

**Minutes of the
COMMISSION ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT
March 26, 2026
1:40 pm
Benson Educational Building
16152 Main Ridge Road
Tangier, VA 23440**

Members Present

Heather Cordasco, Vice Chair
Robert Lauterberg
Terry Payne, Chair
Edwin Rosado (Remote)
Beck Stanley (Remote)

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 (Remote)
Alan Jones, Sr. Public Finance Analyst
Trisha Lindsey, Policy and Legislative Services Director (Remote)
Andrew Malloy, Sr. Policy Analyst (Remote)
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 1:40 p.m.

Roll Call

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

Remote Participation

Prior to the meeting, Commissioners Rosado and Stanley were approved by the Chair to participate electronically. Commissioner Rosado participated electronically from Chesterfield, VA due to a temporary disability that prevented his physical attendance. Commissioner Stanley participated electronically from Bedford, VA for the purpose of providing care to a family member due to a medical condition.

New Commissioner Welcome

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

Approval of 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).

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Commissioner Lauterberg and seconded by Commissioner Cordasco to approve the minutes of the January 9, 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.

Mr. Normand St-Pierre, a member of Tangier Town Council, expressed a desire to provide remarks following the Berkley Group's presentation.

Ms. Donna Biggs expressed concerns regarding her unit of local government and noted she would like to learn more about the activities and responsibilities of the Commission on Local Government.

There was general agreement amongst the Commissioners to allow for public comment from the Town of Tangier following the Berkely Group's presentation.

After seeing no additional speakers, Commissioner Payne closed public comment.

Staff's Report

Mr. Jones informed the Commission of the new gubernatorial appointees at the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). Mr. Jones introduced Dr. Tamarah Holmes as the Director of DHCD, who concurrently serves as the Executive Director of the Commission on Local Government. Mr. Jones also informed Commissioners of the appointments of Cassidy Rasnick as the Chief Operating Officer and Peter Mahoney as Senior Advisor.

Mr. Jones also informed the Commission that the Virginia General Assembly adjourned the 2026 Regular Session on March 14, 2026. Mr. Jones noted that staff will provide additional information regarding the 2026 Regular Session at a future meeting.

Local Fiscal Distress — Town of
Tangier

Mr. Jones provided a brief overview of the Local Fiscal Distress process, noting that the Berkley Group's engagement with the Town of Tangier began on January 9, 2026. Mr. Jones reminded the Commission that this is the first instance of the Local Fiscal Distress process since it was codified in 2024.

Drew Williams and Craig Meadows, representatives of the Berkley Group, provided an in-depth presentation of the Town of Tangier Fiscal Distress Report. Mr. Williams presented on Virginia's fiscal distress and turnaround process, background and history of the Town of Tangier, and the methodology informing the Berkley Group's approach to Tangier's fiscal distress designation. Mr. Meadows presented an assessment of Tangier's current situation, a summary of findings and implementation, immediate next steps, and concluded the presentation with a discussion of comments/questions from Commissioners.

Commissioner Lauterberg expressed concerns about the historical and financial records that may reside in the Town's accounting software and that it may be in the Town's interest to take action to gain access to such records, should they exist. Commissioner Lauterberg asked the Berkley Group for suggestions as to how the Town may regain access to the records. Mr. Williams advised that it may be beneficial to contact the Commonwealth's Attorney and/or the Virginia State Police to secure access to the accounting software.

Commissioner Rosado stated he was shocked at the difficult situation the Town is in and the unanswered questions remaining even after the Berkley Group's report. Commissioner Rosado commended the Berkley Group's comprehensive report, as well as the residents of the Town who have been integral in helping piece together the Town's fiscal documentation.

Commissioner Stanley provided remarks on the thoroughness of the Berkley Group's report and expressed hope that Tangier will take advantage of the recommendations put forth.

Commissioner Cordasco expressed appreciation for the Town's hospitality towards the Commission during its visit and remarked that there is a lot of work to be done by Town

Council, but the Berkley Group’s report offers a roadmap for addressing these issues.

Mr. Normand St-Pierre, a member of Tangier Town Council, provided remarks on the Town’s current budgetary performance and constraints, and provided remarks related to suggestions from the Berkley Group’s report. Mr. St-Pierre stated that additional financial support is needed in order to address the outstanding debt and overdue payments of the Town.

James “Ooker” Eskridge, the Mayor of Tangier, thanked Commissioners for coming to the island and for the support extended throughout the process thus far.

A motion was made by Commissioner Cordasco and seconded by Commissioner Lauterberg to accept and transmit the Berkley Group’s report to the Governor, legislative bodies, and the Auditor of Public Accounts. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote (YEAS: Cordasco, Lauterberg, Payne, Rosado, Stanley; NAYS: None).

A motion was made by Commissioner Lauterberg and seconded by Commissioner Cordasco to direct staff, in coordination with relevant stakeholders, to develop a performance plan and criteria for the Town of Tangier to address its fiscal distress. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote (YEAS: Cordasco, Lauterberg, Payne, Rosado, Stanley; NAYS: None).

Adjournment

A motion was made by Commissioner Cordasco and seconded by Commissioner Lauterberg 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 3:32 p.m.