

**Town of Bluefield
Town Council
Minutes
October 24, 2017**

The Bluefield, Virginia Town Council held a regularly scheduled Town Council Meeting on Tuesday, October 24, 2017 at 7:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Town Hall located at 112 Huffard Drive, Bluefield, Virginia.

PRESENT

Don Harris, Mayor
Jimmy Jones, Councilmember
Ron Holt, Councilmember
Chuck Presley, Councilmember
Lee Riffe, Vice-Mayor
Steve Danko, Councilmember

ALSO PRESENT

Mike Watson, Town Manager
Matt Freedman, Town Attorney
Kris Williams, Zoning Administrator
Lesley Catron, Town Clerk
Kim Hernandez, Executive Assistant
Billie Roberts, Comm. Dev. Coordinator
32 Members of Public
1 Member of Media

ABSENT

Shane Gunter, Police Chief

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Harris called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE

Vice-Mayor Lee Riffe led the Invocation. Mayor Harris led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Councilmember Jones made a motion to approve the agenda. Councilmember Presley seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

CONSENT AGENDA

Councilmember Holt made a motion to approve the consent agenda. Councilmember Presley seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

CITIZEN REQUESTS & SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

Special Presentation: Pumped Hydroelectric Storage Facility – Jason Crews, Dominion Power (PowerPoint presentation attached at the end of minutes).

Mayor Harris stated that Dominion Power would be giving a brief overview concerning a new Hydroelectric Storage Facility. He stated that they would be having a full community meeting at a later date.

Jason Crews stated that they were looking at a site in Tazewell County and asked Spencer Adkins and Dan Poteet to talk more about it.

Dan Poteet stated that Dominion Power had evaluated 2 locations for the development of a Hydroelectric Storage Pump Station, with Wise County being one location and Tazewell County being the other location. He stated that this was spurred by legislation by Senator Chaffins and Delegates Kilgore and Pillion effective 7-1-17.

Spencer Adkins stated that they looked at 7 counties and came up with 150 sites which was narrowed down based on criteria. He stated that they had to look for the following:

- find a site with water
- favorable geographic conditions (proximity to transmission and land availability).
- Environmental and cultural concerns

He stated that they got down to 12 sites before choosing the Tazewell and Wise County sites.

- Wise Site - would not be a traditional pump storage and based on information from the DMME, the Bullitt Mine was identified as a top site for evaluation. He stated that they were working with Virginia Tech on studies.
- Tazewell Site – had one upper reservoir and 2 lower reservoirs that they were looking at combining. He stated that a tunnel connected them to release the water to go back and forth. He stated that the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) stated that the mines were 8-9 miles west of the site. He stated that the Tazewell Site met most of the criteria filed with FERC and they were in the pre-feasibility stage now.

He stated that Dominion owned a lot of property already and would continue to do studies. He stated that they would make a decision whether or not to move forward during the 1st Quarter of 2018.

He stated the statistics from the Virginia City Hybrid Energy Center were:

- \$10 Million in annual property tax payments
- \$25 Million annually for the local economy
- Created 118 jobs

Mr. Adkins stated that it would be a 10 year process before power would be produced. He stated that they would do an open house forum in the near future.

Mr. Jones asked if they could open both.

Mr. Adkins stated just 1 right now. He stated that the Delegates had everything together to pass a resolution which would benefit the region.

Mr. Poteet stated that the Revenue Sharing would be among the 7 counties and would also see the benefits of 2,000 employees coming into Bluefield.

Mayor Harris asked that they set up a meeting allowing the citizens to go by and talk to individual representatives from Dominion Power.

Mr. Adkins stated that they would.

Mayor Harris stated that would give the residents a clearer understanding and would be more beneficial than this slideshow.

Mr. Danko asked if there would be any products that they would have to buy monthly.

Mr. Poteet stated the ongoing operating and maintenance such as lube oil, etc.

Mr. Danko stated that it could be done locally and suggested finding someone to make the parts to get jobs here.

Mr. Poteet agreed.

Mayor Harris suggested the Vocational School in Tazewell and SWCC.

Mr. Crews stated that they were already working the Community College and UVA Wise/SWCC to put together a program to help support it.

Special Presentation: Cardinal Study Update – Charlie Stacy (VDEA Report attached at the end of the minutes)

Mr. Stacy stated that this was a study done free of charge from VEDA (Virginia Economic Developers Association) to help communities understand problems in their area. He stated that he had forwarded a copy to Mr. Watson and would be happy to share

copies with the public. He stated that one thing that was discussed was that businesses looked for recreation and amenities to locate in an area. He stated that Tazewell County did not have those kinds of things but did well in keeping small businesses. He asked what they considered community development to be. On a side note, he stated that Mike Thompson announced his retirement.

Mr. Danko asked which way he would lean towards.

Mr. Stacy stated that right now they needed to work with what they had. He stated that there were skilled workers (displaced workers) who could do the construction job if the hydro pump station was located in Tazewell County.

Mr. Riffe asked if they came to Bluefield, Virginia.

Mr. Stacy stated that they stayed at Comfort Inn and visited the Bluestone and Industrial Park.

Mr. Riffe asked what they said about Tazewell.

Mr. Stacy stated that Tazewell had some highlights going on right now and it drew more attention.

Mr. Riffe stated that we were lacking in our website.

Mr. Presley stated that things could be implemented immediately and it was amazing how people judged based on a website. He stated that it needed to be modern day.

Citizen Request: Bluefield, Virginia Youth League Donation Request – Ron Holt

Mr. Holt stated that there was a letter from the Bluefield, Virginia Youth League board discussing a new score board. He stated that the one they presently had was from the 1950's and still worked but they were looking to replace it. He stated that there was not a lot for our kids to do and they owed it to them to develop and make it the best it could be to keep them away from drugs. He stated that they had also requested money from Charlie Stacy and Maggie Asbury. He suggested giving them \$1k.

Mayor Harris asked Mr. Watson for his input.

Mr. Watson stated that it was a non-budgeted item and would have to be taken out of contingency. He suggested that they wait before giving a donation to make sure all of the money was raised.

Mr. Holt stated that this investment would last for 20+ years. He made a motion to approve donating \$1k when the time came. Mr. Presley seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Bailey Log House Committee Update – Lynn Burnette

Mrs. Burnette showed council a hat and told them it was the future for Bluefield, Virginia. She stated that she had 3 coal mines who wanted to meet and help her if she would put up a coal miner who was in the mines. She stated that there were 8-10 businesses that wanted to sponsor the Bailey Log House. She stated that she had received 3 grants and that they raised the money for themselves. She stated that they had received a new sound system which was put in and to not forget what they had here.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS & REPORTS

None.

NEW BUSINESS & REPORTS

None.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

Harry Thompson stated that he had lived here all of his life and was concerned that they had allowed the power company to build a high power voltage system at the Divides to be divided into a grid. He stated that Dominion wanted to generate more but we would be sending it out and not keeping it in the area. He stated that our electricity was shipped to other areas which did not help us. He stated that if it was kept at home it would bring in manufacturing.

Mayor Harris stated that the citizens would be impressed at their next meeting because they had really done their homework and would be available to answer questions.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

Work Session Meeting Recordings Discussion, POSSIBLE VOTE

Mr. Watson stated that they were currently recording both the Work Sessions and Town Meetings and wanted to open it up for discussion.

Mr. Riffe stated that he brought this issue up because he was not sure if they needed to put the Work Sessions out there when council was hashing things out amongst themselves.

Mr. Presley stated that he did not mind for the people to see it.

Mr. Jones agreed with Mr. Riffe and that nothing was voted on during Work Sessions.

Mr. Presley stated that nothing was secretive and that the citizens should know what they were talking about since they voted them into office.

Mr. Holt agreed with Mr. Riffe and stated that Council Meetings were a combination of both meetings.

Mayor Harris stated that he did not see anything wrong with videoing the Work Sessions as well.

Mr. Riffe made a motion to stop recording the Work Sessions. Mr. Jones seconded the motion.

Mayor Harris asked for a Roll Call Vote.

ROLL CALL VOTE

Vice-Mayor Riffe:	Yes
Councilmember Presley:	No
Councilmember Holt:	Yes
Mayor Harris:	No
Councilmember Jones:	Yes
Councilmember Danko:	No

The motion failed 3-3 by Roll Call Vote.

Holiday Request Time OFF, VOTE

Mr. Watson stated that staff had been doing such a great job that he would like to ask for additional days off and for those who had to work, they would receive extra time. He asked for the following days off:

- November 24th, December 26th and January 2nd

He stated that these days off had been asked for in the past.

Mr. Holt made a motion to approve the above additional days off. Mr. Presley seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

December 26, 2017 Council Meeting

Mr. Watson asked that the December 26th Council Meeting be cancelled since it was the day after Christmas.

Mr. Holt made a motion to cancel the December 26th Council Meeting. Mr. Presley seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

Red Cross Blood Drive

Mr. Watson stated that the Red Cross would be set up in the Council Chambers on October 25th.

Student Government Day

Mr. Watson stated that Student Government Day would be on Thursday, October 26th.

Town Offices Closed

Mr. Watson stated that Town Offices would be closed on Friday, November 10th for Veterans Day. He stated that Friday's trash would be picked up on Thursday, November 9th.

Christmas Tree Lighting

Mr. Watson stated that the Christmas Tree Lighting would be held on Saturday, November 18th at 6 p.m. in Jack Asbury Square.

Christmas Parade

Mr. Watson stated that the Christmas Parade would be held on Saturday, December 9th at 4 p.m. He stated that it was moved because of the football playoffs.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Mr. Danko had none.

Mr. Jones had none.

Mr. Holt stated that there was a concern due to the increase in accidents since the blinking yellow lights on 460 had been installed. He asked if anything could be done about it.

Mr. Watson stated that he had reached out to VDOT and there had been 4 accidents with one serious since the change. He stated that the Town had since been knocked out of the safety side of the VDOT grant.

Mr. Holt stated that the Foundation Dinner was great and suggested they reach out to the Sanders House to see if they would like the old scoreboard.

Mr. Presley asked to have a budget work session in December and that the website be updated. He stated that he had received complaints concerning the line striping in front of Dairy Queen and asked that something be put out explaining why it was done like that. He stated that they needed to talk about donations again and also asked to talk about term limits at the next meeting with a vote.

Mayor Harris asked staff to research term limits and bring it back.

Mr. Freedman stated that he would like to make sure the majority wanted to move forward with term limits before doing anything else. He stated that it would require a charter amendment.

Mr. Presley asked him to bring back more information at the next meeting so that it could be discussed.

Mr. Riffe stated that he was enjoying the new paving and that he had also received some complaints concerning the line striping in front of Dairy Queen and they needed to tell them why it was done like that.

Mr. Presley stated that people were not use to change.

Mr. Riffe stated that he would like for them to tell why it was like that.

Mr. Watson stated that it was impossible for them to win an argument and that most of it was a misunderstanding. He stated that if people would call and ask then staff could tell them. He stated that staff met with all property owners and asked them what they would like and this was the result of it.

Mr. Presley suggested writing something up to tell the people.

Mayor Harris stated that he was downtown 6 days per week and had not heard anything about it.

Mr. Watson stated that it turned into a Facebook issue.

Mayor Harris stated that the paving crew did a wonderful job and welcomed Mr. Danko back and stated that he hoped he was on the road to recovery.

ATTORNEY REPORT

Comcast Franchise Ordinance, VOTE – 2nd Reading, Motion to Read by Title Only; VOTE – to adopt the ordinance.

Mr. Freedman stated that he needed a vote to do the 2nd Reading by Title only on the Comcast Franchise Ordinance

Mr. Holt made a motion to read by title only. Mr. Presley seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

Mr. Freedman read by title only:

An Ordinance granting a non-exclusive cable franchise to Comcast of the South to permit such franchisee to construct and operate a cable system in the public rights-of-way within the corporate limits of the Town of Bluefield, Virginia, and to permit such franchisee to provide cable services over such cable system.

Mr. Freedman stated that the next vote was to adopt the ordinance.

Mr. Holt made a motion to adopt the Comcast Franchise Ordinance. Mr. Presley seconded the motion.

Mayor Harris called for a Roll Call Vote.

ROLL CALL VOTE

Vice-Mayor Riffe:	Yes
Councilmember Presley:	Yes
Councilmember Holt:	Yes
Mayor Harris:	Yes
Councilmember Jones:	Yes
Councilmember Danko:	Yes

The motion passed unanimously by Roll Call Vote.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mayor Harris stated that Charlie Stacy would be joining them in the Executive Session. He asked for a Roll Call Vote to enter into Executive Session.

ROLL CALL VOTE

Vice-Mayor Riffe:	Yes
Councilmember Presley:	Yes
Councilmember Holt:	Yes
Mayor Harris:	Yes
Councilmember Jones:	Yes
Councilmember Danko:	Yes

The motion passed unanimously by Roll Call Vote.

Mrs. Catron read the following Executive Session: *Code of Virginia Section 2.2-3711-A-1.3 and Section 2.2-3711-A-1.6.*

Discussion or consideration of the acquisition of real property for a public purpose, or of the disposition of publicly held real property, where discussion in an open meeting would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the public body.

The investing of public funds where competition or bargaining is involved, where, if made public initially, the financial interest of the government unit would be adversely affected.

Council entered into Executive Session at 8:55 p.m.

Councilmember Holt made a motion to enter out of Executive Session. Councilmember Presley seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

Councilmember Presley made a motion to adopt the following resolution certifying the Executive Session and Mrs. Catron read:

WHEREAS, the Town Council of Bluefield, Virginia has convened an executive meeting on this date pursuant to an affirmative recorded vote and in accordance with provisions of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act; and WHEREAS, Section 2.2-3712-D of The Code of Virginia requires a certification by the Town Council of Bluefield, Virginia that such session was conducted in conformity with Virginia law.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Town Council of Bluefield, Virginia hereby certifies that, to the best of each members knowledge, (I) only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements under this chapter and (ii) only such public business matters as were identified in the motion by which the closed meeting was convened were heard, discussed or considered in the meeting by the Town Council.

Adopted this 24th day of October.

Councilmember Holt seconded the motion.

ROLL CALL VOTE

Vice-Mayor Riffe:	Yes
Councilmember Presley:	Yes
Councilmember Holt:	Yes
Mayor Harris:	Yes
Councilmember Jones:	Yes
Councilmember Danko:	Yes

The motion passed unanimously by Roll Call Vote.

ADJOURN

Mr. Holt made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:29 p.m. Mr. Presley seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

Don Harris, Mayor

Lesley Catron, Town Clerk

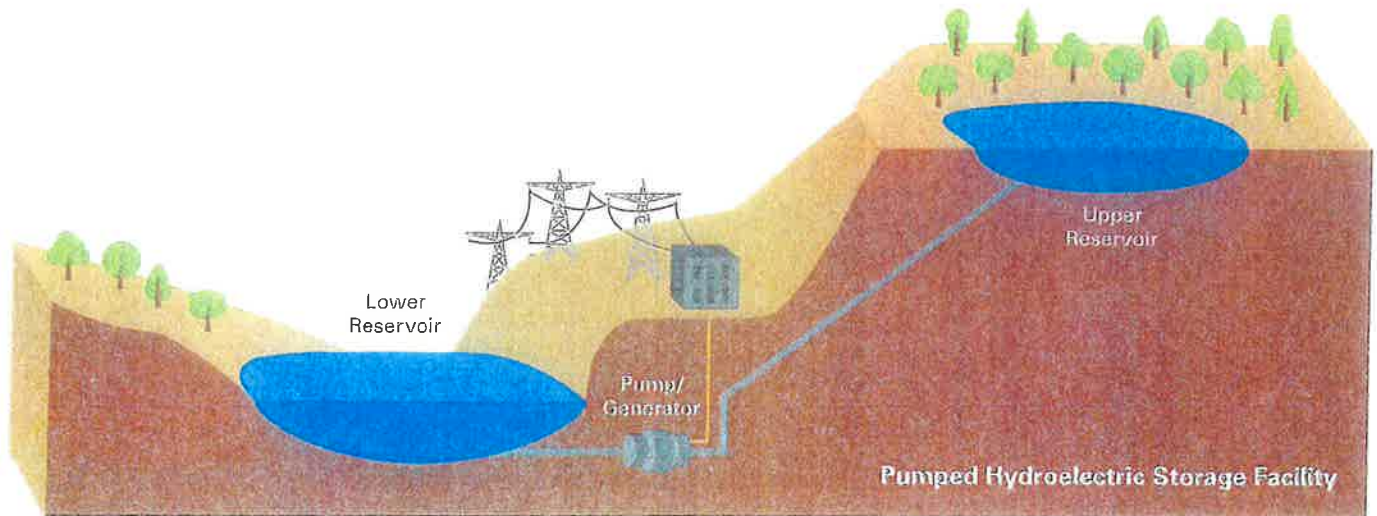
Powering Southwest Virginia

Pumped Hydroelectric Storage Power Station



Dominion Energy Virginia is considering the construction of a pumped hydroelectric storage power station in the coalfield region of Southwest Virginia.

According to a recent study by Chmura Economics & Analytics of Richmond, Virginia, the proposed \$2 billion project would generate significant economic benefits for both Southwest Virginia and the entire Commonwealth.



Development & Construction Phase (2017-2027)



2,083

Jobs in Southwest Virginia
during Construction



\$320 Million

Total Economic Benefit for
Southwest Virginia



\$2.0 Billion

Infrastructure
Investment

Ongoing Facility Operation (2028)



Up to 50

Permanent Jobs Created
by Station Operation



\$37 Million

Annual Economic Benefit
for Southwest Virginia



\$12 Million

Annual Local Tax Revenue
for Southwest Virginia

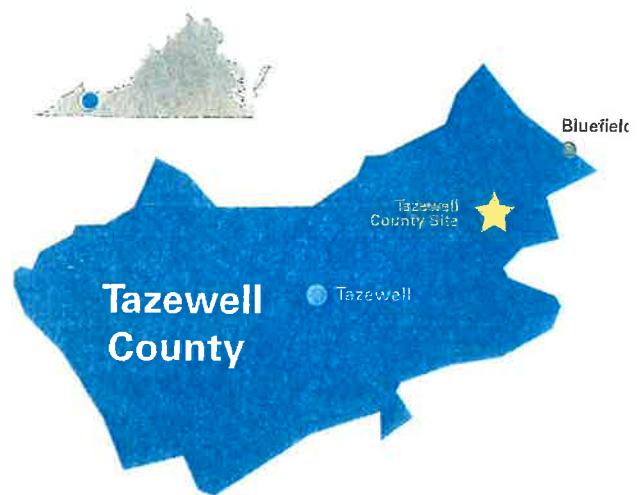
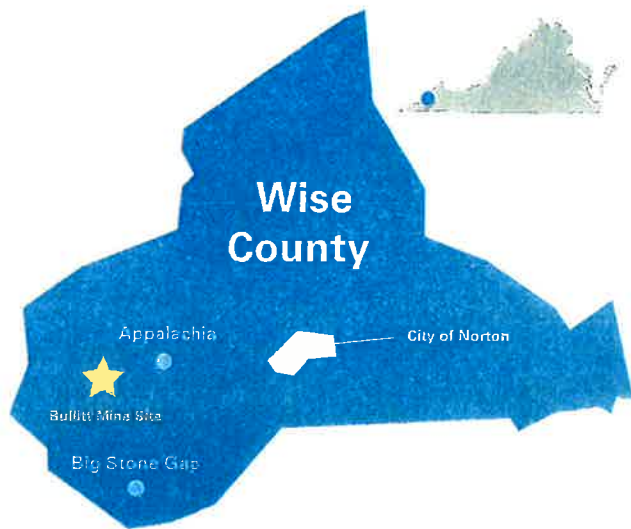
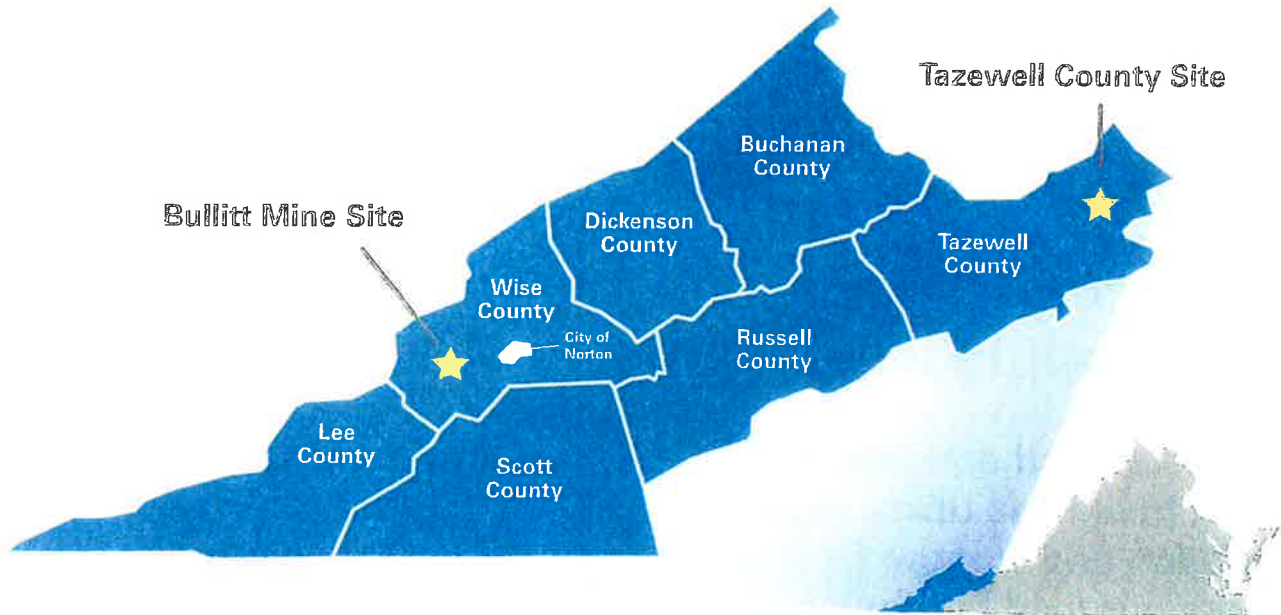
For more information about the proposed project, please visit: www.DominionEnergy.com/PoweringSWVA

Contact: poweringswva@dominionenergy.com • For media inquiries: (804) 771-6115

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Powering Southwest Virginia

The Coalfield Region



Dominion Energy welcomes you!

For more information, visit DominionEnergy.com/PoweringSWVA



Pumped Hydroelectric Storage Legislation

2017 Virginia General Assembly

Senate Bill 1418

Senator Chafin

House Bill 1760

Delegates Kilgore & Pillion

An act to amend and reenact §56-585.1 of the Code of Virginia relating to electric utility regulation; pumped hydroelectricity generation and storage facilities. Authorizes cost recovery for "one or more pumped hydroelectricity generation and storage facilities that utilize on-site or off-site renewable energy sources as all or a portion of their power source and such facilities and associated resources are located in the coalfield region of the Commonwealth as described in §56.2-6002, regardless of whether such facility is located within or without the utility's service territory."

Approved April 5, 2017

Effective Date July 1, 2017

This legislation deemed pumped hydroelectric storage in the coalfield region of Virginia is in the public interest.

For more information, visit DominionEnergy.com/PoweringSWVA



Pumped Hydroelectric Storage

What is pumped hydroelectric storage?

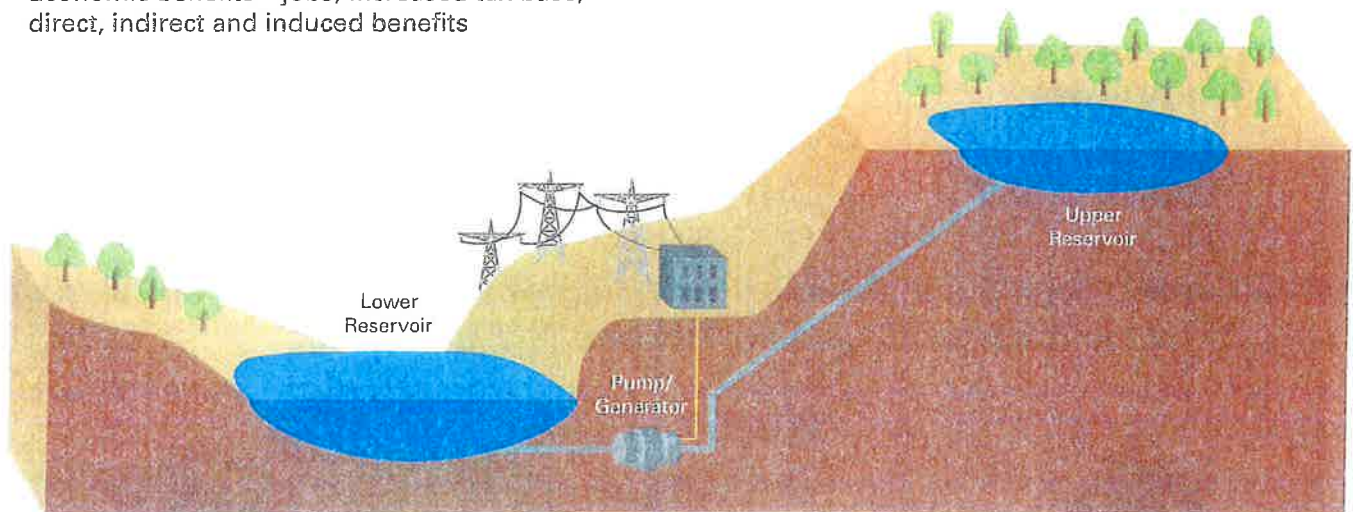
A type of hydroelectric power plant that can store energy. Generators can spin forward and backward to generate or use electricity to help balance the energy grid. Simple in concept, highly efficient, with minimal impact to the environment.

How does it work?

Pumped hydroelectric storage facilities act as large batteries that store energy. Power is used to pump water from a lower elevation reservoir up to a higher elevation reservoir providing grid stability. The water is stored in the upper reservoir until a later period when energy is in demand. At that point the water is allowed to flow downhill to a power generation facility where it spins turbines. The turbines turn generators that produce electric power that is then delivered to the electric grid.

Pumped hydroelectric storage benefits:

- Complements intermittent renewable generation
- Help maintain grid stability by balancing voltage levels
- Ability to store renewable energy for use during peak hours
- Mature, dependable technology
- Economic benefits – jobs, increased tax base, direct, indirect and induced benefits



Did you know?

The Bath County Pumped Storage Station is the largest pumped hydroelectric storage generation station in the world. With 3,003 Megawatts of total capacity - enough to power more than 750,000 homes!

For more information, visit [DominionEnergy.com/PoweringSWVA](https://www.dominionenergy.com/poweringswva)



Economic Impacts

A study conducted by Chmura Economic & Analytics found that the development and construction of a pumped hydroelectric storage project would have significant economic impacts in the Southwest region, from 2017 - 2027 including:



2,083

Jobs During
Development and
Construction



**\$320
Million**

Total Economic
Impact



**\$2.0
Billion**

Infrastructure
Investment

Additionally, once the potential station begins operations, the Southwest region will continue to receive annual benefits, including:



**Up to 50
Permanent
Station Jobs**



**\$37
Million**

Annual Economic
Impact



**\$12
Million**

Annual Local Tax
Revenue

NOTE: Values are approximate, based on economic modeling

For more information, visit [DominionEnergy.com/PoweringSWVA](https://www.dominionenergy.com/poweringSWVA)



Site Selection Criteria for a Pumped Hydroelectric Storage Facility

Key Considerations



Water Availability - Evaluation Of Potential Water Sources

- Initial system filling
 - Replenishing water lost via evaporation and seepage
-



Favorable Geographic Conditions

- Sufficient vertical relief between reservoirs - to maximize generation potential when water is released into the lower reservoir
 - Proximity to transmission - to minimize the cost of connecting the system to the grid
 - Suitable geology - evaluation of potential hazards to construction and operation, such as karst geologic formations
 - Land availability - exclusion of sites with competing land uses, such as recreation resources, wildlife management areas, conservation land, protective easements, etc.
-



Environmental And Cultural Concerns

- Wild and scenic rivers, critical wetlands
- Concentrated urban areas
- National cemeteries and state or local parks
- Endangered species habitats
- Native American tribal lands

Proposed Wise County Site

Bullitt Mine

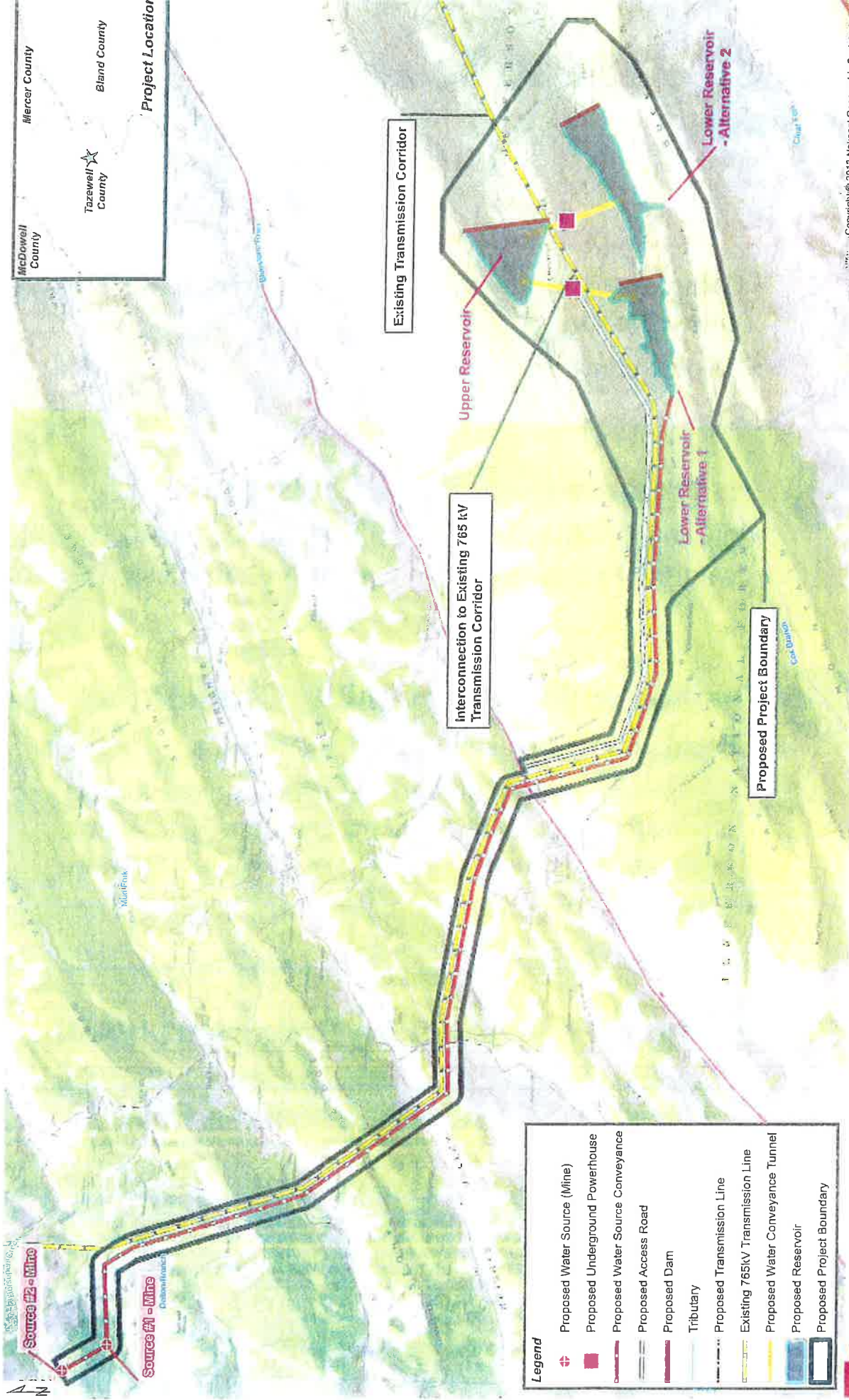


- Based on information from the Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy (DMME), the Bullitt Mine was identified as a top site for evaluation.
- This concept would entail pumping water from the abandoned mine cavity up to an surface reservoir and then allowing it to flow back into the mine cavity, passing through a turbine to produce electricity. The abandoned mine would act as a lower reservoir until water is pumped back to the surface reservoir.
- Dominion has engaged with the Department of Mining and Minerals Engineering of Virginia Tech to evaluate the feasibility of using this concept.
- Virginia Tech will perform various studies, including hydrogeologic, mine stability, subsidence, water quality, impact of water cycling and validation of capacity of the mine.
- Once the study is completed in early 2018, a determination will be made on whether to pursue this site.

For more information, visit DominionEnergy.com/PoweringSWVA



Proposed Tazewell County Site



Development Schedule

An Overview



Site Selection Process:

- Complete site screening & risk ranking of all sites under consideration
 - Select initial sites
-



Preliminary Permit Application:

- Dominion Energy has filed a Preliminary Permit Application with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC)
-



Pre-Feasibility & Feasibility Studies:

- Begin an in-depth study of the initial sites
 - Complete a variety of studies including: geological, environmental, layout, electrical transmission/interconnect, construction cost estimates, and more
 - Select preferred site
-



Preliminary Application Document (PAD)

- Submit Preliminary Application Document (PAD) for preferred site to start FERC application process

Virginia City Hybrid Energy Center

Coal & Biomass

\$10

Million

annual property
tax payments

\$25

Million

annually for the
local economy

118

Jobs

for Southwest
Virginians

7.7

Million

tons of coal used
since 2012

45

Suppliers

of coal and biomass
from the region



Facts & Figures

- 600 Megawatts of Capacity, the equivalent of powering 150,000 homes
- Began operations in July 2012
- Uses coal & up to 20% biomass to fuel
- Utilizes advanced circulating fluidized bed technology

VCHEC Success Story: Use of Waste Coal in a Major Watershed Clean-Up Project

Virginia City Hybrid Energy Center's ability to use previously discarded waste coal to produce electricity has led to the clean-up of some of sites in Southwest Virginia. The waste coal, or GOB, was discarded in huge piles that blocked streambeds and caused acidic runoff, harming the environment. VCHEC was designed with a "circulating fluidized bed" technology that allows it to use GOB for fuel.

Did you know?

Since it began operation, the station has burned more than 2.5 million tons of GOB, allowing private companies to reclaim and restore the land and creeks.



The Straight Hollow A Pile **BEFORE** reclamation



The Straight Hollow A Pile **AFTER** reclamation

For more information, visit DominionEnergy.com/VCHEC



Our Environmental Commitment

Policy & Stewardship

Dominion Energy is fully committed to meeting its customers' energy needs in a manner consistent with a clean environment. We believe it is both good business practice and our duty to protect the natural and cultural resources of the communities we serve. In keeping with this belief, it is our policy to conduct our business in an environmentally responsible manner that protects the public, our employees and the earth that we all share.

- **Virginia City Hybrid Energy Center in Wise County designed to burn waste coal – GOB, helping cleanup legacy environmental hazards in SWVA**
- **Since it began operation in 2012, VCHEC has burned more than 2.5 million tons of GOB, allowing DMME and private companies to reclaim and restore the land and creeks**



Gob Pile Reclamation at McClure Creek in Dickenson County

Pumped Hydroelectric Storage

FEDERAL/STATE/LOCAL AGENCY	PERMIT, APPROVAL or CONSULTATION
Federal Energy Regulatory Agency (FERC)	FERC License, Environmental Report/EIS
U. S. Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE)	Clean Water Act Section 404 Permit Rivers and Harbors Act Section 10 Permit
U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)	Endangered Species Act Section 7 Consultations Migratory Bird Treaty Act Consultation
Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (VDEQ)	Virginia Water Protection Permit/Water Quality Certification Water Withdrawal Permit Construction Stormwater Permit
Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (VDGIF)	Protected Species Consultation
Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (VDCR)	Scenic Rivers Consultation Natural Heritage Program Consultation
Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS)	Protected Species Consultation
Virginia Department of Historic Resources (VDHR)	National Historic Preservation Act Section 106 Consultation – Archeological/Architectural Resources
Virginia Marine Resources Commission (VMRC)	River and Stream Crossing Permit Joint Permit Application
Native American Tribes	National Historic Preservation Act Section 106 Consultation
County/Local Governments	County/ Local Permits
Virginia State Corporation Commission (SCC)	Coordinated Environmental Review and Wetlands Review

For more information, visit DominionEnergy.com/PoweringSWVA



Community Involvement

Helping Those in Our Community



Dominion Energy
Charitable Foundation™

- Dominion Energy and the Dominion Energy Charitable Foundation annually award more than \$25 million to causes that protect the environment, promote education and help meet the needs of our neighbors.
- Dominion Energy employees volunteered 100,900 hours just last year.
- Employees have rolled up their sleeves to weatherize homes, build nature trails in parks, clean up waterways, construct access ramps for the handicapped and paint and repair school facilities.
- Since Project Plant It! was launched in 2007 more than 400,000 tree seedlings have been distributed to students. According to the Virginia Department of Forestry, this equates to over 1,000 acres of new forest if all of the seedlings are planted and grow to maturity.

Southwest Virginia Community Partnerships



**Emergency
Fuel Fund:**
Assisted 683
Homes Since 2008



Food Banks:
2 Million Meals
Since 2008



Health Care:
650 Individuals
Receive Health
Care

For more information, visit DominionEnergy.com/PoweringSWVA





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Energy®**

**For more information, visit
DominionEnergy.com/PoweringSWVA**

*Virginia Economic Developers Association
Cardinal Community Assistance Program*



*Tazewell County
Cardinal Visitation Team Report
August 21, 2017*

Introduction

At the request of the Tazewell County Board of Supervisors and the Tazewell County Industrial Development Authority, The Virginia Economic Developer's Association's Cardinal Assistance Program agreed to conduct a review of the Tazewell County program to validate efforts and offer suggestions for improvement. Formal application was filed with VEDA on December 19, 2016. Specifically, the Tazewell County request was to respond to the challenges of:

1. Diversifying the economic base of the community and to reduce their historic dependence on the coal industry.
2. Attracting new investment from the outside business community.
3. Validation of developing a tourism component to their economy.

The Cardinal Team of Jay Langston, Hugh Keogh and Dave Dickson were identified to respond to this request. Jay Langston was appointed to chair the Tazewell Cardinal Team effort.

Our principal community contact and host for this visit was Michael Thompson, Economic Development Director. It should be noted that Patricia Green, Tazewell County Administrator, accompanied us throughout our visit, as well. We had two productive days of discussion, tours and observation. We began our visit on Tuesday, July 25 at 2 pm concluding at 8 pm and then Wednesday, July 26 at 8:45 am through 2:45 pm.

What follows are our observations and recommendations for Tazewell County's economic development efforts. These thoughts are based on the Cardinal Team's substantial experience of over 100 years gained at the local, regional and state levels of economic development and government. Our mission is solely to be helpful to Tazewell's efforts in providing economic opportunity.

The Cardinal Team thanks all whom we met with during our visit. Everyone was most friendly, helpful and an unabashed advocate for the betterment of Tazewell County.

General Observations

1. Tazewell County is a modest sized community having a population of about 43,000. This population has remained relatively stagnant fluctuating between 50,000 and 40,000 since 1970. The historical population growth or reduction generally follows the fortunes of the coal industry and is currently exacerbated by the worldwide downturn in the use of coal. The current unemployment rate while higher than the average in Virginia is currently at 6.2%. With the expectation that the use of coal will remain well below historical high levels, economic diversification is imperative in order for the community to grow.
2. As a "coalfield" community, geography will always offer some barrier to new investors. Transportation infrastructure is adequate as evidenced by the two companies we visited who export most of their product out of the county. The beauty of the county cannot be denied, which offers favorable tourism activities for outdoor enthusiasts. These assets serve as amenities for traditional economic development businesses. We strongly encourage the continued effort in developing the existing tourism assets related to the Spearhead trails, the Back of the Dragon, the Clinch River and the historical Appalachian cultural assets that attract tourists. Community development efforts focused on increasing the basic business infrastructure, such as development of the new

Holiday Inn Express and Larry Blankenship's new brewery are crucial to not only tourists, but also serve as amenities for traditional economic development businesses.

3. The Team was impressed with the positive "community spirit" from the Board of Supervisors and Industrial Development Authority members we met with in regards to bringing the whole county along with economic development. All members seemed to be very proactive in their approach rather than sitting back waiting for something good to happen. This is very positive leadership.
4. The downtown nexus in Tazewell being developed will be helpful to visitors and investors. The Seven restaurant, new hotel and new local brewery will be a plus for the community because both are building quality of place assets.

Recommendations

1. It is imperative to keep site and building availability and information up-to-date. VEDP maintains a complete "catalog" of sites and buildings throughout Virginia. This information is often the starting point for a company looking to make a new investment. Tazewell has a wealth of information on the new Bluestone Business and Technology Center (and should). This is an excellent project and demonstrates the County's seriousness in business attraction. However, the Tazewell website does not offer any other properties.
2. As the shell building develops, keeping everyone informed of the progress and timetable for completion, as well as development of a plan for marketing the building is imperative.
3. The community needs to have a "plan" or philosophy about the selling or leasing of the new shell building. We assume it is to attract new outside investment and jobs. The County needs to be able to resist pressures to selling to the wrong type of enterprise. Does Tazewell have a relationship with an industrial/commercial realtor? It is worth exploring and Tazewell should be willing to consider compensating realtors that might bring you a deal for the building.
4. Natural gas would be an asset for Bluestone. Feasibility might be an issue, but we believe that a preliminary investigation should take place to quantify this. If feasible, we would suggest developing a CIP and performing due diligence to develop a plan to show how natural gas can be extended for a viable project.
5. Other than the Virginia Economic Development Partnership and the Virginia Coalfield Authority, we could not determine who (if any) other economic development related partners Tazewell relies upon. Any successful economic development effort becomes a "team" sport and communities must be proactive in keeping others informed about the advantages of Tazewell. Work to expand the County's "visibility." As alluded to with respect to realtors previously, this should include a broad network of players that have contact with potential prospects.
6. When you have a client "in-hand," work for clarity. During our visit, we would have benefitted from a clearly prepared map showing the towns, major transportation routes, and available properties. Once we left the Tazewell County Offices, it was difficult to understand where we were in the County. More than once some of us were disoriented

Site consultants and prospects need clear maps. The one provided in your packet is not serviceable in this regard. The Tazewell web site could use the same.

7. Make sure the Tazewell websites stay current. You have some 2014 tax rates referenced for example. Along these same lines, Tazewell should explore using social media, particularly as it relates to combining economic development with the tourism effort. These two worlds are becoming inextricably linked in traditional economic development due to the influence on workforce retention and recruitment. This effort can be subcontracted and does not have to be complex, but it does need to be fresh, periodically distributed and sustained. There is no better example of this than that undertaken by the Roanoke Regional Partnership, <http://www.roanoke.org/Home>, particularly the Roanoke Outside link within the homepage.
8. A crisp one-page quick facts sheet is a requirement for both prospect visitation and general marketing. It must be available in printed and electronic form. Information should include population, size of county, major transportation routes, unemployment rates, labor availability, numbers of new graduates from high school and college and their contact information, significant amenities, and major employers. A one page clear map should accompany this information as part of your basic handout. Clients do not need a stack of pamphlets unless asked for and the same applies for the website.
9. A pro-active business and industry visitation program needs to be established by the County. The major employers need to be visited regularly (twice a year, perhaps) to be current with issues they may have or expansions that might require your assistance. These visits should be low key and handled by your Director of Economic Development.
10. We encourage Tazewell to be a catalyst to create a major employer roundtable. This could be an excellent forum for a Chamber to organize and suggest you explore the concept. This can be either formal or informal, perhaps meeting on a quarterly basis. The atmosphere should be such that business can discuss matters of mutual interest. There must be a degree of confidentiality for this to be effective.
11. Broadband availability is another imperative. We know that there are issues about this service, but do not know enough about the details to comment other than it is a "must have" for growth. Can this be sought through Go Virginia? However unlikely it may be, it is worth bringing this to everyone's attention. Tazewell should explore every opportunity to provide broadband as widely as possible. It is an essential part of the business infrastructure.
12. We encourage the continued effort in developing the existing tourism assets related to the Spearhead trails, the Back of the Dragon, the Clinch River and the historical Appalachian cultural assets that attract tourists. Community development efforts in increasing the basic business infrastructure, such as development of the new Holiday Inn Express and Larry Blankenship's new brewery are crucial to not only tourists, but also serve as amenities for traditional economic development businesses. Contacting Marion about a collaborative marketing effort for anchoring both ends of the Back of the Dragon might be worth exploring and provide a good return on investment.
13. Making sure that the quality of place amenities are provided equal exposure in Tazewell's website and marketing materials is crucial in today's site location process. VEDP is frequently asked about restaurants, breweries, hotels, BnBs, biking trails,

outfitters and similar amenities by economic development prospects and site consultants alike. These amenities must be highlighted in your marketing materials.

14. Probably the most vexing issue to understand is the availability and quality of the workforce. This juxtaposition was clearly exposed in our meeting with two high value producing manufacturers who were delighted with their workforce only to be followed by other contacts who lamented the loss of the home grown local talent, the tainted picture presented by the news media of opioid usage, and the odd phenomenon of high wage earners in the coal industry uninterested in working in lesser paying jobs on the bet that coal will come back. Somehow, a well-crafted presentation of your labor force needs to be prepared. A confusing workforce picture will not serve the County's interests. We do not believe that a workforce being described as "more trainable than skilled" constitutes a successful branding concept. Along these lines, we recommend exploring possible opportunities for assistance within your Go Virginia region. Shannon Blevins knows both well since she is the Associate Vice Chancellor for Economic Development and Engagement, handles workforce issues at UVA Wise and serves as the Go Virginia regional council administrator. Explore opportunities for partnering with her and Randy Rose, VEDP's new business manager in the region for the Virginia Jobs Investment Program.
15. The number of Chambers of Commerce is problematic. We recommend consolidation of the Tazewell and Richlands chambers, which would provide more clout on business issues and a stronger ally for the county in pursuing economic development. Resist requests to subsidize the chambers; to be the "Voice of Business" locally, they must sink or swim on their own.
16. Higher education assets are more important than ever as purveyors of workforce credentials, certifications and degrees. Tazewell is fortunate to have a number of these assets in close proximity and should highlight Southwest Virginia Community College, Bluefield College, the Center of Excellence and UVA Wise in your discussion of workforce issues. Southwest Community College appears to be engaged as a willing workforce partner but it is imperative that they be a full and genuine resource to both existing industries and prospective ones. A representative from the college should be readily available to meet with prospects.
17. A partnership should also be forged with Commonwealth Center for Advanced Manufacturing (CCAM) to make the county more aware of the potential and value in becoming a haven for advanced manufacturing to assist with the diversification from coal. Tazewell's geography and culture are much less of a factor for advanced manufacturers than the quality of the workforce. A visit to Prince George by county officials would be valuable to understand the collaboration represented by the member companies and the higher education assets.
18. Raising the profile of Tazewell within the Commonwealth and especially the economic development community can only pay dividends. You should continue to be active in VEDA and continuously promote recognition in VCEDA. The County's new board member on VCEDA should help. Tazewell representatives should visit VEDP regularly (perhaps quarterly for a year or two) and not just for the Coalfields Region soiree during the General Assembly. As you put the pieces together internally, you need to be telling the story externally.

19. Your economic development effort should also include some form of outreach marketing, even given your limited resources, as we discussed at one point during our visit. For example, attending an out-of-state trade show with VEDP business managers to be seen as active in the marketplace can send a positive message within the Virginia economic development community. Also, be a strong advocate for VCEDA to continue to be more pro-active in marketing the region externally.

Moving Forward

Tazewell County is actively being all they can be. The County Board of Supervisors and Industrial Development Authority leadership is investing in your community by making marketable properties available and having a team in-place to take advantage of opportunities. We perceive that leadership has a good handle on things that will make Tazewell more attractive (availability of natural gas, broadband, recognizing the need to retain young talent) and is willing to expend political capital and financial resources to do so. County leaders realize that the coal economy will not always be the answer to sustain Tazewell and that diversification is necessary in the vision. Thus, we render our recommendations in the spirit of Tazewell's collaboration and are optimistic that success will be gained through the continued solid efforts of both Tazewell's leaders and general citizenry.

Respectfully submitted,

David G. Dickson
Hugh D. Keogh
Jay A. Langston, PhD

Appendix

Tazewell Participants in Cardinal Community Assistance Program

<u>Name</u>	<u>Affiliation</u>
Mike Thompson	Tazewell County Economic Development
Pam Warden	Tazewell County Economic Development
Patricia "Pat" Green	Tazewell County Administrator
David Woodard	Tazewell County Tourism
Eric Young	Tazewell County Attorney
Charlie Stacey	Tazewell County Board of Supervisors
Travis Hackworth	Tazewell County Board of Supervisors
Maggie Asbury	Tazewell County Board of Supervisors
Larry Blankenship	Tazewell County business person
Brian Beck	Appalachian Agency for Senior Citizens
Doyle Rasnick	Tazewell County Industrial Development Authority
Monte Rife	Tazewell County Industrial Development Authority
Darrell Addison	Tazewell County Industrial Development Authority
Curt Breeding	Tazewell County Industrial Development Authority
Kyle Hurt	Tazewell County Industrial Development Authority
Christa Glassburn	The PBE Group
Barry Reeves	Todano Mantis Corporation
Pam Meade	Tazewell Chamber of Commerce
Debbie Branton	Richlands Chamber of Commerce