

**Hampton Roads Planning District Commission
Summary Minutes of July 15, 2021**

The July 15, 2021 meeting of the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission (HRPDC) was called to order by the Chair at 12:33 p.m. in the Regional Board Room, 723 Woodlake Drive, Chesapeake, Virginia, with the following in attendance:

Commissioners in Attendance:

Andria McClellan, Chair (NO)	Larry "Chip" Filer (NO)
David Jenkins, Vice-Chair (NN)	Danica Royster (NO)
Stephen Best (CH)	Randall Wheeler (PQ)
Robert Geis (CH)	William Gillette (SH)
Christopher Price (CH)	Michael Johnson (SH)
Debbie Ritter (CH)*	Michael Stallings (SM)
Ella Ward (CH)	Leroy Bennett (SU)
Amanda Jarratt (FR)	Albert Moor (SU)
Frank Rabil (FR)	Robert Elliott (SY)*
Carol Steele (GL)	Melissa Rollins (SY)
Mary Bunting (HA)	Patrick Duhaney (VB)
Joel Acree (IW)*	Louis Jones (VB)
Randy Keaton, Treasurer (IW)*	Douglas Pons (WM)
Jim Icenhour (JC)	Andrew Trivette (WM)
McKinley Price (NN)	Neil Morgan (YK)
Courtney Doyle (NO)	Sheila Noll (YK)

Commissioners Absent:

Phillip Bazzani (GL)	Angel Jones (PO)
Steve Brown (HA)	T. Carter Williams (SM)
Donnie Tuck (HA)	Robert Dyer (VB)
Scott Stevens (JC)	Barbara Henley (VB)
Cynthia Rohlf (NN)	John Moss (VB)
Kenneth Alexander (NO)	Guy Tower (VB)
Gordon Helsel (PQ)	Sabrina Wooten (VB)
Shannon Glover (PO)	

Executive Director:

Robert A. Crum, Jr., Secretary

Other Participants:

Terry Danaher (CAC)

**Late arrival or early departure.*

Others Recorded Attending:

David Westcott (Chesapeake); Brian DeProfio (Hampton); Brad Rinehimer (James City County); Angela Hopkins and Jerri Wilson (Newport News); Jessica Dennis (Norfolk); Bob Baldwin and Sherri Neil (Portsmouth); Debra Bryan (Virginia Beach); David Sullivan (Elizabeth River Crossings); Doug Smith (Hampton Roads Alliance); Christina Brooks (Hampton Roads Workforce Council); and Keith Cannady, Kelli Arledge, Rob Cofield, Katie Cullipher, KC Filippino, Logan Grimm, Greg Grootendorst, John Harbin, Whitney Katchmark, Krista Lauro, Benjamin McFarlane, Cynthia Mulkey, Pavithra Parthasarathi, Jill Sunderland, and Sheila Wilson (HRPDC/HRTPO Staff)

Chair McClellan announced the appointment of Norfolk Councilwoman Danica Royster and invited members attending in person for the first time to introduce themselves. Chair McClellan welcomed Gloucester Acting County Administrator Carol Steele, Suffolk City Manager Al Moor, and James City Deputy County Administrator Brad Rinehimer.

Approval/Modification of Agenda

Chair McClellan invited a motion to approve July 15, 2021 HRPDC Meeting Agenda as presented.

Motion: Commissioner Ella Ward Moved to approve the Agenda as presented; seconded by Commissioner Douglas Pons. The Motion Carried.

Submitted Public Comments

Chair McClellan noted there were no Submitted Public Comments.

Public Comment Period

Chair McClellan invited members of the public to address the Commission. There were no public comments.

**Commissioners Joel Acree and Debbie Ritter arrived*

Executive Director's Report

Mr. Robert A. Crum, Jr., HRPDC/HRTPO Executive Director, referenced his monthly report included in the agenda package and offered to answer questions. Hearing none, he reported on a few items of interest for Commission Member information.

Mr. Crum referenced a one-pager included in the agenda package from a regional non-profit named RISE Resilience Innovations. RISE is an entity that was formed out of the City of Norfolk's National Disaster Resiliency Competition federal grant award, and its goal is to resource companies to develop technologies and products that address sea level rise and resiliency in Hampton Roads. Since 2018, RISE has worked with 35 businesses developing

new, scalable solutions that help coastal communities adapt to flooding, storm surge, and sea level rise. RISE Executive Director Dr. Paul Robinson provided a briefing to the HRPDC Chief Administrative Officers (CAOs). During the briefing, he described a few innovative pilot projects that RISE will be funding, including stormwater pipe blockage detection, telescopic walls for flood protection, first floor elevation mapping, and trenchless pipelaying technology. These pilot projects provide opportunities for local governments to participate as a hosting city at no cost.

Mr. Crum provided an update on the GetFloodFluent.org regional outreach campaign. Many residents may not be aware that flood insurance typically has a 30-day waiting period from the date of purchase until the policy goes into effect. It is not too late to get flood insurance for this hurricane season, but if residents wait until they need it, it will be too late. Spearheaded by the HRPDC, GetFloodFluent.org encourages area residents to purchase flood insurance to protect themselves as flood risks continue to grow. The website features a rate estimating Flood Risk Calculator and includes extensive media resources, including a campaign toolkit of social media-ready posts, testimonial videos, audio interviews, and pre-made printed materials.

Mr. Crum reported that the HRPDC and HRTPO were invited to a Hampton Roads Caucus Meeting in the City of Hampton on July 21, 2021. Mr. Crum and HRPDC Chair Andria McClellan were scheduled to present regional legislative priorities and Mr. Crum, HRTPO Chair Donnie Tuck, and HRTAC Executive Director Kevin Page were scheduled to provide an update on regional transportation projects.

Mr. Crum also reported that the HRPDC was scheduled to host a Regional Resiliency Roundtable with Senator Warner in the Regional Building's 757 Room on Friday, July 23, 2021. Mr. Crum encouraged Commission Member participation.

Mr. Crum provided a few specific examples of some of the recent HRPDC staff efforts to publicize regional messaging throughout the community. He recognized:

- Mr. Benjamin J. McFarlane, HRPDC Senior Regional Planner, for his work on the Joint Land Use Study (JLUS) with the Cities of Chesapeake and Portsmouth in partnership with the military. To encourage public input, the consultant created an innovative online room and held a virtual public meeting. Online visitors were able to view an introduction to the study and study recommendations.
- Mr. John A. Sadler, HRPDC Emergency Management Administrator, for his interview with TV News Now on the Hampton Roads Hazard Mitigation Plan Update and the plan's importance.
- Ms. Jill C. Sunderland, HRPDC Water Resources Planner III, and Ms. Ashley M. Gordon, HRPDC Coastal Analyst, for an article related to Chesapeake Bay Program requirements and water quality featured in a local realtors magazine. The magazine has broad distribution and the article described how realtors can work with and

educate their clients on flood insurance and water quality when making real estate purchases.

Chair McClellan thanked Mr. Crum for his report. She commented that as the HRPDC Chair, she has learned that many residents are not aware of the HRPDC and its many initiatives. She complimented staff efforts and emphasized the importance of amplifying regional messaging across communication mediums.

**Commissioner Robert Elliott arrived*

Community Advisory Committee (CAC) Report

Ms. Terry Danaher, Chair of the Community Advisory Committee (CAC), provided a brief report of the CAC's activities, noting that the CAC membership feels strongly about providing members the option and flexibility to participate remotely. She requested that the Commission consider submitting a formal request to the Commonwealth of Virginia that the current laws and FOIA requirements are changed to allow public bodies the option to convene electronically.

Due to schedule constraints, Chair McClellan indicated that the Offshore Wind Supply Chain Fund – Legislative Recommendation Agenda Item would be heard next.

Offshore Wind Supply Chain Fund – Legislative Recommendation

Chair McClellan welcomed Mr. Doug Smith, Hampton Roads Alliance (Alliance) President and CEO, to brief the Commission on the proposed Offshore Wind Supply Chain Fund.

Mr. Crum provided background information and reported that the HRPDC was the first regional organization to unanimously support offshore wind development off the coast of Virginia. The Commission has also recognized and discussed the potential for related job creation and economic growth opportunities. Mr. Crum commented that there are not many metropolitan regions that have an opportunity to create a new industry sector, and he described this as a once-in-a-generation opportunity for Hampton Roads. Commission Members have inquired about what definitive actions the local governments and Commission can take to further support this opportunity. Mr. Crum provided that the recommended action for Commission consideration was to request that the Virginia General Assembly create an Offshore Wind Supply Chain Fund during its upcoming special session. For additional information, Mr. Crum introduced Mr. Smith and indicated that Mr. Smith was also presenting on behalf of Mr. Shawn Avery, Hampton Roads Workforce Council President and CEO.

Mr. Smith acknowledged Ms. Christina Brooks, Hampton Roads Workforce Council Senior Director of Youth Services, and indicated she would be available to answer questions.

Mr. Smith began his presentation by describing the Alliance Supply Chain Development Initiative. Supported by a \$529,788 GO Virginia grant, the Alliance initiative includes building

a regional offshore wind hub, attracting new investment to the Commonwealth, growing Virginia businesses, and creating long-term high-wage jobs. Alliance efforts include:

- Commissioning Mangum Economics to conduct a study of the existing offshore wind supply chain to determine its readiness to support this growing industry. The analysis first focused on Dominion Energy's Coastal Virginia Offshore Wind (CVOW) project. The CVOW project includes an \$8 billion direct investment by Dominion Energy and a State investment of at least \$40 million for the Portsmouth Marine Terminal. An initial investment this size has the potential to support 900 direct and indirect Virginia jobs annually, with about 60% in Hampton Roads and almost \$57 million in pay and benefits. Over \$143 million in economic output would generate almost \$2 million in revenues for local governments in the Hampton Roads area and an additional \$3 million in Virginia state tax revenues. The ongoing operation and maintenance of the CVOW facility have the potential to support over 1,100 direct and indirect jobs annually in Hampton Roads with almost \$82 million in pay and benefits. Almost \$210 million in economic output would generate almost \$6 million in revenues for local governments and an additional \$5 million in Virginia state tax revenues.

The offshore wind initiative and growing industry in the eastern United States create an opportunity for Hampton Roads to support this emerging industry. Hampton Roads' best-in-class port, central location, highly-skilled workforce, and supportive businesses provide an opportunity to become a hub that can serve the industry as a whole as it grows on the East Coast. The Mangum Economics Study's conservative estimate is that 5,200 Virginia jobs will be supported by the time the East Coast offshore wind industry ramps up to the degree that Hampton Roads businesses are helping develop one gigawatt of new installed capacity annually. Development of offshore wind at that pace would create an estimated \$270 million in pay and benefits, \$740 million in economic output, \$21 million in revenues for local governments, and an additional \$18 million in Virginia state tax revenues.

- Creating an Offshore Wind Strategic Plan for business attraction, which includes an established competitive position, recommended target sectors in select markets, and an investment promotion strategy.
- Forming a Supply Chain Development Committee with statewide representation as a forum for strategic guidance.
- Opening of the Virginia Offshore Wind Landing. The Landing is a partnership between the Virginia Department of Mines, Mineral, and Energy; the Hampton Roads Alliance; and Old Dominion University's OpenSeas Technology Innovation Hub and offers a platform for companies to work, connect, and access resources. This is a collaborative workspace where companies interested in establishing a presence in Hampton Roads can become a part of the region's maritime network and growing offshore wind industry. The purpose of the Landing is to develop a cluster of offshore wind companies and foster the growth of Hampton Roads as an innovation and supply chain hub of the offshore wind industry.

- Hiring the Xodus Group to conduct a study of the offshore wind supply chain from pre-development through operation and maintenance. The analysis included an assessment of strengths and gaps, a survey of businesses to determine regional capabilities, identification of job roles and training needs, a review of connections between major suppliers and local businesses, and recommendations to establish Hampton Roads as a supply chain hub.

Through interviews with developers, original equipment manufacturers, and Tier 1 suppliers, it is evident that the qualification process required by the industry for companies seeking to enter this field can be expensive and time consuming. The duration of time between when investment companies enter the industry and when they start receiving revenue can be outside of standard business practices. Many companies believe that entering into this process can carry too much financial risk, especially given the lack of experience and familiarity within a developing industry.

Mr. Smith described the request of the Commission as taking action to request that the Virginia General Assembly create a \$30 million offshore wind economic development fund during its upcoming special session to grow the adjacent offshore wind supply chain and develop an offshore wind workforce pipeline project. This fund would grow the adjacent offshore wind supply chain by assisting approved Hampton Roads companies by offsetting some of the costs to develop goods and services to strengthen the ability of Hampton Roads to support this emerging industry.

Offshore Wind Supply Chain Fund grants would be awarded for a minimum of \$20,000 and a maximum of \$250,000 for up to five years to ensure companies can be brought into the industry as it matures with new project approvals. Grant funds could be used by approved companies for worker training/certification, new product development or repositioning, equipment upgrades, and implementing new operational processes to support offshore wind. Grants should not be used for facility construction, market research, industry consulting, or investment in unrelated products and services.

Hampton Roads is well poised to lead offshore wind development for the entire Mid-Atlantic region; however, this cannot be achieved without a skilled workforce. The offshore wind workforce pipeline project goal would be to produce at least 1,000 new offshore wind professionals by 2025. Grant funds could be used to provide community outreach and supportive services to cultivate a skilled workforce, particularly one comprised of under-resourced and under-represented populations. Community Navigators, comprised of 30 individuals from the targeted populations across the region, would be provided comprehensive training regarding the offshore wind industry, employed part-time for 29 hours per week at a rate of \$18 per hour, and perform various job duties, including community outreach, peer advising, service referrals, and related event planning.

In conclusion, Mr. Smith restated the recommendation that the HRPDC support the \$30 million request to help Hampton Roads establish the talent and the supply chain for the offshore wind industry.

Chair McClellan thanked Mr. Smith for his presentation and Ms. Brooks for attending on behalf of the Hampton Roads Workforce Council. She expressed her support and excitement about the initiative and invited questions.

Motion: Commissioner Debbie Ritter Moved to request that the Virginia General Assembly create the Offshore Wind Supply Chain Fund during its upcoming special session to grow the adjacent offshore wind supply chain and develop an offshore wind workforce pipeline project; seconded by Commissioner Ella Ward.

Commissioner Ritter complimented the successful outreach model in the City of Hampton with its educational program and academies. She suggested that Commissioner Mary Bunting potentially present at a special meeting with invitations to the region's school superintendents and appropriate staff to consider a similar outreach model. She also stated that she sees offshore wind as a much more viable alternative energy approach than others and hopes that this funding request is successful.

Chair McClellan thanked Commissioner Ritter for her comments and invited additional discussion before voting.

There being none, a voice vote was held and the Motion Carried.

Appointment of Nominating Committee

The HRPDC Bylaws provide that, at its Annual Meeting in October, the Commission will elect a Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer to serve during the upcoming year. The Chair and Vice-Chair must come from separate localities and be elected officials. The offices of Secretary and Treasurer must be voted on an annual basis but need not be elected officials and may succeed themselves. Please note that the current HRPDC Chair and Vice-Chair are eligible to serve in their current positions for another year.

Chair McClellan requested that the following Commissioners serve on the HRPDC Nominating Committee and provide a report to the Commission at its October meeting:

Chesapeake – Ella Ward	Portsmouth – Shannon Glover
Franklin – Frank Rabil	Smithfield – Carter Williams
Gloucester – Phillip Bazzani	Southampton – William Gillette
Hampton – Donnie Tuck	Suffolk – Leroy Bennett
Isle of Wight – Joel Acree	Surry – Robert Elliott
James City – Jim Icenhour	Virginia Beach – Louis Jones
Newport News – David Jenkins	Williamsburg – Doug Pons
Norfolk – Andria McClellan	York – Sheila Noll
Poquoson – Gordon Helsel	

Chair McClellan reported that the Joint HRPDC/HRTPO Personnel & Budget Committee recognizes that there have been changes in the dates of some municipal elections. As these changes have the potential to impact Commission membership, Mr. Crum was asked to examine a potential corresponding date change for the Annual Meeting date and officer elections.

Consent Agenda

Chair McClellan referenced the Consent Agenda, which included the following items for consideration and approval:

- Meeting Minutes – May 20, 2021 Commission Meeting
- Public Comments – May 20, 2021 Commission Meeting
- Treasurer’s Report – April 2021
- Treasurer’s Report – May 2021
- Executive Director’s Contract
- Fiscal Year 2021 Budget Amendment #3
- Consultant Services Contract – Special Legal Consultant on Stormwater Matters
- Fiscal Year 2022 Hampton Roads Regional Meeting Schedule
- Urban Areas Security Initiative (UASI) Grant Contract
- Rural Transportation Planning Task

Chair McClellan highlighted the Personnel and Budget Committee’s recommended revisions to the Executive Director’s contract as follows:

- The effective date of the new contract shall be July 1, 2021
- The annual salary will be adjusted to \$200,000
- The contract is extended an additional three (3) years to June 30, 2024
- All other provisions in the contract remain unchanged.

Chair McClellan invited questions or comments. There being none, she called for a motion.

Motion: Commissioner McKinley Price Moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented; seconded by Commissioner Ella Ward. The Motion Carried.

Regional Legislative Committee Update

Mr. Crum acknowledged the locality legislative liaisons in attendance and asked them to introduce themselves to the Commission. Mr. Crum complimented the collaboration between the locality legislative liaisons and recognized their willingness to help with regional issues. He welcomed Sherri Neil, City of Portsmouth; David Westcott, City of Chesapeake; Debra Bryan, City of Virginia Beach; Jerri Wilson, City of Newport News; and Jessica Dennis, City of Norfolk.

Mr. Crum began his presentation to the Commission on the initial preparations for an HRPDC/HRTPO Regional Legislative Agenda for the upcoming 2022 Virginia General Assembly session. For the past five years, the HRPDC and HRTPO have adopted a Regional Legislative Agenda to convey to the Virginia General Assembly and Federal Delegation issues of regional significance that should be addressed on behalf of Hampton Roads. This Regional Legislative Agenda is typically approved by the Commission and HRTPO Board at their October/November meetings to allow the regional legislative priorities to be shared with Hampton Roads Caucus members before the start of the General Assembly session in January.

This year, a Joint HRPDC and HRTPO Regional Legislative Committee was formed to develop recommendations for regional legislative priorities to be considered by the Commission and HRTPO Board. The membership of this Hampton Roads Legislative Committee is as follows:

Andria McClellan, Norfolk	HRPDC Chair
Mayor Donnie Tuck, Hampton	HRTPO Chair
David H. Jenkins, Newport News	HRPDC Vice-Chair
Mayor Rick West, Chesapeake	HRTPO Vice-Chair
Mary Bunting, Hampton	CAO Committee Chair
Mike Johnson, Southampton County	CAO Committee Vice-Chair

The Legislative Committee held its first meeting on June 30th and began to discuss potential legislative items for the upcoming General Assembly session. As a starting point, the Committee reviewed the 2021 Regional Legislative Agenda and related actions by the Virginia General Assembly. Mr. Crum described last year's regional legislative priorities as follows:

- **Coastal Resiliency**

- **Resilience Considerations for SMART SCALE Funding:** SMART SCALE is the Commonwealth of Virginia's method for prioritizing transportation projects for State funding. Hampton Roads localities have included foresighted planning for resiliency in their transportation projects, but the challenge was that a project without resiliency features would score higher due to a lower cost. Last year's request was to consider a project's resiliency considerations in the SMART SCALE scoring system. The Commonwealth Transportation Board decided to instead institute a policy that all projects in Virginia must address resiliency.
- **Amend Virginia's Residential Property Flood Disclosure Requirements:** There were no requirements that a seller or realtor disclose information about a property's past flooding history, which resulted in buyers not becoming aware of these issues until they were required to purchase flood insurance policies as part of their mortgage agreements. The request was to amend the disclosure requirements to include a property's vulnerability to flooding or any history of flood damage or flood insurance claims. Significant progress was made through collaboration with the Realtors Association, and a bill was endorsed and approved. The enactment was delayed until January to allow the real estate

community time for training. Mr. Crum thanked Chair McClellan for her leadership on this regional accomplishment.

- **State and Federal Assistance to Update Precipitation Predictions:** Stormwater infrastructure that collects and diverts rainwater away from roads and buildings is size-based on historical rainfall events. The Atlas 14 report, prepared by the National Weather Service, has not been updated for Hampton Roads since 2006. The challenge was relying on outdated data as rainfall trends are changing. For example, based on studies, the City of Virginia Beach has adopted a local standard based on Atlas 14 plus a 20% increase. Mr. Crum reported that Ms. Ann Phillips, Special Assistant to the Governor for Coastal Adaptation and Protection for the Commonwealth of Virginia, was successful in securing funding, and precipitation predictions will be updated in the next two to three years.
- **Commonwealth Flooding Board (CFB):** Last year's proposal to create the CFB will require additional effort this year. Similar to the Commonwealth Transportation Board, the CFB would meet regularly to address statewide flooding issues. The CFB would direct and prioritize State and Federal funding for flood mitigation, ensure collaboration and alignment among State agencies, and coordinate planning and adaptation efforts. Ms. Ann Phillips is working through the Virginia Coastal Resilience Master Plan to address this, but currently, there is no dedicated system for the State agencies and departments of emergency management, transportation, conservation and recreation, and commerce to come together collectively and holistically to address flooding issues across Virginia. Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) funding is available, but there is no Board in place to collectively determine how to establish priorities for the investment of money related to flooding, like the CTB for transportation. Senator Lynwood Lewis, Jr. introduced this item last year, but there was no corresponding budget amendment. Mr. Crum stated that with lessons learned from last year, the creation of the CFB is one of the items under resiliency that the Legislative Committee would like to lead with this year.

- **Transportation**

Elizabeth River Crossings (ERC) Toll Agreement: The HRTPO continues to ask the Commonwealth of Virginia to take whatever steps necessary to support efforts to mitigate the significant impacts the Downtown and Midtown Tunnel tolls have on Hampton Roads' residents and businesses. Through collaborative efforts, there have been some successes such as a one-year toll freeze and a continuation to and beyond 2035 of a low-income resident relief program. The ERC Agreement was signed between the private entity and the Commonwealth of Virginia and sold for about \$2.3 billion. The HRTPO's ERC Task Force will continue to collaboratively work with the

State to identify potential strategies and support steps to permanently reduce tolls and the escalation of toll rates.

I-64 Gap Between Hampton Roads & Richmond: Another legislative priority continues to be securing State and Federal funding to finish the I-64 Gap between Hampton Roads and Richmond. Hampton Roads has completed three phases of I-64 improvements on the Peninsula to the west of Williamsburg using predominantly local/regional tax monies through HRTAC. The Commonwealth has completed improvements between I-295 near Richmond to the Bottoms Bridge Road interchange. Completing the 29-mile gap in improvements would ensure a reliable transportation connection between Hampton Roads, Richmond, and the I-95 corridor to support our military, the Port of Virginia, and the Commonwealth's tourism economy. Approximately 20 of these miles are located outside of the Hampton Roads region. Last year, the Virginia General Assembly created the I-81 Corridor Improvement Program and Fund to provide new transportation revenues between now and 2027. However, it will not be enough to cover the approximately \$650 million cost. The HRTPO will continue to convey to the Federal Delegation that this could be a good project for the Federal Infrastructure Program.

- **Broadband:** The Hampton Roads region is planning a fiber network that will connect to the subsea cables that have come ashore in Virginia Beach and spread ultrafast broadband throughout the 757. The first phase of this effort is a Southside fiber ring, which will be expanded to a second interconnected ring on the Peninsula. Current State funding focuses on rural broadband, but Hampton Roads' core metropolitan areas also need broadband investment. State and Federal funding to construct this fiber ring and support of funding programs and policies that advance regional efforts to develop interconnected and modern fiber networks will assist in the timely delivery of this transformational project.
- **Offshore Wind:** Hampton Roads' geographic location, harbor, and specialized workforce position the 757 to be the hub to support wind turbines planned for construction along the East Coast. The HRPDC continues to support State efforts to promote the offshore wind industry and Hampton Roads as a supply chain hub.
- **Economic Development/ Site Readiness:** The HRPDC supports funding programs and policies that assist local governments with preparing shovel-ready sites for economic development and job creation.
- **Housing:** Affordable housing continues to be a priority for Hampton Roads. The HRPDC supports continued funding of the Virginia Housing Trust Fund for housing programs and projects.
- **Urban Areas Security Initiative (UASI):** The HRPDC supports sustained UASI funding levels for Hampton Roads.

- **K-12 Public Education:** The HRPDC supports the continuation of efforts to provide increased State funding for K-12 public education.

The Legislative Committee also began to identify potential topics as regional legislative priorities for the upcoming General Assembly Session. The Committee will continue to meet between now and the fall meetings of the HRPDC and HRTPO to prepare recommendations for this year's Regional Legislative Agenda. The Agenda will be considered by the Commission and HRTPO Board for adoption in October/November. Mr. Crum presented the following potential 2022 regional legislative priorities for Commission discussion:

- Create the Commonwealth Flooding Board
- Offshore Wind
- Broadband
- Economic Development Site Readiness
- Affordable Housing
- Urban Areas Security Initiative
- Complete the I-64 Gap Between Hampton Roads and Richmond
- Elizabeth River Crossings Toll Agreement
- Improved Passenger Rail Service
- Alternative funding source for transportation – fuels tax insufficient
- Support funding for School Construction and Modernization
- Public Safety – address Virginia Code language on blight, repetitive criminal activity

The Public Safety item was suggested by the City of Hampton. Mr. Crum asked Commissioner Mary Bunting to address the Commission regarding this item and the related concerns about language within the Code of Virginia.

Commissioner Bunting described §15.2-907 as the basis of authority to require removal or repair of buildings that are contributing to blight. She explained that the City of Hampton is concerned with specific language within the definition of criminal blight; wherein, it references “repeated acts of malicious discharge of a firearm within a building or dwelling.” The definition does not address repeated acts of firing into a building, as is the case with repetitive occasions of drive-by shootings at properties. The commonwealth's attorney, city attorney, and police departments are frustrated with the limitations of a locality's authority to address the impacts to a neighborhood street because the shootings are not occurring within the dwelling. The City of Hampton was suggesting a request that the General Assembly amend the Code of Virginia language to broaden this local authority. Commissioner Bunting emphasized that this was only one particular instance where a small amendment to the Code of Virginia language could enable localities to provide greater safety to residents that may be impacted by criminal blight in neighborhoods.

In conclusion, Mr. Crum encouraged discussion and asked if Commission Members supported the initial items identified by the Hampton Roads Legislative Committee and if other topic areas should be addressed.

Commissioner Randy Wheeler suggested that the Legislative Committee address the item requested by the Community Advisory Committee regarding electronic participation in public meetings.

Chair McClellan clarified that outside of a declared state of emergency, the instances in which public bodies can approve electronic participation in public meetings are limited with specific exceptions and related requirements. She thanked Commissioner Wheeler and agreed that the Committee should study and address this item.

Commission Courtney Doyle conveyed her support for the initial 2022 regional legislative priorities identified. She suggested an item to address Public Health District deficiencies on a regional level.

Commissioner Patrick Duhaney suggested consideration of changes to the Code of Virginia language to allow localities to enforce enhancement of problem short-term rental properties more quickly than using the traditional land use processes that can take up to 90 days.

Chair McClellan thanked Commissioner Duhaney for his suggestion and commented that the City of Norfolk is experiencing similar issues and is interested in exploring the ability to implement civil penalties.

Commissioner Bunting echoed Commissioner Doyle's suggestion to address Public Health District deficiencies on a regional level. Commissioner Bunting also suggested increasing Public Health Department funding and requesting the General Assembly to reconsider health district consolidations and return to city/county-run health districts rather than state-run health districts.

In reference to suggestions regarding Public Health Districts, Commissioner Wheeler proposed recommending a Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee (JLARC) study of Public Health Districts' structure, resourcing, and lessons learned from the pandemic.

Commissioner Debbie Ritter commented that it is important to collectively discuss local self-determination. She expressed concern that consolidating decision-making processes in Richmond significantly limits the ability of individual localities to make the best decisions for their citizens. She asked that the Legislative Committee explore opportunities to maintain and enhance local authority and autonomy.

Commissioner Jim Icenhour agreed that the consolidated Public Health District structure during the pandemic was frustrating. He said that the vaccines were distributed disproportionately and the bureaucracy was incapable of reacting appropriately. He complimented the cooperative nature of the Commissioners, their localities, and the many organizations from different communities for working together.

Commissioner Randy Keaton suggested changing the "Support funding for School Construction and Modernization" item to "Increase funding for School Construction and Modernization." He stated that Gloucester County received approval for the authorized one

percent additional local sales and use tax, and Isle of Wight County has sought approval. The revenue from the tax would be used solely for capital projects for the construction or improvements of schools. He suggested coordinating funding for school construction with the Virginia Association of Counties (VACo) effort on the statewide level.

Chair McClellan suggested implementing municipal funding to address electric and autonomous vehicle infrastructure. She indicated that several of the large auto manufacturers announced that they plan to stop manufacturing internal combustion engines as soon as 2030 or 2035. Chair McClellan expressed concern over a lack of funding for appropriate electric vehicle infrastructure at the local level and the potential for electric versus internal combustion engines to become an equity issue. She suggested requesting State assistance and encouraged early planning for autonomous vehicles on the region's roadways.

Mr. Crum commented that the Legislative Committee planned to meet again in August and possibly September. The recommended 2022 Regional Legislative Agenda will be presented for Commission and HRTPO Board consideration and adoption in October/November.

Lower Chickahominy Watershed Collaborative Memorandum of Understanding

Mr. Crum introduced Mr. Benjamin J. McFarlane, HRPDC Senior Regional Planner, to brief the Commission on the Lower Chickahominy Watershed Project and Collaborative Memorandum of Understanding.

Mr. McFarlane described the Lower Chickahominy Watershed Collaborative as a proposed partnership between three counties (Charles City, James City, and New Kent), three tribal nations (Chickahominy Tribe, Chickahominy Indians Eastern Division, and Pamunkey Indian Tribe), PlanRVA, and the HRPDC. The partnership is the culmination of the Lower Chickahominy Watershed Project, a five-year effort led by PlanRVA and funded by the Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program. The overall goal of the project was to identify and recommend policies and other actions to promote the economic development of the watershed while protecting its significant natural resources. The project efforts included data gathering and updating, economic analysis, and coordination and outreach. Outreach efforts included interviews with thought leaders, focus groups, a public survey, a workshop with local government and tribal staff and officials, and a regional summit.

The proposed Lower Chickahominy Watershed Collaborative will help institutionalize and formalize the ongoing collaboration between the counties, tribes, planning district commissions (PDCs), state agencies, and other stakeholders by providing a forum for the partners to work together to identify and establish a shared vision for the watershed that builds on the work done over the last five years. The Lower Chickahominy River Watershed includes some of the most ecologically valuable lands in Virginia's coastal zone. In addition to the critical natural benefits, the area adds to the regional economy with jobs related to the presence of the resource. The Chickahominy Tribe, Chickahominy Indians Eastern Division, and Pamunkey Indian Tribe have a vested interest in this resource from a cultural and historical perspective. Only through a collaborative effort can the stakeholders achieve

the goals of enhanced natural resources, conservation, environmental and cultural protection, and economic opportunities.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has been drafted to formalize the partnership and facilitate enhanced cooperative and collaborative efforts to increase sustainable ecological and economic activity in the Lower Chickahominy Watershed. The signatories include the localities, tribes, and PDCs. Supporting cooperative partners include state and federal agencies, non-governmental organizations, academic institutions, etc. The Collaborative will be managed by a Steering Committee consisting of representatives from each signatory organization. Although there is no contractual obligation to legally commit to the process, the stakeholders recognize the benefit of a collective commitment to work together. Following the establishment of the MOU, representatives from each signatory and supporting partners will meet to build on the priorities identified throughout the five-year effort, which include:

- Improving physical recreational infrastructure
- Supporting sustainable economic development
- Enhancing river advocacy, education, and marketing
- Promoting land conservation and landowner education
- Ensuring protection of sites and traditions that are sacred and historic to the tribes
- Increasing ecological restoration and stewardship

In conclusion, Mr. McFarlane reported that the signatory organizations were currently in the process of signing the MOU and that an in-person Steering Committee meeting and signing ceremony were tentatively scheduled for September. Mr. McFarlane explained the recommended action for Commission consideration was to authorize the Executive Director to sign the Lower Chickahominy Watershed Collaborative Memorandum of Understanding.

Mr. McFarlane invited Commissioner Jim Icenhour to comment on the MOU.

Commissioner Icenhour reported that the James City County Board of Supervisors discussed this item and voted in favor of signing. He commented that the only items of concern, which were alleviated before the vote, involved the nature of the commitment and if there would be a requirement for local funding. He stated that his understanding from their discussion was that funding would predominantly come from other sources such as grant funding. He commented in favor of the MOU and expressed his support for the Commission to approve.

Chair McClellan invited questions or discussion.

Commissioner Neil Morgan asked Mr. McFarlane if there was another definition of Lower Chickahominy that would be easier to understand. He commented that further up the Chickahominy River, Newport News Waterworks draws a lot of water for the Lower Peninsula. He asked if the area is below the dam.

Mr. McFarlane responded that he believed the area is below the dam and indicated that he would provide Commissioner Morgan with a map indicating the precise boundary line.

Commissioner Morgan said that given the amount of water on the Peninsula that is drawn from the Chickahominy, he was curious why Newport News Waterworks was not one of the participants.

Mr. McFarlane stated that he was fairly certain the boundary line was below the dam, but he would look into it and if applicable, reach out to Newport News Waterworks.

Chair McClellan asked for a motion.

Motion: Commissioner Jim Icenhour Moved to authorize the HRPDC Executive Director to sign the Lower Chickahominy Watershed Collaborative Memorandum of Understanding; seconded by Commissioner Ella Ward. The Motion Carried.

Chair McClellan thanked Mr. McFarlane for his presentation.

Three-Month Tentative Schedule

Chair McClellan referred to the Three-Month Tentative Schedule and noted that the Commission was not scheduled to meet in August or September. She specified that the next meeting, scheduled for October 21, 2021, would be the Annual Meeting and include an HRPDC Nominating Committee report for the election of officers.

**Commissioner Randy Keaton departed*

Advisory Committee Minutes

Chair McClellan stated that the Advisory Committee Minutes were provided for information purposes.

Technical Committee Summaries

Chair McClellan commented that the Technical Committee Summaries were provided for information purposes.

**Commissioner Joel Acree departed*

For Your Information

Chair McClellan referenced the correspondence of interest included for Commission member information and highlighted the RISE Building Coastal Resilience Through Innovation One-Pager.

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 1:55 p.m.

Andria P. McClellan
Chair

Robert A. Crum, Jr.
Executive Director/ Secretary