

## WORK SESSION MINUTES

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (EDA)  
OF JAMES CITY COUNTY (JCC)  
BUILDING C CONFERENCE ROOM, 101 MOUNTS BAY ROAD  
3:00 PM, TUESDAY, OCTOBER 12, 2006**

### **1. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by Acting Chair Campana at 3:10 PM.

### **2. ROLL CALL**

A roll call identified the following members present:

Mr. Vincent Campana, Jr.  
Mr. Brien Craft  
Mr. Thomas G. Tingle  
Mr. Marshall Warner

Also Present:

Mr. M. Anderson Bradshaw, Board of Supervisors (BOS) Liaison to the EDA  
Ms. Marcè Musser, EDA Recording Secretary  
Mr. William Porter, Assistant County Administrator  
Mr. Keith A. Taylor, EDA Secretary  
Mr. Steven T. Yavorsky, JCC Assistant Economic Development Director  
Ms. Debi Schaefer, Innovative Marketing Solutions  
Ms. Jody Puckett, JCC Communications Director  
Leanne DuBois, Virginia Extension Department Agriculture Specialist  
Charles Green, Project Manager, Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

Absent:

Ms. Virginia B. Hartmann  
Mr. Mark G. Rinaldi

### **3. DISCUSSION ON AGRI-BUSINESS/TOURISM AND ECO-BUSINESS/TOURISM**

Mr. Taylor introduced the speakers by bringing to the Directors' attention the printed biographies on each.

Mr. Green began by explaining his role in agri-business for the State, the purpose being economic development for agriculture and food processing. He stated the average farm size in Virginia is 102 acres, well below the national average, and JCC farms are even smaller than the Virginia average.

The Agriculture Business Development Commission works with the Department of Agriculture's Marketing Department to address and promote agri-business. No longer are there divisions for domestic and internationally, but all are promoted in the same way as they are so closely related in today's global market. The new focus is retail versus direct marketing, known as CSA (Community Supported Agriculture), a subscription-based sales program directly to the consumer.

Mr. Green's department also supports research, both marketing and product. There is a free directory, which most citizens are not aware of, that covers everything from "pick-your-own" to local, regional and state commodities suppliers. Presently there is only one business from JCC in this on-line directory.

Mr. Green went on to explain the difference between wine and foods, and the difference in commodities; specialty products (fruits, vegetables, etc.) versus main crops (cotton, peanuts, soybeans, corn, etc.). There is a greater return per acre on specialty products and niche markets.

Mr. Bradshaw addressed the question of the reason specialty markets are not yet in JCC. He stated that land prices, labor supply, transaction costs, availability of market all played in to the specialty market industry. He also explained that recently passed PDR programs and the new rural development ordinance could make specialty markets more accessible and profitable in the County.

Mr. Green added that in order for farmers to remain economically viable, they must change to specialty markets. He gave the example:

Commodity products/acre = \$1,000-5,000/acre (gross income)

Specialty agriculture potential yield/acre = \$10,000-50,000/acre (though cost per acre is higher, as well)

He further noted that Virginia grains are in an entirely different category.

Ms. DuBois represents farmers at a local level. Originally her job was as a commercial horticulture agent, but the growing agriculture business in New Kent and James City Counties caused the State to expand her position. These New Kent and JCC farmers are in a difficult position because they are virtually land-locked and have need of a much different/specialized type of assistance than farmers in other parts of the State and County.

Agriculture has virtually no representation in economic development. Ms. DuBois urged the EDA to become involved in educating the public on agriculture in JCC and its benefits. Fifty-six percent of farmers in JCC moved here in the last five years. She gave an example of New

Kent County's Annual Farm Tour. Most of these farms are operated by single women (40%), and 88% are less than 10 acres.

The Williamsburg Farmers' Market, considered one of the most **successful** in the state, represents 32 counties and did more than half a million dollars in sales this past season. Less than 20 merchants at the Williamsburg Farmers' Market are from JCC.

Ms. DuBois asked the Directors to consider doing a regional guide to try to steer toward products presently needed in the area, and to assist in local "match-making" between markets and farmers.

Ms. DuBois informed the Directors that Virginia Teach presently has research programs going in an attempt to extend the growing season. This will greatly benefit JCC farmers, and add value to some of Virginia commodities.

Ms. Schaeffer stated that the quality of food product in Virginia is extremely high, something to be very proud of, and need to be promoted. She tries to work with local restaurants to carry local farmers' products. Ms. Schaeffer feels the EDA needs to urge merchants and businesses to carry and serve JCC food and wine.

As an example of local agri-business, Ms. Schaeffer gave a brief chronology of the Williamsburg Winery:

- 1983 – farm purchased (approximately 292 acres)
- 1985 – farm incorporated, planted 3% acres of chardonnay
- 1987 – first product produced, 1700 cases
- 1988 – first actual sale
- 1996 – original building converted to tourism
- 2000 – 27,000 visitors (not including those who **eat/dine**)
- 2004/2005 – tourism expansion, added 285 acres plus 85 acres of trees
- 2005 – 34,000 visitors (not including those who **eat/dine**)
- 2006 - \$20 million investment; Country Inn to open March 2007 w/28 rooms, projected guests **8000/first year**
- 2007 – winery expects to product 67,000 cases, largest of Virginia (produce ¼ of all wine made in Virginia)

Patrick Duffeler, winery owner, commissioned a study by Nichols-Grays, and the three localities' Eco-Tourism committee which came to the conclusion that the area should be marketed as **an** eco-tourism site. A **website** for this purpose has been set up, and had over 500 visitors its first week.

Ms. Schaeffer added that the Virginia Tourism Commission is promoting "outdoors" through all of Virginia in every advertising **medium**. The Department of Environmental Quality and the Virginia Employment Commission is promotion Virginia Green. It was launched two weeks ago. Tom Griffin heads this program.

Ms. Puckett stated we have not provided visitors with tools to take advantage of area perks. Geo-Tourism sustains or enhances the geographical features of an area. JCC's biggest challenge is "what are we marketing?" There is a push to have visitors, "Stay One More Day," however, when you narrow it down to what visitors will stay for, you must present a product. JCC does not have companies located here to guide, rent, etc. There is a company which will come from **Matthews**, VA, but no one locally.

Ms. Puckett shared geo-tourism venues not known in the region a few years ago:

York County **Blueways** Map  
Chesapeake Bay Gateways  
Virginia Capital Trail  
**Trailblazin'**

She went on to say that developing businesses to support these markets is imperative.

Mr. Tingle asked what the **barriers** are which the EDA can help remove as far as processes, etc. which aid in opening support businesses.

Ms. **DuBois** said that we need to promote home-grown products, specialty crops, etc.

Mr. Campana asked if this would take enough pressure off local land owners to keep them from selling to developers.

Mr. Green answered that it is not the present owners, but the next owner that will buy for the purpose of developing an agriculture business.

Ms. **DuBois** stated that this Work Session was a great first start to aiding in developing Agri-Business, Eco-Tourism and Geo-Tourism.

There was general consensus that the EDA might be able to assist on the Agri- and **Eco**-business side, but the tourism side should be **left** to existing Williamsburg area tourism groups.

## **5. OTHER BUSINESS**

Mr. Taylor reminded the Directors that their next EDA Meeting is November 16.

Ms. Musser announced the annual Celebration of Business is November 8, at the **Jamestown** Settlement Hatcher Rotunda.

6. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mr. Campana entertained a motion by Mr. Warner to adjourn, which passed unanimously. The meeting was closed at 4:49 PM.

  
Virginia B. Hartmann, Chairman

  
Keith A. Taylor, Secretary

## OCTOBER 12,2006 EDA WORK SESSION SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

Charles Green, Project Manager  
Virginia Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services  
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Richmond, VA 23218  
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As a Project Manager-Specialty Agriculture in the Agribusiness Development Services Unit of the Virginia Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services (VDACS), Charles works to recruit agricultural businesses and facilitate the expansion of existing agricultural enterprises.

Prior to joining VDACS, Charles served as head of the International Marketing Officie at the North Carolina Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services (NCDA) and was the Corporate Transportation Manager for Coastal Lumber Company.

Charles holds an undergraduate degree from Virginia Tech and a Masters in Business Administration from Campbell University. Charles lives in Henrico County with his wife, Marcy and son, James.

Leanne **DuBois**, Virginia Cooperative Extension Agent, Horticulture  
James City **County**/**New** Kent County  
PO Box 69  
Toano, VA 23168  
(757) 564-2170  
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Leanne serves as the Horticulture Extension **Agent** for both New Kent and James City **County**. Her duties include coordinating the Turf Love Nutrient Management Program and the coordinator for the **JCC/Williamsburg** Master Gardener Association. Her publication on the America's Anniversary Garden recently won a **state** Communication Award.

Leanne has served as a Project Coordinator with **Cornell** Cooperative Extension in Saratoga County, New York; working with the Agricultural and Farmland Protection Board, Regional Farmers' Markets, Gardening Projects for the Food and Nutrition program and various other horticultural related community revitalization and promotion initiatives. In 1999, she and her county were awarded a National Farm Bureau Promotion Excellence award for their efforts to educate and promote agriculture to the public.

Moving to Virginia in 2001, Leanne became a research assistant for a rare plants grant awarded to the Colonial Williamsburg Landscape Department working to authenticate the plant list of the colonial era

Leanne brings with her years of diverse experience in the Horticulture and Agricultural field. She holds a Degree in Horticulture and advanced training certifications in both Horticulture and Law and is currently in the Masters of Horticulture program at Virginia Tech.

Debi Schaefer, President  
Innovative Marketing Solutions  
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Developed and created the Historic Triangle Outdoor Adventure web site and a committee of eco-tourism promoters to create a base for marketing the flora and fauna of the area. With a career that has concentrated on destination and tourism marketing, the past six years have been dedicated to educating journalist, media, locals and visitors as to the value and assets in our area.

Professional Affiliations include

Greater Williamsburg Chamber & Tourism Alliance  
*Media Relations Committee, Member for 6 years, Chair for 2 years*  
*Special Events Committee, Current Chair*  
Williamsburg Hotel/Motel Association  
*Promotions Committee Member*  
Virginia Hospitality & Travel Association  
*Travel Component, Vice President*  
*Special Events Committee, current member*  
Williamsburg Land Conservancy  
*Board Member since 2004*  
Williamsburg Botanical Garden  
*Advisory Group member*

A James City County resident for the past six years, focused on destination marketing to promote the Historic Triangle area via historic, epicurean lifestyle and geo-tourism venues.

Jody Puckett  
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Jody Puckett is the James City County Communications Director, providing media relations, publications, video production that includes live coverage of the Board of Supervisors and Planning Commission meetings plus citizen-related programming on JCC TV48, and emergency public information for citizens. She's been with the County for 11 years.

Jody also represents James City County by participating on a number of tourism-related and economic development committees including: the Marketing Resource Task Force, and the Chamber and Alliance's Public Relations Subcommittee.

She chairs the 2007 Host Committee's Public Information Subcommittee, is a member of the 2007 Host Committee's Marketing, PR and Public Information Task Force, a Williamsburg Area Arts Marketing Task Force board member, serves as the County liaison to the newly formed Hampton Roads Film Office, and is a Board-appointed member of Business Climate Task Force. Jody led the effort to create *Trailblazin'* – a brochure and map created as a partnership between JCC, York County and the City of Williamsburg to promote and encourage visitors to enjoy the many outdoor activities in the Williamsburg area.