

**THE DRAFT SUMMARY OF THE MEETING OF THE
HRPDC SEA LEVEL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
OCTOBER 9, 2015**

1. Summary of the July 31, 2015 Meeting of the Special Committee on Recurrent Flooding and Sea Level Rise

The Summary of the July 31, 2015 Meeting of the Special Committee on Recurrent Flooding and Sea Level Rise was accepted as distributed.

2. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

3. Updates on University Efforts Related to Sea Level Rise and Recurrent Flooding

There were no updates from university representatives.

4. HRPDC Work Program Follow-Up

Mr. Ben McFarlane, HRPDC, briefed the Committee on the outcomes from the Chief Administrative Officers meeting related to sea level rise. The CAOs discussed the list of potential projects the Committee put together at the July meeting. They settled on three tasks for the near future:

- 1) Developing maps of existing recurrent flooding
- 2) Identifying projects of regional importance and developing criteria for prioritization
- 3) Discussing and potentially developing regional sea level rise planning scenarios

Ms. Michelle Hamor, USACE, asked if regional projects referred to multi-jurisdictional projects. Mr. McFarlane stated that multi-jurisdictional projects are likely to be most, but not necessarily all, of the projects considered.

Mr. McFarlane also announced that the HRPDC has been invited to put together a scope of work for a Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program grant that would focus on integrating coastal hazards into local plans. The HRPDC staff will be developing this scope over the next several months.

5. Dutch Dialogues

Mr. Matt Smith, Hampton, gave a presentation to the Committee on the work of the Newmarket Creek Watershed Team from the Dutch Dialogues workshop in June. The group broke up the watershed into three parts: narrow creek, residential creek, and bay creek. Issues and potential strategies were developed for each of the subwatersheds.

For the narrow creek, strategies included widening the floodplain, integrating it into the built environment as an amenity through parks and stormwater management BMPs. For the residential creek component, the team looked at reducing runoff and regulating the water level using tide gates. The goal for this area is to increase the capacity of the floodplain and add value to surrounding areas. For the bay creek part, the team looked at installing a protection structure and building storage areas. The city is also looking at tying its development plans for the downtown and Coliseum area. The team adopted three general guidelines:

- 1) Work with the system, not against it
- 2) Don't accept solutions that *only* work – look for those that add value
- 3) Be careful with water

For next steps, the city is looking at building and continuing partnerships with neighboring localities, the Corps, VIMS, and others. The city will be convening a Newmarket Creek Team to build on the workshop results, develop a plan for the basin, identify project priorities, and seek funding for implementation.

Ms. Ellen Roberts, asked if there has been lasting impact from the workshop on the city. Mr. Smith stated that the overall reaction has been positive and is already resulting in some changes to city policies and plans.

6. National Disaster Resilience Competition

Mr. Ben McFarlane, HRPDC, updated the Committee on the status of the NDRC. The developing of the application by the three eligible cities (Chesapeake, Newport News, and Norfolk) and state agencies is ongoing. The application is due to HUD by October 27. Public hearings are scheduled to be held on October 15 in each of the three cities.

7. Regional Sea Level Rise Inundation Maps

Mr. McFarlane reported on the status of new regional sea level rise inundation maps. The CAOs suggested focusing on one scenario of sea level rise as a demonstration of the tool and methodology than having several included in the report. This single scenario reflects two feet of sea level rise above current estimated (based on sea level trends from 1992-2014) mean higher high water. The HRPDC staff will be sending out the new GIS data layers for this single layer today. The report and accompanying maps will be submitted to the Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program by November 15. The HRPDC staff is also continuing to support the HRTPO's efforts to include sea level rise in the long-range transportation planning process. This includes developing GIS layers for the three scenarios: 2 feet of sea level rise above the established mean higher high

water datum, 2 feet of sea level rise plus a 25-year storm surge event, and 2 feet of sea level rise plus a 50-year storm surge event.

The next meeting of the Hampton Roads Adaptation Forum will be held on October 30, 2015 at VMASC. The focus will be on adaptation tools and strategies from around world. Information will be sent out next week.

8. Update on State Efforts Related to Sea Level Rise and Recurrent Flooding

Mr. McFarlane reported that the Joint Subcommittee on Recurrent Flooding met on September 15 at the Virginia Institute of Marine Science in Gloucester Point. Mr. McFarlane gave a presentation to the subcommittee on the role of the HRPDC in planning for sea level rise. The Governor's Climate Change and Resiliency Update Commission met on August 31, 2015 to vote on its final recommendations (based on the recommendations submitted by each of the five workgroups) to submit to the governor. The commission selected five:

- 1) Creating a special bank to help finance clean energy efforts, such as solar power projects, as well as resiliency projects, such as elevating homes near rising seas.
- 2) Creating a state clearinghouse for climate change information.
- 3) Establishing a renewable energy target for state agencies.
- 4) Adopting a program to increase the number of vehicles that do not emit carbon dioxide.
- 5) Seeking federal dollars for programs to make communities in coastal, Southside and Southwest Virginia models for warding off the effects of climate change.

The draft recommendations were submitted to the governor last week. The commission is tentatively scheduled to meet again in approximately six months to discuss the progress on the recommendations.

9. Updates on Local Efforts Related to Sea Level Rise and Recurrent Flooding

Ms. Ellen Roberts, Poquoson, reported that Hampton and Poquoson were able to get the Wythe Creek Road causeway project to incorporate sea level rise. The two cities are also going to hire a joint resiliency officer.

Portsmouth staff reported that the city adopted an update to its floodplain management plan in September. The City's CRS program was reviewed in September. Points of emphasis included surveyor license numbers and comparing the floodplain management plan with the hazard mitigation plan. The city's program for public information was reviewed separately. The city expects a new declaration by December 1, which will go into effect in May 2016. Ms. Roberts mentioned that when Poquoson's

rating was lowered that many insurance companies were not aware of the increase in the discount to insurance premiums.

HRSD staff reported that the U.S. Department of Homeland Security is working on a report on hurricanes, sea level rise, and storm surge for Norfolk.

Mr. Mohammed Shar, Newport News, reported that the city's NDRC projects are in two locations, Newmarket Creek and Southeast. The city also increased its freeboard from 1' to 2' and has established a CRS committee.

Ms. Claire Jones, Suffolk, reported that the city received a technical assistance grant from the Green Infrastructure Center to help the city better integrate stormwater management and floodplain management. The city will be working with Isle of Wight County on the project.

Ms. Whitney McNamara, Virginia Beach, reported that Dewberry is still working on the city's sea level rise study and that the city is looking at how to incorporate sea level rise into its comprehensive plan.

Ms. Tara Fisher, Chesapeake, reported that the city continues to work on its NDRC application.

Mr. Matt Smith, Hampton, reported that the city received a technical assistance grant from the Green Infrastructure Center which will look at the downtown area and Wythe creek. The USACE Newmarket Creek study is proceeding. The city has installed a new tide gauge with the U.S. Geological Survey on Newmarket Creek.

Ms. Roberts reported that Joaquin caused minor damage to ten houses, and one business was closed for two days. Several roads flooded. The city took advantage of a flood modeling tool from NASA, which factors in projected tide levels at the Sewell's Point tide gauge and the lag between tides there and in Poquoson. This helps the city know when roads will be flooded. The validation that occurred during the storm event is very valuable.

Mr. Scott Thomas, James City County, reported that the county board will be considering new flood insurance rate maps for the Powhatan Creek area on October 13, and that the maps will go into effect in December.

Mr. Brian Lewis, Gloucester County, reported that the county suffered no significant damage from Joaquin, but there were many road closures. The county has been very

active in applying for FEMA mitigation grants, which have enabled the county to raise about forty homes. The USGS recently installed a new tide gauge in Mobjack Bay. The county planning department is working on an update to the comprehensive plan.

Ms. Michelle Hamor, USACE, reported that the feasibility study for Norfolk is getting underway. The Silver Jackets are working on a high water marking project in Richmond. Researchers from the University of Pennsylvania will be returning to Norfolk for a follow-up workshop on coastal resilience strategies.

Mr. Randy Keaton, HRPDC, reported that Del. Ron Villanueva will be presenting his proposal for Virginia to join the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative at the October commission meeting.

Ms. Whitney Katchmark, HRPDC, reported that the HRPDC is working with the USGS on developing a plan to monitor subsidence, and that a meeting for the project will be on October 29 at the HRPDC.

Ms. Mary-Carson Stiff, Wetlands Watch, reported that the Wetlands Watch phone app for mapping flooding is now available for Android devices.

10. Committee Comments

There were no additional comments from the Committee.

11. Other Matters

The next meeting of the Sea Level Rise Advisory Committee is scheduled for November 20, 2015.