

**REPORT OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

**The Status of the Start-Up
Activities, Needs, and
Accomplishments of the
Center for Rural Virginia**

**TO THE GOVERNOR AND
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF VIRGINIA**



HOUSE DOCUMENT NO. 39

**COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
RICHMOND
2004**

Status of the Center for Rural Virginia

The Center for Rural Virginia was created by the General Assembly in the 2004 session. It is to be an independent entity without political subdivision status. Its purpose is to sustain economic growth in the rural areas of the Commonwealth.

The Center is to be governed by an 18 member board of trustees consisting of six legislative members and 12 non-legislative citizens. Trustees have been appointed and include:

The Honorable Wayne Angell
The Honorable Randolph Beales
The Honorable Robert Bloxom
Ms. Mary Rae Carter
Dr. Rebecca Davis
The Honorable Allen Dudley
The Honorable Emmett Hanger
Ms. Donna Pugh Johnson
The Honorable Joseph Johnson
The Honorable Terry Kilgore
The Honorable Steven Landes
Mr. Mark Lawrence
Dr. Wayne Purcell
The Honorable Jackson Reasor
Ms. Susan Rubin
The Honorable Frank Ruff
The Honorable Joseph Sheffey
Mr. Steven Smith

The General Assembly appropriated \$100,000 for the Center for each year of the 2004 - 2006 biennium. These funds are administered by the Department of Housing and Community Development on the Center's behalf.

The trustees met on August 23, 2004 and on October 27, 2004. Interim officers were selected at the August meeting and include: Senator Ruff – chairman; Randolph Beales – vice chairman; and Rebecca Davis – secretary. Interim committees for organizational structure, funding, communications were established and Mr. Reasor was selected as liaison to the Governor's Office.

A draft vision statement has been developed and preliminary areas of focus identified. These areas are: analyzing and facilitating policy; measuring outcomes; developing leaders; building constituency and advocacy; providing useful information exchange; partnering for success; marketing the assets of rural Virginia; and meeting the Center's financial needs.

By-laws and articles of incorporation are being developed so that the Center can seek 501 3 c tax exempt status. The trustees are interested in developing a web site for the Center and will explore options for hiring staff.

The trustees are interested in developing an advisory board that would help support the work of the Center, provide information and input to the trustees and help disseminate information about the Center's work. Suggestions for such an advisory board are being developed.

The trustees plan to meet again before the beginning of the 2005 General Assembly session.