

Chs. 28 & 29 (2026 Acts of Assembly) Work Group Meeting

Draft Minutes

July 23, 2026

1:30 p.m.

Virginia Department of Transportation
Lockwood Building
3rd Floor, Meeting Room C
9120 Lockwood Blvd.
Mechanicsville, VA 23116

A meeting of the Chs. 28 & 29 Work Group was held at the Virginia Department of Transportation Lockwood Building on July 23, 2026 at 1:30 p.m.

Members Present:

Jamie Bitz – Commission on Electric Utility Regulation
Sam Brumberg – Virginia, Maryland & Delaware Association of Electric Cooperatives (VMDAEC)
Mike Cizenski – State Corporation Commission (SCC)
David Essah – SCC
Rob Hofrichter – Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)
Gary Holt – Appalachian Power Company
Neil Joshipura – SCC
Joe Lerch – Virginia Association of Counties
Laura Meadows – Dominion Energy
Randy Satterfield – NextGen Highways
Mitchell Smiley – Virginia Municipal League
Thomas Turner – Conservatives for Clean Energy

Members Absent:

Tyrone Brooks – NextGen Highways
Amanda Cox – Appalachian Power Company
Alex Jones – VMDAEC
Trieste Lockwood – Lockwood Strategies

Additional Attendees:

Ryan Balluck – VDOT
DJ Hickman – VDOT
Jorg Huckabee-Mayfield – VDOT
Lynne Lloyd – VDOT
Junyi Meng – VDOT
Andy Payne – VDOT
Kathryn Pobre – VDOT
Brent Polland – VDOT

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at approximately 1:32 p.m.

2. Welcome and Introductions

Robert Hofrichter, Director of the VDOT Office of Land Use, welcomed attendees to the meeting, asked attendees to introduce themselves, and provided a safety briefing to the group.

3. Electronic Participation Policy

Mr. Hofrichter introduced the draft electronic participation policy, and Kathryn Pobre, VDOT Policy Analyst, provided clarity on the requirements for members requesting to participate remotely during in-person meetings. Mr. Hofrichter noted that future work group meetings would likely be in-person, with the option to hold all-virtual meetings pursuant to the policy if needed.

The electronic participation policy was unanimously approved by voice vote of the work group.

4. Initial Comments

Mr. Hofrichter laid out a proposed plan and the topics to be discussed and future work group meetings, to include discussion of the current process for placement of electrical transmission infrastructure in VDOT right of way (ROW), highlighting the objective of reducing friction points for industry with VDOT regulations in order to further the goals of Chapters 28 and 29 of the 2026 Acts of Assembly.

Discussion included industry concern over the potential of having to move transmission infrastructure placed within VDOT ROW due to a future VDOT project, the lack of future options for relocating that infrastructure, and options for providing information to utilities about future projects to inform present decision making; initial comments on the VDOT Land Use Permit Regulation (24VAC30-151) and potential amendments; the appropriateness of transmission line siting on different types of roadways; the variability of the permitting process across VDOT offices; and the use of ROW overhang. The group also discussed potentially defining “transmission” and “new electrical transmission infrastructure” to help focus the work group’s efforts. It was noted that internal VDOT instructions, such as those related to ROW and utilities and permit processing, could be revised to reflect the outcome of the work group’s deliberations while any identified changes to the agency’s regulations would adhere to the process required by the Administrative Process Act. The State Corporation Commission highlighted their guidelines that emphasize placing transmission infrastructure in existing ROW.

5. Discussion of 24VAC30-21 and 24VAC30-151 and Work Group Recommendations for Additional Regulations to Review

Mr. Hofrichter highlighted the Virginia Administrative Code sections with relevance for the work group’s deliberations and noted that internal guidance is also found in other documentation, such as manuals and informational memoranda. Regulatory requirements related to vegetation and scenic areas were flagged for further discussion, and potentially including a requirement for additional information to be submitted with a permit application was discussed. The SCC offered to share their guidelines with the group for additional discussion at a future meeting.

6. Work Assignments and Next Meeting

Mr. Hofrichter asked work group members to review the regulatory text and identify pain points in advance of the next meeting. The VDOT Office of Land Use will provide the group with process work flows from different VDOT Residencies for review. The regulatory text and work flows will be discussed at the next meeting.

7. Adjournment

The next work group meeting is tentatively scheduled for August 6, 2026. Meeting time and location are to be determined.

Mr. Hofrichter adjourned the meeting at approximately 2:38 p.m.