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## **District 1 Update: May 2024**

### **OVERVIEW OF COUNTY-WIDE ISSUES**

#### **Increasing Costs and Needs result in Higher Tax and Burden to our Taxpayers**

After months of review and discussions, the BOS approved the County budget. The County had recommended a budget increase of 9.6% and an average real estate tax increase of 10.9%. Several revenue streams have decreased in the past year, such as Deeds of Conveyance (the tax on sale of houses during the year) and Public Service Corporation (loss of tax revenue on the value of the Dominion Energy property as a result of dismantling the Yorktown power generation station). Tax revenue in other areas is needed to offset this loss of revenue.

The County had recommended a reduction in the real estate tax rate from \$0.77 to \$0.74 along with elimination of the vehicle registration fee currently assessed to all vehicles in the County. The Board sought a further reduction in taxes, lowering the personal property tax from \$3.90 to \$3.80.

Following the Public Hearing on April 14<sup>th</sup>, we were able to identify additional cuts in both the County expenses and in Capital Improvements. We reduced overall spending on the proposed budget by \$6 M. This lowered our overall budget increase to 8.2%, significantly below the nearly 10% increase that we started with in January.

I had called for a 4 cent reduction in real estate taxes. We settled for 3 cents as recommended by County staff but added a reduction in personal property tax (vehicle tax) of 10 cents and elimination of the yearly vehicle registration fee. Combined, these savings fall just short of my proposed 4 cent target.

Our goal was to create a budget that minimizes the increase in residential tax burden while still providing necessary funding for important County services and operations.

We achieved that goal through a huge effort of our Chairman, and many participants from County staff, School Administration, our Sheriff's office, and our Fire Chief.

**Below are the highlights of the adopted budget. First are the major spending and expense reductions from the General Fund (the County's operating budget) and the Capital Improvement Plan:**

- Reducing overall spending by \$6M
- \$750K Capital Improvement Plan cash funding elimination
- Reducing \$90K from the Public Safety budget for a project that can be deferred.
- Reducing \$140K from the Public Works operating budget
- Reducing \$160K from the Education & Educational Services budget
- Eliminating \$596K from our Capital Improvement Plan for the proposed New Quarter Park kayak launch and park improvements
- Eliminating \$275K from our Capital Improvement Plan for the proposed batting cages at the McReynolds Athletic Complex

**Those reductions helped us make the following changes to the tax rates and fees by:**

- Reducing the real estate tax rate from \$.77 per \$100 assessed valued to \$.74
- Reducing the personal property tax rate from \$3.90 per \$100 assessed value to \$3.80
- Eliminating the annual vehicle registration fee

**The Board closed the budget discussion with an agreement to look for further reductions in County costs, by implementing a systematic and project based cost reduction process over the next 12 months.**

## **DISTRICT 1 SPECIFIC ISSUES**

### **Queens Lake Dam, Spillway and Lake Funding**

**I continue to pursue funding of Queens Lake Dam and Spillway repairs to prevent environmental damage to Queens Lake estuary and prevent a major loss of property values for residents of Queens Lake.**

**As mentioned last month, the Queens Lake Community Association welcomed Senator Danny Diggs, Congressman Rob Wittman and myself to Queens Lake to discuss the potential of federal funding for the balance of money needed to complete the dam and spillway repair, the creek and ravine stabilization and dredging of both lakes.**

**Much of the damage to the lake can be attributed to recent I-64 widening and the Colonial Parkway construction. State funding in the 2023 budget allocated \$1M to the County in this effort, in addition to money already set aside by the County and the Queens Lake Community Association.**

**Congressman Wittman highlighted the work the National Park Service is currently undertaking to improve the Colonial Parkway. He will, with the County's help, address the water runoff into the Queens Lake basin attributed to the Parkway and seek their support and funding for the dredging costs.**

**The County has undertaken the Engineering work to prepare these figures.**

## **Springfield Road**

Residents of Springfield Road near Cheatham Annex continue to suffer from construction traffic for a new development adjacent to Kings Creek.

County Administrator, Mark Bellamy and I have reached out to Henderson Construction to request a meeting in the County offices to address ongoing noise complaints that we are receiving associated with construction traffic on Springfield Rd, servicing the new Development of Tranquility 55+.

The contractors building Tranquility subdivision are not allowed to operate outside the approved hours of 7 am to 7 pm. Springfield Road residents continue to report violations of this requirement.

Mr. Pete Henderson, CEO of Henderson Construction, has agreed to meet with us in mid-May. Mark Bellamy and I are committed to working together to resolve this issue for the residents of Springfield Road.

## **York 64 Trade Center – NorthPoint Mega Warehouse**

In the January 16<sup>th</sup> BOS meeting, I introduced a motion under New Business to address NorthPoint Development on Lightfoot Rd. and Rochambeau Rd.

I am continuing to try to prevent devastating truck traffic volumes from coming to Lightfoot and Rochambeau Roads.

NorthPoint, for those who have not previously read about it, is an Amazon type distribution warehouse complex, comprised of five buildings totaling 2.4 million sq ft of floor space. This proposed plan is the equivalent of 11 Lowes Home Improvement stores in one location.

At my request, VDOT provided an independent review of the applicant's Traffic Impact Assessment and concluded that a high-capacity parcel distribution warehouse operation is inappropriate for this site and has eliminated that option for the Developer.

The County Administrator, Zoning Administrator and Senior Planner met with me in mid-April to review the VDOT Traffic Impact Assessment. County Staff accepted the VDOT findings and has notified the developer. County Staff will require the developer to reduce the traffic load on Lightfoot Rd from several thousand trucks per day to approximately 1200. Improvements are still being sought for merging this volume of trucks into the warehouse site and back onto Lightfoot Rd.

## **I value your input, Please become a regular recipient of this newsletter.**

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.

You can reach me at my email address shared above.

Click on the link above to request my monthly newsletter or copy/paste the following link:

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSez8\\_XXEx7rgRR2XXobA1uRJK-cRUXFMd\\_D-Oa\\_T7eeNer1Jw/viewform](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSez8_XXEx7rgRR2XXobA1uRJK-cRUXFMd_D-Oa_T7eeNer1Jw/viewform)

**A note from our Sheriff's office that may be of interest to the readers:**

The Sheriff's Department has opened "Safe Exchange Zone" parking spaces at the new Sheriff's building on Goodwin Neck Road.

I continue to work with Sheriff Montgomery to see if we can provide a similar service in the Upper District.

When buying/selling items online we now have two Safe Exchange Zone locations available: 159 Goodwin Neck Road (new station) and 301 Goodwin Neck Road. The designated zones are under 24-hour surveillance and allow the public to make purchases and exchange transactions in a monitored area rather than conducting their exchanges at private residences.

[#SafeExchangeZone](#) [#StaySafeYorkCounty](#)

Shelley



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