



# THE GAINESVILLE EXPRESS



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**Supervisor John T. Stirrup**  
**Gainesville District**

**March 2008**  
*Volume 17*

Dear Gainesville Resident,

Many residents have recently contacted my office regarding the Fiscal Year 2009 (FY09) budget. Some newspapers have reported a 28% increase in taxes which is correct in a sense but somewhat misleading. Your tax bill is a function of two components; the tax rate which is set by the Board of County Supervisors (BOCS), and your assessment which is conducted according to state regulations. The proposed FY09 budget was developed with a base tax rate of \$1.01 per \$100 of assessed value. This rate, is a 28% increase over last year's rate, however, if your assessment declines, your tax bill will not increase by 28%. According to the County Executive, the average single family home in the County is valued at \$344,000 which is down 16% from last year. The result of the increased tax rate and the decrease in property values will result in an average increase of \$258 per year or 8%, if the proposed budget is adopted by the BOCS.

As I mentioned above, the \$1.01 tax rate is merely the basis of the proposed budget. The BOCS is not required to adopt this rate and frequently adopts a different rate. Each budget season, with the help of my budget committee, we review the proposed budget and suggest possible reduction. Our efforts are intended to insure that the County is remaining fiscally responsible by providing services to residents at a reasonable cost.

Given the downturn in the economy, I anticipate a lively budget debate. I encourage everyone to actively follow the budget discussions and let the BOCS know your views on this issue. Below is the remaining budget meeting schedule. All events will be held in the BOCS Chambers at the McCoart Building located at 1 County Complex Court, Prince William, Virginia, 22192.

- 4/7/2008 - Public Hearing at 7:30 p.m.
- 4/15/2008 - County Executive's Budget Recap at 2 p.m.
- 4/22/2008 - Board of County Supervisors Budget Markup at 2 p.m.
- 4/29/2008 – Adoption of the FY09 Fiscal Plan at 2 p.m.

For more information about these meetings, contact the Budget Office at (703) 792-6720 or you can contact my office at by phone at (703) 792-6195 or my email at [Gainesville@pwcgov.org](mailto:Gainesville@pwcgov.org).

Sincerely,

John T. Stirrup  
Supervisor  
Gainesville District

## **Board of County Supervisors' Agenda for March 18**

The Prince William Board of County Supervisors will meet on Tuesday, March 18, 2008, at 2 p.m. in the Board Chamber of the James J. McCoart Administration Building.

At the 2 p.m. meeting the Board will consider the issuance of general obligation bonds to finance capital projects for public schools to include the construction of a new high school, two elementary schools and four elementary school additions. These bonds would be sold to the Virginia Public School Authority (VPSA). The Board will also consider several land use issues and hear presentations from the Office of Information Technology on the 800 MHz re-banding project and from the Police Department on the fatal crash overview.

During County Executive's time the Board is expected to revisit the Fiscal 2009 (Tax Year 2008) Real Property Tax Rate. This issue was deferred from the March 4 and 11 Board of County Supervisors meetings.

At the 7:30 meeting the Board will consider several 2008 Comprehensive Plan Amendments.

## **Police Enforcement of the PWC Immigration Resolution**

My office has received calls from constituents who are concerned with some recent news reports stating that an illegal alien, stopped for a traffic violation, may not necessarily be taken into custody. This is an accurate statement, however, I wanted to explain the new procedures and how the County's ability to address the problem has been improved.

Prince William County Police officers do not have the jurisdiction to arrest an individual on federal charges without an outstanding warrant on those charges. If an officer has probable cause to believe a person is an illegal alien, but the person has not committed a local or state crime, the police officer may not arrest that individual solely for being an illegal alien but, the Police Department will report this individual to Immigration and Customs Enforcement. This procedure provides ICE the necessary information to serve a summons to an illegal alien to appear in a federal immigration court, regarding this person's immigration status. If the person appears and is found to be an illegal alien, he or she is subject to being ordered deported. If the person fails to appear at this hearing, he or she may be ordered deported in their absence, and the person's case is updated in the database. Once a person has been deported for failing to appear at an immigration hearing and that information is entered in the database, the Police Department would be able to take that failure to appear into consideration when dealing with a local offense. This means that if the offense is of a relatively minor nature and would usually result in the issuance of a ticket, an officer can arrest the person because the history of failure to appear justifies a belief that the person would not appear for court on the new local or state charge.

Deportation of all illegal aliens is still the responsibility of ICE. The County Police are acting in a support role to ICE by taking into custody any illegal alien for whom ICE has issued a criminal warrant, by taking into serious consideration for arrest on local charges any history an illegal alien has of failing to appear for ICE proceedings, and by notifying ICE of any person encountered when an officer has probable cause to believe the person is an illegal alien. With this third type of case, as time passes, the completeness of the ICE database will improve through the assistance the Police Department is providing. In turn, this will increase the Police Department's ability to aid the federal government with its efforts to enforce immigration law.

ICE has established a citizens' tip line (1-866-347-2423) for reporting any suspicious or illegal persons. You may also refer to <http://www.pwcgov.org/docLibrary/PDF/007799.pdf> for information on Prince William County's police enforcement guidelines.

**Regional Jail Completes Immigration Status Check**

The Prince William/Manassas Regional Adult Detention Center (ADC) has completed checking the immigration status of the jail population in conjunction with its 287g agreement with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE).

On July 10, 2007, the Adult Detention Center began implementation of the 287g program authorizing trained staff to investigate inmates' legal status, and begin deportation proceedings if necessary. Since July 10, the staff has issued immigration detainers for those inmates who were currently incarcerated and those inmates committed to the ADC. Below is the breakdown as of March 4, 2008, of the countries of origin and the number of individuals from each country that have been issued a detainer and transferred to ICE officials since July 10, 2007. There are a total of 313.

**Prince William/Manassas Regional Adult Detention Center (ADC)  
Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Detainers/Transfers**

<b>Country of Origin</b>	<b>Number</b>
Albania	1
Antigua/Barbuda	1
Argentina	1
Barbados	1
Bolivia	1
Cameroon	1
Colombia	1
Costa Rica	1
Cuba	1
Dominican Republic	1
El Salvador	110
Ghana	1
Guatemala	30
Honduras	51
India	1
Iran	1
Korea	2
Laos	1
Mexico	82
Mozambique	1
Nepal	1
Nicaragua	4
Nigeria	3
Pakistan	2
Panama	1
Peru	3
Russia	1
Saudi Arabia	1
Sierra Leone	4
Trinidad and Tobago	2
Zaire	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>313</b>

**\*This list shows the countries of origin and the number of individuals from each country that have been issued a detainer and transferred from the ADC to ICE officials from July 10, 2007 – March 4, 2008.**

**Status Update on SCC Hearing Re. Application of Dominion Power and TRAILCo. for a 500kV Transmission Line (PUE-2007-00031 and PUE-2007-00033)**

The SCC hearing on this application began on February 25th. The hearing essentially has two phases or portions. The first phase examines the need for the line. The second phase addresses the possible locations for the line. Currently, the need phase is nearing conclusion as the both the Applicants and Respondents have rested and the last of the SCC's need witnesses is testifying.

On March 5th, Prince William County put on its expert witness, energy economist Mr. Jeffery Brown. The crux of Mr. Brown's testimony was that the Applicants' proposal is not the most cost-effective approach to meeting growing peak demand for electricity. Rather, Mr. Brown testified that local generation using gas-fired turbine engines would be a more cost-effective solution. Mr. Brown's opinions were illustrated by economic models he ran using public data from the Applicants and the Department of Energy. Mr. Brown's pre-filed testimony and accompanying models/exhibit were entered into the record.

**Traffic Signal Approved for Gallerher Road & John Marshall Hwy (Route 55)**

The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) reports a traffic signal for this intersection has been approved and the legwork for the installation has been completed. Federal funds are being utilized for this work, pending is an authorization from the Federal Highway Administration. A spring time installation for this traffic signal is anticipated.

**UPCOMING EVENTS:**

**Board of County Supervisors (BOCS) Meetings**

The BOCS will hold a meeting March 18<sup>th</sup> starting at 2:00 p.m. in the Board Chambers at the McCoart Building located at 1 County Complex Court in Woodbridge. Meetings are broadcast live on Comcast Cable Channel 23, and then re-broadcast in their entirety at 7:30 p.m. on the Wednesday, Thursday and Friday following the Tuesday Board meeting and at 10 a.m. on Saturdays and Sundays. To check the meeting schedule and view the current agenda, visit: [PWC - Board Of County Supervisors \(BOCS\)](#)

**Internet Safety Program Offered**

The Prevention Alliance of Greater Prince William, the Gang Response Intervention Team, and the Prince William County Police Crime Prevention Unit are presenting "Internet Safety - What you don't know might hurt your children." Join these agencies for dinner and information on how you can keep your kids safe on the Internet. A Prince William County police officer will share what kids are doing on the Internet, what we as parents or caregivers should do about it, and how surfing the Internet and social Web sites can endanger your children. At the conclusion of the program there will be a hands-on demonstration on how to block dangerous sites and identify suspicious activity on your computer.

The program will be held on Wednesday, March 26, and begins at 6 p.m. A free dinner is being served during the program. This program is being held at the Carteret Mortgage Boys & Girls Club at 9676 Wellington Road, Manassas.

To register for this workshop, or for more information, contact the Prince William County Office On Youth at 703-792-6095 or e-mail your information to [youth@pwcgov.org](mailto:youth@pwcgov.org). Registration is required for all participants. The deadline to sign up is Monday, March 24.

**Did you know?**

The Planning Commission hears and makes recommendations to the Board of County Supervisors on land development proposals? The Planning Commission consists of eight citizens appointed by the Board of County Supervisors. They meet in the Board Chambers at the McCoart Building located at 1 County Complex Court in Woodbridge. The meetings are open to the public and are generally held on the first and third Wednesdays of the month starting at 7:00 p.m. For more information visit: [PWC - Planning Commission](#)

**Recent Happenings in Gainesville**

**Great Gatherings opens in Gainesville**

Great Gatherings, the world’s first store dedicated entirely to the art of celebrating officially opened the company’s inaugural U.S. retail location in Gainesville, Virginia on Friday, February 15, 2008. Located in the new Virginia Gateway Center at 13177 Gateway Center Drive, the 17,000 square foot showroom features ideas, furnishings and accessories that redefine the art of celebrating – all under one roof. The opening marks the first phase of the company’s overall efforts for the region, which will include five locations in the Washington metropolitan area by next year and 20 total nationwide over the next five years. For more information, visit [www.mygreatgatherings.com](http://www.mygreatgatherings.com).



*Supervisor Stirrup officially opens the store with the first break. Joining him from left to right: Great Gatherings store manager, Ron Wilkins; Prince William County Greater Manassas Chamber of Commerce Chairman, Rick Hendershot and Great Gatherings District Manager, Eric Stalzer  
Great Gatherings, February 15, 2008*

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