

**Minutes of the
COMMISSION ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

May 8, 2026

1:00 pm

Virginia Housing Center

4224 Cox Road

Glen Allen, VA 23440

Members Present

Heather Cordasco, Vice Chair

Robert Lauterberg

Terry Payne, Chair

Edwin Rosado

Beck Stanley

Members Absent

None

Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) staff present for all or part of the meeting:

Kenrick Cameron, Jr., Policy Analyst

Joseph Dennie, Policy Analyst

Tamarah Holmes, PH.D., Director DHCD

Alan Jones, Sr. Public Finance Analyst

Trisha Lindsey, Policy and Legislative Services Director

Chase Sawyer, Policy and Legislative Services Manager

Call to Order

Commissioner Payne, Chair of the Commission on Local Government, called the regular meeting to order at 1:05 p.m.

Roll Call

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

Approval of Draft Agenda

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

Introduction of Executive Director

Mr. Jones gave a brief introduction to Dr. Tamarah Holmes, DHCD Director. Dr. Tamarah Holmes spoke to her over 20 years of service in the public sector in the field of community and economic development. Dr. Holmes commented that she is excited to assume the role of Executive Director of the Commission and looks forward to supporting the Commission's statutory responsibilities, strengthening its engagement with local government partners, and ensuring that its work continues to provide impartial, well-grounded analysis that benefits communities across the Commonwealth.

New Commissioner Welcome

Commissioner Payne welcomed the newest commissioner, Commissioner Beck Stanley. Commissioner Stanley provided a brief introduction on his occupation and interest in serving the Commonwealth in this capacity.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Commissioner Lauterberg and seconded by Commissioner Cordasco to approve the minutes of the March 26, 2026, regular meeting of the Commission. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote (YEAS: Cordasco, Lauterberg, Payne, Rosado, Stanley; NAYS: None).

Public Comment

Commissioner Payne opened the floor for public comment.

After seeing no speakers, Commissioner Payne closed public comment.

Staff's Report

Mr. Jones informed the Commission that the Virginia General Assembly adjourned the 2026 Regular Session on March 14, 2026. Mr. Jones provided information on the bills referred to the Commission for review, 24 of which had local fiscal impact statements attached.

Mr. Jones also informed Commissioners of the Conflict of Interest Act (COIA) statement forms provided to Commissioners prior to the meeting to document if an action on the meeting agenda may create a conflict. Mr. Jones added that the statement forms will be provided to Commissioners at each meeting as a matter of record.

Fiscal Stress Index Methodology Review

Mr. Jones updated the Commission on staff efforts to coordinate a presentation and conversation with the Weldon Cooper Center to review the Fiscal Stress Index methodology. The Weldon Cooper Center informed Commission staff that they could not assist with the review of the methodology at this time due to staffing turnover.

Commissioner Lauterberg reminded the Commission that when the subcommittee first began looking into the fiscal stress methodology, Dr. Scorsone had recommended Dr. Eugenia Gorina from the University of Texas at Dallas as an expert in the field. Commissioner Lauterberg added that Dr. Gorina has published research on how to measure and predict fiscal distress. Commissioner Lauterberg referenced Dr. Gorina's study on three items (revenue capacity, fund

balance, and debt) that governments have control over as being prominent in predicting a locality's fiscal distress. Commissioner Lauterberg stated that Dr. Gorina may be able to assist with revisions to the Fiscal Stress Index methodology, for a nominal fee, and that he could connect staff with Dr. Gorina to coordinate a future presentation to the Commission.

Mr. Jones clarified that the Fiscal Stress Index methodology is separate from fiscal distress, which is a relatively new authority in State Code and managed by the Auditor of Public Accounts. Ms. Lindsey noted that the current Fiscal Stress Index is cited multiple times in State Code and that the Auditor of Public Accounts has statutory responsibility for the early warning system associated with fiscal distress in State Code.

Mr. Sawyer stated that staff would attempt to coordinate a presentation for the Commission by Dr. Gorina at the Commission's July meeting, pending Dr. Gorina's interest and availability.

Catalog of Mandates on Local Governments

Mr. Dennie provided an overview of the mandates catalog process and presented to the Commission the 2025 updates to the Catalog of State and Federal Mandates on Local Government.

A motion was made by Commissioner Cordasco and seconded by Commissioner Stanley to approve the 2025 Catalog of Mandates. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote (YEAS: Cordasco, Lauterberg, Payne, Rosado, Stanley; NAYS: None).

Assessment of Mandates Schedule

Mr. Cameron provided an overview of the mandates assessment process and presented to the Commission the FY2027 Schedule of Assessment of State and Federal Mandates on Local Government. Commissioners asked clarifying questions regarding the mandates assessment process.

A motion was made by Commissioner Cordasco and seconded by Commissioner Rosado to approve the FY2027 Mandates Assessment Schedule. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote (YEAS: Cordasco, Lauterberg, Payne, Rosado, Stanley; NAYS: None).

Cash Proffer Survey Instrument

Mr. Jones provided an overview of cash proffers and presented to the Commission the cash proffer survey instrument.

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

Local Fiscal Distress – Town of Tangier

Mr. Jones provided an overview of the local fiscal distress process outlined in State Code and presented the Town of Tangier Performance Plan to the Commission.

Commissioner Lauterberg raised concern over whether one year is ample time for the Town to rectify the identified issues. Commissioner Cordasco echoed this concern over the Town's access to financial records. Commissioners discussed the importance of the Town hiring a town manager or obtaining similar services.

Commissioner Payne offered Tangier Town Councilmember Anna Pruitt Parks, who was attending the meeting virtually, the opportunity to comment on the proposed performance plan. Councilwoman Parks asked about additional assistance for the Town, specifically who can help lead the effort in searching for an interim Town Manager, as well as if anyone could provide Town Council with the training and expertise required to meet the deliverables of the performance plan.

Dr. Holmes reminded the Commission that the local fiscal distress mandate is specific in that the Commission's involvement and capacity is strictly oversight. Dr. Holmes suggested that the Town of Tangier submit an official letter requesting additional assistance in responding to the items outlined in the performance plan.

Mr. Sawyer and Mr. Jones clarified that the performance plan can be amended at any time and serves as an outline to measure progress for the Town. Commissioners discussed providing more time for the Town of Tangier to implement the items outlined in the performance plan. Mr. Jones spoke to additional resources and contacts that DHCD staff have gathered to assist the Town.

A motion was made by Commissioner Cordasco and seconded by Commissioner Lauterberg to approve the proposed Town of Tangier Performance Plan with an amendment to the start date, moving the start date back to July 1, 2026, with the exception of the hiring of an interim town manager which should begin immediately. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote (YEAS: Cordasco, Lauterberg, Payne, Rosado, Stanley; NAYS: None).

Local Fiscal Distress – City of Radford

Mr. Jones provided an update that the City of Radford was recently designated in fiscal distress by the Auditor of Public Accounts and that the City has issued a press release responding to the recent designation. Mr. Jones noted that the Commission currently has no actions to take until the Governor has appointed a state intervention team and notified the Commission of its oversight authority. Commissioner Rosado applauded the City of Radford for taking early action to address the auditors' concerns.

Adjournment

A motion was made by Commissioner Rosado and seconded by Commissioner Stanley to adjourn the meeting of the Commission. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote (YEAS: Cordasco, Lauterberg, Payne, Rosado, Stanley; NAYS: None). The meeting adjourned at 2:41 p.m.