

Regional Connectors Study
Joint Steering (Policy) Committee & Working Group Meeting Minutes
June 22, 2021, 9:30 am

Pursuant to the declared state of emergency in the Commonwealth of Virginia in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and to protect the public health and safety of the members, staff, and general public, this meeting was held electronically via Webex. These electronic meetings are required to complete essential business on behalf of the region. A recording of the meeting will be available on the website.

Steering (Policy) Committee

The following voting members attended the web meeting (alphabetically by city):

Rick West (CH)
Donnie Tuck (HA)
McKinley Price, Chair (NN)
Martin Thomas (NO)
Shannon Glover (PO) (absent for a portion of the meeting)

The following voting members were absent (alphabetically by city):

Michael Duman (SU)
Robert Dyer (VB)

Note that these cities were represented by members of the Working Group below.

Working Group

The following voting members attended the web meeting (alphabetically by city):

Troy Eisenberger (CH)
Lynne Keenan (HA) (replacing Jason Mitchell)
Brian Fowler (NO)
Bryan Stilley (NN)
Carl Jackson (PO) (replacing James Wright)
Jason Souders (SU)
Mark Shea (VB) (replacing Ric Lowman)

The following voting members were absent (alphabetically by last name):

Ric Lowman (VB) (replaced by Mark Shea)
Jason Mitchell (HA) (replaced by Lynne Keenan)
James Wright (PO) (replaced by Carl Jackson)

Others

The following others attended the web meeting (alphabetically by last name):

Rob Case (HRTPO)	Barbara Nelson (VPA)
Robert A. Crum, Jr. (HRTPO/HRPDC)	Keith Nichols (HRTPO)
Anthony Donald (Michael Baker Intl.)	Kevin Page (HRTAC)
Rick Dwyer (HRMFFA)	Lorna Parkins (Michael Baker Intl.)
Craig Eddy (Michael Baker Intl.)	Pavithra Parthasarathi (HRTPO)
Zach Harris (Michael Baker Intl.)	Craig Quigley (HRMFFA)
Amy Inman (Norfolk)	Camelia Ravanbakht (RCS Coordinator)
George Janek (USACE)	Angela Rico (NN)
Steve Jones (Navy)	Dale Stith (HRTPO)
Michael King (Navy)	Eric Stringfield (VDOT)
Patrick Kinsman (USACE)	Bill Thomas (Michael Baker Intl.)
Claudette Lajoie (Michael Baker Intl.)	Cathie Vick (VPA)
Keith Lockwood (USACE)	

1. Call to Order

At 9:34 am, Bob Crum (HRPDC/HRTPO) read a COVID-19 notice. Chairperson Mayor Price (Newport News) conducted the meeting.

2. Roll Call

Camelia Ravanbakht (RCS Coordinator) called the roll (see attendance above).

3. Welcome and Introductions

No introductions were made.

4. Public Comment Period

There were no public comments.

5. Minutes

Mayor Tuck (Hampton) moved approval of the minutes of the October 27, 2020 Joint Steering (Policy) Committee and Working Group, and Martin Thomas (Norfolk) seconded. The motion was approved via roll call:

Steering (Policy) Committee

Richard West	Chesapeake	yes
Donnie Tuck	Hampton	yes
McKinley Price	Newport News	yes
Martin Thomas	Norfolk	yes
Shannon Glover	Portsmouth	yes

Working Group

Troy Eisenberger	Chesapeake	yes
Lynne Keenan	Hampton	yes
Bryan Stille	Newport News	yes
Brian Fowler	Norfolk	yes
Carl Jackson	Portsmouth	yes
Jason Souders	Suffolk	yes
Mark Shea	Virginia Beach	yes

6. RCS: Phase 3: Development of Preliminary Alternatives

Craig Eddy (MBI) provided the joint body an update of work conducted to analyze the various potential alternatives, including the determination that proximity to the proposed US Navy Fuel Depot Expansion and to the Portsmouth Landfill made the southern portion of the VA 164 Connector infeasible. Bill Thomas (MBI) presented results of the modeling of the potential alternatives including traffic volumes and other metrics (e.g. congested speed, average delay). Mr. Eddy stated that the Working Group recommended moving forward with the following preliminary alternatives: 2A, 2B, 3A, 3B, 6A, 6B, 8A, 8B.

Michael King (Navy) clarified that, with regards to the US Navy Fuel Depot, the Navy is simply implementing a long-planned construction rather than a proposed “Expansion”. Barb Nelson (Port of Virginia) stated that the Port supported alternatives 7A and 7B. She noted that 8A and 8B (which exclude widening of VA 164) are inconsistent with the approved 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) (which includes widening of VA 164). Carl Jackson (Portsmouth) noted that the RCS has been decoupled from the LRTP, and noted environmental justice impacts of a VA 164 widening.

Martin Thomas (Norfolk), noting that a funding request that has been submitted to Congress for the Craney Island Access Study, recommended that alternatives 5 and 7 be retained. Bryan Stille (NN) stated that the working group believed that alternatives 5 and 7 had fatal flaws.

Mayor Tuck (Hampton) moved approval of the Working Group’s list of alternatives; Mayor West (Chesapeake) seconded. Mr. Martin offered a substitute motion including alternatives 5 and 7; no second was made. A roll call vote was taken on Mayor Tuck’s motion:

Steering (Policy) Committee

Richard West	Chesapeake	yes
Donnie Tuck	Hampton	yes
McKinley Price	Newport News	yes
Martin Thomas	Norfolk	no
Shannon Glover	Portsmouth	[temporarily absent]

Working Group

Troy Eisenberger	Chesapeake	yes
Lynne Keenan	Hampton	yes
Bryan Stille	Newport News	yes
Brian Fowler	Norfolk	no
Carl Jackson	Portsmouth	yes
Jason Souders	Suffolk	yes
Mark Shea	Virginia Beach	yes

Asked by the Chair for clarification, Mr. Crum noted the lack of a majority of the seven voting members, stated that technically under Roberts Rules this motion would pass, but suggested—given the importance of the issue—that having four yeases would be appropriate.

While the group waited for Mayor Glover to return to the meeting, Cathy Vick (Port of Virginia)—noting that the Hampton Roads Infrastructure Coalition requested funding from Congress for a Craney Island Access Study—recommended postponing the issue to obtain input from the absent localities. Mr. Eddy presented Next Steps (as recorded under “For Your Information”).

Noting that Mayor Glover was not present for the discussion, Mr. Thomas requested postponement to a following meeting. Mayor Price asked staff to schedule a meeting next week to vote on the issue. Mayor Glover returned to the meeting. Mayor Price ruled that there will be a new meeting. Following Ms. Ravanbakht presenting “Next Meetings”, Mayor Price ended the meeting as shown under item 10 below.

7. For Your Information

Craig Eddy (MBI) provided an overview of the tasks planned for the next six months.

8. Next Meetings

Ms. Ravanbakht orally presented the proposed next meetings:

- July 8, 2021 – 1:30 PM: Working Group Meeting
- August 12, 2021 – 1:30 PM: Working Group Meeting
- September 9, 2021 – 1:30 PM: Working Group Meeting
- Fall: Joint Steering Committee and Working Group

9. Other Items of Interest

No other items were discussed.

10. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 10:52am.