

**Hampton Roads Planning District Commission (HRPDC)
Chief Administrative Officers Meeting
Summary Minutes of November 3, 2021**

The Hampton Roads Chief Administrative Officers (CAO) Committee meeting was called to order at 11:37 AM by Mr. Robert Crum, HRPDC/HRPTO Executive Director, at the Suffolk Public Works Operations Center located at 800 Carolina Road in Suffolk. Mr. Crum noted Mary Bunting, Hampton City Manager and Chair of the CAO Committee, had a personal matter that would prevent her from attending and Michael Johnson, Southampton County Administrator and CAO Committee Vice-Chair, had a last-minute conflict arise. He noted that both Ms. Bunting and Mr. Johnson asked him to convene and facilitate the meeting.

The following members of the CAO Committee were in attendance:

Alan Archer for Cynthia Rohlf	Newport News
Brian DeProfio for Mary Bunting	Hampton
Chip Filer	Norfolk
Amanda Jarratt	Franklin
Randy Keaton	Isle of Wight County
Al Moor	Suffolk
Neil Morgan	York County
Chris Price	Chesapeake
Melissa Rollins	Surry County
William Saunders	Town of Windsor
Michael Stallings	Town of Smithfield
Carol Steele	Gloucester County
Scott Stevens	James City County
Mimi Terry for Angel Jones	Portsmouth
Andrew Trivette	Williamsburg
Randy Wheeler	Poquoson

Others in Attendance:

Robert Crum, HRPDC/HRPTO
Keith Cannady, HRPDC
Shernita Bethea, HRPDC
Katie Cullipher, HRPDC
Greg Grootendorst, HRPDC
Whitney Katchmark, HRPDC
Deirdre Garrett, HRPDC
John Harbin, HRPDC
Mark Geduldig-Yatrowsky, Portsmouth Resident
Michelle Gowdy, Virginia Municipal League
Diane Kaufman, Senator Kaine's Office
Drew Lumpkin, Senator Warner's Office
Caleb Smith, Representative Luria's Office

Mr. Al Moor from Suffolk welcomed the CAO Committee to the Suffolk Public Works Operations Center and noted the facility is approximately four years old and houses various divisions of the Public Works Department, with the exception of solid waste. He said Suffolk plans to build additional facilities on the complex, including a new parks and recreation office under construction now. He also noted that the new facility has positively impacted employee morale.

Approval of Agenda

Mr. Crum asked if there were any additions or revisions to the agenda. Mr. Chris Price from Chesapeake requested a report on the CAO Subcommittee on Recycling be added after the Housing Discussion. Ms. Amanda Jarrett from Franklin made a motion to approve the Agenda with the additional agenda item requested by Mr. Price. A second was provided by Mr. Moor. The motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Crum asked if there were any additions or revisions to the Summary Minutes from the October 6, 2021 CAO Committee meeting. After hearing no additions or revisions, Mr. Crum requested a motion for approval. Mr. Moor made a motion to approve the Summary Minutes from the October 6, 2021 CAO Committee meeting as presented. A second was provided by Ms. Jarrett. The motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment Period

Mr. Crum asked if there were any members of the public who wanted to address the CAO Committee. There were no members of the public who wished to address the CAO Committee.

Roadway Flood Sensors Update

Mr. Crum introduced Ms. Whitney Katchmark, HRPDC Principal Water Resources Engineer, to brief the CAO Committee on the Roadway Flood Sensors project. Ms. Katchmark explained that the HRPDC received a grant from the Office of Local Defense Community Cooperation (OLDCC) to install roadway flooding sensors. The HRPDC Coastal Resiliency Committee identified 200 potential sites where local staff thought sensor information about flooded roads would be valuable, and of those, 20 sites were prioritized for a pilot project. The new sensors would work in tandem with existing sensors to detect if a road is flooded and relay the information to WAZE to inform drivers. The data would also be available in a database to be used for research. HRPDC has a contract with Xylem to install the sensors and set up coordination with WAZE. The site designs are complete and the next steps for Xylem and HRPDC are to apply for local permits and pay fees or establish bonds for this work, with an estimated cost of \$20,000 to \$40,000. Due to the nature of the project and the cost of permitting fees or bonds, Ms. Katchmark asked if there are ways to streamline and/or waive permitting and fees so that the savings can be used for additional sensors or other project costs.

The CAO Committee discussed that each locality has a unique process for permitting, fee schedules, and varying degrees of latitude to reduce or waive fees, making a consistent approach unlikely. Mr. Crum suggested that for the pilot project, the permitting process and fees be well-documented so that future project phases can be better informed, and the CAO Committee agreed with this approach. Ms. Katchmark explained that there are several funding opportunities that could fund the next phases of the flood sensors project, including the Community Flood Preparedness Fund (CFPF). Other projects that the HRPDC could submit for funding on behalf of the region through the CFPF program include flood insurance outreach and hydrology and hydraulic regional modeling. Mr. Crum suggested that the CAO Committee check with their staff to determine what projects they are planning to submit to the Fund so that any regional project proposals would not compete with local proposals. Dr. Chip Filer from Norfolk asked about regional collaboration to support each locality's participation in the National Flood Insurance Program's Community Rating System (CRS). Ms. Katchmark replied that existing outreach efforts at the HRPDC contribute points to a locality's CRS score and agreed that more could be done at the regional level. Dr. Filer suggested that the Commission discuss the potential for greater collaboration on the CRS program.

Housing Discussion

Mr. Crum introduced this item, noting that at the October HRPDC meeting (under Old/New Business), Commission members discussed affordable housing in the Hampton Roads region and suggested that the HRPDC consider a regional approach to address affordable housing needs. Mr. Crum asked the CAO Committee if a regional approach is appropriate, and if so, how should the conversation be framed to make it most productive. A roundtable discussion ensued, and highlights included the following:

- The region should find others who have succeeded at approaching affordable housing needs regionally and learn from their successes.
- A full-day retreat or forum-style meeting with presentations from leading experts may be warranted for this topic and would lend itself to better outcomes.
- Other regional stakeholders who are already working on this issue, including housing authorities and the Planning Council, should be included in future conversations.
- A definition of affordable housing and the identification of tiers of affordability would help frame the conversation.
- The City of Williamsburg convened an Affordable Housing Taskforce in early 2021 to identify strategies to increase the supply of affordable housing in the City. The Taskforce utilized a recently updated Housing Affordability Analysis to define levels of affordability. A report by the Taskforce listed 13 strategies, including five priority, short-term strategies that the City plans to implement. The report will be shared with the CAO Committee.

- Establishing affordable unit targets for each community using a shared timeline and providing a menu of best practices would allow each community to select what works best for them to address local needs.
- Increasing real estate prices are further intensifying affordable housing needs, often driving would-be homebuyers to rental housing. Affordable rental housing can be difficult to locate due to its negative perception.
- Existing public housing is concentrated in a few localities that are largely built out. Those localities may be able to share resources to increase the availability of affordable housing in other localities.
- There is a need to review and seek changes to the Code of Virginia that would provide greater flexibility to localities and more tools at their disposal to develop affordable housing.

Ms. Shernita Bethea, HRPDC Housing/Human Services Administrator, explained the various housing programs administered by the HRPDC that support residents across the region, from the homeless to workforce housing for teachers and nurses but noted these programs are funded with federal support that restricts the use of the funds for marketing and outreach.

Mr. Crum thanked the CAO Committee for their insights and requested the participation of the Virginia Municipal League (VML) and the Virginia Association of Counties (VACo) in future conversations. Ms. Michelle Gowdy from VML explained that a statewide study on affordable housing will be completed soon that will further inform this initiative.

CAO Subcommittee on Recycling

Mr. Crum introduced Mr. Price to brief the CAO Committee on the CAO Subcommittee on Recycling. Mr. Price noted that the Subcommittee had its first meeting on October 29, 2021 and discussed areas for potential collaboration, including recycling vendor contracting, regional convenience centers, and outreach and marketing. He asked that each locality appoint a staff member who is knowledgeable on these topics to advise the Subcommittee at their next meeting. Mr. Price also noted that the topic is especially timely for Chesapeake as they consider adopting a solid waste fee or program cuts. Other members of the Subcommittee reiterated the areas for potential regional collaboration and noted that the upcoming closure of the Refuse Derived Fuel (RDF) plant in 2024 will significantly disrupt the current waste streams. Others noted that material collected as recycling is sometimes sent to the RDF plant, which does not meet the state's definition of recycling. Mr. Crum advised that an email will be sent out to the CAO Committee requesting the name of a staff person to advise the Subcommittee.

Locality Roundtable

Mr. Crum asked if anyone had updates to share.

Ms. Carole Steele from Gloucester noted that Brent Fedors stepped down as Gloucester County Administrator and the County will issue an RFP for a professional search firm.

Mr. Neil Morgan from York County noted the Dominion Energy generation station will be completely retired by 2023 and demolished by 2024.

Mr. Randy Wheeler from Poquoson noted that UVA's Leading, Educating, and Developing (LEAD) program has resumed.

Ms. Gowdy provided initial insights from the election and suggested that localities contact newly elected delegates in their area. She noted that eliminating the grocery tax would have a significant impact on municipal budgets and that VML will work to offset this impact by working with the new administration to find other sources of revenue.

Mr. Crum noted that he is working with Senator Spruill to convene the Hampton Roads Caucus and prepare for the upcoming session of the General Assembly. He also noted that the bond referendum in Virginia Beach for flood protection and mitigation projects passed.

Mr. Price noted that Mr. Brian Solis will fill a newly created Deputy City Manager position in Chesapeake.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the CAO Committee, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 1:20 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Robert Crum

Recording Secretary