

RICHMOND REGIONAL PLANNING DISTRICT COMMISSION
Minutes of Meeting
September 13, 2012

Members/Alternates Present

Manuel Alvarez (A)..... Goochland County
L. Ray Ashworth (M)City of Richmond
Richard Ayers (M)..... Powhatan County
Steve A. Elswick (M) Chesterfield County
Even Fabricant (M) Hanover County
Daniel A. Gecker (M)..... Chesterfield County
Kathy C. Graziano (M)..... City of Richmond
James M. Holland (M)..... Chesterfield County
Dorothy Jaeckle (M)..... Chesterfield County
David A. Kaechele (M) Henrico County
Angela Kelly-Wiecek, Vice Chairman (M)..... Hanover County
Kelli Le Duc (A)..... New Kent County
Floyd H. Miles (M) Charles City County
John H. Mitchell (M)..... Henrico County
Patricia S. O'Bannon (M)..... Henrico County
C. Harold Padgett (M) Hanover County
Ken Peterson, Treasurer (M) Goochland County
W. Canova Peterson (M) Hanover County
Edward W. Pollard (M) New Kent County
Faye O. Prichard, Chairman (M)..... Town of Ashland
Charles R. Samuels (M) City of Richmond
Randy Silber (A) Henrico County
Frank J. Thornton (M) Henrico County
C. Thomas Tiller (M) New Kent County
Carson Tucker (M) Powhatan County
David Williams, Secretary (M) Powhatan County

Members Absent

Thomas M. Branin (M) Henrico County
Douglas G. Conner (M)..... City of Richmond
Richard W. Glover (M) Henrico County
Russell J. Gulley (M)..... Chesterfield County
E. Martin Jewell (M) City of Richmond
Lynn McAteer (M) City of Richmond
Tyrone E. Nelson (M) Henrico County
Arthur S. Warren (M) Chesterfield County

Others Present

John AmosRRPDC Legal Council
John T. BentonCitizen, Chesterfield County

Staff Present

Robert A. Crum Executive Director
Jo A. EvansAssistant Executive Director
Julie H. Fry Executive Secretary
Sulabh Aryal Associate Planner
John FoggSenior Planner
Billy Gammel Associate Planner
Chuck Gates Communications Coordinator
Barbara Jacocks Principal Planner
Jin Lee Senior Planner
Daniel N. Lysy Director of Urban Transportation
Greta Ryan Senior Planner
Jackie S. Stewart Director of Planning
Lee Yolton Principal Planner

Call to Order

Chairman Prichard called the regularly scheduled September 13, 2012 RRPDC meeting to order at approximately 1:10 p.m. in the RRPDC board room. She then led 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 to the Order of Business

Chairman Prichard asked if there were any additions or changes to be made to the agenda. There were no requests to change the agenda, and the agenda was accepted as presented.

C. Open Public Comment Period

Chairman Prichard asked if there was anyone from the public in attendance who wished to make a comment to members of the Commission. She 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 Prichard thanked members for their attendance today and their continued interest in the work being done by RRPDC. She said she will have a report on a meeting of the Large and Small Jurisdictions Committees later on the agenda.

E. Executive Director's Report

Mr. Crum brought members' attention to the monthly staff activity report, which is included in the agenda book under Tab 1 and details work being advanced by staff on behalf of the localities. He said staff will be happy to address any questions on what is included in the report.

Mr. Crum said he would like to bring to the attention of members a flyer included with the agenda packet. The flyer announces a Transportation Forum being hosted by the Greater Richmond Chamber of Commerce that will take place on Friday, September 21. The topic will focus on the state's transportation funding needs. Speakers will include former Pennsylvania governor Ed Rendell as well as the Virginia Secretary of Transportation, Sean Connaughton. Panel members will include Virginia State Senator John Watkins and Virginia State Delegate John O'Bannon.

Mr. Crum said the Chamber has agreed to waive the entrance fee for anyone affiliated with the RRPDC, MPO, or local governments. He urged members to attend if their schedules permitted.

Ms. O'Bannon said she has received feedback from some citizens who are upset that they are having to pay a fee to attend when local government officials are not having to pay the fee.

Mr. Crum said the Chamber needs to recover some of their costs to host the Forum. Mr. Crum noted that the RRPDC has no funds invested in the Forum.

Mr. Ashworth said he spoke with Ms. Geisler at the Chamber who indicated that members would be charged the fee. Mr. Crum said if any member has paid the fee, that fee will be reimbursed. Mr. Crum said if anyone would like to attend, please let Ms. Fry know and she will take care of making sure everyone who wants to attend is registered.

Mr. Crum welcomed Mr. Alvarez to the RRPDC as a newly appointed voting alternate member for Goochland County. Mr. Alvarez has been very active in his role as an MPO member.

Mr. Crum also brought to members' attention ongoing problems with the sound system in the Board Room. He has authorized some work on the system to try to extend its service until the agency can budget for the transition to a digital system. He said he appreciates everyone's patience with the system until the repairs are made.

II. CONSENT AGENDA

Chairman Prichard said the Executive Committee recommended approval of the items listed on the Consent Agenda:

- A. Approval of Minutes – July 12, 2012
- B. Approval of June Financial Report

There was no request to have either item removed from the Consent Agenda for additional discussion and on motion made by Ms. Graziano and seconded by Mr. Gecker, the Consent Agenda was approved unanimously.

III. OLD BUSINESS

There was no Old Business to bring before members.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

A. Rural Long Range Transportation Plan (RLRTP)

Chairman Prichard asked Mr. Crum to introduce this item.

Mr. Crum said this transportation plan focuses on the rural areas of the Region that are not included in the MPO study area. These areas are western Goochland and Powhatan Counties and those areas in eastern New Kent and Charles City Counties. He noted that Ms. Jacocks and her staff have worked with a consultant as well as all of the jurisdictional staffs to develop this plan. Members will be asked to take action after the presentation to endorse the plan. The RLRTP has been presented to all of the local governing bodies.

Ms. Jacocks noted that VDOT established this initiative in July 2006 to provide transportation planning in rural areas. It is a statewide initiative to establish a rural long range transportation plan that will complement those plans done for urban areas. RRPDC staff has worked with VDOT and the local staffs to identify transportation issues in rural areas. Public hearings have also been held to receive input from citizens.

Additional information was distributed to each member for their reference during the presentation.

Ms. Jacocks began her review of the RL RTP by reporting that work was completed to identify and establish priority needs and to look at key intersections and road segments deficiencies. Once these were identified, short, medium, and long term solutions were developed.

Local boards of supervisors were briefed after the first of the year, and public hearings were held during the summer and fall. All of the comments were incorporated into the plan.

Ms. Jacocks reviewed each of the localities' deficiencies. She said numbered squares represent segments and circles represent intersections. Color codes indicate the type of deficiency in the area – geometric deficiency, operational deficiency, or safety deficiency.

Goochland County: 22 deficiencies (20 road segments and 2 intersections)

Powhatan County: 21 deficiencies (6 intersection and 15 road segments)

New Kent County: 11 deficiencies (3 intersections and 8 road segments)

Charles City County: 6 deficiencies (1 intersection and 5 road segments)

Ms. Jacocks briefly reviewed each of the recommendations made for the various deficiencies.

Ms. Jacocks said staff is requesting that members consider taking action to endorse the RL RTP.

Chairman Prichard asked if anyone had questions for Ms. Jacocks.

Mr. Williams asked if additional resources for completing the projects have been identified. Ms. Jacocks said that funding will be researched once priorities are set by working with the Rural Technical Advisory Committee and the local boards. After the priorities are set, the RL RTP will be put into the state's plan for funds allocation. Other PDCs have indicated alternate sources of funding can be found.

Mr. Williams asked how many other PDCs in the state have an MPO boundary. Mr. Crum said about 12 have MPO boundaries. These are urbanized areas or areas that expect to become urbanized. There are 21 PDCs in the state.

Mr. Williams asked if anyone knew why some PDCs opted to have MPO boundaries and others did not. Mr. Crum referred back to the first slide that Ms. Jacocks showed which outlines the MPO boundary area in the Richmond Region. Those areas outside of the colored area are not included in the MPO study area. Some discussions have been held about whether to include the entire RRPDC Region in the MPO study boundary. Through legislation, PDCs are permitted to designate their entire region as an MPO area.

Mr. Tucker asked if there was a benefit to have both urban and rural areas. Mr. Crum said the challenge becomes that within the MPO boundary, federal funding is available through RSTP and CMAQ funds. For rural areas, priority projects are submitted to be included in the state's Six Year Improvement Plan. There is no dedicated source of funding for projects in rural areas. If the MPO boundary is expanded, no additional federal funds are allocated for the added rural areas.

Mr. Pollard asked for clarification on intersection deficiencies and what those would entail. Ms. Jacocks said this refers to deficiencies in how the intersection is set up with regard to how vehicles pass through the intersection, such as turn lanes.

Ms. Kelly-Wiecek asked about item 2 on page 12, under Public and Para-Transit Transportation. She asked how Bay Transit had been involved in the process. Ms. Jacocks said outreach was made to service providers several months ago to ask about the providers' strategic plans. Contact with Bay Transit was made through Quin Rivers.

Ms. Kelly-Wiecek said she would recommend that the second sentence under that heading be shortened for clarity. Ms. Jacocks thanked Ms. Kelly-Wiecek for her recommendation.

Mr. Amos, RRPDC legal counsel, pointed out that on page 5, there is a reference in the high-lighted box about park and ride facilities. He said the one on US 250 in Gum Spring is actually located in Louisa County and not in Goochland County.

Mr. Elswick asked when projected costs for the projects would be available. Ms. Jacocks said costs will be determined during the prioritization process. She said this will also assist in identifying short, medium, and long term projects, based on the cost. The cost estimate formula is supplied by VDOT. She said she hopes costs will be finalized in the next fiscal year.

Mr. Tucker said some maps include Rt. 288 and others do not. He suggested for consistency that all maps should probably include Rt. 288.

Mr. K. Peterson asked about short term fixes with regard to safety issues. Ms. Jacocks said some safety issues now identified as long term projects may move up in priority once all safety data is collected.

Mr. Williams said it will be important for the localities to know how much funding might be available as this will help with the process to prioritize projects. Ms. Jacocks said she agreed and will keep the localities updated on funding information.

Chairman Prichard asked if there was a motion to endorse the Rural Long Range Transportation Plan with the noted corrections. Ms. Graziano so moved and the motion was seconded by Mr. Williams. There was no additional discussion and the motion carried unanimously.

B. Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Update

Mr. Crum reported that staff is about half way through the process to complete the Region's first CEDS development effort. He said staff wanted to share some of the analysis that has been completed in this process. Staff has been working in cooperation with a 30-plus member committee which includes staff from all nine RRPDC jurisdictions.

Ms. Jacocks said the plan should be finalized next July. Today she will provide information on statistics that have been collected so far. She said RRPDC staff has assisted in gathering this data along with members of the localities' economic development staffs.

Ms. Jacocks reviewed the purposes for a CEDS:

- benefits regions with economically distressed economies
- encourages projects that advance innovation and support Regional Innovation Clusters (RICs)
- CEDS as pre-eligibility for Economic Development Administration (EDA) grant applications for projects such as public infrastructure and facilities and economic adjustment assistance

Ms. Jacocks said consideration has been given to issues such as geographic access to jobs; jobs that pay a living wage; consideration of different age cohorts; jurisdictional differences in establishing priorities in seeking future funding; keeping a balance through economic and environmental sustainability; and a need to look at end-goals of the localities in their own economic development strategy.

Within the Richmond Region, 14.13 percent of the total population is considered distressed while 31.89 percent is considered to have low to moderate income. Ms. Jacocks said that the Richmond Region's unemployment rates are relatively low as compared to the national average.

The RRPDC received a \$75,000 grant (50/50 match) to use in the development of the CEDS over a 24-month period, ending in July 2013. The committee structure was required to have a membership with over 50 percent of members from the private sector. Ms. Jacocks provided a list of members from the private sector who serve on the committee. Four work groups have been established: talent, employment clusters, infrastructure, and quality of life issues.

Ms. Jacocks reviewed the vision and purpose of the CEDS effort and reviewed some of the statistics that have been gathered regarding the workforce and how it relates to birth rates, migration versus natural growth, age bracket changes, and the aging labor force.

Information was also provided on the percent of the Region's population living below the poverty level; how education plays a role in employment; unemployment in the Richmond Region by education level; place of residence for the population employed in the Richmond Region; and place of employment for residents in the Richmond Region.

Ms. Jacocks provided information on the number of workers employed in each jurisdiction as well as the number of workers living in each jurisdiction. Additional information was provided on economic opportunities, prosperity, and employment trends. Other charts provided information on the number of jobs available in each jurisdiction compared to the number of persons seeking employment, as well as a breakdown of jobs available based on level of education. The top annual occupation gaps are anticipated in the fields of construction and extraction, healthcare/technical, healthcare/support, transportation, and personal care/service.

Ms. Jacocks noted that of the 76,000-plus jobs created in Virginia during the economic recovery, about 32 percent of these pay minimum wage. Since 2009, the number of hourly workers making minimum wage has increased by 78 percent. The Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates that 45 percent of all job openings from 2004 through 2014 will be in middle skill occupations and will require at least a high school diploma.

A map has been created that identifies opportunities for economic growth along the Jefferson Davis Highway corridor. Opportunities will also be identified in the other jurisdictions.

Ms. Jacocks said that as the CEDS development continues, the objectives will be to

- build on all available resources
- stimulate a regional discussion
- identify short and long term educational and training needs of existing population to move the Region forward
- position priority development sites with appropriate infrastructure to foster growth measured by employment retention and expansion

Mr. Fabricant suggested that this information needs to be disseminated to the public to let them know how effectively their tax dollars are being used by the RRPDC. He said an idea would be to have a series of articles published in the Times-Dispatch to showcase each of the work areas. Ms. Jacocks said in the spring, public hearings will be held to receive input from those living in the communities.

Ms. O'Bannon asked if this information is available online. Ms. Jacocks said the information is on the RRPDC website and the PowerPoint presentation can also be posted to the website. Ms. O'Bannon asked if the information will be used in public outreach or if it will be placed on Facebook. Ms. Jacocks said that is an option.

Ms. Kelly-Wiecek said she thought the slides showing education gaps and job opportunities are very helpful. Ms. Jacocks said the purpose of presenting the information is to provide a planning tool to the jurisdictions.

Mr. Tucker suggested that this presentation be made to the regional school boards to help them understand where job deficiencies are so that the education system can react and offer training in fields where workers will be needed. Mr. Tucker also suggested that a footnote should be included on the regional eligibility slide to indicate that the area highlighted in Powhatan and Goochland Counties on the map is prison population.

Mr. Holland said an action plan for the education system needs to be developed to assist with workforce development and preparation. He noted that technology has had a tremendous impact on the economy.

Mr. Crum stressed that the process will not stop with data collection. This is intended to be an action strategy plan. Information will be provided within the next ten months on economic development sites and what will be needed to support those sites. There will also be workforce recommendations. Mr. Crum noted that all of the local staffs serving on the work groups have been very helpful in collecting and assessing the data that was just shared.

V. OTHER BUSINESS

A. Committee Reports

Chairman Prichard reported that the Large and Small Jurisdictions Committees met jointly in August to begin work on development of the RRPDC legislative agenda. The committees will meet again next month.

Chairman Prichard asked Ms. Graziano if she had anything to add to the report. Ms. Graziano reported that the committees will meet again on September 20 and invited everyone to either attend the meeting or to provide input on ideas for legislative issues that should be included in the agenda. The committees have agreed to limit the number of action request items on the agenda. Those issues discussed were transportation, water quality issues and mandates, passenger rail funding, the JLARC study on incentivized cooperation, and the additional seat for the Richmond Region on the Commonwealth Transportation Board.

Mr. Crum noted that the meeting will begin at 8:00 a.m. and will be held at the Workforce Development and Conference Center on the J. Sargeant Reynolds Parham Road campus.

B. Greater Richmond Chamber of Commerce Transportation Forum

Chairman Prichard noted this was covered earlier in the meeting but asked if anyone else had a question regarding this Forum. Ms. Kelly-Wiecek asked if she should respond to the email address on the flyer in order to register for the Forum. Ms. Fry said that was correct.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

There was no other business to bring before the Board and on motion duly made and seconded, Chairman Prichard adjourned the meeting at approximately 2:15 p.m.

Robert A. Crum, Jr.
Executive Director

Faye O. Prichard
Chairman