

**THE DRAFT SUMMARY OF THE MEETING OF THE
HRPDC COASTAL RESILIENCY COMMITTEE
JUNE 24, 2016**

1. Summary of the March 25, 2016 Meeting of the Hampton Roads Coastal Resiliency Committee.

The summary of the March 25, 2016 meeting of the Hampton Roads Coastal Resiliency Committee was accepted as distributed.

2. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

3. Wetlands Watch Adaptation Strategy Guide

Mr. Skip Stiles and Mr. Ross Weaver, Wetlands Watch, gave a briefing to the Committee on their organization's Local Government Staff Guide for Adaptation. The goal of the project is to document what localities are currently doing, identify information needed by localities to implement adaptation efforts, identify roadblocks, and produce a guide for Virginia localities to assist in their adaptation efforts. As part of the effort, Wetlands Watch staff conducted a series of interviews with local officials and worked with several state agencies and municipal organizations. In general, Wetlands Watch found that many localities are working on adaptation, despite significant hurdles and a lack of state direction. There are many differences between localities, particularly between rural and urban localities and coastal and non-coastal localities. There is a significant need for education of public officials, and there will likely be conflicts between adaptation and existing programs. The guide itself will be hosted on a website and is designed to be easily read and understood. Each adaptation policy or strategy features several components:

- A section overview
- Legislative authority for the action
- Available CRS credits, if applicable
- Sample ordinance language
- A Virginia case study, if available
- Benefits and barriers
- Useful tools
- Locality feedback
- Additional resources

Wetlands Watch is actively seeking feedback from locality staff to improve the product.

Mr. John Horne, James City County, pointed out that the comprehensive plan section was very broad and recommended incorporating more specific examples.

Mr. Eric Martin, Chesapeake, stated that the comparative tables were useful.

Mr. Brian Lewis, Gloucester County, identified VDOT's not maintaining outfall ditches and lateral ditches as a major issue.

4. Communicating Resiliency

Ms. Whitney Katchmark, HRPDC, briefed the Committee on a proposal by staff to better communicate local resiliency efforts to the public. The goal of the presentation was to determine whether or not it was a priority of local governments to increase public awareness of planning and implementation of resiliency projects. Potential options included having the HRPDC issue press releases, compose opinion pieces for local newspapers, send out newsletters, make presentations to various groups, and put more materials online. Target audiences could include businesses, the general public, and elected officials.

The Committee did not feel as if this would be a productive use of HRPDC staff time. Many are already managing their own communication efforts. One recommendation was to make PDC and HRTPO reports more accessible, possibly through better summaries.

5. Update on Discussions with FEMA and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Ms. Katchmark updated the Committee on discussions with FEMA and VDEM on the use of mitigation funds. The Coastal Resiliency Workgroup met on May 20th with VDEM representatives in attendance, and the HRDPC staff briefed the HRPDC All Hazards Advisory Committee on May 24th. The result of these conversations was a consensus regional position and request was not sufficiently developed to present to FEMA Region III staff during a monitoring visit in early June. More research is needed to define the problems and identify causes. The HRPDC staff identified four issues to send to VDEM:

- 1) The cap for mitigation-reconstruction project is too low.
- 2) Increased Cost of Compliance (ICC) coverage is too low.
- 3) Budgets often need to be revised for elevation projects as they get underway – localities would like to include contingency funds in original budgets.
- 4) Localities would like FEMA Region III to delegate some authorities to VDEM, such as for small change orders.

Ms. Katchmark also reported that VDEM is in the process of reorganizing some functions and staff responsibilities related to mitigation grants management.

HRPDC staff will continue to research the identified issues and report back to the Committee once more information is developed.

The Committee pointed out that one of the issues with FEMA is that the pilots used as models for national programs are not representative.

Mr. Robb Braidwood, Chesapeake, recommended getting the notes from a meeting with Dr. Stearn from VDEM. He also pointed out that Governor McAuliffe is the upcoming chair of the National Governor's Association, and that mitigation could be one of his four priority items.

Mr. Speaker Pollard pointed out that FEMA has posted a new guidance document on ICC.

6. HRPDC Coastal Resiliency Work Program Update

Mr. Ben McFarlane, HRPDC, updated the Committee on the HRPDC's Coastal Resiliency work program. The HRPDC staff is currently working on two projects identified as priorities by the chief administrative officers: mapping recurrent flooding and prioritizing regional resiliency projects. The effort to map recurrent flooding has run into several issues, including inconsistent data and difficulty in modeling. Mr. McFarlane asked for guidance from the Committee on what map products localities would like to see. Options include mapping areas that experience flooding based on local knowledge and/or data to help track improvements, modeling nuisance flooding under present conditions and with sea level rise, and promoting apps or additional sensors.

Ms. Michelle Hamor, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, stated that the Virginia Silver Jackets is applying for an interagency grant to map inundation based on tide gauges. Ms. Molly Mitchell, VIMS, stated that they are also working on an effort to combine precipitation flooding and tidal flooding. Mr. Braidwood suggested that the regional hazard mitigation might have some of this information.

For prioritizing projects, the HRPDC staff has identified three potential uses: internal tracking, getting state or federal support, and giving outside organizations ideas for projects they can help with. Criteria can be developed for either prioritizing resiliency projects that have regional impacts or for projects that are in the region.

The Committee recommended developing a list of projects with regional impacts and using that list to get state and federal support.

The Committee expressed interest in having the HRPDC look into assisting localities with FEMA-funded mitigation projects through regional contracts or other assistance. An example of an existing contract is the regional debris removal contract. Mr. Braidwood suggested developing pool of contractors for mitigation projects.

7. Collaborating with U.S. Department of Transportation

Mr. McFarlane briefed the Committee on a report by the U.S. Department of Transportation's Volpe Center, titled "Hampton Roads Climate Impact Quantification Initiative: Scoping Paper and Preliminary Baseline Assessment of the Transportation Assets in Hampton Roads." The report was based in part on USDOT staff's interactions with the ODU-led Intergovernmental Pilot Project. The report is a summary of existing datasets and conditions. The report was not presented to the HRTPO's Transportation Technical Advisory Committee.

The HRPDC and HRTPO staffs will be reaching out to FHWA and other USDOT staff involved in the report to provide comments and discuss potential efforts.

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

There were no updates on state efforts.

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

Mr. Greg Johnson, Virginia Beach, reported that the city is still working on its comprehensive strategy for addressing water quality, sea level rise, and flooding. The hydraulic modeling component has been finished, and the water quality component will be addressed next.

Mr. Don Jennings, Isle of Wight County, reported that the county is working on watershed studies and that the county's MS4 permit has been terminated.

Mr. Brian Lewis, Gloucester County, reported that the county has put out four elevation projects for bid.

Mr. Eric Martin, Chesapeake, reported that the city's MS4 permit has been issued and that it includes action plans and mapping. Mr. Martin also reported that the new FEMA elevation certificate is available for use.

Mr. Mark Carter, York County, reported that the county is working on the last details of construction designs for six home elevation projects.

Mr. Tom Leahy, Virginia Beach, reported that the city will be installing 30-50 frequent flooding sensors starting in FY17. This has been included in the city's CIP. The city is also working on several home elevation projects.

Mr. Skip Stiles, Wetlands Watch, reported that they have received a grant to update the organization's sea level rise/flooding app.

10. Other Matters

The next meeting of the Coastal Resiliency Committee will be held in September 2016.