

VIRGINIA:

At a recessed meeting of the Board of Supervisors of the County of Northampton, Virginia, held in the auditorium of the former Northampton Middle School, 7247 Young Street, Machipongo, Virginia, on the 25th day of May, 2010, at 5:00 p.m.

Present:

Laurence J. Trala, Chairman

Willie C. Randall, Vice Chairman

Richard Tankard

H. Spencer Murray

Oliver H. Bennett

Samuel J. Long, Jr.

The meeting was called to order by the Chairman.

Discussion relative to Riverside Shore Memorial Hospital

Ms. Katherine H. Nunez, County Administrator, noted that the purpose of the meeting was to formulate an approach to present to the Riverside Shore Memorial Hospital Board in response to rumors that the hospital may be considering relocation, possibly to Accomack County.

Mr. Peter Stith, GIS Planner, displayed for the Board a map showing all medical facilities, fire and rescue facilities, and pharmacies within a 15 miles radius of Nassawadox. Approximately 22,200 persons reside in this area and 66 of the 99 target groups are within six miles of Nassawadox. In fact, 18 of the 26 active physician staff reside in Northampton County as well as 13 of 29 courtesy physician staff.

Ms. Sandra Benson, Director of Planning, indicated that her conversations with Peninsula Regional Hospital in Salisbury revealed that only 6% of their admissions reside in Accomack County (1100-1300 per year) and less than 1% lives in Northampton County (35-40 per year).

Other facilities in Maryland provided similar statistics with 40-50 admissions from Accomack County to Johns Hopkins, 15-20 to McCready Hospital in Crisfield and 50 to Worcester County Hospital.

Demographics also illustrated that a majority of physicians and other staff reside very close to the Hospital.

Ms. Nunez read the following resolution, received from the Northampton County Chamber of Commerce, into the record:

**RESOLUTION REQUESTING RIVERSIDE SHORE MEMORIAL HOSPITAL TO REMAIN IN THE AREA OF NASSAWADOX, NORTHAMPTON COUNTY**

WHEREAS, Riverside Shore Memorial Hospital is a vital member of the Northampton County community by providing much needed medical care and employment opportunities; and

WHEREAS, it is a good business decision for the Hospital to remain in Northampton County, as the Cancer Center, Dialysis Center, medical offices, pharmacy, and Heritage Hall facilities are already located in Nassawadox and physician residences are located in the surrounding area therein; and

WHEREAS, additional land needed for expansion in Nassawadox that is near the current hospital complex and other medical facilities is potentially available; and

WHEREAS, Northampton County Supervisors and the Nassawadox Town Council have committed to remedy the wastewater issue, and is in the process of currently doing so; and

WHEREAS, relocating Riverside Shore Memorial Hospital to Accomack County would significantly lengthen emergency response times from Northampton County, which would potentially be detrimental to the health and welfare of our citizens.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Northampton County Chamber of Commerce respectfully requests that Riverside Shore Memorial Hospital remain in the area of Nassawadox, Northampton County.

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Mr. Murray read the following comments:

**Riverside Shore Memorial Hospital**  
**Comments of H. Spencer Murray, Supervisor, District #4**

**May 25, 2010**

Mr. Chairman, Fellow Supervisors and Citizens:

I am happy to hear guidance from the public tonight on what this Board should communicate to the Riverside Board regarding their future plans. Speaking only as one supervisor, I have committed my key points to paper and I wish to share them now.

The key arguments for Riverside Shore Memorial expanding and remaining in the Town of Nassawadox, Northampton County are:

1. It is a good business decision. Relocating to the north will only drive more Northampton citizens to Sentara across the Chesapeake Bay. A move north will anger all Northampton citizens and the medical community.
2. The medical complex, including the Cancer Center, Dialysis Center, medical offices and pharmacy, are already there, as well as the Heritage Hall facilities.
3. Additional land for expansion in Nassawadox near the current hospital complex and close to other medical facilities is potentially available.
4. Northampton County Supervisors and the Nassawadox Town Council have committed to remedy the wastewater issue and are in the process of doing so. A loss of the hospital would put this planning effort in jeopardy, possibly making infrastructure to Nassawadox financially impractical.
5. Relocating hospital facilities to the north would significantly lengthen emergency response times from Northampton and therefore be detrimental to the health and welfare of our citizens.

The decision to build a hospital is at least a 30-40 year commitment of capital investment. Numerous factors must be weighed including demographics, infrastructure, and emergency planning in case of hurricane or disaster, and public support.

My hope is that the Riverside Board will not assume that all growth will be to the north of Nassawadox in Accomac County. The Bay Creek, Cape Charles and Cheriton areas have approximately 4000 parcels ready to accept residents. Infrastructure to support this growth as well as other areas of the county is being addressed now. With no emergency or urgent care south of Onancock, these areas will not be served. Will Sentara fill this vacuum with an urgent care facility supported by their Norfolk facilities? Perhaps they will.

Shore Memorial has been heavily supported by donations and the Auxiliary. They have raised the funds for new equipment, a new emergency wing, and supported the staff for many years. Many supporters are Accomac citizens, but many are also Northampton citizens. When Riverside starts its' fund raising campaign, how are Northampton citizens going to respond? What will Riverside's actions say about their regard for Northampton County?

I know the existing hospital structure has numerous issues and limitations. No one is asking the Riverside Board to make poor investment decisions. I do believe, however, that there are creative

ways to expand in Nassawadox, leveraging the assets that are there, utilizing broadband technology to deliver 21<sup>st</sup> century medical care, and therefore reduce some of the capital expense associated with other alternatives.

Yes, I understand the business decision process. Whatever the decision, everyone will not be pleased. I simply ask that the Riverside Board look at all possibilities and be open to influence by all factors, not only financials.

There is a long and rich history of Shore Memorial in Nassawadox. Many worked diligently to put it there and build upon it. It has saved many lives and brought many lives into this world. Riverside Board, please deliberate your options carefully.

Respectfully submitted,

H. Spencer Murray  
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Mr. Tankard said that it was important for the Board to provide a united voice to Riverside and asked that a letter be sent to the Riverside Board urging the continued presence of the hospital in Nassawadox.

Mr. Randall provided historical perspective on the creation of the former Northampton-Accomack Memorial Hospital in the 1920's and stated that no real estate taxes have ever been assessed against the property. Additionally, Northampton was the first county to issue bonds for its construction.

Mr. Tankard distributed information from the Virginia Employment Commission's Community Profile indicating that the Hospital was the County's largest employer and that Heritage Hall Nursing Home was ranked #7 and Eastern Shore Rural Health was #12 and stated again that it was important to develop a unified message to the Hospital Board.

Mr. Long indicated that there was already a strain on Station 19 (Cape Charles Rescue

Station), which has the longest transit time of any station in the County to the hospital. He predicted responses times in excess of one hour if the hospital moves to Accomack County. He said that the Board needs to do everything it can to help the hospital remain in the County.

At this time, the Chairman asked for comments from the public.

Dr. S. Dawn Goldstine said that she has been researching demographics on the citizens who use our medical facilities as well as the incoming residents which do not have children for the most part and are an increasingly older population.

Mr. Dave Kabler said that there would be a significant impact if the hospital left the County and its presence was key to future economic stability. He also said that the proximity of the hospital positively affects local property values.

Mr. Artie Miles, Acting Town Manager of Exmore, said that the hospital was a major economic base and needs to stay in the County. He said that Exmore can work together with the County and Nassawadox to keep the hospital in the county. He commented that all of the residents are relying on the Board to do everything it can to keep the hospital in the County.

Mr. Jim Sturgis, Eastville Mayor, reiterated the need for the hospital, indicating that his grandmother was one of the first staff as well as the first patient. He noted that the County's aging population needs a comprehensive medical facility, not just an acute care or "doc-in-a-box" operation.

Mr. Tommy Rayfield reiterated earlier comments and the hospital's importance to his pharmacy businesses. He noted that there are numerous specialists who commute from Hampton Roads to see patients in Nassawadox and wondered how relocation of the hospital would affect those individuals.

Rev. Harry Crandall echoed his support for retaining the hospital in the County and noted

the urgency of making this decision on a timely basis as the decision will affect not only the retention of existing staff but the recruitment of new staff.

Nassawadox Mayor Estelle Murphy said that the Town Council has already provided evidence of its support to keep the Hospital in town.

It was the consensus of the Board to direct the County Administrator to use the points contained in Mr. Murray's comments as background for crafting a letter of support for the retention of the hospital as well as the input received from tonight's public comment and the demographic data gathered by County staff. It is hoped that the Hospital Board will take all of this information into consideration when making its decision.

Mr. Randall noted that a Hospital Strategic Planning Committee meeting was being held on June 3<sup>rd</sup> to discuss this issue and asked that the County Administrator prepare an appropriate PowerPoint presentation for him to use at this meeting. The County Administrator agreed.

Mr. Murray said that he was concerned that membership of the Hospital Board is slanted toward Accomack County and hopes that that Board would put aside parochial interests and look out for the best interests of the residents.

Mr. Tankard questioned what he called Mr. Randall's "comfort level" in addressing the Strategic Planning Committee given Mr. Randall's earlier comments that he would like to see the Hospital relocated to Exmore. Mr. Randall replied that he wanted the Hospital to remain in Nassawadox but if it was going to move, he would be glad to offer Exmore as an alternative location. Mr. Tankard asked that Mr. Randall advocate for no other location other than Nassawadox and that should the Hospital Board suggest any other location, that Mr. Randall come back to the full Board for direction. The Board agreed with this direction.

Closed Session

Motion was made by Mr. Tankard, seconded by Mr. Bennett, that the Board enter Closed Session in accordance with Section 2.2-3711 of the Code of Virginia of 1950, as amended:

Paragraph 1: Discussion or consideration of employment, assignment, appointment, promotion, performance, demotion, salaries, disciplining, or resignation of specific public officers, appointees or employees of any public body.

*Appointments to Boards/Commissions*

All members were present and voted “yes.” The motion was unanimously passed.

After Closed Session, the Chairman reconvened the meeting and said that the Board had entered the closed session for that purpose as set out in paragraph 1 of Section 2.1-3711 of the Code of Virginia of 1950, as amended. Upon being polled individually, each Board member confirmed that this was the only matter of discussion during the closed session.

Motion was made by Mr. Randall, seconded by Mr. Bennett, that the Eastern Shore Public Service Authority Articles of Incorporation be amended and moved to public hearing for the additional appointment of Mr. J. T. Holland. All members were present and voted “yes,” with the exceptions of Mr. Tankard and Mr. Murray who voted “no.” The motion was passed. Mr. Tankard indicated that he was voting “no” because he did not believe Mr. Holland was qualified and that no application had been submitted. Mr. Murray also said that he was voting “no” because there had been no application submitted for him to review and evaluate.

Motion was made by Mr. Long, seconded by Mr. Murray, that the Eastern Shore Public Service Authority Articles of Incorporation be amended and moved to public hearing for the additional appointment of Mr. Granville F. Hogg, Jr. All members were present and voted “yes”. The motion was unanimously passed.

Motion was made by Mr. Murray, seconded by Mr. Long, that the Eastern Shore Public Service Authority Articles of Incorporation be amended and moved to public hearing for the

additional appointment of Mr. George E. “Rusty” Gowen, Jr. All members were present and voted “yes”. The motion was unanimously passed.

Motion was made by Mr. Trala, seconded by Mr. Murray, that the Eastern Shore Public Service Authority Articles of Incorporation be amended and moved to public hearing for the additional appointment of Mr. Scott R. Walker, Jr. All members were present and voted “yes”. The motion was unanimously passed.

Motion was made by Mr. Bennett, seconded by Mr. Randall, that the Eastern Shore Public Service Authority Articles of Incorporation be amended and moved to public hearing for the additional appointment of Mr. Robert H. Meyers. All members were present and voted “yes”. The motion was unanimously passed.

Motion was made by Mr. Tankard, seconded by Mr. Bennett, that the Eastern Shore Public Service Authority Articles of Incorporation be amended and moved to public hearing for the additional appointment of Mr. Carl Harris. All members were present and voted “yes”. The motion was unanimously passed.

On another matter, Mr. Bennett asked the County Administrator to investigate roaming goats near Vincent Lane outside of Eastville, noting that his constituent had been told that Animal Control could do nothing about the situation.

Adjourn:

Motion was made by Mr. Murray, seconded by Mr. Long, that the meeting be adjourned. All members were present and voted “yes.” The motion was unanimously passed.

The meeting was adjourned.

\_\_\_\_\_CHAIRMAN

\_\_\_\_\_ COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR