

## NORTHERN VIRGINIA REGIONAL COMMISSION

### Minutes of the Commission Meeting Held Thursday, September 24, 2015

#### COMMISSIONERS

(The names of those members present are highlighted.)

**Hon. Sharon Bulova**  
**Hon. David S. Butler**  
Hon. Peter Candland  
**Hon. Janet Clarke**  
**Hon. John C. Cook**  
Hon. Laurie A. Dirocco  
Hon. Jay Fissette  
Hon. Gerald M. Foreman II  
Hon. Kwasi Fraser  
Hon. Libby Garvey  
**Hon. Penelope A. Gross, NVRC Chairman**  
Hon. Pat Herrity  
**Hon. Catherine Hudgins**  
Hon. Frank Jones  
**Hon. Jeffrey C. McKay**  
Hon. Lisa C. Merkel  
**Hon. Martin E. Nohe**  
**Hon. Harry J. Parrish II**  
**Hon. Redella S. Pepper, NVRC Treasurer**  
Hon. Frank J. Principi  
**Hon. R. Scott Silverthorne**  
Hon. Paul C. Smedberg  
Hon. Linda Smyth  
Hon. David Tarter  
**Hon. Scott K. York**

**County of Fairfax**  
**Town of Leesburg**  
*County of Prince William*  
**County of Loudoun**  
**County of Fairfax**  
*Town of Vienna*  
*County of Arlington*  
*Town of Dumfries*  
*Town of Purcellville*  
*County of Arlington*  
**County of Fairfax**  
*County of Fairfax*  
**County of Fairfax**  
*City of Manassas Park*  
**County of Fairfax**  
*Town of Herndon*  
**County of Prince William**  
**City of Manassas**  
**City of Alexandria**  
*County of Prince William*  
**City of Fairfax**  
*City of Alexandria*  
*County of Fairfax*  
*City of Falls Church*  
**County of Loudoun**

#### STAFF PRESENT

G. Mark Gibb  
Linda M. Tenney  
Gina Kesselmann-Smith  
Ken Billingsley  
Normand Goulet  
Jeongmin Kim  
Robert Lazaro  
Dale Medearis  
Michelle Simmons  
Peggy Tadej

*Executive Director*  
*Deputy Director*  
*Executive Assistant*  
*Director, Demographics and Information*  
*Senior Environmental Planner, IT Manager*  
*NVRC international intern*  
*Director, Regional Energy Planning*  
*Senior Environmental Planner*  
*Director, Human Services*  
*No. Va. Regional BRAC Coordinator*

#### OTHERS PRESENT

Mustafa Akpinar  
Katie Boyle  
Vaner Kaplan  
Sue Rowland  
Jane Woods  
Laura Yager

*Pinnacle Academy*  
*Fairfax County staff*  
*American Turkish Friendship Association (ATFA)*  
*NVRC – Legislative Liaison*  
*Former Secretary of Health and Human Services, State of Virginia*  
*Fairfax County CSB Director of Partnerships and Resource Development*

- CALL TO ORDER** Chairman Gross called the meeting to order at 7:35 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.
- MINUTES** Commissioner York moved approval of the Commission meeting minutes of July 23, 2015. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Silverthorne and carried unanimously.
- Commissioner Hudgins and Clarke abstained, as they didn't attend the last Commission meeting.
- PRESENTATION 1** Chairman Gross introduced and welcomed Jane Woods, former Secretary of Health and Human Services, State of Virginia.
- Ms. Woods started out by thanking the Commission for this invitation and then introduced Laura Yager, who is the Fairfax County CSB Director of Partnerships and Resource Development.
- Ms. Yager commenced by saying that she wanted to share with the Commission what has been done over the past 12 months and what was done with the money that was received through grants. She went through the slides that were distributed at the beginning of the Commission meeting:
- September is suicide prevention month
  - Background
  - What has funding provided
  - What have we done with funds: Regional texting and hotline services
  - Regional suicide prevention website launch -> [www.suicidepreventionva.org](http://www.suicidepreventionva.org)
  - "Reach out. Find hope." Campaign
  - Youth-led suicide prevention efforts
  - Training and education across jurisdictions
  - Other funds used for...
  - Where are we going?
  - What have we learned?
- Ms. Yager concluded with saying that while progress was made, there is still a lot of work to do.
- Questions and answers* Commissioner Bulova asked for clarification whether there would be a real person answering, if the person who is contemplating suicide decides to either text or call this hotline. Ms Yager confirmed.
- Commissioner Bulova then asked if there is a connection between the hotline and 911. Ms. Yager confirmed this as well, and explained that it is a very rapid intervention.
- Commissioner Parrish asked what happens in the following days after someone contacted this helpline or 911. Ms. Yager explained that there is a follow up system in place, depending on what is needed.
- Commissioner Pepper pointed out that people need to know what signs to look for. Ms. Yager referred to their website ([www.suicidepreventionva.org](http://www.suicidepreventionva.org)).
- Chairman Gross mentioned that older men seem to be affected the most by suicide and they may not be as communicative. So she was wondering what should be done about

this.

Ms. Woods responded by saying that training will become available, for instance, for the Postal Service, as that is who the older people are talking to.

Chairman Gross also added that the Korean community in this region is suffering from mostly teen suicides. So the cultural and ethnic part in this process is important. What is needed is a pathway into such communities.

Ms. Yager commented that they reached out to the Korean Church and schools and her group would love to help, as there are so many taboos in this culture.

PRESENTATION 2 Chairman Gross reported on the Workforce Summit that took place September 22, 2015. She also asked Mr. Lazaro (NVRC staff) to give the Commission a quick summary of this event.

Mr. Lazaro said that this event was a team effort with good partners. All the speakers were great, as well as the breakout sessions. The next step is to receive the report from Harmony Crew, who were the facilitators. This report will be sent to all the Commissioners. The outcome of this event is that Northern Virginia needs to develop a brand, that our schools need to have conversations with the business community about what the job pipeline is for the future.

Mr. Lazaro also thanked the NVRC staff, and especially Mr. Schwengel for all the hard work in advance.

Chairman Gross then thanked Mr. Lazaro, who did a great job as well. She added that very important leaders were there and everyone was engaged. This event also presented an opportunity to establish a really good working relationship with the Chamber of Commerce. Now short-, mid- and long-term goals need to be set. All together, this was a huge leap forward in addressing workforce issues.

Mr. Lazaro also expressed appreciation for Mr. Ralls, the President of Northern Virginia Community College, for donating the room and food for this event.

Mr. Gibb added that this would have not been possible without the Northern Virginia Regional Commission and without Chairman Gross. He then thanked Chairman Gross for her dedication and skillset in making this happen.

Chairman Gross concluded by saying that this was a remarkable event.

CONSENT AGENDA Upon a motion made and duly seconded, the Consent Agenda consisting of the items outlined below was approved with Commissioner Pepper voting Nay, as she expressed the City of Alexandria's concerns related to landing points for proposed ferry within the City of Alexandria.

- **Resolution No. P16-02:** Authorization to apply for funding from the District Department of Transportation and VA Department of Transportation Alternatives Program

EXECUTIVE  
DIRECTOR'S  
REPORT

Printed copies of the report were distributed and Mr. Gibb went through the slides:

- Solarize Campaign Update
- Northern Virginia Sustainability Network
- 4 Mile Run Project Update
- HOPWA
- Demographics & Workforce

- Leesylvania Statepark Shoreline Restoration
- Coastal Zone Management Grants
- Community, Military & Federal Facility Partnership
- “Lunch Conversation with Congressman Beyer”
- The German Marshall Fund of the United States
- Bicycle Pedestrian Safety Event in Herndon
- NVWMB (Waste Board)
- 

The Executive Director’s report also included two resolutions, outlined below.

Upon a motion made and duly seconded, both resolutions were approved.

- **Resolution No. P16-04:** Authorization to accept and subcontract housing opportunities for persons with AIDS (HOPWA) 2015-2016 funds in suburban Virginia
- **Resolution No. P16-05:** Support of the regional blanket/winter coat drive for Syrian/Iraqi refugees fleeing violence in the Middle East

Mr. Akpinar from the Pinnacle Academy added that the situation in Turkey is very bad. There are more than 2 million refugees in Turkey out of 4 million. The majority of these refugees lives on the streets or in tents. They have no jobs, no money, etc. This is why the blanket drive is so important.

Mr. Akpinar also introduced his new Program Director of the American Turkish Friendship Association (ATFA), Mr. Vaner Kaplan, who will be coordinating this year’s blanket drive.

Commissioner Bulova added that the refugee situation is heartbreaking and that since the US will be taking in refugees as well, maybe a potential refugee family sponsorship should be thought of.

Chairman Gross pointed out that a similar system was established after Hurricane Katrina. So the framework is already in place.

Commissioner Nohe pointed out that it is important to realize that the people we are helping with the blanket drive are the people who are running from IS and Asad. All the refugees who are in Germany, Hungary, Turkey, etc., are the same refugees running from the same violence.

Chairman Gross described this situation as a humanitarian crisis.

Commissioner Silverthorne added that he had a life altering experience last year, when he went to Turkey to distribute the blankets. In 2013 the City of Fairfax didn’t participate, but did in 2014 and it was great. He asked what the goal is as far as numbers of the blankets. And that a healthy competition might be interesting.

Commissioner Bulova said that it is hard to track what jurisdiction is giving where and Chairman Gross added that numbers are fun, but collecting is the important part.

Mr. Lazaro shared with the Commission that the Washington Post might be able to promote this event as well. And the tentative date for the announcement of the Blanket Drive is the 5<sup>th</sup> of November, 2015 at the Fairfax County Government Center.

Chairman Gross asked what else is going to be taken as a donation. Mr. Akpinar responded that blankets, coats and money (through the ATFA website) are going to be accepted.

**NVRC BUDGET** Commissioner Pepper moved approval of the budget resolution P16-03 - Annual budget and programs FY16. The motion was seconded by Commissioner McKay and carried unanimously.

Commissioner Pepper referred to p.4 of the budget material and pointed out that the dues haven't increased.

The General Assembly is not funding what needs to be funded. So Chairman Gross reported that the Executive Committee is proposing to get together a small group of Commissioners to focus on increasing funding. She then asked the following Commissioners, if they agree to be part of this group, which they do:

- Commissioner Siverthorne
- Commissioner Cook
- Commissioner DiRocco
- Commissioner Nohe
- Commissioner Fraser

**NVTA REPORT** Commissioner Nohe reported that the jurisdictions are being invited to submit projects for the FY17 one-year plan.

He also added that there will be a big discussion on what role NVTA is going to play in the I-66 issue.

**CLOSED SESSION** Chairman Gross canceled the closed session and reported the outcome of the lawyer's report on the personnel matter. All allegations were proven to be false. The investigation is concluded.

**ADJOURNMENT** Chairman Gross adjourned the meeting at 8:51 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

G. Mark Gibb  
Executive Director

Approved by:

Penelope Gross,  
Chairman