

NORTHERN VIRGINIA REGIONAL COMMISSION

Minutes of the Commission Meeting Held Thursday, February 22, 2007

COMMISSIONERS

(The names of those present are highlighted)

Commissioner Hilda M. Barg
Commissioner Sharon Bulova
Commissioner Gerald E. Connolly, NVRC Vice Chairman
Commissioner W. S. Covington, III
Commissioner Joan Cross
Commissioner Steve DeBenedittis
Commissioner Joan DuBois
Commissioner Barbara A. Favola, NVRC Chairman
Commissioner Penelope A. Gross
Commissioner Catherine Hudgins
Commissioner Robert W. Lazaro, Jr.
Commissioner Harold Lippman
Commissioner Elaine N. McConnell
Commissioner Martin E. Nohe
Commissioner Harry J. Parrish, II, NVRC Treasurer
Commissioner Redella S. Pepper
Commissioner M. Jane Seeman
Commissioner Paul C. Smedberg
Commissioner Linda Smyth
Commissioner Stephen Snow
Commissioner J. Walter Tejada
Commissioner William J. Treuting, Jr.
Commissioner Bruce E. Tulloch
Commissioner Kristen C. Umstatt
Commissioner Fred E. Yohey, Jr.

County of Prince William
County of Fairfax
County of Fairfax
County of Prince William
City of Fairfax
Town of Herndon
County of Fairfax
County of Arlington
County of Fairfax
County of Fairfax
Town of Purcellville
City of Falls Church
County of Fairfax
County of Prince William
City of Manassas
City of Alexandria
Town of Vienna
City of Alexandria
County of Fairfax
County of Loudoun
County of Arlington
City of Manassas Park
County of Loudoun
Town of Leesburg
Town of Dumfries

STAFF PRESENT

G. Mark Gibb
Linda M. Tenney
Linda Summerall
Ken Billingsley
Barbara Gordon
Doug Pickford
David Schwengel
Michelle Simmons
James Van Zee

Executive Director
Deputy Director
Executive Secretary
Director, Demographics
Communications Director
Director, Environmental and Heritage Resources
Regional Emergency Services Planning Director
Director, Human Services
Director, Regional Planning Services

GUESTS PRESENT

Bruce Bennett
Stuart Freudberg
Matthew Graham
Deborah Tompkins Johnson
George L. Nichols
Sue Rowland
John Smatlak
Phil Sparks

Hunter Mill Road Traffic Calming Committee
Dir., Dept. of Environmental Programs, MWCOG
Hon. Gerald E. Connolly's office
Sr. Manager, State & Local Affairs, Dominion Virginia Power
Principal Environmental Planner, MWCOG
SR Consulting, Inc.
V.P., Electric Transmission, Dominion Virginia Power
Sr. Manager, State & Local Affairs, Dominion Virginia Power

CALL TO ORDER Chairman Favola called the meeting to order at 7:34 p.m. She pointed out the revised agenda, explaining that a number of items had been reordered in order to accommodate several members who expected to arrive late.

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

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

MINUTES

Commissioner Parrish moved approval of the minutes of the January 25 meeting and the February 1 meeting. The motion was seconded. Commissioner Gross pointed out that she did not attend the February 1 meeting and requested that the minutes be corrected. Both sets of minutes were unanimously approved.

EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR'S
REPORT

Mr. Gibb's report, in printed PowerPoint format, was distributed. He reviewed highlights on:

- Regional Water Supply — The 23 incorporated municipalities will sign the agreement next month. Staff expects to hold a formal signing ceremony at the Commission's March 22 meeting.
- 2-1-1 Human Services Information & Referral — A website (211metrodc.org) with a searchable database was launched last week. NVRC is one of the participating organizations in that website. Northern Virginia still lacks adequate state funding to permit 24-hour participation in the call center.
- Positive Livin' — This small, community-based, nonprofit HIV/AIDS service provider will close February 28 due to lack of funding. The 40 clients served by this nonprofit, located in Fairfax County's Route One corridor, will be absorbed by three larger service providers.
- MMRS — The program is nearing completion of purchasing the needed equipment and pharmaceuticals.
- Cameron Run/ Holmes Run Feasibility Study — This program has launched an e-newsletter.
- *Guidebook for Maintaining Stormwater Systems* — NVRC's latest publication was distributed around the table. Copies will be given to the member governments to distribute.
- *Low Impact Development Manual* — Commissioner Smyth asked about the status of this publication. Mr. Gibb explained that Fairfax County staff are looking at six practices and NVRC staff are looking at an additional six practices for inclusion in the manual. The work group meets next month and anticipates publishing the guide this spring.
- Herndon Town Council Retreat — Mr. Gibb reported that the Herndon Town Council has held its envisioning sessions over two weekends in NVRC's conference room. Commissioner DeBenedittis reported the process was helpful and thanked Mr. Gibb for the use of the facilities.

CHAIRMAN'S
REPORT

Chairman Favola announced that next month's meeting presentation will focus on immigrant issues in Northern Virginia, basically the demographics and methods for integrating immigrant populations in our communities; federal immigration policy will not be discussed at this presentation. Commissioner Barg suggested inviting staff members of various federal agencies so they can better understand the region.

COMMITTEE
REPORTS

Operations

Commissioner Parrish reported the Operations Committee met immediately before the Commission meeting. Financial activities were reviewed and the Commission continues to operate in the black.

The committee also adopted the Family and Medical Leave Policy. While the Commission falls under the federal act, it is not required to use the policy because it has less than 25 employees. However, the committee and management agreed it is beneficial to use the policy.

PRESENTATION Future Energy Needs of Northern Virginia

Chairman Favola welcomed Phil Sparks, Senior Manager, State & Local Affairs, with Dominion Virginia Power. In turn, he introduced John Smatlak, Vice President, Electric Transmission, in the Richmond office, and Deborah Tompkins Johnson, Senior Manager, State & Local Affairs, in the Woodbridge office. Mr. Sparks added that he and Ms. Johnson made a similar presentation last month to the Northern Virginia Chief Administrative Officers.

John Smatlak

A number of transmission lines serving Northern Virginia are overloaded for numerous reasons, including:

- explosive regional growth;
- the average household uses 9% more electricity than it did 13 years ago; and
- Northern Virginia is a data center hub; data centers are typically 15-25 times more energy intensive than office buildings.

If the situation is not rectified, rolling blackouts could occur by 2011.

Federal law requires electrical utilities to ensure transmission reliability. A study performed by the federal Dept. Of Energy finds that Northern Virginia is part of the "critical congestion area." Virginia Dominion Power uses transmission best practices and models the flow of electricity annually. The modeling shows the best solution is to build a transmission line from Mt. Storm, West Virginia, to the Loudoun substation; other solutions would not solve the overloads. Once a solution is determined, the utility is charged with finding a route that has the least impact; location of houses, historical sites, and environmentally sensitive areas are taken into consideration, and existing corridors are often followed.

*questions and
answers*

Commissioner Parrish asked how the utility would let the public know about upcoming rolling blackouts. Mr. Smatlak replied they would use the media. Responding to Commissioner Barg's concerns about the effect of blackouts on hospitals, Mr. Smatlak said hospitals would be exempt, but rolling blackouts would affect traffic signals, nursing homes, dialysis centers, etc.

Responding to Commissioner Bulova, Mr. Smatlak said the utility undergrouns transmission lines where it is not feasible to place the lines above ground. It is typically six to ten times as costly underground the lines. If an underground line fails, it takes approximately one month to repair. Mr. Smatlak agreed with Chairman Favola's observation that the frequency of outages occurs more often with overhead lines, but the duration is much longer for underground lines. In this case, the utility would want to convert the electricity to direct current, at an estimated cost of \$1.7 billion.

Commissioner Seeman commented that the proposed additional transmission line provides only a short-term solution, to 2013 or 2014. Mr. Smatlak replied that this solution provides a direct line to Northern Virginia, where the power is needed. Additionally, this is the first of three additional lines in the larger PJM grid region, stretching from Chicago to New Jersey. Those two additional lines outside Northern Virginia will supply the region through 2020.

Virginia Dominion Power, along with Alleghany Energy (which is building the rest of the line), plans to file an application with the State Corporation Commission in April. After the public hearings an evidentiary hearing will be held in Richmond, where the need for the line must be proved.

Commissioner Tejada asked if there is any new technology that could be used to transmit electricity. Mr. Smatlak said no, although there is new technology in the controls. Commissioner Tejada asked what the cost to the average resident will be. If the transmission line is built overhead, the cost will be a small increase; undergrounding will increase the cost substantially. However, the new transmission line will free up overloaded transmission lines in Pennsylvania and Maryland, increasing power to Baltimore and D.C. The FERC may decide to spread the cost over the larger region.

Also discussed was the delivery system. Mr. Sparks explained the utility has a delivery reliability group in Northern Virginia that examines ways to improve reliable delivery. Replying to a comment, Mr. Sparks agreed with the need for increased communication among the utility's internal divisions and with the local elected officials and the jurisdictions; planning departments.

Replying to Commissioner Pepper's inquiry, Mr. Smatlak said the transmission line must be completed by May 2011; the utility hopes to file in April 2007 and have the decision in April 2008; it will take a year (April 2009) to acquire some additional right of way in some sections (100 feet will parallel existing right of way), and two years for construction.

Commissioner Lazaro raised the point that neither the federal nor the state government have an energy policy, and the Commission should think about formulating one for Northern Virginia. Chairman Favola responded this could be a future presentation. It was noted that MWCOG has an energy policy committee.

Commissioner Tulloch pointed out that the members may want to include a position in Commission's 2008 Legislative Platform requesting that power lines be run along major roads.

LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

Commissioners Connolly and Lazaro commented that the energy re-regulation bill, just adopted by the General Assembly, does very little for energy conservation and the public will end up paying higher fees.

Commissioner Connolly pointed out the document outlining the status of bills pertaining to the Commission's platform, adding the Commission did not do well.

An analysis of the House and Senate transportation bills was distributed. For the most part, both bills have significant deficiencies, shifting state responsibilities to the localities. Commissioner Connolly urged the members to let their state legislators know they do not support devolution of roads and local imposition of fees.

ADJOURNMENT There being no further business, Chairman Favola adjourned the meeting at 9:14 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

G. Mark Gibb
Executive Director

Approved by:

Barbara A. Favola
Chairman