

NORTHERN VIRGINIA REGIONAL COMMISSION

Minutes of the Commission Meeting Held Thursday, June 22, 2006

COMMISSIONERS

(The names of those present are highlighted)

Commissioner Hilda M. Barg

Commissioner Melvin Bray

Commissioner Sharon Bulova

Commissioner Gerald E. Connolly, NVRC Vice Chairman

Commissioner W. S. Covington, III

Commissioner Joan Cross

Commissioner William T. Druhan, Jr.

Commissioner Joan DuBois

Commissioner Barbara A. Favola, NVRC Chairman

Commissioner Robin Gardner

Commissioner Penelope A. Gross

Commissioner Catherine Hudgins

Commissioner Elaine N. McConnell

Commissioner Martin E. Nohe

Commissioner Michael O'Reilly

Commissioner Harry J. Parrish, II, NVRC Treasurer

Commissioner Bryan Polk

Commissioner Redella S. Pepper

Commissioner M. Jane Seeman

Commissioner Paul C. Smedberg

Commissioner Linda Smyth

Commissioner Stephen Snow

Commissioner J. Walter Tejada

Commissioner Bruce E. Tulloch

Commissioner Kristen C. Umstatter

County of Prince William

Town of Dumfries

County of Fairfax

County of Fairfax

County of Prince William

City of Fairfax

Town of Purcellville

County of Fairfax

County of Arlington

City of Falls Church

County of Fairfax

County of Fairfax

County of Fairfax

County of Prince William

Town of Herndon

City of Manassas

City of Manassas Park

City of Alexandria

Town of Vienna

City of Alexandria

County of Fairfax

County of Loudoun

County of Arlington

County of Loudoun

Town of Leesburg

STAFF PRESENT

G. Mark Gibb

Linda M. Tenney

Linda Summerall

Barbara Gordon

Doug Pickford

David Schwengel

James Van Zee

Executive Director

Deputy Director

Executive Secretary

Communications Director

Director, Environmental and Heritage Resources

Regional Emergency Services Planning Director

Director, Regional Planning Services

GUESTS PRESENT

William Dickinson

Paul Gilbert

Eldon James

Su Webb

Chairman, No. Va. Regional Park Authority

Executive Director, No. Va. Regional Park Authority

Legislative Consultant

Board Member, No. Va. Regional Park Authority

CALL TO ORDER Chairman Favola called the meeting to order at 7:47 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.

PRESENTATION: *Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority*

Chairman Favola welcomed Bill Dickinson, Chairman of the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority (and a representative for the City of Alexandria). Mr. Dickinson has been a member of the board for six years. Also welcomed were Paul Gilbert, Executive Director (and former President of the Northern Virginia Conservation Trust) and Su Webb, a board member representing Loudoun County.

The Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority is in its 47th year, having been founded in 1959 at the urging of the Northern Virginia Regional Commission's predecessor agency. Arlington, Fairfax County and the City of Falls Church were the founding members, with the City of Fairfax, Alexandria and Loudoun joining later. Mr. Dickinson noted that NVRPA has a very similar structure to NVRC in that it has a twelve-member board appointed by the elected bodies of its member jurisdictions.

NVRPA's first priority is conservation. It owns and operates over 10,000 acres of public parkland and open space, much of it riverfront property on the Potomac and Bull Run/Occoquan Rivers.

NVRPA is highly dependent on self-generated user fees, with less than 22 percent of its operating revenues coming from tax dollars. The agency has made significant cost reductions over the past fiscal year and added new revenue sources, including a golf membership program.

Mr. Gilbert reported that the State Corporation Commission is again holding hearings on siting power lines on the W&OD Trail from Leesburg to Purcellville. Dominion Virginia Power is looking at increasing the height of the towers from 110 feet to 145 feet on this section.

Several recent surveys show the public wants trails for hiking/walking/biking, and 65 percent of voters are willing to pay a small tax increase to acquire more land for open space, historic sites and athletic fields. Mr. Gilbert added that the W&OD trail is the finest example of interconnectivity in the region.

Commissioner Gross asked the speakers what they anticipate from NVRC. Mr. Dickinson replied they want the Commissioners to know who and what the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority is. Mr. Gilbert added that the jurisdictions' park directors have been meeting regularly under Mark Gibb's coordination, and that group may become a committee of NVRC. There is a synergy between the Park Authority and the Commission, and the agencies can benefit from coordination and sharing of resources.

MINUTES

Commissioner Bulova moved approval of the minutes of the May 25, 2006, meeting. The motion was seconded and carried unanimously.

CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Connolly moved approval of the Consent Agenda, consisting of the May financial reports. The motion was seconded and carried unanimously.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- A. Mr. Gibb called attention to the thank you letter from the George Mason University recipient of the Pickford Memorial Scholarship. Tax-deductible donations may still be made to this fund.
- B. Representatives from Northern Virginia's water purveyors met at NVRC on June 19 to discuss the state-required regional water supply plan.
- C. Mr. Gibb reported he represented the Commission at Loudoun County's official signing ceremony sealing the County's partnership with a German county.

CHAIRMAN'S
REPORT

Chairman Favola reported that Commissioners Bray, Druhan and O'Reilly will be leaving the Commission.

NOMINATING
COMMITTEE
REPORT

Commissioner Umstadd, Chairman of the Nominating Committee, reported that the committee recommends the following slate of officers for election at the July 27 meeting:

Barbara Favola	Chairman
Gerry Connolly	Vice Chairman
Hal Parrish	Treasurer

Chairman Favola asked for nominations from the floor. Hearing none, Commissioner Tulloch moved that nominations be closed. The motion was seconded and carried unanimously.

PROPOSED
AMENDMENTS
TO BYLAWS

Mr. Gibb reported that under the current bylaws, a majority of members must be present to adopt changes to the bylaws, and while a quorum is present, the meeting lacks a majority of members.

Replying to Commissioner Seeman's question about the phase-in of the towns' dues, Commissioner Bulova explained that the counties will continue to make up the difference in dues until towns' dues are fully phased in.

Adoption of the amendments to the bylaws will be on the Commission's July agenda. Members were urged to attend this meeting.

FY 2007 BUDGET
AND WORK PLAN

Commissioner Tulloch reported in place of Commissioner Parrish, Operations Committee Chairman, who was unable to attend the Commission meeting. The FY 2007 budget is a balanced budget of \$11.45 million, with the majority of funds being subgrants passed through to others. The remainder of the budget and work program represents \$3.76 million in revenue and expenditures. Of that amount:

- 8% is the annual state appropriation (\$303,499)*
- 27% is member government general dues (\$1,002,250)
- 29% is expected in funding for specific projects from member governments (\$1,096,382)
- 36% is grants and contracts from other sources, fees and interest (\$1,357,311)

**The predicted state appropriation is the same as it has been for the two prior years. It is 10% lower than the FY 2004 appropriation.*

Commissioner Tulloch added that general funds (state appropriation, member dues and interest) pay for the Demographics, Legislative, Communications, and Regional Council programs. All other program areas typically are funded from 50-100% with project funding, grants and contracts.

The Operations Committee expects to propose a minimum of one amendment to the budget as the year progresses.

Commissioner Tulloch moved adoption of the FY 2007 Budget and Work Plan. The motion was seconded and carried unanimously.

COMMITTEE
REPORTS

Communications

Commissioner Smedberg, committee chairman, reported that the Communications Committee held its first meeting immediately prior to the Commission meeting. The committee:

- Reviewed its mission statement;
- Reviewed regional efforts on pandemic flu and discussed creating a “one-stop shop” for flu information. The committee will bring draft information back to the Commission;
- Discussed outreach to multicultural media;
- Discussed having the print media meet with the Commission or the Executive Committee with the goal of educating the print media to turn to NVRC as a resource; and
- Discussed updating the Commission’s website to make it more user friendly.

Commissioner Smedberg moved that the Communications Committee use a consultant to help draft an RFP for website enhancement. The motion was seconded.

Commissioner Smedberg reported the committee plans to hire a firm or technical consultant to implement the revisions. Further, the committee may recommend that the Commission consider a special assessment to pay for the website development if needed.

Commissioner Tulloch reported that Loudoun County recently paid \$5,000 for a consultant who drafted an RFP and sent it to several web companies. The RFP generated a number of competitive responses resulting in selection of a web development firm to upgrade Loudoun County’s website for approximately \$18,000. He added that the Commission has done well at branding itself as the “Voice of Northern Virginia” and having people/ groups that want to address this body.

Commissioners Connolly and Bulova announced they will make a Fairfax County staff person available to work with NVRC staff in developing an RFP for web development services.

The motion carried unanimously.

Legislation

Commissioner Connolly, committee chairman, noted the state budget was finally passed but lacks funding for transportation. VDOT’s six-year plan has been cut in half. He added that local elected officials must importune their state officials to pass transportation funding.

Commissioner Gross reported that the National Association of Regional Councils (NARC) recently discussed transportation and how it impacts the economy.

Commissioner Tulloch reported that as 1st Vice President of VAPDC, he asked the Governor for \$500,000 in funding for the three metropolitan Planning District Commissions (Northern Virginia, Hampton Roads, and Richmond) and was assured it would be in the budget. Since it is not, he and Mr. Gibb will meet tomorrow with the Governor’s chief of staff. Commissioner Connolly suggested emphasizing the Commission’s three-year dues increase, which shows the jurisdictions’ commitment to the agency.

Commissioner Connolly moved that the Commission ratify the position articulated. The motion was seconded and carried.

OTHER BUSINESS

Commissioner Gross reported the first round of the greater Washington Envisioning exercise has concluded. After the three convening groups (MWCOG, Greater Washington Board of Trade, and the Community Foundation of Washington) have responded to the report, the other stakeholders – NVRC included – will be engaged.

Several members questioned why NVRC had not been included in the first stage. Commissioner Gross explained that this was the first step and an initial convening group laid out the process to engage the larger community. Several Commissioners expressed strong interest in advancing NVRC's participation in this activity. Mr. Gibb distributed a chart prepared by Alice Rivlin from GMU's Center for Regional Analysis depicting the relative dominance from 1970 – 2005 of suburban Maryland, D.C. and Northern Virginia to the metro area's economic vitality. It demonstrated clearly that Northern Virginia has outstripped the other sub-areas, continuing to grow, as suburban Maryland and D.C. have declined, in shares of the area's economy.

ADJOURNMENT There being no further business, Chairman Favola adjourned the meeting at 9:13 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Approved by:

G. Mark Gibb
Executive Director

Barbara A. Favola
Chairman