

**CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF FRONT ROYAL-WARREN COUNTY, INC.  
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 10, 2017 – 5 P.M. AT THE CHAMBER**

**Present:**

1<sup>st</sup> Vice Chair Ray Bramble, Aire Serv  
2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chair Brent Jackson, Holiday Inn & Blue Ridge Shadows  
Secretary Rob Morris, Walmart  
Treasurer Herb Melrath, Optimum Business Services  
Past Chair Katie Tewell, The Apple House & Fork'd  
Beth Waller, What Matters  
Kristie Sours, Bearfoot Auctions  
Richard Runyon, Shenandoah Valley Golf Club  
Mike Gochenour, Northern Virginia Daily  
Sherri Yoder, Optimum Impact  
Niki Foster, President  
Pam Riffle, Director of Finance & Operations

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Bramble.

**Member Input:** Ms. Sours distributed information on the Humane Society's fundraiser "Tales & Ales".

**Warren County Administrator's Report:** Attached

**Town Manager's Report:** N/A

**Warren County Public School's Report:** Attached

**Economic Development Authority:** N/A

**Minutes:** A motion by Ms. Tewell, seconded by Mr. Gochenour, to approve the August 8, 2017 minutes as presented. Motion carried.

**Financial Report:** Ms. Foster stated that Jan Kidd has taken a new position outside of Front Royal/Warren County and has resigned from the Chamber board. The Board will vote at the next meeting on her replacement. Ms. Riffle reviewed the financial report. A motion by Ms. Tewell, seconded by Ms. Sours, to approve the financial report as presented. Motion carried.

**President's Report:** Ms. Foster stated that at the December Board meeting will serve as an overview on Chamber membership and why businesses should join. She asked that board members bring a dish or beverage as well to celebrate the holidays. Ms. Foster reported that Front Royal was not chosen to receive the Community Development Block Grant. Front Royal scored 16<sup>th</sup> of 37 with only 15 communities receiving the funding. The Chamber will be assisting with Hometown Halloween via the Halloween Custom contest again this year. There will be a ribbon cutting on Thursday, 11 a.m. at Quality Title and Sprint on October 21<sup>st</sup> at noon. All board members are encouraged to attend. The Christmas Parade will be held Saturday, December 2<sup>nd</sup> at 4 p.m. Due to staff coordinating the parade the Chamber will not be able to participate in the parade itself, unless a board member would be interested. Ms. Yoder stated she was interested and would come up with something. Ms. Foster

encouraged the board to invite 3 members to a Chamber event. Ms. Foster acknowledged Mr. Runyon for traveling to Texas to work with FEMA assisting in hurricane relief efforts.

**Membership Report:** Ms. Foster reviewed the membership report.

**Brew & Blues Festival:** Ms. Tewell stated that the event was a success. Ms. Tewell reviewed the financial for the event. Discussion followed about the future of the event.

**Education Committee:** Ms. Foster stated that the Education Committee was facing an issue with the Ethics Workshop due to the new bus schedules. Discussion followed on possible closer locations and availability of tables and chairs.

**Golftoberfest:** Hole sponsors and teams are still needed for the tournament. Mr. Melrath volunteered to sit on the hole in one sponsored by Jack Evans Chevrolet. Ms. Foster stated that the Warren County Builders Association is also having a tournament on the same day.

**Leadership:** Ms. Foster stated that there will be 15 participants. The first class will be held October 26<sup>th</sup>.

**Legislative:** Ms. Foster stated that we will not be having a candidate's forum as there are no local contested races. We will send out information on all races closer to the election.

**Small Business Committee:** Dr. Yoder reviewed the activities of the Small Business Committee. The committee is working on a survey to send to all Chamber members. Small Business Saturday is coming up and the committee is working on the event. A Brown Bag Luncheon will be held on Wednesday, October 18<sup>th</sup>.

Ms. Foster reminded everyone of the Business After Hours, hosted by The River 95.3 FM, next week.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Pam Riffle  
Director of Finance & Operations

**Warren County Public Schools Report  
October 2017**

- Enrollment is 5271 which 24 less than our projection: \$120,000 of state funds will not be coming our way.
- New Middle School: Opening has been going well.
- New RJES: Impacted a part of our community that is greatly appreciative. We will be having an open house as soon as we get a finished product.
- October Bullying prevention month: WCPS has 11 division programs to address a variety of behaviors that impact student learning and the learning environment.
- October is also Principal Appreciation Month: We appreciate our hard-working Principals
- "I've been supported": practicing gratitude with our student to help develop higher level emotional skills
- Did You Know? New Facebook and Twitter postings on happening and/or data about WCPS. Please like us on Facebook!
- Thank you to the Chamber for all of your support of our students, families and school staff. It means a great deal.

CHAMBER REPORT  
OCTOBER 2017

TOURISM – THE COUNTY OFFICIALLY ADOPTED A LOCAL ORDINANCE TO ALLOW FOR THE COLLECTION OF AN ADDITIONAL 3% OF TRANSIENT OCCUPANCY STARTING JULY 1, 2017. WHILE THE COUNTY IS NOT LOOKING FOR THIS TO SUPPLANT CURRENT TOWN FUNDING FOR THE VISITORS CENTER, I THINK THERE ARE BRANDING AND PROMOTION ISSUES THAT WE CAN WORK ON COLLABORATIVELY FOR THE GOOD OF THE COMMUNITY. THE WAYFINDING SIGNAGE PROGRAM WOULD BE ONE OF THE KEY FOCUSES OF THE EFFORT. WE HAVE DEVELOPED A MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE TOWN AND COUNTY TO APPOINT A JOINT TOURISM COMMITTEE. THE DRAFT MOA WAS REVIEWED AT THE LIAISON COMMITTEE MEETING ON JULY 20TH AND WAS APPROVED BY THE BOARD AT ITS MEETING ON AUGUST 1ST. WE ARE AWAITING APPROVAL FROM COUNCIL TO GET THE COMMITTEE OFFICIALLY ORGANIZED.

DEVELOPMENT REVIEW COMMITTEE – THE DEVELOPMENT REVIEW COMMITTEE MET ON SEPTEMBER 27TH.

THE COMMITTEE DISCUSSED PROJECTS IN THE COUNTY INCLUDING:

- SHORT-TERM TOURIST RENTAL CUP
- ROYAL FARMS

THE COMMITTEE ALSO DISCUSSED TOWN PROJECTS INCLUDING:

- B&G GOODS PROPERTY
- WEST MAIN STREET EXTENSION
- TONY'S TIRES BUSINESS
- CHANGE OF USE FOR HENDERSON TOWING COMPANY

THE COMMITTEE WILL MEET AGAIN ON OCTOBER 25TH.

COUNTY WEBSITE – COUNTY STAFF ARE WORKING WITH OUR WEBSITE CONSULTANT ON AN UPGRADE TO THE COUNTY WEBSITE. WE ARE CURRENTLY HOPING TO ROLL OUT THE NEW SITE BY JANUARY 1, 2018. THE UPGRADE OF THE COUNTY'S WEBSITE WILL DRASTICALLY INCREASE THE SECURITY OF THE SITE, WHILE ALLOWING FOR THE REORGANIZATION AND ENHANCEMENT OF THE INFORMATION THAT IS PUBLISHED. USING GOOGLE ANALYTICS AND USER STATISTICS, STAFF WILL BE RECONFIGURING THE LAYOUT AND CONTENT SO THAT CITIZENS ARE PROVIDED WITH A MODERN, EFFICIENT, AND USER FRIENDLY RESOURCE WHERE THEY CAN FIND ALL OF THE INFORMATION THAT THEY NEED IN ONE CENTRALIZED LOCATION.

Reassessment – A General Reassessment of all real property, as required by State Law, is underway in Warren County and is being conducted by Wingate Appraisal Service, who is under contract with the County. This reassessment should take about 16 months to complete, and the effective date will be January 1, 2019.

Periodic reassessments are required by Virginia law to establish assessments at 100% market value. While Virginia does not have a statutory definition for market value, the definition that has been generally accepted by the courts is:

*“The price which a property will bring when offered for sale by one who desires, but is not obliged, to sell it, and is bought by one who is under no necessity of having it.”*

Proper and equitable assessments ensure that the real estate tax burden is distributed to all property owners according to the value of each property.

Wingate staff members will be visiting properties in different areas of the County to collect sales data, update photographs, verify existing information and/or collect additional information, as needed. These individuals carry Warren County identification badges and have magnetic signs on their automobiles that bear the words **"Real Estate Assessment."** The Warren County Sheriff's Office will have a list of Reassessment vehicles that will be making property visits.

In collecting sales information, Wingate's staff considers location, construction cost, quality of construction, condition of the buildings, etc., in order for the sales data to be compared, for assessment purposes, with the various properties in different neighborhoods throughout the County.

Sales which are higher or lower than typical sales are not considered in the assessments. These would include short sales, family transactions, and sales resulting from foreclosure. Transactions which involve duress on the part of the seller or buyer can represent atypical value and are not given consideration. Also excluded are sales which do not allow for the property to be adequately exposed to the open market, resulting in a sale which can be less than market value. It is also possible that an adjoining owner may pay more than market value in order to protect his/her existing property and/or control how the property will be used or assembled.

As properties are assessed, factors such as location, including access to highways, shopping, schools, availability of utilities, etc., as well as condition and type of buildings are being considered.

Prior to becoming effective, all property owners will be mailed a notice of the new proposed assessed values and will have an opportunity to discuss or appeal their assessment. As the work progresses, additional news releases will be made.

Project Updates

Ressie Jeffries Elementary School – Roof/Addition/Parking Lot Project – The building addition and roof project is 91% complete and the site work project 99%

complete. At this point we are waiting on the delivery of the bus and parent drop/pickup canopies to complete the project. Ressie Jeffries Elementary School - Playground Project – Plans for the project have been completed. County staff started work on the project in September and hope to have the site work completed by early November. Phases I and II of the project should be completed during the fall of 2017. Thanks to a \$5,000 donation and a 5-year \$25,000 donation match, Phases III and IV will be fully funded if the school can raise another \$25,000-\$30,000.

Rockland Park – The County has been working with the contractor from the Royal Farms construction site to accept fill material at Rockland Park. Using this fill, two multi-purpose fields have been completed and seeded. Over the next month two additional fields, stormwater management facilities, and two gravel parking lots will be completed.

Rivermont Fire Station – Moseley Architects completed two conceptual design options for the facility. They were presented to the Building Committee at its meeting on September 25<sup>th</sup>. The Building Committee has recommended that the County proceed with the one-story option. County staff met with Company #2 leadership on October 6<sup>th</sup> to review the proposed plan and are awaiting a final go ahead from Company #2 membership with the proposal to construct a replacement station at the Airport Road site. We hope to be able to move forward in November.

Youth Center and Community Center Roofs – Work has been completed last week on the replacement of the Youth Center and Community Center roofs. Work was also completed on the replacement of ceiling grid/tiles at the Youth Center.

VDOT/Marlow-Silek Revenue Sharing Project – The project will widen a portion of Route 340/522 South from the crossover in front of Shenandoah Motors to the Crooked Run Boulevard entrance by adding a 3<sup>rd</sup> lane and right turn lane. The project will also extend the left turn lane for the crossover. All necessary permits have been received, and the EDA has awarded contract to W&L Construction. W&L Construction started work the week of October 9<sup>th</sup>. It is anticipated that the project will be completed by December 1<sup>st</sup>.

VDOT/Morgan Ford Bridge – The project is approximately 50% complete based on earnings and remains on schedule for completion in June 2018. The contractor started pouring the concrete deck last week and should complete that work in the coming month. Once the deck is placed, the contractor will need to construct the concrete railings.

VDOT/South Fork Bridge – The project is approximately 90% complete and remains on schedule for completion in December 2017. December is still the targeted completion date. There have been some unforeseen issues that are causing some delay. The primary issue has to do with the northern saw tooth expansion joint. The joint clearances closed more than specified after placement causing it to turn downward creating an unacceptable dip at that point. Contractors are currently

breaking out the concrete settings to see if it will relieve the pressure and realign. The remaining work (paving, QRI overlay, vegetation planting, etc.) is weather dependent. Tiger Grant Application – County staff continues to work with the Port of Virginia, Norfolk Southern, and VDOT on the resubmission of a Tiger Grant application for a grade separated crossing at Route 658 (Rockland Road). The grant submission is due October 16th.

Route 340/522 Trolley Project – Service to the corridor and LFCC started on July 31st. County staff has been blanketing the corridor to get advertisement of the new service out.

Commercial Projects – Work continues on the following projects:

- Royal Farms Convenience Store – Fall 2017 Completion
- Marriott/TownePlace Suites – Fall 2018 Completion

| <b>Project</b>                            | <b>Ad/Bid Date</b> | <b>Cost</b>  | <b>Estimated Completion Date</b> | <b>Status</b>         |
|---|--------------------|--------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| FRWC<br>Airport<br>Obstruction<br>Removal | Summer 2016        | \$804,000    | Fall 2017                        | Under<br>Construction |
| South Fork<br>Bridge                      | 9/2013             | \$74,700,000 | Fall 2017                        | Under<br>Construction |
| Morgan Ford<br>Bridge                     | 12/2016            | \$9,713,152  | Spring 2018                      | Under<br>Construction |
| Leach Run<br>Parkway                      | 6/2015             | \$10,648,083 | Summer 2017                      | Completed             |
| Totten Lane –<br>Turn lane<br>Project     | Summer 2016        | Unavailable  | Spring 2017                      | Completed             |
| 2nd Warren<br>County<br>Middle School     | Winter 2015        | \$44,100,000 | Summer 2017                      | Completed             |
| Freezeland<br>Road Kiss-n-<br>Ride        | Fall 2014          | Unavailable  | Spring 2017                      | Phase I<br>Completed  |
| Ressie Jeffries<br>Renovations            | Fall 2016          | \$4,990,077  | Fall 2017                        | Under<br>Construction |

Rockland  
Park Athletic  
Fields

N/A

\$200,000-  
\$300,000

Fall 2017

Under  
Construction