

October 26, 2007

Contact: Mark S. Cox, APR
Director of Public Communications
757-382-6241

CITY NAMES NEW DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

CHESAPEAKE — City Manager William E. Harrell announced that Steven Wright has been chosen as the City's new Economic Development Director. This marks a return to the Chesapeake Economic Development Department for Wright, who served as a Business Development Manager with the City from 1994 through 1998. He is currently the Economic Development Director for Isle of Wight County, a position he has held since September of 2006.

"Mr. Wright's diversified background in planning and economic development will be a tremendous asset to Chesapeake," said City Manager Harrell. "His mix of public and private sector experiences, combined with his knowledge of the challenges facing the City, will help move our already strong economic development efforts to the next level."

Wright holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Urban Studies and Planning from Virginia Commonwealth University. He is currently completing course work with the University of Oklahoma Economic Development Institute.

Prior to his tenure in Isle of Wight County, Wright was the Assistant Director of Economic Development for the City of Suffolk. In this position, he was instrumental in Suffolk securing computer modeling and simulation firms, along with manufacturing and distribution operations. Wright's private sector work includes being a Development Manager for Ferguson Enterprises of Newport News and focusing on identifying sites for branch operations nationwide.

As Director of Economic Development, Wright will oversee a department which also includes the City's Convention and Tourism Division, the Chesapeake Conference Center, and the Portlock Galleries at SoNo. He replaces Warren D. Harris, who left Chesapeake earlier this year to become Economic Development Director in Virginia Beach. Wright will assume his position on December 3, 2007, and will receive an annual salary of \$113,000. "This opportunity to return to Chesapeake is one that my family and I are extremely excited about," said Wright. "I look forward to working towards the continued success of this dynamic city."

In conducting the search for Chesapeake's new Economic Development Director, City Manager Harrell was assisted by Jesse Williams, Executive Director of the Hampton Roads Chamber of Commerce-Chesapeake Division, and Donald Goldberg, President of D.D. Jones Transfer and Warehouse Company, who was formerly the City's Economic Development Director. The executive search firm, Springstead, also assisted in the process and characterized Wright as a "consensus builder with strong communication skills."

