



## **Military Economic Development Advisory Committee (MEDAC)** **Meeting Minutes**

**Monday, November 24, 2025 | 1500 - 1630**

**Department of Economic Development**  
**4525 Main Street, Suite 700**

### **Members Present:**

Chair RADM Phil Olson, Vice-Chair RADM Robert Katz, CAPT Andy Baan, SES Steven Cade, CAPT J.J. Cummings, CAPT Loren Heckelman, RADM Mark Gemmill, RADM Gregory Nosal, RADM Charles Kubic, RADM Fenton Priest, Dr. Charles Stuppard (CAPT), VBDA Rep Eric Keplinger,

### **Members Present Virtually:**

CAPT Robert Holmes, CAPT Bill Curtis

### **Members Absent:**

CAPT Christopher (Kit) Chope, CAPT Louis Schager, CDR Kathleen Owens

### **Guests/Advisors/Staff Present:**

Edmund Libby, Michael Evans, Jonathan Nieves, Todd Nichols, Ihsane Mouak, John Uhrin III, Johnny Evans, Paul Bayer, Kayla Dotson

---

### **Minutes/Notes**

#### **I. Call to Order / Welcome and Introductions**

Chair Olson welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 1500.

- a. Chair Olson began the meeting by sharing the news of Richard Dunleavy's passing and encouraging any members that are able, attend his services.
- b. RADM Fenton Priest introduced the newest member, Steven Cade, Retired DoD SES.

#### **II. Approval of Meeting Minutes**

28 July 2025 Minutes were unanimously approved.

*Chair Olson requested a motion to add Nomination of Officers as an agenda item. The motion was unanimously approved.*



### **III. City Update - City Council Items**

*No Council Members were present.*

### **IV. Special Presentations and Discussions**

Director of Business Intelligence, Michael Evans, provided a presentation on the Hampton Roads Playbook, which is a resource that has been created to highlight the diverse and expansive wealth of assets that exist within the region. Among those, Hampton Roads is home to 15 diverse, dynamic communities, 19 military installations, the World's largest naval base and 33 colleges and universities. Something that separates Hampton Roads the most from other regions is federal spending; the region currently stands as the 5<sup>th</sup> largest metro for DOD spending. Mr. Evans also emphasized that there is a lot of momentum and connective tissue between the region and the four major industries Energy, Defense, Aerospace and Logistics.

The Playbook is viewed as proactive economic development – not waiting for companies to come to the area but to create projects that have a tangible economic impact. Mr. Evans discussed the 8 transformative projects that comprise the current focus of the Playbook such as AUKUS Center of Excellence, NEXUS: National Excellence in Uncrewed Systems and 757 Collab Defense Technology Accelerator.

*Discussion: Additional discussions were held regarding funding sources, how long this project has taken and what roles Economic Development, The HIVE and MEDAC might play.*

### **V. Command Updates for JEB Little Creek – Fort Story/NAS Oceana**

a) No representative for JEB Little Creek – Fort Story Present

*Discussion:* Capt. Charles Stuppard mentioned that there is a Change of Command coming up for this installation, so members can anticipate an invitation, Dr. Stuppard asked if attendance was still restricted to two members. Chair Olson offered a suggestion that was previously proposed - that a non-member group could attend and report back to the Board. Chair Olson suggested that members give the idea some consideration and it can be discussed again in the future.

b) No representative present on behalf of NAS Oceana

### **VI. HRMFFA Update**

Rick Dwyer gave an update on federal spending and grants that will be used at the various installations in the region and the service members in the area. The Federal shutdown came to an end after 43 days at least until January 30<sup>th</sup>, 2026. Updates include approval of a bill that will



fund military construction projects, namely the Navy's barracks privatization which will build or refurbish approximately 8,000 rooms in the Hampton Roads region. December 11<sup>th</sup> will be the HRMFFA Board meeting and the public is welcome to attend; they will be discussing priorities for 2026 and hosting the new Navy Region Mid-Atlantic Commander, RADM Barnett. The Virginia Defense Forum will be held in Norfolk on April 1-2, 2026, and HRMFFA will provide additional details as the event nears. Lastly, a secondary VA Outpatient clinic has been approved, it will be located near the Norfolk Outlets and has an estimated completion date of 2029/2030.

## **VII. Economic Development Update – Ihsane Mouak, ED Liaison**

Ihsane Mouak, ED Liaison, provided some highlights from Economic Development, to include celebrating the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Busch USA in Virginia Beach, attending the Virginia Veterans & Military Affairs Executive Forum in Richmond, and have championed several advancements for local veteran-owned companies. Virginia Beach has been named the #1 U.S. Market for veteran and military spouse employment for 2025 by the national non-profit, Hire Heros USA.

## **VIII. Military Workforce Development Update – Jonathan Nieves**

John Nieves, Coordinator for Hampton Roads Veterans Employment Center, shared that the recent 757 Career Summit was held and will be the last career summit that they host. There is a DoD Skillbridge Summit scheduled for December 3, 2025. Next year, the plan will be to move away from summits/expos and instead host four (4) two-day events, with the first day focusing on military spouses and new families in the region with resources for jobs, schools and housing. The evening portion will feature a “Red, White and Brew” mixer where people in the military community can interact with employers that attended the day’s event. Day two will focus on Executive Cohorts (E9, O5-O6) and Talent Force Cohorts (O4/E8 and below) who will be separated accordingly and have the opportunity to have on the spot interviews with employers, as well as access to resources such as Disability claims, transition information and panelists.

## **IX. Command Visit Program Updates**

No update from the program. There was a discussion asking if there were any updates on the restriction surrounding member visits to the various local commands – only two members can visit at one time. They will give more thought to ways to resolve this.

## **X. Meeting Schedule 2026**

Two options for meetings in 2026 were presented: four meetings, occurring once per quarter or six meetings, occurring bi-monthly. There was some discussion regarding the attendance policy that will require some clarification with the City Clerk’s office. MEDAC Clerk, Natacia James will



confer with the City Clerk's office to get some clarity on the questions raised by members and the vote on the 2026 calendar will be deferred until the next meeting.

**XI. Nomination of Officers**

RADM Robert Katz was nominated for Chairman and Dr. Charles Stuppard (CAPT) was nominated for Vice-Chair; no other nominations were submitted, and the motion was unanimously approved.

**XII. Announcements – Next Meeting – 26 January 2026**

**XIII. Adjournment**

Meeting adjourned at 1605.