



VIRGINIA'S REGION 2000
— LOCAL —
GOVERNMENT
COUNCIL

Virginia's Region 2000
Local Government Council
828 Main Street, 12th Floor
Lynchburg, VA 24504

April 26, 2018
5:00 pm

Minutes

Members Present:

Susan Adams, Appomattox County Administrator
Kenneth Campbell, Amherst County Board of Supervisors
Sara Carter, Amherst Town Manager
Waverly Coggsdale, Altavista Town Manager
Mayor Joan Foster, Lynchburg City Council, Chair of Council
Bruce Johannessen, Town of Bedford
Megan Lucas, Lynchburg Regional Economic Alliance
Bryan Moody, Appomattox County Board of Supervisors
Sen. Mark Peake, Virginia Senate
Dean Rodgers, Amherst County Administrator
Frank Rogers, Campbell County Administrator
Gary Shanaberger, Appomattox Town Manager
John Sharp, Bedford County Board of Supervisors
Bonnie Svrcek, Lynchburg City Manager
Russell Thurston, Brookneal Town Manager
Mayor Dwayne Tuggle, Town of Amherst
Charlie A. Watts, II, Campbell County Board of Supervisors
Reid Wodika, Bedford County Assistant County Administrator on behalf of Carl Boggess

Members Absent:

Mayor Phyllis Campbell, Town of Brookneal
Del. Ben Cline, Virginia House of Delegates
Mayor Mike Mattox, Town of Altavista
Sen. Mark Peake, Virginia Senate

Others Present:

Ben Bowman, Region 2000 Workforce Development Board
Margaret Carmel, News and Advance
Gary Christie, Local Government Council, Executive Director
Kelly Hitchcock, Local Government Council
Rosalie Majerus, Local Government Council, Deputy Director of Finance
W. Scott Smith, Local Government Council

1. Welcome and Moment of Silence

Kenneth Campbell, Chair, welcomed everyone and opened the meeting at 5:00 p.m. with a moment of silence.

2. Presentation of Resolutions of Appreciation to Mayor Joan Foster and Mayor Mike Mattox

Gary pointed out two members will no longer be serving on the LGC and requested confirmation for a presentation of appreciation to Mayor Joan Foster and Mayor Mike Mattox for service to the LGC and the region.

MOTION: Bonnie Svrcek, motioned, seconded by Frank Rogers, and with unanimous support, Gary presented the Resolutions of Support to outgoing Board Members Foster and Mattox.

3. Approval of March 15 Meeting Minutes

MOTION: Upon a motion by Sara Carter, and seconded by Frank Rogers, the minutes of the March 15, 2018 were approved as presented.

4. Financial Report

Rosalie Majerus presented the budget and specifically discussed Attachment 4 within the financial report. Majerus noted the operating expenses are tracking slightly less than budget but will end the year at or above the budget. Majerus also drew the Board's attention to page 3 that reflects a revenue increase from two new projects, Amherst Construction Ready and Brookneal Comp Plan that provided additional revenue.

Rosalie asked for any questions. Frank Rogers asked a question regarding the fund balance that was used towards the Training Center and General Assembly. Dean Rodgers noted the lobbyist was effective and the Senate has proposed \$570,000 towards completing the original environmental assessment and the House has proposed \$820,000. Dean noted the Conferees agreed on the \$820,000 before the session breakdown. Amherst is hopeful the amount will be finalized when session reconvenes in May.

Gary questioned if the current budget includes removing the money from the fund balance to pay the lobbyist or if it is absorbed. Rosalie explained that some will be taken from the fund balance but no more than the \$30,000 indicated. Gary noted the LGC is in communication with the DEQ for a \$50,000 project to be completed in December 2018. This project will be an extra source of revenue and is assumed to be executed in house; more details at a future meeting.

5. Approval of 2018-2019 Local Government Work Plans

Gary provided an overview of the proposed work program to guide LGC and staff activities.

Gary noted Dean had communicated interest in two potential projects. Rodgers highlighted two initiatives, acknowledging he is uncertain if the lead agency should be the LGC or the Alliance. The first is an economic development planning effort for the Training Center,

which seems to be an Alliance activity but the LGC has interest, on what we can or should be doing to make use of the site. The problem is the water system and the County is looking at a potential new waterline to the site. This would be a second City connection, and thus public water will be available. The second is Go Virginia. Do we leave this to the Alliance or is this an opportunity for the LGC? Dean noted the area is ripe for river development. This is a real interest to the County and wants to get these ideas out to both LGC and Alliance policy boards. Dean Rodgers would like to see these items included in the Work Program.

Discussion followed on how specific the LGC Work Program needs to get relative to incorporation of projects such as CVCC. What elements are unique to a locality and which are regional and incorporated elements within the planning district. Frank Rogers noted he would prefer a more general wording that reflected potential for assistance or advocacy to any locality that faced an economic need. If the Work Program can be broad he can support the projects. If, however, more specificity is required, Rogers would like to explore further.

Frank Rogers asked a question on the Resiliency aspect in the Work Plan. Hitchcock noted the intent is to build on the CEDS and coordinate a future planning commission training on regional resiliency factors. Rodgers noted that he assumed this activity would be to advocate for the CVCC as a component of our regional economic resiliency and to advocate for a broader brush in language that provides an avenue to assist a locality or issue with approval by the LGC. Sara Carter noted she agreed with more general support language in the LGC Work Plan.

MOTION: Frank Rogers motioned that the LGC Work Program be approved as presented with the modification to alter the Resiliency task to better inform the LGC role as an advocate for all members in the face of significant economic impacts. Sara Carter seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

6. Discussion of Retaining or Retiring the “Region 2000” Brand

Christie presented the question whether the brand Region 2000, which has been around for about ten to twelve years for the Planning District, should be retired. It was noted that the organization was originally the Central Virginia Planning District Commission. Scott Smith pointed out what various names the organization has had over time. Christie asked for interest or thoughts on the organization name. Sharp noted that Central Virginia as a name used to be an issue with Richmond but RVA branding removes that conflict and noted he feels most folks see the area as the central Virginia area. Dean Rodgers noted regardless of the name, he likes the logo and with a cardinal logo allows area to lay claim to Central Virginia. Lucas noted that the Charlottesville Economic Development Group uses Central Virginia as part of their name but does not know if that matters. Dean Rodgers noted it was more important to use a name that appeals to this region.

Christie pointed out that a name change will require a charter change. Frank Rogers asked if there are there other elements that need to be considered during the same exercise. Christie confirmed there are and will form a subcommittee to address charter matters and bring back to the LGC for final approval. Christie noted Carl Boggess has agreed to serve and would like at least one other member. Frank Rogers agreed to serve on the LGC Charter subcommittee to consider all issues except the name, noting the name is an LGC decision.

MOTION: Bonnie Svrcek motioned that the organization be called the Central Virginia Planning District Commission. Russell Thurston seconded the motion and with an all aye vote, the motion carried.

7. SERDI Process

Gary Christie laid out the agency self-assessment in terms of how well we are doing and where the organization needs to go in the future. The process will result in a report and include communication that can impact future Work Plans. Christie presented the timeline and organization of the interviews proposed.

8. Meeting with Roanoke Valley Alleghany Regional Commission – June 7

Shannon Valentine will be the guest speaker and then participants will move into roundtable topic discussions that have interest to both regions. The meeting will take place in Vinton. Christie asked about availability and interest for the late afternoon meeting. It was agreed that the date and time should be pursued.

9. Update on Office Space

Gary provided an update on the future office space decisions including that there were no new locations to consider at this time. He did have further communication about the current office where we currently pay \$13.45/ft. and had been offered \$12/ft. with the 2% accelerator providing about an \$8,000 per year reduction. Gary suggested that an \$11/ft. offer, at about \$15,000 per year savings, would most likely be accepted. Gary asked the direction the Board would like him to take, continue looking at other options or move towards this space at the \$11 with a minimum three-year lease.

Dean Rodgers asked for a reminder on the numbers associated with the LRBA building. Christie noted that the LRBA, according to Wiley Wilson, the \$280,000 up front investment, would save about \$35,000 per year. It was confirmed this was about \$850,000, thus approximately 25% of the reserve would be needed. Discussion continued on the LRBA option. Lucas noted that there was an offer, but no contract had been signed. She also noted that some of the space, about 400/ft² had been rented and thus, the original footprint is not available.

Frank suggested that in his vision the LRBA space might be better filled with an organization with direct economic development or workforce mission. Dean questioned Ben Bowman on whether he envisioned the LRBA serving as the Workforce Center. After short discussion it was agreed it is too early in the Workforce Center deliberations to make any call on the LRBA building.

Dean Rodgers noted that \$30,000 was a considerable amount of money that could be spent to generate more local benefit. Frank Rogers indicated that he needed to see all of the options in print and suggested that an offer of \$10/ft. for the current space be put forward and that one other comparison be found and brought back to the Board.

10. Election of Officers for 2018-2019

Mayor Foster noted that LGC offers are nominated by rotation. LGC officers, according to rotation are: Chair, Kenneth Campbell, Amherst County; Vice-Chair, Dwayne Tuggle, Town of Amherst; Treasurer Dean Rodgers, Amherst County; and Secretary, Gary Christie.

MOTION: Frank motioned, seconded by Bonnie Svrcek, approval of the FY2018-2019 LGC officers. With an all aye vote, the motion carried.

11. Other Business from Council Members or Staff

Mayor Foster noted this is a time to discuss any new business.

October LGC Meeting

Gary Christie pointed it is the intention to have a speaker at the October meeting and asked Scott Smith to provide more detail. Scott noted that unlocking and connecting to the region's rivers is a CEDS goal and presented a potential topic and speaker for Council consideration. Smith noted the former Chamber of Commerce Director from Columbus, GA has been suggested as a good speaker to share the conversion of a dammed river into a whitewater center. Smith pointed out no contact has yet been made so not certain of availability but did want to share the potential river topic and confirm interest. Dean Rodgers noted he had been in communication with the engineering firm on the Columbus river project and Megan Lucas indicated she had heard the speaker and agreed that he could provide valuable insight on the public and private partnerships that were essential to that project. After short discussion it was agreed to pursue the speaker or other river-themed topic/speaker.

Tornado Reflection

The Council then began a discussion about the recent tornado. The following highlights some noted discussion points.

- Blessing there were no major injuries or loss of life.
- Svrcek noted that while the tornado had a more contained impact zone than the derecho there was more property and financial damage from the tornado; noting 120 versus in excess of 300, with approximately 20 total loss, with the tornado.
- It was noted that NOAA indicated a path of approximately 25 miles, one of the longer path storms in VA.
- Dean noted that reporting to date showed 128 structures damaged, 22 of which are total losses, 8 known families that are considered homeless. Dean noted it appeared most had insurance but knows of 10 uninsured and still had 55 to count.
- Dean reflected on two key issues or lessons learned from the experience:
 - The difficulty of keeping track of the victims, where are they now, and the fear and lack of assurance that important information is getting to the right people;
 - Managing volunteers and balancing between wanting to provide an avenue to get well-meaning groups/people to provide a valuable service and having so many volunteers that managing people becomes more work than the service they are providing.
- Sara Carter noted that during the Appomattox experience she would receive many requests to help and emphasized the importance of letting individuals/groups know to send money. She stressed letting groups/individuals hold bake sales or any number of ways to help by raising money that can then be dispersed in the most impactful and direct way.

- John Sharp commented on the importance and value of the Emergency Alert System/technology in the role it likely played in injury prevention.
- Bryan Moody agreed with Dean on the challenge of really knowing the status of all of the potential victims and pointed out some eight months after the tornado through a happenstance encounter, learning of a family living at a church in Danville.
- Frank Rogers noted that Campbell's impact was businesses. Megan Lucas pointed out that the Alliance opened up its doors to impacted businesses and that at least seven businesses has taken advantage of the service. Lucas encouraged anyone that knows of any business needs to send them to the Alliance.
- Ben Bowman questioned if it wouldn't be valuable to develop an emergency awareness informational tool that could be dispensed to churches and groups so they would know what was needed most, and how best to help. Dean agreed this could be a valuable tool. Susan Adams suggested that the VA Association of Faith-based Organizations is an existing organization that has contacts and would be a logical place to start to assist in developing and dispensing that type of tool.

Area Marketing

Megan Lucas noted that Ron Starner, a publisher at Site Selection Magazine and Liberty alum, was in Lynchburg for a few days to speak with Economic Development directors, boards, and local industry representatives to develop a series of articles that will highlight the region, and the types of unique and thriving area businesses. Lucas noted the value in this type of marketing approach and serving more than standard advertisements in reaching broader markets.

12. Meeting Adjourned

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned.