

ACCOMACK-NORTHAMPTON PLANNING DISTRICT COMMISSION
MINUTES OF THE
July 20, 2026 Meeting
ENTERPRISE BUILDING
ACCOMAC, VIRGINIA

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Robert Crockett	Accomack County
C. Reneta Major	Accomack County
Rev. Charles J. Kellam	Northampton County
Betsy Mapp	Northampton County
L. Dixon Leatherbury	Northampton County
Donald L. Hart, Jr.	Accomack County
Calvin Washington	Accomack County
Vanessa Johnson	Accomack County
Gwendolyn F. Turner	Accomack County
Donna Smith	Accomack County
Mike Tolbert	Town of Chincoteague
David "Jon" Dempster	Northampton County

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:

Adam Charney	Northampton County
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OTHERS PRESENT:

Anne Doyle	Sandy Taylor
Elaine Meil	Eric Horito
Faith Lewis	Russ Williams
Myra Riley Taylor	Matt Spuck

1. Call to Order

The July 20, 2026 meeting of the Accomack-Northampton Planning District Commission (A-NPDC) was called to order by Chairman Mapp at 7:00 p.m.

2. Invocation

Commissioner Hart offered the Invocation.

3. Minutes of the June 15, 2026 Meeting

The minutes of the June 15, 2026 Meeting were presented. Commissioner Hart moved to approve the minutes as presented. It was seconded by Commissioner Turner, the motion was carried by unanimous vote.

4. Financial Status Report

The report indicated 99.60 percent of the proposed FY 2026 Budget had been expended while 100 percent of the fiscal year had passed.

Commissioner Crockett moved to approve the Financial Status Report as presented. It was seconded by Commissioner Hart, the motion was carried by unanimous vote.

5. Financial Statement / Bills Payable

The Financial Statement, including the current Bills Payable, were presented. Commission approval of the Financial Statement and current Bills Payable were requested.

Commissioner Crockett moved to approve the Financial Statement and Bills Payable. It was seconded by Commissioner Hart, the motion was carried by unanimous vote.

6. FY 2026 Audit

Staff announced to the Commissioners the Auditors from Dunham, Aukamp, & Rhodes, PLC. will be visiting the office on July 27th and 28th to perform some preliminary testing and will return in September to complete the audit requirements.

7. Projects

Director of Planning Report

Below is a comprehensive list of Planning Department projects, should you wish to contact the project manager for more information. Details about featured projects follow the list.

3220 - Economic Development Admin. - Economic Development Planning	S. Dudas
3071 - FAA College Initiative & Talent Pipeline with ESCC	A. Doyle
3640 - VA Department of Forestry Planning/Planting Grant	S. Dudas
3593 - DEQ Regional Water Supply Plan	R. Chandler
3547 - DEQ/CZM Technical Assistance & Resiliency Planning	R. Chandler
3575 - FHWA BUILD Grant for ESRT	A. Doyle
3589 - VDEM Hazard Mitigation Plan 2026	R. Chandler
3587 - Navigable Waterways Committee	K. Singleton
3353 - Waterway Dredging Northampton County - Nassawadox Creek Phase 1	K. Singleton
3352 - Waterway Dredging Accomack County - Folly Creek Phase 1	K. Singleton
3581 - Coastal Adaptation and Resilience Plan	S. Dudas
3354 - Dredge Material Management Initiative	S. Dudas/K. Singleton
3571 - A-N Ground Water Committee Projects	R. Chandler
3401 - VDOT Rural Transportation Plan	H. Spurlock
3218 - FHWA Safety Action Plan - Safe Streets for All Program	H. Spurlock

3620 - Delmarva Agricultural Community Resilience Project	S. Dudas
3201 - VDACS Agriculture & Forestry Industry Development Plan	S. Dudas
3010 - VBAF Assessment Grants	S. Dudas

3220	<i>Economic Development Admin. - Economic Development Planning</i>	Sherry Dudas
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Federal funding through the Department of Commerce/Economic Development Administration has been awarded as of July 6, 2026 and staff is reconvening the ESVA Economic Development Committee (EDC) to prepare performing the region's economic development work in several key areas: providing grant writing support to local, county, and regional agencies, staffing and coordinating meetings for the region's only EDC, and performing specific task work on the region's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDs). In addition, on the grant side, staff prepared and submitted several Virginia Brownfields Assistance Fund grants on October 17, 2025, and assisted a funding application for the Aerospace Academy of the Eastern Shore's junior and senior high school curriculum.

3071	<i>FAA Uncrewed Aerial Systems College Initiative & Talent Pipeline Program</i>	Anne Doyle
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The Eastern Shore Community College, in partnership with the Aerospace Academy of the Eastern Shore received Virginia Growth and Opportunity Act (GO Virginia) funding of \$788,700 to establish an Uncrewed Aerial Systems (UAS) workforce program. Effective May 1, 2026, A-NPDC is administering the two-year grant. ESCC has launched a new unmanned systems curriculum, including FAA Part 107 Licensing, Information Systems, GIS and Cybersecurity certifications, UAS Flight Operator and UAS Maintenance and Operations certificates, Aviation Mechanic Certificates, and PMP, CNC Programming, and Additive Manufacturing credentials. Associate in Applied Sciences Degrees will be offered in Electronics Technology, Technical Studies, and Engineering.

3640	<i>VDOF Urban & Community Forestry</i>	Sherry Dudas
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This \$90,000 grant will be used to install native plants along the Treherneville/Birdsnest sections of the Eastern Shore Rail Trail, by a qualified landscape contractor using biochar as a soil amendment. A-NPDC staff is providing educational outreach to the community by having a dedicated page on its website devoted to the project for education of the public regarding the benefits of planting native species, providing a species list & their history on the Eastern Shore of Virginia, and the benefits of using biochar in tree plantings.

3593	<i>DEQ Regional Water Supply Plan</i>	Rita Chandler
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For the FY27 year, A-NPDC, as the designated Regional Planning Unit (RPU) for the Eastern Shore counties and incorporated towns, has been invited to apply for grant funding to offset the cost to prepare the region's water supply plan. This is the third year of the Water Supply Plan update from the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). Grant applications are due by August 14, 2026 and All RPUs that submit complete applications are eligible to receive the typical award amount of \$39,240 from this appropriation, to be disbursed within FY2027.

Work is nearing completion for the FY26 period: 10/01/2025 - 9/30/2026, amounting to \$64,500 federal funding and \$64,500 match. Projects for FY26 include Technical Assistance, Engagement, Coordination, and Trainings; Navigable Waterways, Wetlands & Groundwater Preservation and Protection; Updating the A-NPDC website; Completing the Hazard Mitigation Plan Update; facilitation and support of state agencies in resilience planning efforts. Work has begun to update the A-NPDC website. Shore Strong round 2 kick off meeting was held on June 30th and work continues through August. A locality meeting and training is scheduled for September 3rd.

3575**BUILD Eastern Shore Rail Trail Project**Anne Doyle

Environmental reporting work required by NEPA is well underway and will be completed in August. Project trailheads that will include bus stops are also under conceptual design beginning with Birdsnest. The Engineer of Record contract continues to be negotiated. The VDOT survey of the entire 49.1 miles, using the General Assembly's allocation of funds to the Eastern Shore Rail Trail, as one of five priority trails in Virginia, will be submitted to A-NPDC by July 31, 2026.

3589**VDEM Hazard Mitigation Plan 2026**Rita Chandler

All comments and revisions to the draft update of the Hazard Mitigation Plan have been addressed and submitted to FEMA. FEMA will provide final review and comments before the end of the federal fiscal year. The project is on track for an on-time, on-budget completion.

3587**Eastern Shore Regional Navigable Waterways Committee (ESRNWC)**Kellen Singleton

The Eastern Shore Regional Navigable Waterways Committee held its second quarterly meeting of CY2026 on April 30, 2026. Since the Committee's January meeting, staff efforts have remained focused on project readiness, near-term funding, and regional dredging coordination. A-NPDC advanced its FY27 Virginia Marine Resources Commission Waterway Maintenance Fund request for Folly Creek as a mechanical dredging effort with contractor-sourced upland placement as the baseline disposal pathway. On April 21, 2026, the VMRC Board approved \$1,000,000 in funding for Eastern Shore work. On May 14, a Memorandum of Understanding was entered into by the VMRC and A-NPDC. While this award represents partial funding against Folly Creek's current estimated cost of approximately \$2.744 million, it allows the project to move forward on a staged path toward procurement and construction while reducing disposal, siting, and permitting risk. At its April 30 meeting, the ESRNWC also supported continued development of the beneficial use pathway as a parallel track to the core Folly Creek navigation project, including partner outreach and site-control discussions for screened marsh candidates, identification of feasible monitoring partners and realistic monitoring scopes, and prioritization of near-term feasibility work so that a beneficial use add-alternate can be advanced credibly when funding and permissions align. In parallel, work continues on Nassawadox Creek material management planning, broader regional dredging coordination, and implementation of the Dredge Material Management Initiative. The next ESRNWC meeting is scheduled for August 20, 2026.

3353**Waterway Dredging Northampton County-Nassawadox Creek Phase 1**Kellen Singleton

Coordination with the Town of Tangier and state and federal partners continues to advance the Tangier Island beneficial use pathway as the primary material management approach for Nassawadox Creek following VMRC's denial of the prior nearshore berm proposal. Current review remains focused on the East of Runway site, Beach

Area uplands, Beach Fill and berm area, and the North Port transfer and offload location, pending confirmation of physical constraints. The NV5 survey work is now complete, and the Terracon field investigation has also been completed, providing additional information needed to support the revised placement and permitting package. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service also indicated that the proposed Tangier locations are unlikely to be suitable Northeastern beach tiger beetle habitat and did not recommend a time-of-year restriction for the proposed beach beneficial use locations. Permit submission is now targeted for late June 2026 to allow incorporation of the completed survey and field data, follow-up coordination with regulators, and continued coordination with the Town of Tangier on site logistics and implementation considerations. Pending regulatory review and further Town coordination, the current implementation goal is Fall 2026.

3352

Waterway Dredging Accomack County - Folly Creek Phase 1

Kellen Singleton

The Folly Creek Phase 1B package remains well positioned for implementation, with the draft Joint Permit Application package, Folly Creek-specific Dredged Material Management Plan, sediment and vibrocore data, and permit figures substantially advanced and in hand. The FY27 Waterway Maintenance Fund request was advanced as a mechanical dredging approach using barge or scow movement and transfer and offload at the Folly Creek Landing and boat ramp area, with contractor-sourced upland placement serving as the baseline disposal pathway. On April 21, 2026, the Virginia Marine Resources Commission Board approved \$1,000,000 in funding for Eastern Shore work. Although this award represents partial funding against the project's current estimated total cost of approximately \$2.744 million, it supports a staged path toward procurement and construction while additional coordination and disposal readiness work continues. In parallel, the ESRNWC has supported continued development of a beneficial use add-alternate as a parallel track to the core navigation project, including continued outreach and site-control discussions for screened marsh candidates, identification of feasible monitoring partners and realistic monitoring scopes, and targeted near-term feasibility work so that a beneficial use option can be advanced credibly if funding and permissions align. Staff will also continue agency coordination, finalize procurement strategy, and complete remaining readiness items, including the table of adjacent property owners.

3581

Coastal Adaptation and Resilience Plan

Sherry Dudas

The project was reactivated once VRA agreed to reimburse the A-NPDC for funds expended. A consulting firm has been hired to prepare the Coastal Adaptation and Resilience Plan that will include staff-coordinated public outreach corporation. The plan is expected to be completed in early 2027.

3354

Dredge Material Management Initiative

Sherry Dudas/Kellen Singleton

Dredge Material Management effort is now being folded into the Coastal Adaptation and Resilience Plan. Consultant Kimley-Horn has been procured to delineate and map potential dredge material placement sites. The Planning Department has hired an intern to assist with this work. The Eastern Shore Dredge Material Management Initiative is now under active implementation through a recurring Project Management Team structure managing scope, schedule, budget, and partner coordination across A-NPDC, MPPDC, VMRC,

ESRNWC, Carlexson Consulting, and technical support. Current work is focused on historic dredging and placement-site compilation, digital channel delineation development using best available data, channel screening and prioritization, permitting and constraints review, and early concept development for priority navigation and placement projects.

3571

A-N Ground Water Committee Projects

Rita Chandler

The Groundwater Committee will hold a working meeting to review research needs and solidify plans for the coming year. The session will further develop and prioritize project planning FY27. One priority candidate is the USGS Installation, Operation and Maintenance of a Subsidence Monitoring Network across the Eastern Shore. For this initiative, USGS has completed a project plan and cost estimate that is currently under review by the Groundwater Committee.

3401

VDOT Rural Transportation Plan

Anne Doyle

The FY 2027 Rural Work Program application and adopted resolution were submitted this Spring, with notice of award being made at the end of June. Staff have been asked to participate in training, including Arterial Management Plan development and commercial transportation planning. VDOT is currently auditing A-NPDC's Title VI Plan. Plan updates will be needed and will be based upon new federal executive orders as well as state regulatory changes.

3218

Safety Action Plan - USDOT Safe Streets for All Program

Harvey Spurlock

Kimley Horn presented the Safety Action Plan to the Accomack-Northampton Transportation District Commission at their regular meeting on July 7. The plan was presented to the Safety Action Plan steering committee on July 10th. Staff participated in both of these presentations. A Safe Streets for All website is in development. The SS4A site, hosted by the A-NPDC site, will include a dashboard reflecting current crash statistics and trends.

3620

Delmarva Agricultural Community Resilience Project

Sherry Dudas

This project, led by Virginia Tech and NOAA, is developing a regional collaborative of local and regional governments and extension organizations in rural areas of coastal Virginia, Maryland, and Delaware with the goal to build enduring capacity for planning and implementation of community supported risk reduction efforts that engage the strengths and capabilities of a broad range of actors in the rural coastal zone. The Eastern Shore of Virginia listening session took place and staff assisted with registration and facilitation at the meeting. The final report will be completed in approximately two years.

3201 VDACs- Aquaculture & Forestry Industries Development (AFID) Fund Planning Grant Sherry Dudas

Award of a \$34,910 grant to the A-NPDC for the aquaculture and forestry sectors of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy was received. Staff coordinated a second meeting of forestry stakeholders with the VDOF area forester to discuss forestry initiatives, including workforce development. This Forestry Advisory Committee feels very strongly that a sawmill is needed and a location in central Accomack would be ideal. Amish/Mennonite saw mill operators and other community members may have an interest in relocating here since the quality and quantity of ESVA timber is high. The next meeting is in June. Outreach to form the Aquaculture Advisory Group has begun.

VEDP Brownfields Planning Grants

#1 7194 Lankford Highway, Exmore, VA 23350 & 7194 Lankford Highway, Nassawadox, VA 23413 \$50,000

#2 18554 Cassatt Avenue, Parksley, VA \$50,000

The Planning Grant is for planning and assessment of the two locations and includes site cleanup at the Nassawadox site and environmental data analysis and a reuse plan for the other. A portion of one grant includes a \$2,380 A-NPDC administrative fee and \$2,375.00 for the other. VBAF staff is greatly interested in A-NPDC staff being trained for greater engagement in this program and, to that end, arranged for the A-NPDC to be awarded a \$20,000 grant for administrative purposes. VBAF has been awarded an EPA \$2M assessment grant, of which the A-NPDC will share in the monies and will use for additional property assessments in our project area of the Eastern Shore Rail Trail.

Director of Housing Services Report

Below is a comprehensive list of Housing Service Department projects, should you wish to contact the project manager for more information. Details about the featured projects follow the list.

336250- Continuum of Care

J. Hope

3661 - HUD-Housing Counseling Services

A. Wert

3662 - VHDA HCE Foreclosure/Housing Counseling

A. Wert

366250**Continuum of Care (CoC)****Jen Hope**

The Community Partners of the Eastern Shore (CPES) General Membership meeting was held on July 8th. The Safeguard Veterans Research Project gave a presentation. The next meeting is scheduled for September 9th at the Impact Center in Cape Charles. Starting July 1st Lead Agency duties for the local Continuum of Care moved to the Community Services Board. PDC staff will continue to work on associated CPES projects, including the Virginia Homeless Solutions program.

The community application for CoC grant funding was submitted in June. Awards are expected some time in August.

3661**HUD Housing Counseling Services****Andrea Wert**

The application for this funding cycle was submitted on April 30. Virginia Housing anticipates announcing awards in August and has indicated that level funding is expected. The new period of performance will begin retroactively on October 1, 2025, and extend for an 18-month term. Staff is currently working with 13 pre-purchase counseling clients. Six have reached mortgage-ready status; however, five have opted to pause their home search due to current interest rates and limited housing inventory. One client ultimately chose to continue renting after three years of credit improvement and savings. Over the past three years, eight clients have successfully achieved homeownership through this project, underscoring the sustained impact and effectiveness of our counseling services.

3662**Virginia Housing Counseling & Education****Andrea Wert**

Fair Housing, Rental Topics, and Financial Literacy classes continue to be delivered during Section-8 briefings, providing participants with essential guidance on tenant rights, budgeting, and long-term housing stability. The HCE grant application has been submitted, and Virginia Housing has increased the total funding available for this cycle. Award notifications are expected soon, and staff is preparing for program adjustments based on anticipated funding levels. Following the strong community response to the recent seminar at the Impact Center, staff has secured dates for two additional Heirs' Property Education seminars in Accomack County. These sessions will be held at the Mary N. Smith Cultural Enrichment Center on September 8 and 9, expanding access to residents seeking support with property rights and estate planning. As a result of the recent seminar's success, title searches have already been secured for two participants, and one client is actively seeking legal assistance for the drafting of a will. These outcomes demonstrate both the need for continued outreach and the tangible impact of the program's expansion.

Director of Housing Development Report

Below please find a list of A-NPDC related Housing Development Department projects, should you wish to contact the project manager for more information. Details about featured projects follow the list.

300640 - Town of Onancock-Northeast Neighborhood	E. Horito
3801 - Horntown Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)	E. Horito
3690 - Occhannock Neck Road Project	E. Horito
3823 - FEMA - VDEM Accomack County	E. Horito
4710 - HMGP - DR-4001 & DR-4411	E. Horito
3768 - Accomack County VA 4512-DR-VA-0026 Elevation /Acquisition	E. Horito
4401 - VDH Septic and Well Assistance Program	E. Horito
3337 - Chincoteague Septic System Program	E. Horito

300640	<i>Town of Onancock - Northeast Neighborhood</i>	Eric Horito
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With Onancock's new Town Manager, the Northeast Onancock grant has received a six-month extension. A new Management Team has been formed, and the first meeting with the new Team is set for the end of the month. With the demolitions and rehabilitations completed, the main focus will be installing the sidewalks on Pine Street.

3801	<i>Horntown Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)</i>	Kaitlin Berryman
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The application for the Horntown Community Improvement Grant was submitted on July 1. The submitted scope of work will include the five substantial reconstructions, one housing rehabilitation, four demolitions of derelict structures, and the installation of five septic systems and wells.

3690	<i>Occhannock Neck Road Project</i>	Eric Horito
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A realtor has listed the one-bedroom home for sale. We have an interested party in the two-bedroom, and they are working on getting pre-qualified for a loan.

3823 **Acck Cty VA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) 4291-VA-009 Elevation Project** Eric Horito
No update.

4710 **Accomack County VA HMGP 4401-VA-016 Elevation/Acquisition** Eric Horito
No updates. A budget revision is still pending.

3768 **Accomack County VA HMGP 4512-DR-VA-0026 Elevation Project** Kaitlin Berryman
Staff is obtaining a few remaining signatures for Participation Agreements from homeowners. These Agreements state the stipulations of the grant. Deed Restrictions, flood insurance for the life of the house, and authorization for site inspections and elevation survey work to occur. Obtaining Flood Certificates for the eight homes. By the end of July, a bid package to procure engineering services will be advertised.

4401 **VDH Septic and Well Assistance Program** Eric Horito
All systems have been installed. Working on submitting the final paperwork to the Virginia Department of Health to close this project out. With this program, we were able to install five wells and eleven septic systems for the community.

3337 **Chincoteague Septic System Program** Eric Horito
Designs and permits are being obtained for the final eight systems in the Chincoteague Septic System program.

8. Grants

UVA's Weldon Cooper Center, Institute for Engagement and Negotiation, with participation from Virginia Housing staff, approached A-NPDC to discuss Eastern Shore needs identified through their Livability Hub work and how a partnership might work on those needs. A-NPDC identified that the cost to develop new housing was a major concern. After reviewing options, the group selected building a partnership with VDH to create a white paper that seeks to make rural septic systems more affordable while maintaining public health and Chesapeake Bay water quality. After discussions with the local Virginia Department of Health (VDH) and VDH Central Office, there was broad agreement to explore the existing Virginia regulations for septic systems and how other states regulate their septic systems in similar environments and also quantify and reduce the lifecycle costs of a septic system. Virginia Housing staff then recommended pursuit of their Innovation Planning Grant program which could then be followed by an Innovation Implementation Project.

Commissioner Crockett moved to accept retroactive authorization to pursue the Innovation Planning Grant program then be followed by an Innovation Implementation Project. It was seconded by Commissioner Turner, the motion was carried by unanimous vote.

9. Agreements and Contracts

U.S. Economic Development Administration \$210,000

This contract supports the regional economic development activities and update of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). The contract spans January 1, 2025 through December 31, 2027. EDA has informed us that costs prior to the signature date will be reimbursed back to January 1, 2025. Staff reduced expenditures once it was apparent that the contract appeared to be at risk but will charge the grant for the eligible expenditures.

This contract was the subject of Commission discussion regarding continuance of economic development activities.

Commissioner Crockett moved to authorize the A-NPDC to execute the above named contract. It was seconded by Commissioner Turner, the motion was carried by unanimous vote.

10. Executive Director's Memo

FY2027 Budget

The state budget has approved a 3.5% state employee salary increase and a 4% increase for teachers. The Commission FY27 budget approved a 2% cost of living increase.

To follow the state's increase and add 1.5% on August 1, 2026, staff expenditures would increase \$16,225 to the FY27 expenditures spread across all departments. The adopted FY26 budget has excess revenue of \$20,200 before any budget amendments.

Assuming the contract is approved, the EDA budget amendment will also add a significant increase in revenues greater than the entire staff expenditure increase. Staff are also awaiting the final amount of funds the state budget approved for water supply planning which will also require a budget amendment with revenue increase that could be as high as \$30,000 for FY27 and an additional \$30,000 for FY28. Finally, other grant applications are outstanding and some of these are expected to be awarded with budget amendments for FY27.

Commissioner Hart moved to authorize the A-NPDC to amend the FY27 budget to add a 1.5% salary increase on August 1, 2026 for all employees, including the Executive Director. It was seconded by Commissioner Major, the motion was carried by unanimous vote.

Rural Health Transformation Program

The Rural Health Transformation Program is a five-year initiative to expand access and improve health outcomes in rural Virginia. Virginia's first year of funding is \$189.5 million. All 50 states

are participating. Last fall, the Youngkin administration opened a portal and received about 170 proposals. The proposals generally fall between \$1 million and \$3 million. The counties designated as rural are Virginia's most rural counties and the exurban counties surrounding the metro areas are largely ineligible.

The Governor's Office has reached out to the Planning District Commissions about a potential partnership to obligate and deliver \$63.9 million in the Mobile and Hybrid Care category. After the July 10th discussion, they will be providing a count of the number of proposals each PDC has in their region. The proposals are not sufficient to award and so a full application, award and contract must be completed by September 30, 2026 to obligate the funds. New applicants are allowed. The Governor's office is working on a schedule. Virginia's subgrantees then have until September 30, 2027 to expend the first year funds. There will be four additional years of funding.

Executive Director Meil expressed interest in participating since it appears from the discussion any funds that are not obligated will potentially be lost. Staff are preparing to work with existing partners to prepare for this upcoming opportunity. Staff expect to evaluate the first year portion of the \$14 million Riverside Medical Drone Delivery Phase II project for potential submission.

The schedule may not allow staff to obtain Commission approval to submit grant applications.

Commissioner Crockett moved to authorize the Executive Director to submit applications for the Rural Health Transformation Program. It was seconded by Commissioner Turner, the motion was carried by unanimous vote.

11. Other Matters

The A-NPDC was concerned about the potentially adverse impacts of seabed mineral exploration and mining on Virginia Eastern Shore's seafood economy and working watermen. Since we are the largest supplier of hard clams in the United States and among the nation's leading producers of Eastern oysters. The Eastern Shores's leadership in clam and oyster aquaculture is attributable in large part to its exceptional ocean water quality, stable marine conditions, and favorable salinity.

A-NPDC recommends the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, (BOEM) to undertake a comprehensive scientific study to evaluate the potential effects of seabed mineral exploration and mining on water quality, marine ecosystems, and shellfish aquaculture in the Mid Atlantic. Any degradation of these resources could jeopardize a nationally significant, domestic seafood industry.

A-NPDC also questions the potential impacts of seabed mining on U.S. national defense operations. The proposed mineral exploration lease area overlaps with the existing Naval submarine and air test and training ranges within the VACAPES Complex.

Commissioner Hart moved the A-NPDC stand with both Accomack and Northampton Counties and to be against the seabed mineral exploration and mining on Virginia's Eastern Shore. It was seconded by Commissioner Crockett, the motion was carried by unanimous vote.

12. Public Participation

There was no public participation at this time.

13. Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, August 17, 2026.

14. Adjournment

There was no further business to bring before the Commission. Commissioner Dempster moved to adjourn the meeting. It was seconded by Commissioner Crockett, the motion was carried by unanimous vote. The meeting was adjourned at 7:22 p.m.