

NORTHERN VIRGINIA REGIONAL COMMISSION

Minutes of the Commission Meeting Held Thursday, July 19, 2012

COMMISSIONERS

(The names of those members present are highlighted.)

Hon. Nader Baroukh	<i>City of Falls Church</i>
Hon. Sharon Bulova	<i>County of Fairfax</i>
Hon. Peter Candland	<i>County of Prince William</i>
Hon. Janet Clarke	<i>County of Loudoun</i>
Hon. John C. Cook	<i>County of Fairfax</i>
Hon. Jay Fisette	<i>County of Arlington</i>
Hon. Gerald M. Foreman II	<i>Town of Dumfries</i>
Hon. Libby Garvey	<i>County of Arlington</i>
Hon. Penelope A. Gross	<i>County of Fairfax</i>
Hon. Pat Herrity	<i>County of Fairfax</i>
Hon. Catherine Hudgins	<i>County of Fairfax</i>
Hon. Robert W. Lazaro, Jr., <i>NVRC Vice Chairman</i>	<i>Town of Purcellville</i>
Hon. Fernando "Marty" Martinez	<i>Town of Leesburg</i>
Hon. Jeffrey C. McKay	<i>County of Fairfax</i>
Hon. Lisa C. Merkel	<i>Town of Herndon</i>
Hon. Suhas Naddoni	<i>City of Manassas Park</i>
Hon. Martin E. Nohe, NVRC Chairman	<i>County of Prince William</i>
Hon. Harry J. Parrish II	<i>City of Manassas</i>
Hon. Redella S. Pepper, NVRC Treasurer	<i>City of Alexandria</i>
Hon. Frank J. Principi	<i>County of Prince William</i>
Hon. M. Jane Seeman	<i>Town of Vienna</i>
Hon. R. Scott Silverthorne	<i>City of Fairfax</i>
Hon. Paul C. Smedberg	<i>City of Alexandria</i>
Hon. Linda Smyth	<i>County of Fairfax</i>
Hon. Scott K. York	<i>County of Loudoun</i>

STAFF PRESENT

G. Mark Gibb	<i>Executive Director</i>
Linda M. Tenney	<i>Deputy Director</i>
Linda Summerall	<i>Executive Secretary</i>
Ken Billingsley	<i>Director, Demographics & Information Services</i>
Dale Medearis	<i>Sr. Environmental Planner</i>
David Schwengel	<i>Director, Regional Business Planning</i>
Peggy Tadej	<i>No. Va. Regional BRAC Coordinator</i>
Aimee Vosper	<i>Director, Environmental & Planning Services</i>
Stephen Walz	<i>Director, Regional Energy Planning</i>

OTHERS PRESENT

Sandy Arnette	<i>Verizon</i>
Robert Bisson	<i>NOVEC</i>
Rodney Blevins	<i>Dominion Virginia Power</i>
Kate Boyle	<i>Fairfax County legislative staff</i>
Doug Brammer	<i>Verizon</i>
John Crawford	<i>Arlington Co. emergency communications staff</i>
Maureen Davis	<i>Verizon</i>
Mike Frederick	<i>Dominion Virginia Power</i>
B. K. Fulton	<i>Verizon</i>
Steve Hundley	<i>Verizon</i>
Susan King	<i>MCB Quantico</i>
Chris Landgraf	<i>Dominion Virginia Power</i>
Tony Lewis	<i>Fort Belvoir DPW</i>
Carolyn Moss	<i>Verizon</i>
Jim Moxley	<i>Dominion</i>
	<i>NOVEC</i>

Greg Romano
Sue Rowland
Phillip M. Sandino
Larry Shaffer
Sue Snider
Steve Souder
Sharon Stark
Erin Ward
John Welch

*Verizon
NVRC Legislative Liaison; SR Consulting, Inc.
Dominion Virginia Power
NOVEC
Virginia Dept. of Emergency Management (representing Secretary Terrie Suit)
Fairfax Co. 911
Office of Congressman Gerry Connolly
Fairfax Co. Attorney
Verizon*

- CALL TO ORDER** Chairman Nohe called the meeting to order at 7:42 p.m.
- PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all present.
- ROLL CALL** The roll was called and all members present or absent were noted for the record.
- DERECHO AFTERMATH** Chairman Nohe thanked the numerous representatives from the utilities for agreeing to address the Commission and asked NVRC's Stephen Walz to provide an overview.
- Stephen Walz* Mr. Walz noted that the region was hit on Friday, June 29, by a storm with winds up to 80 miles per hour, moving about 50 mph, which arrived at approximately 10:00 p.m. There was little advance warning of the storm, so the utilities were unable to pre-position crews. Electrical outages ranged from 60% down to 30% of individual jurisdictions' electrical customers. The electrical loss came first and triggered the loss or diminished level of 911 service. There was also loss of telephone landlines and cell towers.
- Legal governance over the utilities and 911 impacts how NVRC and others may respond. The state has its emergency operations plan addressing response to telecommunication and electric outages. The State Corporation Commission (SCC) regulates 911 and sets its service standards. The Federal Communications Commission also has rules governing telecommunications. The SCC also requires electric utilities to maintain emergency response plans that include priorities for restoring power.
- There are a number of investigations of the storm and loss of utility service. Governor McDonnell has directed Terrie Suit, Secretary of Homeland Security and Veterans Affairs, to investigate the broader homeland security impacts and lessons learned. The SCC has two studies underway, a formal investigation under order of the SCC judges of the 911 failure and a staff investigation of the electric outages. MWCOG is also looking at this. Commissioner Principi distributed copies of MWCOG's resolutions. Local governments and utilities are also completing after-action analysis and reports.
- questions & answers* Commissioner Parrish pointed out that the loss of electricity also impacted the petroleum storage facilities and many service stations lost electricity, rendering the pumps inoperable. Commissioner Cook asked if anyone was looking at the electronic banking system that went down. Staff will share these issues with entities investigating the outages.
- Steve Souder
911 Director
Fairfax County* 911 is the most recognized number in the U.S., with 240,000 calls a day. The 911 system worked admirably the night of the storm, then failed the next morning. This incident is one in series of 911 outages; it is not an isolated incident. The 911 directors were not officially informed about Northern Virginia's downed system until eight to nine hours later. The non-emergency phone lines were also out.
- Mr. Souder reviewed the five recommendations for implementation by Verizon, developed by the Northern Virginia 911 directors on July 9.

questions & answers Commissioner Cook said the 911 systems throughout the country should share their lessons.

*Maureen Davis
V.P., Network
Operations -
Mid-Atlantic
Verizon*

Ms. Davis stated Verizon is committed to finding out what went wrong and how to fix it, adding that Verizon recognizes 911 is critical. The company is making progress in its investigation of the failure. The storm caused an enormous amount of damage — there were more poles down than from Hurricane Irene (August 2011); over 1,000 outside plant cables were damaged, and over 1,900 transport systems were lost, mostly in Northern Virginia. The transport systems are the equipment and facilities that interconnect all of the central offices in the area, whose failure led to so much of the banking system going down. More than 40 central offices lost commercial power and ran on batteries or generators during the outage, and a few of the generators failed. An estimated 500,000 Verizon customers were without service Saturday. Their service was restored as power was restored.

Ms. Davis noted that the 911 network is engineered with an enormous amount of duality, redundancy, and resiliency; there is at least two of everything in half a dozen locations both within this region and outside of this region. During and after the storm much of that redundant design worked as it was designed to; many of the 168 PSAPs (911 centers) in the path of the storm across Maryland/D.C./Virginia lost pieces of redundancy but continued to take calls. Four lost full call capability. The night of the derecho, one of two back-up generators in Verizon's Arlington central office facility failed, but 911 was still working on battery through the night. Some equipment, including a back-up generator, also failed at Verizon's Fairfax County central office facility. The combination of failures at both the Arlington and Fairfax central office facilities led to the 911 system failure.

Verizon is trying to understand what is common to the four failed PSAPs as well as unique to them. Ms. Davis reviewed the timeline used by Verizon in restoring 911 service to the jurisdictions. She said the company has solved the generator issues in Arlington and does not expect that to be a problem. Verizon believes that if its Arlington central office utility power supply were to fail again it would not take down the 911 system.

Ms. Davis said Verizon spent a lot of time working with the 911 community last year to develop new communications strategies during outages and used the improved processes on Friday night and Saturday morning. She acknowledged Verizon failed to provide the actionable information needed by the local 911 teams and elected officials. Verizon is working with the 911 community on strengthening and enhancing how that process works.

Ms. Davis also noted that Verizon will participate fully with the investigations.

questions & answers Commissioner Silverthorne noted the problems with cell phones. Ms. Davis said Verizon is working with the wireless carriers on this. Most of the wireless carriers use Verizon's transport network, much of which goes through Fairfax and Arlington. Most of the wireless system came back quickly. He then asked about the FIOS lines, which go out with the loss of electricity — can this be fixed? Ms. Davis said the priority is 911 but FIOS will be looked at.

Commissioner Bulova commented that Verizon did not communicate with the local elected officials, in contrast to the electric utilities who kept them informed throughout the duration. This is what is needed from Verizon, even if the company doesn't have all the answers. Several members concurred, noting that Dominion is a good example of a utility that knows how to communicate. Commissioner Garvey noted that this seemed to be a cultural issue with the company, and that its culture needed to foster clear communication with local governments. Ms. Davis said the company would figure out how to get the needed information out.

Commissioner Fisetta asked if Verizon was going to adopt the 911 directors' five recommendations. Ms. Davis said the company will look at each of them; some can be implemented quicker than others.

Chairman Nohe commented on the intensity of the public's reaction to the 911 failure. The public wants a concrete date when Verizon will know the system will never fail again. Ms. Davis replied she expects the analysis will be complete by the end of the month and will have preliminary solutions for the pieces of the elements that failed; then Verizon will be ready to meet individually with the PSAPs that failed.

Commissioner Cook expressed frustration that the root cause may lie in a design failure, that the system was never properly tested, and that Verizon needed to do a systemic system assessment. Ms. Davis said Verizon does test for natural and man-made events. When their investigation is done they will understand if this is a design issue.

Commissioner Foreman said most officials and key staff in Dumfries are new and need to re-establish communication with Verizon and other utilities. Ms. Davis promised to share contact information.

Commissioner Baroukh noted the cell system interoperability issue and the need for clear communication between Verizon and electric providers. Ms. Davis assured the members that Verizon and Dominion work together and Verizon works with the cell phone carriers.

Commissioner Hudgins said Verizon should feel a sense of urgency to communicate with localities and the public during an incident such as the June 29 storm and aftermath. Commissioner Bulova noted that the press also was concerned about the lack of information from Verizon. Commissioner McKay said people were not informed via the radio stations that 911 was down and what they should do in an emergency: People listen to the radio news stations when the power is out – this is how they get their news.

Responding to Commissioner Clarke's question about why the generators failed, Ms. Davis said the generators are tested monthly. The generator at the Arlington facility was tested a few days before the derecho and it has started every time in subsequent tests. It has been taken apart and sent back to the manufacturer; however they may never know why that particular generator failed. Portable generators have been placed on site.

*Rodney Blevins
V.P., Operations
Dominion Va. Power*

Mr. Blevins started by addressing Commissioner Baroukh's question of how the utilities work together. Dominion met with Secretary Suit after Hurricane Irene to discuss the utilities working together; from that, Dominion assigned a key account manager to be in direct contact with Verizon. Verizon has identified their critical services, which Dominion has populated in its customer information system. The cable companies are also involved.

In Northern Virginia, 63% of Dominion's customers lost power from the storm; 90% were restored by the end of Tuesday, July 3, and restoration was completed Friday, July 6. The company identified 271 critical facilities in cooperation with the local jurisdictions' emergency operations teams; all but seven were restored by the end of the day Monday, July 2. Dominion received help through the Southeastern Electric Exchange Mutual Assistance Group from electric utilities in 18 states and Canada.

Mr. Blevins explained that Dominion's restoration priority system works in the following order:

- 1) transmission lines
- 2) substations
- 3) critical services (hospitals, water pumping stations, police & fire stations, other public

- health/safety facilities)
- 4) main circuits
- 5) residential lines (serve small customer groups & neighborhoods)
- 6) individual transformers
- 7) individual customers

Mr. Blevins concluded by reviewing Dominion's preparations, including communications/partnerships, prior to severe weather events.

questions & answers

Commissioners expressed concern that residents often face lack of coordination when a power line is down in a tree or fallen limbs and neither Dominion nor the tree company will respond, each saying the other must first deal with it. Mr. Blevins replied the utility finds it works best to pair one of its service people with the jurisdiction's representative or VDOT to get the roads open so the company can gain access to its system for restoration. Commissioner Gross thanked Carolyn Moss of Dominion for working with her on a neighborhood tree issue from the storm.

Commissioner Fisetle complimented Dominion on their communications. He asked if there is a qualitative difference between areas with underground lines versus above ground. Mr. Blevins said the utility has a responsibility to look again at undergrounding – there may be pieces that are more susceptible to storm damage and it would make sense to underground them. He noted that while 63% of the primary facilities in Northern Virginia are underground and 75% of customers in Northern Virginia have underground service, 100% of the region's customers have exposure to overhead facilities between the power plant and their homes. Mr. Blevins, in response to a question by Commissioner Fisetle, noted that not all problems were with overhead lines – some underground service failed.

Commissioner Fisetle asked about typical costs for placing lines underground. Mr. Blevins did not have data at hand and promised to get this information to Commissioner Fisetle.

Commissioner McKay asked what caused residents to be in the 10% not restored by the end of Tuesday and was told it is most likely due to a whole tree being down near the end of circuits. Dominion analyzes the data to make investments in infrastructure. Support of a high quality tree-trimming program is important. Commissioner McKay said if he knows the locations, the county may be able to partner with Dominion to move lines underground through redevelopment opportunities.

Commissioner Clarke spoke of the restoration issues in western Loudoun County due to its rural nature. She also noted the out-of-state utility worker who lost her life in a traffic accident while working in Loudoun County and said that her constituents would like to assist the worker's family. Mr. Blevins reported that Dominion employees were helping the family and would let Commissioner Clarke how to help with the relief fund.

*Jim Moxley
Senior V.P.,
Administration,
Substations and
Telecommunications
NOVEC*

NOVEC's (Northern Virginia Electric Cooperative) service area is 651 square miles in Fairfax, Loudoun, Prince William, Stafford, Fauquier and Clarke counties, serving 148,516 customers. It has 6,670 miles of line, two-thirds of which are underground, 53 substations and 216 miles of fiber optic cable.

NOVEC has been rated best in service reliability in the metro D.C. area for the past twelve years as measured by the System Average Interruption Duration Index – 77 minutes in 2011. The utility is first in customer satisfaction in the nation according to a J.D. Power study and also first in the nation in the category of power quality and reliability.

The derecho caused outages for 39,504 (27%) of NOVEC's customers. The outages were widespread and damage was extensive. The utility provided communication

throughout the event. Power was restored to the last customer at 4:00 p.m. on Thursday, July 5.

NOVEC called in stand-by crews in preparation for the forecasted June 29 storm, with additional contract resources arriving on Saturday. Out-of-state crews began repair work early Monday, July 2. Suppliers were able to fill all special materials requirements.

The utility's restoration plan and continuity of operations plan – based on NIMS – worked well. Selected system "hardening" (making aerial systems resistant to damage) and targeted special tree removals were performed in 2011-12 to reduce outage impact. The storm also showed that deployment of advanced technology helps reduce the number of outages and the duration.

Commissioner Clarke noted that if NOVEC were able to bring on more out-of-state crews, then the recovery could be faster. Mr. Moxley replied NOVEC would look at how it could do more to restore service more quickly.

RESOLUTION
NO. P13-01

In Support of the Commonwealth's Investigation to Address 911 Service Gaps During and After the Derecho Storm on June 29, 2012, and Resulting Homeland Security Concerns

The resolution was distributed, moved by Commissioner Gross, seconded and carried unanimously.

Commissioner Gross commented on the number of residents unprepared for the storm (e.g., lack of batteries, cash, canned food, etc.). She asked staff to research the cost to update the Northern Virginia emergency preparedness brochure that was inserted in *The Washington Post* several years ago, as well as being posted on the jurisdictions' websites. Mr. Gibb replied that jurisdictional staff have been resistant, saying hard copies are not needed. Commissioners also discussed communicating the need for citizen emergency preparedness on an ongoing basis. Chairman Nohe thought this could be done in conjunction with the annual hurricane preparedness sales tax holiday.

MINUTES

The minutes of the June 28, 2012, Commission meeting were moved, seconded and carried unanimously.

CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Gross moved approval of the Consent Agenda, consisting of the May financial reports. The motion was seconded and carried unanimously.

EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR'S
REPORT

Mr. Gibb asked the members to review the material in the meeting package on the formation of the NVRC nonprofit affiliate in preparation for discussion at the September 27 meeting.

Printed copies of the report were distributed:

- Real Time Ridesharing – beta testing underway from park & ride lot in Woodbridge to Defense Health Headquarters in Fairfax; 200 people signed up after 2 weeks promotion.
- Regional Energy Strategy – meeting package contains summary briefing on undergrounding electric lines: prohibitively expensive to underground all lines but it can be a good option for targeted spots and new development.
- Alternate Fuel Vehicles/ State PPEA – Dept. of Mines, Minerals and Energy briefed local fleet managers on July 10 at NVRC. Available to state, local governments and private fleets; provide fuel, infrastructure, vehicles, maintenance and training. Contracts will be in place late July with two vendors providing compressed natural gas and propane. After contracts are finalized, NVRC will host planning meeting for Northern Virginia state, local and private fleet managers.
- Northern Virginia Demographics – Ken Billingsley, NVRC's Director of Demographics

and Information Services, along with a GMU professor, recently presented to the Falls Church City Council, Planning Commission and EDA, resulting in the local paper running a series on the city's demographics.

BRAC REPORT Commissioner McKay, committee chairman, reported the next meeting will be September 27. Tom Davis has been invited to speak.

Virginia Secretary of Homeland Security and Veterans Affairs Terrie Suit met with the Northern Virginia Delegates at NVRC on July 17 to discuss "BRAC-proofing" the region.

RESOLUTION *Authorization to Execute Agreement for Market Analysis of Commuter Ferry Service on*
NO. P12-33 *Occoquan, Potomac and Anacostia Rivers*

Commissioner Principi noted the market analysis will determine the viability of commuter ferry service between Northern Virginia, suburban Maryland and D.C. He moved adoption of the resolution, which was seconded and carried unanimously.

OTHER BUSINESS Commissioner Fisette reported that the task force looking at consolidation of NVTA, NVTC, NVRC and PRTC expects to prepare its draft report next month.

ADJOURNMENT Chairman Nohe adjourned the meeting at 9:49 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

G. Mark Gibb
Executive Director

Approved by:

Martin E. Nohe
Chairman