

RICHMOND REGIONAL PLANNING DISTRICT COMMISSION
Minutes of Meeting
September 11, 2008

Members/Alternates Present

Malvern R. "Rudy" Butler (M).....County of Goochland
Karin Carmack (M).....County of Powhatan
Robert R. Cosby (M).....County of Powhatan
Timothy W. Cotman, Sr., Chairman (M)..... County of Charles City
James B. Donati (M), Treasurer..... County of Henrico
Marleen K. Durfee (M).....County of Chesterfield
Daniel A. Gecker (M).....County of Chesterfield
Richard W. Glover (M)..... County of Henrico
John E. Gordon, Jr. (M).....County of Hanover
Kathy C. Graziano (M), Vice Chairman.....City of Richmond
Jeryllynn T. "Jeri" Grigsby (M)..... County of Henrico
John C. Grier (M).....City of Richmond
Evan Fabricant (M).....County of Hanover
James M. Holland (M).....County of Chesterfield
Courtney G. Hyers (M).....County of Goochland
Dorothy Jaeckle (M).....County of Chesterfield
E. Ray Jernigan (M)..... County of Henrico
Beverley C. Lacy (M).....City of Richmond
C. Harold Padgett (M).....County of Hanover
Faye O. Prichard (M).....Town of Ashland
Robert R. Setliff (M).....County of Hanover
Randall R. Silber (A)..... County of Henrico
Frank J. Thornton (M)..... County of Henrico
Stran L. Trout (M), Secretary..... County of New Kent
Joseph B. Walton (M).....County of Powhatan

Members Absent

Russell J. Gulley (M).....County of Chesterfield
David A. Kaechele (M)..... County of Henrico
Delores L. McQuinn (M).....City of Richmond
Patricia S. O'Bannon (M)..... County of Henrico
William J. Pantele (M), Treasurer.....City of Richmond
George K. Roarty (M).....County of Chesterfield
Ellen F. Robertson (M).....City of Richmond
Brenda L. "Sam" Snyder (M)..... County of New Kent
Arthur S. Warren (M).....County of Chesterfield

Others Present

John R. Amos..... RRPDC Legal Counsel
Viktoria Badger.....City of Richmond
John T. Benton.....Citizen, Chesterfield County
Rev. Benjamin P. Campbell..... Citizen, City of Richmond
Carolyn CiosCounty of Powhatan
Robert A. Crum, Jr..... Incoming RRPDC Executive Director
Walter L. Johnson VDOT
Will Jones.....Richmond *Times-Dispatch*

Staff Present

Jo A. Evans Interim Executive Director
Julie H. Fry..... Executive Secretary
Anne Darby Associate Planner
Daniel N. Lysy Director of Transportation
Barbara Nelson..... Principle Planner
Jackie S. Stewart Director Planning/IS
Peter M. Sweetland Finance and Contracts Administrator

Call to Order

Chairman Cotman called the regularly scheduled September 11, 2008 RRPDC meeting to order at approximately 1:15 p.m. in the RRPDC board room. He then led the Commission members in the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

I. ADMINISTRATION

A. Certification by Commission Interim Executive Director of Meeting Quorum

Ms. Evans certified that a quorum of members was present.

B. Requests for Additions or Changes in Order of Business

Chairman Cotman asked if there were any changes or additions to the agenda. As there were no changes or additions, the agenda was accepted as presented.

C. Open Public Comment Period

Chairman Cotman asked if there was anyone from the public in attendance who wished to make a comment.

Chairman Cotman recognized Mr. John T. Benton. Mr. Benton introduced himself and stated he is a citizen residing in the Midlothian District of Chesterfield County.

Mr. Benton asked if members would observe a moment of silence in remembrance of the events occurring on September 11, 2001.

Mr. Benton continued by saying he is a private citizen and is representing no one but himself. He said his comments are meant to address the process and not the people of the Commission. He said the comments he will make come at a good time as there is a new executive director and a new chairman of the Commission.

He said he had come before the Commission before to make a suggestion that it be proactive and take a leadership role in moving the region forward, especially with regard to comprehensive planning and transportation. He said there is too much emphasis on local interests and not enough on regional interests. Mr. Benton said when he spoke to the Commission before he had asked that all jurisdictional flags be removed, but he noticed they are still in place. These should be replaced by one flag representing the region.

Mr. Benton said the new director has a big challenge in front of him. He welcomed the new executive director and wished him well.

In continuing Mr. Benton said he felt the Commission had not lived up to what it was supposed to be doing. With new membership, he suggested a review of the federal law that established the Commission be made. He said he did not see how the Commission could do what it was supposed to do without a strategic plan. He said he had not seen a strategic plan.

Mr. Benton further noted that he felt there should be more priorities set to focus on the big issues. He feels it takes too long to do simple things and that someone needs to make things happen more quickly.

Mr. Benton said he felt the Commission needed to be involved with the Capital Region Collaborative and to pump up the Transportation Strategies Work Group. He attended the meeting held by the Work Group last week.

He further stated he believes the Long Range Transportation Advisory Committee should be made a standing committee.

Mr. Benton said he feels it's difficult to get anything accomplished with more than ten persons at a meeting. He suggested that the size of the Commission be reduced by at least half.

He noted that the Commission needed to step away from transportation issues and focus on comprehensive planning. He said transportation cannot be done without comprehensive planning, and he feels that Mr. Lysy understands this from conversations he has had with Mr. Lysy.

Mr. Benton has also attended a GIS managers meeting. He said this group needs to be told to create a strategic plan for GIS. He feels this group is anxious to do this, they just need to be told to do this. He said this group needs some direction as to what to do.

Mr. Benton said public participation is a good thing, and he is the only member of the public in attendance. He said something needs to be done to engage the public. He said there are many challenges that need public input. He said there needs to be a solution to the transportation crisis.

Mr. Benton thanked the Commission for its time.

Mr. Fabricant pointed out that he is a citizen volunteer representing Hanover County on the Commission and that not everyone sitting around the table was an elected official.

Mr. Holland asked for a point of order regarding the amount of time being allotted to this open comment period.

Chairman Cotman agreed that he had been very liberal with the time as there is supposed to be a three minute limit per person during the public comment agenda item. He thanked Mr. Benton for his comments.

Mr. Gordon asked if he could respond to what Mr. Benton had said. Mr. Gordon thanked Mr. Benton for attending. He said that Mr. Benton is a little misinformed on the recent activities of the Commission. Many of the things Mr. Benton brought up were discussed by the Commission over a year ago and are being addressed at this time.

Mr. Gordon said the Commission is part of the Capital Region Collaborative. A strategic plan is being worked on through the Collaborative. Mr. Gordon continued by saying that when the Commission took a look at itself last year, it was determined that what the Commission does, it does well; however, it was not providing leadership for the region. Priorities were established and these are being worked on with good progress being made. Mr. Gordon noted a member of the press was in attendance at today's meeting and said that was a good thing. It's clear by comments made by Mr. Benton that the accomplishments of the Commission over the past year have not gotten out to the general public. Mr. Gordon said he would welcome press at every meeting so the public will become aware of the services the Commission provides.

Chairman Cotman thanked Mr. Fabricant and Mr. Gordon for their comments and recognized Rev. Ben Campbell, a resident of Richmond.

Rev. Campbell said he had been asked by his neighbors to address the Commission on their concern regarding the future of transportation. He

understands there is a preliminary report on this topic that will be forwarded to the jurisdictions for review. Rev. Campbell said this report indicates there is no interest in public transportation other than highways. He said this seems suicidal in light of what is going on in 2008. This is not forward-looking. The funding in the preliminary report is based heavily on automobile taxing. This makes it difficult for the center city of Richmond because it houses about 50% of the automobiles in the region. He said he would like to work with the Commission on this effort to make sure the concerns of his neighbors are heard.

Chairman Cotman thanked Rev. Campbell for his remarks and asked if there was anyone else from the public who wished to make a comment. There being no further requests, Chairman Cotman closed the public comment period.

D. Chairman's Report

Chairman Cotman said he would like to introduce the new Executive Director, Mr. Robert Crum. Mr. Crum will begin officially on September 16.

Mr. Crum said he is very excited about the opportunity to be here and about the organization and where it can go in the future. He said he is looking forward to meeting with everyone to discuss local issues.

Mr. Crum was welcomed by the members with a round of applause.

E. Approval of Minutes – July 10, 2008 Meeting

Chairman Cotman asked Mr. Trout to present this item.

Mr. Trout noted the minutes were included in the agenda book and moved that the minutes be approved as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Gordon. There being no further discussion, the motion carried and the minutes were accepted as printed.

F. Approval of June 2008 Financial Report

Chairman Cotman asked Mr. Donati to present the financial reports for June 2008. Mr. Donati called the members' attention to the report under Tab 2 and asked if there were any questions. There being none, on motion made by Mr. Donati and seconded by Ms. Prichard, the June 2008 financial report was accepted as presented for audit.

Mr. Donati also reported that during the July meeting, Mr. Fabricant had expressed concern that the reserve funds in the checking account were not earning interest. Mr. Donati asked staff to review other banking alternatives. During today's Executive Committee meeting, a recommendation was made by staff to switch the agency's banking business from BB&T to Suntrust. Suntrust offered a

very good package including interest on the checking account with no minimum reserve.

G. Interim Executive Director's Report

Ms. Evans directed the members' attention to the Staff Status Report under Tab 3 in the agenda book. She noted this will be her last meeting in the role of Interim Executive Director. She said staff is very excited to have Mr. Crum begin work and everyone is looking forward to working with him to continue to move the agency forward.

Ms. Evans reported that New Kent County member, Brenda "Sam" Snyder has been seriously ill. She suggested that everyone keep Ms. Snyder in their thoughts and prayers. Mr. Trout added that she has been in contact with him and seems to be in good spirits.

Ms. Evans stated that concluded her report.

Chairman Cotman said he would offer his appreciation to Ms. Evans for the work she has done as Interim Executive Director. He feels she has done a good job. Members of the Commission joined with Chairman Cotman in thanking Ms. Evans with a round of applause.

II. OLD BUSINESS

A. Jurisdictional Committee Reports – Establishment of Quarterly Leadership Meetings

Chairman Cotman asked Ms. Prichard if she would like to give a report from the Small Jurisdictions Committee. Ms. Prichard stated that as the two jurisdictional committees had met jointly this month, she would defer to Mr. Gordon to give the report.

Mr. Gordon said the committees continue to meet and are well attended and very productive. The committees met jointly this past Tuesday and this will be done with some frequency. A number of items have been discussed over the course of various meetings.

The one item the committees would like to bring to the Commission today is the establishment of quarterly leadership meetings. In an effort to increase visibility and effectiveness as a leadership team, this meeting is being recommended. The leaders will be brought together on a regular basis to increase the positive relationships. Former Chairman King noted that he had not known a lot of the members he was working with when he became Chairman. He created a couple of opportunities for everyone to get together in social settings in order to know each other better.

This is what is hoped can be accomplished by bringing local leaders together. This will send a positive message to the public that this is a region, and the regional leaders will deal with issues facing the region. This will also create a foundation to identify opportunities to work together. A central source for updates on regional activities will also be created.

The meetings would be held quarterly. Once a year there would be a more formal dinner with the other three meetings providing heavy hors d'oeuvres. Attendees will be the nine CEOs and CAOs representing the Commission (to include the two mayors), the President of Richmond City Council, RRPDC Executive Director and Chairman, and the chairmen of the two jurisdictional committees. This is similar in format to the meeting that the four large jurisdictions now have every couple of months. A sample agenda is listed on the handout and could include an update on RRPDC activities, updates on the Capital Region Collaborative, and major current events or activities in the region. Any regional organizations or entities could also be invited to give updates. It is the recommendation that these meetings begin in January, with an introduction of the plan to be made in conjunction with a reception for the new Executive Director later this fall.

The recommendation was endorsed by both jurisdictional committees, and the Executive Committee endorsed it earlier today.

Mr. Gecker noted that the chairmanship on local boards of directors rotates annually and asked if another designee could be named. Mr. Gordon said this was not discussed but it is a valid point. Mr. Gordon said it would be best to leave this decision up to the jurisdictions. The preference would be to have the chair, but if the jurisdiction would like to name a designee, that would be fine.

A motion was made by Ms. Graziano and seconded by Mr. Donati to accept this recommendation. Mr. Gordon pointed out that the public and press would also be invited to attend these meetings. There being no further discussion, the motion carried.

B. Transportation Funding Strategies Work Group

Chairman Cotman asked Mr. Gecker to give this report.

Mr. Gecker reported that the Work Group had a fairly aggressive meeting schedule over the past couple of months. A proposal has been reached at the bequest of Senator Watkins and Delegate Hall for draft transportation legislation that would establish a transportation authority in the region.

Mr. Gecker said today's report is just to give everyone an idea of what the authority would look like and what the proposal provides for revenue sources. Of

revenue collected through the proposed Regional Transportation Authority, 60% would go back to the jurisdiction that generated it and 40% would go in to a pool within the authority to use for regional projects as determined by the governing body of the authority.

The basic premise is to get a foot in the door with the legislature. No one expected to get 100% consensus with the final product. The main criticism is that mass transit was not addressed. The document does list mass transit as a potential funding category. There is no dedicated sum to mass transit, and there is no provision to fund operational deficits of mass transit. It was the consensus of the Work Group that money raised regionally should go to capital needs rather than operational needs.

Mr. Gecker thanked everyone who had participated in this effort, especially Ms. Evans for putting all of the information together. He said all representatives will take the document back to their respective governing bodies for review. It is his hope that agreement can be reached on a package to take to the legislators during the upcoming legislative session. This will not guarantee success, but it will be a starting point.

Mr. Gecker said he would particularly like to thank everyone from Henrico County who worked on developing the proposed legislation, especially Virgil Hazelett.

Mr. Gecker said during the October Commission meeting, he would hope to present a final product from the jurisdictions and ask for action by the Commission on whether or not to move forward with it.

Chairman Cotman asked if there were any questions. He asked if the Work Group would meet again. Mr. Gecker said the Work Group was finished with its work until the October Commission meeting. If the Commission approves the final product, then the Work Group will meet again and get to work on communicating with the legislative delegation. If the Commission does not approve the final product, then Mr. Gecker said he would assume the Work Group has finished its task. He had spoken with Senator Watkins today who cautioned that the entire region needs to support this if it is to stand a chance of getting anywhere in the legislative process. Mr. Gecker said Delegate Hall does intend to support this on the House side.

Chairman Cotman suggested that if anyone had any questions for Mr. Gecker to please ask them at this time.

Ms. Durfee asked if the structure of the authority would be similar to that of the authorities already put forward by northern Virginia and the Tidewater area. Mr. Gecker said what is in front of everyone today is a copy of what had already been approved by the General Assembly.

Mr. Donati asked about the mass transit issue of operational needs and capital projects. Mr. Gecker replied this was discussed at length, and it was decided that funds from the 60% that is returned to the localities could be used for operational needs but the 40% could only be used for capital projects. Mr. Donati said he was interested since Henrico County heavily subsidizes GRTC.

Ms. Graziano said she feels this is a major step to strengthen the region, by establishing an authority. She thinks that mass transit should be included. A mass transit system needs to operate. The 60% operating cost has to be made up from some place.

Mr. Walton asked what Mr. Gecker would like to receive from the jurisdictions at the next Commission meeting. Mr. Gecker said everyone will be able to lobby the legislature in whatever way they'd like. What he's hoping for is a general consensus of putting this in to place. While there may be some deficiencies, the same operational issues will be with GRTC whether this proposal moves forward or not. He would like for all jurisdictions to agree to lobby the legislature to get this through. There has not been a lot of success with this effort before.

Mr. Gordon said this is in the hands of those sitting around the table. If everyone is not fully on board then there will be a problem. Everyone must sell this to their respective boards. Mr. Gordon asked that if there are concerns, these should be discussed with either Mr. Gecker or Mr. Hazelett. The Work Group dealt with all concerns as best they could, and he thinks this is the best product that they can offer.

Chairman Cotman said this will be enabling legislation to give the region the ability to operate as described. The smaller jurisdictions will be given the opportunity to opt in to the authority at any time. He said he will go back to his board and let them know he is in favor of the effort. The next step will be to determine if Charles City County will opt in now or if they will wait to see how things progress.

Mr. Donati noted that everyone around the table receives money from VDOT. He would like assurance that any monies now being received would not be decreased if this transportation authority is approved.

III. NEW BUSINESS

A. RRPDC Legislative Program

Chairman Cotman asked Ms. Evans to review this agenda item.

Ms. Evans said input is being requested from each jurisdiction on issues that would benefit from regional support during this year's legislative session. A few

issues have been mentioned to date and these will be on the table during the October Commission meeting for discussion and possible action to include in a regional legislative package. These are:

- Regional Transportation Authority legislation that was just discussed
- Position on Impact Fees versus Cash Proffers: taking a position on development tools to manage growth in the area. A joint sub-committee is now underway (two year study). A staff member is in attendance at that meeting today. At some point the Commission may want to have a statement on giving localities the tools needed to manage growth to present to this sub-committee.
- Homestead Exemption: this bill failed last year but may be reintroduced
- Environmental Regulations that may impact locations and their ability to manage growth
- Full funding from the state for 599 funds
- Rural Access to Broadband Technology

These will be brought back to the Commission for review in October. If there are other issues, please convey them to staff prior to the October meeting. Some preliminary information has been received from two jurisdictions. A request was sent to the jurisdictions asking for input on issues that would have either local or regional impact.

Ms. Jaeckle asked if some legislators could be invited to attend the November Commission meeting to review this package with them. Ms. Evans said this could be done.

B. Annual RRPDC/VDHCD Contract

Ms. Evans noted this is the annual contract with the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development to provide state funding pursuant to the provision of certain items as required by the Regional Cooperation Act. RRPDC must provide an annual report on activities of the agency over the course of the past year. Once this report is received, a contract is issued.

The contract has not yet been received but it does not change from year to year. A draft has been provided with updated funding noted.

Ms. Graziano moved that the contract be approved. The motion was seconded by Mr. Donati. There being no further discussion, the motion carried.

C. Adopt Resolution of Support – Rural Transportation Planning Program Special Grant

Ms. Stewart noted the Virginia Department of Transportation is offering a special grant to planning district commissions to identify a regional rural system of park-

and-ride lots that encourage regional express bus service, carpooling, and vanpooling. The grant is in the amount of \$30,000.00. One of VDOT's on-call consultants would be conducting this survey as required by the grant.

On motion made by Mr. Butler and seconded by Mr. Gordon, the resolution was approved.

C. Approve Grant Application – Virginia Coastal Program Special Grant

Ms. Stewart reported that the Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program is offering a special grant to planning district commissions to address sustainable community and conservation corridor planning – “green infrastructure” planning. RRPDC will partner with the Crater PDC and the Green Infrastructure Center in Charlottesville to develop this plan. The grant is in the amount of \$50,000.00.

On motion made by Ms. Graziano and seconded by Ms. Durfee, the resolution was approved.

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

A. Committee Reports

There were no other committee reports.

B. Announcements

Ms. Carmack announced that Powhatan County will host a Transportation Forum on October 22. Featured speakers will include the Virginia Secretary of Transportation, Pierce Holmer, as well as Tripp Pollard, Tim McCormick, and Jim Bacon. She will include information with the October agenda packet.

Mr. Glover noted that he liked the idea of the transportation authority. However he wanted to point out that there is the possibility that the General Assembly can reduce any levels of funding as it sees fit. He offered several examples for the members' information of how this has been done in the past.

C. For Your Information

Items included in this section were:

1. Letter from the Chairman to Senator Vogel and Delegate Athey asking that RRPDC be allowed to participate on the Athey-Vogel Commission and response from Senator Vogel to the Commission's request to participate on the Athey-Vogel Commission.
2. News article from the Richmond *Times-Dispatch* on a regional barge program

3. Letters from the Chairman to all regional CAOs and CEOs asking for input on legislative issues
4. Article from the Richmond *Times-Dispatch* regarding the new RRPDC Executive Director
5. Article from the *Centre Daily Times* announcing the appointment of the new RRPDC Executive Director.

V. **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Commission, on motion duly made and seconded, Chairman Cotman adjourned the meeting at approximately 2:20 p.m.

Jo A. Evans
Interim Executive Director

Timothy W. Cotman, Sr.
Chairman

**RICHMOND REGIONAL PLANNING DISTRICT COMMISSION
FY 2009 STANDING COMMITTEES**

Executive Committee

Timothy W. Cotman, Sr., **Chairman**, Charles City County
Kathy C. Graziano, **Vice Chairman**, City of Richmond
James B. Donati, **Treasurer**, Henrico County
Stran L. Trout, **Secretary**, New Kent County
Malvern R. Butler, Goochland County
Robert R. Cosby, Powhatan County
John E. Gordon, Jr., Hanover County
Faye O. Prichard, Town of Ashland
Arthur S. Warren, Chesterfield County

Charter and Bylaws Committee

Stran L. Trout, **Chairman**, New Kent County
Malvern R. Butler, Goochland County
Robert R. Cosby, Powhatan County
Timothy W. Cotman, Sr., Charles City County
John E. Gordon, Jr., Hanover County
James B. Donati, Henrico County
Marleen K. Durfee, Chesterfield County
Kathy C. Graziano, City of Richmond
Faye O. Prichard, Town of Ashland

Personnel & Operating Policies Committee

Faye O. Prichard, **Chairman**, Town of Ashland
Malvern R. Butler, Goochland County
Robert R. Cosby, Powhatan County
Timothy W. Cotman, Sr., Charles City County
James B. Donati, Henrico County
Daniel A. Gecker, Chesterfield County
John E. Gordon, Jr., Hanover County
Kathy C. Graziano, City of Richmond
Stran L. Trout, New Kent County

Audit Committee

James B. Donati, **Chairman**, Henrico County
Robert R. Cosby, Powhatan County
John E. Gordon, Jr., Hanover County
James M. Holland, Chesterfield County
Faye O. Prichard, Town of Ashland