

Virginia Coastal Resilience Master Planning Framework
Technical Advisory Committee Meeting
Meeting Minutes
February 26, 2021 – 8:00 AM – 10:00 AM
Virtual Public Meeting

Welcome and Convening Language - Secretary Strickler

The event began at 8:00 am. The meeting was held by Webex. In attendance were Secretary Strickler, Rear Admiral Phillips, Appointed and Invited Members of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), and their designated representatives. Rear Admiral Phillips Called the roll, a quorum was present.

Secretary Strickler welcomed the committee and read the legal statement of Chapter 1289 of the 2020 Acts of Assembly (the Budget Bill) and called for a vote to continue the meeting by virtual means in accordance with Chapter 1289.

Secretary Strickler transitioned the meeting to Rear Admiral Phillips. Rear Admiral Ann Phillips did the roll call vote under Chapter 1289, with appointed Technical Advisory Committee members, appointed members' designated representatives, invited Technical Advisory Committee members, and invited members' designated representatives. The Committee voted to continue the meeting.

TAC Process Updates - Rear Admiral Phillips

Admiral Phillips thanked the staff advisors who helped with the TAC meeting process. She stated that the process of hiring a contractor who will assist with the professional engineering services is not yet complete, and there will be another TAC meeting convened when the contractor is selected. She stated that an update of the Atlas 14 data has been funded and is in progress, and the study for Rainfall Intensity Duration and Frequency Modeling, statewide, aligned with similar work being funded by the Chesapeake Bay Trust, will be complete by May 2021 with all data being publicly available.

Subcommittee Update and Discussion

Project Identification Subcommittee – Lewis Lawrence

Lewie Lawrence gave a presentation of the initial work of the Project Identification subcommittee.

Secretary Strickler stressed the importance of identifying different types of projects and opened the discussion to other members of the committee.

Dr. Hershner said that the work of the Project Identification subcommittee is critical for the Project Evaluation subcommittee. He said that the development of plans is one of the near-term

goals, and the challenge for the subcommittees is to define what is an acceptable plan. Mr. Lawrence agreed with Dr. Hershner.

Denise Nelson asked how the subcommittee's work will be coordinated with the contractor's work. Mr. Lawrence said that it was not decided. Secretary Strickler agreed and added that the committee can expect a high level of coordination between the subcommittees and the contractor.

Dr. Rob Young stated that it's important to distinguish between projects which require long-term funding from the public sector and projects which are cost-saving for the public sector. Mr. Lawrence stated that the question of who is the beneficiary of the federal or state investment and why is crucial when determining project categories.

Secretary Strickler read a comment from Kevin Du Bois which asked if the strategic retreat is an additional project theme. Mr. Lawrence agreed that retreat strategies are considered to be a type of project, and he stated that the planning document of retreat strategies is assigned to another subcommittee.

Dr. Young agreed that retreat strategies have to be considered as projects. Elizabeth Andrews also agreed with Dr. Young. She stated that she has a team which is working on revising the scorecard from the RAFT project, and suggested that there could be future opportunity to collaborate. Mr. Lawrence agreed.

Dr. Karen McGlathery asked how the subcommittee is looking at the projects through an equity lens. Mr. Lawrence answered that the subcommittee is looking at projects from both a low-income perspective and geographic perspective. Dr. McGlathery added to her question and asked if minority community is a consideration since these communities don't necessarily fall into geographic or low-income category. Mr. Lawrence answered that much of the subcommittee's decision will need to depend on the rules of the Community Flood Preparedness Fund.

Secretary Strickler acknowledge the importance of the issue Dr. McGlathery raised and stated that the TAC will need to have continued discussion on the matter.

Jill Bieri commented that we need to prioritize areas that are both low-income and high-risk.

Col. Pat Kinsman said that one challenge for the committee is to develop a concept of approach and a timeline. He commended the Commonwealth's effort and stated that given the various scale of projects, and stated that it is important to figure out what the responsibility of the contractors is and how the TAC's input is integrated into the Plan.

Secretary Strickler stated that while the Plan will be as comprehensive as possible, it will need revision over time. Future administrations must improve upon and revise the Plan.

Whitney Katchmark asked whether the Project Identification subcommittee is focusing on creating a list of projects or setting up a framework of how projects are defined.

Mr. Lawrence answered that it's neither and both. He said that the subcommittee still needs to figure it out. He stated that the direction of the subcommittee will be clearer once the contractor is on board.

Project Evaluation Subcommittee - Dr. Carl Hershner

Dr. Hershner stated that the goal for the Project Evaluation subcommittee is to have a set of evaluation protocols for the TAC by the end of the summer. He said that the subcommittee is focusing on the five guiding principles in the Framework and trying to develop a set of metrics to evaluate projects.

Dr. Mark Luckenbach asked how do subcommittees interact with the contractors. Secretary Strickler answered that the contractor will be actively engaging with the subcommittees, and any direction to the contractor will need to be given by the Commonwealth.

Mr. Lawrence asked Dr. Hershner to elaborate on how communities that are suffering from revenue loss due to devaluation of the land can feedback to the Project Evaluation subcommittee.

Dr. Hershner answered that to address equity across the coastal zone, communities' capacity to do planning and maintenance is an important consideration.

Skip Stiles said that given the timing for both the TAC and the Community Flood Preparedness Fund, the project selection will need to be done by July, and therefore the TAC's work to inform such process will need to be done by June. He stated that the information provided by TAC to the contractor will need to be done before the November deadline. He is concerned with the process to produce the deliverables.

Secretary Strickler acknowledged the pressing timeline of the Plan. He corrected that the Community Flood Preparedness Fund guidelines ~~are~~ developed by the Department of Conservation and Recreation, and TAC may offer recommendations ~~onto~~ the guidelines. He stated that while the TAC is welcome to advise the Commonwealth and provide any suggestions, there is no pressure for the TAC to have any type of formal process for grant evaluation.

Finance Subcommittee - Elizabeth Andrews

Elizabeth Andrews shared the progress of their first subcommittee meeting. She laid out the subcommittee meeting schedule and agendas for each meeting.

Secretary Strickler thanked Elizabeth Andrews for the effort.

Dr. McGlathery suggested that there might be opportunities to leverage the National Science Foundation funding since many proposals intersect with the subcommittee's goals.

Bob Crum commended Ms. Andrews' effort as the subcommittee chair. He stated that the new federal administration is launching the conversation of a new infrastructure bill, and the focus of

the TAC, including resiliency, sea-level rise, and environmental justice, will become a priority. He suggested that it is worth monitoring the discussion at the federal level.

Jessica Grannis added that there were opportunities passed in the last congress, and there will be an opportunity with the FEMA BRIC program which could change funding source. She stated that these are good opportunities for the states to apply.

Ms. Andrews agreed and added that her subcommittee members will be covering those topics during meetings, and her subcommittee will keep monitoring.

Mr. Crum commented that while it might be early to consider, the TAC could identify the steps for projects to be shovel-ready and qualify for funding. He said that the subcommittees could work together and provide resources for communities.

Ms. Andrews stated that the contractor can work with subcommittees to match projects with funding sources.

Community Outreach Subcommittee – Ashley Montgomery

Ashley Montgomery presented the current effort of the Community Outreach subcommittee. She laid out the plan of the subcommittee to identify capacities and gaps. She said that the subcommittee is working to establish their general message and get it to the communities.

Mr. Stiles agreed with what Ms. Montgomery has laid out as subcommittee progress. He added that in Wetlands Watch's comments on the Community Flood Preparedness Fund guidelines, it also stated that an adequate plan for funding application needs to have proof that the localities have conducted outreach at the community level.

Ms. Montgomery agreed and stated that it's a priority of the subcommittee to identify the capacities and gaps, and have the results ready for the contractor.

Dr. McGlathery offered that the UVA's Climate Equity Center and the Environmental Resilience Institute is developing a climate equity atlas for the Eastern Shore with regional stakeholders, and the director Barbara Brown Wilson could join the subcommittee as an advisor.

Secretary Strickler thanked Ms. Montgomery for the work she has done with the subcommittee.

Studies, Research, and Best Practices Subcommittee – Dr. Robert Weiss

Dr. Weiss gave a presentation about the charge and updates of the Studies, Research, and Best Practices subcommittee. He listed the tasks for the subcommittee.

John Bateman asked if there is existing research on the economic impact of non-action or the economic impact of resiliency.

Dr. Weiss agreed that it is a valuable question. Mr. Bateman said that there might already be related studies. Dr. Weiss answered that the complexity of these types of studies may be a roadblock, but conducting such studies is worth considering.

Dr. McGlathery mentioned that nature-based solutions are-is a priority, and there are multiple studies on the efficacy of different nature-based solutions. She said that having the result of these studies articulated in the subcommittee tasks s is important.

Dr. Weiss agreed and added that he is considering inviting advisors who can speak on the topic to make worthwhile investments in the solutions.

Dr. Weiss concluded that the priority task for the subcommittee is to understand nature-based solutions, and the second priority is the relocation handbook.

Dr. Troy Hartley asked if the deliverable can be operationalized definitions of resilience which is measurable.

Dr. Weiss stated that there are various definitions of resilience. He said that he would like to have a scorecard that can measure the resiliency of Virginia at different scales; however, given the November deadline for the Plan, the subcommittee can only set the path.

Dr. Weiss read a question in the chat which asked that since many projects will be nature-based, will the development of a climate resilience plant palette for grantees be a good project.

Dr. Weiss answered that while it can be a good project, the subcommittee needs to define priorities within the timeframe.

Secretary Strickler followed up with a few comments. He stated that the Framework is using the resilience definition from the U.S. Global Change Research Program, and it is important to operationalize resilience. He said that the method of delivering advice will depend on the type of advice and the time-sensitivity of the advice. He encouraged consensus-based decisions. He added that the Strategic Relocation Handbook will be considered as a project type.

Federal Installation Partnership Subcommittee - CAPT Thomas Crabbs

CAPT Thomas Crabbs shared the progress and discussion from the first Federal Installation Partnership subcommittee meeting.

Aligning Economic Development Subcommittee - Sara Dunnigan

Sara Dunnigan gave a presentation of the subcommittee's progress for the first meeting, including schedule, tasks, and goals for the subcommittee.

Mr. Bateman asked for suggestions from members of the Hamptons Roads region. Mr. Crum stated that he is willing to provide advisors for the subcommittee.

Legislation Update - Secretary Strickler

Secretary Strickler gave an update on regulations and bills from the 2020 General Assembly.

Mr. Stiles asked for contact information of the TAC members as a subcommittee member. Secretary Strickler said that the information has been provided to Subcommittee Chairs, and will be updated regularly.

Public Comment

There is no public comment. The meeting adjourned at 10:11 AM.