

Northumberland County Economic Development Commission

Meeting: April 16, 2024

6-8 pm

1. Roll Call

In attendance were Commissioners: Karen Pica, Melissa Carter, Dan Corder, Maurice Johnson, and Lynn Stuart; and Staff: Robert Bullard, Drew Basye. John Kost, Planning Commission

2. Agenda Review. The agenda was reviewed and approved.

3. Review of Meeting Notes: The minutes for the EDC's March 2024 meeting were reviewed by the commissioners. Mr. Johnson motioned for approval, Mr. Corder second the motion and the Commissioners approved the minutes.

4. Open Discussion – EDC observations on discovery sessions and joint meetings

a. Dr. Pica asked the commissioners if they found the discovery sessions helpful.

- i. Mr. Corder – stated they are very helpful.
- ii. Mr. Johnson – stated they were very beneficial, and we should consider follow-on meetings with participants if additional questions surface.
- iii. Ms. Stuart – Ms. Stuart agreed and suggested we provide read-ahead questions for follow on meetings. She also suggested switching between inviting new individuals for discovery versus follow-on meetings.
- iv. Mr. Corder – Recommended inviting BCB Bank for a session because they have many business customers within Northumberland County.
- v. The group agreed that inviting all the banks in as a panel discussion is the best practice.
- vi. Ms. Stuart – discussed exploring the concept of mobile medical vans. There used to be Vans with mobile x-rays, etc. She commented on reaching out to VCU to see if they have that type of resource. Mr. Corder said East Coast Medical in Callao has been a great add into the Callao community. They accept some insurance and cash payments.
- vii. Mr. Kost (Planning District) – underlying theme he has realized from the discovery sessions is there is a workforce issue within the County.
- viii. Mr. Kost will be meet with the VP of Rappahannock Community College and see if she would be interested in meeting with EDC.

b. Dr. Pica discussed what she viewed as the commission's focus and potential roles with respect to Joint Meetings.

- i. Have commissioners meet with Supervisors and review what the direction is for the draft strategic plan. Get Supervisor's feedback on the plan and their vision as well. The focus will be on a shorter plan, two years out.
- ii. Ms. Stuart agrees that a 2-5 yr. plan is better than the 2030 plan.

- iii. Dr. Pica and Mr. Bullard brought up the concept of town halls or community surveys as a means to solicit input from the community.
- iv. Mr. Johnson – stated there are interdependencies between EDC and Planning Commission and perhaps it would be good to have periodic meetings between the two.

5. Commissioners' Corner

- a. Mr. Corder – District 1 – Thanks to all the volunteer first responders for the immediate reaction to the tornado. Some of the devastation was just tremendous.
- b. Ms. Stuart – District 2 –
 - i. Made a phone call to Warsaw Town Administrator to find out how they did their revitalization.
 - ii. Also made a call to Richmond County School Board. Their Local Composite Index (LCI) went up and they were able to get a waiver because 3% of their population did not live in the county.
 - iii. She is trying to find out their process for doing so. Northumberland County LCI is near .800. Northumberland County LCI is comparable to Fairfax County.
 - iv. Some damage to buildings from tornado but nobody was hurt.
- c. Ms. Carter – District 3 –
 - i. Spoke with Jane Blue and requested to know if there are elderly communities that she can send mobile library to.
 - ii. There was a citizen who couldn't travel after the tornado, and Ms. Blue was able to help. Just call her.
- d. Dr. Pica – District 4 –
 - i. New flower shop "BLOOM" where Britts used to be.
 - ii. Participated in a dinner event with the YMCA. They are trying to raise \$1.5M with hopes to start construction after this pool season. Discussed various programs/opportunities for citizens to use the facilities.
- e. Mr. Johnson – District 5 – No update.

6. Executive Director Items

- a. ARPA project status
 - i. BillboardsIn – ad is in final production.
 - ii. LeisureMedia360 Virginia.org Banner Ad & Chesapeake Bay Hero Header Page – April and May Invoice
 - iii. Kayak Brochure – Finalizing brochure adding pictures, pending Kayak Improvements.
 - iv. Kayak Facilities – RFP released April 2024
 - Which has better water access?
 - Lodge Landing has better infrastructure and better access.
 - Rowes limited parking/infrastructure
 - Still awaiting final approval JPA – at VMRC.

- Go with Lodge
 - Mr. Corder asked what the cost to remove the boat from Lodge.
 - v. Interpretive Signs – no action
 - b. NNPDC on April 15, 2024 –
 - i. Virginia Clean Cities, Inc. Discussed charging stations for EVs in Northern Neck. NNPDC wants to develop a regional plan for public charging stations. NNPDC with increase in EV-owned tourist, public charging stations may become a necessity. While most of the State funds are prioritized for main corridor routes, there are grants available that can benefit rural communities.
 - ii. Virginia Clean Cities is a non-profit organization, State employees, from JMU. There are roughly 1,509 Charging stations in Virginia with 4,627 outlets. NN has approx. 222 registered EV. And 85 are plug in hybrid.
 - iii. At Callao Brewing Company. CBC emerged as part of the Callao Revitalization Project. The revitalization project received funding through a Community Block Development Grant. The initiative helped provide a community with safe walkways, parking, and crossings. CBC voted twice as Best in Virginia with visitors nationwide. CBC is researching the ability to provide food offerings.
 - iv. Food was provided by Ma Margarets House Bed and Breakfast. Reedville. Delicious food and they can accommodate meetings (10-20 max). (mamargarethouse.com). Ms. Alva Jackson, Innkeeper.
 - c. Historical Civil War Interpretive Signage - Coordinating to meet in late April at Howland Chapel School (3560 Courthouse Road). Mr. Drew Gruber covers six states. Intent for the meeting is to have the property owners and Mr. Gruber meet and understand the description of the signage, location, and placement of signage. Follow-on tasks will potentially require a public hearing for approval.
 - d. No update on email account for commissioners
 - e. Summer intern opportunity. Presented a resume' of a college student who is willing to provide free intern services. We have a candidate, but do we have to have an 'application' process?
7. County Administrator Corner
- a. Mr. Basye provided updates to the Kayak Launch site. The proposals received were higher than anticipated. Because of this, only one kayak launch facility can be constructed. The commissioners prioritized Lodge Landing as their choice but if anything on the Joint Permit Application prevents this, then Rows landing is the second choice.
8. New Business

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- a. The Chamber of Commerce had a Board of Director's meeting. Will invite them to attend meeting after our strategic plan is drafted.
 - b. New initiative – current Chamber President starting an education LLC in a partnership from the school.
 - c. What is the filing status for the Chamber of Commerce?
 - d. Awaiting budget approval and how that works.
 - e. The Visitor Center has a new sign.
 - f. Mr. Corder makes a motion to request the county to review that the money going to Chamber of Commerce to find out if they are operating in the guidelines of their Articles of Organization. The county has a right to ask and it should come from the Board of Supervisors.
9. Citizen Engagement. None
10. Adjournment. Mr. Corder motioned for adjournment of the meeting and Ms. Carter second. The meeting adjourned at 7:33 PM