

Welcome

- **Rogard Ross, Chair, [Chesapeake Environmental Improvement Council](#)**
 - Rogard Ross welcomed attendees to the first Chesapeake Conservation Conference. He provided some history of Chesapeake and an outline of environmental challenges lying ahead.
 - Highlighted predictions of the City's population to reach 280,000 by 2040 and sea level rise of 1.5 feet by 2050.

Comprehensive Plan Introduction

- **Mark Woodward, Comprehensive Planning Administrator, [Chesapeake Planning Department](#)**
 - Mark Woodward provided an overview of the Comprehensive Plan and touched upon the two formal amendments to the plan, the Dominion Boulevard Corridor Study and Economic Development Strategic Plan and the Frank T. Williams Farm Tract Coastal Virginia Commerce Park.
 - Comprehensive Plan is updated every five years and the City has plans to start this update in 2020. A key part of the plan is the Land Use plan, designating parts of the City as urban, suburban, or rural. The plan's Vision Statement promotes an environmental vision for the City. The 2nd chapter of the plan is focused on Responsible Growth; the 3rd chapter is about Infrastructure; the 4th chapter addresses Quality of Life issues.
 - The next update of the plan should address issues such as sea level rise, flood plain management, shoreline protection, open space and agricultural preservation, the Naval Auxiliary Landing Field (NALF) Fentress Encroachment Protection.
 - Focus areas include: improving our FEMA rating; strategic land acquisition; infrastructure that is sensitive to natural resources; quality of life; preparing for an industrial waterfront study; solid waste management.
 - The City has adopted a formal Solar Energy Policy and has work underway or pending on the Great Bridge Overlap District, Indian River Small Area Plan, and a City-wide Trails and Open Space Plan
 - City has a new City Manager, Christopher Price who is engaging the City Council on visioning.

Parks and Natural Areas Panel: (Click [here](#) for panel bios)

Lauren Ragsac served as moderator and introduced each panelist.

- **Michael D. Barber, Director, [Chesapeake Parks, Recreation and Tourism](#)**
 - Many improvements to parks and community center areas have been undertaken including
 - The creation of two new parks.
 - A Memorandum of Understanding with the school system to improve and increase citizen services.
 - We have a diverse park system that includes urban, pocket and natural park spaces.
 - The Parks, Recreation and Tourism (PRT) mission is to provide services to all and improve and care for our natural areas, as well as to support businesses

and development in Chesapeake. Many jobs and responsibilities, including historical services, have been consolidated under PRT:

- City's Visitor Center
 - athletics
 - many Boards and Commissions
 - municipal facility services including maintenance, housekeeping, and landscaping
 - Some of Chesapeake's unique parks and open spaces include:
 - Camellia Cove at the Arboretum, which has received some international recognition.
 - The Dismal Swamp Canal Trail, which offers many opportunities like nature hikes and birdwatching. One big goal for this trail is connectivity, and developing ways for everyone to be connected to parks by a short walk.
 - Northwest River Park, which features the Marjorie Rein walkway and overlook currently under renovation.
 - Additional park spaces with recent or current improvement projects include Elizabeth River Park; the Battlefield Park overlook; Plymouth Park; the Western Branch trail; and numerous playgrounds and park shelters.
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- **Rebecca Gwynn, Asst. Chief, Wildlife Resources Div., Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries**
 - The goals of the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (VDGIF) are to conserve and manage land resources; connect people to the outdoors; and protect people and property.
 - One location that the VDGIF manages is the Cavalier Wildlife Management Area (CWMA). Located in the southwest corner of Virginia, it was purchased in 2005 as a wetlands restoration project and for providing recreation in a needed area. There are two parts to this area, including the site adjacent to the Dismal Swamp Canal Trail. There is also a 9,000 year old archaeological site on the property.
 - There are three main goals the VDGIF focuses on for managing this wildlife area:
 - Species of Greatest Conservation Need: As of 2014, 883 species fall into this category. The watershed is home to approximately 50 of them, 36 of which are priority. One such species includes the canebrake rattlesnake. This protected species has lost 80% of its habitat and range due to fragmentation and loss of habitat, as well as persecution. Chesapeake, Suffolk and Virginia Beach are a stronghold for this snake species.
 - Habitat Management and Restoration: The CWMA is 75% forest, and one of the original goals has been to help restore the Atlantic White Cedar. Plantings have taken place for this tree population as it provides an important nesting habitat. The ongoing hydrologic and reforestation project on 3,783 acres, funded in part by grants and Hurricane Sandy funding, has seen 29 weirs installed that help drain ditches. This assists in slowing water movement in an effort to prevent flooding.
 - Wildlife Watching: The CWMA offers much that draws people to Virginia to see wildlife. It is a part of the Virginia Bird and Wildlife Trail, and provides

eco-tourism and citizen science opportunities. Nationwide, eco-tourism is a big business, engaging over one million people in Virginia.

- Collaborative opportunities with other organizations include:
 - Maintaining wildlife corridors, which aligns with implementing City-wide trail systems.
 - Improving buffers to natural areas by avoiding construction up to borders of natural areas.
 - Evaluate recreation that impacts wildlife and communities.
 - Hydrologic restoration.
 - Evaluate groundwater mining.
 - Identifying new places and needs for conservation.

- **Chris Lowie, Manager, Great Dismal Swamp Wildlife Refuge, US Fish and Wildlife Service**
 - The Great Dismal Swamp Wildlife Refuge was established in 1974 by Congress to protect the ecosystem and perpetuate a diversity of life. It is unique in its conservation approach as having a 'landscape level' focus and purpose.
 - The Great Dismal Swamp encompasses almost 113,000 acres, 50,000 of which are in Chesapeake. It features Lake Drummond, the largest natural lake in Virginia. This forested wetland has a history of ditching and draining that has altered it over time.
 - Hydrology restoration will protect the swamp. This is achieved by re-wetting the peat soil. The peat soil is important because it can filter pollutants and sequesters carbon much like a sponge.
 - The Great Dismal Swamp Wildlife Refuge also offers many recreation opportunities like hunting, fishing, education, photography, a boat launch and 50 miles of trails. It has boat access from Ballahack Road in Chesapeake as well as from Suffolk.
 - Priorities and collaborative opportunities that benefit both wildlife and people include:
 - Adopting Smart Growth practices.
 - Protecting Open Space.
 - Wildlife crossings across Route 17 and through the Northwest River.
 - Watershed are important corridors that have many types of potential for wildlife, recreation, and urban uses.
 - Watershed protection, such as for the Northwest River.
 - Developing "Green infrastructure".

- **Tammy Hill, Chair, Chesapeake Bicycle and Trails Advisory Committee**
 - This Committee advises the City on trails and gives recommendations on features like safety, maintenance, and signage. One example is addressing a blind spot where the Veterans Bridge meets Bainbridge Boulevard.
 - Goals of the Committee include promoting regional bike and trail opportunities; advocating for alternative transportation; and promoting community education on the benefits of trails.

- Trails are important for children's health and play, and they provide safe routes to school.
- Bicycling and walking improve health and address nation's obesity problem; current obesity rate is 18.5% and it increases with age.
- Some trail examples and activities include:
 - Indian River Park, one of Chesapeake's parks with trails ideal for bike riding.
 - Waterways are trails! There are plenty of opportunities to enjoy them such as for kayaking.
- BikeFest is scheduled for May 3rd.
- The Chesapeake Bicycle and Trails Advisory Committee meets on the 4th Monday of each month.
- Opportunities for trail improvements and collaboration include:
 - Creating more sidewalks throughout the City, such as on Great Bridge Boulevard. This would benefit those who use sidewalks to commute to work.
 - Extending sidewalks along roads such as Cedar Road.

Questions/Answers:

For Tammy Hill/Bicycle and Trails Advisory Committee: *What is one of your greatest concerns?*

- Lack of sidewalks, for example along Great Bridge Boulevard
- Worrisome to see kids along the roads busy with car traffic.

Are you seeing improvements in water quality from your restoration projects?

- Chris Lowie/Great Dismal and Rebecca Gwynn/VDGIF both indicated results are still pending.

What issues do you see with the development of the Frank T. Williams site located between the Great Dismal Swamp and the Cavalier Wildlife Management Area?

- Rebecca Gwynn/VDGIF: VDGIF submitted formal comments and recommendation about its concerns during the approval process for the site.

What are you doing to deal with invasive species?

- Mike Barber/Parks, Recreation and Tourism: we look for areas to strategically maintain invasives throughout the parks, using both hand-picking and spraying methods. Master Gardeners and other volunteer groups assist with this process.
- Rebecca Gwynn/VDGIF: Manual removal and spraying are methods used in the Cavalier Wildlife Management Area.
- Rebecca Gwynn/VDGIF: There has been an increase in invasive species along roads in the Great Dismal Swamp. Two internships involved in effort to survey and map invasive species; volunteer program provides additional support.

For Rebecca Gwynn/VDGIF: *Any info on archaeological site at the Cavalier Wildlife Management Area?*

- The archaeological site on the property is currently not excavated. Human remains and tools such as arrowheads have been found, which cannot be removed. An opportunity to further explore this site with historical organizations is welcome.

For Mike Barber/Parks, Recreation and Tourism: *How will you improve pedestrian access to the future park and kayak launch along the Indian River (Heron Landing Park)?*

- The Chesapeake Planning Department has included this topic as part of their Indian River Small Area Plan study

For Mike Barber/Parks, Recreation and Tourism: *What is the state of horse trails in at Heritage Park?*

- Parks Recreation and Tourism is reviewing the development and maintenance of a horse trail system in Chesapeake. Funding is available and planning is underway.
- Working in conjunction with plans for new police and fire station.

Land and Water Conservation Panel: (Click [here](#) for panel bios)

Heather Barlow served as moderator and introduced each panelist.

- **Barbara Brumbaugh, Environmental Program Manager, Chesapeake Public Works**
 - Public Works is responsible for the construction, repair, replacement and maintenance of public infrastructure. Other public services include waste management, recycling, environmental quality/regulatory compliance, and emergency (storm, natural disaster) response.
 - Stormwater Management Programs in Chesapeake include
 - Engineering large capital projects for drainage, flooding and water quality.
 - Maintaining and repairing pipes, ditches, structures, and BMPs.
 - Street sweeping.
 - Specialized contractual work.
 - Planning and scheduling small projects in house.
 - Environmental Quality regulatory compliance including the adhering to City's Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit, inspections of construction sites, dry weather screening and inspections, lake management, investigation of pollution incidents, and emergency spill response.
 - Water Quality Monitoring.
 - Stormwater Public Outreach and Education
 - Have a four year partnership with Elizabeth River Project for education and restoration as part of the River Star Home program.
 - Stormwater Goals and Priorities which in addition to the above include preventing flooding and property loss, resilience to tidal and non-tidal events, meeting increase demand for service, and maintaining excellent customer service.
 - Looking ahead
 - Continue to pursue available grant funding (i.e. SLAF, FEMA, HUD, and NFWF).
 - Add real-time flood sensors to the City's existing tide gauge network.
 - Continue to adapt by updating development standards to be more protective.

- Continue to partner with environmental non-profits for homeowner engagement and actions on private property.
 - Expand land conservation programs when funding and opportunities are available.
 - Continue to purchase repetitive flooding properties in low-lying areas for conservation.
 - Reforestation of forested buffer creation on conserved parcels.
 - Partner with VDOT or other localities on stormwater and resilience projects.
 - Expand on regional efforts in coastal resiliency planning and outreach.
 - Public-private partnerships.
 - Infrastructure improvements through the development process.
 - Continue to support the HRSD SWIFT Program to meet water quality goals.

- **Brian Van Eerden, Director, Virginia Pinelands Program, The Nature Conservancy**
 - Provided overview of conservation lands in Chesapeake, mainly adjacent to Great Dismal Swamp and along the Northwest River and North Landing River watersheds.
 - Addressed the Southern River (Northwest River and North Landing River) that drain into the Albemarle Sound.
 - Identified target conservation corridors.
 - From the draft 2010 Urban Forest Management Plan, the value of Chesapeake's forest land (excluding the Great Dismal Swamp National Wildlife Refuge) was \$883 million.
 - Forested lands reduce stormwater runoff.
 - Forested land helps protect quality of City's drinking water supply, which takes water from the Northwest River.
 - Green Infrastructure (such as tree planting) is critical.
 - City should plan to Advance Forest Conservation
 - Support science to inform return on investment of forest conservation projects.
 - Include forestland in City infrastructure planning.
 - Incentivize landowners to protect forests.

- **Cory Hoar, Conservation Specialist, Virginia Dare Soil and Water Conservation District**
 - Virginia Dare is one of 47 Soil and Water Conservation Districts defined in Virginia. Covers Cities of Chesapeake and Virginia Beach.
 - Offers
 - Environmental education opportunities.
 - Technical assistance with VA agricultural BMP cost share program.
 - Used motor oil recycling.
 - Used tire recycling.
 - Established the Southeast Virginia Farmers 20/20 Club.
 - Conservation planning assistance and approval of farm plans.
 - Virginia Conservation Assistance Program.

- An urban cost-share program that provides financial incentives and technical and educational assistance to property owners installing eligible Best Management Practices (BMPs)
 - Moving forward in Chesapeake
 - Would like to see more farm land with nutrient management plans and cover crops.
 - Less continued housing development.
- **Tanner Council, Hampton Roads Grassroots Manager, Chesapeake Bay Foundation**
 - Saving the Bay begins with your waterway.
 - Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) has 274,000 members and 189 full time staff.
 - Brock Environmental Center in Virginia Beach is one of the greenest buildings in the country; one of only five buildings in the world to meet the Living Building Challenge.
 - Chesapeake Bay provides great value for tourism and recreation including fishing, kayaking, and relaxing.
 - Bay has bragging rights on its quality oyster but reality is many shellfish areas are closed due to pollution.
 - 13,000 miles of Virginia streams and rivers fail water quality standards due to sediment and nutrient pollution, causing algal blooms and dead zones.
 - Focused on Clean Water Blue Print to clean up the river and the Bay.
 - CBF works on environmental education, Clean the Bay Day, oyster restoration, sea level rise, shoreline restoration, agricultural solutions, and advocacy.
 - Clean Water Captains are Bay ambassadors.
 - CBF ask is for everyone to stay informed on local conservation issues.

Home and Garden Panel: (Click [here](#) for panel bios)

Becky Greenwald served as moderator and introduced each panelist.

- **Mike Andruczyk, Senior Extension Agent, Virginia Cooperative Extension Office/Chesapeake Master Gardeners**
 - The Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE) is a partnership with Virginia Tech and Virginia State University, promoting research-based information through their agents and Master Gardener volunteers.
 - The Chesapeake Office agents are:
 - Watson Lawrence – Agriculture
 - Mike Andruczyk – Horticulture
 - Jocelyn Dailey- Pearson - 4-H Youth Development
 - Elizabeth Mundoma – Family and Consumer Science
 - They provide education and training on plant health, soil and water quality, food safety, pest management, new crops, and other aspects of sustainable practice for farms, homes, gardens and lawns.
 - VCE partners with other groups for education opportunities through events, brochures, and display gardens.

- Camellia Society, Virginia Horticulture Society, Healthy Chesapeake, Chesapeake PRT, Chesapeake Public Schools, Chesapeake Public Library, Chesapeake Public Works, and the CEIC.
 - Mike also oversees the Chesapeake Master Gardener program. Interns receive 60 hours of class training in accordance with VT/VSU/VCE guidelines.
 - Once those hours are completed, interns must fulfill a required additional 50 hours of volunteer work to be certified as a Master Gardener.
 - To maintain that status, MGs must fulfill 20 volunteer hours of promoting education and eight hours of continuing education.
 - Chesapeake Master Gardeners participate in various City and regional projects.
- **Jason Brown, Public Information Coordinator, Chesapeake Public Works**
 - Public Works Department's mission is to engage with the public about department services.
 - Public Works is the 2nd largest City department with 450 employees.
 - The department handles over 133,000 service requests per year, offers 300 different services, manages 160 bridges throughout the City, maintains 2,345 lane miles of city streets, 2,700 miles of drainage ditches, 1,100 miles of stormwater pipes, and oversees waste management and recycling.
 - Residents are urged to reach out to City Council to share your thoughts on the future of recycling. Current recycling contract runs through June 30th.
 - Jason also coordinates Chesapeake Recycles Day, where residents can drop off recycling, electronics and hazardous materials, oversees the Adopt a Highway and Adopt a Garden programs, and oversees Sign Sweeper program, where trained volunteers remove illegally placed signs on public right-of-way.
- **Carol Warren, Vice President, Friends of Indian River**
 - Friends of Indian River, which was formed in 2012 with nine core members, has grown to 50. The mission of the group is to improve the quality of life and environment in the historic Indian River community.
 - The community includes areas to the north and south of the one-mile section of Indian River Road in Chesapeake. The area has 2,500 residents, 600 acres of marshlands, and nine miles of shoreline.
 - The group participates in the City *Adopt a Highway* and *Adopt a Garden* programs.
 - They perform quarterly clean-ups on Indian River Road.
 - Developed and maintain four gardens adjacent to the Indian River/Oaklette Bridge.
 - They have a strong partnership with Chesapeake Parks, Recreation and Tourism (PRT). They began with the Adopt a Park Program, adopting Indian River Park and advocating for improved access and nature trails. In 2014/2015, they also created a Native Plant Garden in the newly redesigned entrance area. They continue to maintain the garden with partners from the Master Gardeners, Master Naturalist and other community service groups.
 - They have also worked with PRT to procure land for a public kayak launch off Indian River Road, which is still a work in progress.

- They advocated for a park in the Plymouth Park community. What once was an open field is now a park with a playground, walking trail, and view to the Indian River.
 - They have worked with the Elizabeth River Project (ERP) and Chesapeake Bay Foundation to establish five oyster reefs in the Indian River. They are partnering with ERP to provide funding to residents for lawn makeovers.
 - The group holds monthly meetings with speakers from the City, community partners, and environmental or horticulture specialists, providing community education.
 - As a group they attend City Council and Town Hall Meeting, advocating for their community.
 - Target Goals are:
 - Work toward developing a “Downtown Indian River” look and feel.
 - Better shopping options and improvements to the Indian River Shopping Center.
 - Increased parks and green spaces.
 - Increased tree canopy.
 - You can follow the Friends of Indian River on Facebook, their website, or contact by email.
- **Calib Miller, Food Connection Program Manager, Healthy Chesapeake**
 - Healthy Chesapeake was created as a 501c3 organization as a partnership with The City of Chesapeake, Chesapeake Health Department, and Southeastern Virginia Community Foundation, with the mission of improving the population health by identifying needs and improving resources. Projects include:
 - Garden 2 Table - a network of 13 community gardens.
 - Food Pharmacy – providing food as medicine for those with dietary related health issues, while also providing nutrition and food prep information.
 - Food Hub –acquired a 6,059 square foot building to be a safe food storage and distribution site.
 - Targets need in food deserts as identified by the USDA. Food deserts also overlap with environmental and social concerns.
 - They are a network of 60+ community partners and are open to working with others.
 - Get involved, show up, contact and donate to Healthy Chesapeake.

Questions/Answers:

For Jason Brown/Public Works- *What are our recycling options post June 30th?*

- Retain existing program with some changes with a five-year contract.
- Create new model for drop-off locations.
- NO service at all, but unlikely.
- He encouraged residents to share their thoughts on the program and whether they are willing to pay a fee for the added cost.

Follow-up question - *Is a public forum planned on the subject?*

- No current plans. If you would like to suggest that, call Jason and he will share the feedback with City Council and City Manager.

Suggestion from audience: A comment was made regarding the problems with single-stream recycling. A suggestion was made to work with other localities to develop a regional facility for a regional collaborative approach.

Question for Calib Miller/Healthy Chesapeake – *Have they approached the school system about partnering?*

- They are currently working with Great Bridge High School and other secondary schools. They are open to working with others.

Open Question about Battlefield Waterways Park Trail – *Does the walking trail connect with other trails passed the bypass bridge or will it in the future?*

- Monica Christensen, Assistant Director Chesapeake PRT, was in attendance and answered the question, noting that the adjacent property is private, therefore the trails cannot connect.

Coastal Resilience Panel: (Click [here](#) for panel bios)

David Sackett served as moderator and introduced each panelist.

- **Benjamin McFarlane, Senior Regional Planner, Hampton Roads Planning District Commission (HRPDC)**
 - Due to increasing strength of natural disasters, localities need to start factoring flooding into resiliency planning.
 - The HRPDC is made up of 17 member jurisdictions, consists of different types of communities – size, rural/urban, unique challenges, etc.
 - The HRPDC meets with localities and the public and provides technical assistance and support to municipalities:
 - Develop policy recommendations.
 - Coordinate with academics.
 - Advocate for state support.
 - Bring localities together.
 - Working on a resilience inventory to get a better comprehensive regional picture of what we're doing– currently have data from 12 localities, ~400 projects - 133 are completed and total \$123 million.
 - Resilience Policies Story Map – includes community summary which can be used to compare across localities and see opportunities for improvement.
 - Regional sea level rise policy- having robust scenario planning gives localities more info to make better decisions.
- **Casey Shaw, Grassroots Coordinator, Elizabeth River Project**
 - Elizabeth River Project (ERP) mission is to restore the Elizabeth River to the highest practical level of environmental quality through partnerships.

- In 1997 created River Star Businesses program – now it has 134 participating businesses working to improve health of the river.
- The most endangered “thing” on the Elizabeth River is “land” – many opportunities for conserving/restoring.
- The River Star Homes program is not just for people who live on the shore, it includes everyone in the watershed. Ask participants to agree to seven simple steps:
 - Scoop the poop
 - Protect storm drains
 - Don’t feed the geese
 - Don’t flush medicines
 - Keep grease out of the sink
 - Avoid single-use plastics
 - Reduce fertilizer use
- ERP wants to encourage installation of living shoreline (will cost share living shoreline projects 50%) - already completed several along the Indian River.
- Other programs include – rain garden project cost sharing, rain barrel program, annual youth resilience expo, The Learning Barge, Project Blue Crab, and RiverFest 2020 (Saturday June 13, 2020).
- **Skip Stiles, Executive Director, Wetlands Watch**
 - Wetlands Watch works on wetlands conservation and wetlands protection work in cooperation with local governments.
 - In Norfolk’s Chesterfield Heights, they worked with community and Hampton University students to design community scale resilience project – won design challenge.
 - Working on second community based resilience design in Broad Creek.
 - Green infrastructure must be designed with maintenance in mind.
 - Opportunities to learn more at Chesapeake Bay Landscape Professionals certification courses.
 - As part of a citizen science program, citizens can use a smart phone app to work together to record high water mark of the “King Tide” in the fall.
 - Policy work- work with localities on flood insurance problems. Open space along shorelines is the most valuable.
 - Wetland Watch developed concept and support for the Community Flood Preparedness Fund.
 - At Mains Creek – a property acquired under the FEMA flood mitigation program – was costing city ~\$200,000 to mow; working to turn this into wetland banks instead.
- **Kyle Spencer, Deputy Resilience Officer, City of Norfolk Resilience Office**
 - Establishing partnerships is important to designing coastal communities of the future.
 - Norfolk is home to 49% of Hampton Roads’ low income population- City of Norfolk is working to break up concentration of public housing – redesigning St. Paul’s – adding mixed use, mixed income public housing. Housing value improves when you add resilience amenities and defense.
 - Reimagining Otis Creek and Chesterfield Heights – adding resilient components.

- Casino can be used as catalyst to redesign coastline and implement existing plans (such as Vision 2100 and citywide resilience zoning strategy- include 3' of freeboard requirement, energy efficiency, rain barrels/gardens, etc.).
- Currently seeing rise in City using technology (RISE wireless communication evaluations program, flood sensors, dMist, StormSense project, WAZE connected citizens).
- Programs like adopt-a-spot, adopt-a-drain to increase partnerships with citizens.

Questions/Answers:

For Skip Stiles/Wetlands Watch: *Are you doing anything along the Southern Branch?*

- We are open to expanding efforts along the Southern Branch

Benjamin McFarlane/Hampton Roads Planning District Commission (HRPDC): *Is there regional planning and funding?*

- HRPDC thinks that multi-jurisdictional approach is best.
- Each community needs to do its part and allocate funds in their individual capital budgets.
- They are looking at possibility of a regional funding model.

What is best place to see latest sea level rise maps?

- <http://adaptva.org/>
- <https://sealevel.climatecentral.org/maps/>
- <https://coast.noaa.gov/slr/>

How about efforts in the Southern Rivers Watershed, i.e. the rivers draining to the Albemarle Sound?

- Virginia Beach Council Member Barbara Henley been working to create partnerships with northeastern North Carolina municipalities.
- Federal programs are different than those for the Chesapeake Bay watershed.
- Skip Stiles pointed out that as sea level rise increases, low lying areas in the Southern River Watershed will see increased flooding as water will begin to "seep out of the ground".

Kyle Spencer/Norfolk Resiliency Office: *What are some of the lessons learned?*

- Pro: Resiliency Office was put in place to report directly to the City Manager.
- Con: Resiliency Office often needs to convince other departments of value of efforts.
- Need to get all parties to the table.
- Comp Plan update is an opportunity for Chesapeake to become a leader in Resiliency.

Closing Remarks

- **Rogard Ross, Chair, [Chesapeake Environmental Improvement Council \(CEIC\)](#)**
 - Mr. Ross thanked all the participants in the conference, including the panelists, moderators, exhibitors, volunteers and staff who made this possible.
 - Indicated that notes and presentations would be published online after the conference.
 - Asked everyone to complete post-conference survey that will be emailed out.
 - Thanked sponsors including
 - Virginia Museum of Contemporary Art
 - Council Member Debbie Ritter and Ron Ritter
 - The Perry Family
 - Geosyntec Consultants
 - Southern Branch Nursery
 - Friends of Indian River
 - The Izaak Walton League of America
 - Brown and Caldwell
 - Cox Conserves, an Initiative of Cox Communications
 - City of Chesapeake
 - Indicated that the CEIC is looking for volunteers and council members.
 - Contact the CEIC by emailing SpecialPrograms@CityofChesapeake.net
 - Margaret Mead is famous for the quote "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed it is the only thing that ever has."
 - As we approach the 50th Anniversary of Earth Day, Mr. Ross encouraged the attendees "to go forth and expand our outreach to get more folks involved in making our City, state, and our planet a healthier place to live. Let's use the connection forged today to multiply the impact of our efforts."