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Press Release

October 18th, 2021

Hertford County Board of Commissioners host Assistant Secretary Flowers

The Hertford County Board of Commissioners hosted Assistant Secretary of Rural Economic Development Kenny Flowers and Economic Development Planner for Eastern Region Lee Padrick with the North Carolina Department of Commerce on Tuesday, October 18th, 2021. On behalf of the Board and following their guidance; Commissioner Leroy Douglas, County Manager David B. Cotton and Economic Development Director Kelly Bowers discussed the economic development needs of Hertford County. Assistant Secretary Flowers offered insight into the investments being made in rural North Carolina and the available funding options for Hertford County. Commissioner Douglas remarked that, “it was an insightful meeting and an important step in our efforts toward building relationships with economic development partners at the State level.”

We discussed a wide range of economic development topics, which would benefit our community to invest in to secure our future success. The group delved into the need for affordable housing across the entire spectrum of the market and how the need has been exasperated in rural eastern North Carolina. Assistant Secretary Flowers led the conversation about broadband being a major focus for Governor Cooper. He stated in light of the pandemic and the significant shift of major sectors of the workforce to telework, the importance of a strong and reliable broadband network came to the forefront. Assistant Secretary Flowers insightfully stated that broadband infrastructure should be prioritized and linked with utilities (water, wastewater, roads, etc.). Tourism and outdoor recreation were also discussed as resources to leverage for our community’s benefit. Commissioner Douglas and Ms. Bowers explained the need for public access points along the Chowan River. There are numerous natural and historic resources, which we will invest in and advertise in target markets. The meeting ended on a promise to continue to work together for the economic prosperity of Hertford County and rural eastern North Carolina.



Pictured (left to right): Kelly Bowers, Economic Development Director, Commissioner Leroy Douglas, Lee Padrick, Economic Development Planner & Assistant Secretary Kenny Flowers

Following the meeting, Assistant Secretary Flowers was given a guided tour of Hertford County. This time investment provided the Assistant Secretary with a more complete picture and understanding of the economic development needs of Hertford County.

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