

ACCOMACK-NORTHAMPTON PLANNING DISTRICT COMMISSION
MINUTES OF THE
April 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
Mike Tolbert	Town of Chincoteague
Donald L. Hart, Jr.	Accomack County
Calvin Washington	Accomack County
Vanessa Johnson	Accomack County
Gwendolyn F. Turner	Accomack County
Donna Smith	Accomack County
David "Jon" Dempster	Northampton County

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:

L. Dixon Leatherbury	Northampton County
Adam Charney	Northampton County

OTHERS PRESENT:

Anne Doyle	Sandy Taylor
Elaine Meil	Eric Horito
Faith Lewis	Russ Williams
Myra Riley Taylor	David Sabatino
Anthony Sharp	Sheila Conner
Willie Williams	Jamie Pettit
Terri Pettit	

1. Call to Order
The April 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 Kellam offered the Invocation.
3. Minutes of the January 20, 2026 Meeting

The minutes of the January 20, 2026 Meeting were presented. Commissioner Hart moved to approve the minutes as presented. It was seconded by Commissioner Major with three abstentions, the motion was carried by unanimous vote.

4. March Financial Status Report

The report indicated 72.06 percent of the proposed FY 2026 Budget had been expended while 75 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 was 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 Budget Amendments

FY 2026 Budget Amendments were presented for adoption for administrative funds for the following EDA - Economic Development Planning, DEQ Water Supply, Raise/BUILD Rail Trail, ES Dredge Material Initiative - MPPDC, VBAF Elliott Auto, VBAF Parksley Shirt Factory, DHCD Capacity Grant, and Fraud Recovery, Section 8. There was also Town of Chincoteague - Sewer Project (Direct) presented for adoption for pass through funds.

The net change to the FY 2026 Budget is \$251,716.00

Commissioner Hart moved to approve the FY 2026 Budget Amendments presented. It was seconded by Commissioner Major, the motion was carried by unanimous vote.

7. Election of Officers

The Nominating Committee, Commissioners Crockett, Turner, and Leatherbury, met and nominated the following:

Having only served two terms, the following officers were eligible for re-election.

Chairman- Betsy Mapp

Vice Chairman- C. Reneta Major

Executive Committee Member- Rev. Charles Kellam

Commissioner Crockett moved to re-elect Betsy Mapp as Chairman, C. Reneta Major as Vice Chairman, and Rev. Charles Kellam as the Executive Committee Member. It was seconded by Commissioner Hart, the motion was carried by unanimous vote.

8. 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 - EDA-Economic Development Planning	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
3354 - Dredge Material Management Initiative	S. Dudas
3571 - A-N Ground Water Committee Projects	R. Chandler
3580 - DEQ Chesapeake Bay WIP	E. Horito
3218 - FHWA Safety Action Plan - USDOT Safe Streets for All Program	H. Spurlock
3620 - Delmarva Agricultural Community Resilience Project	S. Dudas
3201 - VDACS Agriculture & Forestry Industry Development Plan	S. Dudas

3220

Economic Development Administration - Economic Development Planning

Anne Doyle

Federal funding through the Department of Commerce/Economic Development Administration (EDA) has been paused from January 2025. Absent funding, staff have worked through state agricultural funding avenues, including the Virginia Department of Forestry and the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Service. A-NPDC desires to continue performing the region's economic development work in several key areas, including providing grant writing support to localities, the ESCC, and economic development authorities. The consequence of losing this federal funding is that A-NPDC has stopped its update of the region's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). It has also scaled back staffing the region's Economic Development Committee, resulting in the cancellation of the December 2025 and all 2026 committee meetings.

As discussed in the Commission's January meeting, Staff requests the Commission's support for inclusion of the region's Economic Development Committee into the FY 2027 budgets of Accomack and Northampton Counties. Currently, both counties financially support the region's Groundwater Committee and the Regional Navigable Waterways Committee. It was the

consensus of the A-NPDC to support the inclusion of the Economic Development Committee into the Accomack and Northampton Counties' budget.

3640

VDOF Forestry Planning and Planting

Sherry Dudas

This \$90,000 grant will accomplish a feasibility analysis of a new sawmill placement in ESVA. It will also perform planning and test placement of native and salt-tolerant species. Finally, community residents and forestry staff will lead a planting program alongside the Eastern Shore Rail Trail.

3593

DEQ Regional Water Supply Plan

Rita Chandler

For FY2026, the second year of the performance period, staff applied for and received notice of award for the maximum amount of \$9,240 to prepare the region's water supply plan. The grant agreement was fully executed on 1/14/2026. The Virginia Department of Environmental Quality has designated A-NPDC as the regional planning unit (RPU) serving as the clearing house for the Eastern Shore's counties and incorporated towns. Work on the plan continues.

3547

DEZ/CZM Technical Assistance & Resiliency Planning

Rita Chandler

Funding has been approved for the FY26 period: 10/01/2025 - 9/30/2026 in the amount of \$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 of the A-NPDC website; continuation of the Hazard Mitigation Plan Update; facilitation and support of state agencies in resilience planning efforts. Proposals have been solicited for updating of the A-NPDC website. The Water Supply Update will be due in 2029, and the process for updating has begun.

3575

BUILD Eastern Shore Rail Trail Project

Anne Doyle

The Federal Highway Administration executed the Grant Agreement on February 4, 2026, making \$4,793,843 available so that A-NPDC could begin work on the project. The next day, A-NPDC contracted with consultant Alpha Corporation to begin the conceptual design of the Birdsnest Trailhead and STAR Transit station—the project's starting point. Staff also engaged Wetland Studies and Solutions, Inc. to begin the environmental due diligence work required by

NEPA. The Selection Committee for the project's Engineer of Record has made a decision and a contract is currently being negotiated. On a disappointing note, staff learned the survey for the entire 49.1 miles that VDOT performed, using the General Assembly's allocation to the Eastern Shore, is not complete. Discussions are underway to resolve this problem.

3589

VDEM Hazard Mitigation Plan 2026

Rita Chandler

The Hazard Mitigation Plan update is nearing completion with all chapters drafted and submitted to VDEM for comments. The next step is to submit to FEMA for their comments. A meeting to review progress was held on March 18, 2026. The project is on track for an on-time, on-budget completion.

3587

*Eastern Shore Regional Navigable Waterways Committee
(ESRNWC)*

Kellen Singleton

The ESRNWC held its first quarterly meeting of CY2026 on January 15, 2026, with discussion centered on regional dredging priorities, regulatory coordination, Tangier Island dredged-material disposal planning for Nassawadox Creek, and navigation and ATON issues raised by regional partners. Since that meeting, staff efforts have focused on the most immediate implementation and funding needs, including preparation and submittal of A-NPDC's FY27 VMRC Waterway Maintenance Fund application on March 1, 2026, requesting \$2,744,000 for Folly Creek maintenance dredging using a base-bid, contractor-sourced upland placement approach while continuing to advance a parallel beneficial use marsh restoration concept that may be incorporated as an add alternate if feasible. That request is also scheduled to be presented in person before the VMRC Board on April 21, 2026, at Fort Monroe. In parallel, coordination continues on Nassawadox Creek disposal planning and broader regional dredging priorities, while DMMI work remains underway on channel prioritization, digital channel delineations, CARP-DMMI integration, and the technical groundwork needed to support defensible mapping, project screening, and future implementation. The next ESRNWC meeting will be held on April 30.

3353

*Waterway Dredging Northampton County - Nassawadox Creek
Phase 1*

Kellen Singleton

Coordination with the Town of Tangier and state and federal partners continues to move the Tangier Island upland placement alternative forward for Nassawadox Creek dredged material following VMRC's denial of the prior nearshore berm approach. NV5 completed topographic

field work on March 30, 2026, and is now finalizing quality control for surveys covering three key areas: the beach site, the area east of the runway, and a potential transfer site. This work, together with the completed wetland delineation, is supporting permit development and future construction documents for the placement area. Updated planning estimates for the Tangier upland disposal approach remain approximately \$4.191 million. In addition, VMRC issued Permit No. 2026-0386 on March 11, 2026, for four supplemental vibracores, and Terracon is anticipating field work during the week of April 20 to help determine whether dredged material meets upland placement criteria. USFWS has also provided its preliminary Northeastern beach tiger beetle determination, indicating no time-of-year restrictions, which is an important step in refining the placement approach and permit package. At present, late April to early May remains the target for permit resubmittal, depending on vibracore results and whether any additional special studies are requested. In parallel, Northampton County is still evaluating whether to pursue further administrative or judicial review of VMRC's denial of the nearshore berm concept, while the supplemental vibracore results may also help clarify whether nearshore placement remains technically supportable from a material standpoint.

The Folly Creek Phase 1B package remains positioned for implementation, with the draft JPA completed along with the supporting Folly-specific DMMP, gradation and sediment data from vibracores within the proposed dredge area, and permit figures. Remaining near-term readiness items are limited, primarily to final implementation coordination and procurement. Building on that work, A-NPDC submitted its FY27 VMRC Waterway Maintenance Fund application on March 1, 2026, requesting \$2,744,000 for Folly Creek maintenance dredging using a base-bid, contractor-sourced upland placement approach. In parallel, A-NPDC, DWR, and VESCA partners are evaluating the feasibility of beneficial use placement opportunities tied to the Folly Creek effort, including nearby priority marsh areas identified through screening for ownership, elevation, marsh condition, and habitat value, with the intent of determining whether a marsh restoration component could be incorporated if feasible and supportable.

Dredge Material Management effort is now being folded into the Coastal Adaptation and Resilience Plan, a DCR grant. Consultant Kimley-Horn has been procured to delineate and map potential placement sites. The Planning Department looks to hire an intern to assist with this work.

The Groundwater Committee held its first working meeting on February 17, 2026 to review research needs and develop project(s) for the coming year. USGS presented their suggested priorities to the Committee at that meeting. Another working meeting will be held within the next two months to further develop and prioritize project planning for this year.

Contracts have been issued for one septic system installation and three deep well installations. Savage Onsite Septic has submitted four septic designs to the Health Dept for permits. The Health Dept. has issued one permit and is working on the other three. Once all four are in hand, they will be bid out.

The steering committee selected seven crash types for emphasis (intersections, roadway departures, speeding, distracted driving, alcohol, pedestrian, bicycle). Analysis of crash data identified ten locations on the high injury network that warrant remedial projects. The site-specific recommendations were at these 10 locations:

- US 13 between Arlington Road and Capeville Drive
- US 13 and Stone Road
- US 13 and Courthouse Road/Newman Lane
- US 13 between Franktown Road and Rogers Drive
- US 13 between Rogers Drive and Hare Valley Road
- US 13 between Talsey Road and Accomac Road
- US 13 and M.N. Smith Road/Front Street
- US 13 and Nelsonia Road
- US 13 and Chincoteague Road
- Ridge Road and Bunting Road

Notional improvement sketches for these locations have been completed. A draft version of the safety action plan is being prepared. The 4th, and final, steering committee meeting took place March 17. Staff attended the monthly Accomack-Northampton Transportation District Commission to provide an update on project status.

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 on Thursday, Feb. 5th at the AREC facility. Staff assisted with registration and facilitation at the meeting. The final report will be completed in approximately two years.

3201

*VDACS- Agriculture & 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 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. The next meeting will be in early May.

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 General Membership will meet May 13th. The Annual Point-In-Time Homelessness Count was conducted as scheduled on the evening of January 28th. The preliminary number of people counted as sheltered is 31, noting that the status of these individuals will be reviewed by the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development prior to inclusion on the final report. The final report can be expected some time this summer.

The application for funding has been released. Staff is working to complete that application well before the submission deadline. The period of performance will begin retroactively 10/1/2025 and run for an 18 month period. Staff is currently assisting 12 clients in pre-purchase counseling, with 4 being mortgage ready but choosing to wait for reduced interest rates and housing prices to come down. Over the past two years, seven clients have achieved homeownership through the project, reflecting the continued impact and effectiveness of our counseling efforts.

Fair Housing, Rental Topics, and Financial Literacy classes are conducted during Section-8 briefings. A landlord education event was held at ESCC on March 17th. 38 landlords and property managers were in attendance. Topics discussed included Section 8 rules and regulations, and a review of state and federal Fair Housing law.

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

The Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) will be in Onancock at the end of this month to review the final documents to close out the grant.

3801

Horntown Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)

Eric Horito

DHCD will be opening applications for Project Grants during the first week of May. Staff will be working on getting an application submitted to DHCD by July 1, 2026. The scope of work will include housing rehabilitations, substantial reconstructions and demolition of derelict buildings in the eastern area of Horntown.

3690

Occohannock Neck Road Project

Eric Horito

Grant has been closed out. A realtor has listed the one-bedroom home for sale. Staff has received calls from two people interested in purchasing the two-bedroom home.

3823

Accomack County VA HMGP 4291-VA-009 Elevation Project

Eric Horito

No Update. Staff is working on closing out this grant.

4710

Accomack County VA 4401-VA-016 Elevation/Acquisition Project

Eric Horito

A budget revision is still pending with FEMA. An extension request was submitted to FEMA in March regarding the delay in the budget revision.

3768

Accomack County VA 4512-DR-VA-0026 Elevation Acquisition

Eric Horito

Due to unresponsiveness of one homeowner, we had to drop them from the program. Staff pulled a new home from the substitution list. A letter was mailed out to the recently selected homeowner on March 13th requesting their interest in participating in the program. Will proceed with the engineer procurement once we have the final homeowner agreement.

4401

VDH Septic and Well Assistance Program

Eric Horito

The last two septic systems and deep well installation jobs have been issued contracts.

3337

Chincoteague Septic System Program

Eric Horito

Staff is waiting on a new list of homeowners from the Town.

9. Grants

USDA/VDACS Specialty Crop Block Grant Program

\$49,666.

In February, planning staff prepared and submitted a pre-application for this program that, if successful, will provide \$49,666.00 in funding designed to increase markets as well as profitability for specialty crop producers on the Eastern Shore of Virginia by first contracting a consultant to conduct a survey of specialty crop producers, their crops and their market outlets as well as any agritourism opportunities they may offer. A fresh-from-the-shore brand will be developed and marketing to increase awareness of ESVA specialty crops by consumers will be implemented by developing a consumer-driven campaign using social media, digital advertising, print materials, and visual graphics throughout the region to encourage consumers to purchase ESVA products at farmers' markets, farm stands, u-pick locations, local restaurants and on online platforms as well as providing information regarding agritourism opportunities offered by specialty producers. In addition, a website, where consumers and buyers can search for a specialty crop and find a local producer from which to buy it from, will be created and promoted.

NFWF/National Coastal Resilience Fund (NCRF) Program

\$2,250,000.

In March, planning staff prepared and submitted a pre-application for this program that, if successful, will provide \$2,250,000.00 in funding which seeks to provide the necessary engineering and regulatory analyses required to restore and/or create coastal marshes, reconnect floodplains, rebuild and/or install living shorelines and a necessary berm in Wachapreague, and other natural buffers to be determined. If successful, A-NPDC staff will work cooperatively with The Nature Conservancy (TNC) to possibly site resilience projects on land TNC owns or encumbers with conservation easements.

Virginia Housing - Innovation Planning Grant

\$50,000

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.

FY 2027 Rural Transportation Planning Work Program

\$72,500

The Planning staff's application for VDOT's FY 2027 Rural Work Program is due on April 24, 2026. Along with the application, A-NPDC must submit an adopted resolution of support. Staff respectfully requests the Commission's approval of this recurring funding program by voting to apply for and administer the Rural Transportation Planning Assistance Program. The Resolution will be presented to Commissioners during the April meeting.

Commissioner Crockett moved to accept the retroactive authorization to apply for the USDA/VDACS Specialty Crop Block Grant Program, NFWF/National Coastal Resilience Fund Program, VA Housing - Innovation Planning Grant, and also approval the request for the resolution for the FY 2027 Rural Transportation Planning Work Program. It was seconded by Commissioner Johnson, the motion was carried by unanimous vote.

10. Agreements and Contacts

Housing Counseling and Education Contract Original Contract \$80,000

This has already been approved. This is information that Virginia Housing has issued an additional \$33,920 to A-NPDC for FY26 under this contract.

Commissioner Major moved to accept the Housing Counseling and Education Contract. It was seconded by Commissioner Crockett, the motion was carried by unanimous vote.

11. Executive Director's Memo

Request for Oyster Market Failure Disaster Declaration

At the January Commission meeting, Commissioners asked staff to look into help for the watermen that were without income from the oyster market failure. Executive Director Meil spoke to the Department of Housing and Community Development who suggested talking to the Virginia Marine Resources Commission.

Acting VMRC Commissioner Joseph Grist and staff discussed the recent Maryland request for a disaster declaration. He asked that the counties submit letters of support for the declaration and agreed to talk to the watermen and look into whether or not VMRC would recommend the Governor declare a disaster. Staff coordinated with the counties to request the Oyster Market Failure Disaster Declaration which both did.

At last discussion, VMRC was still evaluating whether or not to request the declaration and would let us know. Executive Director Meil informed the Governor's Local Government Engagement Team of the matter as well. Nothing new to report.

Internship

Periodically, an intern (part time and temporary) could be used to assist with projects. On January 21, the Eastern Shore Community College reached out to A-NPDC to see if we had an internship or could mentor one of the students. We agreed to assist with a mentorship because we had no internship set up but they had already found another placement.

Adding an internship position to the organizational chart would allow staff to fill the position and receive help on programs or projects while also making an opportunity available for local students.

Job Description - Intern (Salary range: Unpaid or minimum wage to \$18.00 per hour)

The part time, temporary Intern position will complete tasks related to one or more projects or programs and will work under the guidance of a full-time A-NPDC staff member. Tasks include but are not limited to; data entry, database management, design and creation of outreach

materials, interviewing and survey collection, event planning, assisting at public outreach events, review and compilation of documentation, mapping, and collection of data.

The successful candidate must be currently enrolled in, or have completed within the past year, course work in housing, planning, transportation, economic development, environmental science or a related field. Prior work experience is preferred.

Commissioner Crockett moved to accept the amendment of the organizational chart to include one Intern position. It was seconded by Commissioner Major, the motion was carried by unanimous vote.

FY2027 Budget

Staff has begun preparing the draft budget. The final draft is expected to be placed in the May packet and adoption requested in June.

12. Other Matters

Commissioner Crockett wanted to clarify the purpose of Public Participation on the agenda. He reminded everyone who has any concerns or comments to bring them to the attention of the Commission at that time.

13. Public Participation

There was no public participation at this time.

14. Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, May 18, 2026.

15. Adjournment

There was no further business to bring before the Commission. Commissioner Crockett moved to adjourn the meeting. It was seconded by Commissioner Major, the motion was carried by unanimous vote. The meeting was adjourned at 7:41 p.m.

