

MEETING MINUTES  
April 15, 2008  
Old Northumberland Courthouse  
Heathsville

Welcome: Call to Order.

Chairman Lee Allain called the April 15th meeting of the Northumberland County Economic Development Commission to order at 7:00 p.m. In attendance were: William Kling, Vice Chairman/District II, Kathleen M. Hanley, Secretary; C. Bruce Andrews/District V; John A. Hendrickson/District IV; Susan Christopher, Ambassador; Kenneth Eades, County Administrator and Joseph Madej, Executive Director. Also present was guest Ron Herring, builder (owner of The Home Crafters).

Approval of minutes:

The minutes of the March 18, 2008 meetings were approved as mailed.

Executive Directors Report:

- Project Progress
  - Mid-Bay Marine Center
    - A meeting to obtain cooperation from VIMS is scheduled for April 28. Invitees include: Christopher Newport, Virginia Tech., RCC, Rob Wittman, Richard Stuart, Albert Pollard, Dept Nat Resources, EPA, Ches Bay Foundation and five from Northumberland.
    - Incorporation papers have been submitted to Virginia State Corporation Commission. Application will then be made to the IRS for 501(C)3 status
    - A request for \$ 6.5 million appropriation has been submitted to U.S. Senator Jim Webb. The subcommittee has requested further clarification of how the center would accomplish the purposes of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974. The additional information was submitted on April 14<sup>th</sup>.
  - T-SYSTEMS corp.
    - A loan is still being considered by the Bank of Lancaster. George Thompson is developing some additional information requested by The Bank of Lancaster.
    - George Thompson has concluded that the Center for Innovative Technology, Herndon Va. is not a viable loan source.
    - The Virginia Department of Business Assistance and Bank of Lancaster have talked via telephone about how the loan guarantee of 75% would work.
- New Business / Project Opportunities
  - The Commission has applied for a grant to erect a farmer's market pavilion. Carol Seymour expects this request will be approved. She is concerned that we will have no African/American vendors or customers and will be viewed as not meeting the criteria. She is asking the Commission to help recruit African/American vendors. The Commission suggests that at the proper time: (1) The consignment shop in Heathsville be asked to display some of their items, (2) Some African-American coral groups perform and (3) Carol Yerby, who writes for The Echo, be asked to help.
  - The video dealing with the economic development aspects of historic preservation is being circulated to members of the Commission.
- Local Business Contacts / Support
  - Visit to Business: "First Baptist Church Day Care Center" & Jayne's Marina.
  - The Board of Supervisors approved (without the swimming pool) the request for a 44 slip marine across from Tiffany Yachts. The results of our email vote was 3-for and 3-against,

therefore the Economic Development Commission made no recommendation. Many business owners spoke in favor of the marina.

- Request to rezone 1.2 acre parcel in Glebe Point from Business to Residential:
  - The Executive Director, as instructed by The Commission, recommended denying the request for rezoning. Because a hotel/restaurant is more economically beneficial to the County than 28 condominiums.
  - Planning Commission will continue consideration the request on April 17<sup>th</sup>.
  - Before the April 17<sup>th</sup> meeting the Executive Director will send The Economic Development Commission's comments to the Planning Commission.
- Liaison Highlights
  - Patty Long is leaving The Northern Neck Tourism Council. Included in the portfolios was the April addition of the newsletter for the Northern Neck Tourism Council which explains her departure.
  - The Executive Director will meet with the Va. Economic Development Partnership tomorrow, April 16<sup>th</sup>, to review all data about the County in the Partnership's database.
  - The Governor's of Va. and Md. will meet with the Potomac Rivers Fisheries Commission in Colonial Beach at 3pm on 4/15.
- Metrics Highlights
  - Employment: Northumberland County's February unemployment rate of 7.7% is shown on the included chart of unemployment data from February 2007 to February 2008. Also shown is the average for Virginia (3.8%) and the United States (5.2%). Northumberland County's unemployment rate for February 2008(7.7%) was higher than February 2007's 6.8% and higher than the rate for January 2008(7.2%).
  - Building Permits: Included in the portfolio is a summary which tabulates the number of homes permitted and construction costs for the month of March and Year-to-Date. For March 2008, the number of homes (8) is less than the number of homes (18) permitted a year ago. The estimated value of these 8 homes is \$4.9 million; the estimated value of the 18 for February 2007 was \$5.4 million. The estimated cost year-to-date is \$14.7 million versus \$19.4 million a year ago. Note that only one of these 8 homes is to be stick-built.
- Progress of Annual Objectives
  - Year 2008 goals are
    1. Obtain initial funding/tangible support for the Mid-Bay Marine Center.
    2. Get Grant approved for another sewer system in Northumberland County that provides support to either the Reedville harbor area or the residential development area adjacent to the new schools.
    3. Win a first Grant through the new Grants Administrator.
    4. Start construction of a Name Brand hotel/motel in Northumberland Co.
    5. Establish an Economic Development Commission web page as part of the County web site.
    6. Conduct at least one community economic development event.
- News Articles

An Economic Development Commission article is needed for the Chamber of Commerce Guide. Commissioner Kling volunteered to update the existing article.

#### Upcoming Activities

- 4/16 Va Economic Development Partnership to review Northumberland County Data
- 4/17 Northumberland County Planning Commission monthly meeting
- 4/18 Northern Neck Middle Peninsula Telemedicine
- 4/21 Northern Neck Chesapeake Bay Region Partnership quarterly meeting

4/24 Select a location for hovercraft ferry maintenance facility  
4/26 Oyster Gardeners Association Meeting  
4/28 Mid-Bay Marine Center meeting at VIMS  
5/5 Vision 2048 "Better Models for Development" Committee monthly meeting  
5/8 Migrant and Seasonal Workers Council monthly meeting  
5/8 Board of Supervisors monthly meeting

#### Ambassador Program Report

Brochures have been distributed to Irvington's Back-In-Time bed & breakfast and will be distributed at the Garden Tour.

Three potential projects for the Economic Development Commission are:

The Kids Marketplace program offered by Va.'s Cooperative Extension

Students make fuel from used cooking oil

Auto fuel from Algae instead of Ethanol

#### Commissioners' Reports

Andrews: Daddy O's pizza is open in Burgess.

Hanley: Aerial surveys are being conducted in the Bluff Point area for a special project.

Hendrickson:

County "Welcome" signs are being erected at the county line at Route's 360 and 200.

W.H. Shirley will address the Builders Association.

Kling: Will attend a lunch meeting with the Small Business Administration on May 2<sup>nd</sup>.

#### County Administrator's Comments:

Verizon agreed to light its glass fiber between Tappahannock, Warsaw and Kilmarnock

By June 30<sup>th</sup> internet, TV & cell phone will be available as a package.

The feasibility of a Heathsville sewer system is presently being studied...

Applications are being obtained to study extending the Reedville sewer to Fairport.

The Little Wicomico River entrance will be dredged.

#### Public Comments:

Ron Herring: The Economic Development Commission needs to promote family businesses.

Adjournment 9:05 pm

Next Meeting: May 20, 2008

Minutes recorded by: Joseph J. Madej, Executive Director