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District 1 Update: December 2025

OVERVIEW OF COUNTY-WIDE ISSUES

VACO (Virginia Association of Counties) conference:

I had the opportunity to attend the VACO conference again this year. It consists of 95 Counties across the Commonwealth coming together for two days of learning and sharing.

As I reported in our November BOS public meeting, much of the discussion was on Data Centers

- Mike Turner, Vice Chair, Board of Supervisors for Loudoun County and Bill Murray Senior Vice President–Corporate Affairs & Communications for Dominion Energy made a joint presentation.
- They jointly highlighted the State’s continued power constraints for major power consumers. Currently data centers will be power constrained until at least 2029 due to insufficient power in the State, and that assumes a predictable increase in demand.
- Dominion Energy estimates a seven year wait for all new data centers applications until additional capacity can be constructed.
- The growth of AI and its attendant power demands could vastly complicate that problem. As we have already experienced in Virginia, this is going to create an industry push to develop onsite power supply to reduce data center dependence on the electrical transmission grid. This transition is likely to happen relatively quickly and will have impact on residential rates.

Both speakers highlighted that County Boards must act now to assert and maintain managerial oversight, through land use planning and new zoning requirements to address this sector-wide evolution.

Recycling Services to Return

A new contract for recycling has been established with Republic Services of Yorktown which is the same vendor currently collecting our trash.

We have approved a long-term contract for recycling services, signed directly with York County, rather than through VPPSA.

Recycling will begin in January. This start date was selected to:

- Allow sufficient time for the contract to be publicly reviewed, discussed, and approved.
- Provide an opportunity to replace the TFC-owned recycling bins with bins from York County (week of December 8th)
- Allow the vendor and County staff time to finalize operational details such as routes, schedules, and collection procedures.
- Educate the residents if there are any changes to the current material(s) collected for recycling.
- Provide sufficient time for Republic to increase its truck fleet.

Stay tuned to the county's [Recycling Portal](#) for the latest information. We anticipate a much more responsive contractor and overall better service with this change.

York County Update on Employee Compensation and Building Needs

Last May, during the FY26 budget approval process, the Board asked for two studies to be conducted by the Administration.

- Compensation Study for all York County staff to review if our employees are being competitively paid and to help the County hire and retain quality employees.
- Building Space Study to insure that our employees have the facilities to efficiently and safely do their work.

The Compensation study was prompted by a summary from Human Resources on the hiring issues challenging York County. The number of personnel moving to adjoining jurisdictions, for better compensation, created substantial vacancies. Most noticeable was the loss of firefighters. In the Spring of 2025, the County had upwards of 30 staff vacancies to fill. Our starting salaries were not competitive, and we were left with many gaps in our County organization. The Board has heard a lot over the last couple of years about employees jumping ship for better pay and benefits to surrounding localities, especially our Sheriff's deputies and Fire & Life Safety folks.

Dr. Russell Campbell, Chief Administrative Officer of Management Advisory Group International presented to the BOS in early December. His analysis spanned 17 localities (Public and Private sector) and analyzed 388 different jobs within the County.

We were disturbed by the study results. Compensation for many of our employees was 10% below that of immediate localities when comparing the same job and same scope. Some were as much as 25% below average.

Dr. Campbell advised that York County was just below the 50th percentile related to total compensation and benefits. In order to remain competitive, Dr. Campbell recommended we should be in the 70th percentile to become what is known as an employer of choice.

The analysis presented identified \$8M is needed to make up the 10% compensation gap. I support paying our county employees a fair and competitive salary. We received the very same feedback last spring when the discussion was focused on teacher's salaries.

The Building Space study will be presented to the Board on Tuesday evening December 16th. Our Court house is currently 66,000 sq ft but requires approximately 110,000 sq ft. to meet demand.

The Courthouse expansion is largely due to a new judge and his entourage, storage requirements for retention of documents.

Our Court system includes areas as far away as Charles City, Gloucester and to the New Kent County boundary, so one of the obvious questions is how we receive State funding for this multi-jurisdictional service.

Increasing the size of the Courthouse will impact York County functions currently occupying space in the adjacent Courthouse building. We have yet to determine the path forward as a Board, however, it is apparent that we will require space to house Finance, Treasury, Commissioner of Revenue and IT employees displaced by the Court expansion.

Williamsburg Regional Library (WRL) Update

In the June and August newsletter, I highlighted that York County is requesting a new contract be developed for the WRL library services, ahead of any addition of libraries in JCC, and possible rebuild of the downtown library in Williamsburg.

Last week both JCC and the City of Williamsburg approved funding that will result in a new downtown library and a JCC library at their new government center. It is not our intent to eliminate our partnership with WRL, but we need to be able to fund these services at an affordable cost. Our proposed cost for FY 2027 has increased by about 10% while JCC and the City experience reductions in operating costs. I'm strongly advocating for a revised contract, and any necessary changes that York County needs to make to ensure that we retain a competitive cost for library services.

However, York County also needs to take steps to ensure library services in the Upper County continue, should the negotiations fail. Our Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) will be presented on Tuesday evening, and you will see a new line item within the proposed CIP addressing this need.

DISTRICT 1 SPECIFIC ISSUES

Queens Lake Dam, Spillway and Lake Funding

A groundbreaking ceremony was held on Dec 12th to recognize the start of construction on the dam and spillway at Queens Lake. This proposed project work has been under development for four years when Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) rated this dam and spillway as inadequate.

Queens Lake Association members, York County staff along with Construction management attended the event. See below:



I continue to seek funding options for the restoration work at Queens Lake and will be reaching out to Queens Lake resident, Delegate Elect Dr. Mark Downey, on this legislative priority, as he begins his term in office in January.

Solar Farm

City of Williamsburg Mayor Doug Pons recently announced that the City of Williamsburg turned down a proposal by Cenergy to build a solar energy farm on City owned land beside Bruton High School and adjacent to Waller Mill Park along Rochambeau Rd.

Waller Mill Heights Update

I reported last month that Waller Mill Heights Development had received an Emergency Stop Work Order in response to 45 environmental violations at the construction site.

The issues continue to be worked on, meanwhile the Stop Work Order remains in effect, ensuring that the County's standards on environmental protection are maintained throughout construction.

Approximately ½ of the deviations have been addressed, and work is progressing on the balance.

New Businesses

The number of new businesses in York County continues to grow, with 21 new businesses licensed in November, and 9 closures in the same month.

The latest business licenses to be approved in District 1 include one commercial business and four home-based businesses. They are as follows:

- New Life Counseling Services LLC., a commercial business located at 113 Palance Lane.
- VIA Arts and Crafts LLC, home-based retail merchant and crafts outlet located at 106 Bruton Dr.
- Staya LLC., a home-based merchant offering online sales, located at 109 Stratford Dr.
- Garden Gals, a home-based consultancy business, at 474 Catesby Lane.
- RinneCooks LLC, a home-based commissioned service located at 106 Valor Court.

I value your input and am happy to address questions or concerns on these or any other topics for the district. Please don't hesitate to contact me.

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