

Northumberland Economic Development Commission

Minutes—Meeting July 15, 2014

- Roll Call—Commissioners in attendance: John Hendrickson, Bill Kling, Melissa Bunns-Carter, Lee Allain, Dick Saxer; Executive Director, Theresa Lambert; and County Administrator Kenny Eades.
- Members welcomed Dick Saxer as a new Commissioner, appointed by Ron Jett for District 5.
- It was announced that the Tavern has closed again.
- Minutes of the June 16, 2014 Meeting were approved.
- Information on the number of building permits for June was presented.
- Unemployment figures for June were presented.
- Executive Director's Update.
 - New director thanked the Commission for the appointment and expressed excitement about the new opportunity to serve the county.
 - Recent Activities.
 - Provided a summary of previous meeting of the Board of Supervisors including the vote on the long debated "tourist home" issue.
 - Highlighted a webinar that explored the resources available through BusinessUSA, a government website sponsored by the US Department of Commerce and the Small Business Administration to assist the development of new or expansion of existing businesses.
 - Discussion
 - A recommended approach for conducting Commission meetings was offered. Specifically, the executive director will send out a preliminary agenda the week prior to the meeting for input from the Commissioners by Monday noon prior to the Tuesday meeting. She asked that the Commissioners include the topics on which they will be providing an update. Members agreed to the approach.

- The type of basic materials/information that needs to be developed to enhance the Commission’s visibility was discussed. Members recommended beginning with the website. Members wanted to re-examine and update, as necessary, the Commission’s mission statement, goals and objectives for posting on the site. Then the material could then be included in a “fact sheet” or brochure for distribution at meetings or to local businesses.
 - The need for the development of a new strategic plan was discussed. Members agreed that it was time for new plan. Several suggested that additional meetings may be required to undertake the planning for such an effort. The group thought the fall was the time to begin the endeavor.
 - A marketing/visibility plan was also briefly discussed. The Commissioners acknowledged the need to tie the effort to the strategic plan. The concept of “product, place, price and promotion” should guide the Commission’s activities.
- Contract with the County for the Executive Director. The Commissioners approved engaging the new executive director for up to 40 hours per month.
- Upcoming Activities. The executive director identified several upcoming activities which she or members of the group would be attending over the next month. Ms. Lambert will also update the website with the names and latest contact information of all the members of the group.
- County Administrator’s Update.
 - Mr. Eades stated that Delegate Margaret Ransome is meeting with the Department of Commerce on the Broadband issues. There is a lack of “Last Mile” funding to get service throughout the county.
 - He announced that JMU is increasing use of the its property in Bluff Point and it plans to use it more in the fall. The Corp of Engineers permit expires in 18 months so they need to build quickly.
 - He announced the county will begin billing for rescue squad service.
- Commissioner Updates.
 - John Hendricks stated that a new business expects to get underway in a couple of months focused on home maintenance services for weekenders.
 - Melissa Bunns-Carter-No report.
 - Dick Saxer reported that NAPS received a \$3500 grant to purchase legos for a science projects for students.

- Lee Allain explained how the STEM project boosts science and math among students. He discussed the importance of the Governor’s Oyster Trail Initiative. He mentioned catfish processing plant as an emerging opportunity citing the O’Biers processing plant.
- Commissioners voted not to meet in August due to vacation schedules but to reconvene in September.
- Adjournment—Members voted to adjourn.