

**Minutes of the
COMMISSION ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT
January 3, 2025
3:00 PM
Main Street Centre
600 E. Main Street
Richmond, Virginia**

Members Present

Heather Cordasco

Ceasor Johnson

Robert Lauterberg, Chair

Terry Payne, Vice Chair

Edwin Rosado

DHCD staff present for all or part of the meeting:

Justin Bell, Assistant Attorney General

Trisha Lindsey, Policy and Legislative Director

LeGrand Northcutt, Senior Policy Analyst

Sulaiman Safi, Policy & Legislative Services Coordinator

Chase Sawyer, Policy and Legislative Services Manager

Members Absent

None

Call to Order

Commissioner Rosado, Chair of the Commission on Local Government, called the regular meeting to order at 3:05 p.m.

Roll Call

The roll was called by Mr. Sawyer. Mr. Sawyer reported that a quorum was physically present.

Welcome New Commissioner

Commissioner Rosado welcomed the new commissioner, Commissioner Cordasco. Commissioner Cordasco introduced herself.

Election of Officers for 2025

Commissioner Rosado opened the floor for nominations for Vice Chair of the Commission. Commissioner Lauterberg nominated Commissioner Payne. No other commissioners were nominated, and the floor was closed for nominations. A motion was made by Commissioner Rosado that Commissioner Payne be elected Vice Chair by acclamation. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote (YEAS: Cordasco, Lauterberg, Payne, Rosado; NAYS: None; ABSENT: Johnson).

Commissioner Rosado opened the floor for nominations for Chair of the Commission. Commissioner Payne nominated Commissioner Lauterberg. No other commissioners were nominated, and the floor was closed for nominations. A

motion was made by Commissioner Rosado that Commissioner Lauterberg be elected Chair by acclamation. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote (YEAS: Cordasco, Lauterberg, Payne, Rosado; NAYS: None; ABSENT: Johnson).

Approval of Agenda

A motion was made by Commissioner Rosado and seconded by Commissioner Payne to approve the draft agenda. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote (YEAS: Cordasco, Lauterberg, Payne, Rosado; NAYS: None; ABSENT: Johnson).

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Commissioner Payne and seconded by Commissioner Cordasco to approve the minutes of the November 1, 2024, regular meeting of the Commission. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote (YEAS: Cordasco, Lauterberg, Payne, Rosado; NAYS: None; ABSENT: Johnson).

A motion was made by Commissioner Rosado and seconded by Commissioner Payne to approve the minutes of the December 2, 2024, special meeting of the Commission. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote (YEAS: Cordasco, Lauterberg, Payne, Rosado; NAYS: None; ABSENT: Johnson).

Public Comment

Commissioner Lauterberg opened the floor for public comment. After seeing no speakers, Commissioner Lauterberg closed public comment.

Staff's Report

Mr. Sawyer provided an update on articles of interest that were included in the meeting packet, including an article on the Department of Taxation's recent report on distressed localities and an article on the Town of Glen Lyn voting to dissolve its charter.

Mr. Sawyer introduced Ms. Cordasco, the new Commissioner. Mr. Sawyer also introduced Mr. Sulaiman Safi, the new Policy and Legislative Services Coordinator for DHCD. Mr. Sawyer also shared that Mr. Northcutt would be leaving DHCD. Mr. Sawyer provided an update on staffing and ongoing recruitment efforts of the Policy Office.

Mr. Sawyer updated the Commission on the Conflict of Interest Act requirements, including Commissioners

submitting new financial disclosure statements by February 1, 2025.

Presentation of Commemorative Resolutions

Commissioner Lauterberg, on behalf of the Commission, presented a commemorative resolution to former Commissioner Diane Linderman. Commissioners expressed their heartfelt gratitude to Ms. Linderman for her ten years of dedicated service. Ms. Linderman shared her appreciation for the opportunity to serve on the Commission, expressing how meaningful her experience had been over the past decade.

Cases Before the Commission

Mr. Northcutt provided an update on previous cases before the Commission, including the Town of Leesburg – Loudoun County Voluntary Settlement Agreement, the Town of Washington – Rappahannock County Voluntary Settlement Agreement, the Town of Warrenton – Fauquier County Voluntary Settlement Agreement, and the Caroline County – Spotsylvania County Economic Growth Sharing Agreement.

Mr. Northcutt provided an update on an article of interest that was included in the meeting packet related to the City of Emporia.

Electronic Meetings Policy

Mr. Sawyer reviewed the Commission’s Electronic Meetings Policy and reminded the Commission that the Electronic Meeting Policy must be approved by the Commission annually.

Commissioner Lauterberg shared proposed changes to the Electronic Meetings Policy. The first proposed change related to quorum requirements when a Commissioner with a severe disability or who is a caregiver for such a person is approved for electronic participation. The second proposed change related to the timing of the notice a Commissioner must provide the Chair when requesting to participate electronically for personal matters. The Commission discussed the proposed changes.

A motion was made by Commissioner Rosado and seconded by Commissioner Payne to approve the Commission’s Electronic Meeting Policy as presented. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote (YEAS: Cordasco, Johnson, Lauterberg, Payne, Rosado; NAYS: None).

A motion was made by Commissioner Rosado and seconded by Commissioner Cordasco to direct staff to incorporate the amendments proposed by Commissioner Lauterberg and bring the amended Electronic Meeting Policy back to the Commission for approval. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote (YEAS: Cordasco, Johnson, Lauterberg, Payne, Rosado; NAYS: None).

Regulatory Items

Mr. Sawyer provided an update on the Commission's regulatory reduction efforts pursuant to Governor Youngkin's Executive Directive 1 and Executive Order 19. Mr. Sawyer shared that the regulatory action was currently in the proposed stage and open for public comment until February 28, 2025.

Mr. Sawyer provided an update on the regulations related to fiscally distressed localities (SB645, 2024). Mr. Sawyer shared that the emergency regulations had been submitted to the Registrar and published on December 30, 2024. Mr. Sawyer further shared that the emergency regulations went into effect at the time of their publishing. Mr. Sawyer reminded the Commission that the publishing of the emergency regulations started the standard regulatory process and a 60-day public comment period.

Assessments of Mandates on Local Governments

Mr. Northcutt presented an overview of the mandates assessed during the period of July 1 to December 31, 2024. Mr. Northcutt highlighted key findings and recommendations from the agencies that conducted the assessments.

FY23 Fiscal Stress Report

Mr. Sawyer provided an update on the status of the FY2023 Fiscal Stress Report. Mr. Sawyer informed the Commission that an extension will be needed to complete the FY2023 report because there are several localities that have not submitted their required reports to the Auditor of Public Accounts. Mr. Sawyer commented that the extension has become a typical part of the fiscal stress report process.

2024 General Assembly Session

Mr. Sawyer provided the Commission with an overview of the Commission's, Commissioners', and staff's responsibilities during the upcoming General Assembly Session.

Schedule of Regular Meetings

Mr. Sawyer shared that the next meeting of the Commission is currently scheduled for March 7, 2025. Commissioners

expressed their preference for holding the maximum number of all-virtual meetings allowable by State Code during the calendar year.

Other Business

There was no other Commission business.

Adjournment

A motion was made by Commissioner Payne and seconded by Commissioner Rosado to adjourn the meeting of the Commission. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote (YEAS: Cordasco, Johnson, Lauterberg, Payne, Rosado; NAYS: None). The meeting was adjourned at 4:14 p.m.