



# TOWN COUNCIL

## Work Session

Town Hall  
July 21, 2011  
6:00 PM

At 6:00 p.m., Mayor Dora Sullivan, having established a quorum, called to order the Work Session of Town Council. In addition to Mayor Sullivan, present were Vice Mayor Bannon, Councilmen Evans, Sullivan and Veber and Councilwoman Natali. Councilman Bennett arrived at 6:06 p.m. Also present were Town Manager Heather Arcos, Town Planner Tom Bonadeo, Harbor Master Smitty Dize, Town Clerk Libby Hume and Ms. Liz Povar from the Virginia Economic Development Partnership. There were five (5) members of the public in attendance.

Mayor Sullivan announced the business for the evening would be to hear a presentation by Ms. Liz Povar regarding the Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP) and to discuss future development at the Harbor.

Town Manager Heather Arcos introduced Ms. Povar and her husband, Tedd Povar, and welcomed them to Cape Charles and thanked them for coming to give this presentation.

Ms. Povar began by stating that she and her husband were from the Emporia / Greensville area and she served 10 years as the Economic Development Director and Tedd Povar was the former city manager for Emporia which had a population of approximately 16K. Ms. Povar went on to explain that the VEDP was created by Governor George Allen as a sustaining bridge through administrations since governors were limited to one four-year term in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Ms. Povar reviewed the VEDP's mission statement and introduced Governor McDonnell's Economic Development Team which included Lt. Governor Bill Bolling, Chief Jobs Creation Officer, Mr. Jim Cheng, Secretary of Commerce and Trade, and Mr. Robert Sledd, Senior Economic Advisor.

Councilman Veber stated that he would like to invite the Governor and his leadership team to Cape Charles to show them the Town. Ms. Povar stated that she did not think the Governor would be able to visit the Town but she would send an invitation to the other members of the Economic Development Team as well as Ms. Mary R. Carter, the Deputy Secretary of Commerce and Trade for Rural Development.

Ms. Povar went on to state that Cape Charles was a very diverse community and stressed the importance of having a master plan for the Town spanning the next five years. Ms. Povar reviewed figures and ideas from other municipalities including an estimated cost of services per household prepared by Chesterfield County in 2005 which showed the cost of services, the average amount of taxes paid per household and the amount of the shortfall per household which needed to be made up by economic development. Ms. Povar stated that this type of exercise was very important and suggested that municipalities needed to have these types of facts before it could move forward with plans for the future.

Ms. Povar stressed the importance of working together with our neighbors such as Northampton County, the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel, other towns within the county and the entire Eastern Shore of Virginia and southern Maryland. The Towns and County needed to think about the types of businesses to recruit and added that this area was suitable for manufacturing and technical businesses. Ms. Povar continued to review various statistics regarding the Commonwealth of Virginia and gave examples of success stories of several localities throughout

the state adding that economic development needed to be done with the help of a professional and could not be done part-time or by a volunteer. Ms. Povar went on to suggest that talking points be developed and distributed to the Town and County officials so everyone was saying the same thing. A common long-term vision needed to be decided upon with broad, flexible strategies to accommodate diversity which would also transition over elections so the Town could stay focused on its ultimate goal.

Ms. Povar concluded by stating that the Town/County/Eastern Shore should start the process by reviewing the region's assets and needed to utilize the private sector partners, who knew the markets, and try to figure out how to support them in their business endeavors.

Vice Mayor Bannon stated that Cape Charles was 30 miles from approximately 2M people and added the following: i) The Town was pro-wind energy but the County was not; ii) There was not interstate access; iii) We have a railroad; iv) We also have one of the highest tolls in the country; v) The closest airport is 35 miles to the north; and vi) We have an under-motivated workforce.

Ms. Povar stated that the Town needed to decide the types of businesses you wanted to attract and work from there and to think regionally in cooperation with the surrounding towns and counties. Must be realistic in the numbers and embrace the local business owners who have connections. Also, would be great to have a partnership combining tourism and economic development. Ms. Povar stated that she was not aware of an area within Virginia where this had been done successfully and she would like to see that on the Eastern Shore and she and Ms. Lynne Lochen would be happy to help the Town and County in the development of some type of program.

Councilman Veber stated that one thing that he had picked up from this evening was that we should be looking at the glass as half full and be better educated on how to sell the Town and we all needed to be better emissaries of the Town.

Ms. Povar stated that some areas develop an ambassador program where business leaders and citizens were educated and given talking points to help promote the area. Councilman Evans stated that he felt that we did that to a certain extent but were missing the part about selling benefits regarding the business in Town. We needed something to refine our knowledge to get to the business sector and still protect the small-town atmosphere. We needed to figure out how to keep that uniqueness and still be able to cater to businesses. We did not need to change the plan for a business but needed a broader, more flexible plan to accommodate businesses that we want here and we need to be more knowledgeable regarding working with businesses.

Councilwoman Natali added that the Town had a history of moving forward a little, then stopping and needed to do something to keep up the momentum.

Ms. Povar stated that the VEDP would be happy to help. The Town Council and staff needed to go visit other similar communities to see what they were doing. When she was in Emporia, their Council was taken to three other cities / towns to talk to other leaders and to see how others were doing things. The VEDP might be able to help recommend other communities similar to Cape Charles for Council and staff to visit. The VEDP had managers who were focused on their particular business sector and she may be able to arrange for some of them to talk to Council. The VEDP was here to help Cape Charles become the best that it could be.

Mr. Povar stated that he knew of someone, who was a former town manager, that could help with facilitation if the Town held a community meeting or planned a Council retreat, etc. It was beneficial to have a neutral third party involved and it would be at no charge. The Town needed to have a big, overall concept. A community exercise was also needed to get the community "buy-in." Vision and Plan could be used interchangeably and the Town needed to live the vision.

Every decision needed to be measured by saying “Does this get us closer to the vision?” If it did not, don’t do it. Council and staff were probably the worst people to see what the Town had because you dealt with the day to day issues and complaints and were buried in the minutia that you could not stop and see the actual community and what it had going for it. A third party could help get the focus back on what the community had and to build on that.

Mayor Sullivan stated that she learned a lot from this evening and thanked Mr. and Ms. Povar for coming this evening. Councilman Evans added that this meeting had been extremely helpful.

Mayor Sullivan stated that sufficient time needed to be devoted to the discussion regarding the development at the Harbor but it was already after 7:30 p.m. and Council needed to move on to the Executive Session. Mayor Sullivan apologized to Harbor Master Smitty Dize but added that the Harbor development discussion would have to be tabled to another work session in order to give it the proper attention. Council was in agreement.

**Motion made by Councilman Veber, seconded by Councilman Bennett, to adjourn the Town Council Work Session. The motion was approved by unanimous consent.**

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Mayor Sullivan

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Town Clerk