

SOUTHSIDE PLANNING DISTRICT COMMISSION
Annual Dinner Meeting
October 26, 2023

Southside PDC Chair Tom Tanner welcomed everyone to the 54th Annual Dinner Meeting of the Southside Planning District Commission (SPDC), held at the Berry Hill Resort in South Boston, Virginia on October 26, 2023. Chair Tanner thanked Halifax County/South Boston for hosting this year's meeting and then introduced Mr. Dennis Barker, South Boston Assistant Town Manager, Scott Simpson, Halifax County Administrator, and Kristy Johnson, Halifax County IDA Economic Development Director. Mr. Simpson provided welcoming comments to the group.

Deborah Gosney, Executive Director of Southside PDC recognized special guests and sponsors of the Annual Dinner Meeting. Executive Director Gosney extended a thank you to PDC Commissioners for their continued support of the organization. Recognition was given to the CEDS Committee as well as to past PDC Chairs and Executive Directors.

RECOGNITION OF SPECIAL GUESTS/SPONSORS

The following guests were recognized for their committed work and dedication to serving our communities:

- Senator Frank Ruff - Virginia Senate
- Delegate Tommy Wright- Virginia House of Delegates
- Richard Jenkins-Telecommunication, Rural Development
- Laurette Tucker- Area Director, Rural Development
- Kristie Proctor - Executive Director, Virginia Rural Center
- Dr. Quentin Johnson- President, Southside Virginia Community College

The following sponsors were recognized for their partnerships and contributions:

- B & B Consultants, Inc.
- Cedric Stovall Design & Construction
- Dewberry
- EMPOWER Broadband, Inc.
- First Citizens Bank
- Letterpress Communications
- MBC
- Mecklenburg Electric Cooperative
- SERCAP, Inc.
- Southside Outreach Group

INVOCATION

Reverend Hubert Pannell, Halifax County Board of Supervisor, delivered the invocation.

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Tanner called the meeting to order.

ROLL CALL

Executive Director Gosney called the roll. With 14 Commissioners being present, a quorum was met for this meeting. The full list of Annual Dinner Meeting attendees is attached at the end of the minutes.

BRUNSWICK COUNTY	Present	Absent
Bernard Jones, Sr.	X	
Leslie Weddington-Treasurer	X	
John Zubrod		X
HALIFAX COUNTY		
Stanley Brandon	X	
William Claiborne	X	
Jerry Lovelace	X	
Garland Ricketts	X	
Scott Simpson	X	
MECKLENBURG COUNTY		
M. J. Colgate		X
Charles Jones	X	
Charlie Simmons	X	
Claudia Lundy	X	
Tom Tanner - Chair	X	
SOUTH BOSTON		
Joseph Chandler III	X	
George Leonard - Vice Chair	X	
SOUTH HILL		
Kim Callis	X	
Lillie Feggins-Boone		X
PRESENT	14	
ABSENT		3

AGENDA

UPON MOTION BY KIM CALLIS, SECONDED BY JERRY LOVELACE, THE AGENDA WAS UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED AS PRESENTED.

CONSENT AGENDA

The Commissioners received their respective meeting packets prior to the Annual Meeting. The meeting packet contained the agenda, minutes from the previous Commissioner meeting dated July 20, 2023, and the Financial Report for the period ending September 30, 2023. The Commissioners were asked if any of the Consent Agenda items needed to be moved to regular discussion items. Hearing none, the Consent Agenda items were recommended for approval. UPON MOTION BY KIM CALLIS, SECONDED BY GEORGE LEONARD, THE CONSENT AGENDA WAS UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED AS PRESENTED.

RECOGNITION OF STAFF

Executive Director Gosney then recognized Staff by title and length of service.

SPDC STAFF	
Ashleigh Zincone - Senior Community Planner	25 years
Andy Wells- Director of Local Gov't Services	20 years
Sangi Cooper - Senior Community Planner	13 years
Chad Neese - Senior Planner/GIS Specialist	6 years
Erika Tanner - Community Planner I	3 years
Magen Long - Administrative Assistant	6 months
Leslie Kubasek- Finance Director/HR	3 months
Ann Taylor Wright - CTW Consulting LLC - Contract Staff	4 years

Staff receives special recognition on every fifth-year anniversary of dedicated service to the commission. Two awards were presented as follows:

- ❖ Ashleigh Zincone – 25 years of service
- ❖ Andy Wells – 20 years of service

GUEST SPEAKER

Chair Tom Tanner introduced speaker Caroline Luxhoj, who serves as the Program Manager for the Office of Broadband at Virginia's Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). In her role, she oversees the administration of DHCD's more than \$1 billion in state and federal broadband funding with the goal of achieving universal broadband access across the Commonwealth. Caroline has been a champion for broadband in Virginia for nearly 15 years. Prior to joining DHCD, she was with Virginia's Center for Innovative Technology (CIT) where she managed state and federal initiatives and helped to establish some of Virginia's earliest broadband programs.

Caroline's presentation was entitled "Broadband Progress in Virginia & Looking Ahead." The presentation covered the Virginia Telecommunication Initiative (VATI) and the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment Program (BEAD). Numerous VATI applications have been awarded in various localities with a focus on extending broadband service to unserved areas. The program has leveraged significant funding and made significant progress in providing broadband access to citizens in the region. The presentation also highlighted the Line Extension Customer Assistance Program (LECAP), which aims to assist indigent Virginians in extending broadband infrastructure to their homes. Additionally, the Commonwealth Connection – Broadband Availability Map and the Virginia Digital Opportunity Plan are important resources for understanding broadband coverage and addressing digital equity. The Digital Equity Act provides substantial funding for states to develop and implement digital opportunity plans, with a focus on accessible affordable internet, digital skills, and access to connected devices.

CLOSING COMMENTS AND ADJOURNMENT

In closing, Chair Tanner thanked Ms. Luxhoj for her interesting and informative presentation. Additionally, he thanked Halifax County for hosting our Annual Dinner Meeting this year and Berry Hill for providing the meal.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Tom Tanner, Chair

Deborah Gosney, Secretary

Annual Dinner Meeting Attendees October 26, 2023

Tom Tanner	SPDC Commissioner – Chair - Board of Supervisors
Leslie Weddington	SPDC Commissioner – Brunswick County Administrator
Bernard Jones, Sr.	SPDC Commissioner
George Leonard	SPDC Commissioner – Vice Chair
Scott Simpson	SPDC Commissioner – Halifax County Administrator
Charles Jones	SPDC Commissioner
Clauda Lundy	SPDC Commissioner
Charlie Simmons	SPDC Commissioner – LCDC Board
Joseph Chandler	SPDC Commissioner
Kim Callis	SPDC Commissioner – Past Chair
Garland Ricketts	SPDC Commissioner
Stanley Brandon	SPDC Commissioner
William Claiborne	SPDC Commissioner
Jerry Lovelace	SPDC Commissioner
Wayne Carter	Mecklenburg County Administrator
Alex Gottschalk	Mecklenburg Deputy County Administrator
Judy Sheffield	Mecklenburg Assistant County Administrator
Tina Morgan	Mecklenburg Tourism Coordinator
Coleman Speece	SPDC - Past Chair
Keli Reekes	South Hill Town Manager
Bentley Morris	South Hill Economic Development Manager
Brenda Blackwell	Mecklenburg Board of Supervisors
Dr. Alfonzo Seward	Brunswick Board of Supervisors
Welton Tyler	Brunswick Board of Supervisors
Dr. Barbara Jarrett-Harris	Brunswick Board of Supervisors
Alfreda Reynolds	Brunswick County Director of Economic Development
Robert Hayes	Alberta Town Mayor
Elizabeth Crowder	Alberta Town Clerk
Hurbert Pannell	Halifax Board of Supervisors - LCDC Board
Wayne Smith	Halifax Board of Supervisors
Kristy Johnson	Halifax IDA Director Economic Development
LaTonya Hamilton	Halifax County Tourism Director – CEDS
Detrick Easley	Halifax County Planning Director
Jason Johnson	Halifax Emergency Service Coordinator
Dexter Gilliam	Town of Halifax Mayor
Sevaane Gilliam	Guest
Carl Espy	Town of Halifax Manager
Dusty Forbes	Chase City Town Manager
Daniel Reyes	Dewberry – Graduate Engineer

Annual Dinner Meeting Attendees October 26, 2023

Jeff Jones	Clarksville Town Manager
Nettie Simmon-Owens	Chief Workforce Development Officer
Barbara Speece	South Boston – Council Member
Dennis Barker	South Boston – Assistant Mayor
Sharon Harris	South Boston – Council Member
Marcus Hargrave	South Boston – LCDC Board
Stacey Hargrave	Guest
Nancy Edwards	First Citizens Bank – LCDC Loan Review Committee
Bryan David	GO VA Region3 – Program Director
Ilsa Loeser	GO VA Region3 – Letterpress – Marketing Consultant
Bryan Harrison	Guest – Seventh Wall
Richard Jenkins	USDA – Rural Development – Telecommunications Rep
Robbie Jenkins	Guest
Laurette Tucker	USDA – Rural Development – Rural Business Specialist
Delegate Tommy Wright	Virginia Delegate – 61 st District
Senator Frank Ruff	Virginia Senator – 15 th District
Kristie Proctor	Virginia Rural Executive Director
John Lee	Mecklenburg Electric/Empower President & CEO
David Lipscomb	Mecklenburg Electric/Empower Vice President
Drew Arnold	Dewberry Practice Area Manager
Cedric Stovall	Housing Rehab Specialist
Cynthia Stovall	Guest
Petrina Carter	Tri-County President & CEO
Hope Cupit	SERCAP, Inc President & CEO
Brain Brown	SERCAP, Inc Sr. Business Services Lead
David Denny	Virginia’s Growth Alliance Executive Director
Amanda Svard	First Citizens Bank Manager Services
Beverly Ambs	Brunswick Chamber of Commerce Executive Director
Dr. Quentin R. Johnson	Southside Virginia Community College President
Mary Jane Elkins	SVCC Foundation, Inc. Executive Director- CEDS
Caroline Luxhoj	DHCD Broadband Office – Program Manager – Speaker
Casey Logan	Mecklenburg Electric – Chief Operating Officer
Dwayne Long	Mecklenburg Electric – Info Technology
Jim Guy	Mecklenburg Electric – Legal Council
Carol Ann Jones	Mecklenburg Electric – VP, Finance & Accounting
Stephanie Jackson	Halifax County – Finance Director – Guest
Olivia Epps	Halifax County – Strategic Programs Coordinator – Guest
Charlene Hendricks	Halifax – Administrative Assistant to County Administrator – Guest
Chris Ward	Southside Outreach Group, Inc. Board Treasurer
Detra Carr	Southside Outreach Group, Inc. Board Secretary
Soloman Perkins	Southside Outreach Group, Inc.

