

A SPECIAL MEETING OF THE NEW KENT COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS WAS HELD ON THE 10<sup>TH</sup> DAY OF MARCH IN THE YEAR TWO THOUSAND NINE OF OUR LORD AT PARHAM LANDING COMMERCE PARK, NEW KENT, VIRGINIA, AT 3:00 P.M.

---

IN RE: CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Davis called the meeting to order and welcomed representatives from County businesses, as well as County staff and members of the Economic Development Authority. He also thanked Tom Vosnick for hosting the meeting and John Britt for the refreshments.

---

IN RE: ROLL CALL

Thomas W. Evelyn	Present
David M. Sparks	Present
James H. Burrell	Present
Stran L. Trout	Present
W. R. Davis, Jr.	Present

All members were present.

---

IN RE: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Davis explained that the County knew that times were tough and wanted to have some dialogue about what the County was doing to support and attract businesses, as well as to receive suggestions from the business community as to what they would like to see. He then introduced County Administrator John Budesky, who indicated that businesses were the foundation of every community and the County wanted to do what it could to help everyone through the difficult economic times. He introduced County staff, which included Assistant County Administrator Bill Whitley, County Attorney Jeff Summers, Public Utilities Director Larry Dame, Community Development Director George Homewood, Planning & Tourism Manager Rodney Hathaway, Economic Development Director Mark Kilduff, Building Official Clarence Jackson, Deputy Clerk Connie Nalls and Economic Development Administrative Assistant Marilyn Mills.

Economic Development Authority (EDA) Chairman Paul Robinson welcomed everyone, and introduced other EDA members Charles Davis and Eugene Williams. He explained the work of the EDA and stated that they were very much interested in receiving comments from the business community. He indicated that as a real estate broker, he shared many of the same concerns and interests. He thanked Mr. Britt for providing refreshments and the County and Board of Supervisors for their interest and commitment to help economic development in the County.

Economic Development Director Mark Kilduff and Planning & Tourism Manager Rodney Hathaway, by PowerPoint presentation, reviewed the concept of how economic development was promoted in New Kent. Mr. Kilduff explained that the Economic Development Department represented the County and served as its marketing arm and would provide the same marketing services to local businesses.

Mr. Hathaway spoke about how tourism was the leading industry in the country, and that it was the County's goal to market attractions and historical sites to help New Kent become a tourist destination. He described the various brochures that had been developed and available at the Visitors and Commerce Center, as well as the tourism website that was under development.

Mr. Kilduff described the importance of a good website, advising that the Internet was the most popular place to obtain information, with about 90% of a site search being conducted online. He briefly reviewed the Economic Development website and invited local commercial landowners to list their available properties, which would also include a listing on the State's economic development website. He spoke about the value of the County's annual Statistical Summary and copies of that resource were made available to those in attendance.

Mr. Kilduff explained that his department was working on targeting the hospitality industry for sites at the County's four interstate interchanges, as well as distribution wholesalers, smaller service industries, and multipliers such as commercial real estate brokers.

He next reviewed the Incentive Program provided by the County. He explained that incentives had to make economic sense to both parties and should support the County's development plans. He noted that the Incentive Program demonstrated the County's willingness to partner and support businesses, both with cash payments and by having processes in place that were not hindrances. He described the County's Comprehensive Plan as a "wonderful" document and guide to help commercial growth. He reviewed the different incentives that were available which included cash grants to assist home-based businesses to move into commercial space; grants to assist new or expanding businesses; matching grants for façade improvements; and the marketing sign program where the EDA would purchase signs and pay for their installation. He indicated that applications for all of the incentive programs were available at the Visitors Center.

He described the steps of the incentive process which included discussion of plans and possibilities, providing investment and financial information, analyzing revenue stream, grant proposal discussions, and ending with the EDA making the final decision.

Mr. Kilduff advised that his department was also working to develop an online business directory and he solicited the help of the business community to provide information about their services to be included in this resource. He also encouraged businesses to express their needs and suggestions and to feel free to call or stop by the Visitors & Commerce Center.

Attendees were then invited to ask questions.

One of the questions involved how New Kent was working with the State to bring in businesses. Mr. Kilduff explained that he worked with the Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP) on a regular basis, noting that all of the larger projects came through VEDP and that New Kent was among those under consideration in the State's site selection process.

There was a question as to whether any State economic development funding was distributed to the counties. Mr. Kilduff responded that with the exception of incentives funding (through the Governor's Opportunity Fund), no State money drifted down to any of the localities.

Someone asked why, with such a high travel count, public water and sewer were not available in the Route 33 corridor. Mr. Davis explained that the County had chosen to install public utilities at the interstate interchanges, and that once the economy rebounded, those areas would be ready for businesses. He indicated that public utilities was an

enterprise fund and was supposed to pay for itself, and that before any expansion was considered, there had to be committed users to pay for it.

The next comments came from the owner of a local biodiesel firm, who spoke about the expanding need and interest in renewable energy and suggested that New Kent could "raise the banner" on being a source of renewable fuels.

Someone asked if natural gas services were going to be available in the Route 33 corridor. Mr. Kilduff indicated that he had been working toward that end but had not as yet been successful. He suggested that it would take a "big user" for Virginia Natural Gas to justify the investment of putting in the lines.

Mr. Crump, a developer in the Courthouse area, described the problems that one of his tenants had in obtaining County permits, and suggested that the County could expand its hours in order to better accommodate the public. Mr. Budesky indicated that the County was considering some changes to help businesses navigate the permitting process.

Mr. Crump praised the incentives program, but noted that the grant payments often came at the end of the process instead of at the "front end" where the majority of a businesses' costs were.

Mr. Davis suggested that businesses in the eastern end of the County needed to become more familiar with the services provided by their neighbors. He noted that few businesses in the area were members of the Chamber of Commerce and really had no way to network with each other. It was noted that around 700 businesses were licensed through the County, but there were only 120 who belonged to the Chamber.

Switching from a focus on attracting new businesses, Mr. Budesky asked what the County could do to help existing businesses. One suggestion was availability of public transportation from the airports or train stations. Another was to add links on the County's website to the websites of local businesses. Someone mentioned sprucing up the area around the historic school property, and it was reported that additional grants to extend the sidewalks had been submitted for stimulus funding.

Someone who recently moved here from Florida did not understand why, with the high traffic count along Route 33, there weren't chain restaurants and strip malls in the area.

Mr. Robinson spoke about how in the Comprehensive Plan the Eltham area was designated as a village and asked about any plans or preliminary engineering to bring public utilities into the area. Mr. Davis indicated that there had been a previous opportunity to run sewer into the Plum Point area but the residents didn't want it. He also talked about the problem with obtaining utility easements and rights-of-way past the intersection with Farmers Drive. He indicated that those problems were not insurmountable and that if a larger user were to appear, then it would likely be considered. Mr. Budesky added that the County had invested \$50 million to date in its public utilities system and was preparing to spend another \$20 million to expand the wastewater treatment plant, and it was important to have enough customers who were committed to paying connection charges before making further investment. Someone asked how much commitment there was from property owners between Parham Landing Road and the interstate interchange. Mr. Budesky clarified that the line running from interstate was a force main and until there was enough of a commitment from property owners, it would not be tapped.

The next question was whether there was any grant funding for tap fees for rural localities in the economic stimulus package. Mr. Budesky explained that New Kent had filed applications for stimulus funding for its plant expansion project and a reclaimed water project but he was not aware of any grants for connection fees.

EDA Vice Chairman Charles Davis reminded everyone that the EDA held an annual business appreciation dinner and invited all in attendance to leave their contact information with Marilyn Mills so that they could be invited.

Mr. Davis closed the Question and Answer segment and invited everyone to stay for refreshments provided by Special Occasion Catering and take advantage of the opportunity to network.

---

IN RE: ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mr. Burrell moved to adjourn the meeting. The members were polled:

Thomas W. Evelyn	Aye
David M. Sparks	Aye
James H. Burrell	Aye
Stran L. Trout	Aye
W. R. Davis, Jr.	Aye

The motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:15 p.m.