

**PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
SEPTEMBER 6, 2023
7:00 P.M.**

PRESENT

Chair:	Timothy Bradshaw
Vice Chair:	Dianna Carneal
Commission Members:	Maria Pitts (<i>arrived late</i>)
	Elaine Hilowitz
	Yvonne Vaughan
	Scott Cannady
Community Development/Zoning Administrator:	Connie Dalton
Secretary:	Patsy K. Scates

- **CALLED TO ORDER**

Chair Bradshaw called the meeting to order.

- **MINUTES APPROVED**

On motion of Scott Cannady, seconded by Elaine Hilowitz, the Commission voted to approve the August 2, 2023, Planning Commission Meeting Minutes.

Votes were cast as follows:

Dianna Carneal:	Aye	Yvonne Vaughan:	Aye
Elaine Hilowitz:	Aye	Scott Cannady:	Aye
Timothy Bradshaw:	Aye		

- **TOUR OF THE TOWN EXCURSION SUMMARY REPORT TABLED**

The approval of the Tour of the Town Excursion Summary Report will be tabled until the October 4, 2023, Planning Commission Meeting.

- **NEW BUSINESS**

Chair Bradshaw asked for any comments on ideas on recognizing National Community Month.

Commissioner Member Hilowitz stated she likes the idea of the Planning Commission Members attending the Farmers Market.

Commissioner Member Carneal asked for some ideas for the Planning Commission Members to present to the public while attending the Farmers Market and she asked was this a meet and greet event.

The group discussed some of the ideas for their participation in the Farmers Market. They suggested handing out rack cards or applications for people to volunteer to serve on the Planning Commission. The group also discussed what items would be needed such as a banner or poster, tent, tables and chairs, candy for children. The group discussed how to apply for a spot at the Farmers Market, and the date and time of the market.

Commission Member Hilowitz and Commission Member Vaughan volunteered to oversee coordination of the Planning Commission Members attending the October 2023 Farmers Market.

Connie Dalton suggested the Planning Commission Members could set up some talking stations to share information on the Downtown Revitalization Plan and show the renderings, the Zoning Map, the Hoskins Creek Project, the Tappahannock Central Park project, or the current Comprehensive Plan and explain that they are in the process of an update. She also suggested scavenger hunt or borrowing some planning books from the library. She stated that the members are welcome to borrow an old Tappahannock Flag to help them identify their tent as the Tappahannock Planning Commission.

Commission Vaughan stated there was a Joint Meeting between the Town of Tappahannock and Essex County to discuss certain proposed projects. She suggested that Connie Dalton provide the Commission Members with some information on those projects that were discussed because it may be something that the public may want to be aware of.

There was some discussion about conducting a raffle for a free drawing with no exchange of money, but asking business for donations.

Connie Dalton stated that she would caution the Planning Commission Members about asking business for a donation. She suggested raffling off some Tappahannock gear.

Commission Member Vaughan asked if the members were only going to participate in the Farmers Market for National Community Planners month. She stated she liked the suggestion of the Town Council recognizing that October is National Community Planners month by a proclamation.

After some discussion, it was decided that Chair Bradshaw would present the proclamation to the Town Council recognizing October as National Community Planners month to the Town Council.

Commission Member Pitts asked the members if they felt it would be appropriate to discuss with the Council Members training options or opportunities and fundings at that time.

Commission Member Carneal stated she feels that we need to do some more research into training options, and the possibility of funding before presenting it to the Council Members.

- **TRAFFIC CALMING SURVEY QUESTIONS**

Commission Member Carneal stated she sent an email to the Commission Members for some suggested survey questions. She asked the Commission Members to review the survey so that there can be some discussion at the next meeting.

Commission members asked if the survey could be put on the website and if the Town utilized Survey Monkey.

Connie Dalton stated the Town has not used Survey Monkey to her knowledge. She stated that she feels the survey should indicate why you are asking the public to take it, and how the Commission Members would utilize the information.

Connie Dalton stated that she does not feel the Town would want to increase the postage in the mailing of the utility bills so she suggests putting a link on the website or in the next newsletter.

Commission Member Carneal reported she reached out to the Virginia Department of Transportation for any additional information regarding the traffic issues in Tappahannock to be included in the survey, but she has not heard back.

Commission Member Vaughan stated that we need to gather information that will take the Commission Members to a point where something could be recommended.

Commission Member Hilowitz suggested making a list of what they hope to get out of the survey.

Commission Member Cannady stated he hoped VDOT would conduct a study and it could be presented to the Town Council members to see how they would like to move forward.

Connie Dalton stated that the VDOT has some studies that track the number of accidents. She stated that she will be happy to share the name and number of a contact person from VDOT who may be able to share some data points with them for the Tappahannock area.

There was some discussion regarding the Smart Scale Study conducted by the Virginia Department of Transportation.

Commission Vaughan stated she feels the Commission Members should be involved in the RAISE grant process, and the Smart Scale Study funding meetings.

Connie Dalton stated she will be attending the first preliminary meeting for the Smart Scale funding, and she will report back to the members at the next meeting. She will also find out some more information regarding the RAISE Grant.

Commission Member Hilowitz stated that she received some information from VDOT about the connection road between Airport Road and Marsh Street but she needed additional information from the Town but she did not receive it.

Commission Member Pitts suggested putting on their agenda revisiting the connection or cut through road between Airport Road and Marsh Street on the October Planning Commission agenda.

Commission Vaughan stated that there is an article in the Rappahannock Times about ongoing discussion about the connection road between Essex County Board of Supervisors and the Town Council.

After some discussion about the proposed connection road and the Planning Commission members decided, they will wait to see if the Council Members need any assistance from them.

TRAINING OPTIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Commission Carneal stated she is not prepared to discuss any research on the training options or opportunities at this time.

The members decided that this topic regarding the training options and opportunities will be discussed at the October 2023 Planning Commission Meeting.

Chair Bradshaw stated town staff request items for the agenda the Monday prior to the meeting. He reminded the members that if they would like an item added to the agenda to please forward those items to him a week before the meeting.

Commission Member Pitts feels the Commission Members should give themselves a realistic deadline of when they want to present the training options to the Town Council Members. She feels that training will help the members better understand their role as a member of the Planning Commission. She feels that the same items are being revisited in the meetings, but there should be an end goal.


Commission Member Pitts stated she felt the traffic survey was a good start and the goal was to have the whole survey done. She felt that there should be four or five goals we want to accomplish and have it ready before our next meeting so there can be good information for discussion.


On motion of Elaine Hilowitz, seconded by Scott Cannady, the Commission voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 p.m.

Votes were cast as follows:

Diane Carneal: Aye
Maria Pitts: Aye
Elaine Hilowitz: Aye

Timothy Bradshaw: Aye
Yvonne Vaughan: Aye
Scott Cannady: Aye


Timothy Bradshaw, Chair


Patsy K Scates, Secretary