



Supervisor John T. Stirrup
Gainesville District

THE GAINESVILLE EXPRESS

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Dear Gainesville Resident,

During this budget season I set several objectives to accomplish. My primary goal was to limit the Fiscal Year 2006 (FY06) Budget to result in an average residential tax bill increase no greater than the rate of inflation, which was 3.60 percent last year. A secondary objective was to secure funding to staff the Gainesville Heavy Rescue Unit to serve the western end of the County. The remainder of my goals addressed the need for greater transparency into the budget process.

During this budget season I was successful in reducing the tax burden to County residents. To this end, the Board of County Supervisors (BOCS) voted to lower the property tax rate from the originally proposed rate of \$0.924 per one hundred of assessed value, to \$0.910 per one hundred of assessed value. The resulting average tax bill will increase by an average of \$128, or 4.49 percent. While this is an increase above the rate of inflation, it is significantly lower than the \$166, or 5.89 percent increase proposed by the County Executive at the beginning of this process. Ultimately, I did not support the Adopted FY06 budget because I felt the BOCS could have done more to reduce tax burdens further.

Another goal of this budget season was to obtain funding for the Gainesville Heavy Rescue Unit. With public safety being a priority of the BOCS, I tried to secure funding for personnel to man this unit a year early. I suggested that this project could be funded by limiting proposed budget increases, instead of budget cuts. Unfortunately, a majority of the BOCS did not support me in this effort. The staffing of this unit will greatly increase the rescue capability in the western end of the County. Currently, an emergency on the western end of the County requires that a heavy rescue unit be dispatched from the eastern end of the County. This leaves the Dale City area uncovered, or requires that we ask another county for assistance. Prince William County already possesses the necessary equipment for this unit; all we need is the funding for the professional firefighters to man it. As we grow toward becoming a world-class community, we need to have fire and rescue protection at a comparable level. To this end, I will push for the personnel funding when the BOCS considers the use of any surplus tax revenue we collect.

In closing, I think the Adopted FY06 Budget is better than the proposed budget that was presented to the BOCS two months ago; however, there are still some outstanding issues which need to be resolved regarding the budget process. As we look forward to the remainder of FY06 and towards FY07, I would like to reiterate my ultimate goal; to achieve a balance of governmental services at a cost that extracts the smallest measure possible from the taxpayers.

Sincerely,

John T. Stirrup
Supervisor
Gainesville District



Supervisor Stirrup celebrates Dr. Seuss' birthday on March 2, 2005, with students at Mountain View Elementary School.

Next Town Hall Meeting:

The next Quarterly Gainesville District Town Hall Meeting will be held on Saturday, June 25, 2005, from 10 to 11:30 a.m. at the Haymarket Town Hall located at 15016 Washington Street. The topic of this meeting is "What's on Your Mind."

Recap of the Winter Town Hall Meeting:

The subject of my last Town Hall Meeting was the Proposed FY2006 Budget. The meeting was held at Bull Run Middle School, with approximately 60 citizens in attendance. The purpose of this meeting was to give residents a more thorough presentation of the proposed budget, and to allow residents on the western end of the County an opportunity to vocalize their thoughts and concerns on the proposed budget without having to travel out of the District. After the opening ceremonies, County Executive Craig Gerhart gave a half-hour presentation explaining the major highlights of the budget. This presentation focused on the priorities and historical data which illustrated fund allocation. After the budget presentation, a lengthy question and answer period was allowed. Melissa Peacor, Assistant County Executive; Chris Martino, Finance Director; and David Tyeryar, Budget Director; were also present to answer any specific questions from residents.

Several of the questions from residents centered on the process and eligibility for tax relief for the elderly and disabled. The FY06 deadline to apply for tax relief has passed but information on the program is available by calling the Prince William County Real Estate Assessment Office at 703-792-6780. Other residents' comments suggested the County set different tax rates for individuals who use fewer services. Unfortunately, state law prohibits the County from taxing properties at different tax rates for any reason. Several residents addressed the Land Use Value Assistance Program. This program gives tax relief on the basis that the property is used for agricultural, wooded or open space purposes and will not be developed. If you would like more information on this program, please call the Real Estate Assessment Division

Chief, Allison Lindner at 703-792-7417. Residents also asked why the County is behind on building infrastructure. The County Executive replied that during the 1990s, the county residents did not want their government to incur debt in order to build infrastructure. As a result, little was done and we are now trying to recover from this stagnant period.

I want to thank all who came out to participate at this meeting. If you have any further questions concerning the Adopted FY06 Budget or any tax relief program, please call my assistant Scott Chambers at 703-792-5785.

TRANSPORTATION UPDATE:

Transportation Public Hearings

Tri-County Parkway: The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) has released a Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the proposed Tri-County Parkway which can be viewed at www.virginiadot.org/projects.tcp.asp. VDOT is scheduling a Public Hearing for Monday, May 9 from 5 to 8 p.m. at Stonewall Jackson High School, 8820 Rixlew Lane in Manassas. If you cannot attend, please send your comments before May 21, 2005 to:

Ken Wilkenson
Virginia Department of Transportation
1401 E. Broad Street
Richmond, Virginia 23219
tricityparkway@virginiadot.org

Battlefield Bypass: The Federal Highway Administration and the National Park Service are holding a Public Hearing on Thursday, May 5 at Battlefield High School, 15000 Graduation Drive in Haymarket at 6:30 p.m. The Public Hearing will be held to discuss the Environmental Impact Study, which was released in January 2005. This can be accessed at <http://www.battlefieldbypass.com/>. The Comment Period has been extended until June 6. If you cannot attend, please send your comments before June 6, 2005 to:

Jack Van Dop
703-404-6282
Environmental Specialist
Federal Highway Administration
Eastern Federal Lands Highway Division
21400 Ridgetop Circle
Sterling, VA 20166
jack.j.vandop@fhwa.dot.gov

Robert K. Sutton, Ph.D.
Superintendent
Manassas National Battlefield Park
12521 Lee Highway
Manassas, VA 20109
robert_sutton@nps.gov

District Road Projects

Manassas Battlefield Route 29/234 Relocation

The Federal Highway Administration and the National Park Service have just released a draft of the Environmental Impact Analysis and have selected Alternative D as the preferred route. The public will have an opportunity to comment at a public hearing planned for Thursday, May 5. Based on these comments, any revisions to this preferred alternative will be incorporated following the public review period. In addition, measures to minimize impacts will be incorporated into the design phase of this project.

Linton Hall Road from Route 29 to Devlin Road

Linton Hall Road will be widened from four lanes to six lanes between Route 29 and Glenkirk Road, and from two lanes to four lanes between Glenkirk Road and Devlin Road. The second bid received on this project came in more than 10 percent higher than expected. VDOT will resubmit paperwork with the federal government, and construction is now slated to begin sometime in May; the anticipated completion date remains the fall of 2007.

Status on Route 55/Catharpin Road

We have been pursuing funding for this intersection on two levels. First, we sought to have the intersection qualified by VDOT for the Hazard Elimination Safety Program. Projects selected for 2006 will be shown in VDOT's tentative Interstate/Primary Six Year Program, which is due in the April/May timeframe. The Hazard Elimination Program is federally funded and will add considerable time to the project's completion date. We have also sought funding for the intersection through the use of proffer dollars. On Tuesday, May 3, the BOCS moved to transfer, budget and appropriate \$1,230,066; including \$644,000 from proffers and \$586,066 for County construction crews for improvements of Route 55 and Catharpin Road. Our goal remains to have the intersection signalized in time for school reopening in September. It is unlikely that turn lanes will be constructed by September, but the installation of the light remains a feasible goal.

Wellington Road

Construction is scheduled to begin this spring to widen Wellington Road from Limestone Drive to Balls Ford Road. The intersection at Wellington Road, Devlin Road and Balls Ford Road will be realigned.

Wellington Road Extension

Wellington Road will be extended and adjusted to intersect with Linton Hall Road by the developer of Virginia Gateway. Construction is underway and almost completed.

East/West Connector: (Phase I – Gainesville Interchange)

The construction of a four-lane road over I-66, from Route 29 to Wellington Road has begun. The anticipated completion date is fall 2006.

Sudley Manor Drive Extension

1. The Sudley Manor Drive extension between Linton Hall Road and the Prince William Parkway is scheduled to be completed in August 2006.
2. The Sudley Manor Drive extension between the Prince William Parkway and Chatsworth Drive is scheduled to be completed in October 2006 and will extend Sudley Manor Drive south from its current dead-end at Chatsworth Drive to the Victory Lakes development.

Potomac Rappahannock Transportation Commission (PRTC)

PRTC offers bus services for commuters. A new route will start at the Virginia Gateway Shopping Center at Linton Hall Road and Route 29, then continue along Linton Hall Road, Devlin Road, Balls Ford Road, the Route 234 Bypass and I-66 before arriving at its last stop – the West Falls Church Metrorail Station. The reverse route is in effect for the afternoon. For more information, call 703-730-6664 or visit their Web site at <http://www.prtctransit.org/omniride/metrodirect.php>.

LAND USE UPDATE:

May 17, 2005:

CPA #PLN2004-00196

Click here to read the PWC Staff Report

Wentworth Green at Virginia Gateway

GPIN: 7397-91-7815

Purpose: Change Long-Range Land Use designation of 200 acres from FEC to SRM (130 AC), O (31 AC), & PL (39 AC), & amend the I-11/Route 29 Sector Plan

Location: On Linton Hall Rd., approximately 0.8 miles from its intersection with Route 29 (Lee Highway)

REZ #PLN2004-00385

Click here to read the PWC Staff Report

Wentworth Green at Virginia Gateway

GPIN: 7397-91-7815, 7396-99-3811, 7397-72-6796

Purpose: To rezone property from M-1 to PMR (9-ac), M-2 to PMR (139 AC) (475 Units)

Location: On Linton Hall Rd., approximately 0.8 miles from its intersection with Route 29 (Lee Highway)

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Citizen Fire/EMS Academy

The Prince William County Department of Fire and Rescue ‘s Citizen Fire/EMS Academy is a training program for people who live and/or work in the County and want to know more about the various functions of the Department of Fire and Rescue. The Academy is broken into five classes that occur one night a week. Participating students will learn about the department’s hiring process, budget, fire ground procedures, emergency medical services, fire marshal duties and receive CPR/AED instruction free of charge.

Participating in the Citizen Fire/EMS Academy is a great way for community members to become familiar with the County’s public safety efforts, meet new people and become more involved with the long-term safety of Prince William County. The next Citizen Fire/EMS Academy will begin in the fall. For an application, please visit <http://www.pwcgov.org/default.aspx?topic=04002600010> or call 703-792-5823. Applicants must live and/or work in the County and be at least 18 years of age.

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*Supervisor Stirrup at the UPS Store's 5,000th ribbon cutting ceremony in Virginia Gateway.
(Cutting the ribbon from left to right are: Susan Jacobs, Chair PWC-Greater Manassas Chamber of Commerce;
Teri Milner, UPS Store Franchisee; Supervisor Stirrup and Ron Milner, UPS Store Franchisee.)*