

**RRPDC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**  
**Minutes of Meeting**  
**February 14, 2019**

**Members Present**

Angela Kelly-Wiecek..... Hanover County  
Susan Lascolette..... Goochland County  
Cynthia Newbille, Chair .....City of Richmond  
Tyrone Nelson, Vice Chair ..... Henrico County  
Larry Nordvig ..... Powhatan County  
Patricia Paige, Secretary ..... New Kent County  
George Spagna, Treasurer.....Town of Ashland

**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**

Chairwoman Newbille called the regularly scheduled February 14, 2019, RRPDC Executive Committee meeting to order at approximately 8:25 a.m. in the RRPDC Board Room. Chairwoman Newbille said she wanted to take a moment on this Valentine’s Day to say thank you for 50 years of regional cooperation for the love of the region. She said she wanted to recognize the efforts of everyone to work together for the good of the region.

**Quorum**

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

**1. Minutes for the December 13, 2018 Meeting**

Chairwoman Newbille said the minutes are included in the agenda packet under Tab 1. She said if there are no corrections, she’d ask for a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Ms. Lascolette made a motion that the minutes from the December 13, 2018 meeting be approved as presented. The motion was seconded by Dr. Spagna. There was no additional discussion and the motion to approve the minutes of the December 13, 2019 Executive Committee meetings carried

unanimously. Chairwoman Newbille abstained from the vote as she was not present during the December meeting.

## **2. Review of Revised FY19 Budget**

Chairwoman Newbille said Dr. Spagna will review the work of the Audit/Finance/Facilities Committee with regard to their review of the revised budget. Following his review, Ms. Shickle will present the revised FY19 budget for members' consideration.

Dr. Spagna reported that the committee met on January 22 to review the revised budget. He said there is a handout that details actions taken by the committee. Dr. Spagna noted that staff, especially Ms. Shickle, put in some hard work on the revised budget. He said while there is still a small deficit, the agency has shown improvement and is working toward further reduction of the deficit prior to the end of the fiscal year. Dr. Spagna reported that staff has concentrated on increasing revenue through hiring additional staff and through some cost cutting measures. He noted that the Audit/Finance/Facilities Committee is recommending that the Executive Committee adopt the revised budget and to recommend its adoption by the full Board during this morning's meeting.

Ms. Shickle reported that revenues are higher. Staff is projecting about a \$287, 266 increase over what was projected last summer. This is largely due to action taken by the RRTPO to infuse 5303 carryover funds into transportation programs. This is offset by increases in operational expenses. The amount shown on line 13 includes an increase in passthrough funds for consultant expenses and emergency management passthrough funds. The agency makes purchases on behalf of the Central Virginia Emergency Management Alliance (CVEMA) localities. Line 10 shows a difference in salaries due to savings when the agency was not at full staffing levels. Staff has also refined the salaries to reflect actual amounts for the newly hired staff members.

Ms. Kelly-Wiecek said in her review of minutes from the last meeting, she noted that a request had been made to provide more information on consulting/contractor services and how staff time was being dedicated to projects to draw down funds. She said she did not see any of this information included in the packet. Ms. Kelly-Wiecek said during the last meeting, more detail was provided. Given the issues around the agency's financial situation, she said she believed members need to see that detailed information. She asked if a supplemental sheet can be made available during the full Board meeting.

Dr. Spagna noted that the Audit/Finance/Facilities Committee did review more detailed information. Chairwoman Newbille said she thought members should be able to see the detailed information. Ms. Kelly-Wiecek said she believed members would appreciate seeing the additional information since they will be asked to vote on the revised budget.

Ms. Swinger said she had recommended including only the summary information in the agenda packet since the Audit/Finance/Facilities Committee members had reviewed all of the detailed information.

Chairwoman Newbille said given the due diligence undertaken at the committee level, it was thought that members could be given a summary.

Mr. Nordvig said because the Board is comprised of elected officials who represent citizens of the region, he thought it would be appropriate for the Board to see the full information.

Ms. Shickle asked if members would like to see both detailed and summary versions of financial reports going forward.

Ms. Kelly-Wiecek said she believed members should see the same format each time in order to be able to compare and understand what is being presented.

Chairwoman Newbille said she would like to ask that members receive both the detailed and summary versions of financial reports.

Mr. Nordvig said as elected officials, they are responsible for tax payer money and this type of oversight is part of their responsibility.

Ms. Shickle said a staff time allocation model has been developed which allows all staff hours to be entered at each person's billable rate. Because the report contains salary information, it cannot be presented in a meaningful way to members. She said she may be able to aggregate some of the information and provide it to members at a later time. Ms. Shickle said the model allows monitoring of the rate plus fringe and indirect costs so that if there is a vacancy, the impact on the agency can be readily identified and corrected. The report will be reviewed on a quarterly basis and incorporated into the quarterly billing. Adjustments can be made throughout the year as needed. Ms. Shickle said the model also incorporates contracted information to identify which contracts have been executed and which ones are on hold.

Ms. Shickle said she feels this step has allowed staff to make significant progress in addressing the budget gap. Analysis has continued and was provided to the CAOs and Managers for their review. She said there has been a shift away from keeping staff in administrative positions, which cannot be billed back to grants. In 2004, the percentage of staff in funded positions was about 58 percent. Now the percentage is about 74 percent in funded positions.

Ms. Kelly-Wiecek said to clarify, those contractors remaining are for financial services and for technology support. Ms. Shickle said that was correct. She said work on the website is an ongoing operational expense as the site is developed. There are both ongoing contracted expenses and project related contracted expenses. Ms. Shickle said the professional fees are show on line 11; project related contracted services are shown on line 13. She said she believed what Ms. Kelly-Wiecek had asked for was an analysis of at what point does a contracted position exceed the cost of bringing in a full time staff member. For technology and finance, the analysis is underway. Ms. Shickle said she anticipates transitioning to a full time finance position in the next fiscal year. She said with regard to technology, the agency is working now to transition to a more virtual, cloud based environment. This will result in a different model for managing IT services. She said Mr. Bittner will manage the contract, but an outside vendor will still be needed.

Ms. Kelly-Wiecek asked if a new manager has been hired to oversee the Capital Region Collaborative. She noted that the localities contribute to this position. Ms. Shickle said the Collaborative leadership has been meeting over the last few months to determine the next steps related to the position. She said she is not certain that the RRPDC will continue to play a role in this partnership. She hopes to be able to provide more information to members in April. Funds associated with the position are being held in reserve. Ms. Busser was asked to serve in the management role in an interim basis through March 31. There has been no increase in expenses. Once Ms. Busser fulfills her obligation, there will be one-quarter of the funding in reserve.

Chairwoman Newbille said there is an action request for the Executive Committee to recommend adoption of the Revised FY19 budget by the full RRPDC Board during this morning's meeting. She said pursuant to receipt of the itemized budget information, members should agree to accept the recommended action. Ms. Kelly-Wiecek said she would make that her motion; the motion was seconded by Ms. Lascolette. There was no additional discussion and the motion carried unanimously.

### **3. Chair's Report**

#### **A. Resolution of Appreciation for Outgoing Member**

Chairwoman Newbille said a Resolution of Appreciation for Sandra Marshall is included under Tab 2 of the agenda packet. Ms. Marshall's term on the Board as the Planning Commission Representative from Henrico County has ended. Mr. Gregory Baka will replace her.

Chairwoman Newbille asked if there was a motion to approve the resolution as presented. Dr. Spagna so moved and the motion was seconded by Ms. Paige. There was no additional discussion and the motion carried unanimously. Chairwoman Newbille said staff will forward the resolution to Ms. Marshall on behalf of the Board.

#### **B. Committee Updates**

Chairwoman Newbille said that Mr. Nolan Blackwood, Alternate Voting Member for the City of Richmond, has expressed an interest in serving on the Audit/Finance/Facilities Committee. She said Mr. Blackwood has expertise in commercial real estate. She asked if members of the Executive Committee would agree to his joining the Audit/Finance/Facilities Committee. If so, she would ask for a motion to that effect. Ms. Kelly-Wiecek so moved and the motion was seconded by Ms. Lascolette. There was no additional discussion and the motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Shickle reported that after the December Board meeting, Mr. Blackwood met with Ms. Shickle and Mr. Gregory to review the current office lease. She said she believes Mr. Blackwood will be a good addition to the committee based on his commercial real estate background. He will be able to assist in identifying other space options or with lease renegotiations.

Mr. Gregory added that the meeting was very productive. There are about two years remaining on the current lease term. If the lease is broken prematurely, it will be very costly for the agency as

the remaining term on the lease would need to be paid out. He said it is being recommended to remain in the lease until the term expires and to use the time to look for new space or to work with the landlords to renegotiate. Mr. Blackwood brings a lot of knowledge about the commercial real estate market and will be able to provide good insight into options for the Board to consider.

Ms. Lascolette asked if the current lease was standard with other commercial leases. Mr. Gregory said it was standard.

Chairwoman Newbille thanked Ms. Shickle for meeting with Mr. Blackwood and Mr. Gregory to be proactive prior to the end of the current lease term.

Ms. Shickle said a review of the Bylaws and Charter will be brought before the Executive Committee within the next few months. The current Charter speaks specifically to the physical location of the office. She said the Executive Committee should look at other potential restraints in the Charter to see if or how these should be addressed.

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

Ms. Shickle reported that during this morning's Board meeting, she will use a slide deck. Copies of the slides have been provided at each member's seat. She will provide an update on the implementation of the Strategic Plan framework. Tasks associated with the Strategic Plan are included on the larger sheets. This provides an overview of progress through the second quarter.

Ms. Shickle said members had asked for a second review of the employee engagement survey. She said there was a total of 48 questions including ranking, yes/no, and open ended questions. Staff was diligent in their completion of the survey. Lowest scores centered around opportunities for staff advancement and the adequacy of staffing levels to perform the work. Other areas of need dealt with professional development and lack of support for professional development. Results showed staff felt there is a lack of feedback on job performance and how staff members can improve their work performance. Survey results showed that staff is unclear on the direction of the agency. They also felt there was not incentive to strive for a higher level of excellence.

Ms. Shickle said she feels the current staff structure will allow more individual staff interaction. She noted that both Mr. Parsons and Mr. Bittner have spent time since their arrivals meeting with their staffs to understand current projects and work being completed. Ms. Shickle said she believes the current staff structure will allow more of these concerns to be addressed.

Ms. Shickle said she would like to spend time addressing an open door policy and who staff should contact when there is a problem. There is also a need to preserve confidentiality.

Compensation was also part of the survey. Ms. Shickle said it seems that current staff is more concerned with the quality of their work and being able to work on projects they believe in. Compensation follows those items. Other concerns are the need for clarity and making sure each staff member understands his or her role in where the agency is going.

Ms. Shickle said the survey results are fairly consistent with the feedback received in exit interviews. She said staff members are also complimentary of their colleagues. The challenges are with the employee not knowing what their future with the agency could look like.

Ms. Kelly-Wiecek asked how the survey was administered. Ms. Shickle said it was a digital survey. Ms. Kelly-Wiecek asked if there was a link or ability for members to see the raw data from the survey. Ms. Shickle said she can provide a link to members.

Ms. Shickle said the Audit/Finance/Facilities Committee has directed her to work with the HR Roundtable to look at policy amendments regarding retiree healthcare benefits and other personnel policies that have a financial impact on the agency. She said attention will be given to aligning the agency's policies with those of the jurisdictions.

The Audit/Finance/Facilities Committee will also be reviewing the fund balance and whether the \$1 million amount is the right amount and how to restore the balance to the \$1 million mark.

Ms. Shickle said she's interested in feedback from members on how the agency can commemorate its 50th anniversary. One idea is to have each member jurisdiction adopt a resolution recognizing their membership in the RRPDC.

During the March Board meeting, Mr. David Blount, Executive Director of the Virginia Association of Planning District Commissions (VAPDC) will be in attendance to share information on current work within VAPDC.

Ms. Shickle said she wanted to bring members' attendance to the information on the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) that was given to them. She said if anyone is interested in attending the next conference to please let her know. She said she did not produce enough copies for the full Board, but she will if there is interest.

The VAPDC summer conference is scheduled for July 24-26, 2019 in Williamsburg. If anyone is interested in attending, again, please let her know. Mr. Nordvig said when he attended a previous conference, he thought the breakout sessions were very good.

Ms. Lascolette asked how the Charter and Bylaws will be reviewed. Ms. Shickle said she has been keeping a list of issues with the documents that have been brought to her previously. She said Ms. Fry has reviewed both documents and highlighted instances where, based on her tenure with the agency, the Board has encountered limitations when making decisions. Ms. Shickle said she will provide this information to members next month. She said she has collected similar documents from other PDCs for a comparison.

Ms. Lascolette asked if the HR Roundtable was comprised of the region's HR Directors. Ms. Shickle said that was correct.

Mr. Nordvig asked if there is a current organizational chart that can be provided to members. Ms. Shickle said she can distribute that to members.

## **5. Other Business**

Chairwoman Newbille said at the beginning of this morning's meeting she thanked everyone for 50 years of regional cooperation for the love of the region. She said she wanted to again thank members for their work and the work of their jurisdictions over the last 50 years.

Chairwoman Newbille said she hosts a Seniors Valentine's Day event for her district, and in order to attend that event, she will not be able to attend the full Board meeting. Vice Chairman Nelson has agreed to step in to fill the Chairman's duties in her absence.

No other business was identified to bring before the Executive Committee.

## **6. Adjourn**

As there was no additional business to bring before the Executive Committee, Chairman Newbille adjourned the meeting at approximately 9:05 a.m.

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Martha Shickle  
Executive Director

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Cynthia Newbille  
Chair