

Northumberland County Economic Development Commission
Meeting: January 21, 2025
6-8 pm

1. The meeting was called to order at 6:02 PM. Mr. Basye, the Assistant County Administrator, chaired the first part of the meeting to administer the election for officers.
2. Roll Call. In attendance were Commissioners: Dr. Karen Pica, Melissa Carter, and Maurice Johnson; Staff: Drew Basye. Jon Kost from Planning Commission.

NOTE: Although Mr. Corder was not in attendance, he did provide notes, annotated below, to Mr. Drew Basye, prior to the meeting.

3. Discovery Session –Rescheduled to next month.
4. Mr. Basye opened the floor for the election of Chairperson, EDC. Mr. Johnson motioned to nominate Dr. Karen Pica, and Ms. Carter second. Ms. Pica accepted the nomination, and Mr. Basye closed the floor for nominations and the nomination for Dr. Pica was approved. The chair for the meeting was transitioned to Dr. Pica.
5. Dr. Pica requested a motion to adjust the agenda and postpone the Discovery Session until next month’s meeting. Mr. Johnson made the motion, Ms. Carter second and the motion was approved.
6. Dr. Pica requested a motion to nominate the Election of Co-Chairman, EDC. Mr. Johnson motioned for Ms. Carter to serve as Co-Chairman, Dr. Pica second the motion and Ms. Carter accepted the nomination. A vote was made, and Ms. Carter was elected as the Co-Chairman.
7. Election for Secretary. Dr. Pica noted that the EDC Charter does not stipulate a requirement for a secretary, and since Mr. Bullard – the Executive Director – currently manages the administrative functions for the EDC, there is not need for a secretary. Mr. Johnson motioned to forego nominating a secretary, until a need surfaced for a dedicated Secretary. Ms. Carter second the motion and the motion was approved.
8. Approval of Adoption of By-Laws. Mr. Johnson motioned to approve the EDC By-Laws as they are currently written and Ms. Carter second the motion. The Adoption of By-laws were approved.
9. 2025 EDC Meeting Dates. Mr. Johnson made a motion to accept the proposed meeting dates for 2025. Ms. Carter second the motion. A discussion to consider moving the meeting an hour earlier but moving it earlier was not feasible. The motion passed.
10. Remote Participation Policy. Mr. Johnson motioned to accept the remote participation policy and Ms. Carter second the motion. The motion approved.

11. Review of Meeting Notes: The minutes for EDC’s November 2024 meeting were reviewed by the commissioners. Ms. Carter motioned for approval Mr. Johnson second the motion and the Commissioners approved the minutes for November 2024.
12. EDC 2025 Discovery Session Meetings Review. No motion was required because the discovery session is more of an informational session. Dr. Pica requested the commissioners to review the meeting and provide suggestions, as necessary. Mr. Johnson mentioned there may be impromptu opportunities to bring in participants.
13. Commissioners’ Corner
 - a. District 1 – Mr. Corder – Not present but Mr. Basye read notes he provided.
 - i. Obier seafood is still intending on moving forward with their Deli/sub shop. They are continuing to wait on the workforce for interior build out.
 - ii. Neno Pizza intends to have a limited presence at Neno Pizza in Callao in March. This will be the first time that they have opened for indoor dining since the onset of Covid in 2019. This is very positive and hopefully he will get the support he needs from the community.
 - iii. Callao Jubilee is relocating to their previous location behind the David Fine building right at the intersection of 360.
 - iv. The Callao brewing Company was on target for opening their fire brick oven pizza shop that is attached to the Brewery in January, they have had to push that back until February.
 - v. The consultant engineers hired to develop the site plan for the Hometown Community Park divided their services into phases. At this time, they completed Phase A and 50% of Phase B. The hometown community association recently had a meeting with the consultants to make decisions that could impact design and development. The association is happy with this progress and is busy working on fundraising.
 - b. District 2 - Vacant
 - c. District 3 – Ms. Carter – No updates
 - d. District 4 – Dr. Pica – No updates
 - e. District 5 – Mr. Johnson – No updates
14. Executive Director Items – Mr. Bullard was not present.
15. County Administrator Corner
 - a) All Points Broadband completed their construction for both phases and are finalizing paperwork to submit to the State for grant payments.
 - b) Planning to work towards obtaining BEAD funds to continue the infrastructure build-out in the Northern Neck.
16. Current Projects

- a) 29 January is the Virginia Talent + Opportunity (V-TOP) event at the Tavern from 1:00 – 3:00 PM. Dr. Jenkins has a list of participants for the event. Dr. Pica extended an invitation to the Northumberland Chamber of Commerce. Mr. Bullard extended an invitation to the Westmoreland County Economic Development Administrator and requested the invitation be extended to their Chamber of Commerce.
- b) Dr. Pica will meet with the Tavern manager to coordinate on EDC upcoming events for the Spring Job Fair. The meeting is to ideate on how to focus on opportunities related to Northumberland County focused activities. There will be two events: (1) A job fair at the high school for summer opportunities and (2) An event to highlight Northumberland County.
- c) Coordinating with Indian Creek Yacht Club to provide list of hoteling within the County.
- d) Dr. Pica will reach out to the Commissioner of Revenue for an updated list of County businesses.
- e) Jacob McCaleb hosts a monthly meeting to connect businesses and economic development commissions in the region. It is intended to be an information sharing event.
- f) Ms. Carter discussed Howland Church voting to proceed for the Civil War Trails signage. Dr. Pica discussed the presence of historical markings in the County and if they should be listed on the Do.Stay.Eat map. Mr. Kost mentioned there is a Northern Neck book with historical markings.

17. New Business

- a) Mr. Basye mentioned how EDC used ARPA Tourism grant money to advertise events like Blessing of the Fleet and Annual Strawberry Festival. He asked if EDC should reach out to Omega and St. Stephens if they need assistance again. Other ideas discussed were incorporating adding this to a QR Code for their events. Providing support was possible because of the funding from ARPA. Dr. Pica said she would discuss this with Mr. Bullard. Ms. Carter discussed the idea of having an EDC presence at County events like the Strawberry Festival and Famers Markets. *The new business is to get a presence that covers people that want to come visit, people that want to come play, and people that want to do business.*
- b) Mr. Johnson discussed the open partnership between OpenAI and Oracle and other agencies. The technology they are putting together, not from a computing perspective, but how it is going to get its power is an item of interest. This refers to modular nuclear power. Mr. Johnson will research the information and will inform the commission.

- c) Mr. Johnson discussed Omega's need for a machinist, and he inquired if the high school has a program for such a trade. Omega trains their personnel to do this job but there must be a need, or an identification of people who have the capability to be trained. Mr. Johnson will research the information and will inform the commission.

18. Citizen Engagement

- a) Nothing to report.

19. Adjournment. A motion to adjourn by Ms. Carter was second by Mr. Johnson. The meeting adjourned at 6:47 PM.