

ACCOMACK-NORTHAMPTON PLANNING DISTRICT COMMISSION
MINUTES OF THE
November 12, 2024 Meeting
ENTERPRISE BUILDING
ACCOMAC, VIRGINIA

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

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

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:

None

OTHERS PRESENT:

Russ Williams	Sandy Taylor
Anne Doyle	Faith Lewis
Elaine Meil	
Eric Luchansky	

1. Call to Order
The November 18, 2024 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 Major offered the Invocation.

3. Minutes of the October 21, 2024 Meeting

The Minutes of the October 21, 2024 Meeting were presented. Commissioner Hart moved to approve the minutes as presented. Seconded by Commissioner Leonard, the motion was carried by unanimous vote.

4. Public Participation

There was no public discussion.

5. Financial Status Report

The report indicated 33.09 percent of the FY 2025 Budget had been expended while 33.33 percent of the fiscal year had passed.

Commissioner Crockett inquired, the bumper was usually larger, was anything driving the change? Ms. Taylor stated there were some budget amendments which would help it spread.

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

7. Budget Amendments

Ms. Taylor wanted to mention a typo on Page 23, Budget Amendment #2. Project #3218, USDA Safety Action Plan, should be USDA Rural Business Development Grant - Melfa Industrial Grant through the Economic Development Authority of Accomack County.

Ms. Taylor stated the net change to the FY 2025 budget is \$244,876 which \$74,876 was administrative funds and \$170,000 is direct costs.

Commissioner Hart moved to approve the Budget Amendments. It was seconded by Commissioner Leonard, the motion was carried by unanimous vote.

8. FY 2024 Audit

Ms. Taylor stated the Budget/Loan Committee met prior to this meeting and she would like for them to make the recommendation.

Chairman Mapp, Commissioner Kellam, and Commissioner Major all agreed the audit did not show any issues or concerns.

Commissioner Major moved to accept the FY2024 Audit as prepared by Dunham & Aukamp, PLC. It was seconded by Commissioner Crockett, the motion was carried by unanimous vote.

9. FY 2026 Budget Requests

Ms. Taylor presented the FY 2026 Budget Requests. This was the level funding from Accomack County, Northampton County, and the Town of Chincoteague.

Commissioner Crockett moved to accept the FY 2026 Budget Requests. It was seconded by Commissioner Major, the motion was carried by unanimous vote.

10. 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
3592 - Bay Act DEQ BMPs	A. Doyle
3211 - USDA for Melfa Industrial Park for Economic Development Authority	A. Doyle
3526 - VCZMP Technical Assistance & Resiliency Planning	A. Doyle
3401 - VDOT Rural Transportation Planning	A. Doyle
3589 - VDEM Hazard Mitigation Plan 2026	A. Doyle
3221 - Wachapreague Sewer Installation Project	A. Doyle
3587 - Navigable Waterways Committee	K. Singleton
3571 - A-N Ground Water Committee Projects	E. Meil
3334 - Agricultural Study	K. Singleton
3580 - DEQ Chesapeake Bay WIP	E. Luchansky
3764 - Town of Parksley Downtown Revitalization	A. Doyle
3353 - Waterway Dredging Northampton County - Nassawadox Creek Phase 1	K. Singleton
3365 - Waterway Dredging Northampton County - Nassawadox Creek Phase 2	K. Singleton
3351 - Waterway Dredging Northampton County - Kings Creek Phase 2	K. Singleton
3355 - Waterway Dredging Northampton County - Red Bank Creek Phase 1	K. Singleton
3352 - Waterway Dredging Accomack County - Folly Creek Phase 1	K. Singleton
3354 - Dredge Material Management Initiative	K. Singleton
3218 - Safety Action Plan - USDOT Safe Streets for All Program	A. Doyle
3675- FHWA RAISE Grant for ESRT	A. Doyle

3220

Economic Development Administration - Economic Development Planning

Anne Doyle, ext. 115

Contributing to regional economic development, a strategic market planning study has begun that will focus on the agriculture/aquaculture and aerospace industry sectors. Related supplier and service commercial sectors would be included. Staff continue to make progress on the new Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) that will be developed and released to the region by 2026. The plan must be posted electronically with an ability to update the economic indicators informing the plan on a quarterly basis. Progress continues to be made as time and funding permits.

3600

Drone Medical Package Delivery

Anne Doyle, ext. 115

Project staff from ODU's Virginia Institute for Spaceflight and Autonomy, DroneUp, and A-NPDC participated in the project's final drone demonstration of medical package delivery on Tangier Island on October 23rd. Staff continue to await notice on the \$15 million grant application for Stage Two of the project that will operationalize the initiative on the Eastern Shore and in some of Virginia's other medically underserved regions. On December 9th, A-NPDC is coordinating a Drone Discovery Day at the Eastern Shore Community College to inform prospective and current students about drone pilot training and certification courses ESCC will hold. Both DroneUp (medical package delivery) and SRS (agricultural cover crop planting) companies will demonstrate their respective use cases as well as discuss typical career paths for drone pilots during this event.

3592

Technical Assistance for the Bay Act

Rita Chandler, ext. 129

The broad purpose of this grant is to assist towns with incorporating resilience measures into their planning processes. A-NPDC staff are coordinating the participation of incorporated town leadership in a training event hosted by the Town of Cape Charles for builders and contractors on November 20, 2024. The Training will cover updates to the Building Code, compliance with the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act, zoning requirements, historic district measures, and tree permits.

3211

USDA Rural Business Development Grant

Anne Doyle, ext. 115

Staff coordinated an Economic Development Authority (EDA) steering committee meeting on October 14, 2024 consisting of regional business leaders. The purpose of the meeting was to get input from the key stakeholders of the types of businesses they would like to see established in the Melfa Industrial Park. Their information will inform a regional marketing strategy currently being developed by bGlobal Consulting Group. Upon conclusion of the meeting Taylor and Tucker Terry conducted a tour of the former Bloxom Agriculture Center that is now owned by the EDA and leased to the Terrys. The Terrys are using the Hub for shellfish operation. Additionally, they have conceptualized a regional Hub where they plan to start-up a fin fish processing center. Virginia Tech is integral to the fin fish venture, having provided market research and technical assistance.

3526

VCZMP Technical Assistance & Resiliency Planning

Rita Chandler, ext. 129

Staff continues follow-up activities from its "Community Needs for Resilience Planning" training session in September that was attended by 25 town mayors, vice mayors, clerks and other town managers. The event highlighted the successful resilience projects in Oyster and Saxis and provided training and tips for incorporating resilience into Eastern Shore comprehensive, zoning and other

plans. A-NPDC has hired a new Coastal Planner beginning on October 16th who will manage the Ground Water Committee as well as managing the Department of Environmental Quality and Department of Conservation and Recreation grants. An introduction and project discussion meeting was held with the new Coastal Planner and William Isenburg, VDEQ on October 29, 2024.

3401

VDOT - Rural Transportation Planning

Anne Doyle, ext. 115

Staff are assisting the Eastern Shore Rail Trail Foundation by attending public outreach events, including the ESVA Ag Fair. A-NPDC has printed rack cards for the Foundation in both English and Spanish language in order to increase public awareness and support of the Eastern Shore Rail Trail. In compliance with the Rural Work Program, staff continue to attend the Accomack Northampton Transportation District Commission monthly meetings. A-NPDC is also using the Rural Work Program to advance planning and scoping of the comprehensive Safety Action Plan.

3589

VDEM Hazard Mitigation Plan 2026

Rita Chandler, ext. 129

Staff continued to discuss statewide hazard mitigation planning in conjunction with regional resilience planning. Staff is organizing a meeting with VDEM and FEMA resource personnel. The Eastern Shore Disaster Preparedness Coalition has agreed to partner with the A-NPDC, adding Hazard Mitigation Planning to its quarterly meeting agenda; its next meeting is on October 24th. A community event was held in Oyster, VA on October 21, 2024 hosted by the Nature Conservancy, to review the flooding mitigation plan for the Oyster Community and gather input from the community. A-NPDC staff attended the event. The Fall session of the Climate and Hazard Mitigation Planning meeting and training is scheduled for November 12, 2024 with the Eastern Shore Disaster Planning Committee (ESDPC).

3221

Wachapreague - HUD and DEQ

Anne Doyle, ext. 115

The Wachapreague project schedule continues to advance: The pump station received power from A&N Electric Coop on October 22nd. The load test for the generator was scheduled for October 30th. Grinder pumps are scheduled to be installed/connected at the Island House, the Wachapreague Motel, and Fire Station by November 22nd with remaining business installation/connection by December 6th. Once this occurs, the project will be at substantial completion by December.

3587

***Eastern Shore Regional Navigable Waterways Committee
(ESRNWC)***

Kellen Singleton, ext. 114

The Nassawadox Creek project has submitted its Joint Permit Application and is awaiting issuance from the regulatory agencies before moving to the construction phase. A-NPDC staff and committee members met with VMRC staff on 8/16 to discuss Nassawadox Creek DMMP considerations. VIMS has again not advised nearshore berm disposal. Red Bank Creek and Folly Creek dredging projects remain in the active design phase. A topo survey for Folly Creek has been completed. The committee

has decided to move forward with contractor-sourced material management with priority efforts in the absence of other alternatives. The Virginia Port Authority has approved the dual MPPDC/A-NPDC Dredge Material Management Effort allocating up to \$3,048,500 to the Middle Peninsula Chesapeake Bay Public Access Authority for planning efforts. The Memorandum of Understanding is currently under review. On June 25th, the Northampton Board of Supervisors adopted a resolution to request the transfer of the remaining balance, \$993,144.77 of the Kings Creek Dredging Project VPA Funds to the Nassawadox Creek Dredging effort. Rocket Lab has identified critical transportation issues related to the upcoming launch of their Neutron rocket from Wallops Island, scheduled for 2025. The large components of the rocket, measuring 25 feet in diameter, cannot be transported by road, rail, or air, making marine transport the only viable option. However, Wallops Island lacks the necessary dock infrastructure, and dredging is required to support the marine offloading of these components. Tangier Shoreline Protection and Resilience Working Group has been organized to coordinate local, state, federal, and private efforts to protect shorelines and increase the resiliency of the Tangier community. On May 30, 2024, USACE held a public informational meeting in Saxis to inform the public about the Pocomoke Sound Oyster Restoration initiative. The next ESRNWC meeting will be held on Thursday, January 16, 2025, at the Enterprise Building.

3353

***Waterway Dredging Northampton County - Nassawadox Creek
Phase 1***

Kellen Singleton, ext. 114

The dredging of Nassawadox Creek is scheduled to begin after the completion of Phase 1B, which focuses on the material management plan, including securing necessary permits and addressing environmental concerns. This phase is crucial for ensuring the proper and compliant management of dredged material. Funding has also been secured for a Dredge Material Management Initiative that will expedite future dredging efforts. While the exact duration and extent are still being finalized, it is expected to address significant navigation and environmental issues in a 24,200 cubic yard area at the mouth of Nassawadox Creek. The Eastern Shore Regional Navigable Waterways Committee (ESRNWC) is collaborating closely with local stakeholders and regulatory bodies to ensure a comprehensive approach. A-NPDC staff and committee members met with VMRC staff on 8/16 to discuss Nassawadox Creek DMMP considerations. VIMS has again not advised nearshore berm disposal. Upland material management alternatives are being explored including contractor-sourced mainland disposal and Tangier Island beneficial use.

3571

A-N Ground Water Committee Projects

Elaine Meil, ext. 116

The GroundWater Committee met on October 15th. Staff had been advertising the 2024 well testing program and obtaining applicants with Columbia wells. Outreach efforts have included newspaper and Facebook advertisements, flyers in the Eastern Shore post offices, and direct mail. Fifty-two applications have been received. During the week of October 28, 2024 A-NPDC collected residential well water samples in both Accomack and Northampton counties for the Ground Water well testing projects.

Dr. Abhilash Chandel of Virginia Tech has delivered study deliverables which include 32 years of Virginia Eastern Shore climate, planting, yield, and satellite data totaling 26 TB of data for the project and a dashboard for presenting and accessing the data. The dashboard enables multiple scenarios to be examined that will inform crop production on the Eastern Shore. The study has shown that climate shifts have significantly impacted crop health, with factors like temperature, soil moisture, and wind speed most affecting corn, cotton, soybean, and winter wheat. Notably, corn saw a reduction of up to 19% in harvested acreage, while winter wheat experienced a 28% loss due to extreme weather. Machine learning models achieved up to 85% accuracy in predicting crop health based on weather data, suggesting a promising tool for future yield projections. Soybeans demonstrated strong resilience, particularly in water use efficiency under drought, unlike corn and wheat, which showed increased water needs likely tied to rising temperatures. These findings offer critical insights for farmers, policymakers, and crop breeders to guide resilient crop selection, water management, and strategies to counteract climate impacts. Dr. Chandel's progress was presented to members of the Coastal Planning District Commission at its May 23, 2024 meeting.

Staff continued to educate clients on the proper use of well and septic systems.

Staff has submitted the grant administration agreements to the Federal Highway Administration and awaits its execution. Kickoff meetings have been held with both the VDOT Safety Office in Richmond and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). VDOT will collect and perform an analysis of crash data-to include 2024 data- for the comprehensive safety action plan.

A-NPDC's engineering firm Alpha Consulting has provided an updated engineer's cost estimate for the project as well as a revised logical termini report. Both reports are being reviewed by the Federal Highway Administration before going to the Office of the Secretary of Transportation for approval.

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

315710 - Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS)

A. Press

366250

Continuum of Care (CoC)

Jen Hope, ext. 123

Community Partners of the Eastern Shore's General Membership met on November 13th at ESCC. The Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) Committee met November 12th. This committee is responsible for the Homeless Point-In-Time count, which is scheduled for January 22nd. A-NPDC staff will again be participating in the overnight canvas.

3661

HUD Housing Counseling Services

Andrea Wert, ext. 125

26 clients are receiving homeownership counseling. 4 clients have received a pre-approval through Virginia Housing for a mortgage (two are current Section 8 clients). 21 clients are working to repair their credit, pay down debt, and increase their savings and/or income. 3 clients should be ready to secure mortgage approval in 2024 barring any unforeseen setbacks. There are no current foreclosure clients. 7 clients have successfully purchased homes in the past 23 months, and 3 of these families were formerly Section 8 tenants.

3662

Virginia Housing Counseling & Education

Andrea Wert, ext. 125

Staff continues to conduct Financial Literacy, Rental Topics, and Fair Housing classes for new HCV recipients during intake briefings. These briefings are being held monthly, with 7-12 attendants in each class. Staff is still seeking partners for 1st Time Homebuyer Certification classes. Certification classes require commitment from realtor and a mortgage professional, including required training. Virginia Housing offers on-line training as an alternative to the in-person classes.

315710

Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS)

April Press, ext. 124

HUD awarded A-NRHA the Family Self Sufficiency (FSS) program as a supplement to administration of the HCV/Section 8 program. FSS offers financial incentives to qualified working HCV families, including escrow accounts and one-on-one housing counseling. The goal of the program is to build credit and assets in an effort to graduate from assistance and purchase a home, or otherwise become self-sufficient. FSS aligns well with our existing Housing Counseling programs. Staff have begun enrolling qualified applicant families into the program.

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
3690 - Occhannock Neck Road Project

E. Luchansky
E. Luchansky

3823 -FEMA - VDEM Accomack County	E. Luchansky
4710- HMGP - DR-4001 & DR-4411	E. Luchansky
3801 - East Horntown CDBG Planning Grant	E. Luchansky
3340 - Holland Lane CDBG Planning Grant	E. Luchansky
4401 - VDH Septic and Well Assistance Program	E. Luchansky
300660 - Makemie Park Urgent Need Project	E. Luchansky

300640	<i>Town of Onancock - Northeast Neighborhood</i>	Eric Luchansky, ext. 118
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15 Watson is complete. 5 Spady Lane is under contract. 30 Boundary Avenue is expected to be under contract this week.

3690	<i>Occohannock Neck Road Project</i>	Eric Luchansky, ext. 118
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The foundations for the one-bedroom home and two-bedroom home are installed. Framing has begun on the one-bedroom. The site work for the duplex is completed and foundations are expected to be installed once permitted.

3823	<i>Accomack County VA HMGP 4291-VA-009 Elevation Project</i>	Eric Luchansky, ext. 118
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Staff is working to acquire one property in Saxis..

4710	<i>Accomack County VA 4401-VA-016 Elevation/Acquisition Project</i>	Eric Luchansky, ext. 118
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23668 Saxis Road has been acquired. The settlement took place on October 31st.

Staff is waiting for a quote to redesign the foundation of 18658 Johnson's Landing, which will change from pilings to piers.

3801	<i>East Horntown Planning Grant</i>	Eric Luchansky, ext. 118
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Staff had submitted a grant to demolish four derelict homes and rebuild 5 substandard homes.

3340	<i>Holland Lane - Cheriton Planning Grant</i>	Eric Luchansky, ext. 118
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Staff had submitted a grant to demolish one derelict home and rebuild two substandard homes. Staff is working with DEQ to repair the two proposed house wells and septic systems.

One well and alternative septic system was installed in Painter. One well is scheduled to be dug in Nassawadox in the coming week.

All paperwork has been submitted to close out this grant.

11. Executive Director's Memo

Enterprise Building

Procurement is complete to study the sewer connection. Estimates received are very expensive.

2024 Columbia Well Regional Testing

The 2024 Columbia Well Testing Regional testing was conducted the week of October 28.

VDH Meeting of Local Health District Directors - The Future of Public Health

Executive Director Meil learned that Maryland and Pennsylvania both have pursued a very different policy regarding septic treatment. Instead of requiring high levels of treatment through the septic system, they approve sand mounds and increase the setback of wells located in the surficial aquifer.

The Commission is interested in referring this information to the Ground Water Committee for further study and investigation.

Draft Policy - Eastern Shore Elevation Cap on Costs Policy

In 2024, housing elevation costs have increased and may require significant resources above project average costs.

To promote the safety and welfare of the residents of the Eastern Shore, it is critical that limited federal, state, and local resources be available to the widest extent possible and serve as many residents as possible.

The policy proposes A-NPDC puts a cap with no more than \$250,000 of federal, state, or local grant funds to be used to elevate a residential structure. Also proposes A-NPDC to review if the project costs exceed an average of \$175,000 per residence.

Commissioner Crockett moved to adopt the Eastern Shore Elevation Cap on Costs Policy. Seconded by Commissioner Major, the motion was carried by unanimous vote.

Drone UP Update

The operational person from the privately owned Drone company wanted to thank the A-NPDC for how great the process was working with them. They would love to keep working with us in the future.

12. Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, January 21, 2025 at 7:00 p.m.

13. Chairman's Report

Chairman Mapp had no report.

14. Other Matters

There were no other matters to discuss.

15. Adjournment

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

Chairman, Betsy Mapp

Executive Director, Elaine K. N. Meil