

At a retreat meeting of the Southampton County Board of Supervisors held at the Franklin Business Incubator, 300 North Mechanic Street, Franklin, Virginia on February 1, 2013 at 8:30 AM.

SUPERVISORS PRESENT

Dallas O. Jones, Chairman (Drewryville)
Ronald M. West, Vice Chairman (Berlin-Ivor)
Dr. Alan W. Edwards (Jerusalem)
Glenn H. Updike (Newsoms)
Carl J. Faison (Boykins-Branchville)
Barry T. Porter (Franklin)
S. Bruce Phillips (Capron)

SUPERVISORS ABSENT

OTHERS PRESENT

Michael W. Johnson, County Administrator (Clerk)
Beth Lewis, Director of Community Development
Lynette C. Lowe, Finance Director
Julien W. Johnson, Jr. Public Utilities Director
Richard E. Railey, Jr., County Attorney
Hart Council, Public Works
Julien Johnson, Public Utilities
Amanda Jarratt, CEO Franklin/Southampton Economic Development
Cynthia J. Edwards, Administrative Secretary

OTHERS ABSENT

After a light continental breakfast, Mr. Michael Johnson called the retreat to order.

Mr. Michael Johnson gave an overview of where we are today. He quoted “Where there is no vision, the people perish.” From Proverbs 29:18. He stated that the purpose of the meeting was to determine where we want to be in one year, five years, and ten years. He asked the Board members to list some of the things they would like to see in the next year. Some of the answers he got are: don’t show segregation, but show unitedness and team building, plan long term visions, balance how long term decisions are made with best input available, get zoning business friendly, have a cohesive vision – develop a roadmap to get there, can’t continually cut employees, have to temper everything with realism, protect our agriculture.

Mr. Michael Johnson stated that we have to focus on our vision. The reason we are here today is to bring our county’s future into focus. He asked the Board members what things they would like to see. Things that the Board members would like to see are: everybody working, good quality of life, diversity of the economy, get businesses in to broaden tax base, set aside prime areas for business, control the messages we are sending out.

Mr. Michael Johnson showed a Power point presentation showing the following:

Elements of a Vision

Prosperous economy
Excellent schools
Outstanding quality of life
High levels of civic involvement
Diverse economic base
Fair and competitive tax rates
County/City working together harmoniously

If We're to Achieve It

We cannot maintain status quo

We cannot tax, or cut, our way to prosperity, but must take deliberate and strategic action to GROW our economic base.

To grow our economic base, we must make high educational attainment a reality.

Cycle of Development

Good jobs – creation of good jobs will build good assets

Public & Private

A capable, productive workforce which provides a good foundation for good jobs.

Mr. Michael Johnson stated that today we are going to look at ways to be successful. In order to be successful we must focus on economic development. He turned the meeting over to Mrs. Amanda Jarratt and Mr. John Loftus of VEDP.

Mrs. Amanda Jarratt stated that economic development is every aspect of our future. She stated that Mr. John Loftus has assisted with site projects, site development for Isle of Wight, Prince George, and Greenville Counties. Mr. John Loftus stated that the purpose of VEDP was to enhance the quality of life and raise the standard of living for all Virginians, in collaboration with the Virginia Commonwealth through assertive business planning. There are several items which come into play with this process:

Location Factors

Sites/Buildings

Labor

Marking/Transitions

Quality of Life

Business Climate

Site Readiness

Site Control

Zoning

Utility Infrastructure

Transportation Infrastructure

Shovel Ready Pad

Master Plan

Identify Site Properties

Identify Quality Property

Comprehensive Plan

Proximity to Transportation

Proximity to Utilities

Developable Land

Competitive Sites

Shirley T. Holland Intermodal Park in Isle of Wight

Progress Park – Wythe County

Mecklenburg County

Cane Creek County

Washington County

Current Inventory we have:

Turner Tract
Southampton Business Park
IP – Converting Innovation Center

Where do we focus our efforts next?

Hwy. 671 Corridor
Cypress Cove
Hwy. 460 Corridor

Next Steps:

Identify Priority Areas
Proper Future Land use Plan Designation
Proper Zoning in Place
Discuss ways to gain control of property in priority areas
Due diligence on highest priority properties
Utilize existing agreements to lower potential costs

After a short recess, Mr. Michael Johnson turned the floor over to Mrs. Beth Lewis who gave a presentation focusing on Community Development. Mrs. Beth Lewis focused on the following:

Current Status – Where we are now?

- a. Capital Improvements that continue to require repayment/maintenance
 - Riverdale Elementary – repayment
 - WWTP – repayment
 - Turner Tract – repayment, infrastructure development to further Enviva plant Development
- b. Capital Improvement in the near future
 - Security improvements to courthouse – plans in preparation
- c. Most schools under capacity – Capron Elementary replacement has been included in the Capital Improvements Plan for a number of years. In recent discussion between Dr. Parrish and the Planning Commission, the replacement of the school was the number two priority, with replacement school buses being the top priority.
- d. Comprehensive Plan update is underway – Planning Commission has received drafts of all updated chapters except the Environmental chapter. Commission has begun to look at land use mapping for the Ivor and Courtland Planning Areas. Commission has received data gathered from “planning at the fair” booth that provided insight into what citizens seek. Mapping needed throughout plan, no in-house capacity for mapping, no funds available for contracted mapping.

Challenges – What we need to focus on

- Customers for WWTP.
- Completion of infrastructure for Turner Tract that will make Enviva development possible and may encourage development of remaining acreage. Water tower permit approved, waiting to be picked up.
- Full occupancy of Agri-Business Park.
- Adoption of amendments to Comprehensive Plan and zoning map to encourage further industrial development.
- Continuing to focus on preservation of agriculture/forestry while encouraging necessary development in appropriate locations.
- Continuing reductions in solid waste quantities.
- Improving economy may increase development pressure; staffing needs to be able to respond to increases in workload.

Opportunities and Strengths

- Increasing large-scale non-residential development
 - Enviva
 - Dominion Power renovation
 - Asphalt plant in Ivor
 - Southampton Real Estate office-retail building nearing completion, will house law office, Farmer's Bank. Final office/retail building planned.
 - Hardee's plan in review.
- "Green" energy to be generated by renovated Dominion Power plant is positive attribute for area to various companies.
- Housing construction is steady, much of it located on existing lots and subdivisions rather than along rural roads, i.e., Pines of Ivor, along Unity Road, Shady Brook Court, Bethel Farms. Benson Woods subdivision infrastructure under construction.
- Four communication towers (cell towers) upgraded
- Substantial renovation of Stevens Woods apartments in Courtland completed
- Numerous improvements and additions to houses of worship
- Good partner with City of Franklin Community Development Department. They have provided all building inspections since December 3, 2012. Prompt response to questions from permit holders, able to accommodate all inspections as requested by permit holders.
- Opportunity for development along new US 460 Expressway in manner County directs with review of Comprehensive Plan underway.
- Clarity provided in 2012 regarding zoning and Land Use taxation issue
- Both new Planning Commission members have completed training, three of four new BZA members have enrolled in training this spring. Planning Commission recommends reappointed Commission members who have not completed training enroll within two years of reappointment
- Local businesses growing
 - Crowder & White acquired sand mining operation on south side of General Thomas Highway
 - Gray and Sons moved business out of home onto industrial property
 - Restaurant under construction between Capron and Drewryville owned and operated by local property owner
 - Downtown Boykins economic restructuring and marketing plan complete, number of available storefronts on Main Street in Boykins continue to decrease
 - Clark family auto-related businesses in Ivor growing
 - Improvements made to several local peanut processing facilities in 2012
 - Ministorage near Sedley underway
- Recreational/cultural/historical facilities continue to grow in County
 - Sedley ball fields to get underway soon
 - Courtland ball fields near Sebrell underway
 - DGIF boat ramp on Shady Brook Trail under construction
 - Development of Nat Turner Trail underway, improvements at Historical Society site on-going
 - Development of Cheroenhaka tribal lands continues
 - New pool under construction at Girl Scout camp

The next item was a discussion regarding machinery and tools tax with Mrs. Amy Carr. It was looked at as far as change, remaining revenue neutral, and lower rates. The statement was made that our plan discourages people from buying new tools. We should Grandfather method of assessment for current businesses if we change to a new method.

After a break for lunch the focus was turned to education. Mr. Michael Johnson welcomed Dr. Alvera Parrish, Superintendent of Southampton County Public Schools. The title of Dr. Alvera Parrish's presentation was Going Forward Together. She gave an overview of the state of Southampton County Public Schools. The total number of students in Southampton County public schools is currently 2,845 students. She touched on the educational trends of the past, present, and future. She stated that the standards today are more rigorous than ever before. The budget control

act of 2011 would improve roughly 1.2 trillion in across the board budget cuts to almost all federal programs including education. There was a 5.9% cut to education. For FY 2014 – 2021 overall funding allocations would decrease across the Board. They are still faced with unfunded mandates. They cut 45 positions with 19 of those being classroom teachers.

Critical Personnel Needs

Elementary Librarian
High School Spanish Teacher
High School Math Teacher
Administrative Assistant at Riverdale
Teacher Assistant at the Middle School

Efficiency Reviews

Have energy solutions groups to come in and do walk-throughs.

School Buses

School buses for student transportation are in a poor state.

Looking Ahead

JROTC Program
Heating Occupations
LPN Nursing Program
Add Foreign Language Courses to Upper Elementary & Middle School
Additional Computers

Mr. Michael Johnson and Mrs. Lynette Lowe gave a presentation on Budget and Finance. Mr. Michael Johnson compared our county to some of the surrounding counties as far as school issues and the number of personnel other counties employ. Also, the number of old school buses has gotten quite large. There is no accountability for funding of buses. Mr. Michael Johnson stated that the way we got in this position was that it has been left to the school board as to how to spend the money they receive from the county. They always put their money into education instead of transportation. In comparison to other surrounding counties our teacher's salaries are less competitive.

Our Fiscal Year 2013 Budget is \$52,511,208. We have got to look at where we are going to cut our budget.

The next focus was on Information technology. Mrs. Sandi Plyler gave a presentation showing an overview of the department's responsibilities. She stated that they needed to upgrade in order to speed up the computer system. This was her main item of concern as she has to get some people off the computer in order for others to be able to get their work out.

The next focus was on Public Utilities. Mr. Julien Johnson and Mr. Michael Smith gave an overview of the infrastructure. They currently have 26 pump stations. They need to put slip lining sewers in the Edgehill Subdivision at a cost of \$261,000. They need to rebuild six pump stations in the Courtland Environs Wastewater System which will cost \$210,000.00. There are six pump station generators that need replacing which will cost \$92,000.00. They still have not filled the laborer position. They desperately need to fill that position.

The next focus was on Public Works. Mr. Hart Council and Mr. Jackie Vick provided an update on their respective areas. As far as solid waste there are 16 own refuse sites, 1 SPSA Transfer Station. The Ivor and Boykins sites are owned by SPSA. They are in need of replacing two pick-up trucks which would cost about \$40,000.00. They need to replace a roll-off truck which will cost \$160,000.00. There are three compactors that need replacing which will cost \$120,000.00. As far as Building and Grounds there are several items that need attention at the courthouse. We need to replace current one-pipe HVAC system with two-pipe system at \$125,000.00. The courthouse windows need replacing at a cost of \$35,000.00. We need to seal water intrusion in

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basement at \$10,000.00. After much discussion about possible usage of the IP Building, it was stated that the building is in need of having the roof repaired and the cost to run networking out there is extremely high.

Mr. Michael Johnson wrapped the meeting up and stated that we would continue tomorrow by breaking out into groups and applying what we had heard today to come up with some goals for the future.

Dallas O. Jones, Chairman

Michael W. Johnson, Clerk

At a retreat meeting of the Southampton County Board of Supervisors held at the Franklin Business Incubator, 300 North Mechanic Street, Franklin, Virginia on February 2, 2013 at 8:30 AM.

SUPERVISORS PRESENT

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Ronald M. West, Vice Chairman (Berlin-Ivor)
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After a light continental breakfast, Mr. Michael Johnson called the retreat to order. He stated that after yesterday we needed to look at the elements of a vision for the future – one year, five years, and ten years. He broke the group up into two teams; one team was the Ravens and other team was San Francisco. Both teams had an hour and a half to work on coming up with goals for one year, five years, and 10 years. The Ravens looked at Economic Development, Public Utilities, IT, Education and San Francisco looked at Budget & Finance, Community Development, Public works, and Education.

After that time the two groups came back as one and discussed what their individual teams had planned. Most of the ideas that one group had the other had thought of also. Some of the ideas focused on rezoning property in the county in order to be shovel ready when new businesses looked at coming into the area (specifically in the new Highway 460 area), updating the comprehensive plan, partnering with the City of Franklin to be provide cost savings, possible tax rollback, infrastructure map, computer upgrades (megabytes), plan to purchase new school buses/work with the School Board to get back on a regular rotating basis of replacing buses, faced with 2% salary for teachers only that is required of the schools by state mandates, plan to be prepared before 2018 as what to do with trash before the SPSA agreement ends, seek projects to generate revenue, plan to utilize the IP Building and/or selling it. These are just some of the major items considered for the future of the county.

Lunch was eaten as we finished our discussion on goals for the future. The meeting adjourned at approximately 1:20 PM.

Dallas O. Jones, Chairman

Michael W. Johnson, Clerk