



# CITIZENS FOR A BETTER EASTERN SHORE

# SHORELINE

A News Journal of Natural Resources, Public Affairs and  
Community on the Eastern Shore of Virginia

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## Poultry Forum Highlights Critical Issues

ShoreLine Staff Report

On Wednesday, January 20, over 150 people attended a forum on Community Impacts of Industrial Poultry Operations, sponsored by CBES. The intent of the forum was to enrich the conversation in both counties on this critical issue, since both counties are changing zoning rules for the poultry industry. With the possible exception of the future at Wallops and the aquaculture industry, there is no activity on the Shore that comes close to the economic importance of the poultry industry. Clearly, local policies need to be carefully thought through. There is understandable passion on both sides of this debate. Unfortunately, as the discussion in the forum made clear, there are no easy answers.

The forum was moderated by Peabody Award-winner Marc Steiner, a radio broadcaster from Baltimore who has covered this debate in Maryland, where the industry is more developed and where the popular backlash has led to a number of legislative proposals to regulate the industry. This allowed CBES to spread the information across Delmarva and have a record of the forum through the taped broadcast of the Marc Steiner Show.

### Department of Environmental Quality

The panel presentations began with two representatives from the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), Roger Everton, of Water Compliance and Monitoring, and Neil Zahradka, from the Office of Land Applications Programs. They explained

how the DEQ approaches confined poultry regulation. There are three divisions within DEQ – Water, Air, and Land Protection. Up until now, confined poultry has fallen under the water division. But it is quite challenging to regulate an industry when jurisdiction is split between areas and divisions. For example, a key part of poultry regulation is the Nutrient Management Plan (NMP) that each farm must have as it moves its poultry litter out of containment to a field application as a fertilizer. The NMP is regulated by the Department of Conservation and Recreation rather than the DEQ. Largely the DEQ works with the assumption that all plans are followed and result in minimal risk to the environment. They only interact with the end user where the manure is applied when complaints are received that indicate that the state regulations are not being followed. It appears to be effectively a voluntary program without a rigorous permitting process. As one chicken grower pointed out, every farm that receives litter is recorded so that the grower has a clear record of where the manure is going. But that is not public information unless violations or complaints are received by DEQ. Further, there is no way that any of this regulatory framework can be cumulative. In other words, while a NMP takes into account factors like soil type, crops grown, etc., it does not take into account what is happening on adjacent properties and what the cumulative effect is on the environment. As several speakers pointed out, all three Delmarva states

have regulatory frameworks that are similar; but all areas with intensive poultry operations are really struggling on water quality.

Everton explained how the monitoring of water quality happens around the Shore. There is a significant amount of data collected in terms of temperature, salinity, pH, nitrogen, bacterial counts, and turbidity (or suspended solids in the water). Some has been collected for many years, giving some good trend data. The health department also does a great deal of water testing in shellfish growing areas, which the DEQ also uses. The DEQ monitors and determines when water quality is “impaired” for some use such as aquaculture or swimming. If there is an impairment of a normal use of a watershed, a TMDL (total maximum daily load) is determined for the impairment (bacteria, etc.) and an action plan developed to address the issue until the waterway is no longer impaired. But a quick look at a map of the Eastern

*See Poultry Forum, cont'd on p. 3*

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# As Promised – a New Direction

New Board acts quickly to repeal controversial zoning

By Mary Miller

After nearly two years of citizen opposition to a rezoning, and a political race with the winning candidates promising to take the county in “a new direction,” the Northampton County Board of Supervisors did just that at their first regular meeting of 2016.

As the final item of the night, newly elected Board Chairman Spencer Murray recognized Supervisor Robert Duer, from District 5, who read into the record a Resolution that would repeal the month-old county-wide rezoning and re-enact the 2009 Zoning Code and Map. The Resolution was adopted by a 3-2 vote. Duer stated that the recently adopted zoning amendment did not comply with the county’s Comprehensive Plan and had no supporting studies to justify the new zoning districts, densities or uses. The county is being sued over the rezoning by a private citizen. Murray agreed with Supervisor Hogg’s statement that a Comprehensive Plan review should have preceded any new zoning changes and said that review would be part of the process moving forward.



Northampton Supervisors Robert Duer (left) and Spencer Murray (right), along with Granville Hogg, made good on campaign promises at their first Board meeting with a motion to revise the new Zoning Ordinance to bring it closer to the 2009 ordinance.

A Motion was then made to put forward several amendments to the 2009 Zoning Ordinance. Chairman Murray went on to state that the newly elected Board members had listened to the public and have proposed changes to the 2009 Ordinance that had been suggested and supported by citizens’ comments and written statements – all of which are in compliance with the county’s adopted Comprehensive Plan. These Amendments, labeled “Attachment A,” include:

- Draft clearer, more concise Statements of Intent for Agricultural, Residential, Commercial and Industrial Districts
- Remove Special Use Permit requirements from many Commercial and Industrial Uses and allow those Uses By-Right in appropriate Districts
- Replace “Agritourism” references with a precise definition, as now required by Virginia Code
- Permit Accessory Dwellings for single-family, owner-occupied properties, with a Minor Special Use Permit and performance standards
- Revise “Intensive Livestock” language to include CAFOs (Concentrated Animal Feeding Oper-

ations), AFOs (Animal Feeding Operations) and to include new EPA guidelines

- Establish consistent setbacks from residential areas and tidal waters for CAFOs, AFOs, Intensive Livestock Operations and manure storage
- Create policy for increased customer service by the office of the Zoning Administrator
- Include the Chesapeake/Atlantic Preservation District in the Zoning Ordinance

Both the Zoning Resolution and the Zoning Amendments are available on the Northampton County website.

A timetable has been set for newspaper legal notice, mailings to property owners, Planning Commission review, Public Hearings and a recommendation to the Board by the Planning Commission. A Public Hearing is scheduled for March 9 at Northampton High School; citizens will have opportunities to submit written comments and to speak. After Planning Commission review and recommendation, the Board may then act on zoning changes for the county.



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## ***Poultry Forum, cont'd from p. 3***

community. This is of particular concern, since some of these bacteria are resistant to some antibiotics. Workers at the facilities have elevated levels of health issues from the working conditions. They also bring into the community exposure from their clothing, hair, and skin. Finally, she pointed out that open air transport of chickens creates another exposure route that needs research.

Dr. Fry spoke at length about the central regulatory problem of jurisdiction when health issues are a focus. Rarely do these fall within an existing regulatory framework. It is hard to get government intervention because the problem frequently falls between jurisdictions, with neither department having responsibility. As Dr. Fry put it, we know much more about water quality and are ready to address those issues. We actually know relatively little about health issues raised by industrial poultry operations.

### **Perspective From a Former Poultry Grower**

The final panelist was Carole Morrison, a former Perdue grower who has become a bit of a celebrity in the sustainable food movement through her exposure in movies such as *Food Inc.* She left the Perdue system and now raises pasture laying hens on her farm, primarily for Whole Foods. She reviewed her experience with industrial poultry operations and integrators. She claimed that the economics of the process has degraded from “full time pay for part time work” to simply supplemental income, with expansion funded through cash incentives to put up more houses. She explained that each house represents a \$380,000 investment and the current cash incentive pays about 20% of that cost. But she claimed that the process is no longer economically viable for smaller growers, who have to continually borrow funds to keep up with industry capital requirements. She quoted a study that showed that 70% of poultry growers in the industry are below the poverty line, and she painted a picture more akin to sharecropping, where farmers are dependent on the integrator for their survival. Contracts are only by flock and can be cancelled at any time, potentially bankrupting the farmer, who has borrowed funds to create a production system tailored to a specific integrator.

In comments from other operators on the Eastern Shore, Morrison’s financial experience seems not to be universal. The system is set up to favor larger and more successful operators and to be actively eliminating operators that are at Morrison’s scale. Her description, though, highlighted the complexity of the industry. An integrator such as Tyson or Perdue controls all inputs of chicks, food and medications, and specifies growing parameters and required equipment. They then provide the sole market outlet to purchase the birds at harvest time. This means that they control the income of each producer and have sole negotiating leverage. Apparently the integrators are enlarging the scale of operations and increasingly relying on investors

rather than family farms to make the investments required at that scale. They need to provide enough return to their growers to produce the output they need for their sales. The efforts of Virginia to increase export markets for chicken will continue to drive those integrators to increase their grower communities and increase their output.

The most problematic part of the process – disposing of the litter, principally manure, dead birds and feathers – is the responsibility of the individual grower. The site approvals and community relationships are also largely left for the grower to manage. This creates an unresolved regulatory complexity since integrators, like Tyson and Perdue, are not liable for the worst negative impacts of the operations. Although integrators are increasingly involved in finding solutions to dispose of that output through incineration, pelletizing fertilizers, etc., nothing yet has been successful. Maryland’s legislature is contemplating making the integrator responsible for disposal of litter. At this time, though, Virginia has no plan to change that part of the equation for our counties.

### **Comments and Concerns**

About half of the forum was devoted to questions and statements from the audience. One speaker worried we might damage the industry – poultry represents the only food processors left on the Shore and our past prosperity came only when the Eastern Shore had a number of processors adding value to our farm output. Several on the panel and in the audience pointed out how different Perdue and Tyson are from the old Webster tomato facility, for example, in terms of community impact and creating local prosperity. Many of the questions reflected frustrations with the regulatory framework and the science that supports it.

Several questioners pointed out the gaps in the science and the lack of guidance on how many chicken houses is too many or even how far from homes or communities is a safe distance. The DEQ approach of relying on NMPs, with no permits for land application to document safe disposal, made a lot of the audience uncomfortable. Other comments indicated the need to think more about cumulative impact as the number of operations continues to grow.

Maryland spends \$5 million annually on manure transport, and the federal government provides significant subsidies for manure management. Some wondered if those resources could be better spent elsewhere. There was some question of water use by the industry. The industry claimed in the first forum, sponsored by the Eastern Shore Shorekeeper, that water use in a confinement house was minimal, but confirmation of water usage for both bird hydration, poultry house misting, and other uses should be verified.

The session ended with one questioner’s plea that we work to build a more sustainable local food system. We

*See Poultry Forum, cont'd on p. 6*

# Proposed New Poultry Ordinance for Accomack County

by Sue Mastyl

Accomack County is moving closer to passing a new zoning ordinance with regard to poultry farms, although many in the county feel it does not go far enough to address the issues. In a Work Session on January 13, the Accomack County Board of Supervisors moved to schedule a Public Hearing on the new ordinance for February 3. The Board received the current version from the Planning Commission at its November 18, 2015 meeting, with a recommendation to hold a public hearing at their January 20 monthly meeting; instead, the Board tabled the proposed ordinance and scheduled the work session earlier in January. No changes were made to the ordinance during the January 13 work session.

Rich Morrison, Director of Planning and Community Development for Accomack County, noted that “with the exception of Northampton County, Accomack County’s Poultry Regulations as proposed by the Planning Commission will be the most robust on the Delmarva Peninsula.” However, it should be noted that Caroline County in Maryland has a setback requirement of 600 feet from the property line, which is more restrictive than any locality except Northampton County. A comparison table of regional counties’ regulations is posted on the CBES website.

Morrison updated the Board on the current status of applications for new poultry houses in the county. There are an estimated 308 active poultry houses in the county, with 33 new poultry houses permitted as of December, and an additional 21 with “a high likelihood of approval.” Another 12 are pursuing approval on some level, and little movement on the applications for 17. In November and December, applications were received for an additional 101 poultry houses, with a further 48 in discussion, of which 32 “have a good chance at moving forward.” That brings the total of potential new poultry houses to 232 (33 are less likely to move forward). According to Morrison, Tyson has said they need 130 to 150 new houses (including anticipated growth in Maryland) to meet their expanded capacity. Even a conservative estimate would result in a 50% increase in the number of poultry houses in a single year, and the new houses will be much larger than those already in operation.

During the Board’s Work Session, County Attorney Cela Burge explained that those applications that are approved before the new ordinance takes effect will be subject to the requirements of the old ordinance; all other applications, at whatever stage in the process, will need to meet the new requirements.

The issue of changing the setback to reflect the distance to the property line, rather than the adjacent structure, was also discussed, since all other zoning is administered this

way. Vice-Chair Robert Crockett asked whether the Board could change the language to use the property line for the setback, but County Attorney Burge advised that this would require sending the amended ordinance back to the Planning Commission for review, since it is a more restrictive change. The Board moved to leave the amended ordinance as is, and go to a Public Hearing, with the understanding that the Planning Commission is still working on additional issues (storage, composting requirements, and application requirements for poultry litter; management of litter fires; groundwater usage; and public health concerns). Morrison estimated that additional amendments would be ready for review by April, 2016.

During public comments at the Board’s monthly meeting on January 20, several citizens raised concerns about the proposed ordinance. Joe Valentine of Onancock noted that setbacks are “still inadequate – how many people are willing to live 600 feet from fans?” He referenced an October 22, 2015, letter provided to the county from Robert S. Lawrence, MD, and colleagues from Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health and Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future, outlining the public health concerns associated with industrial poultry farming. Unfortunately, he noted, the Director for the Eastern Shore Health District, David Matson, MD, PhD, speaking to the Planning Commission at their January 13 meeting, has labeled this letter “a fraud,” and instead used the poultry industry as his resource. Eastern Shorekeeper Jay Ford urged the board to “give the benefit of the doubt to public health and well-being.”

Jillian P. Fry, PhD, MPH, from Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health and a coauthor of the October 22 letter, cited specific public health risks associated with large-scale poultry production, with pollutants such as nutrients, gases, volatile organic compounds, particulate matter and heavy metals. Documented health effects include infections, respiratory illnesses, thyroid conditions, blue baby syndrome, gastrointestinal illnesses, cancer and birth defects. With respect to the efforts to discredit the Johns Hopkins letter, she noted that “some may not like the findings; we present the science as is, and don’t overstate it.” She also urged community members to get involved, since “there is no agency monitoring the environment to protect public health.”

Following the public comment period, Crockett added a point of clarification, reading into the record the disclaimer from the October 22 letter, that “The opinions expressed herein are our own and do not necessarily reflect the views

*See Poultry Ordinance, cont’d on p. 6*

**Poultry Ordinance, cont'd from p. 5**

of the Johns Hopkins University,” concluding that “they are not speaking for Johns Hopkins University.” However, a reading of the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health website shows that this is standard policy, as it is for

any academic institution. The reputations of the letter’s six authors stand for themselves; Dr. Lawrence, the lead author, founded the Center for a Livable Future in 1996 and received the 2002 Albert Schweitzer Humanitarianism Prize.

**Accomack and Northampton Counties: Comparison of Current and Proposed Poultry Ordinances**

	Accomack County		Northampton County
	Current	Proposed	
Landscape plan required	No	Yes	No
Density requirement	None	1 house per 5 acres	5-acre lot size
Maximum limit (number of houses)	None	12 houses per parcel	None
Minimum separation distance	None	400 feet between operations	None
Setback from existing dwelling	300 feet/400 feet on tunnel end	500 feet/600 feet on tunnel end	None
Setback from property line	200 feet	200 feet	400 feet; 200 feet with 200 feet of mature woodlands and ammonia scrubbers
Reduced setback with consent of adjacent property owner	Yes	No	--
Setback from schools, churches, nursing homes, daycare centers, campgrounds, public recreation areas, and public wells	500 feet	500 feet/600 feet on tunnel end	1,000 feet from Hamlets; 1,500 feet from Villages, Waterfront Villages, Waterfront Hamlets, Existing Cottage Communities, Town Edges;
Setback from incorporated towns, subdivisions of 10 or more lots, mobile home parks, or travel trailer parks	400 feet	500 feet/600 feet on tunnel ends; only improved subdivisions	2,000 feet from incorporated town or tidal waters
Earthen berm required	No	May be required	No
Landscape buffer required	No	3 rows of plant material on all sides	No
Provision for Traffic Safety and Existing Road Conditions	No	Yes	No

Source: Proposed Poultry Ordinance Comparison Chart, December 1, 2015; and Delmarva Poultry Ordinance Overview, September 9, 2015, Accomack County Planning Department.



**Poultry Forum, cont'd from p. 4**

know the problems now with industrial poultry but where is the discussion of how we can create solutions by building local diversified opportunities in Shore agriculture?

Spencer Murray, Chairman of Northampton’s Board of Supervisors, gave closing comments from his county’s perspective. He reiterated that the only local tool to regulate this industry is zoning and that Northampton is indeed adding setbacks for Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) that “will protect the county’s tidal streams.”

Eastern Shore Shorekeeper Jay Ford gave a brief update on the status of Accomack’s efforts to rewrite their zoning regulations related to the chicken industry. The next public hearing on the new zoning regulations for Accomack is on February 3. Given how little direction science and the regulatory process can give our Boards of Supervisors, it is critical that the community speak up for its interests. As Ford

pointed out, the integrators have already provided language, as the proposed zoning largely reflects the industry’s “good neighbor” practices. As Ford put it, citizens need to let the Accomack board know their thoughts or the industry will be effectively writing their own regulations.

CBES would like to thank Broadwater Academy for making its facility available. Also thanks to the Marc Steiner Show and to our forum panel, who generously shared their time and expertise to help further this debate. Finally, we would thank our dedicated CBES volunteers, who spent months to bring this critical information to the Shore. The forum will also be available on the Marc Steiner Show website, <http://www.steinershow.org> or at the CBES website [www.cbes.org](http://www.cbes.org). Our hope is to continue this conversation later with another forum more focused on potential policy options.



# The Future of Healthcare Services in Northampton County

By Ervin E. Jones, MD

*Dr. Jones, who lives in the Cape Charles area, retired from a long and distinguished career as a professor in the School of Medicine at Yale University. He is a current member of the ad-hoc Emergency Medical Services Committee of Northampton County.*

Shore Memorial Hospital, formerly Northampton-Accomack Memorial Hospital, and currently Riverside Shore Memorial, has been a part of Northampton County since the late 1920s and has been in its current location for 40 years. In September 2009, the Shore Memorial Board voted to affiliate with Riverside Health Services, Inc., Newport News, VA. A Certificate of Public Need (COPN) was issued in 2011 and the Hospital announced that it would be moving to Onley in Accomack County by 2015. As a part of the COPN application, Riverside Health Services provided assurance that it would continue to provide services such as an Urgent Care Center at or near the present site in Nassawadox. Expansion to 24-hour diagnostics, basic laboratory services, and other primary care services were cited by Riverside as longer-term goals.

Riverside administration recently announced that the hospital as well as the cancer center will be relocated to Onley by the end of 2016. Although the building currently housing the cancer center will remain, no other facilities will remain in Nassawadox.

## Impact on health services in Northampton County

Riverside Shore Memorial Hospital will be relocated 18 miles north of its current location. The nearest Emergency Department to the south is Sentara Independence in Virginia Beach. Ambulances traveling south will have to cross the 17-mile Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel, with potentially dangerous closure delays from accidents or weather. Not only will ambulance transport time to the nearest emergency department be longer, ambulance turnaround time will also be substantially increased. It is estimated that the new minimum ambulance turnaround time for Northampton providers will be more than an hour.

The transportation burden on Northampton County citizens will also be increased by the longer drive for health services. Pressure on EMS services will increase as the population becomes more dependent on EMS services for medical transportation.

The loss of the hospital will deprive Northampton citizens of a local emergency room and other critical services, e.g., diagnostic imaging, laboratory testing, screening and other primary care services.

## Emergency Medical Services (EMS) in Northampton

The Northampton County EMS system is made up of four separate agencies: the Northampton County Depart-



*After the hospital moves to Onley, ambulances from Nassawadox and Exmore will be required by law to transport patients from south of Eastville to a hospital across the Bay.*

ment of EMS (Machipongo) and three volunteer agencies – Community Fire Company, Exmore; Northampton Fire and Rescue, Nassawadox; and Cape Charles Rescue Service, Cape Charles. Each agency functions with its own articles of incorporation, licensure, leadership and financial management structure, by-laws and standard operating procedures. Each agency owns its buildings and emergency vehicles. Six ambulances comprise the County-wide EMS service fleet. In addition, four quick response vehicles (QRVs) are used to supplement the ambulance fleet as needed.

Personnel staffing for the agencies consists of a combination of paid and volunteer providers. An advanced-level career employee from the county EMS Department is generally embedded with the volunteer service 80% of the time. In addition, the QRVs, with advanced-level paramedics and duty supervisors, are generally available.

Each EMS agency is required by Virginia Department of EMS to have an Operational Medical Director (OMD). The current OMD for the County-wide EMS system is retiring and a replacement has not yet been hired. The responsibilities and authority of an OMD are broad and include provision of medical direction to providers, verification of qualifications, quality management and improvement, corrective action and interaction with state, regional and local authorities as needed.

*See Healthcare Services, cont'd on p. 8*

## **Healthcare Services, cont'd from p. 7**

Each of the three volunteer agencies has a designated call area. All calls go to the 911 Call Center in Accomac. The dispatcher then contacts the appropriate agency, and the nearest agency is expected to respond. The next nearest agency serves as backup. The responding agency is required by the Virginia Department of EMS to transport the patient to the nearest Emergency Department unless the patient signs a waiver refusing transport. The public must be aware of this transport requirement and its impact on EMS services.

### **EMS Requirements and Response Plan**

Each EMS agency provides service within its primary service area on a 24-hour basis, and each locality ensures that EMS covers its entire area. The EMS response plan states that a unit will be on scene within 20 minutes of dispatch, 90% of the time, 24 hours a day.

### **Challenges**

The major challenge facing EMS is a lack of personnel to staff the ambulances. Some agencies cannot consistently guarantee volunteer staff and struggle to cover all shifts. This is of great concern, since EMS stations are primarily staffed by volunteers. Advanced-level career employees are often lost to other localities. A strong EMS training program is needed in Northampton County, and the volunteer EMS program needs to be rebuilt. In addition, Northampton County High School and especially the Eastern Shore Community College should be involved in training programs for careers in EMS.

Garage and storage facilities are lacking for the Northampton County EMS service in Machipongo. The County EMS building is in need of renovation to reduce exposure of vehicles, reduce degradation of medical supplies due to overheating or freezing, improve vehicle readiness and to meet Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regulations. Plans are under way to modify the existing building to meet the need. According to EMS leadership, at least one more ambulance will be required once the hospital moves because of increased travel distances and turnaround time.

Funding for some of the agencies continues to be a major problem. In certain cases, billing revenue does not fully support the operations budget. Each agency employs its own billing vendor, which results in inconsistent billing from agency to agency.

There is lack of coordination among the agencies with respect to equipment, billing, incentives for volunteers, and bulk purchases. Ambulances are not all equipped uniformly and as a result, not all personnel are familiar with all equipment on each ambulance. It will be necessary to improve coordination among the agencies to meet

the challenges. Efforts to unify and streamline operations among the agencies are under way.

### **A Broader Perspective**

A strong, well-equipped EMS service is clearly needed. However, EMS systems were never designed to comprise the entire healthcare delivery system for a locality. EMS cannot and should not function as “gate keeper” and principal provider for health services in the county. Instead, healthcare delivery and access must be viewed in the broader context of a well-balanced system of healthcare: emergency medical services, urgent care services, primary care and nursing home care. EMS services should be used for real emergencies and not routine transport for non-critical services.

From a long-term perspective, it is unlikely that Northampton County can financially support a stand-alone Emergency Department. However, night and weekend medical services are needed. Twenty-four hour diagnostics, basic laboratory services, and primary care services are longer-term goals. All options to establish an urgent care center in Northampton County should be considered, including seeking and securing established medical service partners.

### **A Strategic Plan**

In anticipation of the impending relocation of Riverside Shore Memorial Hospital, the Northampton County Board of Supervisors established an *ad hoc* Emergency Medical Services Committee to explore all options for provision of services. A consultant from the Virginia Rural Health Resource Center, Roanoke, VA, was retained to do an assessment and present options. The report provides numerous options for development of healthcare infrastructure in Northampton County.

The Committee chose to take a broader, multi-faceted approach and developed a seven-point strategic plan that would include other forms of healthcare delivery. The seven primary goals of the strategic plan are:

- Create a strong, well equipped, well-staffed EMS system to serve all residents of Northampton County
- Enhance, support and increase primary care resources in the county
- Provide urgent care service in Northampton County
- Create telecommunications infrastructure to support medical services
- Educate the public regarding health care resources and how to best use such resources
- Generate revenue to support medical services

*See Healthcare Services, cont'd on p. 9*



**Healthcare Services, cont'd from p. 8**

- Develop a system for accountability and monitoring of health services in Northampton County

Although a strong, well-equipped, well-staffed EMS system is clearly necessary, both primary care resources and urgent care resources are also needed. Telecommunications resources are crucial in today's healthcare environment as new approaches such as telemedicine, telehealth, in-home monitoring, long-distance care and wearables are all now a part of the evolving healthcare landscape.

The public must be informed regarding the availability and the appropriate and efficient use of healthcare resources in order to provide the best care available to the people of the community. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, a system of accountability and monitoring of healthcare services in the County needs to be established.

**Summary**

The departure of Riverside Shore Memorial Hospital from Nassawadox will leave a serious deficit with respect to healthcare services in Northampton County. Not only will emergency medical services be challenged, other key healthcare services, such as imaging, laboratory diagnostics and screening, will be severely impacted. The availability of urgent care services will be lost. Solutions will require a concerted effort on the part of all of those with a stake in this matter. Creativity and innovation must be brought to bear. Numerous rural communities have faced similar problems over the past two decades. These communities have met these challenges through creative thinking, innovation and the realization that healthcare delivery, or the lack of it, is a community problem. Therefore, it is incumbent upon all of us to recognize this problem and seek solutions to it.



# Community Unity



*Tyler Major, a senior at Broadwater Academy, spoke at the recent Community Unity Day breakfast. Look for complete coverage of this event in next month's issue.*



*The annual Community Unity Breakfast to commemorate the life of Dr. Martin Luther King, was held on January 18 at Northampton High School. The crowd is shown listening intently to the keynote speaker, Reverend Milton Palmer Bunting.*

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# SHORELINE

## Community Calendar - February 2016

*Note: Please verify times and places prior to attending meetings.*

CBES and Other Activities		Accomack County		Northampton County	
Feb 3	<b>VIMS Public Seminar</b> 7:30 PM, Wachapreague	Feb 3	<b>Public Hearing on Poultry</b> 6 PM, Metompkin ES	Feb 1	<b>Board of Zoning Appeals</b> 1 PM, Conference Room
Feb 8	<b>CBES Exec. Committee</b> 5 PM, CBES Office	Feb 3	<b>Board of Zoning Appeals</b> 10 AM, Sup. Chambers	Feb 2	<b>Planning Commission</b> 7 PM, Sup. Chambers
Feb 11	<b>Shorekeeper Meeting*</b> 3 PM, ES Chamber of Commerce	Feb 10	<b>Planning Commission</b> 7 PM, BOS Chambers	Feb 9	<b>Board of Supervisors</b> 7 PM, Sup. Chambers
Feb 16	<b>CBES Board Meeting</b> 7:00 p.m., Eastville	Feb 16	<b>School Board</b> 7 PM, BOS Chambers	Feb 17	<b>Wetlands Board</b> TBA, Conference Room
Feb 16	<b>ES Groundwater Committee</b> 10 AM, Accomac	Feb 17	<b>Board of Supervisors</b> 5 PM, BOS Chambers	Feb 22	<b>BOS Work Session</b> 5 PM, Sup. Chambers
		Feb 18	<b>Wetlands Board</b> 10 AM, Sup. Chambers	Feb 23	<b>School Board</b> 5:30 PM, Sup. Chambers

\* Alternating between the ES Chamber of Commerce and the Barrier Islands Center

[www.cbes.org](http://www.cbes.org)