



Central Virginia Planning
District Commission
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Central Virginia Planning District Commission Regular Meeting Minutes May 15, 2025 @ 5:00 PM

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

Members Present:

Reggie Bennett, Town of Altavista, Chairman
Frank Rogers, Campbell County
Tom Lawton, Campbell County
Dwayne Tuggle, Town of Amherst
Robert Hiss, Bedford County
Richard Conner, Town of Appomattox
Michael Campbell, Town of Appomattox
Curt Diemer, City of Lynchburg
Gary Shanaberger, Town of Altavista
Barbara LaPrade, Town of Brookneal
Craig Hughes, Town of Brookneal
Greg Patrick, City of Lynchburg (Proxy for Wynter Benda)

Staff Present:

Alec Brebner
Sandy Dobyns
Patti Lassiter
Traci Blido
Tim Saunders

Others Present:

Sarah Sayer, Centra College
Jason Ferguson, Associate Vice President, CVCC (Virtual)

1. Welcome and Introductions

Chairman Reggie Bennett welcomed the Commission, guests, and new board members. For new members who could join, a brief introduction was given. The meeting started at 5:02 p.m.

2. Consideration of Requests for Electronic Participation

Chairman Bennett asked if there were any electronic participants among Commissioners. There were none.

3. Meeting Minutes: Regular Meeting, March 20, 2025, Executive Committee Meeting, April 10, 2025

Chairman Bennett inquired about any changes to the minutes from the March 20, 2025, meeting or the April 10, 2025, Executive Committee meeting. With no comments or corrections, Frank Rogers made a motion to approve the minutes, which Gary Shanaberger seconded. All were in favor, and the motion passed.

4. Appointments of LRBA Executive Committee

Chairman Bennett reminded the board that this item had been deferred from the March meeting. Megan Lucas and Alec Brebner conferred and recommended seeking a rotation schedule similar to the regional economic developers (RED) Team chairmanship. This request presented to the board to appoint Jeremy Bryant and Frank Rogers to the LRBA Executive Commission for the fiscal year 2026.

Chairman Bennett asked for a motion to approve Jeremy Bryant and Frank Rogers as appointees to the LRBA Executive Commission for the Fiscal year 2026. The motion was made by Richard Conner, which Gary Shanaberger seconded. All were in favor, and the motion passed.

5. LPN Training Grant Request; “Facilitating Career Pivots into High-Demand Occupations” Grant Application; FY26 Budget with WIOA Grant Match

Alec introduced Traci Blido, Executive Director for the Virginia Career Works – Central Region, who will be speaking about an important project the Central Virginia Workforce Development is working on regarding a grant application.

Traci introduced Dr. Jason Ferguson of CVCC and Dr. Sayer, thanking the board for their time. The Central Virginia Workforce Development Board (CVWDB) has an opportunity from the governor's office, with Secretary Brian Slater making 15% of Virginia's Title I federal funds available through competitive grants. CVWDB staff has applied for a \$100,000 grant focused on addressing the shortage of Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs), particularly since Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs) may struggle to transition to LPN roles without financial support.

Traci shared with the board that currently, there are about 500 LPNs in our region, with 328 job openings. Central College can graduate about 30 LPNs, but many students can't afford the tuition, which is not covered by the FastForward grant. This funding could help close the gap.

Traci explained the need to secure matching funds from localities or nonprofits for this grant. Traci seeks the Planning District Commission's support for regional funds to help elevate 15

CNAs to LPNs through foundational classes.

Traci asked Dr. Ferguson to discuss the program's challenges and how this initiative could help meet the training needs of candidates Sarah works with.

Dr. Ferguson stated by thanking the board for accommodating his need to join via Zoom. During a discussion about a funding opportunity, Tracy and Tim approached CVCC regarding the limitations of G3 funding, which serves as a crucial source for credit and credential programs.

CVCC is the only community college in Virginia without a nursing program, as it partners with Central College to provide general education courses for LPN and RN programs. Recently, CVCC established a co-enrollment opportunity for students in the CNA program, allowing them to attend CVCC while also enrolled at Central College, often at no cost. CVCC also covers expenses like background checks, drug screens, and scrubs to help students overcome barriers.

This funding opportunity will allow students to progress from CNA to LPN, in line with Central College's model. By funding the Health Sciences Career Studies Certificate, these students can earn an academic award while meeting the first-semester requirements of the LPN program at Central College. CVCC will continue to support them in their educational journey.

Dr. Sayer introduced herself and went on to explain the importance of this program to the region. Central College, a private, not-for-profit institution, currently has 250 to 270 students and offers four programs: CNA (in partnership with CVCC), LPN, RN, and RN to BSN. Central College's LPN program has achieved a remarkable 100% first-time pass rate on the licensure exam for over two years, a significant accomplishment.

While our LPN program is a certificate program, students need college credits to enroll, which prepares them for successful nursing careers. LPNs can earn from \$25 to over \$35 an hour, and about 95% of our graduates remain in the local workforce. Our students are primarily non-traditional learners who fund their education and are committed to working in our community.

Currently, Central College graduates around 30 students per year, but there's a greater need for LPNs. By enrolling an additional 15 students currently working as CNAs, they can boost their salaries significantly by completing our LPN program.

As for the future, this initiative will help address the LPN shortage and that the region can continue to support students through Title I funds. The effort will enhance marketing efforts for the program, raising awareness about the demand for LPNs.

Discussion ensued among the Commissioners about the adoption of a motion for this grant funding match. Alec discussed the availability of funds from the CVPDC fund balance and the potential impact.

Richard Conner made a motion to approve the grant and the \$50,000 local match fund to support the LPN training grant. Robert Hiss seconded the motion. All were in favor, and the motion passed.

6. Rural Transportation Planning Work Program; Rural Transportation Planning Work Program Resolution

Alec introduced the rural transportation planning work program, which guides \$58,000 of federal funding for transportation planning in rural areas. CVPDC has been working closely with the Lynchburg VDOT office to develop this program. After it was submitted to the federal government, the state central office asked for some additional phrasing and revisions. CVPDC staff asks that the board adopt a resolution with those revisions so staff can resubmit. Robert Hiss made a motion to adopt the resolution for the Rural Transportation Planning Work Program. The motion was seconded by Robert Hiss. All voted in favor, and the motion passed.

7. Fiscal Year 2026 Work Plan; Budget

Alec presented the fiscal year 2026 work planning budget, highlighting the following key initiatives and budget allocations.

- Yearly audit cost increase
- ADA 3rd party COBRA increase
- Not filling the vacant admin position for the front desk
- Planning to hire a transportation planner

The CVPDC Executive Committee, consisting of the chairman and the chief administrative officers of each member local government, met on April 10, 2025. Their task was to review and make recommendations on a draft work plan and budget. They unanimously recommended the documents as submitted, which now appear in the CVPDC's May agenda packet.

Dwayne Tuggle departed the meeting at 5:45 for another engagement.

Greg Patrick and Curt Diemer departed the meeting at 5:54 for another engagement.

Tom Lawton made a motion to adopt the work planning budget as presented and Gary Shananberger seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion was unanimously approved.

8. Organizational Reports

a) Financial Report and Balance Sheet

Sandy stated that there was nothing out of the ordinary within the financial reports that needed to be brought to the board's attention.

b) Executive Director's Report

Alec stated that the next board meeting will be July 17. That meeting is the annual election of officers.

9. Other Business and Regional Roundtable

Michael Campbell and Richard Conner shared that Appomattox will be having its first centennial on June 7 from 5 to 8. The Town of Altavista will be having a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the Spark Innovation Center. Bedford County held a groundbreaking for its animal shelter expansion.

10. Adjournment

The motion to adjourn was entertained by the Chairman. Frank Rogers made a motion to adjourn, and Richard Connor seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 6:10 PM.

X _____
Signature attest

Date