



Central Virginia Planning
District Commission
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**Central Virginia Planning District Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes
January 16, 2025 @ 5:00 PM**

**Meeting Location: CVPDC Offices
828 Main Street, 12th Floor
Lynchburg, VA 24504**

Members Present:

Chairman Reggie Bennett, Town of Altavista
Frank Rogers, Campbell County
Tom Lawton, Campbell County
Jeremy Bryant, Amherst County
Drew Wade, Amherst County
Robert Hiss, Bedford County
Dwayne Tuggle, Town of Amherst
Gary Shanaberger, Altavista Town
John Sharp, Bedford County
John Spencer, Appomattox County
Rob Fowler, Town of Appomattox
Megan Lucas, Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance

Members Joining Virtually:

Wynter Benda, City of Lynchburg

Staff Present:

Alec Brebner
Sandy Dobyns
Patti Lassiter
Richard White

Others Present:

Zach Hipes, Auditor with Robinson, Farmer, Cox Associates (virtually)

1. Welcome and Introductions

Chairman Reggie Bennett welcomed the Board and guests. The meeting started at 5:00 p.m.

2. Consideration of Requests for Electronic Participation

Reggie asked for a motion for Wynter Benda to participate electronically. Drew Wade made the motion, which was seconded by Gary Shanaberger. Wynter was approved to participate in the meeting virtually.

3. Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes, November 21, 2024

Reggie asked if there were any changes to the November 21, 2024, meeting minutes. Tom Lawton mentioned his name was misspelled, but no further comments or corrections were made. Tom Lawton made a motion to approve the minutes with noted corrections, which was seconded by Megan Lucas. All were in favor, and the motion passed.

4. Fiscal Year 2024 Financial Statements - Zach Hipes, Auditor with Robinson, Farmer, Cox Associates

Zach started by presenting the management and auditors' responsibilities as outlined in the governance letter. Per the audit, no difficulties were noted during the audit. Zach mentioned that, to his knowledge, management did not consult a second audit firm and had no knowledge that management requested a second opinion. Zach then presented the independent auditors' report, including the financial statements: statement of net position, statement of revenues, expenses, changes in net position, and statement of cash flows. Zach discussed corrected and uncorrected misstatements, noting no uncorrected misstatements for FY24. Zach highlighted the financial report's key points, including the net position, changes in net position, and cash increase. Zach ended his presentation with the independent auditors' report on internal controls or financial reporting. This report is a required compliance report for governmental agencies. This report is a required compliance report for governmental agencies. This report, if applicable, would describe any significant deficiencies or material weaknesses and internal controls and processes over financial reporting. No significant deficiencies or material weaknesses were disclosed for the fiscal year 2024.

Frank Rogers asked Zach if the PDC is in good financial condition, to which Zach responded affirmatively. The Chair then invited discussions or comments regarding the financial report. Gary Shanaberger summarized that there were no material findings, which is what you want with an audit.

A motion to approve the Fiscal Year 2024 Financial Statements as presented by Robinson, Farmer, Cox Associates, was made by Frank Rogers, and seconded by Megan Lucas. All members were in favor, and the motion passed unanimously.

5. 2025 Meeting Schedule

- a) Regular meetings (third Thursday of odd months): 5:00 PM on January 16, March 20, May 15, July 17, September 18, November 20, 2025, and January 15, 2026.

- b) Executive Committee budget meeting: 1:00 PM on Thursday, April 10, 2025
- c) Social: 5:00 PM on Thursday, February 20, 2025

6. Organizational Reports

a) Financial Report and Balance Sheet

Sandy provided a brief overview of the financial statements, noting that there is nothing significant to report at this time. Alec mentioned that during the last meeting, Tom Lawton requested the inclusion of the Balance Sheet with the financial statements, which have now been provided.

b) Executive Director's Report

Region 2000 Services Authority

Alec provides updates on the Executive Committee, landfill operations, and potential workforce reductions due to landfill closure. The Livestock Road Landfill's capacity is projected to last into early 2029. In all likelihood, the Authority will begin planning for closure in 2025. Closure involves constructing a cap, which will take much of 2029. The Authority must then maintain the closed landfill for a 30-year post-closure period, including environmental monitoring.

An essential early step in closure planning is employee retention for the remaining life of the facility. Authority board members expressed openness to an incentive-based strategy to retain employees and help them identify landing spots once their positions are no longer needed. Staff will develop this strategy for the Authority board in 2025.

The landfill operators rely on the CVPDC employee handbook as CVPDC employees. If successful, the strategy would be funded by the Authority and formalized in the CVPDC employee handbook. Staff will keep the Planning District Commission informed about the Authority board's progress and will later propose any necessary changes to the employee handbook. Frank Rogers expressed gratitude to Greg Patrick and Alec for their presentations and attendance at the Board meeting. He also remarked on their professionalism.

Radio Communications Board

Alec mentions the radio board's positive update regarding a potential lease extension and the importance of maintaining operational equipment. The Radio Board has met four times since the beginning of December to discuss long-term lease security for its equipment. The Radio Board had sought an audience with the CVPDC Executive Committee on January 9th to present options; however, a communication breakthrough with a tower owner alleviated the urgency of that need. The Chairman called off the special meeting.

Regional Housing

Alec discussed regional housing initiatives, including a \$2 million grant for affordable housing projects and the need for competitive grant applications. CVPDC staff has follow-up initiatives for each of the two recent regional housing initiatives. On January 13th, staff convened housing providers to discuss funding options for affordable housing via the PDC Housing Development Program.

The CVPDC received \$2 million from Virginia Housing from 2021 to 2025 to fund housing for households earning less than 80% of the area's median income. The Planning District Commission has awarded funding to help build 63 units to date in Amherst County, Lynchburg, and Altavista.

The next iteration of the PDC Housing Development program will be competitive on a statewide basis. Staff are communicating with prospective partners for a possible grant application to Virginia Housing. More to come!

Staff are also working to organize a housing information event for developers interested in increasing the housing supply in Central Virginia. Affordable housing will be an essential but not sole focus. Virginia Housing is offering funding and support for this event. Mount Rogers, Thomas Jefferson, George Washington, and other PDCs have convened similar events. Staff have just begun coordinating with prospective event partners and look forward to sharing more information with the Commission at a subsequent meeting.

CEDS

The CVPDC will embark on a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) in 2025 and 2026 with US Economic Development Administration funding. According to the US EDA, "economic development planning serves as a means to engage community leaders, leverage the involvement of the private sector, and establish a strategic blueprint for regional collaboration. CEDS provides the capacity-building foundation by which the public sector, working with other economic actors (individuals, firms, industries), creates the environment for regional economic prosperity."

Staff will assemble a CEDS Committee (a required part of the process that includes a broad spectrum of stakeholders) and solicit interest from economic development planners on our bench of on-call consultants. The Commission will learn more as 2025 progresses.

7. Other Business and Regional Roundtable

Megan Lucas of the Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance presented an update on the regional economic development strategy, including goals for retaining and growing existing businesses:

1. Retain and grow existing businesses.
2. Develop our workforce.
3. Expand sites and buildings.
4. Enhance our sense of place.

LRBA has completed the Central Virginia Rail Study and partnered with the Energy Communities Alliance to highlight the role of energy and higher education in economic growth. The Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) program involves collaborations with local economic developers and the Virginia Department of Economic Development to support existing manufacturers.

In 2024, LRBA facilitated the \$63 million purchase of the Teva Pharmaceutical facility, focusing on inquiries from the energy sector. While successfully expanding local businesses, attracting new projects is challenging due to a shortage of available properties ready for quick operation.

LRBA has rebranded as "Lynchburg Region, Virginia: The Edge of the Blue Ridge" and prioritizes workforce development. Efforts include a new workforce roadmap and initiatives for recruiting engineers and exposing students to manufacturing.

Upcoming initiatives for 2025 include an inner-city visit to Greenville, South Carolina, and updates to the nuclear and energy sector plans. LRBA will also host site consultants at the Select USA Summit. Congratulations to Appomattox and Altavista on their recent achievements!

Reggie inquired about AI's impact on our field, and Megan noted that while automation is evolving, quantum computing's potential presents both challenges and opportunities.

John Sharp raised concerns about diversity, equity, and inclusion in leadership efforts. Megan noted, "Thanks for telling me about Leadership Lynchburg. I'll follow up."

John replied, "The workforce is competitive, and if AI can replace someone, it will. I'm worried we're moving away from judging merit. Many localities discuss funding, and Bedford County is caught between Roanoke and Lynchburg. Bedford is being asked if they should consider Roanoke's funding model." Megan mentioned a larger spending plan.

John expressed concern about associating with anything that undermines the country's foundation and stressed the need for graduates to be workforce-ready with essential skills like reading and math. Megan acknowledged the issue related to the Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance.

John concluded that graduating should mean being prepared for life, not just meeting minimum requirements.

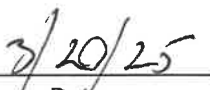
Alec announced that the Central Virginia Transportation Safety Summit will take place on January 31 at the Alliance. Join us to hear from transportation experts as they discuss ways to make our roads safer. Feel free to invite your friends and neighbors; the event is open to the public.

Lastly, Alec introduced the newest member of the PDC staff, Richard White, who started in January and will serve as our Regional Planner.

12. Adjournment

The motion to adjourn was entertained by the Chair. Tom Lawton made a motion to adjourn, and Drew Wade seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 6:14 PM.

x 
Signature attest


Date