

NEW RIVER VALLEY REGIONAL COMMISSION
Minutes of the Commission Meeting
held on
August 25, 2022
6:00 p.m.— Pulaski County Innovation Center, Fairlawn

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Maslaney, Chair, called the meeting to order.

PRESENT: Mr. H. Johnson, Town of Christiansburg, Chair; Mr. S. Fijalkowski, Montgomery County, Vice-Chair; Mr. L. Law, Giles County, Treasurer; Ms. S. Anderson, Town of Blacksburg; Mr. L. Clevinger, Town of Pulaski; Ms. A. Covey, New River Community College; Ms. L. DeVito Kuchenbuch, Floyd County; Mr. M. Harvey, Montgomery County; Mr. D. Horton, City of Radford; Dr. A. Joyner, Radford University; Mr. R. McCoy, Giles County; Mr. M. Maslaney, Floyd County; Ms. L. Morris, Virginia Tech; Mr. M. Patton, Town of Floyd; Ms. C. Potter, Virginia Tech; Mr. M. Reis, Town of Pulaski; Mr. T. Spangler, Town of Narrows and Mr. T. Wilson, Town of Christiansburg.

ABSENT: Mr. D. Breslau, Town of Blacksburg; Ms. C. Clark, Town of Pearisburg; Mr. R. Jones, Town of Rich Creek; Mr. W. Griffin, Town of Floyd; Mr. R. Lawson, Town of Pembroke; Mr. J. Martin, City of Radford; Mr. J. Reeves, Pulaski County and Dr. D. Warren, Pulaski County.

Staff Attendees: Jessica Barrett, Kevin Byrd (zoom), Hannah Palko, Julie Phillips, Elijah Sharp, and Christy Straight

Other Attendees: Joe Guthrie

II. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Mr. Maslaney reported the nominations for the slate of officers for Fiscal Year 2023 are as follows:

The nominations include:

Chair: Hil Johnson, Town of Christiansburg

Vice-Chair: Steve Fijalkowski, Montgomery County

Treasurer: Leon Law, Giles County

At-Large: Angie Covey, New River Community College

At-Large: Mike Harvey, Montgomery County

At-Large: Catherine Potter, Virginia Tech

Past Chair: Mike Maslaney, Floyd County

Motion: Mr. Horton moved for the approval of the slate of officers for Fiscal Year 2023. Mr. Wilson seconded the motion.

Action: Motion carried unanimously.

III. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Approval of Minutes for May and June.

Mr. Johnson called for approval of the consent agenda item if there were no questions or changes.

Motion: Mr. Horton moved for the approval of the minutes. Ms. Anderson seconded the motion.

Action: Motion carried; one abstention, Mr. Patton.

B. Approval of Treasurer's Reports for May, June, and July.

Mr. Johnson called for approval of the consent agenda item if there were no questions or changes.

Motion: Ms. McCoy moved for approval of the Treasurer's Reports. Mr. Wilson seconded the motion.

Action: Motion carried; one abstention, Mr. Patton.

IV. COMMONWEALTH INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVIEW PROCESS

A. Projects (Signed-off by the staff)

1. Various Utility Upgrades, Claytor Lake State Park

B. Regular Project Review

None

C. Environmental Project Review

None

V. PUBLIC ADDRESS

None

VI. CHAIR'S REPORT

Mr. Johnson gave an I-81 Committee update and recommended Commissioners visit the website www.improve81.org for details on specific projects in the corridor.

VII. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Byrd provided a summary report in the Regional Commission agenda packet. The environmental review documents and draft agreements are either executed (Pulaski County) or in final review (Bland and Montgomery counties) this month for the VATI 2022 broadband implementation project.

The final Huckleberry Trail Plan was accepted by the NRVMPPO at their August meeting. The final plan is available for download in the Commission's new website library.

The I-81 Advisory Committee held their first meeting for 2022 on July 7th. Hil Johnson, Commission Chair, is the representative for the Regional Commission. The Committee elected Delegate Terry Austin to serve as Chair and Delegate Tony Wilt as Vice-Chair. The website www.improve81.org has project information that can be shared widely.

The NRV Passenger Rail Station Authority will hold the first meeting on September 28th at 10:00am. Members are appointing representatives during the month of August. The first meeting of the authority will largely cover project background with subsequent meetings focusing on organizational documents such as bylaws.

ReNew the New will take place August 27th. The Regional Commission issued a press release last week on behalf of the host communities to increase awareness and participation. Clean-up activities will take place in all four counties and the city.

The Business Continuity Team is working with UnCork-It to prepare a pandemic after-action report. The consultant will be interviewing several partners over the coming weeks.

The Commission staff held our first agencywide retreat post-pandemic yesterday. The morning was focused on communication styles with a session facilitated by Shelley Fortier utilizing the DiSC model. Time was also spent discussing internal initiatives that advance the organization. In the afternoon, staff participated in a team building exercise at Millstone Kitchen making pasta with HazelBea Catering.

The Business Continuity Team program received the Robert M. deVoursney Best Practices Award from the Virginia Association of Planning District Commissions for its remarkable collaborative pandemic response.

VIII. REVIEW OF MUTUAL CONCERNS AND COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS

Mr. Wilson reported the Town of Christiansburg has many events planned going into the fall season. There is a tent located at Uptown Christiansburg that will be used for a temporary Halloween store.

Mr. Harvey reported the New River Watershed Roundtable met and the native plant guide is scheduled to be completed this winter.

Mr. Horton reported ReNew the New's Radford event will be held in Bissett Park on Saturday. Potter in the Park, hosted by the Literacy Volunteers of the NRV, will be held on September 3rd in Bissett Park.

Ms. Morris reported Virginia Tech is continuing many construction projects this year. The first home football game will be held on September 10th.

IX. OLD BUSINESS

A. Regional Economic Strategy (RES) FY22 Update – Commission Action

Mr. Byrd explained each year the Regional Commission reviews and updates the Regional Economic Strategy (RES). The purpose of the RES is to continue federal and local partnerships to address economic development in the region. The RES also documents economic development needs in the region and creation of the strategy document.

Motion: Mr. Horton moved for the approval of the Regional Economic Strategy FY22 Update. Mr. Patton seconded the motion.

Action: Motion carried unanimously.

B. Consideration of Proposed FY23 Budget – Commission Action

Mr. Byrd explained the proposed budget was included in the agenda packet and provided additional details on both the budgeted expenditures and the anticipated revenue.

Motion: Mr. Wilson moved for the approval of the FY23 Budget. Ms. Anderson seconded the motion.

Action: Motion carried unanimously.

X. **NEW BUSINESS**

A. Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

Mr. Guthrie provided an overview of the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS). The office ensures that program services are focused on meeting customer needs and effectively carried out within the limit of budgeted resources. In addition, the office supports the agency-wide strategic planning process to ensure that all programs are working toward achievement of common goals and objectives through the Strategic Management Team.

B. Regional Commission FY23 Program of Work

Mr. Sharp provided an overview of the FY23 Work Program. He noted there are currently over 50 projects and more may be added during the year. He highlighted the process utilized by staff to keep everyone on track with project progress and project billing.

Motion: Mr. Horton moved to approve the FY23 Program of Work for the Regional Commission. Ms. DeVito Kuchenbuch seconded the motion.

Action: Motion carried unanimously.

C. 2022 Regional Commission Awards

Mr. Byrd explained the nominee information was included in the packet and then he overviewed the award voting process. The Commission proceeded to vote by secret ballot for the award recipients. Mr. Byrd will be contacting the award recipients to notify them that they will be recognized for their contributions to the region.

D. September Commission Meeting, consider moving to September 29th.

Mr. Byrd explained the scheduled September meeting conflicts with this year's Thursday evening home Virginia Tech football game. The Executive Committee recommends moving the meeting to September 29th, the fifth Thursday of the month.

Motion: Mr. Harvey moved for the approval of moving the September 2022 meeting to September 29th. Mr. Reis seconded the motion.

Action: Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Johnson called to adjourn the meeting at 7:35 pm.

H. Johnson, Chair
New River Valley Regional Commission