

1. No Agenda
There is no agenda available for this meeting.

2. Meeting Materials

Documents:

[06-05-25 DIRECTORS REPORT.PDF](#)

Essex County Economic Development Authority (EDA)
Executive Director's Report
June 5, 2025

Action Taken

5/30: Submitted monthly report to Essex Board on Supervisors.

Action Requested

None.

2025 Marketing Campaign Update

5/30: Virginia Tourism awarded the EDA almost half of our \$20,000 Marketing Leverage Grant. Public disclosure of the exact amount is currently embargoed, until the governor makes the official announcement.

At this time, the EDA does not require additional county funding for our marketing campaign. We will use a portion of the funds the BOS appropriated last month as the match for our Virginia Tourism grant. We may seek additional local funding in July.

The EDA is finalizing its contract with Consociate Media to achieve Phase 1 of our marketing plan, minus website development (\$10,000). With the grant as awarded, and the BOS's funding, we will initiate Phase 1 in the coming weeks, which includes branding, marketing, and related work to prepare for website development and tourism incentives.

6/2: The NPS Chesapeake Gateways program approved our request for technical assistance for marketing and branding. Our working title for this project is, "Explore Essex County: A Chesapeake Gateways Community." Services we will receive from the Gateways visitor experience and communications team include promoting us on their website and mobile apps, graphic design assistance, and more. I will coordinate the collaboration between Gateways team and Consociate Media.

Our request for technical assistance regarding enhancement of three public water access sites is pending.

5/27: Essex County and the Town of Tappahannock are currently a "pilot" Chesapeake Gateways Community. The NPS has identified us and Annapolis for official Gateways Community designation. The local steering committee will self-nominate our community in July - August. This would allow us to take full advantage of Chesapeake Gateways branding and marketing resources.

5/5: Established library of tourism maps & rack cards at Historic Downtown Tappahannock office.

Strategic Action Plan

We are participating in a Local & Regional Competitive Initiative, offered by the Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP). In August, they will send us an analysis of our program, along with a summary of neighboring locality programs.

2022 RAISE Grant Update

6/2: I have requested a meeting with MPPDC staff regarding the *Community Connectivity and Mobility: A Multimodal Assessment and Master Plan* (Town of Tappahannock and Essex County, April 2022). I'm hoping to have more information to share at our June 5 meeting.

Industrial Development

6/4: Met virtually with a site development specialist from TRC (formerly Draper Aden) about securing a due diligence report for LaGrange Industrial Park. This is following up on a suggestion from GO Virginia Region 6 staff. The EDA will also be conducting outreach visits to businesses currently at LaGrange.

Business Retention & Expansion Outreach

6/4: EDA board members attended an outreach visit to Pallet Machinery Group (PMG), along with VEDP representative Annie Conte. PMG builds pallet-making machines and rents space from O'Malley Lumber at the old airport. PMG is owned by Greg Wine.

PMG has 32 employees; 26 in manufacturing and 6 in sales. They primarily sell within the U.S. and have a goal of competing internationally. They recruit internationally. In preparing for this visit, I determined that the forestry sector in general contributes about \$75,000 annually to county revenues, primarily through the Tools & Machinery Tax.

Meetings since May 1

5/7: Attended Go Virginia Region 6 application information training. We're still looking for a good Essex project that fits their requirements.

5/8: Met with Bill Croxton and the Essex-Tappahannock Airport Authority. Authority members share our interest in economic development partnerships. They are undergoing environmental review of a land parcel they own near the airport entrance. They estimate it will be 2027 before they can seriously consider a development project.

5/13: Attended BOS work session and regular session. They allocated \$11,000 toward our tourism marketing campaign. Supervisor John Magruder suggested we research the Intersurface Modal Transportation RAISE grant as a funding source for a preliminary study of sports tourism at Rotary Poor House Park.

5/15: Attended Go Virginia Region 6 Healthcare Talent Development meeting.

5/27: Attended local Chesapeake Gateways steering committee meeting.

6/2: Attended VEDA and VEDP training on updates to the industrial park Site Selection website.

6/3: Attended GO Va Region 6 Focus Group meeting on a Growth & Diversity Plan update.