

VACo-VML Local Government Recovery Task Force

Virtual Meeting – Monday, June 8, 2020

Participants: Supervisor Sherrin Alsop, King and Queen County; Supervisor Mary Biggs, Montgomery County; Chairman William Kyger, Rockingham County; Supervisor Ruth Larson, James City County; Chairman Jeff McKay, Fairfax County; Councilman Sean Polster, Town of Warrenton; VACo Executive Director Dean Lynch, VML Executive Director Michelle Gowdy; VML Policy Manager for Transportation and Natural Resources Mitchell Smiley; VACo Director of Government Affairs Katie Boyle

Dean Lynch and Michelle Gowdy welcomed participants and provided an overview of the genesis of the Task Force, noting that it is expected to serve as a line of communication and a means of providing assistance to the Administration during the coming year as the state works through the near- and long-term repercussions of the pandemic.

Attendees introduced themselves and briefly discussed some of their main concerns regarding the response to the pandemic.

Task Force members discussed immediate, medium-term, and long-term issues to be relayed to the Administration and legislative leadership.

Immediate issues identified include:

- Improving communication with local governments and the importance of having clear guidance from the Administration on the policies that are established at the state level, as local governments are often placed in the position of administering, enforcing, and/or interpreting the policies.
- Clarifying eligible uses of Coronavirus Relief Fund dollars.
- Joint advocacy for additional, flexible federal support for the state and localities to address revenue losses.
- Clarification on the local role in reopening schools, and what assistance the state plans to provide.

Medium-term issues involve expectations for a special session later this summer and include:

- Protecting state assistance to localities
- Avoiding unfunded mandates from the state, which will further stress already-austere local budgets.
- Protecting local revenue streams.

Staff will draft a document outlining key principles for the special session, which will be used as a tool for advocacy, and circulate to the Task Force for review. Members discussed the importance of working with the Administration and General Assembly leadership in advance of the special session.

Long-term issues will be discussed over time in advance of the Governor's December 2020 introduced budget and the 2021 legislative session. Task Force members offered some initial areas for consideration, including:

- Preparations for a potential second wave of COVID-19 cases in the fall.
- Access to child care, particularly as parents return to work and school reopening may be partial or delayed
- Mental health concerns
- Economic impacts to areas of the state that are reliant on tourism
- Regulation of nursing homes