



Board/MIC Meeting Minutes

April 26, 2023: 10:00 a.m. – Noon

Virtual via Zoom

Call to Order

Theodore L. Chandler, Jr., Co-chair of RVA757 Connects, called the April 26, 2023 Board of Directors / Megaregion Institutional Council (MIC) meeting to order at 10 a.m.

Mr. Chandler welcomed the group and thanked them for prioritizing this meeting in their busy schedules. He said the meeting's primary focus will be on the Global Internet Hub Strategic Plan. He also shared condolences for the loss of Harvey L. Lindsay Jr., the former president and chairman of Harvey Lindsay Commercial Real Estate business in Hampton Roads, who died a week before the meeting. He was a true community patriot and will be missed.

John W. Martin, President and CEO of RVA757 Connects, introduced the day's agenda.

Updates on RVA757 Connects

Mr. Martin reviewed the availability of the Documents portal on RVA757 Connects' new website, which houses all documents related to Executive Committee meetings, Board/MIC meetings, and foundational and financial documents.

Mr. Martin shared this year's budget and projected end-of-year surplus based on 2022 carry forward income, 2023 pledges, and 2023 Executive Committee-approved expenses. The March budget recap is on the Documents portal on the website under the meeting folder.

Mr. Martin reminded the group that a bio book for the board of directors and MIC members will be created. Laura Robidoux will reach out to each board/MIC member to get bios and photos in the next couple of weeks. The goal is to produce the bio board book by Convergence 2023.

He also provided the remaining 2023 Board/MIC meeting dates, including Convergence 2023:

- September 28, 2023: Convergence 2023
 - All-day retreat focused on the I-64 Innovation Corridor. This event is organized by ChamberRVA, Hampton Roads Chamber, and RVA757 Connects. It will be held in Williamsburg. We will hold a short Board meeting as part of this signature event.
- November 15, 2023: 10 a.m. to noon – (100% Zoom)
 - Share results of the board/MIC survey along with 2024 legislative agenda and priority recommendations.

Committee Updates

Government Relations Committee Co-Chairs Ross Grogg and Chris Lloyd provided updates on the General Assembly budget discussion as well as major topics being reviewed in the House and Senate. The November election will create a large turnover of seats in both the House and Senate.

On behalf of Development Committee Chair Mitch Haddon, Mr. Martin shared that in appreciation for all of the support given over the past three years, all investors should expect thank you notes and calls from committee members. About 90% of investors have received their 2023 invoices.

Mr. Martin pointed out that this is an important year as the initial founding investors joined RVA757 Connects three years ago, and all made a three-year commitment. In 2023, we hope that all these founding members will continue for another three-year pledge term. The Community Foundation of Hampton Roads has expressed interest in providing another three-year commitment. In addition to contacting founding investors, the development committee will explore financial support outside of the board of directors.

Mr. Martin provided an update on Nominations and Governance. There are a couple of invitations out, and with these final seats getting filled the board of directors will reach its capacity (75 directors).

Bryan Stephens, Co-Chair of the Megaregion Institutional Council (MIC), provided updates on the MIC. In addition, Mr. Stephens shared the latest news about the combination of the Hampton Roads Business Roundtable and Reinvent Hampton Roads to create the Hampton Roads Executive Roundtable. Dennis Matheis, president and CEO of Sentara Healthcare, and Cliff Fleet, president and CEO of the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, will co-chair the new roundtable. Nancy Grden, who has been



president and CEO of Reinvent Hampton Roads since June 2022, leads the new organization, which has the primary mission of coordinating the region's economic development organizations, strategy, and associated initiatives.

Communications Director Greg Gilligan reflected on the website relaunch and the positive feedback received so far. The next Innovation Spotlight will feature Rony Thomas of LifeNet Health sharing remarkable innovation stories. Stakeholders are encouraged to attend the webinar, spread the word, and recommend speakers.

I-64 Gap Project

VDOT has issued a construction Request for Proposal for the first 11 miles. The award is expected to be awarded to a contractor in September 2023.

Bike-Walk Trails

The Virginia Capital Trail extension (BoAT trail) and Fall Line Trail are the top two focus areas for RVA757 Connects' approved plan. Part of this plan is to build out the story on a website, which does not yet exist. We are working with HRPDC and the Tidewater Trails Alliance to make a case for funding a full-time employee to focus on the trails' ROI study. A meeting will be scheduled in May with VDOT's new Trails Office head. Tom Cosgrove spoke about the benefits of supporting the trail extensions. Mr. Martin commended Mr. Cosgrove for stepping into this leadership position advocating for bike/walk trails.

Mr. Cosgrove made a request during the meeting for a RVA757 Connects board member to join the Tidewater Trails Alliance board. (Any current director who is interested in serving on that board, please reach out to John Martin.)

Increasing Passenger Rail

Mr. Martin reminded the group of the RVA757 Connects' Passenger Rail Plan presentation that was given at the December meeting by guest speaker DJ Stadtler, Executive Director of Virginia Passenger Rail Authority (VPRA).

The key takeaway from that presentation is the need to complete the Long Bridge project in Northern Virginia before future rail expansion and improvement projects in Virginia can move forward. RVA757 Connects will provide support for the Long Bridge and related improvements.

The Virginia five-year rail plan was finalized and signed off by the Federal Railroad Administration. RVA757 Connects' committee is planning a meeting with DRPT and the three Planning District Commissions (PlanRVA, the Hampton Roads PDC, and Crater District PDC in the Petersburg area) to determine which priorities and projects should be included in the next five-year plan.

Jefferson Lab Update

The Department of Energy RFP has been released for a super-computer site. Letters of support are being collected to be included with the RFP response. RVA757 Connects has written a letter of support. That letter of support will be sent to all board members by the RVA757 Connects staff.

Featured Topic: Global Internet Hub Strategic Plan Initiative

Mr. Martin gave a 20-minute overview of the Global Internet Hub (GIH) Strategic Plan.

All board members were sent a copy of the draft of the Strategic Plan and the executive summary.

A robust Q&A session followed.

Examples of the comments that came out during the discussion included:

- This project was exciting to fund from GO Virginia's perspective. It has turned up more information than expected.
- Neutral locations for content providers are beneficial for all parties, including the users. Digital deployment is moving at rapid speed.
- The key is to keep the momentum going by creating an industry council to implement the Global Internet Hub Strategic Plan.
- Hampton Roads Community Foundation is interested in providing support for this initiative.
- There are two kinds of urgency – putting together the infrastructure (tax incentives, hardware, sites) and marketing the digital assets in the megaregion to put them on the map.
- Virginia has a great deal of competition in attracting digital infrastructure investment.
- The intentionality of this Strategic Plan can set the Commonwealth apart.
- Attracting more investment in our digital infrastructure ecosystem will drive a growth in our IT/tech workforce.

- While advancing the Global Internet Hub is a must do, an eloquent case was made that we need to continue to work on all fronts to improve the economy and quality of life in the megaregion to remain competitive.

The board was encouraged to read the plan and provide any additional feedback to RVA757 Connects' staff.

Next steps include:

- 1) Next 30 days – get input on the plan from multiple parties.
- 2) Finalize the Strategic Plan and submit it to GO Virginia in June.
- 3) Brief the Administration.
- 4) Stand up the GIH Council.
- 5) Implement the GIH Strategic Plan.

Airports in Hampton Roads

Doug Smith, CEO of the Hampton Roads Alliance, shared plans by Peninsula Airport Commission (Newport News/Williamsburg Airport), the Norfolk Airport Authority, and the cities of Norfolk, Newport News, and Hampton, to conduct a study examining the passenger travel and cargo trends and needs of five regional airports. The Alliance is requesting a GO Virginia grant to hire a consultant for the study.

Thank You and Wrap Up

Thomas R. Frantz, Co-Chair of RVA757 Connects, thanked everyone for their input, support, and engagement. RVA757 Connects focuses on convening, connecting, and collaborating. It started with the Port of Virginia and has now led to digital infrastructure developments. People want to be close to global connectors like the ports and subsea cables. Greater success in the megaregion will lead to greater success throughout the Commonwealth. It's time to get the political community on board.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:09 p.m.