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District 1 Update: January 16TH, 2024

Taking office.



Swearing In Ceremony at York Hall

The newly elected Board of Supervisors met on January 2, 2024 for a Swearing In Ceremony and to elect the Chair and Vice Chair.

My congratulations to Stephen Roane on his election to the role of York County Board of Supervisors Chairman and to Sheila Noll to her election to Vice-Chair.

January has been a busy month and will continue to be quite busy with the slate of agenda items before the Board. Key areas I will be focused on this month:

District 1 :

- Review of Property Assessments in several subdivisions of District 1
- Request for help on parking issues for the residents of Arbordale subdivision

- Meeting with the American Battlefield Trust to support their efforts in securing land at the intersection of Penniman Rd and Government Rd
- Proposing a resolution to the BOS for the NorthPoint Development application on Lightfoot Rd.

York County :

- Reviewing the FY 24 Proposed Budget, and the Proposed Capital Improvements Program for 2024 – 2029
- Reviewing the key issues facing the BOS: 2024 Property Tax and Personal Vehicle Tax Adjustments, Princess Cruise Line proposal, Williamsburg/JCC/York County Regional Sports Complex, York 64 Trade Center proposal on Lightfoot Rd, and the need for tighter guidelines on the approval of Short-Term Rentals
- Review / consideration of manpower levels within the County

KEY ISSUES OVERVIEW

Budget Surplus

As in previous years, the County's revenues exceeded projections, and expenditures were less than budgeted in 2023. As a result, \$9.0 M was transferred to FY24 appropriated projects, returned to Capital Reserve, transportation Capital projects, as well as transfers into the Worker's Compensation Fund, Solid Waste funding and ongoing departmental needs.

The revenue surplus is made up of real property, personal property and local taxes as well as other revenue sources such as fees, interest income, and charges for services. Departments in the County are also encouraged to increase efficiencies, which can generate an additional surplus.

While a breakdown in surplus sources, versus efficiency savings is not yet available, the fact that we continue to generate nearly \$10 M per year, is a disturbing trend.

As we enter 2024, the concern on the mind of nearly all residents is the impact of the increase in property value assessments. The average rise in assessment value for homes and businesses in York County is 21% above the 2022 Assessment values. The Board will be considering a substantial decrease in the tax rate, to address this large increase.

Princess Cruise Lines

In February 2023, Princess Cruise Lines announced plans to stop in Yorktown beginning in 2024. The York County community is divided on this topic. Some support the arrival of ships, believing the economic benefits will be worthwhile. Others, however, are speaking out against the plan, participating in grassroots meetings and/or signing a petition in hopes of blocking Princess' arrival.

Holland America has also recently announced their plans to visit Yorktown beginning in 2024, and perhaps even more disturbing, Princess Cruise Lines have hired five full

time lobbyists. Their missions, per their registrations: “To lobby for operating cruise ship casinos while in Virginia waters and to lobby for gaming legislation and regulation, infrastructure funding, tourism promotion.”

I am NOT in favor of creating a riverboat gambling industry in the Port of Yorktown. While I had previously considered the pro’s and con’s of the economic value cruise lines would add to our tourism in the Historic Triangle, I am deeply concerned with the lack of transparency of this industry, and the continued steps Princess Cruise lines is taking to push this initiative forward.

Regional Sports Complex

The outgoing Board of Supervisors reviewed and endorsed plans for a Regional Sports Center to be located on the Colonial Williamsburg Visitor Center property.

In the summary presented to the Board, York County and JCC will jointly be responsible for the operating expense of the facility for 30 years. While the revenue to support this new cost is expected to be funded by the Tourism Tax collected by York County, City of Williamsburg and JCC for hotel stays, meal tax, cigarette tax etc., concern remains that a budget shortfall may exist, and that York County cannot fully fund this project from tourism tax.

The Board now has an ongoing commitment to both monitor and influence the Regional Sports Facility governing body if the objectives on tourism increases fall short of target.

York 64 Trade Center – NorthPoint Mega Warehouse

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

I have requested that County staff provide a resolution introducing the need for a Special Use Permit, or an alternative means to ensure that the traffic load associated with this warehouse is kept off Lightfoot Rd.

Short Term Rentals

During 2023, then BOS Chairman, Tom Shepperd placed a halt on consideration of any further Short-Term Rentals, until the new Board is able to convene and engage on the matter of standards for Short Term Rentals.

As one would expect, the introduction of a new Regional Sports Facility is expected to put further stress on the County for review of Short -Term Rental applications.

I am opposed to whole house short term rentals. Unless the applicant is located and resides on the same street as the rental unit, I will continue to vote against this intrusion to our neighborhoods. Recent trends in other municipalities include the introduction of air stream trailers parked on the same lot as the applicant and operated as a short-term rental. This is no different than above garage apartments, which are currently banned in York County.

Swearing In Ceremony for our Newly Elected House Delegate

I had the privilege of joining Chad Green and his family at the House of Delegates in Richmond on Sunday, January 14th for his official Swearing In.



As your newly installed District 1 Supervisor I am committed to working hard for you. I value your input and welcome your emails, calls and dialogue on matters important to our citizens.