

Recurring Coastal Flooding Subpanel of the Secure Commonwealth Panel

House 1, Virginia State Capitol, 1000 Bank Street, Richmond, Virginia 23219

Wednesday, September 25 @ 1100

Meeting Minutes

Panel Members Present:

Senator John Watkins (Co-chair)	Mr. Paul Conway
Mr. Jim Redick (Co-chair)	Mr. Joe Bouchard
Secretary Doug Domenech	Mr. Bret Burdick (for Mr. Michael Cline)
Mr. Mike Landefeld (for Secretary Jim Hopper)	Mr. Dwight Farmer
Delegate Margaret (Margi) Vanderhye	Ms. Michelle Hamor
CPT John Korka (for RADM Dixon Smith)	Mr. Jeb Wilkinson (for Mr. David Johnson)
Ms. Janine Burns	Mr. David Paylor

Additional Staff Support:

Bryan Pennington
Latoya Vaughn

Agenda Item #1 – Welcome and Introductions

Welcome by Senator Watkins

Co-Chair Senator Watkins discussed the importance of the subpanel and other flood mitigation efforts being conducted including a Homeland Security Planning and Management [JLARC study](#) due in October 2013. The Senator also stated that the task for this meeting will be to develop a schedule for the future and assign sub-groups for research.

Agenda Item # 2 – The Virginia Institute of marine Science (VIMS) reviews Senate Document 3, 2013: “ Recurrent Flooding Study for Tidewater Virginia,” Ms. Molly Mitchell

Presentation slide are included as an attachment.

Agenda Item #3 – Key finding and next steps, Jim Redick, Director of Emergency Preparedness and Response City of Norfolk and Co-chairman of the Subpanel.

Co-Chair Mr. Redick provided the Subpanel with an overview of the key issues and recommended the formation of smaller issue –specific workgroups (the workgroups are envisioned to be comprised of subpanel members and identified experts). Mr. Redick also introduced the group to the working document where a collection of data through a variety of

sources has been (and continues to be) entered and categorized by the respective VIMS recommendations. He asked the Sub-Panel members to review the document and provide input. Likewise, to ensure an inclusive and comprehensive approach, he further announced all participating technical expert agencies and partners would have the opportunity to review and comment on the material.

Agenda Item #4 – Additional Business, including discussing future meeting dates (meeting dates for the workgroups and subpanel)

Summary of Additional Comments and Observations:

The group agreed on three overarching areas on which to focus:

1. Prevention
2. Protection of Property through Policy (to include strategies for rebuilding)
3. Awareness of the Competition for Resources Among Other States/Regions

Likewise, there must be a discussion and agreement about what success means, how it will be measured, and that which is idealistic versus realistic. This includes establishing short, medium and long term goals. Furthermore, the group must be cautious of recommendations that could impact other areas or cause unintentional consequences.

In terms of competition, Virginia has great assets, but is not yet competitive for federal resources. Other states are further along in the efforts and it is important to assess the state's ability to compete against other states for federal funding. Becoming competitive will require the Virginia delegation to be well informed and knowledgeable of the subject matter.

Additional discussion is categorized as follows:

Unity of Effort

Ms. Hamor commented that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers North Atlantic Division is conducting a [comprehensive study](#) from Virginia to Maine as directed by Congress in response to Hurricane Sandy. The report looks at vulnerability for the coast and sea level rise now and in the future. The Army Corps Norfolk Region is continuing efforts to make sure Virginia's voice is heard. The group opined it often takes an event to get attention. The threat is present and there are limited resources.

One observation involved the chain of command for both the Army Corps of Engineers and FEMA. While there are shared interests at all levels, and great relationships at the local level, USACE reports to the Department of Defense while FEMA is part of the Department of Homeland Security. These parallel channels make it challenging to align priorities and resources.

Economic Impact

Another significant issue moving forward is the importance of financial analysis / quantifying economic data related to flood damage throughout the Tidewater and the Commonwealth. Additionally, efforts should be taken to identify which government resources are likely to be impacted.

One economic concern has to do with the recent changes to flood insurance and the (in)ability of home and business owners to secure or maintain insurance for their property. Additionally, while costs may be more actuary, the rise in flood insurance costs has an impact on one's ability to sell their home, which can decrease property value, and ultimately impact real estate taxes at the local level. Likewise, there was concern regarding the further decline in land tax revenue for areas which may need to be transitioned into wetlands.

The important role of the insurance industry was also discussed, with mention of the [North Carolina Coastal Property Insurance Pool](#) where insurance companies pooled together to insure high risk properties. There was a past attempt to introduce legislation to develop something similar in Hampton Roads (~15 years ago) but with no success.

Critical Infrastructure / Key Resources (CI/KR)

In addition to identifying government impacts, the threat to Critical Infrastructure / Key Resources – most of which is owned and operated by the private sector – is also a critical component.

One of the most critical assets in the region is the Department of Defense. There was discussion about the Navy's efforts and their taking into account flooding to piers, which is reflected in the recent modifications to Craney Island. There was also mention of the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization's (HRTPO's) Report: "[Hampton Roads Military Transportation Needs – Roadways Serving the Military and Sea Level Rise/Storm Surge.](#)" A separate effort underway has been the [Homeland Security Regional Resiliency Assessment Program \(RRAP\)](#) which focuses on the transportation network in Hampton Roads. (This latter report has not yet been finalized). The interest was expressed in conducting similar assessments for all Critical Infrastructure and Key Resources (CI/KR) in the Commonwealth vulnerable to recurrent flooding, with the acknowledgement it would require significant and on-going collaboration with the private sector (power, cable, etc.). It was also understood loss of these assets could stifle disaster recovery efforts.

One addition report mentioned during the meeting focused on the military risk assessment of recurrent flooding / sea level rise at Naval Station Norfolk. This report will be provided to sub-panel members with announcement of a presentation on the report by Ms. Kelly Burkes-Copes at Old Dominion University later in October. Co-Chair Senator Watkins recommended inviting Ms. Burkes-Copes to present for the Sub-Panel as well.

Legal

It was mentioned efforts should be taken as part of the Sub-Pane's approach to revisiting and otherwise exploring Virginia laws regarding property owner's rights and addressing protection needs.

Mapping

The issue of mapping resources and the use of [LIDAR](#) data was also discussed. Senator Watkins mentioned the availability of LIDAR data and other resources housed with VITA's Virginia Geographic Information Network (VGIN), which can be found online at <http://www.vita.virginia.gov/isp/default.aspx?id=12104>.

After the meeting it was also found that VGIN partners with William and Mary Geospatial Analysis with LIDAR data available for various locations throughout coastal Virginia – found [here](#)).

Senator Watkins advised that the next meeting will be scheduled in late October, possibly in Hampton Roads. The Co- Chairs will work on assigning work groups and look into scheduling a presentation by Kelly Burkes-Copes.

Adjourned