

NORTHERN VIRGINIA REGIONAL COMMISSION

Minutes of the Commission Meeting Held Thursday, March 26, 2015

COMMISSIONERS

(The names of those members present are highlighted.)

Hon. Sharon Bulova	<i>County of Fairfax</i>
Hon. David S. Butler	<i>Town of Leesburg</i>
Hon. Peter Candland	<i>County of Prince William</i>
Hon. Janet Clarke	<i>County of Loudoun</i>
Hon. John C. Cook	<i>County of Fairfax</i>
Hon. Laurie A. Dirocco	<i>Town of Vienna</i>
Hon. Jay Fiset	<i>County of Arlington</i>
Hon. Gerald M. Foreman II	<i>Town of Dumfries</i>
Hon. Libby Garvey	<i>County of Arlington</i>
Hon. Penelope A. Gross, NVRC Chairman	<i>County of Fairfax</i>
Hon. Pat Herrity	<i>County of Fairfax</i>
Hon. Catherine Hudgins	<i>County of Fairfax</i>
Hon. Frank Jones	<i>City of Manassas Park</i>
Hon. Kwasi Fraser	<i>Town of Purcellville</i>
Hon. Jeffrey C. McKay	<i>County of Fairfax</i>
Hon. Lisa C. Merkel – alternate Vice Mayor Jennifer Baker	<i>Town of Herndon</i>
Hon. Martin E. Nohe	<i>County of Prince William</i>
Hon. Harry J. Parrish II	<i>City of Manassas</i>
Hon. Redella S. Pepper, <i>NVRC Treasurer</i>	<i>City of Alexandria</i>
Hon. Frank J. Principi	<i>County of Prince William</i>
Hon. R. Scott Silverthorne	<i>City of Fairfax</i>
Hon. Paul C. Smedberg	<i>City of Alexandria</i>
Hon. Linda Smyth	<i>County of Fairfax</i>
Hon. David Tarter	<i>City of Falls Church</i>
Hon. Scott K. York	<i>County of Loudoun</i>

STAFF PRESENT

G. Mark Gibb	<i>Executive Director</i>
Linda M. Tenney	<i>Deputy Director</i>
Gina Kesselmann-Smith	<i>Executive Assistant</i>
Jeongmin Kim	<i>NVRC international intern</i>
Robert Lazaro	<i>Director, Regional Energy Planning</i>
Dale Medearis	<i>Senior Environmental Planner</i>
David Schwengel	<i>Director, Regional Business Planning</i>
Michelle Simmons	<i>Director, Human Services</i>
Debbie Spiliotopoulos	<i>Senior Environmental Planner</i>
Peggy Tadej	<i>No. Va. Regional BRAC Coordinator</i>

OTHERS PRESENT

Donald Beyer	<i>Congressman, District 8</i>
Katie Boyle	<i>Fairfax County staff</i>
Desmond Dinan	<i>George Mason University</i>
Sue Rowland	<i>NVRC – Legislative Liaison</i>

CALL TO ORDER Chairman Gross called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all present.

ROLL CALL The roll was called and all members present or absent were noted for the record.

MINUTES Commissioner York moved approval of the Commission meeting minutes of February 26, 2015. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Butler and carried unanimously.

PRESENTATION Chairman Gross introduced and welcomed Congressman Beyer, who said that he came to the Commission meeting more to learn than to give the Commission a lecture on his first 10 weeks in Congress.

Congressman Beyer then said that the opportunity to do public service is fulfilling and then spoke about what is happening in Congress and that Democrats and Republicans are actually friendly with each other and a process is in play that works. He also told the Commissioners about that day's success in Congress: How physicians are reimbursed for Medicare; and that the House produced a budget on March 25 (for the first time in years). He described the time in Congress as "fun and meaningful" and that it is great to see Congress do big things.

Congressman Beyer is on three committees: Science, Space and Technology Committee, Natural Resources Committee and Joint Economic Committee. He further described his 3 priorities to the Commissioners: 1. The economic transformation of Northern Virginia and the Country. (One of the great assets here is the Northern Virginia Technology Council); 2. Climate change, as he believes that the best leaders think long-term; 3. The economic power of women, noting that many companies with women on top are more profitable.

Congressman Beyer also shared with the Commission that he was thrilled to see all the international perspectives of NVRC. He also emphasized that Northern Virginia can learn from Switzerland, which has a minimum wage of \$53,000 and zero poverty. The 3 most heavily weaponized countries are the US, Yemen and Switzerland and yet Bern (1.5 M people) has only 5 murders a year and most of them are domestic. Switzerland also has a very low carbon footprint. (e.g. no school buses).

Questions and answers

Chairman Gross asked if the FBI is coming to Northern Virginia. Congressman Beyer responded that it is being worked on.

Chairman Gross then spoke about the workforce development in Northern Virginia and asked Congressman Beyer to elaborate on what he is seeing on the national level regarding this subject and how this might apply to Northern Virginia. Congressman Beyer answered by comparing the US to Switzerland, which has a completely different education system. It begins at age 13/14, when two thirds of the kids based on their academic performance today are channeled into vocational education. He pointed out that more jobs are being advertised now than ever, but the dilemma in the US is that there are no people with the right skill set. There is a great recognition at the national level that we have to continue to rethink our education system. To simplify the Swiss system: They train their kids for the jobs that exist in the economy. And the US for a lot of reasons has a culture where we think that our kids have to get a college education.

Chairman Gross also brought up the climate matter and spoke about the solar development in Virginia. Congressman Beyer commented that the Department of Energy announced that by 2050 30 % of American energy needs will be met by wind.

Robert Lazaro (NVRC staff) was recognized and asked a budget question. As the federal tax credit for Solar is expiring and that is the only incentive for Virginians, are there any prospects for an extension? Congressman Beyer answered that he doesn't know what is going to happen in the Conference committee and that he does know that the Senate Republican budget will look different from the House Republican budget. The outcome is unknown.

Mr. Gibb then mentioned that the Northern Virginia Regional Commission is having an international component, e.g. the relations with Germany, where they took examples like green roofs and implemented this in Northern Virginia and that it is great to exchange best practices around the world.

Congressman Beyer also shared with the Commissioners what he most liked about Switzerland, that is the idea of shared power. Since 1291 no one has been allowed to have a title. It is a 7 person federal Council, without a head of state and everything is being done by consensus. The idea is that each gives up a little power in order to find something that meets everybody's needs. And this is what he sees at NVRC, a lot of great Republicans and Democrats working together for the benefit of the region.

CONSENT AGENDA Commissioner York moved approval of the Consent Agenda, consisting of the items outlined below. The motion was seconded by Commissioner DiRocco and carried unanimously.

- **Resolution No. P15-27:** Authorization to submit a TA Grant Proposal to VA Coastal Zone Management Program
- **Resolution No. P15-28:** Support of the East Coast Greenways in designating and identifying safe routes in Northern Virginia

**EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR'S
REPORT**

Printed copies of the report were distributed and Mr. Gibb went through the slides:

- Meetings:
 - Interviews for potential candidate for the position of President of the Northern Virginia Community College
 - Conference Call with Senator Warner and all of the 21 Virginia Planning District Commissions
- Community, Military & Federal Facility Partnership
- JBAB Commuter Ferry Service
- Hosted Workshop - Evaluating Proprietary BMPs: Is it Time for a State, Regional or National Program?
- Focus 2015: A Forum of Communities for Urban Sustainability
- Solarize NoVA 2.0 Kicks Off in April
- Solar in National Capital Region 2013
- Solar Map for NoVA
- Four Mile Run Update
- Northern Virginia Sustainability Network
- Clean Water Partner's Program
- Native Plant Guidebook
- Affordable Care Act (ACA) update
- 2015 Quick Guide now available
- 2014 Map of Bicycle and Pedestrian Crashes in Northern Virginia

Mr. Gibb also introduced Jeongmin Kim, the new South Korean intern at NVRC.

CHAIRMAN'S
REPORT

Chairman Gross announced that the National Association of Regional Councils/National Conference of Regions will take place in Raleigh, NC in June 2015. Further information is available online. (www.narc.org)

Chairman Gross also updated the Commissioners on the personnel matter that was discussed in last meeting's closed session. An outside attorney that was hired by the Commission (personnel matter) will be interviewing NVRC staff and give the Commission a final report within 60 to 90 days.

LEGISLATIVE
REPORT

Commissioner Cook, Legislative Committee Chairman, presented the summary of bills that made it through the legislative session. He also brought to the Commission's attention that the Governor signed the budget without any amendments. The Commission will receive an update by Sue Rowland on two bills that haven't been signed yet, and also spoke to the Commissioners about the status of Planning District Commissions' funding.

WORKFORCE
COMMITTEE
REPORT

Chairman Gross explained to the Commission that it is a challenge to get everyone together and that the Workforce Committee is still in conversations with the Chambers of Commerce. She also mentioned that there is a lot of discussion and that a location is available but not a date yet.

COMMUNITY &
MILITARY
PARTNERSHIP
COMMITTEE
REPORT

Commissioner McKay referred to the information mentioned earlier in the Executive Director's report.

NVTA REPORT

Due to Commissioner Nohe being absent Commissioner York reported on Commissioner Nohe's behalf and spoke about the public hearing that took place March 25, 2015 and that there are a lot of worthy projects.

Commissioner York pointed out that there is a big misunderstanding about project lists. The projects are being scored and some projects that score very high are not funded in the next round. Part of the problem is that they are not included in the 2040 plan. By law the projects have to be in the 2040 plan in order to receive funding. It is not possible to just add projects in the current plan right away. The plan would have to be amended to put those projects in and the process takes about a year. So Commissioner York asked to have patience with them and that he understands that there are many worthy projects.

Commissioner McKay brought up that several legislators don't understand HB 599, its relationship to NVTA, and the different criteria for scoring projects. Commissioner York said that this is a commonly misunderstood matter. Just because a project scores high on HB 599 criteria, doesn't mean it will score high overall.

OTHER BUSINESS

Commissioner York talked about NVTA, which will have to spend about \$ 2 million to do the update to the 2040 plan. There is some discussion that NVTA can take those \$ 2 million out of the 70% funds, which is the regional money. And the reason for that is that by law we have to have the 2040 plan to impact the regional transportation partnerships. But NVTA is being told that this money will have to come out of the 30 % funds (local money). So Commissioner York brought up the question of "Why are we not our own MPO (Metropolitan Planning Organization) here in Northern Virginia"? He added that several million dollars for Virginia projects are perhaps being left on the table.

Chairman Gross added, that the Commission also needs to look at what the implications of NVRC becoming its own MPO are relative to the work that is being done regionally with the Transportation Planning Board at COG.

Commissioner Foreman asked if this was presented to the bylaws committee of NVTA, as they should be the ones looking into this. Commissioner York explained that many members of NVTA are also members of NVRC. And he questioned whether all the money that an MPO receives is for transportation planning exclusively.

Commissioner McKay added that the report should not only be from NVRC and that NVRC needs to talk to local jurisdictions and their staff to see pros and cons and to have a complete and thorough report.

Commissioner York suggested that Mr. Gibb could work with the chief administrative officers on that report as well.

Chairman Gross added to research if there is a hybrid structure existing already and what kind.

Commissioner Cook advised to keep this report smaller first to see if it is worth further research and that it is better to just get a broad rush overview for now.

Chairman Gross then established that there is a consensus among the Commissioners to have the NVRC staff work up an overview report for the Commission in 60 days.

ADJOURNMENT Chairman Gross adjourned the meeting at 8:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

G. Mark Gibb
Executive Director

Approved by:

Penelope Gross,
Chairman