

THE HISTORIC TRIANGLE COLLABORATIVE

Meeting results of February 22, 2016

Members present:

Marvin Collins, Phil Emerson, Bryan Hill, Ruth Larson, Carl Lum, Neil Morgan, Mitchell Reiss, Taylor Reveley, Karen Riordan, Jeff Wassmer and Sandy Wanner. Susan Dickerson also attended.

Member absent:

Clyde Haulman

Discussion:

Sandy opened the meeting and welcomed Jeff Wassmer and Ruth Larson as new members.

Host Update

Jeff reported that the York County Board of Supervisors recently held its retreat and set its strategic priorities, including tourism, sports tourism and economic development. York is losing the refinery as a source of tax revenue and the County needs to take advantage of its water front more. The County also is anxious to see the Route 17 construction progress toward its conclusion. Neil said the school system is working to find a site for an elementary school. The County is in negotiations with a couple of parties for land and hopes to have an identified site by summer.

Taylor inquired about the County's greatest challenge. Jeff said it was trying to run the County on 48% of the real estate tax while 52% of the County is non-taxable. Half the land in York is simply untaxable, land being the single largest source of revenue to run a local government.

Review Mission and Objectives

Taylor iterated that the formed to focus on collaborative issues that cross jurisdictions where collaboration is crucial, and the group needs to identify those issues.

Neil said financing tourism seems to be a topic that lacks a champion. Citizen groups in York agree that the County would benefit from having authority to set its meals tax rate. The General Assembly has meals tax capped at 4%. If York could have the same meals tax as Newport News or Hampton, the County could fully fund its schools' request. If the HTC united around the issue, then the issue could have a chance in Richmond.

Mitchell stated that improved air service is needed to support tourism and economic development.

Karen said the Economic Diversification Task Force produced a tremendous body of work in its “Economic Diversification in America’s Historic Triangle: Progress and Next Steps” report from 2015. Marvin agreed.

Phil said he thought the group had been complacent and needs to affirm key issues it wants to tackle. He recommended that the group consider strategic planning sessions – occasional 2 hour meetings – to deeply dive into an issue.

Jeff agreed that members should add specifics behind each item of its objectives. Carl suggested that the group spend time at the next meeting gathering consensus on two or three items to work on in 2016.

Other members

The group discussed the potential of adding additional new members and the history behind the current membership.

Other

The group thanked Carl for his service to the HTC and the community and wished him well on new endeavors.

Next Meeting

March 21 – TBA

April 18 – College of William & Mary