



VAPDC 2023 Summer Conference & Annual Meeting *Speaker Profiles*



The Honorable Kenneth Cooper Alexander, Ph.D.
Mayor
City of Norfolk

Kenneth Cooper Alexander was elected Mayor of the City of Norfolk on May 3, 2016 and re-elected in May 2020. Dr. Alexander is the Chancellor of a network of career community colleges, 14 Aviation Institute of Maintenance campuses across the country and six Centura College and Tidewater Tech locations within Virginia. Dr. Alexander also serves as president of Metropolitan Funeral Services. A native of Norfolk, he began his public service career more than two decades ago.

Dr. Alexander served in the Senate of Virginia from 2012 – 2016 where he was a member of the committees on Commerce and Labor, Finance, Transportation, and Privileges and Elections. Before his election to the Senate, he represented the 89th District in the House of Delegates from 2002 until 2012, serving on the committees of Commerce and Labor, Education, Privileges and Elections, and Rules.

Prior to serving in the General Assembly, Dr. Alexander was a member of the Norfolk Economic Development Authority, City Planning Commission (vice chair), and Human Services Commission. He is a member of the Greater Norfolk Corporation, the Norfolk Chapter of the FBI Citizens Academy Alumni Association, and an alumnus of the Sorensen Institute for Political Leadership.

Dr. Alexander began his community service as president of Berkley's Beacon Light Civic League and Beacon Light Community Development Corporation. Mayor Alexander is proud that his first full-time job was with the City of Norfolk as a Cemetery Manager with the Department of Parks and Recreation from 1989 to 1990.

Alexander graduated from Norfolk's Lake Taylor High School in 1985 and continued his education in Virginia's public institutions earning an associate's degree in Mortuary Science from John Tyler Community College and a Bachelor's degree in Political Science from Old Dominion University. He later served as an instructor at Tidewater Community College after completing a master's degree in diplomacy from Norwich University. In 2019, Alexander earned a Ph.D. in Leadership and Change from Antioch University.

Dr. Alexander has been a guest columnist in many of Virginia's major newspapers, and he is the author of *Persistence: Evelyn Butts and the African American Quest for Full Citizenship and Self-Determination* which was published in May 2021.



The Honorable Douglass G. "Doug" Pons
Mayor
City of Williamsburg/Hampton Roads Planning District Commission

Douglas Pons is a lifelong Williamsburg resident. He graduated from Lafayette High School and Christopher Newport University with a B.S. in business administration. He is the owner of The Flats of Williamsburg on York Street in Williamsburg and is a member of the Williamsburg Hotel Motel Association.

Doug has served on a variety of City boards and commissions, including the Planning Commission, Williamsburg Economic Development Authority, Regional Issues Committee, and Architectural Review Board.

He was elected to City Council in 2010 and first elected by City Council to serve as mayor in July 2020. He had previously served a two-year term as vice mayor.

Doug lives in the College Terrace neighborhood with his family.



Stephen A. Edwards
CEO and Executive Director
Virginia Port Authority

Stephen A. Edwards is the CEO and Executive Director of the Virginia Port Authority (VPA). He is responsible for the broad programmatic areas of business and relationship development, infrastructure development, strategic marketing, economic development, finance, security and safety. He directs and manages the operations of Virginia's marine and inland terminal facilities through Virginia International Terminals, LLC, the port's private terminal operating company, including Virginia International Gateway, Newport News Marine Terminal, Norfolk International Terminals, Portsmouth Marine Terminal, Richmond Marine Terminal and the Virginia Inland Port.

He is a globally experienced leader in the maritime industry with extensive operational experience and a proven track record of growing businesses and creating long-term value for customers and stakeholders.

Before joining the VPA in January 2021, Stephen served as President and Chief Executive Officer for TraPac, LLC and was responsible for the overall performance of the company with focus on safety, service and sustainability. Prior to that, he was the CEO of Global Container Terminals. Previous industry experience includes president and CEO of Ports America Group and president and CEO of P&O Ports North America.

In his capacity as CEO and Executive Director of the VPA, Stephen serves as an ex-officio member of the Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP) board of directors. Mr. Edwards is a director of the Through Transport Mutual Insurance Association Ltd.

Stephen holds a BS (Hons) degree in Transport Management from Aston University in England.



Chris Thompson
Director of Strategic Housing
Virginia Housing, City of Norfolk

Chris Thompson is the Director of Strategic Housing at Virginia Housing. He leads a team charged with developing and managing relationships with the Commonwealth's Housing Services Delivery Network. Mr. Thompson coordinates the design and delivery of trainings intended to strengthen the ability of local officials, land use planners, planning entities, and housing developers to better address local affordable housing and neighborhood revitalization issues. He also identifies strategic opportunities to provide technical assistance to individuals and organizations seeking to undertake transformational revitalization projects. Prior to joining VHDA he served as Deputy Director for Housing at the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD).



Matthew Bolster
Senior Strategic Housing Officer
Virginia Housing

Matthew Bolster, AICP is Senior Strategic Housing Officer in the Community Outreach division of Virginia Housing, Virginia's housing finance agency. He began his planning career in 1993 in Spotsylvania County, where he worked in land use administration in what was then Virginia's fastest-growing locality. In subsequent positions he transitioned to community development and housing, assisting smaller localities with revitalization projects as a planning consultant for six years with K.W. Poore and Associates, and later serving 11 years as a project manager for the Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority.

In the latter position he coordinated neighborhood revitalization activities under Richmond's Neighborhoods in Bloom program, and then managed public housing transformation projects. He has also served as a policy analyst for the Commission on Local Government. As a member of Virginia Housing's Strategic Housing team since 2016, he now uses his experience to connect public and private organizations to the resources available to produce and preserve affordable housing. Matt has a B.A. in history from the College of William and Mary and a master's degree in city and regional planning from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.



Martha Shickle
Executive Director
PlanRVA

Martha Heeter serves as the Executive Director of the Richmond Regional Planning District Commission, known commonly as PlanRVA, where she is responsible for directing the agency's general operations, strategic planning, project development, and program performance. PlanRVA is an intergovernmental agency that facilitates collaboration among the nine local jurisdictions in the Richmond region, which includes the Town of Ashland, the City of Richmond, and the Counties of Charles City, Chesterfield, Goochland, Hanover, Henrico, New Kent, and Powhatan.

She is a member of the Board of Directors for the Partnership for Housing Affordability, Grow Capital Jobs' GO Virginia Regional Council, Thrive Birth to Five early childhood coalition and Virginia Repertory Theater. She is an alumnus of Lead Virginia (class of 2018) and the Richmond Memorial Health Foundation's 2017 Equity + Health Fellowship program.

Having served more than 18 years in the public sector, her career has included local and regional government leadership positions in the Northern Shenandoah Valley and Richmond Regions. Martha previously served as the Executive Director for the Northern Shenandoah Valley Regional Commission and before that, she served as the Neighborhood Revitalization Director for the City of Winchester. In 2013, she received the Garland Thayer Award from People Incorporated, which recognizes the contributions of community leaders who embody the non-profit's work to help economically disadvantaged people. She was also named as one of Virginia's *Top 40 Under 40 in Housing* by the Virginia Housing Development Authority and Virginia Housing Coalition in 2012.



Sarin Adhikari
Principal Data Manager
PlanRVA

Sarin joined PlanRVA in 2022 and works as a Principal Data Manager. In his role, Sarin handles data insights, GIS, dashboards and data management. His favorite aspects of the role are discovering exciting insights from the data, conducting research on burning urban issues in collaboration with PlanRVA's highly skilled team. Sarin received his PhD in Urban Affairs from the University of Louisville.



Sandra Powell
Senior Deputy Director
Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development

Sandra Powell serves as the Sr. Deputy Director of the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). She joined the agency in October 2021. Sandra is responsible for providing strategic leadership of the Community Development and Housing division, which focuses on creating and implementing solutions in partnership with all levels of government, nonprofits, and the private sector to achieve essential housing and community development outcomes.

Before joining DHCD, Sandra served as the Deputy Executive Director with Newport News Redevelopment and Housing Authority (NNRHA). In her role as NNRHA's Deputy Executive Director, she provided day-to-day leadership of all NNRHA operational activities related to implementing organizational and department goals and strategies. Some of Sandra's accomplishments while at NNRHA included her contribution to the success of the \$30 million Choice Neighborhood Initiative Grant and the conversion of 296 housing units under HUD's Rental Assistance Demonstration program. Sandra's other focus areas include homeownership, construction, and renovation. She and her team collaborated with the planning and implementation of many city infrastructure and economic development efforts.

Sandra holds a bachelor's degree in business administration from Christopher Newport University and earned her master's degree in public administration from Old Dominion University. She has also achieved her Housing Development Finance Professional Certification.



Myron Wooden
Acting Program Director for Community Facilities
USDA Rural Development

I started with the agency in 2001 serving out of the Smithfield VA office as a student intern. I interned there for three summers while attending college. I interned one summer for Multi-Family Housing in Washington DC. Upon graduation I was hired as a loan specialist with the Single Family Housing Direct loan division in 2005. I went on to serve as a senior specialist, finance and loan analyst, and as the Branch Chief for the Special Programs Branch of the SFH Direct Loan Division. I served USDA Rural Development in a capacity at the National Office for a little over 17 years. Most recently I have come back to the state of Virginia to serve as an Area Director covering the Southeastern portion of the state. As Area Director I oversee Housing, Community Facilities, and am involved in Rural Business programs throughout my service territory.

Collectively I have 22 years of experience with USDA Rural Development and consider it an honor to serve in the capacity I have today as the territory I oversee encompasses the part of the state that I grew up in and now also call home.



Austin Pitman
Senior Development Manager
The Lawson Companies

Austin Pittman is the Senior Development Manager at The Lawson Companies, focusing on project feasibility and the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC). He works directly with the state housing credit authority, while managing the LIHTC process from procurement to completion. While working directly with HUD and municipal housing authorities, he also oversees the procurement and approval process for project-based rental assistance. Prior to his role as Senior Development Manager, Austin served as a Financial Analyst and Multifamily Development Analyst with The Lawson Companies.



Patrick Mauney
Executive Director
Rappahannock Rapidan Regional Commission

Patrick Mauney serves as Executive Director of the Rappahannock-Rapidan Regional Commission following his appointment in 2016. Prior to his current role, Patrick worked as the Commission's GIS Program Manager for ten years. He is responsible for administration and proactive guidance to the Commission's 21-member Board, and leadership and management of the organization's programmatic functions in transportation, environmental, housing and homeless services, and community development planning.

Patrick also serves as a board member for the Virginia Association of Planning District Commissions, Council for Rural Virginia, GO Virginia Region 9, and Aging Together. He is a native Virginian and a graduate of Mary Washington College (B.A., Geography) and University of Nebraska-Omaha (M.A., Public Administration).



Alleyn Harned
Executive Director
Virginia Clean Cities

Alleyn Harned is the Executive Director of Virginia Clean Cities (VCC), a member of the U.S. Department of Energy-affiliated Clean Cities Coalitions program.

Alleyn joined Clean Cities in 2009, the same year Virginia Clean Cities, Inc., formed a partnership with James Madison University. That partnership allows Clean Cities and the university in Harrisonburg, Va., to work together to leverage resources, support alternative fuel initiatives and pursue opportunities to decrease pollution and reduce dependence on foreign oil.

Prior to be named Executive Director, Alleyn served as the VCC 's Business Development Director. He served as the Virginia representative to the nine-state Southeast Natural Gas Vehicle Corridor Committee, and was coordinator for Virginia's initial 2010 electric vehicle readiness effort. Harned an appointee to Virginia's Energy Commission in 2014 and the State Advisory Board on Air Pollution in 2013. Harned serves as the President of the Transportation Energy Partners Board of Directors and has served twice as the Mid-Atlantic representative to the Clean

Cities Coordinator Council. Harned led coalition through the completion of the 1200 vehicle Southeast Propane Autogas Development Project under the Recovery Act.

Alleyn has worked on transportation and energy related issues in Virginia since 2006. Before joining the VCC staff, Alleyn served as the Assistant Secretary of Commerce and Trade for the Commonwealth of Virginia where he assisted in drafting Virginia's initial Energy Plan, and participated in the Virginia Commission on Climate Change and Governor's Energy Policy Advisory Council. Harned is a graduate of Ohio Wesleyan University, and has his Masters degree in Public Administration from James Madison University with a focus on community economic development.

With Virginia Clean Cities, Harned leads the Virginia Clean Cities coalition's collaborative effort to assist stakeholders and the Commonwealth in programs to improve air quality, and increase American energy security and economic opportunity through the increased use of alternative fuels and vehicles. Operating since 1996, Virginia Clean Cities has successfully managed tens of millions of dollars of federal, state, and stakeholder vehicle and infrastructure programs from offices on the James Madison campus in Harrisonburg VA. Examples of past projects were the nation's largest propane autogas vehicle deployment project, which covered 13 states, the Richmond Electric Vehicle initiative, which facilitated vehicles, and a Virginia DC and Maryland ethanol deployment project which installed the first ethanol stations in the mid-Atlantic region. Alleyn's theory of change involves incremental collaborative team leadership and drafted the nations only successful dual-state station deployment project for the 2015 USDA Biofuels Implementation Partnership.



Erin Belt
Decarbonization Lead
Environmental Division
Virginia Department of Transportation

Erin Belt joined VDOT's Environmental Division as the Decarbonization Lead in July 2022. She previously worked in construction stormwater for more than 17 years with Virginia DEQ, two Virginia localities and the State of Georgia. Erin completed her Bachelor's degrees in Forestry & Wildlife and her Master's degree in Wildlife Ecology at the University of Georgia. In her free time, she enjoys sustainable homesteading with her husband, playing with her blue heelers, and cheering on the UGA Bulldogs.



Tiffany Dubinsky
Statewide Transit Planning Manager
Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation

Tiffany Dubinsky is a Statewide Transit Planning Manager at the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT). She has almost 15 years of experience in the industry, having previously served as Principal and Senior Transportation Planner at the Richmond Regional Planning District Commission and Regional Planner for the Northern Shenandoah Valley Regional Commission. Her responsibilities include innovation and transit technology, grants management, transit planning, and MPO coordination.

Tiffany has a Master of Urban and Regional Planning from Virginia Commonwealth University and an undergraduate degree in Public Administration from James Madison University.



Kristin Peraza
Mobility Manager
Rappahannock Rapidan Regional Commission

Kristin Lam Peraza is a native Virginian who spent the first 10 years of her career working in various state positions including with the Virginia Health Department, the Virginia State Police, and the Northern Virginia Training Center. In her spare time, Kristin traveled to Central America completing several charitable projects, pursued a degree in Business and Spanish, started a family, and took up carpentry and cake baking.

After years of commuting into the city, Kristin took a position closer to home working with the local planning district 9, Rappahannock Rapidan Regional Commission, ultimately taking over the mobility programming. As the mobility manager for the region, Kristin has mitigated changes in federal and local funding and implemented an innovative collaborative approach; ultimately planning for and facilitating the expansion of mobility services, bolstering local non-profit transportation programs, and designing and implementing a unique and complex data infrastructure system used for service coordination and as the foundation of the One-Call One-Click Center.



Grant Sparks
Director of Transit Planning
Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation

Grant Sparks, AICP, serves as the Director of Transit Planning for DRPT, providing leadership in the evaluation, development, and execution of a \$4.2 billion portfolio of public transportation, commuter assistance, and congestion management programs throughout the Commonwealth. Mr. Sparks joined DRPT in 2019 and has more than 12 years of experience in grant management, federal compliance, transit service planning, and transit capital planning. He has served as a Project Manager for the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) in Washington D.C. where he managed a multi-million dollar U.S. EPA contract aimed to educate local

governments on redeveloping blighted and potentially contaminated properties.

He has also served as the Manager of Transit Planning for the Greenville Transit Authority in Greenville, South Carolina, and the Director of Transit Planning for the Chatham Area Transit Authority in Savannah, Georgia. In both positions he administered federal and state transit grants and managed service planning activities for the transit agencies. Mr. Sparks received his Bachelor degree in Public Policy and Administration from James Madison University and his Master of City and Regional Planning from Clemson University.



Roosevelt "Ted" Mercer, Jr.
CEO and Executive Director
Virginia Commercial Space Flight Authority

Roosevelt "Ted" Mercer, Jr., Major General, USAF (Ret.), is the CEO and Executive Director of the Virginia Commercial Space Flight Authority. Since taking office on August 1, 2021, Mr. Mercer has made it the mission of Virginia Space to serve the Commonwealth's economy by providing safe, reliable, and responsive space launch services, ensuring access to space at competitive prices, and maintaining secure facilities for testing of unmanned vehicles for integration into the National Airspace System (NAS).

Virginia Space is a political subdivision of Virginia. It owns and operates the Mid Atlantic Regional Spaceport collocated at NASA Wallops Flight Facility on the Eastern Shore of Virginia. Mr. Mercer is responsible for the expansion and promotion of the commercial and government space industry in the Commonwealth. He directly oversees successful launch to space, industrial and economic development, and scientific and technological research and development.

Under Mr. Mercer's leadership, Virginia Space continues to reach milestones that signify rapid expansion, including successful launches, the development of new facilities, a new launch pad, and outreach activities with domestic and international space industry organizations.

Prior to joining Virginia Space, Mr. Mercer was the director of the Office of NextGen Collaboration and Messaging at the Federal Aviation Administration. He provided high level leadership by managing and building relationships with a broad representation of stakeholders in the aviation community, federal agencies, and international air navigation service providers.

Mr. Mercer oversaw communication and outreach activities, including performance 2 reporting for the Next Generation Air Transportation System (NextGen). His organization supported the governance of the NextGen Executive Board, the NextGen Management Board, the NextGen Executive Weather Panel, and the NextGen Advisory Committee, managed interagency NextGen issues and coordinated the Office of NextGen's international program to support global harmonization.

Prior to joining the FAA in April 2016, Mr. Mercer served as the Vice President and Director for Government Commercial & International Initiatives, Geospatial Systems, a division of ITT Exelis. He was responsible for government and industry partnerships and international initiatives.

Mr. Mercer served in the United States Air Force (USAF) for more than 32 years (retired January 1, 2008), most recently as Director of Plans and Policy for U.S. Strategic Command at Offutt Air Force Base (AFB) Nebraska. He was responsible for the development and implementation of national security policy, military strategy, space and weapons employment concepts and policy, and joint doctrine as it applied to the command and execution of its missions. Mr. Mercer was also responsible for the development of the nation's strategic war plan, strategic support plans for theater combatant commanders, and contingency planning for the Global Strike mission.

Mr. Mercer has held Air Force command eight times from the squadron to the wing level. Some of his many USAF assignments include Commander, 45th Logistics Group, Patrick AFB, FL; Commander 30th Space Wing, Vandenberg

AFB, CA; Commander, 81st Training Wing, Biloxi, MS; Commander 91st Operations Group, Minot, N.D.; Vice Director of Plans, U.S. Space Command, Peterson AFB, Colorado; Deputy Director of Operations, Headquarters Air Force Space Command, Peterson AFB, CO; and Commandant, Joint Forces Staff College, National Defense University, Norfolk, VA.

Entering the USAF in 1975, Mr. Mercer was a distinguished graduate of the University of Puget Sound's ROTC program. His educational credentials include a BA in urban planning from the University of Puget Sound; MS in counseling from the University of Oklahoma; post-graduate Executive Programs at Syracuse University, National Defense University, and Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government; and a concentrated Executive Financial Development Program at the Wharton School of Business.

Mr. Mercer is a member of the Commonwealth of Virginia Governor's Aerospace Advisory Council; Vice Chairman of the board, National Strategic Research Institute for the University of Nebraska; member of the Board of Trustees for the Rochester Institute of Technology, Rochester, NY; a member of the National Association of Governing Boards; the Commercial Space Transportation Advisory Committee; and the National Space Council Users Advisory Group.



Robert A. Crum Jr.
Executive Director
Hampton Roads Planning District Commission

Mr. Crum began his tenure as Executive Director of the HRPDC/HRTPO on July 1, 2015. He has over 38 years of professional community planning experience. In his role with the HRPDC and HRTPO, he is responsible for coordinating cooperation among the region's 17 jurisdictions in areas such as regional consensus building, legislative affairs and transportation, community, environmental, housing, economic and emergency management planning. Examples of current regional initiatives include the Regional Fiber Initiative, Regional Economic Development Sites Inventory, Regional Legislative Agenda, Birthplace of America Trail, and collaborating with HRTAC in the planning, prioritization and coordination of over \$5 Billion of interstate transportation

improvements in the Hampton Roads region.

From 2008 to 2015, Mr. Crum was the Executive Director of the Richmond Regional Planning District Commission and Transportation Planning Organization. His major accomplishments with the RRPDC included:

- Formation of the Capital Region Collaborative, a strategic partnership between the RRPDC and the Greater Richmond Chamber
- Preparation and approval of the community's first regional Economic Development Strategy
- Formation of a regional emergency management planning program
- Regional investments in the Port of Richmond to leverage this facility as an economic development amenity

Prior to his work at the RRPDC, Mr. Crum worked for 20 years at the Centre Region Council of Governments in State College, Pennsylvania, most recently as the Agency's Planning Director. Between 1988 and 2008, he was responsible for coordinating all aspects of the Agency's regional planning program including preparation and maintenance of the regional comprehensive plan and sewage facilities plan, and oversight for the Region's transportation, land use, community facilities, housing, water resources and environmental planning programs. He completed planning and consensus building for a nationally recognized water reuse project and an award winning inter-municipal zoning effort.

Prior to his work in State College, he was Chief of the Planning Division for Indiana County, Pennsylvania where he coordinated County-wide community and solid waste planning activities.

Mr. Crum holds a bachelor's degree from Mansfield University of Pennsylvania in Geography and Regional Planning. He and his wife Patty have been married for over 37 years and have two sons – Bryan and Brandon.



Steven DeBerry
Executive Director
Southside Network Authority (SNA)

6/2020-Present: Executive Director, Southside Network Authority

The Southside Network Authority (SNA) is a regional political subdivision of the Commonwealth of Virginia formed by five cities in South Hampton Roads: the Cities of Chesapeake, Norfolk, Portsmouth, Suffolk, and Virginia Beach. The SNA is responsible for creating a fully integrated

regional fiber network that connects employment areas, higher education, research institutions, and municipal facilities through increased broadband access, speed and capacity while driving down average end-user costs and reducing barriers to entry for innovative new companies wishing to invest in the region. This regional broadband network will allow Hampton Roads to continue to develop as a nationally connected 21st century community and international information gateway, providing the region with the necessary infrastructure to support job creation in many emerging industry clusters.

7/2014-1/2020: Technology Manager and Chief Information Officer, City of Norfolk

Prior to 2014: Department of the Navy

30 years Senior Civilian leadership in multiple logistics areas: Financial Management, Supply Chain Management, Facilities Management, Strategic Planning, Information Technology, and Human Capital.



Rosemary Wilson
Vice Chair
Southside Network Authority (SNA) Board of Directors/Vice Mayor
City of Virginia Beach

Vice Mayor Rosemary Wilson has held elected office since 1996 — first with the School Board (1996 to 2000, including being vice chairman), then with the City Council (2000 to present). A graduate of Bayside High School and Old Dominion University, Wilson is a realtor with Howard Hanna Real Estate.

Recognized in 2012 by “Lawyers Weekly” as one of the Most Influential Women in Virginia, Wilson was also appointed by Gov. McDonnell to the Fair Housing Board and the Local Government Advisory Board to the Chesapeake Bay. She was honored by “Inside Business” in 2007 with the Women in Business Achievement Award, and by the Virginia Beach Education Association in 1999 with the Friend of Education Award. She is a fellow of the Sorensen Institute for Political Leadership at the University of Virginia and the Civic Leadership Institute at Old Dominion University.

Rosemary has served as president of the Virginia Municipal League and chairman of the League’s Human Development and Education Committee, as well as the Federal Advocacy Council. In 2016, she was named Volunteer of the Year from the Virginia Recreation and Park Society and is the co-chair of Cycle for Survival, a nonprofit that raises money for rare cancer research.

She is a City Council liaison to the Atlantic Park Community Development Authority, Beaches and Waterways Advisory Commission, Development Authority, Health Services Advisory Board, Historic Preservation Commission and School Modernization Special Project, and an appointed member of the Community Organization Grant (COG) Review and Allocation Committee, the In-House Pharmacy Exploratory Committee, the Oceana Land Use Conformity Committee and the Southside Network Authority.



Peter Wallace
Alternate Member
Southside Network Authority (SNA) Board of Directors/Chief Information Officer
City of Virginia Beach

Peter Wallace is the Chief Information Officer (CIO) for the award-winning City of Virginia Beach. He leads nearly 200 employees across six business units in the Information Technology (IT) Department. With more than three decades of industry experience, Peter is a champion of innovation who empowers employees while guiding high-performance organizations toward success in a digital world. He has held senior positions at Fortune 500 technology giants including Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, Merrill Lynch and IBM.

His bold yet pragmatic approach to managing change has culminated in local, national and global recognition. Under his leadership, the City of Virginia Beach has secured two CIO 100 awards and has been ranked as the #1 “Digital City” of its population size (250,000 – 499,999) in the Center for Digital Government’s Digital Cities Survey three times. Peter was named a Local IT Leader of the Year as part of the 2020 StateScoop Local Smart Awards. He was listed among Government Technology Magazine’s Top 25 Doers, Dreamers and Drivers of 2022.

Currently, Peter’s major tech initiatives include advancing the effort to position Virginia Beach as a tech hub and developing a multijurisdictional dark fiber, open access ring, which will support digitally empowered communities and regional prosperity.



Michael W.S. Lockaby
Outside General Counsel
Southside Network Authority (SNA)/Spilman
Thomas & Battle, PLLCPeter Wallace

Mike is a Member in Spilman's Roanoke, Virginia office. Mike has represented the Commonwealth and its political subdivisions his whole career. Mike's primary areas of practice are community development and housing, economic development projects, public finance/bonds, public-private partnerships, land use, and infrastructure projects, including broadband, electricity, water, sewer, solid waste, and transportation. He represents and advises numerous broadband authorities and public entities on telecommunications issues, particularly at the intersection of the requirements of Virginia state law, federal regulatory compliance, and the practical business realities that firms and investors are interested in when public and private entities work together. Mike is Secretary of the Board of Directors of the Virginia Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors (VATOA).

With the help of his colleagues at Spilman, Mike serves as County Attorney for Botetourt County, Virginia, and Town Attorney for the Town of Bedford, Virginia. He is also general counsel to the Southside Network Authority, the Economic Development Authority of Amherst County, and the Town of Bedford Redevelopment and Housing Authority, among others. Particularly relevant to this conference, he has also worked on regional initiatives and issues for the Roanoke Valley—Alleghany Regional Commission (RVARC) and the Southside Planning District Commission.

Mike is a graduate of the University of Virginia and the College of William & Mary Marshall–Wythe School of Law. He is also a member of the Local Government Attorneys of Virginia, Inc. (LGA), is Vice-Chairman of the Board of Governors of the Local Government Section of the Virginia State Bar, and is a member of the National Association of Bond Lawyers (NABL).



Tamarah Holmes
Director
Office of Broadband
Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development

Tamarah Holmes, Ph.D, is the director for the Office of Broadband at DHCD and has been in the role since September 2019. She has spent 20 years in the public sector in the field of community and economic development in New York, New Jersey, and Chesterfield, Virginia. Dr. Holmes has played an instrumental role in the creation of the Virginia Telecommunication Initiative (VATI) having served as the lead in the development of the program that has grown from a \$1 million to a \$750 million appropriation since 2017. Prior to her current role, she was the Associate Director for the Policy and Strategic Development office in the Community Development Division at DHCD.

In addition to serving as broadband director, she serves as the Virginia Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) program manager, overseeing ARC's economic and community development programming in 25 counties and 8 independent cities in the Appalachian region of Virginia. Dr. Holmes holds a master's degree in urban planning and analysis with a concentration in housing and community development. She received her doctorate in public policy and administration from Virginia Commonwealth University, located in Richmond, VA.



Melody Foster
Executive Director
Commonwealth Regional Council

Melody Foster is the Executive Director of the Commonwealth Regional Council (CRC) which serves the counties of Amelia, Buckingham, Charlotte, Cumberland, Lunenburg, Nottoway and Prince Edward - known as Virginia's Heartland. She has been with the CRC since 1986. She and her husband are the 4th generation to live in her great-grand parents' home near Charlotte Court House, Virginia that they remodeled in 1994. Melody enjoys sunsets, taking care of her many flowerbeds, spoiling her grandchildren and traveling with her husband.



Sheri McGuire
Associate VP for Community and Economic Development
Longwood University

Sheri McGuire serves as the Associate VP for Community and Economic Development at Longwood University where she coordinates and connects research, services, and projects supporting regional economic development initiatives. A key part of her role is directing the activities of the Longwood Small Business Development Center, serving small business communities in 25 localities in Southern/Central Virginia. Sheri's current projects include co-directing the development and implementation of the GO Virginia Region 3 Entrepreneurship and Innovation Investment Strategy and coordinating the development of an innovation hub in

Downtown Farmville.

Sheri is a graduate of LEAD Virginia (2016). Sheri holds an MBA from Virginia Tech and an undergraduate degree in Business and Finance from Longwood University.



R. Bryan David
Program Director/GO Virginia Region 3
Virginia Institute of Government

Bryan David serves as a Program Director for the University of Virginia's Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service at the Karsh Institute of Democracy to advance economic and community development in Southern Virginia. His work includes a partnership between the Cooper Center and the Growth and Opportunity Virginia Region 3 Council. He leads the operations of the GO Virginia Region 3 Council and directly collaborates with an extensive network of business and education leaders, partner organizations, and engaged residents. The Region 3 Council includes a 13-county region and the Cities of Danville and Martinsville in Southern Virginia.

With over 30 years of professional experience, Bryan has served rural Virginia localities as a County Administrator and held other local government leadership positions. He also headed Virginia's Region 2000 Partnership - Economic Development Council serving the Lynchburg metropolitan region. He received a Master of Urban and Regional Planning degree from Virginia Commonwealth University and a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science from Hampden-Sydney College. He is a member of the Mid-Atlantic Broadband Communities Corporation Board of Directors, Chair of the Council for Rural Virginia, and member of the Virginia Rural Leadership Institute Advisory Committee. His professional memberships include the American Institute of Certified Planners, the Virginia Economic Developers Association and its Public Policy Network, the American Planning Association and its Virginia Chapter, and the Virginia Local Government Management Association. He is a graduate of the University of Virginia's Senior Executive Institute.



Lauren Stuhldreher
Virginia Representative
Economic Development Administration

Lauren Stuhldreher serves as the Economic Development Representative for the Commonwealth of Virginia at the United States Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration. She works collaboratively with local and regional stakeholders on economic development investments that have included workforce development initiatives, industry and feasibility studies, construction of multi-use buildings, and infrastructure improvements throughout Virginia, totaling over \$130 million dollars since 2019. Prior to joining the U.S. Economic Development Administration in October 2019, Lauren worked as a Program Coordinator at Northwestern University and most

recently as the Incentives Coordinator at the Virginia Economic Development Partnership. She earned her bachelor's degree from Virginia Tech and is a recipient of the U. S. Department of Commerce Bronze Award for Superior Federal Service.