

Public Outreach and Engagement Committee

October 18, 2018

Meeting Notes

Members Attending:

Larry Nordvig, Chair Powhatan County
Mike Gray, City of Richmond
Frank Thornton, Henrico County

Others Attending:

Martha Shickle, RRPDC Executive Director
Katherine Busser, RRPDC Consultant
Blair Keeley, West Cary Group
John Taylor, West Cary Group
Julie Fry, RRPDC Staff/Recording Secretary
Forrest Andrews, RRPDC Staff

Chairman Nordvig called the meeting to order at approximately 4:05 p.m. and welcomed everyone to the meeting. He asked if introductions around the table could be made.

Following introductions, Ms. Shickle provided an overview of the purpose for today's meeting. She said that the Executive Committee will meet on Thursday, November 1, in order to review and take action on the recommendation made by the Public Outreach and Engagement Committee today. Ms. Shickle said notice of the November 1 meeting will be sent out to members of the Executive Committee and the Public Outreach and Engagement Committee on Monday, October 22. The requested action will be whether or not to move forward with the PlanRVA-The Regional Commission branding name. Ms. Shickle cautioned members that the colors will look different in each of the different media forms – paper, electronic, etc. What is being presented by West Cary Group (WCG) are just representations of how the branding name will look in each of the applications.

Ms. Busser added that the concerns and feedback received from Board members during last week's meeting have been addressed by WCG in what is being seen today. There was concern voiced about losing the regional aspect and needing to focus on sharing stories of regional collaboration.

Ms. Shickle said she thought WCG had done a good job in responding to these concerns.

Chairman Nordvig reminded everyone that WCG had already addressed concerns regarding the use of *plan* versus *planning*; use of naming for PDCs as specified in the Virginia Code; and whether or not RVA referred to the entire Richmond region.

Mr. Gray asked if what will be seen today will need to go back to the full RRPDC Board for review. Ms. Shickle said the Executive Committee will make a decision regarding the branding name during its special meeting on November 1 and will make a recommendation to the full Board for its action on November 8.

Mr. Gray said he'd like to ensure a decision can be expedited and that another meeting of prolonged discussion be avoided if at all possible. Chairman Nordvig said he expects the Executive Committee will recommend that members of the full Board accept their recommendation without additional discussion.

Mr. Keeley began the review of revisions with examples of what the branding name could look like on letterhead and business cards as well as other applications such as PowerPoint presentations, a one-page report, and a vector-formatted version. Ms. Shickle asked if WCG could produce a map of Virginia that showed each of the other PDC regions in addition to the RRPDC region.

Mr. Keeley continued by showing examples of how each locality's page can be color-coded to match their map color.

Next was a review of the color palette page. Ms. Busser pointed out that colors were being used that will tie in to each of the Capital Region Collaborative's priority areas. In discussions with Kim Scheeler (ChamberRVA President and CEO), it was agreed that the ChamberRVA will change its webpage to match the color palette of the RRPDC and Collaborative since the Collaborative is a joint effort between ChamberRVA and RRPDC. Mr. Keeley said use of jewel tone colors is intentional and the brand colors will be stand-alone colors.

Mr. Keeley moved on to show proposed website renderings and concepts. Mr. Taylor added that the focus of the website will be on the localities with use of a carousel of photos representative of each of the localities. Mr. Taylor pointed out that the gear symbol in the upper right hand corner will show options for accessibility.

Ms. Busser added that the carousel photos can be changed to highlight banner events held in the localities, such as the Folk Festival in Richmond or the Festival of the Grape in Powhatan.

Mr. Keeley reviewed each of the drop down windows on the navigation bar. Chairman Nordvig noted that the carousel photos can highlight anything at the locality or agency levels.

Mr. Thornton asked if the Public Outreach and Engagement Committee will only meet to discuss the branding and website efforts. He said he hopes the new website format will be used to tell the story of the region.

Ms. Shickle said the website will be used to increase brand recognition across the agency, including not only the RRPDC, but the RRTPO, CVEMA, Collaborative, etc. She said the effort is being undertaken to bring uniformity to the programmatic areas.

Chairman Nordvig said the website is going to offer a way to find out information regarding the agency using a regional focus.

Mr. Thornton pointed out that the agency has done a poor job in the past of reaching out to the general public to let them know who the RRPDC is and to show the strengths of the region.

Mr. Taylor said WCG is working to show the agency is accelerating collaboration while also showing information about each of the localities in the region. He said the goal is going to be to keep the web pages clean.

Ms. Busser said as part of public engagement, members of the general public will be able to find their own locality on the website.

Mr. Thornton said he would suggest that a statement be included that tells the purpose of the effort and the importance of collaboration. Chairman Nordvig indicated content for the website will follow once the format has been completed.

Ms. Busser said it has been discussed previously that it is more credible for the RRPDC to share stories about regional collaboration than it is for each of the localities to talk about how they work together. RRPDC has no agenda in providing stories of collaboration. Chairman Nordvig said there is a need to remain competitive with other regions and telling about regional collaboration is key in that effort.

Ms. Busser said there will be test users of the website to determine what edits will need to be made to enhance accessibility.

Mr. Keeley pointed out that the Program page will highlight the RRPDC's work and projects.

Ms. Busser noted that on the photo carousel, each locality will have several photos available and these will be rotated out regularly.

Ms. Shickle asked if the committee was ready to decide on a recommendation for the Executive Committee to move forward with development of the PlanRVA-The Regional Commission branding name. She said Dr. Newbille has an expectation for the Executive Committee to make a final decision at its meeting on November 1 with regard as to what to move forward to the full Board on November 8.

Ms. Shickle said once the branding effort has been finalized, she would like for the Public Outreach and Engagement Committee to begin work on public outreach goals and strategies.

Chairman Nordvig asked if committee members were in agreement to present a recommendation to the Executive Committee to move forward with PlanRVA-The Regional Commission as the information has been presented today.

Mr. Gray said he thought the materials presented today were good. He recommended that the gear icon on the website be highlighted in some way to show its intention. He said he'd also suggest

emphasizing that cost for using an embedded watermark on letterhead will be more expensive. Mr. Gray said he liked the rotating banner photos.

Ms. Shickle said the Communications Roundtable is being tasked with providing photos from each of their jurisdictions to use on the website. Ms. Busser added that there will be a digital library of photos and landmark events.

Mr. Thornton said there should be some flexibility built into the effort for changes as needed. He said he felt a rationale for the work needs to be prepared to offer to RRPDC members.

Chairman Nordvig said his goal for the RRPDC Board meeting is to be able to present something that everyone can live with. He said he does not realistically expect that all members will be 100 percent in favor of what will be recommended.

Mr. Thornton asked if a member of the Public Outreach and Engagement Committee will be attending the November 1 meeting. Ms. Shickle said the entire committee will be invited to attend the November 1 meeting.

Chairman Nordvig said he had reached out to Ms. Lascolette after last week's meeting since she seemed to have some concerns regarding the branding name. He said her concern was that she did not want to change the legal name of the RRPDC as that will involve a lengthy Charter change effort.

Chairman Nordvig thanked WCG for their work to make revisions so quickly. He said he heard during today's meeting that caution should be used in recommending a watermark due to cost; emphasis needs to be put on the gear icon; business cards will show the localities; there is a color palette tie-in with RRPDC, ChamberRVA, and the Collaborative; and the information on the website is a mock up only.

Chairman Nordvig asked if there was consensus to move ahead with a recommendation to the Executive Committee that staff be authorized to work with WCG to finalize the PlanRVA-The Regional Commission branding name. Mr. Gray said he'd like to clarify that this is only a first step in public outreach efforts. Chairman Nordvig said that was correct.

Ms. Shickle said the website design is progressive and is about the localities coming together as a region. Chairman Nordvig added that the website will also include information on each of the nine member localities.

Ms. Busser said the website will direct the general public to a place where they can learn about the agency and about the region. She said once the branding name is finalized, there will be a concerted effort to move forward with completion of the website for a rollout after the first of the year. Ms. Shickle said she'd like to use the new website as a kick-off to celebrate the agency's 50th anniversary year.

Mr. Thornton said he wanted to compliment the committee on its work. He said what is being proposed will allow the smaller jurisdictions to feel more secure in the region. The work was done in a purposeful manner and is only a beginning in the agency's public outreach efforts.

Chairman Nordvig said he and Ms. Shickle are meeting tomorrow with Ms. Larson to review what was discussed today. He said pending that discussion, he will consider the branding name ready to forward to the Executive Committee for approval on November 1.

Chairman Nordvig thanked everyone for their time and adjourned the meeting at approximately 5:10 p.m.