

Hampton Roads Planning District Commission (HRPDC)
Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) Committee Meeting
Summary Minutes of September 3, 2025

The September 3, 2025 meeting of the CAO Committee was called to order at 11:45 am by CAO Committee Chair Mary Bunting in the Chesapeake Room in the Chesapeake Conference Center at 700 Conference Center Drive, Chesapeake, VA 23320.

CAO Committee Members in Attendance

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| Mary Bunting, Chair | Hampton |
| Chris Price, Vice Chair | Chesapeake |
| Carol Steele | Gloucester County |
| Don Robertson | Isle of Wight County |
| Scott Stevens | James City County |
| Patrick Roberts | Norfolk |
| Randy Wheeler | Poquoson |
| Steven Carter | Portsmouth |
| Michael Stallings | Smithfield |
| Brian Thrower | Southampton County |
| Kevin Hughes | Suffolk |
| William Saunders | Windsor |
| Patrick Duhaney | Virginia Beach |
| Mark Bellamy | York County |

CAO Committee Members Absent

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| Alan Archer | Newport News |
| Melissa Rollins | Surry County |
| Andrew Trivette | Williamsburg |

Executive Director:

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| Robert Crum | HRPDC |
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Others Recorded Attending:

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| Greg Grootendorst | HRPDC |
| Drew Lumpkin | Hampton Roads Executive Roundtable |
| Brenda Roberts | Representative Jen Kiggan's Office |
| David Westcott | City of Chesapeake |
| Jerri Wilson | City of Newport News |

Welcome

Ms. Bunting thanked Chesapeake City Manager Chris Price for hosting today's CAO Committee meeting. Mr. Price welcomed the Committee members and provided introductory remarks, and then Ms. Bunting called for a round of introductions from those in attendance.

Approval of Agenda

Ms. Bunting reviewed the proposed agenda for the CAO meeting and asked if there were any adjustments to the agenda as distributed. There being none, Mr. Stallings moved to approve the agenda as presented, Mr. Wheeler seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

Public Comment

Ms. Bunting asked if there were any members of the public present who wanted to address the CAO Committee. There being no comments, the Public Comment period was closed.

Approval of the Minutes

The summary minutes of the CAO Committee meetings held on April 2, 2025 and July 2, 2025 were included in the agenda packet for consideration and approval.

Ms. Bunting asked if there were any questions on the minutes; hearing none, Mr. Stallings moved to approve the minutes, Mr. Wheeler seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

Items of Regional Interest

Ms. Bunting opened the discussion on topics of regional interest, emphasizing that a key benefit of CAO meeting agendas is the exchange of information on shared issues, challenges, and best practices across localities. Each CAO was provided an opportunity to share items of regional interest from their locality.

Tax System Modernization

Mr. Crum reported that at the last CAO meeting, committee members requested a briefing on the current tax system and potential modernization opportunities.

Mr. Greg Grootendorst, HRPDC Deputy Executive Director, provided background on state and local taxation in the Commonwealth as a foundation for discussion on pressing revenue concerns facing local governments in Hampton Roads. Effective and efficient government depends on stable and adequate revenue streams to support programs, services, capital projects, and the overall administration of the government. When tax policy fails to keep pace with structural and economic changes, the reliability and fairness of the tax system can erode. Deductions, exemptions, and credits, while sometimes necessary, can further complicate the system and alter its equity. To chart a sustainable path forward, it is essential to understand revenue trends, tax base changes, competing tax structures, and the historical context of the current system.

Mr. Grootendorst reviewed 12 principles of good tax policy and reviewed a packet of maps that illustrated the following information for each State in the nation:

- Top Marginal State Individual Income Tax Rate
- State Sales Tax
- State-Local Tax Burdens

- Road Funding Supported by Road Taxes
- Corporate Income Tax Rates
- State-Local Tax Burdens by State

Mr. Grootendorst also reviewed information on Tax Revenues for the Commonwealth of Virginia in Fiscal Year 2026, as well as local revenue sources, and responded to questions from the CAO Committee on this information.

A significant amount of discussion occurred among CAO Committee members on the impact that State Tax Exemptions are having on local government budgets. The CAOs expressed interest in collaborating with other localities and regions in Virginia's Urban Crescent to advocate at the General Assembly on relief related to these tax exemptions. Significant discussion also occurred about the need for tax system modernization in Virginia, particularly related to the telecommunications and streaming industries.

Regional Legislative Agenda

Mr. Robert Crum, HRPDC/HRTPO Executive Director, briefed the CAO Committee on potential Regional Legislative Agenda items for the upcoming General Assembly session. He noted that the HRPDC/HRTPO Legislative Committee met on August 12, 2025, to discuss regional legislative priorities to be considered for approval by the Commission and HRTPO Board in October/November. The membership of this Legislative Committee is as follows:

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| Shannon Glover, Portsmouth | HRPDC Chair |
| Michael Hipple, James City County | HRTPO Chair |
| Jimmy Gray, Hampton | HRPDC Vice-Chair |
| Rick West, Chesapeake | HRTPO Vice-Chair |
| Mary Bunting, Hampton | CAO Committee Chair |
| Chris Price, Chesapeake | CAO Committee Vice-Chair |

Following Mr. Crum's briefing, the CAO Committee held considerable conversation on several items, including primary and secondary road fund, flood prevention and mitigation, emergency sheltering needs, state funding for HRPDC, and an all-of-the-above approach to energy supply development.

Other Business

Mr. Crum noted the upcoming emergency management exercise that will be held at the offices of the HRPDC and stressed the importance of participation in this exercise by all city managers and county administrators. He also provided an update on passenger rail service in Hampton Roads and potential service impacts during the construction of the Long Bridge project in Northern Virginia. In addition, Mr. Crum provided background information on requests for locality letters of support for the Hampton Roads Economic Development District (EDD) application.

Next Scheduled Meeting

The next regularly scheduled meeting will be held on November 5, 2025, at 11:30 AM and will be hosted by the City of Hampton.

Adjournment

There being no further business to discuss, the CAO Committee meeting was adjourned at approximately 1:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Crum
Recording Secretary