

At a Mini Retreat of the Southampton County Board of Supervisors held at the Workforce Development Center in Franklin, VA on March 7, 2006 at 6:30 PM

SUPERVISORS PRESENT

Dallas O. Jones, Chairman (Drewryville)
Walter L. Young, Jr., Vice-Chairman (Franklin)
Walter D. Brown, III (Newsoms)
Carl J. Faison (Boykins-Branchville)
Anita T. Felts (Jerusalem)
Ronald M. West (Berlin-Ivor)
Moses Wyche (Capron)

SUPERVISORS ABSENT

None

OTHERS PRESENT

Michael W. Johnson, County Administrator
James A. Randolph, Assistant County Administrator
Julia G. Williams, Finance Director
Robert L. Barnett, Director of Community Development
Sandi P. Plyler, Data Processing Manager
Julien W. Johnson, Jr., Public Utilities Director
Hart Council, Public Works Director
Robert Croak, Utilities Systems Supervisor
Richard E. Railey, Jr., County Attorney
Vernie W. Francis, Jr., Sheriff
John Robert Harrup, Commissioner of the Revenue
Eric A. Cooke, Commonwealth's Attorney
Susan H. Wright, County Administration Executive Secretary

Supervisor Faison gave the invocation at 6:30 PM and dinner and fellowship immediately followed from 6:30 PM – 7:00 PM.

Chairman Jones called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

Mr. Michael Johnson, County Administrator, welcomed everyone, and presented a PowerPoint presentation revisiting the important issues identified last year by the Board of Supervisors. Issues identified last year as issues on top of them were new school construction, growth and development, and land use taxation. Issues looming were the cost of solid waste collection and the need for attended sites, a plan for economic development, and infrastructure development. Issues on the horizon were organizational issues (pay and classification, staffing needs, space needs), and technology issues (E-government). He reported the progress that had been made regarding those issues, as well as the shortfalls. Regarding school construction, mobile units were purchased and placed at Southampton High School at a cost of \$150,000. A new Hunterdale Elementary School and a new Capron Elementary School were still needed at a cost of \$16,000,000 and \$7,400,000 respectively, which together would be an estimated equivalent of a 10¢ - 12¢ increase in the real estate tax rate. Regarding growth and development, a land-use taxation ordinance was adopted June 27, 2005. He noted that implementation of that program was not without a cost, as it would be an estimated equivalent of a 6¢ - 7¢ increase in the real estate tax rate. He continued that rural-residential zoning regulations were adopted December 19, 2005, the Comprehensive Plan update commenced December 1, 2005, and a proffer study and model had been completed. Regarding attended solid waste collection, two transfer sites (Newsoms and Courtland) had been purchased, a business plan for attended sites was developed and authorized, lease/purchase agreements were authorized and ready for distribution, and phased implementation was to begin July 1, 2006.

Mr. Johnson continued that regarding economic development, a new marketing organization, Franklin-Southampton Economic Development, Inc. was created, a Board of Directors appointed, and an Executive Director, Mr. John Smolak, was hired. Ties with a larger regional group, Hampton Roads Economic Development Association, were being pursued. Recent successes in Southampton County were a \$6.5 million expansion of Narricot which created 130 new jobs, a new \$3 million industry in the Southampton Business Park which would create 40 new jobs, and a \$1.5 million expansion of an existing industry to the Southampton Business Park. In regards to infrastructure development, the Courtland Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) and environs master plan had been authorized, although funding had not been identified. The estimated cost to expand the Courtland WWTP to 1 million gallons/day was \$6 million, an estimated equivalent increase of 4¢ - 5¢ in the real estate tax rate. Also, funding for the Turner Tract infrastructure had

not been identified. The cost to fully fund the Turner Tract project was \$10,960,400, an estimated equivalent increase of 8¢ - 9¢ in the real estate tax rate. Regarding organizational issues, he advised that both the pay and classification plan and the organizational staffing study were complete and ready for presentation on 3/27/06. Funding had not been identified and set aside for implementation of the pay and classification plan and organizational staffing needs. It was estimated that the cost to fully fund the plan would be an estimated equivalent increase of 4¢ - 5¢ in the real estate tax rate. He stated that progress had been made and he thought it was important to reflect upon that progress, as sometimes it was difficult to realize.

Mr. Johnson stated that as they were aware, the general reassessment had been completed, but they did not yet know the values of the growth in assessments. However, to give them an idea, if assessments grew 30%, that would be equivalent to a 22.2¢ increase in the real estate tax rate, if assessments grew 40% - 29.6¢, and if 50% - 37.0¢.

Mr. Johnson shared statistics from the 2004 Harris Poll, which surveyed 23,000 U.S. residents (workers, managers, and executives) employed full time in key industries and governments. The survey indicated that only 37% had a clear understanding of what their organization was trying to achieve and why, only 1 in 5 were enthusiastic about their organization's goals, only 1 in 5 had a clear "line of sight" between their work and their organization's goals, and only half were satisfied with the work they accomplished at the end of the week. In addition, only 20% fully trusted the organization they worked for, only 17% felt their organization fostered open communication that was respectful of differing opinions and open to new and better ideas, and only 10% felt their organization held people accountable for results. He advised that if that were a football team, only 4 of 11 players on the field would know which goal was theirs, only 2 of 11 would care, only 2 of 11 would know what position they played and what they were supposed to do, and all but 2 players were actually competing against their own team rather than the opponent.

Mr. Johnson stated that the role of government and what we were trying to achieve was "to create and maintain a thriving community." Our real challenge was to digest the long range vision into strategic, tactical bites that can be translated into budget requests and measurement tools.

Mr. Johnson then divided everyone into 4 discussion groups and asked them to decide the projects or programs in which we must focus for the next 3-5 years to create and/or maintain a thriving community, and their budgetary impacts. The groups' results were as follows:

Group 1

- Education - bricks/mortar - \$23.5 million
- Economic Development - \$11 million
- Organizational Development - 4 to 5 cents
- Marketing (5 to 7 cents for tax relief)
- Additional jobs
- Retain best and brightest

Group 2

- Education - Hunterdale Elem. School focal point for future growth (19 cents)
- Infrastructure (18 cents)
 - Courtland WWTP expansion
- Maintain school accreditation
- Open communication w/ existing towns (no cost)
- Faculty/staff retention
- Recognition/resolution

Group 3

- Courtland WWTP Expansion - \$6 million
- Economic Development - \$11 million
- Comprehensive Plan
- Pay & Classification Plan - 4 to 5 cents
- Total of 17 cents
- Schools "a given"
- New investment, # jobs create
- Quality of employees attracted & retention

Group 4

- 7 cents for land-use off the top
- Economic Development - jobs, investment - Turner Tract acquisition right away - 5 cents - don't forget Rt. 460
- Education - \$16 million - Hunterdale now, Capron later
- Fund pay & classification - take care of home first
- Reassess every 2 years

The Board of Supervisors concluded that some heavy decisions would have to be made this budget year given the reassessment and the budgetary impacts of the aforementioned projects.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:45 PM.