

**RICHMOND REGIONAL PLANNING DISTRICT COMMISSION**  
**Minutes of Meeting**  
**February 14, 2019**

**Members and Alternates (A) Present**

Greg Baka..... Henrico County  
Nolan Blackwood (A) ..... City of Richmond  
Tim Davey ..... Chesterfield County  
Steve Elswick ..... Chesterfield County  
Gloria Freye..... Chesterfield County  
Kimberly Gray..... City of Richmond  
Mike Gray..... City of Richmond  
Leslie Haley..... Chesterfield County  
Jim Holland ..... Chesterfield County  
Angela Kelly-Wiecek ..... Hanover County  
Kristen Larson ..... City of Richmond  
Susan Lascolette ..... Goochland County  
Anne Marie Lauranzon..... Hanover County  
John Moyer..... New Kent County  
Tyrone Nelson, Vice Chair..... Henrico County  
Larry Nordvig..... Powhatan County  
Patricia Paige, Secretary..... New Kent County  
Canova Peterson ..... Hanover County  
Dan Schmitt..... Henrico County  
Randy Silber (A) ..... Henrico County  
George Spagna, Treasurer ..... Town of Ashland  
Frank Thornton..... Henrico County  
Randy Whittaker..... Hanover County  
Christopher Winslow..... Chesterfield County

**Others Present**

Eric Gregory ..... Hefty, Wiley and Gore  
Jill Swinger..... Warren Whitney

**Staff Present**

Martha Shickle ..... Executive Director  
Julie Fry..... Executive Assistant  
Mark Bittner ..... Director, Regional Planning  
Diane Fusco..... Office Manager  
Chet Parsons ..... Director, Transportation

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## **Call to Order / Pledge of Allegiance**

Vice Chairman Nelson called the regularly scheduled February 14, 2019 RRPDC meeting to order at approximately 9:10 a.m. in the RRPDC Board Room. He reported to members that he will be filling in for Chairwoman Newbille this morning as she needed to leave in order to attend an annual Valentines Day event that she hosts for the senior citizens in her district.

Vice Chairman Nelson drew members' attention to a handout of PowerPoint slides that can serve as notes for members during today's meeting.

Vice Chairman Nelson then led members in the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

## **Certification by Commission Executive Director of Meeting Quorum**

Ms. Shickle, RRPDC Executive Director, reported that a quorum of members was present.

### **1. ADMINISTRATION**

#### **A. Request for Additions or Changes to the Order of Business**

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

As there were no requests to change the agenda, Vice Chairman Nelson said the agenda will stand as presented.

#### **B. Open Public Comment Period**

Vice Chairman Nelson opened the public comment period, noting that if anyone wished to address the members they should please stand and provide his or her name, locality of residence, and, if appropriate, the name of any organization being represented. Vice Chairman Nelson asked that any speaker please limit comments to three minutes, and organizations should limit their comments to five minutes.

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

#### **C. December 13, 2018 Meeting Minutes**

Vice Chairman Nelson said if there are no corrections, he will ask for a motion to approve the minutes for the December 13, 2018 meeting as presented. Ms. Lascolette so moved and the motion was seconded by Ms. Paige. There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

## **D. Chair's Report**

### **1. Welcome New Member**

Vice Chairman Nelson welcomed Mr. Greg Baka to the RRPDC Board. He noted that it is the custom of the Henrico County Planning Commission to appoint its current Chair to serve as the County's Planning Commission representative to the RRPDC Board. Mr. Baka is replacing Ms. Marshall, who served in that capacity last year.

Mr. Baka said he appreciated the opportunity to be a part of the RRPDC Board.

### **2. National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) Innovation Awards and Washington Policy Conference**

Vice Chairman Nelson introduced Mr. Ben Ruppert, who is the past president of the Central Virginia Emergency Management Alliance (CVEMA). Vice Chairman Nelson said he would like to present to Mr. Ruppert the Aliceann Wohlbruck Innovation Award given to RRPDC during last fall's NADO conference. The award is in recognition of CVEMA's Survivor Day events held over the past ten years.

Mr. Ruppert thanked Ms. Shickle, Ms. Moody, and RRPDC for their assistance with the past Survivor Day events. He said CVEMA depends on RRPDC for its logistical and administrative support for these events. As Survivor Day is a regional event, this assistance is essential to ensure that the smaller localities can participate. Many of the smaller localities don't have the support staff needed to handle event registration and other tasks associated with Survivor Day. Mr. Ruppert said the entire CVEMA region appreciates RRPDC's continuing partnership.

Members congratulated Mr. Ruppert on the award recognition with a round of applause.

Ms. Shickle added that more information on the NADO awards can be found online at <https://www.nado.org/innovation-awards>. She said RRPDC was one of only a few agencies that submitted an application for this award in the category of Emergency Preparedness and Disaster Recovery.

Ms. Shickle also reported that NADO hosts two events each year: an annual training conference and an annual policy conference. She said this year's policy conference is scheduled for March 17-20, and will be held in Washington, DC. She said anyone interested in attending should please contact her. She said this conference provides an opportunity to learn about what is happening at the federal level with regard to funding streams that can impact local communities.

## **E. Standing Committee Reports: Membership and Status**

### **1. Audit/Finance/Facilities Committee**

Vice Chairman Nelson asked Dr. Spagna to provide a report from this committee.

Dr. Spagna reported that the monthly Financial Report is included in the agenda packet under Tab 2. He said staff can respond to any questions.

#### **a. Monthly Financial Report**

Ms. Shickle said staff has been working with the Audit/Finance/Facilities Committee over the last few months to respond to feedback received from members regarding the financial report. This month a narrative has been provided to offer descriptions of what is included on the report, including the Profit and Loss Statement and the Balance Sheet. Ms. Shickle said summary documents were included in the packet. Members of the Executive Committee asked that more detailed information be shared with members and a handout will be distributed to everyone.

Ms. Shickle said she would like to point out that at the close of the first quarter, in September, the agency had about a \$55 thousand deficit. This has been brought down over the second quarter to approximately \$32 thousand. She said this is due to hiring additional staff and moving current staff into work tasks that can draw down grant funds. She said that staff anticipates eliminating the remainder of the \$55 thousand deficit by the end of the fiscal year on June 30.

On the Net Ordinary Income line (Profit and Loss Statement), a year-to-date net income of \$16,911 is shown. This is calculated before incurred capital expenses. Ms. Shickle said she feels that the agency is making significant strides in closing the deficit gap. She said either she or Ms. Swinger can respond to any questions.

Ms. Kelly-Wiecek asked for clarification on a comment made by Dr. Spagna during the Executive Committee meeting when he indicated the agency would be within \$500 of closing the gap. Dr. Spagna said at the end of the current fiscal year, the agency is projecting that the deficit will be under \$500.

Ms. Shickle pointed out on the Profit and Loss Statement, in the first column, after subtracting funds expended for the website work, \$49,061, the agency shows a net loss of \$32,150. The net loss was about \$55 thousand on September 30, at the close of the first quarter. By the end of the fiscal year, staff is projecting that the net loss will be within \$500.

Ms. Kelly-Wiecek asked for the current fund balance amount. Mr. Holland, member of the Audit/Finance/Facilities Committee, said that this amount is shown on the Balance Sheet. It is the amount enclosed in the box - \$748,810. Ms. Shickle

said staff projects the fund balance to be approximately \$780,000 at the end of the current fiscal year. Ms. Swinger said this will bring the agency back to the same level as it was at the end of the last fiscal year.

Vice Chairman Nelson said if there are no additional questions, he'll ask for a motion to accept the monthly financial report as presented. Mr. Holland so moved and the motion was seconded by Ms. Gray. There was no additional discussion and the motion carried unanimously.

b. Revised FY19 Budget

Vice Chairman Nelson reported that the Audit/Finance/Facilities Committee reviewed the revised budget with staff during the committee's last meeting. In the interim, staff has worked to develop a staff time allocation model to track hours used for work assignments. Vice Chairman Nelson noted that the revised budget incorporates all confirmed revenues for the fiscal year as well as the revised salary and operating expenses based on staff changes. He said the Audit/Finance/Facilities Committee is recommending that the Revised FY19 Budget be accepted as it is presented.

Dr. Spagna added that the committee reviewed the revised budget details, which have been provided to members on a separate sheet. This document was not included in the agenda packet and is being provided following a request made by the Executive Committee during this morning's meeting. Dr. Spagna said the committee believes that the budget is realistic, the projections are realistic, and the staff time allocation model will assist in capturing more billable hours. He noted that in the past, there was too much time being assigned to administrative tasks, which are not billable. He said the committee is happy with the direction the agency is going and agrees there is more work to be done. Dr. Spagna said a \$500 deficit is a marked improvement over a \$55 thousand deficit.

Ms. Shickle said as has been discussed previously, FY18 endured what could be called a perfect storm with regard to the agency's financial situation. She said staff has been able to identify the anomalies and those things that staff could change in the way the agency operates that will prevent these events from happening in the future. An example of the anomalies was the requirement to reimburse a payment made by a grant funder after the funder deemed the reimbursement was no longer eligible to be made. She said staff is working to improve the relationship with this agency to ensure clearer communications with regard to grant funds.

Another factor that contributed to the budget gap was staff vacancies and the inability to charge additional staff hours back to grants for reimbursement of not only staff work hours, but also of direct and indirect costs. Ms. Shickle said with the development of the new staff time allocation tool, staff hours can be more closely monitored and shifted as necessary to funded programs in order to maximize grant drawdowns. This model will also assist in mapping out the

financial impact when there is a staff vacancy. Ms. Shickle said this report will be produced quarterly but can be monitored on a more frequent basis.

Staff is projecting a net income gain of approximately \$58 thousand at the end of the fiscal year. However, when operational capital expenditures (one-time website and IT) are factored in, there is a net loss at the end of the fiscal year of about \$500. Ms. Shickle said she believes that the agency will be able to offset this minor deficit by the end of the fiscal year.

Ms. Kelly-Wiecek asked about expenditures on lines 7290 (Miscellaneous Expenses), 7295 (Bank Fees), and 7410 (Organizational Dues). Ms. Shickle said 7290 includes monthly fees for a shredding service. Ms. Swinger is reviewing bank fees to determine if there are services the agency does not need. Ms. Swinger added that the majority of fees are for fraud protection services as a result of the fraudulent checks that were presented last year. She said she is reviewing these fees to see if the agency still needs this service or if there is a more cost-effective option.

Ms. Shickle said other miscellaneous expenses include the purchase of some new office furnishings that were needed following the office consolidation when Homeward became the agency's subtenant. Ms. Swinger added that the majority of these expenses will not be repeated.

With regard to the Organizational Dues, Ms. Shickle said these types of expenditures are paid at the beginning of the fiscal year and are calculated each month to show an additional one-twelfth of the cost. The budget represents six months of intended annual expense.

Mr. Peterson reported that the Audit/Finance/Facilities Committee is also going to review some current personnel policies that have a financial impact on the agency, such as retiree healthcare. He said the committee is looking at detailed information, and there are a lot of pieces that still need to be addressed.

Ms. Shickle said a breakout of revenue per program area is also provided so members can have a better idea of how funding is allocated to program areas.

Dr. Spagna added that when the committee was first brought together, it was anticipated the committee would meet only once each quarter. He said the committee recognizes the need to meet more frequently in order to adequately deal with the current financial situation.

Ms. Lascolette asked if Ms. Shickle could share the same statistic with members that had been shared with the Executive Committee regarding staff time being used for administrative work. Ms. Shickle said about 74 percent of staff time is now being distributed to funded programs. This percentage is up from about 58 percent in 2004.

Vice Chairman Nelson asked if there were any additional questions. He said if there are no questions, he'll ask for a motion to accept the Revised FY19 Budget as presented and recommended by the Audit/Finance/Facilities Committee. Dr. Spagna so moved and the motion was seconded by Mr. Holland. There was no additional discussion and the motion carried unanimously.

## 2. Public Outreach and Engagement Committee

Vice Chairman Nelson asked Mr. Nordvig to provide a report from this committee.

Mr. Nordvig reported that the committee is entering its second phase of the rebranding effort. To review, he said the committee spent their first few meetings looking at the new logo, web content and functionality, and other areas that cross over into all program areas in an effort to tie all of the programs together on the new website. Work has been completed on identifying the agency's target audience, which will include members of the Commission, staff, partner agencies and organizations, and the general public. Mr. Nordvig noted that the new website will match the industry norm of offering content at an eighth grade reading level.

On the new website homepage, Mr. Nordvig reported that there will be a photo carousel, with each of the localities represented. There will be information on current projects and links to provide more information on the projects as well as staff contact information. Mr. Nordvig said the goal of the new website is to make it easier for the general public to understand the work being done by the agency. He said there is also consistency across all program areas and with what is presented on each of the jurisdiction's websites.

Ms. Shickle added that a soft launch of the website is targeted for March 1. Members of the committee and other key staff will have access to the new site and will look for areas that may need to be refined. The official launch is targeted for April 1. She added that beginning in March, the new logo will be incorporated into all meeting materials and other correspondence. There are a number of projects that will launch over the next few months, and the new branding will be used for those efforts as well. At the next Public Engagement and Outreach Committee meeting, the members will discuss a communications plan.

Mr. Peterson asked how the official launch will be announced to the general public. Ms. Shickle said all of the agency's new branding, including the website, will be tied to the agency's 50th anniversary. There will be opportunities to use the new materials during public input requests and other meetings. She asked if members have any other suggestions on how to announce the new branding to please let her know.

Mr. Peterson said he thought there should be an opportunity to bring in media. He noted that at the recent launch of the Opioid Solutions RVA Website, there was a concerted effort to have a media presence. All of the four large jurisdictions are partnering in this effort. Ms. Haley suggested that since each locality has a public

relations department, those staff members could help develop a publicity plan. Ms. Shickle said there is a group of the region's public relations directors that meets on a quarterly basis. She said this group will be asked for assistance. Up until a year or so ago, this group had not had an opportunity to meet and get together to discuss regional issues, best practices, etc. It was from a meeting of this group that the hashtag OneRegionRVA was created.

Ms. Lauranzon asked if there will be a particular event scheduled to announce the agency's anniversary. Ms. Shickle said the actual anniversary date is in August. She'd like to find ways throughout the year to celebrate. One idea she's had is to develop a time capsule that will incorporate events from the first 50 years and try to project what types of projects and events that might take place during the next 50 years. She said the agency's budget constraints will prevent a large-scale celebration, but she hopes to be able to identify other ways to announce the anniversary and the rebranding.

Ms. Lauranzon suggested that a kick-off event be set up to announce the brand refresh and the new website.

Ms. Kelly-Wiecek suggested that social media be included in any kick-off or announcement in order to reach a wider audience. She said the more things are shared and repeated, the more people become aware.

Mr. Nordvig said the next step for the committee is to look at a communications plan in order to determine which issues resonate with the public.

Ms. Shickle reported that Ms. Moody was successful in obtaining a \$70 thousand grant from the Department of Emergency Management on behalf of CVEMA. The funds will be used for public outreach efforts on emergency preparedness. Some of these funds have been used to develop CVEMA's part of the new website and will be used in the rebranding of Survivor Day.

### 3. Operations Committee

Vice Chairman Nelson announced that the Operations Committee will be formed soon and will focus on setting a meeting calendar for the upcoming year. He said he, Chairwoman Newbille, and Ms. Shickle have been meeting regularly to discuss potential meeting topics. He said as this is the only time so many of the region's elected officials are together, it's important to make the best use of the time together.

## **F. Executive Director's Report and Highlights**

### 1. Introduction of New Staff

Ms. Shickle said as she's reported previously, several new employees have been added to the RRPDC team. She introduced Mr. Mark Bittner, who has spent the last several years working with Crater PDC. She said Mr. Bittner not only has planning knowledge,



but he's very adept with GIS functions as well. With his relationship to Crater PDC, Mr. Bittner can also help identify ways the two PDCs can collaborate on projects.

Ms. Shickle said many of the Commissioners have already met Mr. Chet Parsons, who is the new Director of Transportation. Mr. Parsons is relocating to Richmond from Morgantown, West Virginia.

Other new employees include Cat Modlin-Jackson, AmeriCorps VISTA volunteer; Nelson Reveley, Transportation Projects Manager; Nick Tafelsky, Regional Planner; and Shiyang Xing, Regional Planner, who will begin next week.

Ms. Shickle said that it has become an annual tradition at RRPDC to celebrate Pi/Pie Day on March 14. As this is a Board meeting day, Ms. Shickle said if members' schedules permit, everyone will be invited to stay a bit after the meeting to enjoy a variety of pies.

## 2. Strategic Plan Update

Ms. Shickle said a handout has been placed at each member's seat that is the Strategic Plan Implementation Dashboard. She said those with a green status are tasks that are on track; those with a gray status have not been started; yellow indicates the projects are behind; and red indicates that not only have the projects not been started, but they are in jeopardy of being pushed off track. She reviewed projects in each of the four Strategic Areas of Focus: Create Value for the Region; Prioritize Based on Customer Needs; Build a Regional Resource Center; and Strengthen the Organization.

Ms. Shickle also reviewed topics for upcoming Board meetings. On March 14, amendments to the Personnel Policy will be introduced. She said the HR Roundtable has been asked to assist staff in a review of the current policies to ensure they are in line with the jurisdictions. There will also be an introduction of a new Fund Balance Policy. Members of the Audit/Finance/Facilities Committee will be making this review at their upcoming meeting. Ms. Shickle said that Mr. David Blount, VAPDC Executive Director, will also be in attendance to provide an update on VAPDC activities.

Ms. Kelly-Wiecek asked if a report on employee trends can be developed. She said she'd be interested in learning the average length of employment for agency staff and to see if there is a need to develop a retention/training program.

Mr. Holland added that transportation, education, and workforce preparation are regional concerns and he felt these topics would be worth discussing at a regional level. Another topic could be training in awareness diversity.

Ms. Gray said that there are real needs within special education, which is a very costly effort. She would like to see if there is a way for the region to share special education resources. She said now that some school systems are sharing calendars, there are more opportunities for collaboration and training. She'd like to see this done regionwide.

Ms. Lauranzon asked if the white paper Ms. Shickle mentioned, with regard to regional messaging, was in a form that can be shared with members. Ms. Shickle said this was shared with the regional CAOs/Managers only. She said she could provide the information to members.

Vice Chairman Nelson thanked members for their input. He said he would like for upcoming meetings to provide opportunities to discuss issues with regional implications. He said he feels confident that the agency is headed in the right direction.

**2. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

Vice Chairman Nelson said there is no unfinished business to bring before members.

**3. NEW BUSINESS**

There was no new business to bring before members.

**4. OTHER BUSINESS / ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Ms. Shickle said she would like to introduce Ms. Diane Fusco to members. She said she was sorry not to have made the introduction earlier in the meeting. Ms. Fusco will be assuming some of Ms. Fry's duties, including Board meeting support.

Vice Chairman Nelson said he would like to follow up on the comment made by Ms. Kelly-Wiecek regarding length of service for agency staff. He said he believes the Board will need to be able to accept that if it appears the agency is a training ground for staff, to prepare them to go on to the next step in their careers, everyone will need to be comfortable with that role.

Mr. Thornton said that he would like to remind members that there needs to continue to be sensitivity toward issues important to the small jurisdictions. He said it will be important to remember there are some regional issues that will have more of an impact on those jurisdictions.

No other business was identified to bring before the Board.

5. **ADJOURN**

As there was no additional business to bring before the Board, Vice Chairman Nelson thanked members for their time and adjourned the meeting at approximately 10:20 a.m.

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Martha Shickle  
Executive Director

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Tyrone Nelson  
Vice Chair