

At a Mini Retreat of the Southampton County Board of Supervisors held at the Workforce Development Center in Franklin, VA on June 13, 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
- 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
- Jackie D. Vick, Facilities Maintenance Supervisor
- David K. Britt, Treasurer
- John Robert Harrup, Commissioner of the Revenue
- 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 providing an update of major projects, including the public safety radio system, attended solid waste convenience centers, new Hunterdale School, and new industrial park. He also talked about the Commonwealth Education Policy Institute education study and shared 10 habits of highly effective boards. He advised that the public safety radio system was a \$3.1 million project. The emergency operations center (EOC) would have generator backup, 2 dispatch consoles, and the EOC monopole would provide VHF connectivity and control to 4 towers throughout the county. The tower sites would have shelters with fixed equipment and generator backup. New mobile and portable radios, pagers, and base stations would be provided to the fire and rescue departments. There would be satisfactory coverage with a handheld radio over 95% of the area, 95% of the time. An implementation strategy meeting was scheduled tomorrow night with fire and rescue. System testing was to begin June 19, mobiles and pagers distributed to fire and rescue the week following July 4, system cutover to begin mid-July, and mobiles to be installed by September 1. Regarding the attended solid waste convenience centers, they planned to have 4 of them fully operational by September 1, 4 more by October 1, 4 more by November 1, and the final 4 by December 1. They were seeking 32 total part-time employees. They would work 6 hour days, 13 days per month @ \$7.00/hour. They would be assigned to work 2 “paired sites”, such as Unity and Sedley. They would never be scheduled to work more than 2 consecutive days. Paul D. Camp Community College was developing the orientation and training plan.

Mr. Johnson advised that regarding the new Hunterdale School, an initial project planning meeting took place on May 30. Present were school board administrative staff, the architect, engineer, project construction manager, financial advisor, and county administrative staff. Site evaluation of the potential donated school site at the Cutchins Farm was underway by the School Board. The project estimate for the 600-student school with furnishings was \$16.2 million. The tentative schedule was for design work to continue through December 2006, bids to be received March 2007, notice to proceed in April 2007, final completion in July 2008, and the school to be opened in September 2008. Our financial advisor, Davenport, was developing the financing strategy based on cash flow projections provided by the project manager. Regarding the new industrial park, he advised that items already completed were the water/sewer feasibility study, option acquired on the 1st 200 acres, Phase 1 and 2 environmental site assessments, wetland delineation, boundary survey, aerial photography/topographic survey, Army Corps of Engineers confirmation of the wetlands delineation, and land appraisal. To be completed were Phase 1 and 1A cultural resources survey, identifying “farmed wetlands” and obtaining permits from ACOE & VDEQ, identifying stormwater management alternatives, finalizing cost estimates, completing final cost/benefit analysis, and acquiring the site and proceeding with project.

Mr. Johnson stated that an education study had been performed by the Commonwealth Education Policy Institute of Virginia Commonwealth University. It was prepared for and funded by Franklin-Southampton Futures, Inc. He noted that it was not a consolidation study. Part 1 of the study was an analysis of governance options (shared superintendents, jointly-operated divisions, or consolidation) for school systems that may wish to collaborate. Part 2 was a review of resources available to the City of Franklin and Southampton County Schools. He shared the following information regarding reversion, should the City of Franklin ever decide to revert back to a town:

- Process may be initiated by majority of city council or voter petition (15% of all registered voters)
- Only 1 city has initiated a reversion suit that was heard on its merits – South Boston (1995)
- Clifton Forge filed suit in 1999 but subsequently reached a voluntary reversion agreement with Allegheny County (2001)
- Once initiated, the petition is forwarded to the Commission on Local Government (COLG) for review
- COLG has 5 members, appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the General Assembly
- COLG is authorized to investigate, analyze, and make findings of fact to the probable effect upon citizens affected by the reversion
- Special court (3 Circuit Court Judges appointed by The Virginia Supreme Court) will enter an order granting town status, if after hearing the evidence, the court finds that:
 - The change will not substantially impair the county’s ability to meet the needs of its service population;
 - The change will not result in a substantially inequitable sharing of resources and liabilities;
 - The proposed change is, in the balance of equities, in the best interest of the city, county, and the Commonwealth and the people of the city and county;
 - The Court may impose such terms and conditions as it deems appropriate to:
 - Insure an orderly transition
 - Adjust any financial inequities;
 - Insure the best interest of all parties
 - After entry of the order, the city council may, within 21 days, decline to accept town status
 - Liabilities and assets of city remain with the town
 - 2-year moratorium on annexation proceedings

Supervisor West wondered if there was more to this study than meets the eye. He asked Mr. Johnson for his thoughts. Mr. Johnson stated that he did not think there was a hidden agenda. Supervisor Faison remarked that, nevertheless, we should always keep an open mind.

Mr. Johnson shared the following 10 habits of highly effective boards:

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| 1) Think and act strategically | 7) Allocate time and energy appropriately |
| 2) Understand and demonstrate teamwork | 8) Set clear rules and procedures for meetings |
| 3) Master small group decision making | 9) Get an assessment of the public’s concerns and an evaluation of your performance |
| 4) Clearly define roles and relationships | 10) Practice continuous learning and development as a leader |
| 5) Partner with staff | |
| 6) Monitor policy implementation | |

Mr. Johnson asked if there was anything that anyone wished to talk about?

Mr. John Robert Harrup, Commissioner of the Revenue, stressed the importance of appointing good people to the Board of Equalization. He urged the Board of Supervisors to advise him of potential appointees before sending their names to the Court, as he may be able to provide insight as to whether that person may or may not be a good candidate.

Supervisor Brown stated that regarding real estate tax exemption for the elderly and disabled that would be the subject of a public hearing this month, he was concerned that our figures were low, especially in light of the tax increase due to the assessment. We were also behind other counties.

Mr. Jay Randolph, Assistant County Administrator and Secretary of the Planning Commission, encouraged more interaction among the Board and Commission. In terms of the Comprehensive Plan Update currently underway, they wanted to ensure they were following the Board’s wishes.

Mr. Johnson suggested inviting the Planning Commission to attend the mini retreat in September.

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