



**2014 Fall Legislative Board Meeting
Hampton Roads Convention Center
November 14, 2014**

In Attendance:

Board of Directors

William Johnson

Kim Payne

Marlene Randall

Ellen Robertson

Kristin Szakos

Legislative Liaisons and Guests

Laura Bateman

Herbert Bragg (proxy for Mark Haley)

Dan Callaghan (proxy for Chris Morrill)

Mary Jo Fields

Anne Holton

Ron Jordan

Don Mark

Robin McCormick

Owen Miller

Sherri Neil (proxy for John Rowe)

Bryan Pennington

Lisa Robertson

Chris Snead (proxy for George Wallace)

Richard Taylor

Jennifer Walle

Thad Williamson

Staff

Kelly Harris-Braxton

Jim Regimbal

Jamie Crawford

Welcome/Introduction

The Honorable Kristin Szakos, VFC Chair, welcomed everyone to the board meeting. The attendees introduced themselves and shared some exciting news from their localities.

Councilwoman Szakos presented a plaque for George Wallace for his two years of service as VFC Chair. Ms. Szakos also presented Councilwoman Marlene Randall with a plaque thanking her for her service to Virginia First Cities and the Board of Directors.

Greetings from the City of Hampton

The Honorable Chris Snead, Councilwoman, welcomed everyone to the City of Hampton and thanked them for coming.

Executive Director's Update

Kelly Harris-Braxton, VFC Executive Director, reviewed the agenda and purpose of the meeting. She highlighted the speakers who would present later.

Ms. Harris-Braxton discussed some issues of concern to VFC members. She talked about primary extension road funding and VFC's success in obtaining funding for these roads in the 2014 session. She spoke about the push for extended year schools and VFC's role in the Urban Policy Initiative. Ms. Harris-Braxton also talked about the Enterprise Zone program and tax preferences.

She outlined the next steps for VFC in the hiring process of its contract lobbyist and informed the board members that she had received 6 proposals. A discussion followed about the process going forward and the review panel was expanded to include additional representation.

Virginia's Revenue and Budget Situation

Jim Regimbal discussed the revenue situation and problems facing localities now and in the future. He talked to the board members about possible budget items that could be at risk for

cuts in the 2015 General Assembly Session. Mr. Regimbal encouraged members to decide what VFC's highest priorities are going to be for 2015. A discussion followed on the chances of getting funding.

Adoption of the 2015 Legislative Program

The board members discussed the proposed program and agreed to add language on regional jails. Councilwoman Ellen Robertson moved the approval of the Legislative Program, as amended, and William Johnson seconded the motion; it was approved unanimously.

Bridging the Achievement Gap in the Commonwealth

The Honorable Anne Holton, Secretary of Education, discussed the Administration's education legislative program for the upcoming session. She talked about the Governor's goals including getting schools accredited and preventing cuts to K-12 education. She asked for VFC's advocacy. A discussion followed that allowed the board members to tell the Secretary what localities want and need as related to education.

From Concentrated Poverty to Community Wealth Building: Richmond

Thad Williamson, Director of Community Wealth Building for the City of Richmond, presented Richmond's Wealth Building program in detail. Virginia First Cities members agreed that the tenets of the program were in keeping with VFC's priorities. Dr. Williamson described the initiative that they expect will lead to greater wealth and new businesses, self-sufficiency and additional revenue for communities. A discussion followed.

"Choose Hampton": Novel City Promotion

Robin McCormick, Communications Strategist for the City of Hampton, discussed how the "Choose Hampton" business marketing campaign came about and the involvement of local businesses. She also talked about how the city used social media to further its reach.

VFC Business Meeting

- **Treasurer's Report:** Kim Payne reviewed the financial documents with the board members. He moved the approval of the documents; Herbert Bragg seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.
- **Minutes:** The board members reviewed the minutes from the August 7, 2014, Board of Directors meeting. Kim Payne moved their approval; Herbert Bragg seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.
- **Legislative Priorities:** The board members briefly discussed what should be VFC's legislative priorities. They decided: 1) education, 2) road maintenance, and 3) public safety. Kim Payne moved the approval of the legislative priorities and Bryan Pennington seconded the motion; it was approved unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 3 pm.