

NORTHERN VIRGINIA REGIONAL COMMISSION

Minutes of the Commission Meeting Held Thursday, June 23, 2005

COMMISSIONERS

(The names of those present are highlighted)

Commissioner Hilda M. Barg	County of Prince William
Commissioner Melvin Bray	<i>Town of Dumfries</i>
Commissioner Sharon Bulova	County of Fairfax
Commissioner Gerald E. Connolly, NVRC Treasurer	County of Fairfax
Commissioner W. S. Covington, III	<i>County of Prince William</i>
Commissioner Joan Cross	City of Fairfax
Commissioner William T. Druhan, Jr.	Town of Purcellville
Commissioner Joan DuBois	<i>County of Fairfax</i>
Commissioner Barbara A. Favola, NVRC Vice Chairman	County of Arlington
Commissioner Robin Gardner	<i>City of Falls Church</i>
Commissioner Penelope A. Gross	County of Fairfax
Commissioner Catherine Hudgins	County of Fairfax
Commissioner Elaine N. McConnell	<i>County of Fairfax</i>
Commissioner Martin E. Nohe	County of Prince William
Commissioner Michael O'Reilly	Town of Herndon
Commissioner Harry J. Parrish, II	City of Manassas
Commissioner Bryan Polk	<i>City of Manassas Park</i>
Commissioner Redella S. Pepper	City of Alexandria
Commissioner M. Jane Seeman	Town of Vienna
Commissioner Paul C. Smedberg	City of Alexandria
Commissioner Linda Smyth	<i>County of Fairfax</i>
Commissioner J. Walter Tejada	<i>County of Arlington</i>
Commissioner Bruce E. Tulloch	<i>County of Loudoun</i>
Commissioner Kristen C. Umstattd, NVRC Chairman	Town of Leesburg
Commissioner Lori Waters	<i>County of Loudoun</i>

STAFF PRESENT

G. Mark Gibb	<i>Executive Director</i>
Linda M. Tenney	<i>Deputy Director</i>
Linda Summerall	<i>Executive Secretary</i>
Kenneth Billingsley	<i>Director, Demographics</i>
Normand Goulet	<i>Sr. Environmental Planner/ Information Systems Mgmt. Analyst</i>
Doug Pickford	<i>Director, Environmental and Heritage Resources</i>
David Schwengel	<i>Regional Emergency Preparedness Planning Director</i>
Michelle Simmons	<i>Director, Human Services</i>
James Van Zee	<i>Director, Regional Planning Services</i>

GUESTS PRESENT

Paul Des Jardins	<i>Director of Planning, MWCOG</i>
Sue Rowland	<i>Principal, SR Consulting</i>

CALL TO ORDER Chairman Umstattd called the meeting to order at 7:36 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 Pepper moved approval of the minutes of the May 26, 2005, meeting. The motion was seconded and carried.

DEMOGRAPHICS
PRESENTATION

Ken Billingsley, NVRC's Director of Demographics, began by indicating he would discuss four major demographic trends shaping the future of Northern Virginia — population growth, urbanization, immigration, and aging of the population. These are the megatrends that will have the greatest impact.

1) POPULATION GROWTH

After reviewing the post-war history of population growth, Mr. Billingsley discussed the future. He said that demographers are projecting a half million more residents will be added this decade, the largest per decade increase in the region's history. The region is well on its way to achieving this historic number. The population in Northern Virginia has recently surpassed the two million mark — a population larger than both one-quarter of the American states and 304 (of 311) metropolitan areas nationwide.

This was followed by a discussion of challenges arising from population growth. Mr. Billingsley observed that Northern Virginia has the good fortune of being a leading region of the creative economy and by being next door to federal government, the largest purchaser of goods and services in the world, a national leader in job creation. This is the good news. The bad news is that like most big winners in the new economic age, this region struggles with worsening traffic congestion, a seemingly intractable housing affordability and supply problem, sprawl, and the loss of open space. He discussed each of these by-products of the region's economic success.

2) URBANIZATION

All Northern Virginia suburbs, Mr. Billingsley remarked, have become more urban as traffic congestion, overcrowding, immigrants, and more diverse households and lifestyles have worked their way into suburbia. But urban pressures are more intense inside the beltway where their impact over time has caused many of the communities to morph from conventional family-centered suburbs into new-urban enclaves that, demographically, have become similar to what one finds today in downtown Manhattan, San Francisco, and other central cities. Mr. Billingsley discussed the contrasting demographic profiles found as distance from the central core increases. Urbanization, he concluded, is adding much-needed diversity to the Northern Virginia landscape.

3) IMMIGRATION

Mr. Billingsley began the section on immigration by charting what the Census Bureau is projecting for the next half century, a journey to a day when whites will no longer be a majority in the United States. He explained that this is where the nation is headed, propelled by immigration and higher fertility rates among minorities.

After providing background on the larger national context, he presented statistics on the growth of the foreign born in Northern Virginia, from 25,000 in 1970 to an estimated half million today, one-fourth of the population. He said that that 40 percent of the population growth over the past three decades has come from increases in foreign born. One of three persons living inside-the-beltway today is foreign born. In fact, all of the population growth inside-the-beltway over the past two decades, an increase of more than 100,000, has come from the swelling number of foreign born.

However, limited English proficiency is a challenge both for immigrants and the receiving community.

- Approximately one in four Northern Virginians live in a home in which English is not the primary language spoken.
- While many are fluent in English, approximately 100,000 (six percent of the region's population) are unable to speak, read or write in English.
- One-half of the immigrants from Central America either cannot speak English or have limited facility with English.

Will this decade, in the aftermath of 9/11, slow the trend? With the robust metropolitan economy outperforming other parts of the country by a wide margin, all signs, Mr. Billingsley said, point to a continuation of the upward climb.

How many illegal immigrants are there in the region? Estimates from the Dept of Homeland Security and other reputable organizations, he said, place the number at 100,00-175,000 for the entire state which, extrapolating to Northern Virginia, could mean as many as 75,000-125,000.

Mr. Billingsley indicated that one way immigrants cope with the high cost of housing in the region is by doubling and tripling up — the same way immigrants have always dealt with the problem. If there is an overcrowded unit in a neighborhood odds are it has an immigrant household living within it.

The nation's capital, Mr. Billingsley informed the Commission, is a global talent magnet matched by few places in the world in its ability to attract brains and professional talent from abroad. Almost 40 percent of Northern Virginia's foreign born have college degrees; one in six has an advanced degree. Only Silicon Valley, among major U.S. metropolitan areas, has a larger percentage of college educated. This is a story that oftentimes gets lost amid the controversy surrounding illegals and other contentious immigrant issues.

Mr. Billingsley directed Commissioners to a set of maps in the handout showing where immigrants from different countries have settled in the region.

It is estimated that the Commonwealth of Virginia has approximately 100,000 – 175,000 illegal immigrants. Mr. Billingsley said extrapolating this number could mean as many as 75,000 – 125,000 illegals in Northern Virginia.

4) AGING

In six years, the first wave of "baby boomers" turns 65. This will greatly affect society and the Northern Virginia region as the baby boomers leave the workforce and transition into retirement years. Although Northern Virginia historically has lagged behind the nation in the aging of the population, it has a larger percentage of baby boomers; baby boomers make up one-third of the region's population compared to 28 percent nationally.

The public and private sectors will soon face a labor shortage related to the aging of the baby boom generation; the labor force will grow slower than the retiring population, resulting in the challenge of replacing highly skilled and experienced older employees as they retire in numbers larger than ever before. A second challenge will be designing strategies to retain these valued workers in the work force, such as phased-in retirements, flexible scheduling options, job sharing, and redesigning pension plans for those who work past traditional retirement age.

There will also be an impact on the local housing market. Will the baby boomers stay in the region? Will they downsize? Are they downsizing now? What impact will property taxes and traffic have on the decision to stay here?

questions and answers

Commissioner Gross suggested that the results of the Urban Land Institute's "Reality Check" be superimposed onto Mr. Billingsley's information. She then asked about cultural melding, to which Mr. Billingsley replied it is a long-term trend.

Commissioner Hudgins commented that a recent Fairfax County survey showed immigrants are interested in getting involved in the community, but how does the county involve them? Commissioner Favola replied that Arlington County has created an "immigrant college" where civics is taught and where, in turn, county staff and community activists learn from the immigrants.

Discussion turned to day laborers, illegal immigrants, overcrowding and the impact on residential communities. The Commissioners agreed they would like to continue the discussion at the next meeting, focusing on how the jurisdictions are building bridges with the immigrant communities and the problems these communities face.

CONSENT
AGENDA

Commissioner Barg moved approval of the consent agenda, as outlined below. The motion was seconded and carried unanimously.

- A. Financial Reports for May 2005
- B. Cameron Run Restoration Feasibility Study
- C. USAI Funding for Expansion of MMRS in Northern Virginia
- D. USAI Funding for 211 Development
- E. Contract for Legislative Services

EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR'S
REPORT

- A. In addition to the Program Highlights included in the meeting package, Mr. Gibb reported on a very successful Lake Anne Charrette, held June 8-10, focusing on the redevelopment and revitalization of the Lake Anne Center of Reston. Commissioner Hudgins thanked Mr. Gibb for his assistance, noting it was an exciting process and galvanized the community.

Commissioner Connolly commented that the process used in the Lake Anne Charrette has applicability to other parts of the region, and may be applicable to the Tyson's Corner redevelopment. Commissioner Hudgins added that the process helped alleviate concerns and fear and allowed participants to view various scenarios.

- B. Mr. Gibb announced a BRAC hearing for the state of Virginia in Arlington at 9:00 a.m. on July 7, with the location to be announced. Staff distributed a map showing the proposed BRAC job relocation/losses in the region. He added that Virginia's U.S. Senators and the Northern Virginia Congressional representatives will testify at this hearing.
- C. According to Whitman-Walker Clinic's management, \$625,000 needs to be raised to keep its Northern Virginia clinic open for one more year, otherwise it closes September 30. A number of groups are meeting to look at options to provide care for the current clients. The Alexandria Health Director has asked NVRC to convene these groups and Arlington County Board Chairman Jay Fisetto agreed. NVRC staff will keep the Commissioners apprised.

In reply to a question, Mr. Gibb said the recent cash infusion to Whitman-Walker keeps only the D.C. clinics open. It was noted that 70 percent of Whitman-Walker's fundraising has come from Northern Virginia. Commissioner Connolly expressed outrage over the inequity of this decision. The Commissioners expressed concern for the clients. Commissioner Favola noted that the Northern Virginia jurisdictions have been close partners with Whitman-Walker's Northern Virginia clinic. Several members noted that the Northern Virginia facility was not in the red ink and in fact subsidized the D.C. and Maryland facilities.

- D. Ms. Simmons, NVRC's Director of Human Services, reported that the Virginia Department of Social Services is pushing the state to adopt the 211 number for universal Information and Referral, adding that the District has already adopted this program.

The Northern Virginia Human Services Officials' work group has a business plan with cost recommendations that will be presented to the Northern Virginia Chief Administrative Officers Committee next month. The work group's plan calls for the formation of a 501(C)(3) in conjunction with NVRC to administer the call center after hours and weekends. Ms. Simmons added that the state is not providing appropriate funding for this activity.

- E. Mr. Gibb reported that the office move will take place in mid-to-late August.
- F. Mr. Gibb reported that NVRC's current budget deficit can be attributed in large part to VDOT's repeated refusal to sign the agreement with NVRC for work with NVTA, that has been rewritten numerous times to VDOT's specifications, with VDOT now saying it cannot pay for work completed before a signed agreement. Commissioner Connolly reminded the members the General Assembly passed legislation allotting \$50,000 to NVRC for administrative work for the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority; this legislation was not contingent upon an agreement. Additionally, VDOT has not paid NVRC the \$25,000 allocated for its work on the Northern NVTA's ATLAS project. Mr. Gibb added that this situation had been discussed by the Operations Committee.

Commissioner Connolly moved that the Commission address a letter to Virginia's Secretary of Transportation calling for release of the \$50,000 appropriated by the General Assembly as well as the \$25,000 for ATLAS. The motion was seconded and unanimously carried. Commissioner Barg suggested that Mr. Gibb call Transportation Secretary Pierce Homer and offered to do so herself.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Chairman Umstadd noted the Commission needs to follow-up with the Northern Virginia Delegation. Commissioner Favola suggested devoting the December meeting to legislative relations. Commissioner Barg stated the need to have the legislative platform prepared early; Commissioner Seeman concurred.

Commissioner Connolly suggested holding a breakfast or luncheon on the day of the Northern Virginia hearing in Richmond.

It was decided to invite members of the Northern Virginia Delegation who are members of the relevant committees to the Commission's July meeting, and to include the demographics profile distributed tonight with the invitation.

FY 2006 BUDGET AND WORK PLAN

Commissioner Bulova reported that the Operations Committee met immediately before tonight's Commission meeting. The committee reviewed the draft FY 2006 Budget and Work Plan. It reflects the 3-year recovery and stabilization program adopted last year, including filling three positions: the GIS manager, an environmental planner, and the newly created communications director.

Commissioner Bulova moved adoption of Resolution No. P05-33. The motion was seconded and unanimously carried.

ELECTION OF
OFFICERS

Commissioner Bulova, Chairman of the Nominating Committee, moved the slate of officers as follows:

Chairman	Barbara Favola
Vice Chairman	Gerald Connolly
Treasurer	Harry J. "Hal" Parrish, II

The motion was seconded.

Commissioner Seeman moved that the officers be adopted by acclamation. The motion was seconded and carried unanimously.

Commissioner Favola presented Chairman Umstattd with a gift on behalf of the members and staff. The members thanked Chairman Umstattd for skillfully guiding the Commission through a very transformational year.

ADJOURNMENT There being no further business, Chairman Umstattd adjourned the meeting at 9:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

G. Mark Gibb
Executive Director

Approved by:

Kristen C. Umstattd
Chairman