

Executive Director's Report February 16, 2022



The purpose of this monthly report is to provide members of the Regional Commission with a summary report of work plan-related activities, staff attendance and participation at local/regional/statewide meetings, and updates on initiatives impacting the Regional Commission and our localities.

Administration:

- Clay Jackson, Chair of the Madison County Board of Supervisors, was appointed to the Commission January. I, and I'm sure all of you, look forward to welcoming Mr. Jackson at the meeting next week.
- Brittany Amador has joined the Commission as a Social Work intern working with Foothills Housing Network through May. Ms. Amador is completing the internship as part of the Social Work program at Mary Baldwin University.
- As requested by the Commission in late 2020, staff has completed a compensation survey report with comparisons to local government positions and similar Regional Commissions. The Executive Committee reviewed the report earlier this month and recommends approval of the report and the pay plan developed as part of the process.
- FY 2023 budget requests for all counties and those towns with formal budget request process are completed. Requests to the remaining towns will be sent in early March for incorporation into each locality's respective budget process. The FY 2023 organization budget will be presented in April. We continue to track annual grant requests and should have a solid understanding of most revenue sources by that time.

Homelessness & Regional Housing

- Rebecca Wareham and RRRC staff involved with Foothills Housing Network worked with partners across the region to conduct the annual homeless Point-in-Time count on January 26th and the weeks following. This effort included surveys with individuals and households in emergency shelters, as well as outreach efforts for unsheltered individuals in the region. Staff will provide a report at the next Commission meeting on the PIT count, as well as status of funding and other initiatives.
- Staff have spent much of the past months engaged with potential developer partners for the PDC Housing Development program. We will provide details and a staff recommendation for initial funding allocations for your consideration and approval next Wednesday.

Environmental & Natural Resources

- Michelle Edwards was named as Vice Chair for the Chesapeake Bay Local Leadership Workgroup for 2022. The LLWG has developed *A Local Government Guide to the Chesapeake Bay*, a series of modules to support mutually beneficial outcomes for the Bay by prioritizing local economic development, infrastructure resiliency, public health, education, and the environment. The Local Government Advisory Committee is also considering another round of watershed field tours for elected officials this year.
- The RRRC Food Policy Council met earlier this month and heard updates from the Minority & Veteran Farmers of the Piedmont and additional information from RRRC's Farm to School

Liaison. We are also beginning to gear up for Farmers Markets and other opportunities to expand the reach of the Purely Piedmont brand.

Economic Development & Tourism

- The Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) application should be submitted in early March. Staff has collaborated with Thomas Jefferson PDC staff to coordinate our applications and requests, and have had multiple discussions with EDA staff as part of this process. Letters of support were requested from local governments and other regional partners last week.

Transportation

- We are wrapping up work with the consultant teams on the Culpeper Small Area Plan that focused on long-term transportation needs in the areas east of the Town of Culpeper roughly bordered by Route 15/29, Route 15/29 Business, and Route 3. The study was presented to a joint meeting of the County and Town planning commissions in January.
- Several new planning efforts will kick off via the Office of Intermodal Planning and Investment GAP technical assistance program in the next months. Staff are working with the Town of Remington and Rappahannock County, and the Town of Washington also has a study through the same program to be conducted over the rest of 2022.
- Kristin Lam Peraza and the Regional Transportation Collaborative continue to expand capacity at partner agencies. Through funding received by RRRC from PATH Foundation, we are supporting two part-time positions at Aging Together focused on volunteer recruitment and marketing and outreach. The RTC also has engaged with Culpeper Hospital regarding partnership opportunities, and is formalizing partnerships with the Free Clinics in Culpeper and Fauquier to assist with transportation for their clients, when and where possible.
- The next round of Smart Scale is quickly approaching. Staff are engaged with VDOT District and local planning staff in project discussions. The first deadline is April 1st for pre-applications. As a reminder, RRRC can submit up to four projects provided they meet a Corridor of Statewide Significance need.
- Commuter Services' staff members are preparing for Bike Month activities in May. If your locality is planning any specific activities and would like to partner or utilize our staff capacity to support your efforts, please let us know.

Emergency Planning & Hazard Mitigation

- The Hazard Mitigation Plan update will likely begin in late 2022. We anticipate contracting much of the work on this plan and will likely seek cooperative procurement options via other Planning District Commissions that have completed similar updates with consultants in the past year or two.
- The ongoing Wildfire Risk Analysis project is now in draft form. Matthew Decatur presented to the Land Use and Environment committee in February and we plan to engage emergency management staff in the region in the next months to share the information in the analysis.

Local Technical Assistance

- Staff are assisting the Town of Gordonsville with an application to the Land and Water Conservation Fund grant program. Michelle and Matthew have provided technical assistance and mapping in support of the application.

- We completed redistricting support with Culpeper County and Rappahannock County in January and February, and also provided revised boundary descriptions for Orange County's redistricting efforts following adoption of the new Congressional, State Senate and House of Delegates maps by the State Supreme Court. We continue to work with the Town of Warrenton as part of its redistricting process.
- Supported monthly meetings with regional Chief Administrative Officers related to the General Assembly session, and shared impacts of the Grocery Tax repeal received from VACo and VAPDC contacts.
- Coordinated a meeting in Richmond during Local Government with Rappahannock County and other localities across the state that have dealt with landline telephone service degradation issues.
- Participated in various meetings with the Mayor from the Town of Remington, including connections to DHCD staff for potential field visit
- Participated in river access discussions with Fauquier County, PEC and Friends of the Rappahannock
- Participated on transportation pipeline planning projects with Fauquier County and the Town of Warrenton for targeted projects in both localities
- Offered support to each of our member jurisdictions (Fauquier, Madison and Rappahannock) that are working with neighboring Planning Districts on VATI broadband projects. I coordinate with Brandon Davis at NSVRC and Christine Jacobs at TJPDC on a regular basis, and am happy to advocate for PD9 localities, when and as needed. Congratulations to those jurisdictions, as well as to Culpeper County, on their VATI awards!