



Minutes of the Full Commission
Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission Meeting
112 MacTanly Place
Staunton, VA 24401
June 15, 2026, 7:00 p.m.

Attendance: 22

	Augusta County		Rockbridge County		Staff
✓	Carolyn Bragg	✓	Leslie Ayers	✓	Garreth Bartholomew
	Vacant		Chris Slaydon	✓	Zach Beard
	Julia Hensley		Rockingham County	✓	Philippe Bone
	Bath County	✓	Sallie Wolfe-Garrison	✓	Jeremy Crute
	Lynn Ellen Black		Joel Hensley	✓	Ann Cundy
	City of Buena Vista		Rachel Salatin	✓	Danielle Gannon
	Jesse Lineberry		Kim Sandum	✓	Elizabeth Goodlow
	City of Harrisonburg		City of Staunton	✓	Donnie Kern
✓	Laura Dent	✓	Brad Arrowood	✓	Rachel Kinzer
	Nasser Alsaadun		Sharon Angle	✓	Paula Melester
	Adam Fletcher		City of Waynesboro	✓	Kimberly Miller
	Highland County		Terry Short	✓	Rich Sagui
	Henry Budzinski	✓	Leslie Tate	✓	Carrie Sensabaugh
	City of Lexington		Others	✓	Devon Thompson
✓	Frank Friedman, Chair	✓	Russell Swartz, Governor's Office		

Call To Order

The Commission meeting of June 15, 2026, was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairperson Frank Friedman.

Public Comment

Chair Friedman opened the floor for public comments. There were no public comments.

Consideration of Minutes

Chair Friedman presented the minutes of the meeting held on April 20, 2026. There being no objections, the minutes were approved by consensus as presented.

Chair's Report

Chair Friedman reported on the following items:

1. Chair Friedman reported that at the most recent Executive Committee meeting, Commissioner Carolyn Bragg was elected Vice Chair. He expressed enthusiasm for her service in that role. He also noted that Commissioner Bragg has accepted a nomination to

the Board of the Virginia Association of Planning District Commissions (VAPDC), with election and appointment anticipated in August.

2. Chair Friedman welcomed Commissioner Leslie Ayers of the Rockbridge County Board of Supervisors, who is serving her second term on the Board. He invited her to introduce herself to the Commission.
3. Chair Friedman acknowledged the work of Planner Rachel Kinzer in leading the two-year effort to complete the 2026 Central Shenandoah Hazard Mitigation Plan, noting the importance of such plans when emergencies arise.

Executive Director's Report

Ms. Cundy reported on the following items:

1. **BRITE Triennial Review:** Ms. Cundy reported that BRITE Transit recently completed its triennial review with the Federal Transit Administration. The FTA reviewers departed early, noting that they would have to work very hard to find any deficiencies, which Ms. Cundy characterized as a rare and exceptional outcome. She credited the transit and finance teams for their thorough preparation.
2. **Spanberger Administration Engagement:** Ms. Cundy reported that she participated in two input sessions led by secretariats within the Spanberger Administration. The Secretary of Commerce and Trade, Carrie Chenery, hosted a session on economic development to inform the update of the state's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy. The Secretary of Public Safety, Stanley Meador, convened a regional readiness summit in Charlottesville focusing on mutual aid and what the state can do to enhance first responder coordination.
3. **Shenandoah Rail Trail:** Ms. Cundy reported that VDOT has concluded Phase Three of the Rail with Trail assessment and completed public engagement activities, including in-person meetings and an online survey. The CSPDC is awaiting the report on outcomes of that public engagement. The Rail Trail Partnership has been actively facilitating tours of the corridor for state officials, including Secretaries of Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Transportation, the DCR Director, and Deputy Secretary of Transportation, with the Secretary of Transportation and Virginia's First Gentleman also scheduled to visit. Ms. Cundy thanked Rockingham County, Timberville, and Broadway for their continued demonstration of local commitment to the project.
4. **Community Development Block Grants:** Ms. Cundy reported that the PDC is currently working with the Town of Goshen, Augusta County, Craigsville, Rockingham County, and Bridgewater on various CDBG planning and implementation grants addressing water systems, water and sewer line extensions, housing, community centers, and childcare facilities.
5. **BRITE Transit Service Transition:** Ms. Cundy reported that BRITE will begin service with new contracted provider Resource Management Systems (RMS) on July 1, 2026, with a new fleet of buses. To ease the transition, the first week of service will be fare-free. Ms. Cundy encouraged commissioners to promote BRITE and Afton Express to residents and employers in their communities. In response to a question from Chair Friedman, she confirmed that

employment was offered to all current bus drivers, management, maintenance, and mechanics staff, with most electing to continue with the new provider.

In response to a question from Commissioner Dent regarding the Commonwealth Transportation Board meeting scheduled for the following day, Ms. Cundy noted that the June CTB meeting typically approves the Six-Year Improvement Program and that she did not anticipate any particularly controversial items. She noted that the Shenandoah Rail Trail assessment is not on the agenda for that meeting.

Treasurer's Report

Finance Director Donnie Kern presented the Treasurer's Report. Mr. Kern reported that the CSPDC's financial position remains strong as of April 30, 2026. Key highlights included an increase in cash and investments of approximately \$722,000, driven in part by a \$317,166 insurance reimbursement from VRSA for the replacement of the Transit Facility roof. Accounts Payable increased by \$572,110, primarily due to an uncleared check of \$186,063 issued to Virginia Regional Transit for transit services and \$295,744 related to the Housing Program. Year-to-date revenues totaled \$6,797,425 and exceeded expenditures by approximately \$349,000. Mr. Kern noted that the ARC and EDA funds show revenues slightly over budget due to the nature of those programs spanning two fiscal years, which is not a cause for concern. Mr. Kern also noted that Brown Edwards will begin preliminary audit work the following week, with final field work commencing July 16.

There being no objections, the Treasurer's Report was approved by consensus as presented.

Consideration of FY27 CSPDC Budget (BAF #26-08)

Ms. Cundy introduced the FY27 Budget for Commission approval, noting that the draft budget was presented to the Commission at the April meeting. Mr. Kern presented the budget, highlighting that it is a tight, conservative document totaling \$11.2 million. The budget includes 30 programs, 15 full-time equivalent positions, a 3% cost of living adjustment, and reflects the final year of the scheduled one-cent-per-capita assessment increase, bringing the per capita rate to \$0.85. Mr. Kern noted that should fluctuations arise during the year, budget amendments will be presented to the Commission.

Discussion followed regarding the potential impact of the absence of a state budget on federal grant funding. Ms. Cundy explained that the majority of the PDC's federal grant funds are matched by state dollars to a limited degree, and that no indication has been received from VDOT that the lack of a state budget for FY27 would affect committed funding. She also noted that Virginia Housing's SPARC program may operate at a reduced level, but that Virginia Housing is not subject to the state budgeting process. Chair Friedman noted that the PDC maintains reserves sufficient to sustain operations during a potential state or federal funding disruption. In response to a question from Commissioner Wolfe-Garrison regarding state matching funds for federal grants, Ms. Cundy confirmed she would follow up with specifics related to the MPOs.

Ms. Bragg moved, seconded by Ms. Dent, to approve the FY27 CSPDC Budget as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

Consideration of CSPDC Strategic Plan (BAF #26-09)

Ms. Cundy reported that Dr. Grant Tate of BBTx Consultants presented the 2026–2030 Strategic Plan, titled "Forging a Digital Region," to the Commission in draft form at the April meeting, and that no commissioner comments had been received in the intervening period. She noted that the Plan

focuses on five strategic pillars centered on the PDC's role as convener, analyst, and implementation partner, and that staff are looking forward to beginning implementation over the summer. She also noted that the PDC recently received 48 on-call consultant proposals in response to an RFP, reflecting strong interest in the region's work.

There being no objections, the Strategic Plan was approved by consensus as presented.

Consideration of CSPDC/BRITE Title VI Plan (BAF #26-10)

Transportation Planner Devon Thompson presented the CSPDC/BRITE Title VI Plan for Commission approval. Ms. Thompson noted that the Commission approved the broader CSPDC Title VI Plan at the April meeting, which covers PDC programs, transportation programs, and other federally assisted activities. The BRITE Title VI Plan specifically covers the transit program. The plan was completed in May, released for a 30-day public comment period beginning May 5, 2026, and no public comments were received.

Ms. Thompson noted that the plan must be updated every three years in accordance with FTA regulations. It includes an updated demographic profile, four-factor analysis, public engagement and outreach process, system-wide service standards, and discrimination complaint procedures. Upon Commission approval, the plan will be submitted to the FTA for review and concurrence.

There being no objections, the CSPDC/BRITE Title VI Plan was approved by consensus as presented.

Consideration of 2026 Central Shenandoah Hazard Mitigation Plan (BAF #26-11)

Regional Planner Rachel Kinzer presented the 2026 Central Shenandoah Hazard Mitigation Plan (CSHMP) for Commission adoption. Ms. Kinzer noted that the Plan represents the third comprehensive update since its original adoption in 2005. The two-year planning process involved collaboration with 21 localities, 4 special districts, and more than 30 regional organizations, incorporating over 450 public input responses. On May 20, 2026, the Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM) and FEMA formally approved the plan, well ahead of the anticipated timeline.

Ms. Kinzer reported that the Plan evaluated 8 natural hazards and 4 human-caused threats. Among the highest-ranked hazards were flooding, wildfires, severe winter weather, and hazardous materials incidents. The Plan is organized around six regional goals addressing economic resilience, housing and neighborhood protection, environmental stewardship, resilient public infrastructure, public health and safety, and collaboration and innovation. Approximately 300 mitigation actions were developed across the 25 participating jurisdictions.

Ms. Kinzer also highlighted that through this update, the region has unlocked access to FEMA's National Dam Safety Program by meeting an optional element related to high hazard potential dams, approximately 40 of which are documented in the region. She noted that only a handful of Virginia hazard mitigation plans have met this optional requirement.

In response to a question from Chair Friedman, Ms. Kinzer confirmed that the National Dam Safety Program can support both dam rehabilitation and decommissioning. A question from Commissioner Dent prompted discussion of the local adoption timeline; Ms. Kinzer noted that Highland County, Bath County, Waynesboro, Dayton, Mount Crawford, and Timberville have already adopted the plan,

and that the City of Harrisonburg is scheduled to consider adoption at its next meeting in June. A question from Commissioner Wolfe-Garrison prompted discussion of best practices for community education and awareness related to hazard mitigation.

There being no objections, the 2026 Central Shenandoah Hazard Mitigation Plan was approved by consensus as presented.

Consideration of SMART SCALE Application Resolution of Support (BAF #26-12)

Transportation Planner Garreth Bartholomew presented the request to approve a resolution authorizing the CSPDC to submit a SMART SCALE Round 7 application on behalf of the City of Harrisonburg for improvements to Port Republic Road between Devon Lane and Neff Avenue. The application stems from the FY25 Port Republic Road Small Area Study completed by the CSPDC through the Harrisonburg-Rockingham MPO. The corridor experienced 88 crashes and 34 serious injuries between 2019 and 2023, with roughly half occurring near JMU and involving individuals aged 16 to 21. The corridor also faces projected operational challenges over the next 25 years due to continued growth.

Proposed improvements include intersection redesign with extended turn lanes, access management, and the conversion of approximately 2,200 feet of unprotected sidewalk into a buffered shared-use path for non-motorized users. The full application deadline is August 3, 2026. SMART SCALE requires a resolution from the governing body submitting the application; there is no direct fiscal impact to the CSPDC. Commissioner Dent expressed strong support for the application on behalf of the City of Harrisonburg.

Discussion followed regarding the design of the shared-use path, with clarification that “buffered” refers to the path being physically separated from the roadway by a median or landscaped strip.

Ms. Dent moved, seconded by Ms. Bragg to approve the Resolution authorizing the CSPDC to submit a SMART SCALE Round 7 application for the Port Republic Road Improvements from Devon Lane to Neff Avenue on behalf of the City of Harrisonburg. The motion carried unanimously.

Report on CSPDC Freedom of Information Act Policy (Board Memo #26-05)

Ms. Cundy reported that the Executive Committee approved a FOIA Rights and Responsibilities Policy on March 23, 2026, on behalf of the full Commission, as authorized under the CSPDC Bylaws. In taking such action, the Bylaws require that the full Commission be notified, which is the purpose of this report. The policy was developed in connection with a broadband project in Rockbridge County, for which the internet service provider required that the CSPDC have an adopted policy specifying how it would consider FOIA exemptions in order to protect the confidentiality of proprietary procurement and reimbursement information. The policy has been posted to the CSPDC website. Ms. Cundy noted that the policy has already been used effectively in response to a broad FOIA request received since its adoption.

Discussion followed regarding the philosophy of open government and the importance of accessible communication with the public, led by Chair Friedman.

Presentation by Russell Swartz, Local Government Engagement Associate, Office of the Governor

Chair Friedman introduced Russell Swartz, Local Government Engagement Associate in the Office of Governor Spanberger. Mr. Swartz noted that the Local Government Engagement Office is a new department within the Governor's Office, established on January 17, 2026. He explained that the office was created in response to feedback that previous administrations had not provided localities with a single point of contact in the Governor's Office, and that a primary goal is to bridge communication between local governments and state secretariats.

Mr. Swartz described the office's work in close coordination with VACO, VML, VLGMA, and planning district commissions to make its existence known to local government officials across the Commonwealth. He noted that the office serves as a connector and guide for localities seeking assistance with state-level issues, whether related to legislation, funding, or interagency coordination. He offered examples of how the office serves as a guide to help localities navigate state agency contacts, resolve questions about state programs, and address concerns that may otherwise be difficult to route through state government.

Discussion followed among Commissioners and Mr. Swartz on a variety of topics, including the importance of strengthening communication and relationships between state legislators and local governments, the push-and-pull between state preemption and local authority, and the Governor's approach to legislative review. Mr. Swartz noted that the Governor reviews each bill individually and is responsive to feedback from localities across the political spectrum. Commissioners also raised questions about groundwater resources and the potential for private industry partnerships in studying underground water supply, prompting a substantive discussion led by Commissioners Wolfe-Garrison, Bragg, and Dent on agricultural water use, data center impacts, and the need for better regional water resource planning. Ms. Cundy noted that the PDC has been in contact with the Alliance for the Shenandoah Valley and USGS on this topic, and that local jurisdiction interest in pursuing groundwater studies would be welcome before the PDC moves forward with any application for funding.

Chair Friedman expressed, on behalf of the Commission, strong support for the work Mr. Swartz and the Local Government Engagement Office are doing and encouraged commissioners to stay in touch with him. Mr. Swartz distributed business cards and invited direct communication.

Intergovernmental Reviews (Board Memo #26-06)

Ms. Cundy noted that the intergovernmental reviews included in the meeting packet require no action from the Commission and are presented for informational purposes. The eight reviews include a USDA Housing Preservation Grant application submitted by the CSPDC, the VDH State Public Water System Supervision Grant, two VADEQ brownfields grant applications, and grant applications for state and federal environmental monitoring from VADEQ.

Other Business

Chair Friedman reminded commissioners that the next CSPDC Commission meeting is scheduled for Monday, August 17, 2026, at the CSPDC Office. He invited commissioners to view the staff family wall in the office and expressed appreciation for the teamwork, respect, integrity, and cooperation that characterize the PDC community.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Kimberly Miller, Commission Clerk