

**Meeting Minutes of the PACE Committee of the County of Isle of Wight
June 28, 2006**

The meeting of the PACE Committee of the County of Isle of Wight was called to order by Dee Dee Darden at 7:05 p.m. on June 28, 2006, at Colonial Farm Credit in Windsor, Virginia.

Members Present: Tom Alphin
Pete Carr
Dee Dee Darden
Jimmy Oliver

Ex-officio Members Present: Rachel Morris, Rural Economic Development
Manager/PACE Program Administrator
Amy Ring, Asst. Director of Planning and Zoning
Scott Bachman, VA Dept. of Forestry
Abraham Bear, VA Dept. of Forestry
Tara Outland-Williams, Peanut Soil and Water
Conservation District

Rachel Morris called the roll.

Ms. Darden presented the minutes from the May 8, 2006 meeting for the Committee's approval and/or amendment. Tom Alphin moved that the minutes from May 8, 2006, accepted as presented. Pete Carr seconded the motion. The motion was adopted with members Alphin, Carr, Darden, and Oliver voting in favor and no members voting against.

Ms. Morris asked that the Committee postpone the discussion of old business so that the guest speaker could make his presentation. Jim Wright, NRCS, began his discussion of the importance of valuing good soils in the ranking criteria. He began by sharing with the Committee several Soil Map books and encouraged everyone to use them often. Mr. Wright insisted that there is a more up-to-date version of the document available online, but the book is a great tool to know how to use.

Mr. Wright informed the Committee that much of the land in Isle of Wight County has draintile and the records of which lands are tiled are available at the Farm Service Agency (FSA) Office in Smithfield. Further, he insisted that land which has draintile in it is more valuable than land without. 75 to 90% of the hydrated farmland in Isle of Wight County is draintiled and it must be maintained in order to function properly.

Next, Mr. Wright began describing the different classes of soils in the County. Class I soils were noted to be the very best, but being very sparse. He explained that this County has many acres of Myatt and Yemassee, which are good cropland soils, where drained. When looking at the Soil Book, it is important to know that hydric soils are those that are

poorly drained or very poorly drained. Mr. Wright informed the Committee that it would even be a good idea to toss out Nawney type soils because those soil types are not good for development or for crops.

It was then discussed that soils are very different when it comes to farming for crops than for building houses. Pete Carr suggested that a decision be made as to the purpose of the Program. Therefore, there was some discussion whether or not the job of the Program is to protect farming or prevent development, with the decision being that the Program's main focus is to preserve farmland and the business of farming. Preventing development is a tertiary result of preservation.

Mr. Wright concluded his presentation by reviewing his suggested ranking criteria for Class I and II soils. Jimmy Oliver suggested that there be substantial emphasis placed on prime farmland since those soils were determined by NRCS. There being no further discussion regarding soils, Ms. Darden thanked Mr. Wright for his presentation. Ms. Morris suggested that she will be calling on Mr. Wright and NRCS to assist in determining acreages and soil types. Mr. Wright agreed to assist the Committee at any point in the future.

Ms. Darden asked that the next item, Ranking Criteria, be discussed. The Committee discussed each individual criterion in depth and where changes were noted asked that Ms. Morris update the document and send it out prior to the July meeting.

Being that there was no further business Tom Alphin motioned that the Committee adjourn until its next meeting date, July 26, 2006. Jimmy Oliver seconded the motion with members Alphin, Darden, Carr, and Oliver voting in favor and no members voting against.