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District 1 Update: December 2024

OVERVIEW OF COUNTY-WIDE ISSUES

York County Board of Supervisors / School Board Joint Session

I reported in my last newsletter, the agenda for the October 29th, 2024, joint meeting between the School Board and the BOS. It included an update on the School Division's Master Plan, an update on York County residential development and an open discussion on extending the tuition rebate/credit currently offered to School Division and County employees who reside outside of York County to possibly include business owners who consider moving their business to York County.

I received an update from the York County School Division in response to my November newsletter. I had stated that good progress was made in each of the school sites over the past ten years, however there has been very limited investment in classrooms, gymnasiums or cafeteria facilities. The Administration pointed out that 8 out of 10 elementary schools, and 3 out of 4 middle schools have had upgraded gym floors, a new gym added at Waller Mill, new LED lighting, and upgrades to kitchen equipment in all schools.

While I don't dispute this feedback, I still come back to the fact that we have 300 children in portable trailers at the elementary schools in District 1, and the need for additional classrooms could not be more evident. The consequence of continued residential growth in the Upper District.

The point I made during this meeting is that we need to design, construct and open expansions to elementary and middle schools. Queens Lake Middle is scheduled for expansion in 2028, but Waller Mill is not scheduled until 2031. In my view this is too slow. I prefer to see both expansions move forward to 2028.

On the tuition tax rebate topic, I reported that we currently have 270 children enrolled in York County schools, whose parents work for the school division or County staff positions but live outside of York County. The estimated draw on taxpayer funds is \$2.7 M.

Dr. Shandor contacted each Superintendent on the Peninsula, including Gloucester, regarding tuition for staff to see if it is a common practice to provide free tuition to staff members who reside outside of the County. His review showed that all school boards in this region are applying the same tuition exemption.

Dr. Shandor shared that we are in the worst national teacher shortage in history, and for the past 4 years, YCSD has had to offer incentives to attract teachers and staff.

I support the initiatives that have been put in place during COVID recovery years to address the teacher and staff shortage. However, I ask the question, how long does this incentive program continue. Should it be applied to all staff, or just those in teaching positions? What guidelines are in place to eventually rescind these incentive programs and is it fair to our teachers living in York County, that their peers, who choose to live outside of the County receive this additional incentive?

VACo

Virginia Association of Counties meets in November of each year.

Supervisors, and County Administrators from across Virginia (95 Counties) attend the event, and hear presentations made on a number of topics, including State budget, planning issues facing different Counties across the State and workforce challenges.

I had the opportunity to attend this year's conference. The highlight for me was the networking that took place. At breakfast I sat with five other first time Supervisors from all corners of the State and compared notes on many topics, including challenges on getting established, dealing with decisions made by previous Boards, addressing the substantial number of new regulations being implemented by the State, and meeting commitments made to the voters. We had further discussion on growth of data centers, legislation needed to control the impact on utilities and the impact that rampant growth is having on rural Counties.

I consider this conference to be one of the best I have attended. It was a highly collaborative event in which representatives from communities across the State freely shared notes and strategies. Sharing notes

and strategies among attendees is not something normally found while working in industry as it can result in an antitrust violation.

York County Board of Supervisors Code of Ethics

Many citizens have come before the BOS in recent years and stressed the need for a Code of Ethics.

Each elected member has taken an Oath of Office following election to the Board of Supervisors, and this has historically been considered to meet the need. I'm not in agreement.

Stephen Roane and I took the initiative to draft a Code of Ethics for the York County Board of Supervisors, which will be included in our Rules of Procedure acknowledgement during the first meeting of each New Year.

A link to the Code of Ethics can be found here:

https://www.friendsofdougholroyd.com/files/ugd/61866b_6a80e424b2df4b238e57ddd7f4d37767.pdf

Lighted Boat Parade



This event is hosted by the York County Historical Committee and is sure to be a fantastic evening for families and community members alike. We hope to see you there to celebrate the season with music, lights and holiday spirit!

The Annual Yorktown Lighted Boat Parade will take place on Saturday, December 7th. It promises to be another festive highlight of the season, with a beautiful display of holiday spirit on the water!

Event Details:

- **Date:** Saturday, December 7th
- **Pre-Parade Activities:** Starting at 6:00 PM
- **Boat Parade Start Time:** 7:00 PM
- **Location:** Yorktown Waterfront

Pre-Parade Activities:

- **Performance by the Fifes and Drums of York Town:** Enjoy a traditional musical performance by the Fifes and Drums of York Town as the festivities get underway.
- **Caroling Around the Fires:** Gather with friends and family to sing carols around the cozy fires, creating a warm and welcoming atmosphere.
- **Hot Cider from the Boy Scouts:** Sip on hot cider provided by the Boy Scouts as you enjoy the pre-parade festivities.

Boat Parade:

At 7:00 PM, the Yorktown Lighted Boat Parade will begin, with brightly decorated boats cruising along the York River. It's a beautiful and unique way to celebrate the season on the water.

DISTRICT 1 SPECIFIC ISSUES

Home Based Business

In my October Newsletter I reported that York County staff had been working on proposed amendments to the Home Occupation Ordinance. The proposed changes dated back to 2021, and the work of a special team appointed by the County.

The BOS approved this package during our Oct 15th Public Meeting. I feel that we have reached a good compromise.

We have limits on the daily volume of traffic, the types of business that may be approved by-right (without a Special Use Permit), the size of

commercial vehicles allowed in a residential area, and in the case of Day Care businesses, those with less than five children will require a registration process.

Staff have been tasked to work collectively with the Child Care Division of the Department of Education, to develop specific registration requirements for day care/family day homes. All cities and “urban” counties within Virginia have the authority to develop registration requirements.

County Attorney, Richard Hill, has determined after our October meeting, the current State statute prohibits York County, a “traditional” governance County, from establishing regulations for Family Day Homes. His discussion with the office of the State Attorney General confirmed this understanding.

Upon reviewing the applicable State Statute, our Board has endorsed a recommendation to be forwarded to our Delegate, Chad Green as well as our Senator, Danny Diggs, to introduce a resolution in the General Assembly authorizing all counties within Virginia to have the same authority granted as is currently in place for cities and “urban counties”.

This resolution will be prepared for the next General Assembly.

National Parks Service – Closure of Colonial Parkway

National Park Service (NPS) Director Chuck Sams joined a celebration in Colonial National Historical Park marking the completion of a \$24 million shoreline restoration project. At the conclusion of the ceremony, I had the opportunity to express my concerns to the Director on the planned closure of the Colonial Parkway at Cheatham Annex / Queens Lake. This section of roadway represents the third phase closure and rehabilitation of the Parkway.

The Director’s office responded to my concerns in late November:

“Unfortunately, my request to leave a limited section of the Parkway open between Hubbard Lane and Parkway Drive is not feasible.

Recommendations to mitigate traffic impacts have been presented to VDOT for consideration. In the meantime, the project team will continue meetings and coordination with VDOT and local first responders to address any traffic or safety concerns that arise.”

Seasons Greetings!

As this will be my last newsletter in 2024, I wish all of you a happy and safe holiday season. I'm looking forward to continuing to work as your Supervisor in the coming year. Merry Christmas.

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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