

A REGULAR WORK SESSION WAS HELD BY THE NEW KENT COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS ON THE 30TH DAY OF JUNE IN THE YEAR TWO THOUSAND TWENTY-ONE IN THE BOARDROOM OF THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATION BUILDING IN NEW KENT, VIRGINIA, AT 9:00 A.M.

IN RE: CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Thomas W. Evelyn called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone.

IN RE: ROLL CALL

Thomas W. Evelyn	Present
C. Thomas Tiller, Jr.	Present
Patricia A. Paige	Present
Ron Stiers	Present
John N. Lockwood	Present

All members were present.

IN RE: COVID-19 VACCINATION PROGRAM – VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION

County Administrator Rodney Hathaway presided over the recognition of COVID-19 vaccination program volunteers. He stated it was an honor to recognize residents and staff who had assisted with the COVID-19 vaccination programs. New Kent had worked very closely with other localities in the Chickahominy Health District and it had been a group effort to provide COVID-19 vaccinations in the County. The program had been very successful and many compliments had been received regarding ease of process, ease of registration and how pleased they had been to have their calls returned and questions answered. He felt the County had scored an "A+" with this program but noted credit for the success did not go to just one person because many County staff, residents, members of the Board of Supervisors and state officials had also been involved. He invited Fire Chief Rick Opett to join him and share information on the New Kent vaccination clinics.

Chief Opett echoed Mr. Hathaway's comments regarding the excellence of this program, the team that had been assembled and the good that had been done in the County. He stated the performance had been phenomenal and he could not say enough about the team and everyone who had assisted. He reported one of the tools they were trained on in the Emergency Management field was "Whole Community" and noted this had truly been a whole community effort. There had been 26 clinics, most of which had been held at New Kent High School. The initial goal with New Kent's population of 23,500 had been to get 12,300 individuals vaccinated. He reported that as of June 30th almost 11,000 New Kent residents had been vaccinated. Original plans had been to offer clinics through the end of July but the decision had been made to end sooner as vaccinations become more readily available in the community. 8,526 vaccinations had been given through clinics in New Kent County and this had been a wonderful accomplishment by many people. He stated that from the bottom of his heart and as the Emergency Management Director, he applauded and thanked everyone who had helped with this phenomenal effort.

Mr. Stiers echoed Mr. Hathaway's and Chief Opett's comments regarding the team effort offering vaccinations for New Kent residents. He stated he remembered seeing some of the individuals present today at clinics and he expressed appreciation for the time they had given. He noted all of this had been done under the leadership of Chief Opett and the

process had worked very well. He reported the Chickahominy Health District had brought others to New Kent clinics to see how our program was operating. He expressed his appreciation to all who had assisted and stated the biggest salute went to Chief Opett.

Mr. Tiller also echoed previous comments and expressed his appreciation to all who had assisted. He reported attending several Friday clinics where many staff members had been assisting. He also noted the large number of Fire-Rescue and Sheriff's Office staff as well as volunteers involved and again expressed appreciation for their time and service.

Ms. Paige echoed the sentiments of Mr. Hathaway and Chief Opett. She also reported that not only had over 10,000 residents received vaccination but the County had also manned a call center with volunteers who had talked with many who had been vaccinated. She added that unlike many of the vaccine sites where you registered and hoped to get a response, those calling the New Kent call center were able to speak with someone and those leaving messages had their calls returned. She added that this had taken many hours and she was proud of how the clinics had been run and proud to be a citizen of New Kent County.

Mr. Lockwood stated the room was sounding like an echo chamber and agreed an amazing job had been done by all. He noted that when a Supervisor received a phone call it was not often a call offering praise but he had received many calls reporting that experiences at New Kent clinics had been incredible. He expressed his appreciation to Chief Opett for his coordination and to everyone who had volunteered and helped make New Kent shine.

Mr. Evelyn reported he had initially met in January with Chief Opett, Mr. Hathaway, Sheriff Joe McLaughlin, New Kent School Superintendent Dr. Brian Nichols and Executive Assistant to Administration Krista Eutsey to discuss COVID vaccinations for New Kent residents. At that time the Chickahominy Health District was encouraging New Kent residents to call their hotline or the Hanover County hotline to get on a vaccination list. Mr. Evelyn reported he had urged staff to think outside of the box and they had come up with the idea of New Kent having its own hotline. Although the Chickahominy Health District had frowned on this idea, Chief Opett, Mr. Hathaway, Sheriff McLaughlin and he had fought back because they felt strongly that New Kent needed to do something for our citizens. Staff had run with this idea and he expressed appreciation for all they and the many volunteers had done to help the citizens. He turned the floor back over to Mr. Hathaway for individual recognitions.

Mr. Hathaway reported volunteers would be receiving a plaque as a token of appreciation for their service. Although some individuals could not be present today, he would call their names and arrangements would be made to get their plaques to them. The acrylic plaques contained the New Kent County logo and stated, "Volunteer Appreciation Award, we hereby express our sincerest appreciation to: (name of individual) In recognition of outstanding volunteer service during the New Kent County COVID-19 Vaccination Program. Thank you for your generosity and dedication. Presented by the New Kent County Board of Supervisors, June 2021." He pointed out that all big programs and projects required spark plugs and noted there had been a number of individuals who had been spark plugs for the call center and vaccination clinics. As the recognitions were announced, it was revealed that those spark plugs had been Travis Jenkins, Holly Naggy, Lisa Baber, Chief Opett and Krista Eutsey. The following individuals were called to receive their awards:

Teresa Alarcon
Joshua Airaghi
Lisa Baber
Jason Baldwin

Teasha Barth
Chris Brackett
Barbara Britt
Gail Carey

Katherine Cheeley
Sarah Cochrane
Wilber Collins
Katherine Cranston
Julie Escalona
Krista Eutsey
Charles Evelyn, III
Betty George
Suzanne Grable
Koty Gray
Kathleen Hale
DeDreama Harrod
Rodney Hathaway
Margaret Jefferson
Travis Jenkins
Gloria Johnson
Kelli Le Duc
Cynthia McKinney
Debbie McNeer
Monica Militrano

Holly Naggy
Brian Nichols
Rick Opett
Patricia Paige
Glenn Palais
Stephanie Parrish
Leigh Quick
Stephen Sattie
Marshall Shelton
Matthew Smolnik
Jonathan Stanger
Justin Stauder
Ron Stiers
Sarah Storey
Patricia Townsend
Kim Turner
Suzanne Uzzell
Wanda Watkins
Becky Wells
Stephen Woodward

Chief Opett presented a plaque to Mr. Hathaway and noted any successful program needed support from the top. Mr. Hathaway had always been the first one to say, "let's make it happen" and had been out in the trenches registering people and working clinics. He thanked him for everything he had done.

Mr. Hathaway presented plaques to Mr. Stiers, Ms. Paige and Chief Opett. He reported Mr. Stiers had attended the first clinic and had asked if there was anything he could do to help. He had also attended and assisted at numerous clinics since then. Ms. Paige had not only come to vaccination events but she had also worked in the call center and had jumped in wherever assistance was needed. He noted Chief Opett had definitely been one of the spark plugs and had been instrumental in the design of the process. He stated he didn't think we could have done better and thanked Chief Opett for his leadership, time and efforts.

Mr. Hathaway stated you always save the best for last and that individual had been a true spark plug who had been asked to take on a task and had run with it. He added that it was great to have people on your team that could be counted on to get something done and to get it done right and that individual was Krista Eutsey. Chief Opett jumped in and noted he had not mentioned Ms. Eutsey's service in the call center. He reported that when they had met with Mr. Evelyn in January and discussed what the County could do, they had decided they wanted the citizens to have an opportunity to speak with a human. He had looked at Ms. Eutsey and said, "you've got this, it's yours." He noted the high quality performance of everyone in the call center, especially Ms. Eutsey who had managed the day to day operations. Mr. Hathaway reported they had wanted to get Ms. Eutsey a gift that she truly could use. He noted she would soon be going on a much deserved vacation and the gift they had chosen would be something she could use while away. He presented her with a New Kent County logo cooler and an appreciation plaque.

Mr. Hathaway closed the recognitions by again thanking everyone for their dedication. He noted many volunteers had jumped in without even being asked. He reported there had been a point when he had started assigning departments to work the call center and he had been concerned about the blow back he would receive. He noted many of those who had

been asked to work had expressed appreciation for the opportunity to serve New Kent County citizens and to work in the call center. He added that was the type of staff in New Kent and he was proud to work with them.

Mr. Evelyn called for a brief recess at 9:26 a.m. The meeting reconvened at 9:34 a.m.

IN RE: NEW KENT COUNTY FAIR ASSOCIATION FUNDING REQUEST

New Kent County Fair Association Chairman Martha A. Martin reported that for almost fifty years the Fair Association had hosted a County Fair. There had been no fair in 2020 due to COVID but the committee had decided to go forward with plans for an abbreviated (one-day) fair in October. On behalf of the Fair Association, she was asking the Board to consider providing \$5,000 in additional funding. She had written a letter outlining some of the fair costs and had noted insurance was one of the biggest costs. The Association was carrying an event policy and a year-round policy extending coverage to both New Kent County and New Kent County Public Schools. She reported the Association enjoyed bringing this fun event to New Kent residents and noted it was open to anyone interested in participating. She also reported the Fair Committee was comprised of fifteen people and many other volunteers were needed during the event. She entertained questions.

Mr. Stiers noted Ms. Martin had mentioned two insurance policies. He asked why an annual policy was needed. Ms. Martin reported the annual policy covered meetings, fundraisers, pageants, Grand Illumination, National Night Out or other events where members were present. Noting this year's County Fair would be a one-day event compared to three days in the past, Mr. Stiers suggested the insurance cost should be much less than the \$2,000 indicated in her letter. Ms. Martin reported the cost of the year round policy had gone down \$100 but they would not know the amount of the event policy until complete plans for the Fair were in place. She noted the insurance carrier would consider the individual components of the Fair and any considered to be a higher risk could result in a higher premium. Mr. Stiers noted he had reviewed the list of what was being planned and had not seen rides listed. He asked if they were planning on having rides. Ms. Martin reported they were planning to have rides and once a budget of necessary expenditures was in place, they would know how much money they would have for rides. She noted they were looking at several possible ride vendors. She also noted that in past years they had paid for entertainment but this year they were looking for more economical options such as churches and other local entertainers. Mr. Stiers suggested the cost of the event policy should be less than half of previous years since the event would be reduced from three days to one. Ms. Martin noted the event had been a half day on Friday, a full day on Saturday and a half day on Sunday. Mr. Stiers reported the event policy for the recent Prom at Rockahock Campground had been with the same insurance vendor and had been much less than \$2,000. He suggested they should request a better rate. Ms. Martin reported she would have to show the vendor each thing they were planning to have at the Fair and also noted every vendor providing a service also had to have liability insurance.

Ms. Paige stated that when she thought of the Fair, she thought of the last Fair (2019) and what had been posted on social media (regarding vendors with products depicting Confederate symbols). She stated it would be her desire that the Fair Association be very sensitive as to the vendors who would be attending. She stated here in New Kent we are New Kent Strong and we are one community so if Fair vendors were offensive not just to the community of color but to any members of the community, they should be eliminated. She added that she realized everyone had the right to freedom of speech and the right to represent their heritage but she felt the Civil War and Revolutionary War had a place and

she didn't think the County Fair was that place. She asked that the committee take this into consideration when they were compiling a list of vendors. Ms. Martin assured her this had been addressed and the vendor(s) who were offensive had not been invited back.

Mr. Lockwood moved to appropriate \$5,000 from Fund Balance to the New Kent County Fair Association. The members were polled:

C. Thomas Tiller, Jr.	Aye
Patricia A. Paige	Aye
Ron Stiers	Aye
John N. Lockwood	Aye
Thomas W. Evelyn	Aye

The motion carried.

Ms. Martin thanked the Board for their consideration and stated she hoped they would come out to the County Fair on October 9th from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

IN RE: BRIDGES OF CHANGE PROGRAM UPDATE

Victim Witness Assistance Program Director Karen Mortensen and Social Services Director Suzanne Grable presented information on the Bridges of Change Domestic Violence Shelter. Ms. Mortensen noted she was the Chair of the Board for Bridges of Change and Ms. Grable was Secretary. She distributed handouts providing program statistics. She noted grant funding had been over \$200,000 when the shelter had opened in 2018 and again in 2019. A local match of 25% (\$40,000+) had been required for each of these years. She had received notice in January that grant funding would be significantly reduced for the next two years and in May they had been notified funding would be cut by 65%. A statement of grant award had been received the previous day indicating they would receive \$141,000 for two years and a 25% local match (\$28,251) would be required. This would mean that without the local match, they would have \$56,502 annually to run a ten-bed shelter. They had been operating with a full-time Shelter Manager and four part-time staff members but would only be able to fund two part-time positions effective July 1st. This would not be enough staff to provide sufficient coverage. She reported localities served by the shelter included Charles City, King William, King & Queen, West Point and New Kent. Charles City and King & Queen had each given \$5,000 in FY21. Commitments for local funding in FY22 included \$5,000 from West Point and Charles City and \$3,500 from King & Queen.

Ms. Mortensen reviewed a list of clients indicating where they were from, how many children they had brought to the shelter and the number of nights they had been housed. She reported normalized time in the shelter was considered to be thirty days but clients who had no place to go were given extra time as needed. She pointed out the list included some New Kent and Charles City clients. She added that because they were grant funded, it was necessary that they produce statistics showing the funding had been used wisely. She noted this was why domestic violence victims from other localities had been allowed to come to the shelter when space had been available. She reported they were now in a dire situation but the Board of Directors was not giving up. They had fought hard for years because the need for this shelter was so great. She reported COVID had shown them what it was like to live in a home with an abuser and, as a result, she had seen new victims of domestic violence almost every day in her day job. She noted her position served both Charles City and New Kent but the majority of victims were from New Kent.

Mr. Evelyn noted the handout suggested about 7% of the shelter's bed nights were utilized by New Kent residents and a majority of clients were coming from Fredericksburg and the City of Richmond. He asked if Bridges of Change was seeking funding from these localities. Ms. Mortensen reported they could not ask for funding because these clients were coming from other shelters that were also grant funded and services provided were free of charge. She noted the Department of Criminal Justice Services had awarded the grant funding on a competitive basis and large shelters who had been open much longer had been fully funded. She noted this funding change would mean the Bridges of Change shelter would need to change its operations by only accepting clients from within its service area.

Mr. Lockwood asked if this would mean people from Richmond would no longer be coming to the shelter. Ms. Mortensen indicated that unless they were in dire need of a place to hide, they would not be able to receive them. Mr. Lockwood indicated he was surprised Bridges of Change could not get funding from municipalities being helped by Bridges of Change. Ms. Mortensen reported Richmond and Williamsburg shelters were always full and this had been the reason for opening a local shelter for residents in the service area.

Mr. Evelyn noted this funding request had missed the deadline for inclusion in the FY22 budget. Ms. Mortensen agreed and noted they had not realized they would have this problem until they had received the first letter in January. She noted that letter had notified them that they would be cut but they had not known it would be by 65% until recently. Mr. Evelyn suggested the Board may want to look into this further and have more information presented at a future meeting. Mr. Lockwood agreed. Ms. Grable asked what additional information would the Board like to see. Mr. Evelyn indicated he would like to see more financial information and a plan for how the shelter would operate without clients from localities outside of the service area. Ms. Mortensen indicated they would have a better idea of what the year would look like since the new grant would start on July 1st.

Mr. Lockwood asked Ms. Mortensen if she had said they were not allowed to ask the other municipalities for funding. Ms. Mortensen confirmed and also noted some of the clients called Bridges of Change directly without going through the locality therefore there would be no possible funding source. Mr. Lockwood noted there had been only three clients from the service area in the past year. Ms. Mortensen noted that because of her work with domestic violence victims she was aware of the fact that many domestic violence victims did not need to go into a shelter. She noted New Kent was a small community and many victims had the support of family and friends or just didn't want to come into a shelter. Accommodations in the shelter were not perfect and sometimes more than one mother had to share a room, the children's friends would not be present and they would sleep in bunk beds. Mr. Lockwood noted Bridges of Change was doing good work and regardless of where the victims were coming from, these women needed assistance. Ms. Mortensen reported there had been some gentlemen victims as well and those clients had been put up in hotels.

County Administrator Rodney Hathaway asked if any of these other localities were taking New Kent victims when our shelter was full. Ms. Mortensen indicated they were not because they were always full. If they didn't have space, they would pay for the client to stay in hotels in the Sandston or Williamsburg area. Mr. Stiers asked if someone was sent to New Kent from Richmond and there was no space, would New Kent be paying for a motel for them. Ms. Mortensen indicated we would not and noted Bridges of Change would not accept them if they were full and it would be up to Richmond to find them a hotel.

Sheriff Joe McLaughlin noted he was serving as an advisory member of the Bridges of Change Board of Directors. He reported a number of victims of domestic violence in New

Kent and Charles City would actually go to stay with relatives or friends in other localities to put distance between themselves and their abusers. Although these victims were not physically staying in New Kent, they were still utilizing some of the services of Bridges of Change. He also reported a letter had been sent to New Kent's Congressional representatives, General Assembly representatives and other agencies including the Department of Criminal Justice Services and the Homeland Security Public Safety Director asking that the funding process be reexamined. He noted the more affluent and financially stable shelters had been fully funded while the rural and newer facilities were not funded. The funding had gone to the larger, more financially capable jurisdictions.

Ms. Paige stated she would also like to see what the plan was for funding already dedicated to the shelter. She noted Ms. Mortensen had reported they would be receiving \$141,000, they had been receiving \$200,000 and with the local commitments, they would be receiving an additional \$15,000. She didn't understand what the ask was and didn't know what the plan would be if they were not able to get the requested funding. Ms. Mortensen reported the budget was based on the funding awarded and that would be \$76,000 a year including the \$14,000 match. She noted she would bring the new budget back to the Board.

IN RE: ENVISION NEW KENT COUNTY STRATEGIC PLAN

Aaron Arnett with Arnett Muldrow, Inc. expressed appreciation to the Board for having him to present additional information on the Strategic Plan. He noted he had presented the draft plan when he had last met with the Board and he would be going over the framework of the final plan, information contained in the report and discuss some first steps and implementation tasks. He would also address any questions along the way.

He reported that from the beginning, the plan had been for the Strategic Plan to be a foundation or bridge to the Comprehensive Plan. He noted this was a hybrid plan with typical Strategic Plan elements such as a broad-based vision and goals as well as specific implementation strategies. The plan also had a Comprehensive Plan focus including a development vision, market analysis, business strategy and market position and branding.

He reminded the Board that the kickoff for developing the Strategic Plan had been just before COVID had started and although that had extended the process, creative thinking under those conditions had resulted in a tremendous amount of public engagement. There had been 60 individuals present at the kickoff meeting which he suggested was good for a rural county of New Kent's size. Other public engagement numbers reported included 1,037 participants in the community survey, 3,900 community design workshop viewers and 130 participants in the draft plan workshops near the end of the process. Even though there had been almost 6,000 public engagements, it had still been challenging to reach all parts of the community. He stated that one of the most important numbers in the engagement statistics was the smallest number which had been the 12 members of the Strategic Plan Steering Committee. He noted the Board had appointed this committee to help guide the process and he recognized several committee members in attendance. He thanked the Board for their guidance in appointing the Steering Committee and noted the members had been incredibly knowledgeable and helpful throughout the process.

He provided the Board with a brief overview of the elements of the plan. He noted the Strategic Plan Vision was contained in the second chapter. There had been a great deal of input into the final vision statement which stated, "New Kent County will remain a diverse community that values its outstanding rural character, history, natural environment, and quiet community lifestyle. We will maintain these values through thoughtful planning and

managed economic development, with continued responsive and accountable governance supportive of our residents." He also noted there were five core themes which were the priorities indicated by the community. These themes, including infrastructure, growth management, quality of life, governance and resiliency, laid the framework for building the plan. The strategic assessment had involved the collection of community input and had ultimately resulted in a SWOT Analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats). The results of this assessment had framed the conversations throughout the process.

Mr. Evelyn drew attention to the list of weaknesses and read, "There appears to be a lack of communication infrastructure between decision makers and the citizenry which has created a distrust in government agencies." He had drawn attention to this statement at a previous meeting and had requested additional information on where this came from. He stated the Board was quick to hold community meetings anytime something came up in the County and specifically noted New Kent High School had been packed when the question of a possible casino had come up. He also noted only a few individuals attended Board of Supervisors meetings and again noted he would like to see more information regarding the origins of this statement. Mr. Arnett noted nearly 6,000 individuals had been engaged in the Strategic Plan process and suggested there had been few if any other public processes in New Kent in which the public had been engaged to this degree. He stated the sheer number of engagements said that New Kent was doing something right and noted lack of communication and distrust kept coming up in survey responses and in the analysis. In his personal opinion, this had to do with a few conversations the County and the Board were having at the time about some development as well as gaps resulting from challenges connecting with some individuals. He suggested these two things were the reason this item had become a point on the list of weaknesses. He noted Mr. Evelyn had asked a great question and stated he felt like there had been some strong community outreach and connections to the community as well. He also pointed out that one of the strategies of this plan was for the County to consider hiring a public information officer and he knew the County was working on that. Mr. Evelyn noted that position had been approved. Mr. Arnett stated that position would be a valuable tool. Mr. Evelyn stated, "distrust is a strong word - I don't like it." He noted there had been one issue in the eastern part of the County which had never come to the Board for a vote. He added that the most important thing the Board did was the annual budget and citizens rarely came to a meeting when this was discussed. He noted the Board had kept the tax rate down, when people called them - they responded and they were out in the community. He again stated, "to say distrust - I don't like it."

Mr. Stiers noted total agreement and indicated that when he had read that statement he had thought, "what a slap in the face." He added that he didn't think there was a single member of the Board that was not reaching out to their constituents and noted they each were holding town hall meetings from time to time. Annual budget adoption always included a public comment time and out of 23,000 people in New Kent, only three had come to speak in April. He noted distrust was a strong word and he took offense to it. He noted Broadband Infrastructure had also been noted as a weakness and reported the Board was working feverously to get that for its citizens so it should be scratched off the list. He went on to read another statement from the list of weaknesses stating, "Although New Kent County has great visitor assets, it has no conventional overnight accommodations and lacks other visitor support services." He noted he had personally reached out to the EDA (Economic Development Authority) to reach out to hotel chains to encourage them to come to New Kent. The EDA had done their due diligence and had learned that hotel occupancy in the Williamsburg area had only been 40% last year. He stated it was not like New Kent hadn't reached out. He reported he had spoken with Colonial Downs representatives about the possibility of a hotel on some of their property. They had indicated the hotels they had

spoken with were waiting for some history of Colonial Downs presence at the location before they would be interested in investing in the area. He also noted New Kent had a number of age-restricted communities as well as a hospital facility and medical services.

County Administrator Rodney Hathaway noted he didn't like the distrust statement either but reminded the Board this information had been collected through a survey with over 1,200 responses. He added that he felt this was a misconception the County would have to deal with and even though we didn't like it, it shouldn't be ignored. Mr. Evelyn asked what percentage of responders had noted distrust and asked if anyone had seen the figures.

Mr. Lockwood stated he understood why some would take offense to this statement. He noted this was a statement of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats and regardless of who said it or how many said it, there had been enough respondents who had expressed this for it to make the list. Board members didn't have to agree but it was the interpretation of some regarding how the Board governed and communicated. He suggested they should look at this as an opportunity and noted a number of improvements had been made since the process had started more than a year and a half ago when remnants of the combat range issue had still been strong. He suggested it would be interesting to see if that feeling was still as strong now. He again stated the Board should consider this an opportunity to improve the view constituents have of government in general and indicated he felt they already had to some degree. The County would have a communication person whose job would be to get the word out to the people. The Board could not force them to listen and although they advertised meetings, they could not force them to attend. He suggested citizens didn't separate the Board of Supervisors from Congress and the underlying sentiment was they didn't trust government in general.

Mr. Arnett noted the vision statement had been revised to give the County recognition for working hard for the people in the community. He noted Mr. Hathaway had referred to the statement as a misconception. He noted agreement with this but added that to the people making the comment, it was not a misconception. He noted the fact that the County was putting together the tools to expand communication with a Public Information Officer and to address some of the challenges said a lot. Referencing Mr. Stiers comments regarding broadband being on the list of weaknesses, he noted the County had done much in this regard over the past year and this would probably be one of the first tasks to be checked as completed. He suggested it should be left on the list so the Board could say we heard you and we've seen the challenges and this is what we have done. He noted the lists had been compiled from data collected early in the process that had helped build the foundation for the plan. He suggested the Board may want to consider conducting a community satisfaction survey to poll the community now. Noting there had been challenges with a particular development proposal and broadband and much had happened since the start of the planning process, he suggested if the same people were asked the same questions today, they may have a different perception because the County was doing the right things. He noted the plan document was the result of a lot of work and a lot of time, the County had been listening throughout the process and had been taking action along the way.

Mr. Evelyn continued to express concerns about the use of the word distrust and noted he wanted more information. Mr. Arnett noted he felt the distrust stemmed from the timeline of when this was done and noted the combat range issue had been fresh when the survey had been conducted. He also felt there were gaps in the community engagement dealing with demographics, socioeconomics and the geography of the County.

Mr. Arnett moved on with discussion on the planning focused market analysis. New Kent had grown 25.8% in the last ten years and even with being one of the fastest growing counties in Virginia, New Kent was still only 23,000 people and remained rural. He noted that because of this, New Kent residents had to rely on sources outside of the County for many things. He noted the market character was also planning focused and character boards representing a development vision had been developed. He stated you know you are growing and the question was how do we grow while protecting and retaining what makes New Kent special. The character boards depicted eight development types including village, hamlet, crossroads, countryside, business parks, interstate interchanges, residential and the New Kent County Courthouse area. Brand expansion had also been considered and he noted this had much to do with Economic Development, tourism development and communication. He reported New Kent's current branding was working and they had focused on building on that existing system. They had focused on updating the tools to be more current in design and on the expandability of marketing and communication tools. Independent logos had been developed to highlight specific communities as well as enhanced marketing tools to promote the County as a place to live, work and invest.

Mr. Arnett drew attention to Chapter 7 which provided detailed information on goals and strategies. He noted this was the meat of the plan and included implementation details, benchmarks and performance indicators to track progress. The plan included one vision, five strategic themes, 21 goals and 113 associated strategies. This plan was much bigger than many strategic plans and he noted this was due to the inclusion of planning focused components. He noted it would be necessary for the County to rely on and involve the community and partner agencies in the implementation of the plan. He pointed out that ten key strategies had been discussed at a previous meeting. The public had been given an opportunity to provide input to help rank those key strategies and, as a result, the priority had been restructured in the final plan. Those key strategies included:

- I.1.1* Develop plan to provide enhanced internet
- G.1.4 Recruit business based on potential identified in Strategic Plan
- GM.2.1 Update the Comprehensive Plan
- GM.2.2 Adopt Development Character Boards as design vision
- G.1.2 Improve community participation & increase public trust
- Q.2.4 Enhance entryway corridors into County
- GM.3.1 Revise the Zoning Code
- R.3.1 Adopt a Disaster Recovery Plan across all departments
- G.4.2 Align Vision & Goals into departmental strategic plans
- G.4.1 Facilitate annual Report Card Evaluation

* Coding of key strategies is based on the strategic theme in which it falls.

Board members had been provided with copies of the report document for review. Mr. Arnett noted an executive summary brochure which told the story from the process, to the plan frame work, to vision and goals and key strategies had also been developed. This brochure was a large format poster which could be folded to 8.5x11 and used as a tool to share with the community or as a reminder of priorities and goals.

Mr. Arnett reported this would not only be a County plan but also a community plan and accomplishing its goals would rely on partnerships with community members as well as the private sector. He also noted this would be a dynamic plan which could and should evolve over time. First steps for plan implementation included:

- Appointing a project manager to oversee the implementation and consider a citizen advisory board to provide guidance. Mr. Arnett noted he did not know who this may be but suggested it could be a task given to the Assistant County Administrator or the new Public Information Officer.
- The first thing the project manager should do would be share the plan with partner agencies to make sure everyone was on the same page.
- The project manager should hold regular coordination meetings with staff. This plan would need to be implemented over time with work being done throughout the year leading up to the annual budget process.
- Work on departmental strategic plans could begin now.
- Work on the Comprehensive Plan should begin. The Strategic Plan would provide the foundation to hit the ground running with developing the Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Arnett entertained questions.

Ms. Paige acknowledged those volunteering to serve on the Steering Committee. She noted this had been a long process and expressed appreciation to those who had given their time and talents to be a part of the process. She noted the lack of diversity on County boards and commission had been mentioned and she was always seeking individuals to serve and needed to know the "how to" in regard to more diversity in appointments. She also noted the Public Information Officer would be a very capable person and the Board could not let the Strategic Plan reestablish the responsibilities of that position. She suggested that since much of the information was from citizens, it may be advisable to have a citizens' advisory committee to take on the project. She again expressed appreciation to everyone involved.

Mr. Lockwood expressed appreciation to Mr. Arnett and to the citizens who had participated throughout the process. Noting the next step would be the Comprehensive Plan, he stated he was looking forward to moving into that phase as well. The Steering Committee had invested much time in completing the plan and he applauded them for their efforts. He added that the Board had heard from the citizens and whether they agreed with the sentiments or not, it was time to look at the input and move forward. He stated the Board had made great progress on broadband and it was not something that could be done overnight. He closed by stating he looked forward to turning some of the weaknesses into strengths and communicating to the citizens that they were being represented in a fiscally sound way. He added that Board members were open to communication and all Board meetings were open and he was hopeful this would encourage participation.

Mr. Stiers reported he had reviewed the 48-page document and had not seen any mention of personal property rights. He stated he was a big advocate of personal property rights unless they infringed on the rights of others. He asked if personal property rights were addressed in the Strategic Plan. Mr. Arnett noted the Strategic Plan was a development vision and did not include rules and regulations. The Strategic Plan was framing discussions for the Comprehensive Plan and he felt that the details of personal property public regulations would come into play during the discussion of development tools. He noted the foundation of that conversation was in the Strategic Plan development vision.

Mr. Evelyn noted his frustration with the word "distrust" was that he didn't know how to fix it. He added that he felt this was a great plan and a great working document and expressed appreciation to all who had been involved in the process. He again noted his frustration regarding the word, "distrust" and stated he needed to know how to fix that and he hadn't been told how. Mr. Arnett noted he appreciated all of the comments and added that one thing he had learned about the community was that there was a passion for the County.

The people loved the community and some wanted changes while others didn't want change. He also noted the dedication of staff as well as the Steering Committee. He further noted the Board members all loved New Kent County and its values and they wanted to protect those in the future. He was hopeful the Strategic Plan would be part of a tool that could be used to continue to protect who New Kent County is.

Ms. Paige stated she felt the members of the Board all appreciated the time and effort that had gone into this plan. She noted that some of the words were sometime hurtful because they dedicated so much time and energy to New Kent County and her citizens. She felt this could be a tool to help New Kent County continue to grow in a positive direction.

Ms. Paige moved to adopt the proposed Envision New Kent County Strategic Plan. The members were polled:

Patricia A. Paige	Aye
Ron Stiers	Aye
John N. Lockwood	Aye
C. Thomas Tiller, Jr.	Aye
Thomas W. Evelyn	Aye

The motion carried.

IN RE: SALARY STUDY BUDGET TRANSFER

County Administrator Rodney Hathaway reported the County was in the process of procuring a consultant to conduct a salary study. This had been discussed during the FY22 budget process and the plan was to utilize existing FY21 funding to cover the cost. The request was to transfer \$100,000 from the FY21 Reserved for Contingency line item to Professional Services. He was not sure \$100,000 would be the cost and he was hopeful it would be much less. The RFP (Request For Proposals) was due by July 17th and a more accurate cost would be known at that time.

Mr. Evelyn noted this was something the Board members had agreed to move forward with during the budget process. Mr. Lockwood asked if the Board should wait until the cost was known. Mr. Hathaway noted this request was for FY21 funding which would not be available after 12:00 a.m. that night.

Mr. Tiller moved to approve the transfer of \$100,000 from Reserved for Contingency to Professional Services for the purpose of conducting a comprehensive salary study. The members were polled:

Ron Stiers	Aye
John N. Lockwood	Aye
C. Thomas Tiller, Jr.	Aye
Patricia A. Paige	Aye
Thomas W. Evelyn	Aye

The motion carried.

IN RE: OTHER BUSINESS – LITTER PICKUP CONTRACT

Mr. Stiers asked if the second phase of the litter pickup contract would be in July. County Administrator Rodney Hathaway reported he believed the next round of litter pickup would be in August but he would have to look at the schedule to confirm.

IN RE: OTHER BUSINESS – RAILWAY CROSSING ASSISTANCE GRANT & LOAN PROGRAM

County Administrator Rodney Hathaway distributed copies of a draft document entitled "Railway Crossing Assistance Grant & Loan Program Guidelines" dated June 28, 2021. He noted these guidelines were for a proposed grant and loan program to assist businesses with providing railroad crossings. The program was proposing that the Board of Supervisors work with the EDA (Economic Development Authority) who would actually issue the grants and loans to businesses meeting certain criteria. The list of criteria included:

- Must have a railway that crosses a private driveway/road with an average annual daily traffic (AADT) volume of more than 200 trips.
- Be locally or regionally owned (Corporately-owned national chains were not eligible).
- Must be up to date on local taxes and have a current County business license (if required).
- Be operational since June 1, 2019.
- The business shall agree to accept all liability and responsibility for ongoing maintenance.

He reported there had been four accidents involving railroad crossings in New Kent this year and this was seen as a temporary fix with the ultimate goal being to get arms and lights specifically at the Rockahock Campground and Ed Allen's Campground crossings. He noted there were numerous other crossings in the County but they were focusing on these two because of the traffic volume. In the meantime, they were looking at the installation of additional signage with flashing lights that would draw a driver's attention to the need to stop and look both ways. He again noted this was a temporary measure and the program would offer up to a \$10,000 grant and up to a \$10,000 loan for cost above the initial grant. The loan would be paid back in 60 monthly installments and would be interest free. The EDA had operated other grant programs and he believed they would be more than capable of handling this grant and loan program. He would present this to the EDA at their July meeting if it was the Board's desire to move forward. He entertained questions.

Mr. Evelyn thanked Mr. Lockwood for taking on this issue. He noted all Board members had been receiving calls about this and they were well aware of the concerns. He thanked Mr. Lockwood for working with Mr. Hathaway to get something done. Mr. Lockwood thanked Mr. Hathaway, Sheriff Joe McLaughlin and Fire Chief Rick Opett for their input into the proposed program. He noted this program was a stop-gap and a letter requesting support would be drafted to all individuals representing New Kent in any capacity. He stated getting gated crossings was a bureaucratic nightmare and the grant process for gated crossings did not recognize private roads as eligible. He stated that in memory of Kevin Pence and Freeda Pruitt who had been killed in the last three months, this would be a good way to move forward and make the crossings safer. He expressed appreciation for the efforts that had been made to get this program started and closed by noting it would be a long road to getting gated crossings but this was a good way to get started.

Mr. Lockwood moved to move forward with the Railway Crossing Assistance Grant & Loan Program as stated. The members were polled:

John N. Lockwood

Aye

C. Thomas Tiller, Jr.	Aye
Patricia A. Paige	Aye
Ron Stiers	Aye
Thomas W. Evelyn	Aye

The motion carried.

IN RE: ANNOUNCEMENT OF UPCOMING MEETINGS/ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Evelyn announced the Board's next regularly scheduled meeting would be held at 6:00 p.m. on Monday, July 12, 2021 and the next work session would be held at 9:00 a.m. on Wednesday, July 28, 2021, both in the Boardroom of the County Administration Building.

Mr. Tiller moved to adjourn. The members were polled:

C. Thomas Tiller, Jr.	Aye
Patricia A. Paige	Aye
Ron Stiers	Aye
John N. Lockwood	Aye
Thomas W. Evelyn	Aye

The motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 10:59 a.m.