

RICHMOND REGIONAL PLANNING DISTRICT COMMISSION
Minutes of Meeting
September 10, 2015

Members (Alternates) Present

Jonathan T. Baliles	City of Richmond
Karin Carmack	Powhatan County
Timothy M. Davey	Chesterfield County
Steve A. Elswick	Chesterfield County
Evan Fabricant.....	Hanover County
Daniel A. Gecker, Vice Chairman.....	Chesterfield County
Richard W. Glover	Henrico County
Kathy C. Graziano, Secretary.....	City of Richmond
Jimmy Hancock.....	Henrico County
James M. Holland.....	Chesterfield County
David A. Kaechele	Henrico County
Angela Kelly-Wiecek.....	Hanover County
Floyd H. Miles, Treasurer	Charles City County
Patricia S. O'Bannon.....	Henrico County
C. Harold Padgett	Hanover County
Ken Peterson.....	Goochland County
W. Canova Peterson	Hanover County
Edward W. Pollard	New Kent County
Rodney Poole	City of Richmond
Faye O. Prichard.....	Town of Ashland
Randall R. Silber (A).....	Henrico County
Emily Thomason (A).....	City of Richmond
Frank J. Thornton	Henrico County
Arthur S. Warren	Chesterfield County
David Williams, Chairman.....	Powhatan County

Members Absent

Parker C. Agelasto.....	City of Richmond
Daniel Arkin	City of Richmond
Russell J. Gulley.....	Chesterfield County
Dorothy Jaeckle.....	Chesterfield County
Michelle Mosby.....	City of Richmond
Tyrone E. Nelson.....	Henrico County
C. Thomas Tiller.....	New Kent County
Carson Tucker	Powhatan County
Robert Witte	Henrico County

Others Present

John Amos RRPDC Legal Counsel
 Nora Amos Town of Ashland
 Jerry Fox Capital Region Collaborative
 Douglas Goodman Town of Ashland
 Elizabeth Greenfield Richmond Association of Realtors
 Charles Hartgrove Town of Ashland
 Laura Lafayette Richmond Association of Realtors; Partnership for Housing Affordability
 Mark Olinger City of Richmond
 Paul Oswell Virginia Department of Social Services
 Catherine Pemberton Powhatan County

Staff Present

Barbara Jacocks Interim Executive Director/Director of Planning
 Julie H. Fry Executive Secretary
 Danielle Clark Administrative Secretary
 Anne Darby Senior Planner
 Billy Gammel Planner
 Chuck Gates Manager, Community Affairs
 Ashley Hall Manager, Capital Region Collaborative
 Josh Mallow Planner
 Barbara Nelson Director of Transportation
 Kathy Robins Senior Planner
 Greta Ryan Senior Planner
 Will Sanford Intern
 Jackie Stewart Manager, Special Projects

Call to Order

Chairman Williams called the regularly scheduled September 10, 2015 RRPDC meeting to order at approximately 9:10 a.m. in the RRPDC Board Room. He then led members in the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

I. ADMINISTRATION

A. Certification by Commission Interim Executive Director of Meeting Quorum

Ms. Jacocks reported that a quorum of members was present.

B. Request for Additions or Changes to the Order of Business

Chairman Williams asked if there were any requests to change the agenda or order of business.

There were no requests to change the agenda, and on motion made by Ms. Graziano and seconded by Mr. Miles, the agenda was approved unanimously as presented.

C. Open Public Comment Period

Chairman Williams opened the public comment period, noting that if anyone wished to address the members, to please come to a microphone and provide his or her name, locality of residence, and if appropriate the name of any organization being represented. Chairman Williams asked that any citizen speaker please limit comments to three minutes.

As there were no requests from the public to address members of the Board, Chairman Williams closed the public comment period.

D. Approval of July 9, 2015 Meeting Minutes

Chairman Williams asked Ms. Graziano to present the minutes of the July 9, 2015 meeting.

Ms. Graziano asked if there were any changes or corrections to be made to the minutes.

There were no corrections or comments on the minutes, and on motion made by Mr. K. Peterson and seconded by Mr. Thornton, the minutes of the July 9, 2015 meeting were approved unanimously as presented.

E. Approval of June and July 2015 Financial Reports

Chairman Williams asked Mr. Miles to present the financial reports for June and July 2015.

Mr. Miles said if there were no corrections, he would ask for a motion to accept the June and July 2015 financial reports as presented. Ms. Graziano so moved and the motion was seconded by Mr. Warren. There was no further discussion and the motion carried unanimously.

F. Chairman's Report

Chairman Williams reported that the search for a permanent Executive Director is proceeding on schedule. During this morning's Executive Committee meeting, dates were set for candidate interviews. Chairman Williams added that he and Mr. Gecker have been very pleased with the assistance being offered by the regional human resource professionals.

H. Interim Executive Director's Report

Ms. Jacocks brought members' attention to the staff activity report, which is included in the agenda book under Tab 3 and details work being advanced by staff on behalf of the localities. She said staff will be happy to address any questions on what is included in the report.

Ms. Jacocks introduced Josh Mallow, Planner, who is a one-year contract RRPDC staff member working on the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project in cooperation with the City of Richmond. Ms. Jacocks also introduced Mr. Mark Olinger, Director of Planning and Development Review with the City of Richmond, who is leading the City's portion of the BRT project.

Ms. Jacocks also introduced the following new staff members:

- Will Sanford, Intern (BRT)
- Ashley Hall, Manager (Capital Region Collaborative)
- Danielle Clark, Administrative Secretary (Administration Division)
- Catherine Bray, Intern (Transportation Division) [not in attendance]

II. CONSENT AGENDA

Chairman Williams asked if there were questions on the Consent Agenda item. He noted that the Consent Agenda has been recommended for approval by the Executive Committee.

- A. Approval of DRAFT Annual Contract Between Richmond Regional Planning District Commission (RRPDC) and the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) to Receive State-Allocated Funds for Planning District Commissions (Tab 4)

Ms. Prichard made a motion that the Consent Agenda be approved as presented. Ms. Graziano seconded the motion. There was no discussion and the motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented carried unanimously.

III. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no Unfinished Business to bring before the Board.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

A. Regional Forum Series – Town of Ashland: Ashland Motels and Issues Associated with Long-Term Residency

Chairman Williams asked Ms. Jacocks to introduce this agenda item.

Ms. Jacocks reminded members that during the July meeting they approved a regional forum approach for Commission meetings over the next year. She asked members to hold questions until after the presentation. Following the presentation, information will be provided on current efforts around the Region to provide affordable housing. This first forum discussion also touches on several aspects of the Indicators Project – public safety, economic development, public education, and social stability. Ms. Jacocks asked Ms. Prichard to introduce the Town of Ashland staff members who will be providing the presentation.

Ms. Prichard said she knows other jurisdictions are working on similar issues regarding how to solve the problem of hotels and motels that have become long-term residences and, as a result, no longer serve the residents, the community, or economic needs of the locality. Ms. Prichard said the Town of Ashland has been working on this issue for a while and recently revamped the effort into a more multi-departmental, team approach. She introduced Charles Hartgrove, Ashland Town Manager; Doug Goodman, Ashland Chief of Police; and Nora Amos, Director of Planning.

Mr. Hartgrove thanked members for the opportunity to present information on the Town's efforts in this area. He said they would try to answer any questions that members may have following the presentation. He asked Chief Goodman to lead the discussion.

Chief Goodman also thanked members for the opportunity to be in attendance today. He said the issue is very complex and not easy to discuss because it impacts those persons who are living in the motels. He said the problem needs to be addressed from all angles – sustainability, governance, and resource allocation.

Chief Goodman provided information on the number of police calls at the top five locations in Ashland:

1. Apple Garden Inn (338)
2. Walmart (338)
3. Motel 6 (182)
4. Ashland Convalescent Center (151)
5. Henry Clay Apartments (112)

Information was also provided on how many police calls were made per room per location during 2014. Chief Goodman reviewed trends in the increase of police calls over the past three years. Since 2000, rates for Part 1 Crime were trending down until about 2013, when the rates began to increase. Chief Goodman said the majority of this increase can be attributed to shoplifting. He said the department is looking at these calls to see if it can be determined how many of those persons committing the shoplifting crimes live in the area motels.

The transient occupancy tax rate has also decreased since fiscal year 2008. Chief Goodman said the economy is responsible for some of this decline. Once a person stays in a motel room over 30 days, the occupancy tax can no longer be collected per state code. The

demand for services is increasing while the taxes to pay for those services cannot be collected after 30 days. Mr. Hartgrove added that meals and lodging taxes represent about 25 percent of the Town's revenue.

Chief Goodman said a white paper was presented to members of the Ashland Town Council to illustrate the many moving parts within the transient challenge. He referenced a study completed by the city of Chula Vista (California). He said if members want to see the entire study, he will be glad to provide a link to the study. Key findings of the study include:

- low room rates were strongly correlated with higher calls for service rates
- direct access to rooms (motels) allows problem guests and visitors to come and go with little detection
- when room rental hits a tipping point (20 percent overnight guests versus 80 percent long-term residents) the fewer legitimate guests will be attracted to the motel
- the longer the average stay, the higher the calls for service rates
- problem residents are also difficult to remove; in Virginia, once a long-term resident stays 90 days, they become a "tenant" and the motel must follow the Landlord Tenant Act, which can take up to three months to evict a person from the room

Chief Goodman provided a copy of the current Town Code 21-3 which defines *hotel, motel, motor court, tourist court or motor lodge*. Additionally, he provided photos of a room interior taken during a crime investigation showing added furniture, cooking utensils, and the lack of cleanliness (sanitation) in the room.

The current effort to address the long-term residency issue includes:

- position paper presented to Town Council (October 21, 2014)
- Town Manager provided direction to staff to pursue meetings with various stakeholders to include neighboring businesses, churches, those living in motels, and hotel management
- from December 1, 2014 – May 28, 2015, staff conducted 13 meetings with well over 100 unique individuals in attendance
- three stakeholder meetings were held with local faith leaders
- additional presentations were provided to Market Ashland Partnership and Ashland Kiwanis

Chief Goodman provided key takeaways from meetings with faith leaders, key business leaders, and motel resident focus groups, including possible regulatory steps that can be investigated, keeping in mind the need for compassion and the impact any changes will have on residents.

A review of staff proposals was also provided in addition to the following proposals regarding length of stay:

1. Option A – limiting occupancy to no more than 30 days in a 90-day period
2. Option B – allow each motel to designate only five to ten percent of their rooms for long-term guests (over 30 days); requiring a local town license/permit/conditional use permit specifically for motels that includes minimum standards for security, sanitation, and proper management
3. Option C – limiting occupancy to no more than 30 days in a 90-day period; delayed implementation until July 1, 2016

Ms. Prichard thanked Chief Goodman for his presentation. She noted that there are school bus stops at several of the motels. It will be important to ensure that any impact on affected children will be a positive impact.

Chairman Williams added his thanks to the Town staff members. He said this truly is a regional issue. He asked if members had any questions or additional comments.

Mr. Fabricant asked if there could be hotels/rooms designated as “family” rooms and if there could be a section added to the Town Code requiring that rooms must be cleaned on a regular basis. Chief Goodman said staff is looking at all options. He said research is being done to see how other localities have handled implementation of new regulations to ensure they are legal. The state health department is responsible for enforcing sanitary standards within hotels/motels.

Ms. O’Bannon said many of the faith groups in her district will call a designated person at the local health department to coordinate assistance. She noted there is a group that holds events to benefit the Henrico County Women’s and Children’s Shelter. Ms. O’Bannon asked if this was something that could be done in Ashland to benefit those needing assistance. Ms. Prichard said the group in question has changed affiliations and has held events in Hanover County.

Ms. Prichard said Hanover Safe Place has indicated that regulations must be in place to help guide benevolence efforts by faith groups.

Mr. Holland asked if meetings have been held with hotel/motel managers. He also asked if it’s known how many children are living in the hotels/motels.

Chief Goodman said there are some hotel/motel managers who are working with the Town of Ashland while others will not. He said it is very difficult to maintain a good survey on how many children are living at the motels, especially if they are not school age. There is one school bus driver who tries to keep track of the numbers of children being picked up and will report this, as well as information on any family relocations, to the Police Department. Chief Goodman said there are about 15-20 children, kindergarten to high school, that the bus driver is aware of currently.

Mr. Fabricant asked if there was the possibility of placing a cap on how much long-term residents could pay in a week or month to allow them to be able to save money for an

apartment. Mr. Hartgrove said it's difficult for the Town to stipulate to a private business owner what he can charge in room rates as these are typically based on market rates.

Mr. C. Peterson asked if regulations that pertain to true residential dwellings could be applied to motels that offer long-term residency. Mr. Hartgrove said the Town works closely with not only the state health department but also with the fire marshal and building inspector in Hanover County to explore all opportunities with regard to what authority is given to the Town in the Code.

Chairman Williams thanked the Town of Ashland's staff for bringing this information to members. He said that Ms. Stewart was going to offer information on the types of affordable housing that are currently available.

Ms. Prichard noted that this same presentation will be made to the Virginia Municipal League in October, and she hopes there will be some legislation developed that can be considered this year by the General Assembly.

Ms. Stewart introduced Laura Lafayette, representing the Partnership for Housing Affordability (PHA). PHA is working to support the Capital Region Collaborative's (CRC) Social Stability priority through efforts to educate the public on affordable housing and its impact on the community. Ms. Stewart also noted that there were representatives from the Department of Social Services (state and local) in attendance today who will present additional information later in the meeting. Ms. Stewart said all of these agencies, along with faith based organizations, are working together to identify and remedy barriers that may keep those who live in locations described by Chief Goodman from moving into affordable housing.

Ms. Stewart provided examples of current affordable housing available in the Region:

- senior housing (Carter's Woods – Henrico County)
- community-focused (Jefferson Mews – City of Richmond)
- single adults (New Clay House – City of Richmond)
- neighborhood-based (Porter Street Initiative – City of Richmond)
- faith-based partnerships (Spring Hill Apartments – City of Richmond)
- mixed-use/mixed-income (Winchester Green – Chesterfield County)

Ms. O'Bannon noted that mental health issues are also part of the problem and must be addressed in order to help people move into affordable housing. She said she agrees that transient lodging is a multi-faceted problem and noted that finding ways to help those with mental health problems, as well as offering job training, should be included when discussing solutions.

Mr. Holland said all of the Region is included in the Capital Region Workforce Consortium (WIB), which has resources to help with job training. There are many employers, working through the Consortium, who will help finance job training.

Ms. Kelly-Wiecek said it will also be important to determine what the children caught in these types of living arrangements consider as “normal” life. Workforce training is part of what will be needed to break the cycle. She said she agrees that the multi-disciplinary approach is the best way to help solve the issue.

Ms. Amos said some of the single woman/mothers living in the area motels may have job training but the hourly wages they earn will not pay for both daycare and housing costs. She said Winchester Green developers worked with the YMCA to be able to offer affordable daycare on site.

B. Update on Regional Indicators

Chairman Williams asked Ms. Jacocks to provide information on this agenda item. He said as the Region is working to address regional issues such as transient lodging, the Indicators will provide a way to measure how the Region is doing to address the issue.

Ms. Jacocks said she’d like to bring to members’ attention the key takeaways or lessons learned as they relate to the transient lodging issue. These are listed on the agenda.

Ms. Jacocks noted that data collected by PHA on affordable housing can be used in the Indicators project and can be updated routinely to measure progress that is being made.

Ms. Jacocks said the Indicators project is establishing benchmarks that will flow into aspirations of where the Region wants to be. Strategies can then be developed that will lead to actions to meet and measure progress on the benchmarks.

Today’s update focused on annual average wages adjusted for cost of living, housing affordability/availability, and homelessness trends. Ms. Jacocks provided charts showing how the Richmond Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) measures up to the previously identified peer regions in each of these areas.

Moving forward, members will receive routine benchmark updates on the Indicators. In-depth review and guidance will be offered by the CRC Organizing Council, working in cooperation with Ms. Hall. The CRC Work Groups will be brought back into the efforts. Staff will coordinate with the project funders to develop a strategic plan that will be key to measuring progress and lead to success.

C. Presentation by Paul Oswell, Central Regional Office Director, Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS)

Ms. Jacocks introduced Mr. Paul Oswell who will provide data on how VDSS works with the localities to address social service issues.

Mr. Oswell thanked members for the opportunity to speak with them this morning. He introduced Cathy Pemberton, who is the local director of social services for Powhatan County.

Mr. Oswell said there are 120 social services agencies in Virginia. The VDSS develops policy and regulations and provides training, technical assistance, and sub-recipient monitoring. Localities determine eligibility for assistance based on state-developed policy and regulation. He said localities also provide child/adult protective services, assume custody of children in foster care, provide adoption services, and assist with child care payments.

Mr. Oswell provided a map that showed each of the state's five health district regions. All of the RRPDC member jurisdictions are in the Central Region. He noted that the Town of Ashland is not separated out from Hanover County because Ashland does not have a Federal Information Processing Standards (FIPS) Code.

Mr. Oswell provided information that is released annually on what services are provided by the state and locality. For each locality, data is provided by race, age, children living in poverty, poverty rate, births, and the types of assistance received (SNAP, TANF, and Medicaid).

With regard to actual funding, the data is broken down by amounts received from federal sources, state sources, and what each locality contributes. A total of \$1.5 billion in federal/state funding leveraged another \$40 million local dollars to the Region's residents receiving assistance during fiscal year 2014.

Mr. Glover asked what portion of funds used to address poverty comes from 599 state funds. Mr. Glover said he believed the amount contributed to the locality is based on 599 funds. He said this related to HB599, HB602, and HB603. Mr. Oswell said he was not familiar with those funds but would research the question and have Ms. Jacocks respond with the answer.

Mr. Thornton asked if annual statistics were available only for the previous year and asked who he should contact if he wanted current information (links to FY14 data by locality were provided with the agenda packet). Mr. Oswell said the total statistics are only available for the past year and the local health district office should have current information. Mr. Oswell said members could contact him directly if they had any questions.

Chairman Williams thanked Mr. Oswell for his presentation.

V. OTHER BUSINESS

Chairman Williams noted that the Mission Statement will be included on each agenda for members' reference as meetings proceed during the year. He said members should determine if the agency is meeting its mission based on the information presented during the meetings.

Chairman Williams said Charles City County will provide a presentation next month on a topic that he feels will be of interest for everyone.

Chairman Williams asked if there were other items to bring before members for discussion. No additional items were identified.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

As there was no additional business to bring before the Board, Chairman Williams adjourned the meeting at approximately 10:35 a.m.

Barbara V. Jacocks
Interim Executive Director

David T. Williams
Chairman