings on October 15 at 9:00 a.m.

Other Business

Ms. Bunting wanted to recognize that several of our CAO colleagues have departed and she wanted to make mention of them and the tremendous contributions they have made to their localities, the CAO Committee and Hampton Roads region. Patrick Roberts in Suffolk and Dr. Lydia Pettis Patton in Portsmouth both recently resigned their positions as City Manager in their respective localities. In addition, Tom Leahy has retired from the City of Virginia Beach. Ms. Bunting and the CAO Committee wished these three colleagues the very best and thanked them for their contributions.

There being no further business to come before the CAO Committee, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 12:40 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Robert Crum
Recording Secretary

DRAFT

Hurricane Sheltering and Planning during COVID-19

Executive Summary

In July, the All Hazards Advisory Committee (AHAC) wrote a white paper outlining obstacles presented by COVID-19 to the safe and effective sheltering of our citizens following a hurricane. On July 29th, the Chair and Vice-Chair of the CAO Committee sent a letter to Governor Ralph Northam describing our region's sheltering concerns during the COVID-19 pandemic and asked for five areas of assistance from our State government. The Governor's staff responded to the letter on Sept 3rd. After reviewing and discussing the matter, the AHAC is now prepared to brief the CAOs on the State's response.

Generally, the requests to the State were favorably received. Additionally, the AHAC agrees that the State concurs with our identified issues and is willing to assist where possible to address them. Furthermore, it is important to note that the COVID-19 operational environment has changed since the July letter. Several major hurricanes have struck the Gulf Coast providing lessons-learned for sheltering during the COVID-19 pandemic.

We asked the State for assistance in five areas:

1. We request that the State adjust the timeline for opening state managed shelters to coincide with the opening of local shelters.

The State acknowledges that opening state shelters at the same time as localities would be beneficial, but also point out that their plans and procedures are not structured to accomplish this task. Since the State's response, AHAC has begun communications with the Red Cross to explore their ability to provide additional assistance with establishing regional shelters.

2. We ask that the State begin identifying additional resources for shelter staff.

Many localities have buildings that can serve as shelters but lack the staff to operate them. Regularly, this gap could possibly be filled with state staff. However, if State shelters are opened simultaneously, the State will need to bring in additional resources via the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) or Statewide Mutual Aid (SMA). Overall, the State responded favorably to this request. While acknowledging the difficulty in completing this task, the State affirmed that they are willing to assist where possible.

3. We would like to partner with the State on securing large-scale hotel contracts which could streamline the operations of non-congregate sheltering and assist our localities' efforts to receive cost reimbursement.

The State indicated that there is a workgroup near completing this task. The AHAC is of the consensus that the State will, at a minimum, provide contracts for local government use. A best-case and possible outcome would be for the State to fully assume non-congregate sheltering responsibilities as did the State of Louisiana during Hurricane Laura.

4. We request that the State fund and execute COVID-19 Point Prevalence Screenings (PPS) in the shelters.

The State rightfully concludes that it would be challenging to conduct mass testing in a shelter environment. However, this only applies to short/mid-term sheltering. If long-term sheltering were to be required, the State agrees that PPS may be appropriate. Additionally, screening processes have been developed by VDH to be applied to those entering a congregate shelter. Local Health Districts also have 25 swab kits on hand to be used should they be required.

5. We also request enhanced collaboration regarding messaging related to emergency sheltering during this hurricane season.

Since the July letter, the State has substantially increased its efforts to enhance collaboration regarding emergency messaging. This includes the sharing of graphics/materials, offering translation services, and on-going dialogue with locality public information officers. The AHAC is confident that the relationship between the State and local public information officers will continue to strengthen.

In sum, the AHAC believes the State not only shares our concerns regarding sheltering during the COVID-19 pandemic but is actively working to address them. There is also general consensus that all parties involved will need to be flexible and creative in addressing necessary shelter changes. Finally, it is important to note that during a global pandemic, congregate emergency sheltering will not be ideal regardless of the increased assistance from stakeholders.