

ACCOMACK-NORTHAMPTON PLANNING DISTRICT COMMISSION
MINUTES OF THE
January 16, 2024 Meeting
ENTERPRISE BUILDING
ACCOMAC, VIRGINIA

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Donna Smith *Zoom*	Accomack County
Robert Crockett	Accomack County
C. Reneta Major	Accomack County
Arthur Leonard	Town of Chincoteague
Rev. Charles J. Kellam	Northampton County
Betsy Mapp	Northampton County
L. Dixon Leatherbury	Northampton County
Donald L. Hart, Jr.	Accomack County
Gwendolyn F. Turner	Accomack County
John Coker	Northampton County
Vanessa Johnson	Accomack County

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:

Adam Charney	Northampton County
Vacant	Accomack County

OTHERS PRESENT:

Elaine Meil	Anne Doyle
Eric Luchansky	Leanna Rasmussen
Russ Williams	Sandy Taylor

1. Call to Order

The January 16, 2024 meeting of the Accomack-Northampton Planning District Commission (A-NPDC) was called to order by Vice Chairman Mapp at 7:00 p.m.

Commissioner Smith attended virtually from Richmond, Virginia.

2. Invocation

Commissioner Kellam offered the Invocation.

3. Minutes of the November 20, 2023 Meeting

The Minutes of the November 20, 2023 Meeting were presented. Commissioner Hart moved to approve the minutes as presented. Seconded by Commissioner Turner, the motion was carried by unanimous vote.

4. Public Participation

There was no public participation.

5. December Financial Status Report

The report indicated that 39.24 percent of the FY 2024 Budget was expended while 50 percent of the fiscal year had passed.

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

6. 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. Seconded by Commissioner Hart, the motion was carried by unanimous vote.

7. Nominating Committee

The following officer terms are up for election effective March 1:

Chairman, Vacant
Vice Chairman, Betsy Mapp
Executive Committee Member, Rev. Charles Kellam

Since Commission By-Laws state that a Nominating Committee of two Accomack Commissioners and one Northampton Commissioner be appointed at the meeting prior to the elections, staff requests that Vice-Chairman Mapp appoint the Nominating Committee for elections to be held at the next meeting.

Having served three terms, the officers are not eligible for re-election.

Vice-Chairman Mapp nominated Commissioner Major, Commissioner Crockett, and Commissioner Coker to serve as the Nominating Committee.

Additionally, a third signatory was needed for the Commission. Commissioner Major consented to be the signatory. No action was needed.

8. Projects

Informational Items

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
3600 - Drone Medical Package Delivery	A. Doyle
3589 - VDEM Hazard Mitigation Plan 2021	A. Doyle
3401 - VDOT Rural Transportation Planning - SPR	A. Doyle
3584 - VDEQ Chesapeake Bay Phase III WIP Technical Assistance	E. Luchansky
3568 - VDEQ VCZMP 306 Ecotourism Resiliency	A. Doyle
3526 - VCZMP Technical Assistance & Resiliency Planning	A. Doyle
3571 - A-N Ground Water Committee Projects	K. Singleton
3334 - Agricultural Study	K. Singleton
3587 - Navigable Waterways Committee	K. Singleton
3764 - Town of Parksley Downtown Revitalization	A. Doyle
3578 - FY21 VA Port Authority Dredging Project: Folly Creek Phase 1A	K. Singleton
3577 - FY21 VA Port Authority Dredging Project: Red Bank Creek Phase 1A	K. Singleton
3579 - FY21 VA Port Authority Dredging Project: Nassawadox Creek Phase 1A	K. Singleton
3351 - FY22 VA Port Authority Dredging Project: Kings Creek Phase 2	K. Singleton
3353 - FY22 VA Port Authority Dredging Project: Nassawadox Creek Phase 1B	K. Singleton

3220, 3325

Economic Development and Economic Recovery

Anne Doyle
ext. 115

The Economic Development Committee met on December 7th. Six new committee members were approved: Phillip Dail-Entrepreneur, Scott Hall-ESCC, David Landsberger-Sentinel Robotic Solutions, Lillian Palmbach-VA Spaceport Authority, Matt Spuck-Onancock Business and Civic Organization, and David Wilcox-GSX Corporation. Membership renewal was approved for the following members: Chris Bott, Dick Snyder, Robie Marsh, Terry Malarkey, Ava Gabrielle-Wise, and Kerry Binard. In addition to an update of current projects, including the Eastern Shore Rail Trail, the Drone Medical Package Delivery project, and the market research study for the Melfa Industrial Park, members discussed workforce development initiatives. Also in December, the Legislative Priorities meeting was held on December 21st with Senator DeSteph and Delegate Bloxom. The meeting forecasting the 2024 General Assembly session was informative for both the legislators and the counties and Chincoteague. Finally, the Bay Consortium Workforce Development Board was awarded \$500,000 federal Department of Labor funds through GO Virginia to build a "worker-centered sector partnership that promotes job quality in coastal resiliency jobs." The partnership will build upon the data/strategies identified in Virginia's Coastal Resiliency Master Plan. Bay Consortium has hired consultant WorkED to build a program on the Eastern Shore and the Northern Neck.

3211

USDA Rural Business Development Grant

Anne Doyle
Ext. 115

The Economic Development Authority of Accomack County entered into a contract with the A-NPDC to administer the USDA-funded project totaling \$304 thousand, including a \$90 thousand match from Accomack County for the development of the Melfa Industrial Park. A-NPDC received responsive proposals through a competitive process for a boundary survey and a stormwater master plan for the industrial park. The next task will be to commission a marketing research study for the industrial park that will focus on business development in the agribusiness and aerospace sectors.

3401

VDOT - Rural Transportation Planning

Anne Doyle
Ext. 115

Staff completed quarterly reports for the VDOT Rural Work Program and attended the State Trails Office Virtual Town Hall. Staff also participated in VDOT's quarterly Metropolitan Planning Organization meeting held on December 12th. Changes to the VDOT SMART SCALE funding program were discussed, including the preferred use of Weldon-Cooper demographic data over US Census data to describe local conditions.

TBD

USDOT RAISE Grant - Eastern Shore Rail Trail

Anne Doyle
Ext. 115

A-NPDC is moving forward with the original project limits for the RAISE project with the Federal Highway Administration and will be submitting a draft agreement on January 16, 2024. A-NPDC has requested the Commonwealth Transportation Board transfer all funding away from the Melfa-to-Onley SMART SCALE segment and onto the Onley-to-Parksley SMART SCALE segment. This would better serve the public by enabling 25.1 miles of the Eastern Shore Rail Trail to be built rather than the 16.9 miles that is currently awarded. Our goal is to maximize the number of miles constructed with funding that has already been awarded.

3221

Wachapreague - HUD

Anne Doyle
Ext. 127

Staff assisted the Town of Wachapreague to publish a Notice of Finding of No Significant Impact and Notice of Intent to Request Release of Funds, as required by HUD for the environmental review certification. HUD has now released the awarded grant funds. The Town has still not received the grant agreement from DEQ for funds awarded through the General Assembly.

3764

Town of Parksley Downtown Revitalization

Anne Doyle
Ext. 115

Progress continues to be made on the Parksley Downtown Revitalization project through a DHCD grant. Project close-out is January 31, 2024. The derelict building on Bennett Street has been demolished and the sidewalk planters have been planted and placed around the town center. Storefront signs are currently being fabricated for placement this month.

3581

ESVA Community Resilience & Sustainability Plan (CRSP)

Anne Doyle

The consultant has postponed the first community session in Wachapreague until the beginning of 2024. It will be the first citizen engagement session for incorporation into the final plan.

3587 *Eastern Shore Regional Navigable Waterways Committee (ESRNWC)* Kellen Singleton
Ext. 129

The Kings Creek Phase 2 project construction was completed on schedule November 2. The total material removed was 22,888 cubic yards (22,228 cubic yards payable) was utilized to restore the Cape Charles Public Beach. The Nassawadox Creek project is undergoing the JPA permit review process and issuance before moving on to the construction phase. In an active design/survey phase are the following dredging projects: Red Bank Creek and Folly Creek. Dredging material management and project funding remain considerations.

3571 *A-N Ground Water Committee Projects* Kellen Singleton
Ext. 129

The Residential Well Testing Subcommittee will lead in the detailed planning and oversight of the Residential Well Testing Program and continues to meet regularly. The subcommittee has proposed and will determine the feasibility of a collaborative effort with regional high schools. GWC advisor continues assessing groundwater monitoring drilling and supplemental monitoring techniques including the potential enhancement of saltwater intrusion tools and modeling as well as identifying future locations for well testing. Surficial Aquifer mischaracterization and Yorktown-Eastover Aquifer overutilization remain areas of increasing concern. The Committee advisor is moving forward in drafting a Surficial Aquifer Characterization Plan that will provide quantitative information on yield and water quality for the surficial aquifer. Supervisor Calvin L. Washington of Accomack has been appointed as the Committee’s newest member. The Committee continues to stress the importance of surficial aquifer utilization for new or expanded withdrawal use when feasible.

3334 *Agricultural Study* Kellen Singleton
Ext. 129

Dr. Abhilash Chandel of Virginia Tech has completed the data collection of 32 years of Virginia Eastern Shore climate, planting, yield, and satellite data totalling 26 TB of data towards Objective I, II, and III. The study timeline has been extended.

3351 *Kings Creek Phase 2* Kellen Singleton
Ext. 129

Dredging and beneficial use placement began September 28. The Kings Creek Phase 2 project construction was completed on schedule November 2. The total material removed was 22,888 cubic yards (22,228 cubic yards payable) that was utilized to restore the Cape Charles Public Beach. Following AD surveys by Michel’s Construction, Inc. and Waterway Surveys & Engineering, Ltd. A

review and acceptance meeting between staff, project engineers, ESRNWC members, Northampton County and Cape Charles officials, was held November 8 at which Michel's Construction, Inc. was commended for their work. Michel's has completed their demobilization from the project site. The project is being closed out.

3353

Nassawadox Creek Phase 1B

Kellen Singleton
Ext. 129

The Joint Permit Application needed for the dredge construction phase of Nassawadox Creek has been completed by the project engineer, signed by Northampton County, and submitted. Representatives from USACE, VMRC, VIMS, the project engineer, and staff met October 17th to discuss steps moving forward. Issues with General Permit designation were discussed. A follow-up meeting has occurred. Dredge material placement remains a concern.

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.

3661 - HUD-Housing Counseling Services	A. Wert
3662 - VHDA HCE Foreclosure/Housing Counseling	A. Wert
366250 - Homeless Solutions COC Activities	J. Hope

366250

Continuum of Care (CoC)

Jen Hope
Ext. 123

Community Partners of the Eastern Shore's General Membership met on January 10th. Updates were provided by participating service providers and committees. The meeting primarily served as a training for partners participating in the annual Point-In-Time homelessness count. The date for the 2024 PIT count is now definitively set for January 24th, with a weather date alternative of January 25th. A-NPDC staff will be assisting in the overnight canvas of the Eastern Shore.

3661

HUD Housing Counseling Services

Andrea Wert
Ext. 124

21 clients are receiving homeownership counseling. 2 clients have prequalified for a loan and are looking for a home (one with FHA & USDA, one with VA.). 19 clients are working to repair their credit and increase their savings, with 4 clients currently participating in the new Credit Improvement program. 1 client is receiving foreclosure counseling. 5 clients have successfully purchased homes in the past 15 months, and 3 of these families were formerly Section 8 tenants.

Staff has trained and passed the necessary exam to receive certification, and is currently working with FAHE to become a packager of the USDA 502 Direct Loan Applications. This program will allow staff to assist our clients directly with their applications.

Staff continues to conduct Financial Literacy, Rental Topics, and Fair Housing classes for new HCV recipients during intake briefings. These briefings are being held twice monthly, with 8-15 attendants in each class.

Staff continues working to recruit the required partners for New Home Ownership Certification classes. New Real Estate partners are scheduled to attend Train–The-Trainer classes this coming April. Staff continues to look for commitment from a Financial Partner to participate. Plans for these classes remain on hold.

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. Luchansky
3335 - Accomack County CDBG Planning Grant	E. Luchansky
3760 - Gospel Temple/Adams Crossing CDBG	E. Luchansky
300660 - Makemie Park Urgent Need Project	K. Singleton
300702 - Metompinkin CDBG - Program Income	B. Herbert
3690 - Occhannock Neck Road Project	B. Herbert
3680 - Accomack County COVID CDBG Urgent Needs	E. Meil
4710- HMGP - DR-4001 & DR-4411	E. Luchansky
3823 - HMGP - DR-4291	E. Luchansky
4401 - VDH Septic and Well Assistance Program	E. Luchansky

300640***Town of Onancock - Northeast Neighborhood***Eric Luchansky
Ext. 118

Two homes have been demolished. The street lights have been upgraded in the neighborhood. Staff is waiting for a design for the sidewalk that will span Pine Street. All easements for the sidewalk have been obtained.

3760***Gospel Temple/Adams Crossing Neighborhood Revitalization CDBG***Eric Luchansky
Ext. 118

The project is closed out.

300660***Makemie Park Urgent Need Project***Kellen Singleton
Ext. 129

To date all 26 septic systems have been installed, per the initial construction agreement and contract addendum. All conflicting wells have been abandoned and replaced. Staff and District 3 Supvr. Johnson has initiated a door-2-door info, outreach, and recordation signing effort. A decommissioning procedure for the current Makemie Park Sewage Disposal Area has been drafted. The project

engineer will assess the communal system and property. SERCAP, Inc. has approved a \$38,000 allocation for the effort. The contractor and staff continue to engage Makemie Park residents to address landscaping and residential plumbing impacts as well as future AOSS maintenance needs. A third in a series of community outreach and septic training events is being planned. A final DHCD compliance review took place October 30 and 31.

3690 *Occohannock Neck Road Project* Bruce Herbert
Ext. 128

Staff is in the process of selling the one bedroom home. It should be complete by mid January. Several prospective buyers are in contact with staff to purchase the two bedroom home.

3823 *Accomack County VA HMGP 4291-VA-009 Elevation Project* Eric Luchansky
Ext. 118

Staff is working on preparing bid documents for demolition for the acquisition/demolition of 20055 Saxis Road. Staff is working with 2 previously uninterested homeowners to lift their homes. There is room in the budget.

4710 *Accomack County VA 4401-VA-016 Elevation/Acquisition Project* Eric Luchansky
Ext. 118

The engineering design is complete. Staff is working on putting bid documents together for lift and foundation construction.

3801 *East Horntown Planning Grant* Eric Luchansky
Ext. 118

Staff are beginning to prepare the application for a comprehensive improvement grant. Staff are still conducting inspections and holding monthly meetings.

3340 *Holland Lane - Cheriton Planning Grant* Bruce Herbert
Ext. 128

Staff is working on scheduling a kick off meeting for late January.

4401 *VDH Septic and Well Assistance Program* Eric Luchansky
Ext. 118

Three homes are complete. Three homes are in the process of engineering design. Once complete, bid documents will be sent out to prospective contractors.

9. Grants

Wishart's Point Planning Grant Application

Accomack County submitted a planning grant application for \$50,000.00 on December 29th, 2023. If awarded, Accomack County may offer the administration contract to A-NPDC.

10. Executive Director's Memo

RC&D Council Dissolution

The sponsors met on October 27, 2023 to discuss the RC&D Council recommendation to dissolve. After discussion, the sponsors gave unanimous consent to the Council representatives to select the date of the resolution to dissolve.

No date had been received yet.

Employee Background Checks

HUD had advised that as a condition of participation in all federally funded Housing counseling programs that participant employees are screened for eligibility. According to the advice and template provided by Virginia Housing, below is a draft policy, subject to Commission approval. Note: There is no requirement that current staff be subject to the hiring conditions outlined in the policy.

“EMPLOYEE BACKGROUND CHECKS

As of January 1, 2024, a background check will be conducted post-offer on all final employment candidates and on any staff that is promoted, as deemed necessary. Employment candidates must complete a background check authorization form at the time of an employment offer. Based on the specific role, background checks may include, but are not limited to:

1. Social Security Verification: copies for the file of official documents such as Social Security Card and government issued ID confirming prospective employee's Social Security number and date of birth.
2. Criminal History: includes review of criminal arrests, convictions, and probation.

The results of a candidate's criminal background check can be used to withdraw the offer of employment or promotion. The following factors will be considered for employment candidates with a criminal history:

- The nature of the crime and its relationship to the position.
- The time since the conviction.
- The number (if more than one) of convictions.
- Whether hiring the employment candidate or promoting a staff member would pose an unreasonable risk to the agency, agency staff, clients, and vendors.”

Adoption of the Policy and authorization to amend the Personnel Policies to include it behind the Violence-Free Workplace Policy (p.9) was requested.

Commissioner Coker moved to adopt the Policy and authorization to amend the Personnel Policies to include it behind the Violence-Free Workplace Policy as requested. Seconded by Commissioner Crockett, the motion was carried by unanimous vote.

Employee Compensation

Accomack County has completed an employee compensation and classification study. Overall, it was found the County was 15.9% below market rates. In the summer, Accomack approved a 6.5% & 0.5% COLA that was an improvement on that metric. A-NPDC based their rates on an averaging on filled positions at Accomack, Northampton County and agencies but it was completed prior to this study. This intended to level the salaries with similar locally filled positions. The County did not include the County Administrator, however, the A-NPDC Executive Director position was last based between the salaries of Department Directors and Deputy Administrators.

Positions received a 7% increase on January 1 although some positions received a boost beyond that based on the study's findings. A-NPDC has identified resources in each department to fund a 7% increase to all staff positions, including the Executive Director. The approved November budget amendments of new contracts are more than sufficient to pay the entire increase. On December 31, 2023, A-NPDC had two staff persons resign, one returning to Accomack County.

Authorization to increase base salaries by 7% for the pay period beginning January 1, 2024.

Commissioner Hart moved to approve the authorization to increase base salaries by 7% for the pay period beginning January 1, 2024 as presented. Seconded by Commissioner Crockett, the motion was carried by unanimous vote.

A-NPDC 2024 Calendar of Meetings

In 2024, the Commission meetings do not conflict with a holiday. At this time, there is no need to reschedule any of the meetings.

Accomack-Northampton Planning District Commission meets at the conference room at 23372 Front Street, Accomac, Virginia at 7:00 pm. Meetings are open to the public. Meetings are the third Mondays of each month except December and February which are not held. The January meeting is scheduled for the third Tuesday of January.

Tuesday, January 16, 2024
No Regular Meeting February
Monday, March 18, 2024
Monday, April 15, 2024
Monday, May 20, 2024
Monday, June 17, 2024
Monday, July 15, 2024
Monday, August 19, 2024
Monday, September 16, 2024
Monday, October 21, 2024
Monday, November 18, 2024
No Regular Meeting December

Ms. Meil requested support for communication with Delegate Bloxom, VACO, Virginia Planning District Commissions, and Legal Lobbyists in regards to passing House Bill 818. Commissioner Hart moved to approve the requested support for the passing of House Bill 818 as presented. Seconded by Commissioner Major, the motion was carried by unanimous vote.

11. Next Meeting

The following By-Laws Amendment to Article IV, Section 1, Regular Meetings, was approved in March 2011:

Regular monthly meetings of the Commission shall be held at 7:00 p.m. on the third Monday of each month, except January, February and December, at a place to be determined by the Commission. The regular January meeting will be held at 7:00 p.m. on the third Tuesday. No regular meetings will be held in February or December. The Commission may change the date and time of any regular meeting at any proper meeting and may adjourn any meeting from time to time or to another place.

Therefore, the next regular meeting is scheduled for Monday, March 18, 2024.

No action was required at the time.

12. Chairman's Report

No report was given at the time.

13. Other Matters

No other matters were discussed at this time.

14. Adjournment

There being no further business brought before the Commission, Commissioner Leonard moved to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Commissioner Crockett, the meeting was then adjourned.