

Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

February 13, 2025 – 8:30 a.m.

PlanRVA James River Boardroom, 424 Hull Street, Suite 300,
Richmond, VA 23224 and via Zoom

LOCALITY	NAME	X (attended)
Town of Ashland	Dr. Daniel McGraw, Chair	X
Charles City County	Byron Adkins, Treasurer	X
Chesterfield County	Jim Ingle	X
Goochland County	Neil Spoonhower (virtual)	X
Hanover County	Sean Davis	X
Henrico County	Reverend Tyrone Nelson	
New Kent County	Jordan Stewart, Vice Chair	X
Powhatan County	Steve McClung	
City of Richmond	Dr. Cynthia Newbille, Secretary	X

The technology used for the PlanRVA Executive Committee meeting was a web-hosted service created by Zoom and YouTube Live Streaming and was open and accessible for participation by members of the public. A recording of this meeting is available on our [Plan RVA YouTube Channel](#).

Welcome and Introductions

Chair McGraw called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. and welcomed all attendees.

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chair McGraw.

Roll Call and Certification of a Quorum

Diane Fusco, PlanRVA, took roll call of attendees and certified that a quorum was present.

A. Administration Items

1. Confirmation of Member Participation from a Remote Location

Chair McGraw announced that the following member requested approval to participate remotely: Neil Spoonhower. Reason: personal matter, specifically a scheduling conflict that prevents in-person attendance.

Chair McGraw announced his approval of the request to participate remotely.

On motion duly made and seconded, the members of the Executive Committee voted to confirm that the Chair's decision to approve the request to participate from a remote location was in conformance with the PlanRVA Policy for Remote Participation of Members; and, the voice of the remotely participating member could be heard by all persons at the primary or central meeting location (voice vote).

The quorum was updated to show the presence of the remote members.

2. Agenda Amendments / Approval

There were no requested amendments to the agenda.

3. Public Comments

There were no public comments received or requests to address the Committee.

4. Approval of Meeting Minutes – November 14, 2024

On motion by Cynthia Newbille, seconded by Byron Adkins, the members of the PlanRVA Executive Committee voted to approve the meeting minutes as presented (voice vote).

B. New Business

1. Resolution naming Partnership for Housing Affordability as implementation Partner for Virginia Housing Grant

Martha Shickle explained the resolution request and offered to answer any questions.

Ms. Shickle disclosed details of her role as Chair of the Board of Directors for Partnership for Housing Affordability. It was noted that this disclosure will also be made as part of the recommendation to the Full Commission.

On motion by Cynthia Newbille, seconded by Jim Ingle, the members of the PlanRVA Executive Committee voted to recommend Commission adoption of resolution authorizing the Executive Director to execute an MOU with PHA to administer a grant award from Virginia Housing.

2. FY2025 Key Imperatives Update

Ms. Shickle provided this update and noted it is intended to provide a high-level overview of year-to-date progress in meeting goals within the FY2025 Key Imperatives approved by the Commission as part of the annual work program and budget.

Key points include the following:

- PlanRVA is mostly on track for completing the current goals.
- Details about work in meeting the imperative to “Support Member Jurisdictions through Local Planning Assistance”. A summary of the regional projects with local impact and specific requests from localities for support on various projects was provided.
- Projects in Ashland, Hanover and Henrico have not yet been identified.

3. PlanRVA's Mission Alignment with 2025 Federal Priorities (Martha Shickle) Discussion item.

Ms. Shickle provided this update and noted staff continues to process information from the new presidential administration regarding federal priorities and actions associated with a handful of recently issued Executive Orders. Very little information

has been communicated from our federal partner agencies, though we are seeing signs of changes that significantly impact our programs and the agency.

Specific Executive Orders staff is closely watching:

- EO 14148: Initial Recissions of Harmful Executive Orders and Actions
- EO 14151: Ending Radical and Wasteful Government DEI Programs and Preferencing
- EO 14154: Unleashing American Energy
- EO 14168: Defending Women from Gender Ideology Extremism and Restoring Biological Truth to the Federal Government

Ms Shickle provided summaries of early guidance she has been able to review from the DOT order and memorandum from January 29, 2025. The documents outline the initial steps to enact policy shifts to implement Executive Orders. Further, the communications articulate instruction to eliminate all references to climate change, “greenhouse gas” emissions, racial equity, gender identity, “diversity, equity, and inclusion” goals, environmental justice, or the Justice 40 initiative.

Timeline/ Next Steps

- DOT and its operating administrations were to identify and submit a list of all targeted policies to the Secretary of Transportation by February 8, 2025. The Administration plans to begin the recission process by February 18, 2025, or within 10 days of a respective operating administration’s submission for a swift policy transition.
- DOT must issue guidance to implement the Order which will include a notice and comment process.
- NOFOs, grant agreements and contracts must be updated to align with the new requirements.
- Existing grant agreements and contracts will be reviewed and amended where permissible.
- DOT will submit a compliance report within 6 months outlining progress.
- It’s unclear whether the review of existing agreements and awards will happen concurrently with the broader review, rulemaking and comment process or in sequence.
- It is not yet known how this will impact the MPO Planning program (PL and 5303 funding), or the recently awarded but not yet contracted PPPP grant intended to develop additional transparency in our prioritization process.

Implications:

- DOT is extending the cost-benefit standard to all grantmaking, lending, policymaking and rulemaking decisions, regardless of economic magnitude, where the previous threshold was \$200 million or more. Federal funding will be increasingly difficult to obtain for initiatives that do not produce clear, measurable financial returns, particularly those focusing on environmental, equity or social justice concerns. Funding may be less accessible for projects emphasizing sustainability or social equity goals.
- Entities that utilize DOT funding must now align their projects with new federal priorities, shifting away from climate—and equity-based initiatives toward economic and family-focused criteria. DOT will no longer use or consider the social cost of carbon estimates in its analyses. US EPA has been directed to issue new guidance.

- DOT will prioritize projects that are funded by a user-based module such as local transportation taxes.
- Projects located in local opportunity zones are preferred candidates for DOT funding.
- DOT policies now prioritize impacts on families and local communities. Infrastructure projects will be evaluated based on factors such as noise reduction, water and soil quality, and economic stability rather than climate or equity goals. Communities with marriage and birth rates higher than the national average will receive a higher preference for awards.
- Entities seeking DOT funding must ensure that their projects emphasize financial efficiency, cost-benefit outcomes and compliance with Buy America provisions.
- Communities are required to cooperate with federal immigration enforcement in order to qualify for DOT funding.
- DOT grants, loans and contracts must now serve a clear federal interest and cannot be used to advance projects that serve local goals.

A handout was provided for reference of PlanRVA's current Vision/Mission/Values language, which has served as part of the basis for the development of Strategic Plan priorities (as well as the priorities emphasized across the region in local comprehensive and other planning documents).

Staff has identified several areas where it is believed current programs/projects are at risk of posing short-term (FY2025/2026) financial implications and longer-term programmatic implications:

- It is too early to know if any amendments to our current Unified Planning Work Program and associated grant agreements are in play for this fiscal year. The request for reimbursement for Q2 under the PL and 5303 funding programs has been submitted but has not yet been processed/paid. VDOT and DRPT have indicated that no additional guidance has been given from FHWA and DRPT regarding the status of these grants. (they are 80% federal with a 10% state and local match).
- It was announced in December the award of a \$1.5mm grant from FHWA to significantly revise the current transportation prioritization process towards a regional vision of safety, equity, a strong economy, and environmental stewardship. It is not yet known whether this award will be contracted. Project deliverables included updates to the current model run for incorporation into the current LRTP planning process and developing a digital web presence to increase public accessibility and transparency to the project prioritization process.
- As of Wednesday, February 12, 2025, the grant awards for developing the region's Comprehensive Climate Action Plan and Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy are no longer showing in our grants portal. The EPA and EDA fund these projects. Staff has reached out to grant reps for each agency and are coincidentally scheduled to meet with the EDA representative this afternoon. The total awards for these two projects are close to \$2mm and include consultant contracts. Staff has been in close contact with legal counsel to advise on the situation. Staff is also conferring with other grantees with these same awards in Virginia and our national association, NADO.

- CCAP is a \$1mm grant award; CEDS is a \$50k grant award. Both are programmed as part of this Fiscal Year.
- PlanRVA is a sub-recipient of the City of Richmond's award under the Energy Futures Grant program. Staff has not been notified whether this program will be terminated.

4. FY2026 Key Imperatives

This item was tabled until the next Executive Committee meeting.

5. Staff Continuity and Succession Management Plan Update

This item was tabled until the next Executive Committee meeting.

C. Adjournment

Chair McGraw adjourned the meeting at approximately 9:34 a.m.