



Supervisor John T. Stirrup
Gainesville District

THE GAINESVILLE EXPRESS

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Dear Gainesville Resident,

As the tax debate begins to wind down, I wanted to explain the remaining steps in the budget process. To date, much effort has already occurred to shape the budget and the remaining steps will further refine the details of the ultimate budget.

The budget process is nearly year round. Planning for this year's budget began last year toward the end of summer. Staff surveyed the economic trends to estimate the expected downturn. At the Board of County Supervisors (BOCS) retreat in October, these forecasts and their implications were made available to the BOCS who then directed staff to form the budget, based on the agreed upon priorities. This direction from the BOCS served as the basis of the County Executive's proposed budget which was released in February.

Since then, the BOCS has had several work sessions to determine the effects the proposed budget will have on the community. The next step of the process was to vote on the advertised tax rate. The tax rate advertised was \$1.212 per \$100 of assessed value. The advertised rate is not the adopted rate but serves as the upper limit. The BOCS could adopt a rate lower than \$1.212, but not a higher one. The BOCS has also held two public hearings to allow citizens to make their comments a part of the official record. Additionally, the budget recap gives the County Executive a chance to describe how the proposed budget has changed since it was released in February.

The remaining steps include markup, which allows the BOCS to discuss any further details it wishes to see in the final budget and adoption. Some programs might see a reinstatement of their funding while other may be removed. Markup is scheduled to occur at the April 21, 2009 BOCS meeting. The final step in the process is adoption when the BOCS votes to approve the budget. Adoption is scheduled to occur at the April 28, 2009 meeting of the BOCS.

This has been a challenging year for the budget. Some programs may see a reduction in funding or elimination. It is difficult to decide which programs must continue to operate and which must be foregone, but County residents cannot continue to make up for lost revenues in bad economic times. I feel the budget, as it is proposed, is responsible to taxpayers and keeps core functions of the County government intact.

Finally, I would like to thank all of you who have contacted me with your comments on the budget. Please feel free to contact me if you have any final thoughts on the budget or any other issue. My office number is 703-792-6195 and my email is gainesville@pwcgov.org.

Sincerely,

John T. Stirrup
Supervisor
Gainesville District



Pictured from left to right:

Chris Martino, Prince William County Director of Finance; John Stirrup, Gainesville District Supervisor; Melisa Peacor, Prince William County Assistant County Executive; Dave Tyeryar, Prince William County Budget Director

March 19, 2009

*Gainesville District Quarterly Town Hall Meeting
Bull Run Middle School*

Town Hall Meeting Recap

My last Gainesville District Town Hall Meeting, the 21st in a continuing series, was held March 19, 2009 at Bull Run Middle School. The topic was the Fiscal Year 2010 (FY10) budget. I would like to thank Principal William Bixby, for accommodating the Gainesville residents, and the distinguished speakers, Melisa Peacor, Assistant County Executive, Chris Martino, Director of Finance, and Dave Tyeryar, Budget Director.

I began the meeting with a general description of the United States economy and local assessments. As most homeowners are aware, assessments have fallen dramatically in response to the global recession. The federal government's approach to this issue is concerning. Since October, \$4,807,000,000,000, or \$4 trillion - \$807 billion, a doubling of the money in the United States, has been committed to solve the problem. Our children will pay for this, our currency will devalue, and those on a fixed income will suffer. This is not good fiscal policy and it will affect how we fund projects locally.

Next, I introduced Chris Martino, the County Financial Director, who has done a fantastic job managing the County's finances. His strong financial management practices have involved a five-year revenue and expenditure plan, and have put in place the Revenue Stabilization Reserve in years past to enable the County to balance the budget this year. County staff has analyzed the budget and has recommended several reductions. These reductions were not as severe as they otherwise would have been without the Revenue Stabilization funds. Other surrounding counties are suffering financial shortfalls now; however, Prince William County does not have this problem. The financial downturn was anticipated and the County adjusted for this in previous budgets. This has minimized the necessary budget cuts this year. Because of this prudent management, the County enjoys an AAA bond rating which greatly decreases the County's cost to borrow money. This allows the County to engage in more projects at a cheaper cost.

Chris Martino also broached the issue of assessments. He said that it will take another 18 – 24 months for County assessments to reach bottom, and it will take us quite a few years to fully recover. Another wave of foreclosures are expected to occur in 2010 – 2011 when a number of adjustable rate mortgages will re-set with new interest rates. Some County residents took mortgages that were five times their household income, and no-documentation loans became mainstream. That is the reason they got into trouble. The traditional definition of an affordable house is a home that costs less than 2.5 times the yearly salary. It is anticipated that all residential assessments will decline at least 20% this year with some falling more than 50%.

In the prevailing market, short sales and foreclosures are included in the calculation of assessments as they are the most predominant real estate activity. In 2006 the County experienced 250 foreclosures. In 2008 there were 6500. The older parts of the County were involved in the first wave of foreclosures. The second wave of foreclosures will involve the newer developments. A lot of investors are coming into the County. Presently 75% of sales transactions are bank sales. What that will mean is not yet clear. 2013 will be a better year for Prince William County when we will be through the heavy foreclosure cycle. Aggregated information on assessments by zip code can be found at <http://www.pwcgov.org/docLibrary/PDF/009860.pdf>. Assessments are expected to flatten out in 2013 – 2014.

David Tyeryar, Budget Director, also addressed the Gainesville constituents with a discussion of the budget process. The need for Social Services is “through-the-roof” at the same time that state and federal monies are not keeping up with their commitments to Social Services.

Melissa Peacor, Assistant County Executive also addressed the crowd saying that the Board of County Supervisors has built 55 miles of roads in the County with County funds. Also, the direction of the Board in the Strategic Plan was to concentrate funding on risk situations.

I would like to thank Chris Martino, Melisa Peacor, and Dave Tyeryar for their great presentations. The purpose of these meetings is to hear what is on the mind of constituents, because feedback makes me a better Supervisor. I thank all who attended the meeting and for the great questions they offered.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Board of County Supervisors (BOCS) Meetings

The [BOCS](#) will hold meetings on April 21st and 28th, May 5th, 12th and 19th 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 view the current agenda, visit: [PWC - Board Of County Supervisors \(BOCS\)](#). You can also visit the County website to view video of past BOCS meetings using the following link: <http://www.pwcgov.org/MeetingRoom.aspx>.

Spring into Green, Earth Day Celebration at Virginia Gateway, April 25, 2009

Virginia Gateway and the Prince William Clean Community Council are hosting an earth friendly event promoting environmental stewardship in Gainesville. This free event will be held from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at Virginia Gateway Shopping Center located at the intersection of Route 29 and Linton Hall Road.

Giant will include a fund raiser on this day for John's Hopkins and The Children's Cancer Foundation, Inc. They will have activities taking place in the parking lot in front of their store i.e. moon bounce, games, car bash, sno-cones, popcorn and more. Walgreens will provide nail art at their store, Sports Authority is giving away a tent.

In the Gateway Plaza area where Target is located, there will be a document shredding truck, recycling and electronics recycling. There is normally a charge for the document shredder, but on this day it will be free for a minimum of 3 Bankers boxes. Best Buy will be handling the electronics recycling, and although they do no charge for most items, there is a \$10 fee for televisions larger than 32" and a few other items, but in turn, they will give you a \$10 gift card to use at their store. It's best to check out their website for details: www.bestbuy.com.

At the Atlas Walk area, entertainment will be provided by the Off Star Band and the Bull Run Cloggers, a Wii Tournament will be at the American Disposal Service table, Supervisor Stirrup will attend a tree dedication ceremony at noon, and there will be face painting and much more!!!

Earth Day Celebration in Haymarket on Saturday, April 25, 2009

The Town of Haymarket will celebrate Earth Day April 25th from 8:00 am – 4:00 pm. The day's highlight is the Children's Littlest Parade for children ages two to seven, starting at 10:00 at Madison and Washington Streets (next to BB&T Bank). Children may wear home-made costumes, carry art work, and decorate bicycles or wagons.

Another focus on children is the Middle School Essay Contest with a \$100 first prize sponsored by the Gainesville-Haymarket Rotary Club. The essay will be titled What I Can Do Every Day To Promote a Cleaner Environment.

A long stretch of Washington Street will be closed from 8:00 to 4:00. They'll be parking in various locations, just look for the signs. Come early and have breakfast with the Haymarket Woman's Club at the Mason's Lodge on Jefferson Street. They'll start serving at 7:00 am. The Town Beautification starts at 8:00 and volunteers should gather at the old town hall at 15000 Washington Street.

Stop by the Kids Fun Activity Corner and enjoy arts and crafts and games. Bring your bike to the Bike Rodeo hosted by the Haymarket Police Department where you can get you bike inspected and run an obstacle course. Much fun is to be had by going on the Treasure Hunt that starts at BB&T. Clues that will

take you throughout Haymarket. Be sure and catch wonderful live performances on stage. Live performances by the Manassas Chorale, Bingo the Clown, Restless Street, the Bull Run Cloggers, and appearances by Honorable Gerald E. Connolly and the Gainesville District Supervisor, John Stirrup and more.

Other environmental awareness activities include a Recycling Fair for electronics and shredding for personal papers. Don't miss the exciting Green Car Show where you'll be able to see the latest environmentally friendly cars. Each hour there will be Earth Day workshops. Washington Street will be lined with vendors' booths full of environmentally friendly products and lots of environmental literature.

This event is being produced by the Town of Haymarket and the Gainesville-Haymarket Rotary Club of Virginia. For more information please visit the Earth Day in Haymarket website at <http://www.haymarketearthday.org>

Historical Christmas Raid Lecture Scheduled

The Prince William County Historic Preservation Division will host another historic lecture on Thursday, April 30, 2009, at 7 p.m. in the Old Manassas Courthouse, 9248 Lee Avenue. The subject is the little known, J.E.B. Stuart's 1862 Christmas Raid. The lecture is free and open to the public.

Mark Trbovich, a local historian and President of the Prince William Historic Preservation Foundation, will lecture on Confederate General J.E.B. Stuart's raid into Prince William County and Fairfax County in December of 1862. Stuart's raid wreaked havoc on Union supply lines and involved skirmishes at Dumfries, Occoquan, Burke Station and in the Sully area of Fairfax County.

For more information, please call 703-367-7872 or e-mail dborn@pwcgov.org.

Historical Commission Requests Your Photographs

The Prince William County Historical Commission will sponsor a community event to collect historical photographs and to document family life from 1900-1950. The event is scheduled for Saturday, May 2, 2009, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the One Room School House, Brentsville Courthouse Historic Centre, 12229 Bristow Road in Bristow. The event is free and open to the public.

At the event, staff will electronically scan photographs and gather supporting narrative materials. A signed release form is required and allows the Historical Commission to digitally scan and utilize the electronic image and supporting documentation. These images and documents may then be used in a future book, planned to highlight local history in the late 19th and early 20th centuries with a focus on family life. Original photographs will be returned to owner on the day of the event.

The Historical Commission is sponsoring the community event as part of the County's commemoration of May's Historic Preservation Month. For more information, please call 703-792-7359 or email jlassiter@pwcgov.org. For information the day of the event, call 703-365-7895.

National Infant Immunization Week

The Prince William Health Department is participating in National Infant Immunization Week, Saturday, April 25 through Saturday May 2, 2009. The purpose of the special week is to remind parents how important it is to provide recommended immunizations to protect infants from preventable disease.

Some of the vaccines available include tetanus, diphtheria, rubella, pertussis, polio, chickenpox, haemophilis and hepatitis B. The week is part of an ongoing partnership with the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The partnership strives to reduce and potentially eliminate serious diseases in the United States.

Currently the Health Department offers immunization clinics at both the Manassas Clinic at 9301 Lee Avenue, and the Woodbridge Clinic, 4001 Prince William Parkway, Suite 101. Times for the Manassas clinic are Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 8-10:30 a.m. Beginning May 4, the Manassas clinic will be open only on Monday from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. and Friday from 8-10:30 a.m. Hours at the Woodbridge Clinic are Monday from 1-3 p.m. and Tuesday from 8-10 a.m.

For more information about local vaccination clinics, call the Prince William Health Department at 703-792-6345. For more information about immunizations, visit: www.cdc.gov/vaccines; www.immunize.org; or www.aap.org.



**You're Invited to the 3rd
Public Participation Workshop
for the Virginia Railway Express (VRE) Gainesville-Haymarket Alternatives
Analysis & Feasibility Study**

**On Tuesday, May 5th join VRE representatives and your fellow citizens to
be informed and participate in discussion regarding this project.**

VRE is concluding the yearlong Alternatives Analysis/Feasibility Study of the proposed extension from the existing VRE Manassas Station to the Town of Haymarket along Norfolk Southern's "B" line in western Prince William County. At this workshop you'll be informed and have the opportunity to discuss findings of the study. All stakeholders are encouraged to share their thoughts and insights on this project.

**Tuesday, May 5, 2009
Samuel L. Gravely Elementary School
4670 Waverly Farm Drive
Haymarket, VA 20169**

For more information contact at 703.684.1001, gotrains@vre.org, or check the VRE web site at www.vre.org

DID YOU KNOW?

Services offered by Environment and Natural Resources/Virginia Cooperative Extension – Prince William County Unit

- Great 'Scapes Lawn Program
This program is offered to homeowners, non-profits and HOA's in Prince William County. For a fee of \$20.00, a Master Gardener volunteer will measure the turf your organization maintains and take a soil sample. We send the soil sample to Virginia Tech Soil Lab for analysis. From the analysis you will receive a customized Nutrient Management Plan for lime and fertilizer applications specifically for your lawn. To register for Great 'Scapes call (703) 792-7747 or download an application at www.pwcgov.org/vce/enr.
- Partners in Water Quality

Businesses and non-profits receive up to a 30% Stormwater Management Fee Rebate. Rebates must be renewed annually and are applied to the following year of participation.

- To receive a 10% rebate you must attend a quarterly Stormwater information session and participate in a post-survey.
 - To receive an additional 10% rebate you will need to participate in at least one of these activities: Great 'Scapes Lawn Program, Adopt-A-Stream or Adopt-A-Spot.
 - To receive the maximum 30% rebate you must attend the Stormwater information session and participate in both Great 'Scapes **and** either Adopt-A-Stream **or** Adopt-A-Spot.
 - Contact Phyllis Ingram at (703) 792-4037 for further information.
- Plant clinics staffed by Master Gardener volunteers are held each Saturday from 10:00am to 1:00pm at:
 - Gainesville Lowes
 - Southern States in Manassas
 - Merrifield Garden Center in Gainesville

Bring questions and plant problems for diagnosis and recommended solutions.

- Visit www.pwcgov.org/vce/enr for information on upcoming classes and our Saturday in the Garden programs at the St. Benedictine Monastery on Linton Hall Road.

Recent Happenings in Gainesville



Pictured from Left to right:
Charlie Husser, 2008 GDLL president; Supervisor Stirrup; John Craig, 2009 GDLL President
Gainesville District Little League (GDLL) Opening Ceremony
April 18, 2009
Catharpin Park

Gainesville District Little League 2009 Spring Season Opening Ceremony

Hundreds of Gainesville District Little League players gathered for the opening ceremony of the Gainesville District Little League (GDLL) at Catharpin Park in Catharpin on April 18th. John Craig, GDLL President, introduced teams, managers, and officers, the national anthem played and a prayer was offered. Park Authority Board member, Rick Berry, Supervisor Stirrup and Brentsville Supervisor Wally Covington spoke. The little league's pledge was read: I trust in God, I love my country and will respect its laws, I will play fair and strive to win, but win or lose I will always do my best.

For more information on Gainesville District Little League, visit their web site at:
<http://gdll.org/Page.asp?n=12872&snid=160930967&org=gdll.org>



Pictured from left to right:
*Supervisor Stirrup; Rick Berry, Park Authority Board Member;
Charlie Husser, 2008 GDLL President; Supervisor Covington*
Gainesville District Little League (GDLL) Opening Ceremony
April 18, 2009
Catharpin Park



Gainesville District Little League (GDLL) Opening Ceremony
April 18, 2009
Catharpin Park

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