

**RICHMOND REGIONAL PLANNING DISTRICT COMMISSION**  
**Minutes of Meeting**  
**June 11, 2009**

**Members/Alternates Present**

Willie L. Bennett (M) ..... County of Henrico  
Malvern R. “Rudy” Butler (M).....County of Goochland  
Deborah B. Coates (A).....County of Hanover  
Douglas G. Conner (M) .....City of Richmond  
Timothy W. Cotman, Sr., Chairman (M)..... County of Charles City  
James B. Donati (M), Treasurer..... County of Henrico  
Marleen K. Durfee (M).....County of Chesterfield  
Evan Fabricant (M) .....County of Hanover  
Daniel A. Gecker (M) .....County of Chesterfield  
Kathy C. Graziano (M), Vice Chairman.....City of Richmond  
Russell J. Gulley (M) .....County of Chesterfield  
James M. Holland (M) .....County of Chesterfield  
Dorothy Jaeckle (M) .....County of Chesterfield  
E. Martin Jewell (M).....City of Richmond  
Bonnie-Leigh Jones (M) ..... County of Henrico  
David A. Kaechele (M)..... County of Henrico  
Edward W. Pollard (M).....County of New Kent  
George K. Roarty (M).....County of Chesterfield  
Charles R. Samuels (M).....City of Richmond  
Robert R. Setliff (M).....County of Hanover  
Randall R. Silber (A) ..... County of Henrico  
Millard D. Stith (A).....County of Chesterfield  
Stran L. Trout (M), Secretary ..... County of New Kent  
Joseph B. Walton (M) .....County of Powhatan

**Members Absent**

Karin Carmack (M).....County of Powhatan  
Robert R. Cosby (M).....County of Powhatan  
Richard W. Glover (M)..... County of Henrico  
John E. Gordon, Jr. (M) .....County of Hanover  
John C. Grier (M).....City of Richmond  
Courtney G. Hyers (M).....County of Goochland  
Beverly C. Lacy (M) .....City of Richmond  
Patricia S. O’Bannon (M) ..... County of Henrico  
C. Harold Padgett (M).....County of Hanover  
Faye O. Prichard (M) .....Town of Ashland  
Frank J. Thornton (M)..... County of Henrico  
Arthur S. Warren (M) .....County of Chesterfield

**Others Present**

John R. Amos..... RRPDC Legal Counsel  
Nora Amos .....Town of Ashland  
Andy Boenan ..... AECOM  
Rob Bradham ..... Greater Richmond Chamber  
Suzette Denslow.....City of Richmond  
George Homewood ..... County of New Kent  
Joe Lenzi .....County of Chesterfield  
Greg Wingfield .....Greater Richmond Partnership

**Staff Present**

Robert A. Crum, Jr..... Executive Director  
Jo A. Evans ..... Assistant Executive Director  
Julie H. Fry..... Executive Secretary  
Sulabh Aryal ..... Intern  
Anne Darby.....Associate Planner  
Jacob Epstein ..... Intern  
Allyson Finchum.....Principal Planner  
Billy Gammel..... Intern  
Brian Koziol..... Intern  
Jin Lee.....Senior Planner  
Daniel N. Lysy .....Director, Transportation  
Randy Selleck .....Senior Planner  
Sarah Smith.....Senior Planner  
Jackie S. Stewart..... Director, Planning/IS  
Peter M. Sweetland ..... Finance and Contracts Administrator  
Kathy Wright ..... Intern  
Lee Yolton .....Principal Planner

**Call to Order**

Chairman Cotman called the regularly scheduled June 11, 2009 RRPDC meeting to order at approximately 1:05 p.m. in the RRPDC board room. He then led the Commission members in the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

**I. ADMINISTRATION**

**A. Certification by Commission Executive Director of Meeting Quorum**

Mr. Crum certified that a quorum of members was present.

## **B. Requests for Additions or Changes in Order of Business**

Chairman Cotman asked if there were any additions or changes to be made to the agenda.

Mr. Crum asked if New Business Item III.B. could be moved to the top of the agenda. Ms. Graziano moved that the item be moved up on the agenda as requested and the remainder of the agenda will be maintained. The motion was seconded by Mr. Donati. There was no additional discussion and the motion carried.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **III. B. Resolution in Support of High Speed Rail**

Mr. Crum said the Capital Region Collaborative Organizing Team (CRC) has been discussing several items over the last few months. High speed rail has been among the items discussed. There is economic stimulus money (\$8 billion) available for high speed rail, and there is an opportunity for the State of Virginia and the Richmond Region to take advantage of these funds to move high speed rail service from Washington, DC to the Richmond Region.

During its meeting in May, the Capital Region Collaborative Organizing Team unanimously adopted its first resolution – one that is in support of high speed rail service being brought to the Richmond Region. The resolution also encouraged the Commonwealth of Virginia to submit an application to access the federal funding available for high speed rail service and encourage the Federal Rail Administration (FRA) to look favorably on the Commonwealth's request.

After passing the resolution, the CRC felt that a regional show of support would improve competitiveness and strengthen the application for the funding. The CRC asked each of the Region's nine jurisdictions to pass similar resolutions and that the RRPDC and MPO also take similar action.

Today a resolution in support of expanding high speed rail from Washington, DC to Richmond is included in the agenda book for the Commission's consideration and action.

Mr. Crum introduced Mr. Dan Plaugher, executive director of Virginians for High Speed Rail, who will give a short presentation on the issue.

Mr. Plaugher said his organization is a coalition of citizens, localities, economic development agencies, businesses, and other organizations such as the Greater Richmond Partnership. The main goals of the organization are to improve the quality and reliability of service between Newport News and Washington, DC through Richmond and to invest in the southeast corridor rail system.

Mr. Plaugher said passenger trains have many advantages – creation of jobs, economic development, and addressing environmental concerns. Staples Mill currently has 15 trains each day; Main Street Station has four regionals; Petersburg has eight long distance trains; Ashland has eight regional services. Current reliability for the regional services is about 60%-70%. Ridership in the Richmond Region grew about 19% last year with no increase in services or reliability.

The biggest problem in the Richmond Region is the time it takes to get from Staples Mill to Main Street Station. This delay is caused by congestion at ACCA Yard, which is the largest bottleneck on the east coast. The Commonwealth Transportation Board has allocated \$10 million in stimulus money to rail service in order to address this problem.

The southeast high speed rail corridor expands from Washington, DC to Atlanta (GA) and Jacksonville (FL). The northeast corridor is beginning to see Richmond as its most southern point.

The goals of high speed rail are 90% on-time performance, 90-minute trip time between Richmond and Washington, DC, and 90-mile per hour top speed.

Mr. Plaugher noted the FRA has named four types of rail service: conventional service up to 79-miles per hour on a mixed use corridor; freight rail; regional high speed; and express.

On June 16, the FRA will release its guidelines to access the stimulus funds. Virginia has already developed a state-wide rail plan and entered into state corridor agreements. Virginia also has some funding in place.

Mr. Plaugher noted that resolutions in support of expanding rail service will be key to having the application approved by showing community support. Making contact with state and federal legislators is also an important factor.

Mr. Crum said that several localities have already acted to approve resolutions of support: Henrico, City of Richmond, Hanover, New Kent, and Goochland. The remaining localities have the resolution on their agendas for upcoming meetings.

Mr. Kaechele asked how many trains go out of Main Street Station. Mr. Plaugher said only four trains utilize Main Street Station. Mr. Kaechele asked what improvements would be made in service at Main Street Station. Mr. Plaugher replied that the goal is to add an additional cross-over and bypass around the east and to the north to connect Main Street Station to Staples Mill.

Mr. Setliff asked what the final cost would be on these improvements. Mr. Plaugher said it is estimated for the entire corridor, the cost will be \$2.5 billion.

Ms. Jones asked if any other high speed models were self-sustaining. Mr. Plaughter said the infrastructure is the most expensive portion, which will be addressed with the federal stimulus funds. Operations can be sustainable if infrastructure costs are taken out.

Ms. Jaeckle asked what type of study is being done to determine how additional train traffic will impact localities. Mr. Plaughter said information is being gathered on that now in addition to what grade crossings will be closed.

Mr. Crum said the resolution is included under Tab 4 of the agenda book for the members' consideration. Mr. Butler moved that the resolution be approved as presented. Ms. Durfee seconded the motion. There was no additional discussion and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Crum said he would also ask that another item be added to the agenda. This is an action item to approve a grant application for the MPO Route 5 Urban/Suburban Multimodal Corridor Study. This would be added as an item under New Business.

Chairman Cotman said if there was no objection, he would add this as the last item under New Business, Item III.E.

## **I. ADMINISTRATION**

### **C. Open Public Comment Period**

Chairman Cotman asked if there was anyone from the public in attendance who wished to make a comment. He reminded speakers that their time is limited to three minutes. As there were no requests from the public to address the Commission, the Chairman closed the public comment period.

### **D. Chairman's Report**

Chairman Cotman noted this will be his last meeting as Chairman. He thanked staff for their cooperation and assistance to help him in his role as Chairman over the past year. He thanked members of the Commission for their patience and cooperation. Chairman Cotman noted this had been a very pleasant learning experience for him, and he appreciated the opportunity.

### **E. Approval of Minutes – May 14, 2009 Meeting**

Chairman Cotman asked Mr. Trout to present this item.

Mr. Trout said before he presented his report, he wanted to introduce Mr. Edward Pollard, who is the New Kent County Planning Commission's new representative

on the Commission. Mr. Pollard is filling Ms. Snyder's position which was left vacant upon her death. Chairman Cotman welcomed Mr. Pollard on behalf of the Commission.

Mr. Trout reported the minutes from the May 14, 2009 meeting were included in the agenda book. Mr. Trout made a motion that the minutes be approved as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Butler. There being no further discussion, the motion carried.

#### **F. Approval of April 2009 Financial Reports**

Chairman Cotman asked Mr. Donati to present this item.

Mr. Donati stated the financial report is included in the agenda book under Tab 2. He noted that with 83% of the fiscal year completed, expenses are tracking at just over 77%. There being no discussion, on motion made by Mr. Donati and seconded by Mr. Butler, the April 2009 financial reports were accepted for audit as presented.

#### **G. Executive Director's Report**

Mr. Crum brought the members' attention to the monthly staff activity report which is included in the agenda book under Tab 3.

Mr. Crum noted that the Hanover County Technical Assistance Project (Regional Parks Inventory) is nearing completion and a report will be given on this during the July meeting. He also noted that each jurisdiction had been asked to appoint a representative to the Regional Grants Warehouse Work Group. Ms. Evans distributed a member list and said vacancies shown are expected to be filled within the next few days. It is anticipated that the Work Group will meet in July.

### **II. OLD BUSINESS**

#### **A. Jurisdictional Committees Reports**

Chairman Cotman asked Mr. Crum to give reports on recent meetings of the jurisdictional committees on behalf of Ms. Prichard and Mr. Gordon, who could not attend today's meeting.

Mr. Crum reported that the Large Jurisdictions Committee met on June 4. The committee received a presentation on early childhood education needs in the Richmond Region from Sherrie Brach, United Way of Greater Richmond and Petersburg. The committee also received a presentation from staff on a proposed change to the RRPDC logo. The committee endorsed the design that was presented, which does include a name change. The Small Jurisdictions

Committee will also receive this presentation for input. Members of the Commission will receive the presentation within the next month or two.

The Small Jurisdictions Committee will meet on Tuesday to discuss the same items.

### **III. NEW BUSINESS**

#### **A. Greater Richmond Partnership – Greg Wingfield, President**

Chairman Cotman asked Mr. Crum to introduce the guest speaker for this item.

Mr. Crum noted that each month he receives feedback from the Executive Committee on what topics of interest should be presented to the full Commission. Mr. Wingfield was invited to give an update on activities of the Greater Richmond Partnership (GRP) as a result of a suggestion made by Mr. Butler during an Executive Committee meeting.

Mr. Wingfield thanked members of the Commission for the opportunity to speak with them today. He presented background information on the Greater Richmond Partnership:

- Formed in 1994
- Regional public/private economic development group
- Current five-year budget \$16 million (2004-2009)
- Spent since 1994: \$40.7 million
- Attracted nearly 375 new businesses/investment \$6.8 billion
- GRP value added of \$166 to every \$1
- 50 trips per year to other countries to promote Richmond

He noted the mission of the GRP is “to help grow the Greater Richmond economy through the attraction of high quality jobs and new capital investment, the retention of existing businesses, and the continued improvement of the region’s business climate.”

Issues of concern currently:

- Loss of two Fortune 1000 companies
- Loss of Qimonda, S&K Menswear
- Loss of ICL service at Port of Richmond
- Layoffs of over 6,500 in 2009 plus 5,000 in 2008
- Unemployment more than double from last April
- Residential building permits down 30% from 2007 to 2008
- Credit remains tight

Mr. Wingfield said the GRP has four economic development programs:

1. New Business Attraction and Regional Marketing
2. Business Retention and Expansion
3. Workforce Development
4. New Business Formation

The GRP began a refunding process that was reworked when the current economic downturn began, which included a 90-day strategic plan. This was done in cooperation with the GRP members. It was deemed in the best interests of the Region to begin to recruit new types of businesses, such as green industries and agencies that support homeland security.

Forbes still rates Virginia as the best place to do business and the Greater Richmond area is listed as 7th on Forbes' list of best places for business and careers in the largest 250 metro areas of the country. Richmond is 4th on the list of best places to find a job.

Mr. Wingfield also reviewed unemployment and housing figures and stated that the Region will be able to maintain its outstanding business factors once the recession ebbs.

Mr. Fabricant asked if the GRP anticipates any companies moving their headquarters to Richmond given the economic conditions. Mr. Wingfield said there is some movement in that direction as companies reposition themselves to be more competitive when the economy begins to turn around. There are also opportunities for backroom operations in the Richmond area.

Mr. Jewell asked about the duty-free zone around the airport. He asked if this was an incentive to bring business to Richmond and if this could be tied to the Port of Richmond. Mr. Wingfield said this is part of Trade Zone 207. There are 6-10 sub-zones in the Region that use this Trade Zone 207 link to defer tariffs and taxes.

Mr. Crum asked, with regard to regional considerations, what RRPDC could do to strengthen the positioning of the regional economy. Mr. Wingfield noted the support of regional high speed rail was a great help. An extended transportation/transit system would be beneficial to get residents to available jobs, including connections to the Tri-Cities. The addition of low-cost airlines to the Richmond Airport was also a great boon.

Chairman Cotman thanked Mr. Wingfield for his update.

**B. Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Program Presentation – Joe Lenzi, Energy Manager, Chesterfield County**

Chairman Cotman asked Mr. Crum to introduce this item and the guest speaker.

Mr. Crum reported during last month's Executive Committee meeting, Mr. Warren suggested this next presentation as an agenda item. The Executive Committee discussed the issue of energy conservation, and it was suggested that Mr. Lenzi be invited to review this grant program with Commission members.

Mr. Lenzi reported that authorization for this grant came from the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007, and is funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. Funds were allocated to the Department of Energy which in turn created the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Program (EECBG). The funds will go directly to county and municipal governments for use on energy efficiency projects.

The purpose of EECBG is to reduce fossil fuel emissions, reduce total energy use, and improve energy efficiency. Its principles include:

- Prioritize energy efficiency and conservation first
- Maximize benefits over the longest possible term
- Create and/or retain jobs
- Provide substantial, sustainable, and measurable energy savings and job creation

Mr. Lenzi said he is proposing that an "energy bank" be set up to house the funds which will be distributed for work on energy efficiency projects. Savings realized over five years after the projects are completed will be returned to the bank for future projects and become a self-sustaining fund source.

Chairman Cotman thanked Mr. Lenzi for his presentation and encouraged members to contact Mr. Lenzi with questions regarding the grant application process.

**D. Report of Nominating Committee and Election of FY 10 Officers**

Chairman Cotman reported that members of the Nominating Committee (Mr. Butler, Mr. Cosby, Mr. Gordon, Mr. Warren, and Chairman Cotman) had met and agreed on the following slate of officers for FY 10. These nominees are based on the established jurisdictional rotation.

Chairman: Kathy Graziano, City of Richmond  
Vice Chairman: Jim Donati, Henrico County  
Treasurer: Stran Trout, New Kent County  
Secretary: Faye Prichard, Town of Ashland

On motion made by Mr. Setliff and seconded by Mr. Bennett, the slate of officers was approved unanimously as presented. The new officers will be sworn in during the July Commission meeting.

**E. MPO Route 5 Urban/Suburban Multimodal Corridor Study Resolution Authorizing FHWA/SPR Funds Grant Application and Agreement**

Chairman Cotman asked Mr. Lysy to present this item.

Mr. Lysy noted that information on this proposal was sent to each Commission member and is being distributed again at this time. VDOT has advised that a resolution will be required for the RRPDC to accept state planning funds for the Route 5 Corridor Study. Staff is requesting that action be taken to authorize RRPDC staff to submit the application for these grant funds to hire a consultant to complete the study and to enter into a contract with VDOT to administer the funds. The MPO has taken action as part of its FY 10 Unified Work Program to authorize this application.

On motion made by Mr. Trout and seconded by Mr. Donati, the resolution was approved as presented.

**IV. OTHER BUSINESS**

**A. Committee Reports**

There were no other committee reports.

**B. Announcements**

There were no announcements.

**C. For Your Information**

The following item was included in this section:

1. Article on regional high-speed rail from PilotOnline.com (Hampton Roads)

V. **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Commission, on motion duly made and seconded, Chairman Cotman adjourned the meeting at approximately 2:25 p.m.

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Robert A. Crum, Jr.  
Executive Director

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Timothy W. Cotman, Sr.  
Chairman