



Richmond Regional Planning District Commission February 2010 Meeting Report

RRPDC Officers

Kathy C. Graziano – Chairman
City of Richmond

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Robert A. Crum, Jr. – Executive Director



The **Richmond Regional Planning District Commission** (RRPDC) held its regularly scheduled monthly meeting on February 11, 2010. The next meeting of the RRPDC Board will be held on Thursday, March 11, beginning at 1:00 p.m. in the RRPDC Board Room.

Regional eCivis license for RAFT

The Board voted to procure a **regional license for eCivis®**, a software and database system used to research and apply for government grants and private foundation funding. The \$70,006 cost of the regional license represents a 56% savings from the price if each of the Region's nine jurisdictions purchased the software individually. The Board's vote followed a recommendation from the Regional Area Funding Team (RAFT), the newly established regional grants warehouse within the RRPDC. RAFT consists of grants personnel from all nine jurisdictions.

Jurisdictions were given a month to discuss individually whether their locality could benefit from the software and opt-in to participate in the regional license.

The City of Richmond and Town of Ashland currently use eCivis, and Powhatan County was planning to purchase its own license, but held off pending the Board's action.

The expenditure will be funded by the RRPDC's unallocated fund balance with the software available for use by July.





Regional Economic Development Strategy

The Board authorized RRPDC staff to lead a regional process to **create a Regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy** (CEDS). The strategic document will analyze the regional economy and serve as a guide for establishing goals and objectives, developing and implementing a regional plan of action, and identifying investment priorities and funding sources. RRPDC staff will seek funding for the project through a grant from the federal Economic Development Administration (EDA).

A regional CEDS is required for a community to be eligible for certain funding from the EDA. In a presentation before the Board's vote, Bob Skunda, President and CEO of the Virginia BioTechnology Research Park, detailed an incident last year where he was denied the

chance to apply for federal stimulus funds because the Region lacks a federally-approved CEDS. Skunda was accompanied at February's meeting by Gregory H. Wingfield, President of the Greater Richmond Partnership.

The RRPDC will bring together regional representatives from the public and private sectors to create an economic roadmap to diversify and strengthen regional economies. Staff will coordinate their efforts with the consultant preparing a CEDS for the City of Richmond.

"Without an approved CEDS in place, we can't even make an application."

**- Bob Skunda,
President and CEO of the Virginia
BioTechnology Research Park**

On January 13, RRPDC staff held a meeting with economic development personnel from the Region's nine jurisdictions who were supportive of the RRPDC taking the lead on this project.

RRPDC MISSION STATEMENT:

"To strengthen the quality of life throughout the Richmond region by serving as a regional forum of member local governments to address issues of regional significance, providing technical assistance to localities, and promoting and enhancing the collective consensus on the economic, transportation, social, environmental, and demographic interests of the region."



Regional Opposition to LCI “unfreezing”

Acting on a request from the City of Richmond, the Board adopted a statement in opposition to the proposal to “unfreeze” the Local Composite Index (LCI) which determines state funding for public education. The statement read:

“We ask the General Assembly to retain the freeze on the Local Composite Index until an assessment is conducted regarding the equity of the formula and a plan is established to establish full state funding of the standards of quality.”

“[I]t is clear that our localities have reached a point where we cannot handle any more state budget cuts. As such, members of the Richmond Regional Planning District Commission -- Ashland, Charles City, Chesterfield, Goochland, Hanover, Henrico, New Kent, Powhatan, and Richmond -- have united to request the legislature to support the freeze of the LCI until an assessment is conducted to determine the equity of the formula.

**- Delegate Jennifer McClellan
from Richmond Times-Dispatch Editorial**

The proposal being considered by the General Assembly would result in \$100 million of total reductions to the Richmond Region’s school divisions – \$17.5 million from the LCI changes in addition to the \$83 million of cuts included in the FY 2011 budget before the General Assembly. Communications Coordinator Chuck Gates relayed the statement to members of the Capital Region Caucus. News coverage of the RRPDC’s vote included a news article (“School funding change opposed,” February 12) and an opinion column by Delegate Jennifer McClellan (“Unfreezing Formula Would Chill Local School Systems,” February 14) in the *Richmond Times-Dispatch*.

If you would like to receive this flyer electronically, please contact Julie Fry via email, jfry@richmondregional.org

Learn about ongoing RRPDC projects and upcoming meetings by visiting our website:
www.richmondregional.org



Richmond Regional Planning District Commission

FY 2010 Membership

Town of Ashland 1 Elected Official

Charles City County 1 Elected Official

Chesterfield County 5 Elected Officials
1 Planning Commission Representative
1 Citizen Representative

Goochland County 1 Elected Official
1 Planning Commission Representative

Hanover County 2 Elected Officials
1 Planning Commission Representative
1 Citizen Representative

Henrico County 5 Elected Officials
1 Planning Commission Representative
1 Citizen Representative

New Kent County 1 Elected Official
1 Planning Commission Representative

Powhatan County 2 Elected Officials
1 Planning Commission Representative

City of Richmond 4 Elected Officials
1 Planning Commission Representative
1 Citizen Representative