

COUNTY OF HENRICO, VIRGINIA  
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
SPECIAL MEETING  
February 26, 2009

The Henrico County Board of Supervisors convened a special meeting on Tuesday, February 26, 2009 at 6:30 p.m. with the Henrico County NAACP in the County Manager's Conference Room, Administration Building, Henrico County Government Center, Parham and Hungary Spring Roads, Henrico County, Virginia.

**Members of the Board Present:**

David A. Kaechele, Chairman, Three Chopt District  
Patricia S. O'Bannon, Vice Chairman, Tuckahoe District  
James B. Donati, Jr., Varina District  
Richard W. Glover, Brookland District  
Frank J. Thornton, Fairfield District

**Other Officials Present:**

Virgil R. Hazelett, P.E., County Manager  
Joseph P. Rapisarda, Jr., County Attorney  
Barry R. Lawrence CMC, Assistant to the County Manager/Clerk to the Board  
Tanya B. Harding, Administrative Assistant/Deputy Clerk to the Board  
George T. Drumwright, Jr., Deputy County Manager for Community Services  
Leon T. Johnson, Deputy County Manager for Administration  
Jennifer K. Acker, Assistant Director of Public Relations & Media Services

Mr. Kaechele called the meeting to order at 6:29 p.m.

Mr. Kaechele welcomed the members of the Henrico NAACP who were present and thanked them for participating in this open forum with the Board. Mr. Hazelett introduced Tyee N. Davenport, President of the Henrico NAACP, and noted that she had requested this meeting.

Ms. Davenport thanked the Board for this opportunity and offered brief opening remarks. She recognized Barbara Palmer, who delivered the invocation. Ms. Palmer recognized Rev. Dr. J. Rayfield Vines, Immediate Past President of the Henrico NAACP and President of the Virginia State Conference NAACP, who was in attendance along with several other officers and members of the Henrico NAACP.

Following the invocation, each member of the Board provided a district update.

- Mr. Kaechele displayed a map of the Three Chopt District and reviewed new commercial and mixed use development in the Broad Street Road corridor, including Short Pump Town Center, West Broad Village, and Reynolds Crossing. He also referred to the

opening of John Rolfe Parkway in 2010 and the planned extension of North Gayton Road. Mr. Kaechele noted the many changes that have occurred in his district during his nearly 30-year tenure on the Board.

- Mrs. O'Bannon highlighted her efforts to bring more transparency to government and pointed out that the Board began live video streaming of its meetings in January 2009. She referred to the Board's commitment to low taxes, her recent town meeting on how to use the public library to search for jobs, a compact disc available through the Henrico County Economic Development Authority on how to start your own business, a future town meeting being planned with the Henrico Health Department and Richmond Academy of Medicine on health issues, and a multi-cultural survey recently conducted by the County's Public Library on improving English language skills. Mrs. O'Bannon also discussed the mission and structure of the 2011 Celebration Advisory Commission that she is chairing, alluded to a DVD and pamphlet on the County's Real Estate Advantage Program (REAP) that she has been sharing with senior citizens in her district, and noted that there are 11 assisted living facilities in the Tuckahoe District. She distributed a brochure describing services provided by the Capital Region Workforce Centers and distributed a second brochure with information on the Capital Region Workforce Partnership's Employment Transition Center that was scheduled to open on March 9, 2009. Ms. Davenport thanked Mrs. O'Bannon for inviting NAACP members to join in the planning of the 2011 celebration and said the organization would graciously accept the offer.
- Mr. Donati explained the boundaries and diverse features of the Varina District, which include a number of public parks and prime agricultural land. He referred to two major projects in his district, The Shops at White Oak Village and the newly renovated Henrico Theatre where the County's Division of Recreation and Parks is sponsoring programs and entertainment. Mr. Donati pointed out that he holds monthly town meetings in his district. Mr. Donati advised that he and Mr. Thornton have been working with Mr. Hazelett and the Board to ensure that women and minorities are treated fairly in the procurement process. He noted that the County has recently hired a new Supplier Relations Coordinator, Marvis Marshall, to oversee the County's SWAM (Small, Woman-Owned and Minority-Owned) vendors program.
- Mr. Glover cited several projects in his district, including the widening of Hungary Springs Road that was finished one month ahead of schedule, the new high school under construction on Staples Mill Road, redevelopment in the Willow Lawn area, improvements to the former Executive Inn site by the Faison School of Autism, and the future renovation and expansion of Glen Allen Branch Library. He also noted the success of RF&P Park in attracting regional and national youth baseball tournaments and the popularity of the Cultural Arts Center at Glen Allen as the facility celebrates its tenth anniversary. Mr. Glover remarked that the Board has maintained the County's 87-cent real estate tax rate and referred to his special interest in the youth of his district.
- Mr. Thornton identified the location and spoke to the characteristics of the Fairfield District, which he noted is 65 percent African-American. He cited the quality of

construction in his district's residential subdivisions as a main concern but one where substantial progress has been made in recent years. Mr. Thornton noted his commitment to public education and the current infusion of funds into Fairfield District schools, including the Center for the Arts at Henrico High School. He also commented on his efforts to expand GRTC bus service in the district, improve the district's aging corridors through the Department of Community Revitalization with enterprise zone funds, and reduce the district's share of apartments. Mr. Thornton referred to his metaphorical babies, the Police Athletic League (PAL) targeted at disadvantaged youth and the Eastern Henrico Recreation Center that will open on Laburnum Avenue in 2011. He pointed to the historic Armour House near Arthur Ashe Elementary School as one of the district's jewels.

Ms. Davenport thanked the Board for the updates and commented that the Henrico NAACP is attempting to post all of the Board members' town meetings on its web site. She also thanked Mr. Hazelett for having members of his staff attend this meeting. The County staff members who were present introduced themselves, which included the following agency representatives: Rosalyn Key-Tiller, Director of the Capital Area Training Consortium; John Vithoukias, Director of Finance; Ed Smith, Chief of Fire; Paul Proto, Director of General Services; George Cauble, Jr., Director of Human Resources; Col. Henry Stanley, Chief of Police; Bill Mawyer, Assistant Director of Public Utilities; Tim Foster, Director of Public Works; and Jane Crawley, Director of Social Services.

Ms. Davenport stated that she had a few questions of her own for members of the Board or staff and then would like to provide other members of the NAACP who were present with an opportunity to ask questions. Her first question related to whether the recent Henrico County zip code changes have been successful and how much additional revenue the County expects to receive as a result of the changes. Mr. Hazelett advised that the changes were approved in October 2008, that \$1.5 million has been collected to date, and that \$5 million additional business tax revenue per year is anticipated. He recognized Mr. Vithoukias, who provided more specifics on changes in zip code designations and the advantages to the County of having citizens use Henrico, Virginia rather than Richmond, Virginia in their mailing address. Mr. Hazelett noted that in addition to the financial benefits to the County, citizens may personally benefit from the changes over time through more favorable insurance customer ratings based on a Henrico address.

Ms. Davenport's next question pertained to how the County responds to major layoffs by local companies and attracts new jobs. Mr. Hazelett spoke to the impact of recent layoffs and to the County's focus on economic development. He recognized Mr. Drumwright, who reviewed Mrs. Crawley's efforts during the previous fall that facilitated the establishment of an Employment Transition Center scheduled to open on March 9, 2009. Mrs. Crawley noted how the layoffs have changed her customer base. Mrs. Key-Tiller explained her agency's responsibility for responding to major layoffs in the region and the services that will be provided through the new transition center with the support of a \$500,000 federal grant received by her agency. Mrs. O'Bannon commented on job resource packets that are available at the County's public libraries. Mr. Drumwright elaborated further on the services that will be provided by the transition center. In response to a question from Lucy Wells, a NAACP member, Mr. Drumwright and Mrs. Key-

Tiller referred to a new summer jobs program funded with federal stimulus monies that will be targeted to young people who meet certain eligibility criteria.

Ms. Davenport's final question was in regards to what the County is doing to help safeguard children living in public housing and to prevent accidents involving dumpsters. Ms. Davenport introduced a resident of Essex Village, Ms. Alexander, whose daughter was murdered in Essex Village in 2007. Ms. Alexander stated there had been seven murders in Essex Village and only one had been solved. She expressed specific concerns relating to property management and security. Ms. Alexander noted that most of the residents of Essex Village are young African-American mothers with children. Ms. Alexander indicated a need for enhanced community and County support to assist Essex Village residents. She referred to Pastor Joe Ellison's efforts to help her community and advised that a scholarship in her daughter's name was being established at Henrico High School.

Ms. Davenport reframed her previous question by asking what more can be done to address crime in Essex Village. Col. Stanley responded by identifying the community police officer assigned to Essex Village, noting the number of arrests that have been made in Essex Village for drug trafficking, and referring to resources that the County's Division of Police have devoted to that community including the PAL program. He pointed out that many Essex Village residents have stepped up to the plate to assist the Division with its crime prevention efforts but acknowledged that the Division has not received the full cooperation of property managers in addressing maintenance and security issues. There was discussion by Mr. Hazelett and Board members regarding how the County can hold Essex Village's out-of-state property management company more accountable for property maintenance deficiencies. Ms. Davenport remarked that the Henrico NAACP would be launching a membership drive to help the residents of Essex Village.

In response to a question from Drusilla Bridgeforth, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President of the Henrico NAACP, Mr. Hazelett commented on future plans for the Qimonda LLC building in eastern Henrico and the County's housing foreclosure rates.

Ms. Davenport opened the floor to other members of the Henrico NAACP for questions. Cheryl Palmer, Secretary of the NAACP and a Varina District resident, voiced concerns about residential growth in her district and asked whether the County has a master plan for development. Mr. Hazelett referred to land use changes that are occurring in Henrico and commented on the public process the County has followed in updating its land use plan. He offered to provide information on the County's draft 2026 Comprehensive Plan to Ms. Davenport. Mr. Hazelett also referred to the County's recent bond referenda and capital improvement needs. Mrs. O'Bannon pointed out that every local jurisdiction in Virginia is required to have a comprehensive plan. Mr. Donati remarked that the comprehensive plan is an important land use guide but that the voice of citizens on specific rezoning cases is more important. He referred to recent examples of public involvement with cases in his district. Mr. Kaechele commented on the County's relatively low growth rate compared to other areas of the Commonwealth and the good job that County staff and private developers have done in bringing quality development to the County. Mr. Donati spoke to the challenges and costs of extending public infrastructure, especially sanitary sewer, to Varina and said that Varina will remain rural. Mr. Thornton stated that there was a need for more citizens to attend meetings where land use decisions are made.

In response to further comments by Ms. Palmer, Mr. Glover referred to the Division of Police's successful efforts over the past 20 years in reducing crime and the Division of Fire's enhancement of the County's emergency medical system. Mr. Hazelett noted that public safety and education are the Board's two highest priorities. He cited the Board's biggest challenge as finding additional revenue sources to fund the debt service for infrastructure needs.

Col. Stanley, Chief Smith, Mr. Hazelett, and Mr. Glover responded to questions from Ms. Davenport concerning the number of police and fire personnel in the County and the ratio of public safety personnel to the County's population.

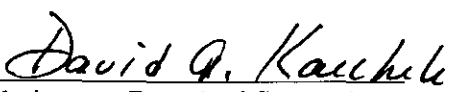
Dr. Vines questioned where the Board stands on the issue of regional cooperation, particularly with regard to transportation. Mr. Kaechele spoke to the County's strong record of cooperative efforts within the region and interest in maintaining dialogue on regional initiatives with the new Richmond mayor and other regional organizations such as the Richmond Chamber of Commerce and Richmond Regional Planning District Commission. Mr. Donati referred to the number of cooperative efforts listed in the County's booklet on regional cooperation and remarked that the County is always the first locality in the region to step up to the plate on major regional initiatives. Mr. Glover noted the County's financial commitment over the years to the Greater Richmond Convention Center and the Diamond, and for GRTC bus service, but pointed out that it was the State's responsibility to finance road construction. Mrs. O'Bannon commented that our region is known internationally for its regional projects such as the interoperability of emergency communications. Mr. Donati referred to his personal relationship with Richmond Mayor Dwight Jones. Chief Smith advised that the County's Hazardous Materials Team provides services to 30 counties. Mr. Drumwright responded to a comment by Dr. Vines that there is a perception in the community that the County is against regionalism.

Mr. Hazelett invited the Henrico NAACP to help the County get out the message that the Henrico is an active regional participant. He spoke to the difficult transitions in responsibilities between the State and local governments. Mr. Hazelett stated that establishment of a regional transportation authority would involve taxing Henrico citizens for what has traditionally been a state responsibility. He pointed out that the County has the lowest tax burden among Virginia's 13 largest local jurisdictions. Mr. Glover noted that Henrico and Arlington are the only counties in Virginia that design, construct, and maintain their own roads. He referred to the disparities in State funding for maintenance between Henrico and other localities, including Arlington, which may be at least partly attributable to the efficiency of the County's Department of Public Works. Mr. Glover emphasized that it is difficult to get this message out to the public. He remarked that the County has a great staff and is the only locality in Virginia that operates under the County Manager Form of government.

Ms. Davenport thanked the Board of Supervisors, County Manager, and County staff for participating in this open forum and expressed a desire to continue this dialogue in the future. She concluded by stating that the Henrico NAACP is watching the County. Dr. Vines pointed out that the NAACP is observing its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year, noted that three white persons were involved in its formation, and invited County officials to be part of the NAACP.

Mr. Kaechele thanked Ms. Davenport and the Henrico NAACP members who were present for their participation. He assured them that the Board is interested in having open and honest government in Henrico. Mr. Kaechele concluded by stating that Henrico has one of the best County Managers in local government and by thanking Mr. Hazelett for his dedicated, caring, and responsive staff.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:42 p.m.

  
Chairman, Board of Supervisors  
Henrico County, Virginia