

# VIRGINIA

TOWN &

The magazine of the  
Virginia Municipal League

VOL. 54

NO. 1

JAN. / FEB. 2019



## RETHINKING PROCUREMENTS

**What you  
need to know  
to make the  
process easier,  
better, faster**



# VMLIP to launch Public Safety Academy

Early in 2019, the **VMLIP Law Enforcement Academy** will be rebranded as the **VMLIP Public Safety Academy!**

The new online learning

platform, still **FREE** for VMLIP members, will offer additional courses focusing on fire/rescue and emergency medical safety.



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PUBLIC SAFETY ACADEMY

## New courses will include:

- Mental Health and Wellness for Firefighters
- HIPAA For First Responders
- Globe NFPA 1851 Advanced Cleaning and Inspection Training
- Firefighter PTSD
- Firefighter Cancer: Prevention and Health
- Emergency Vehicle Characteristics
- Emergency Vehicle Driving Techniques
- Emergency Vehicle Driving Requirements
- Emergency Vehicle Driving Dynamics

**Partial in-service** Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services credits will still be available for law enforcement courses. For more information, contact VMLIP Public Safety Specialist Gary Dillon.



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## About the cover

We kick off the year with a collection of articles about procurements. Admittedly, not the most electrifying topic, procurements are nevertheless an essential and heavily codified function of local government. As such, we believe that the discussions herein will be of interest to all our subscribers and may benefit more than a few. Enjoy!

**Note:** In 2019 each issue of *Virginia Town & City* will have a theme. Upcoming issues will explore housing and real estate, disruption economies, energy, youth activities in Virginia, and more.

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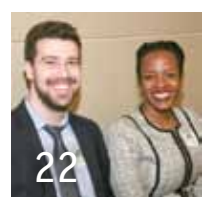
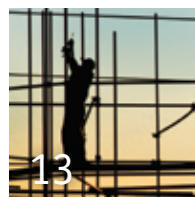
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### Friendly faces at VML's January events

Pictures of the recent 2019 Finance Forum, Newly Elected Officials Conference, and the 2019 VML Legislative Day events.

Photographs by *Manuel Timbreza*

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# Greetings at our busiest time of the year

**A General Assembly in session, three VML events in one month and some new features in our magazine!**

**W**ELCOME TO 2019! At present, all of us at VML are immersed in the legislative session, which we hope will wrap up as scheduled on February 23. It's challenging work but incredibly rewarding and we want all our members to know that it is a privilege and a pleasure to represent your interests on the myriad of issues facing local governments in Virginia.

The legislative team wants to send a big "THANK YOU" to all of you who attended one or more of our events in January. Our Newly Elected Officials conference and our Finance Forum were both held on January 8th and were each a success. We brought the two groups together in the morning for presentations regarding the 2019 budget from Deputy Secretary of Finance Joe Flores and Fiscal Analyst Jim Regimbal. On January 24th, we hosted our annual Legislative Day and attendees in the packed meeting room were briefed on a variety of important issues affecting local governments this legislative session. Our local officials took the rainy weather in stride as they made their way to the Pocahontas Building and the State Capitol to meet with their delegations.

We owe another big "THANK YOU" to all of you who have responded to our requests for information and requests to contact your delegation in response to our legislative action alerts. VML's legislative team works hard during the session but we absolutely depend on local officials to respond to our alerts, send us information about how legislation affects your locality, and call your senators and delegates. Legislators must hear from "the folks back home." Remember: We're all in this together!

I know that sometimes you get tired of hearing about the same issues over and over. Not another grievance bill! Annexation? Redistricting. The Freedom of Information Act? But change occurs incrementally and with your help we will continue to chip away where necessary and fortify what we must to ensure that local governments have the authority and resources they need to tackle today's issues.

Shifting gears a bit, I want to talk a little about a change we are making in *Virginia Town & City* magazine. Each issue this year will have an overarching theme. For example, the theme for this issue is procurements; the theme for March will be housing and real estate and the April issue will focus on topics related to what has come to be called the "disruption economy." Of course, each


of these themes will be explored through a Virginia-colored lens. The complete list of themes is available online in our 2019 Editorial Calendar.

Also, in this issue is a new regular feature called "Across Our Great Virginia" which borrows its title from a line in our new state song adopted in 2015. The idea is to start a conversation (of sorts) between two members from different parts of the state and, in the process, find out more about that things that make us all Virginians. Thanks to Bill Rush from Marion and Cydney Neville from Dumfries for agreeing to be part of the inaugural edition!



**The 2019 VML Legislative Policy team (l-r) Jessica Ackerman, Neal Menkes, Michelle Gowdy, Janet Areson, and Bernard Caton.**

Of course, our regular *VTC* features such as "People," "Focus on our Members" and "News & Notes" will continue to highlight noteworthy achievements and happenings of all kinds throughout Virginia. Please contact our editor, Rob Bullington ([rbullington@vml.org](mailto:rbullington@vml.org)) if there's something happening in your locality that you think would make a great story for an upcoming issue. We hope that you will continue to enjoy everything about *Virginia Town & City* in 2019.

Finally, looking ahead in the year, we are excited to be returning to Roanoke for our annual conference in October. We will be posting details and registration information on our site soon. We encourage you to register early since the Star City is always a popular destination for our conference attendees. 

VML connects you with a variety of networking and professional development events. Learn about these opportunities at [vml.org/events](http://vml.org/events).

- March 31 – April 1** **Virginia Building and Code Officials Association (VBCOA) Mid-Year Meeting**  
Hotel Roanoke and Conference Center, 110 Shenandoah Ave. NW, Roanoke, VA
- May 22 – 24** **Municipal Electric Power Association of Virginia (MEPAV) – Annual Meeting**  
Hilton Garden Inn, 3315 Atlantic Ave., Virginia Beach, VA
- Sept. 21 – 24** **Virginia Building and Code Officials Association (VBCOA) – Annual Conference and School**  
Hilton Oceanfront, 3001 Atlantic Ave., Virginia Beach, VA 23451
- Oct. 5 - 6** **Virginia Mayors Institute**  
Hotel Roanoke and Conference Center, 110 Shenandoah Ave. NW, Roanoke, VA
- Oct. 6 - 8** **Virginia Municipal League Annual Conference**  
Hotel Roanoke and Conference Center, 110 Shenandoah Ave. NW, Roanoke, VA

People

**Local officials appointed to commissions boards**

Several local officials have been appointed or reappointed to boards over the last two months, including:



- Owens -

South Boston Mayor **Edward Owens** to the Virginia Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission. The commission has awarded more than \$1.1 billion in grants from the national tobacco settlement to promote economic development in tobacco-dependent communities, as well as \$309 million in indemnification payments to tobacco growers and quota holders.



- Garber -

**Mary M. Blowe, R. Scott Garber, Kelvin Wright** and **Jolena Young** to the 9-1-1 Services Board, which plans and promotes development of a statewide emergency services network. Blowe is chief financial officer and director of support services in Winchester.



- Wright -

Garber is the fire chief in Staunton. Wright is the chief of police in Chesapeake. Young is the 911 coordinator for the Twin County 911 Regional Commission (Galax, Carroll County and Grayson County).

**Jarratt tapped as Franklin manager**

Franklin City Council selected **Amanda Jarratt** as its new manager effective Jan. 28.



- Jarratt -

Jarratt served most recently as president and chief executive officer of Franklin-Southampton Economic Development Inc.

Her local government experience also includes serving as director of planning and development for Roanoke Rapids, N.C.; deputy director of community development for Franklin; and as New Kent County planner. She holds an undergraduate degree in government from The College of William and Mary and a master's degree in urban and regional planning from Virginia Commonwealth University.

Clarence Monday, a retired local government administrator, had been serving as interim city manager following the retirement of Randy Martin in August.

**Owens appointed assistant county administrator**



- Owens -

Roanoke County Administrator Daniel R. O'Donnell promoted **Rebecca E. Owens** to assistant county administrator effective Jan. 5. She had served since 2003 as the county's finance director.

Prior to coming to Roanoke County in 2000, Owens worked for the City of Salem

in the finance department. She holds a bachelor's degree from Roanoke College and a master's degree in business administration from Averett University.

**Franklin to lead housing authority**



- Name -

The Williamsburg Redevelopment and Housing Authority Board of Commissioners appointed **Tyrone Franklin** as its executive director effective Jan. 7.

Franklin has 24 years of local government experience, including serving from 2005 until 2018 as county administrator in Surry County. Franklin began his local government career with the Newport News Redevelopment and Housing Authority.

**Lombardo assumes reins in Essex**



- Lombardo -

The Essex County Board of Supervisors selected a town manager from Massachusetts as the county's new administrator.

**Michael A. Lombardo**, whose prior experience included serving as town manager in Hamilton, MA, and as city manager of Iowa City, IA took over in Essex on Jan. 15.

He holds a bachelor's degree in economics and a master's degree in public administration from the University at Albany, State University of New York.

### Hiss appointed as county administrator

A local government manager from Georgia with previous experience in Virginia was chosen as Bedford County's next administrator.

The Board of Supervisors named **Robert Hiss** to lead the county government effective Feb. 25. He served most recently as the assistant manager in Athens-Clarke County, Ga. He also has served as assistant county administrator in Pulaski and as the county administrator in two other Georgia localities.

Hiss holds a master's degree in public administration degree from American University and is a graduate of the Senior Executive Institute at the University of Virginia.

### Middleburg Town Planner / Zoning Administrator is given expanded role

The Town of Middleburg is pleased to announce that **Will Moore**, who has served



- Moore -

as the Town Planner / Zoning Administrator for four and a half years, has been reclassified to a new role of Deputy Town Administrator / Town Planner / Zoning Administrator. The additional duties include

working alongside Town Administrator Danny Davis and overseeing management of certain town functions, enhanced responsibility, and the authority to act on behalf of Town Administrator Davis in his absence or incapacity.

In addition to Moore's current work for Middleburg, he has thirteen years of prior experience in the City of Winchester and six years of operations experience with the U.S. Army's 1st Infantry Division Band.

### Erin Schaible Named New City of Fairfax Chief of Police



- Schaible -

When **Erin Schaible** begins her tenure as the city's new chief of police on February 19, she will be the first woman to hold the role for the city. Schaible, who was most recently the deputy chief of patrol for the Fairfax County Police Department, comes to Fairfax City with 28 years of law-enforcement experience in Northern Virginia and a reputation for developing extensive rapport and relation-

ships in the communities where she's worked. Additionally, Schaible has served as a Fairfax County Police major for the resource management bureau and a captain for organized crime and narcotics, among many other roles. She earned a master's degree in public administration from George Mason University.

In naming the appointment, officials commended the work of Carl Pardini, who was with the city for 30 years (four as chief) and retired as chief in December and well as Kenneth Caldwell, another veteran of the department, has been serving as acting chief for the past two months.

### Price sets retirement date

Shenandoah County Administrator **Mary T. Price** will retire April 1, ending a 40-year career in local government that began upon graduation from high school.

Price, 58, has served as county administrator since 2013. She served as assistant county administrator for 17 years prior to that. A native of Strasburg, Price is a graduate of Eastern Mennonite University.

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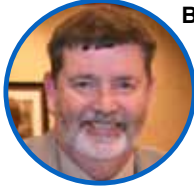


# ACROSS OUR GREAT VA

A three-way blind interview series conducted via email that seeks to remind our readers that wherever you go in the Commonwealth, you find connections that make us all Virginians.



**Cydney Neville** is a councilwoman in Dumfries and a 7th grade teacher in Stafford County. She is a native of Alexandria, VA and earned her degree in English and Mass Communications from Virginia State University. She is the proud parent of a son currently attending her alma mater.



**Bill Rush** is the town manager of Marion. He is a native of Damascus, VA and earned his degree in management and finance from Virginia Tech. He is happy to be able to work and, with his wife Robin, to have raised four children in the area where he grew up.

**VTC:** What's something you get asked a lot?

**Bill:** Is there anything new coming to Marion?

**Cydney:** What do I need to do to start a business in Dumfries?

**VTC:** Cydney, is there anything new coming to Dumfries?

**Cydney:** We have been in the process of securing funding to widen Route 1 (for years) and should have the project completed over the next seven years. There are new housing developments coming including a new housing option for senior citizens.

**VTC:** Bill, what are some key things for someone who wants to start a business in Marion to do or consider?

**Bill:** Other than the standard things, like having a business plan and being adequately financed, we suggest sitting down with our Director of Economic Development. He has a great program to help entrepreneurs get started.

**VTC:** What's the most unusual question you've received?

**Bill:** I recently got a call asking if I would run by Hardees and get a sausage biscuit because the caller couldn't drive.

**Cydney:** Service questions involving businesses not actually located within town limits.

**VTC:** Cydney, what would you do if a Dumfries resident who could not drive called out of the blue and asked you to pick up and deliver a sausage biscuit to them?

**Cydney:** Well, I've been known to bring neighbors food if I was already out-and-about. Unless there was inclement weather, I'd definitely pick them up a turkey sausage biscuit from a local establishment, and a coffee...and the same for myself!

**VTC:** Bill, how would you respond if someone called to complain about service at a business that isn't actually located in Marion?

**Bill:** We would explain to them that we don't govern the service of any business, whether it's located in the town or not. We would attempt to find a contact name or number whereby they could make the complaint to the correct person.

**VTC:** What's your favorite kind of question to be asked by a resident?

**Bill:** "Why do my water and sewer rates keep going up?" [Note – VTC suspects that Bill is being a little sarcastic in describing this as his "favorite" question]

**Cydney:** Any question that I can address as a council member that results in work to improve service/support for citizens. [Note – VTC is confident that Cydney is being genuine here]

**VTC:** Cydney, has anyone asked you about lowering water and sewer rates? If so, what did you tell them?

**Cydney:** I haven't been asked this question...yet.

**VTC:** Bill, can you think of a time someone asked you a question that led to improved services or support for citizens?

**Bill:** All the time. We invite the discussion, whether it's in the form of a suggestion or complaint, and we are truthful as to whether we can address that issue. We are very responsive to complaints and invite those people to be part of the solution.

**VTC:** If you had to perform your duties in a different town in Virginia, what's something you'd want to know ahead of time?

**Bill:** What is the town council's vision for the town?

**Cydney:** What are the citizens' needs?

**VTC:** Cydney, how would you describe your town council's vision for Dumfries?

**Cydney:** The Town of Dumfries is a tight-knit community, with a 2030 vision that lays the blueprint to guide us to do just that, make a BIG difference! Here's a link to our full 2030 Vision! <https://bit.ly/2MydqBf>

**VTC:** Bill, what do you consider the #1 need of the citizens of Marion?

**Bill:** For government to do its job, to the best of its ability, for the least fiscal impact to the community. If government is doing its job correctly, it should be invisible.

## Roanoke recognized in statewide, national awards

ROANOKE HAS BEEN recognized for its programs on housing revitalization, conservation and inclusion efforts.

Lead Safe Roanoke recently received the 2018 Virginia Housing Award for Best Housing Preservation/Revitalization Effort at the Virginia Governor's Housing Conference in Arlington. The program, which is currently funded by a three-year, \$2.7 million grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, includes testing children for lead poisoning, educating and training the community on hazards associated with lead-based paint, and performing lead hazard control activities for housing located in the city.

Since the first grant was awarded in 2003, 364 residential housing units in the city have been cleared of lead-based paint hazards. Additional information on the Lead Safe Roanoke program is posted at <https://www.roanokeva.gov/684/Lead-Safe-Roanoke>.

Roanoke Parks and Recreation Department has received the "Best New Environmental Sustainability" award, in the 50,001-100,000 population category, from The Virginia Recreation and Park Society. The department was recognized for its collaborative work in preserving the historic Sycamore Tree in Elmwood Park.

Working with Bartlett Tree Experts, Manning Arboriculture, Downtown Roanoke, Inc., and the Roanoke Tree Steward volunteers, Parks and Recreation's Office of Urban Forestry went to extraordinary lengths to save this veteran tree during a renovation of Elmwood Park. Up to 70 percent of the tree's roots were removed to build

the stage and seating area for a new amphitheater at the park. For more information about this project or about the City's Office of Urban Forestry, please visit [www.PLAYRoanoke.com/Urban-Forestry](http://www.PLAYRoanoke.com/Urban-Forestry) or call 540-853-1994.

The City recently was selected by New American Economy (NAE) and Welcoming America to receive a Gateways for Growth award. Launched in 2015, the nationwide challenge is a competitive opportunity for local communities to develop concrete strategies to integrate immigrants, foster economic growth, and promote inclusion for all residents.

The City of Roanoke will receive a customized qualitative research report from NAE that outlines demographic and economic contributions of Roanoke's international community. Roanoke will also receive on-the-ground technical assistance from NAE and Welcoming America to develop, execute, and communicate a multi-sector immigrant integration strategy.

This award marks another successful community-based project stemming from public-private partnerships in Roanoke. After working closely with local non-profits to launch an effective Welcoming Roanoke campaign this past September, the City collaborated with Local Colors, Commonwealth Catholic Charities, and

Blue Ridge Literacy to apply for Gateways for Growth.

Since 2015, 41 communities across the nation have participated in Gateways for Growth.



## Danville honors first Project Imagine graduates

FIVE TEENAGERS GRADUATED last December from Danville's inaugural Project Imagine class, which is designed to give gang-affiliated youth a future off the streets by providing them with a paid work experience and mentoring while on the job.

The five graduates received certificates for completing the nine-week work readiness program. The first-of-its kind program was implemented through a partnership between the City of Danville Workforce Center and the Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice. The teenagers in this first class worked jobs in the city's public works and parks and recreation departments.

To supplement their work experience, the youths received

training on setting goals, managing money and the availability of classes and additional training programs.

Danville Mayor Alonzo Jones, speaking at the graduation ceremony on Dec. 14, said "When I became mayor, I asked that we add one strategic goal to our list. That goal is creating partnerships. Look at what we have done here by working together as partners."

The next Project Imagine class is scheduled to begin in late January or early February. The Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice provides the referrals to the program, which is funded through the Virginia Workforce YES program.





# Hampton businesses invited to join 'Blue View'

THE CITY OF HAMPTON has rolled out a new program designed to share live security camera videos in local business with the city's Real Time Information Center. As a result, first responders can see what the cameras in the businesses see during an emergency.

The Information Center includes staff who analyze crime trends and monitor cameras across the city in real time. Part of the goal is to continue building partnerships between police and local businesses.

According to the Blue View webpage (<https://bit.ly/2SLAsXG>), the program provides Hampton police personnel with effective and efficient access to private partner cameras.

Many existing cameras are already compatible with the program. For those who do not have compatible systems, the police can provide guidance on how to make an existing system compatible or how to acquire a dedicated camera asset that is compatible with the program.



# First Aid on Fredericksburg's Front Line

FREDERICKSBURG HAS SUCCESSFULLY launched two programs that place medical equipment in public places. Extensive efforts have also been undertaken to train and educate city employees in first aid, empowering more civilians at the scene of an emergency to provide immediate help.

The drive to develop first aid care skills in Fredericksburg city employees started in 2014 with CPR training in advance of placement of automated external defibrillators (AEDs) in all city-owned properties, including city schools and, eventually, police cruisers. Initiated by the city Fire Department's EMS team, nearly 100 percent of city employees took the training and were certified by the American Heart Association.

"We realize that seconds count," said Fire Chief Eddie Allen. "When our staff proposed this concept, I understood its benefit and potential impact. We started the development process very quickly."

The CPR training soon showed benefit when a travel counselor for the city's visitor

center aided a man in cardiac arrest within months of earning her CPR certification.

Another initiative, "Stop the Bleed," was proposed for Fredericksburg by Medic Lt. Patricia Derr, who learned about the national Department of Homeland Security program designed to empower individuals to act quickly to save lives.

"It's a scary and sad reality that we need to be prepared for all sorts of catastrophes where mass casualties could occur,"

said Lt. Derr. "We have seen instances such as in Las Vegas, Parkland and Orlando where simple supplies and basic first aid knowledge can mean the difference in life and death."

The Fire Department received a grant from the Mary Washington Hospital Foundation, the charitable branch of the region's Level II trauma center. With that funding and some monies from the department's budget, 54 "Stop the Bleed" kits with bandages, tourniquets and other supplies were placed in the community, most frequently co-located with the AED devices.

"Stop the Bleed" kits have been used for minor injuries to date, reports Chief Allen. He added that the City stays prepared for all incidents and completed a mass casualty training event last fall.

Fredericksburg City Manager Timothy J. Baroody said, "We obviously prefer that we never have to use these kits for any reason, certainly not a mass casualty incident. But we must be prepared." He observed that both initiatives speak to the City's newly adopted City Values, including "Agile Innovation and Outstanding Customer Service."



Fire and EMS staff took Stop the Bleed training to outside agencies, including the staff of the regional library system.



Kids participating in the annual Badges to Baseball summer camp sponsored by city fire, police and sheriff's departments learned Stop the Bleed techniques.

## Brown Box partners with Exmore to bring Shakespeare to the Eastern Shore

TAKING TO HEART the Bard's words that nothing will come of nothing, Exmore Town Manager Robert Duer took a chance when the director of the Brown Box Theatre Project in Maryland called to see about bringing his traveling theater troupe to Exmore. The result: Two successful Shakespeare festivals in a row in the historic town on the Eastern Shore.

According to newspaper reports, two years ago Duer received a call from Kyler Taustin, the director of the Brown Box Theatre Project. The Maryland acting company has the mission of bringing performances to unconventional venues and underserved populations with the goal of reaching the widest possible audience. The Brown Box Theatre's webpage notes that Taustin, who grew up on Maryland's Eastern Shore, knows first-



hand about the lack of professional theatre in many areas and the importance of arts for communities that want to thrive. The Brown Box Theatre Project makes it easy for the host sites: The company brings in everything to be used for the show, sets up and packs up when it is over. All that's needed is a place to set up and people to attend.

Exmore was opening its town park in 2017 and ended up being the site for the performance of *Hamlet* at the town's first Shakespeare festival. This year *As You Like It* took center stage and was warmly received. Shakespeare might say that "It is not in the stars to hold our destiny but in ourselves."

## Danville piano project gets underway

AFTER SEEING OUTDOOR pianos in Lynchburg, Hampton and Denver, Danville Council Member Jim Buckner was inspired to start the "Danville Piano Project" this past November. Five pianos are placed in different areas of the city and are available to anyone to play.

Buckner used his own money to buy the pianos for \$65 at a Pittsylvania County surplus auction. Local artists then painted the pianos and the project was underway.

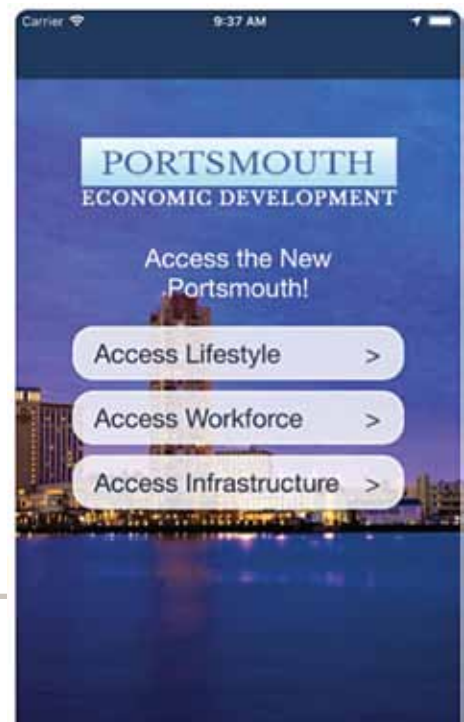
See more on River City TV at <https://bit.ly/2saMw95>.



## Portsmouth launches economic development mobile app

THE CITY OF PORTSMOUTH'S Information Technology and Economic Development Departments, in partnership with SimIS, Inc., have launched a mobile app that will display information on property in the city, thereby making it easier to search for land available for economic development. With the city's new site availability and information app, users can see the assessment of the property, a Google map of the location and the distance from the interstate, port, roads and more. Users also will be able to conduct a filtered search for city-owned properties. The app is available through the Apple and Android Google Play stores.

SimIS, a Hampton Roads Chamber of Commerce 2018 Small Business of the Year recipient, is a modeling and simulation company offering information security consulting and engineering services.



## March For More education funding rally held

THE “MARCH FOR MORE” took place on Dec. 8th with more than 1,000 advocates, students, teachers, parents and local and state leaders who marched from Richmond’s MLK, Jr. Middle School to the State Capitol to raise awareness about the need for more state funding for all Virginia students. More Better Stronger is a campaign to fight for more state funding for public schools across Virginia. Since the campaign kickoff in September, the More Better Stronger initiative has become a movement from social media to news coverage garnering the support of organizations and localities across Virginia.

The march was organized by City of Richmond Mayor Levar Stoney and Richmond Public Schools Superintendent Jason Kamras. It was supported by a number of education advocates and organizations, including the Virginia Municipal League, and representatives from a number of cities and counties across the state.

“The March For More brought Virginians together to fight for the future of kids in every city and county across Virginia,” said Mayor Levar Stoney. “This was just the start of the campaign. Kids in Virginia cannot wait another year for the General Assembly to properly fund their education. With legislators currently in session, the time to act is now.”

Richmond’s All City Band, Albert Hill Middle School cheerleaders and Mayor Stoney’s Youth Academy led the march through downtown Richmond to the Capitol. Speakers at the Kickoff Rally and the Capitol Rally included Congressman

Donald McEachin, members of the Richmond City Council, Chairwoman of the Richmond City School Board Dawn Page, Henrico Schools Superintendent Amy Cashwell, Lynchburg School Board Vice Chair Dr. James Coleman and Member Dr. Bob Brennan, Virginia’s 2019 Teacher of the Year Rodney Robinson and several parents and students.

State funding for education is an issue that all communities face whether rural, urban or suburban. Since 2009, state funding for K-12 education is down 9%, while overall student population has grown by 5%. In Virginia, localities are required to fund 45% of K-12 education but are funding 57% of the spending – to the tune of about \$4 billion more than required. The General Assembly is not living up to their constitutional obligation to ensure that an educational system of high quality is established and maintained.

“Here in Lynchburg, we are facing the same problems in our schools as many other localities across the state,” said Dr. James Coleman, Southern Region Chair, Virginia School Boards Association and Vice Chair, Lynchburg City School Board. “If Virginia does not increase the investment in K-12 education today while the economy is strong- we never will. It is time for the General Assembly to take this issue seriously and fairly support state education funding in localities.”

To learn more about the campaign or to sign the petition visit [MoreBetterStronger.com](http://MoreBetterStronger.com) and use #MoreBetterStronger.



## Commissioners & Cans initiative enters second year

COMMISSIONERS OF THE REVENUE from across the state will team up to fight food insecurity through the second annual Commissioners & Cans Initiative, to be held from Feb. 1 through 15 in support of the Virginia Federation of Foodbanks. Participating offices will compete in this



food and fund drive supporting their local respective food banks with a focus on the top 10 items recommended by Feeding America.

The 2018 Commissioners & Cans initiative – the first – was initiated by Newport News Commissioner of the Revenue Tiffany Boyle in concert with the commissioners in Poquoson, York County and Williamsburg. That food drive raised more than 700 pounds of food.

## Fairfax opens new public comment webpage

FAIRFAX CITY RESIDENTS can show support or opposition to actions being brought before council at a new web resource implemented on the City of Fairfax's website. People can visit [Connect2FairfaxCity.com](http://Connect2FairfaxCity.com) or click on a link on the city's home page in order to leave comments on pending issues. Right now, the site includes materials related to agenda items, such as staff reports and studies. Looking toward future developments, city staff plans to use the page for surveys and information about developments, and current and future projects.



## Public-private partnership used in parking lot improvement

AN INNOVATIVE USE of a public-private partnership enabled the Town of Woodstock to improve a downtown parking lot without having to go through the process and expense of purchasing the lot.

Instead, the town worked with local businesses in an area off South Main Street to enable the town to make improvements while the property owners retained ownership of the lot. The businesses and consumers have improved parking and the town can use the lot for events.

According to town staff and to a Jan. 9 article in *The Northern Virginia Daily*, the project construction took six months to complete and about five years of planning, property owner negotiation, design, and bidding. The project involved the installation of a new system of stormwater facilities, including 10,000 square feet of permeable pavers, bioretention, and underground

stormwater storage; the installation of light poles, catenary lighting and a Town of Woodstock sign; and the planting of trees, shrubs and grasses. All of the above grade work was completed by in-house forces, including the installation of pavers, electrical systems, electric car charging stations, landscaping, site amenities, and a portion of the concrete work.

A ribbon-cutting ceremony to mark the completion of the project was held Jan. 11.



## Bristol earns national recognition as the best small “town” to visit in Virginia

AN ONLINE TRAVEL PROMOTION website has named Bristol VA as the best small town to visit in Virginia in *The Discoverer's* list of the best small towns in each state to visit and explore. Bristol was recognized for its wealth of live music opportunities and for its role as the birthplace of country music.

*The Discoverer*, which wants to “to inspire people to explore Earth’s most incredible destinations,” notes that “Country music fans make a beeline for Bristol, the birthplace of the genre and one of the most-loved towns on the Crooked Road heritage

trail.” Check out the on-line story at <https://bit.ly/2TyltjA>.

Bristol’s State Street also was recognized by the American Planning Association as one of 15 “great streets.” In its recognition, the APA notes that Bristol has “successfully capitalized on its music heritage as the Birthplace of Country Music, which included the opening of the Smithsonian-affiliated Birthplace of Country Music Museum in 2014.” More information can be found at <https://bit.ly/2yo50GV>.



## Suffolk library holds Flip the Switch event



SUFFOLK PUBLIC LIBRARY lit up the world of technology with a Jan. 26 “Flip the Switch” event that aimed at giving the community opportunities to explore technology in new ways. The free public event included four zones that let participants of all ages get hands-on time with different technologies. The Code & Cogs zone focused on coding and robotics; the Green Scene looked at technology designed to improve the environment; the Gaming Zone concentrated on gaming technologies and the Make & Create area allowed participants to create arts and crafts.

Additional information is posted on the Flip the Switch Facebook page at <https://bit.ly/2QBnZUz> or through the library’s webpage at <https://bit.ly/2D2eLxc>.

# RETHINKING PROCUREMENTS

THE GOVERNMENT PROCUREMENT PROCESS has the overarching goal of ensuring that high quality goods and services are obtained at the best price and in the fairest manner possible. The first federal law on procurement, enacted in 1795, was entitled “An Act to establish the Office of Purveyor of Public Supplies” and the intent of the law was clear: the “purveyor” was not to gain from his office and should not have a “concern” or “interest” in the businesses that would be supplying governmental products. The concepts embodied in that 1795 law are also at the forefront of the Virginia Public Procurement Act, which states in part:

*“To the end that public bodies in the Commonwealth obtain high quality goods and services at reasonable cost, that all procurement procedures be conducted in a fair and impartial manner with avoidance of any impropriety or appearance of impropriety, that all qualified vendors have access to public business and that no offeror be arbitrarily or capriciously excluded, it is the intent of the General Assembly that competition be sought to the maximum feasible degree...”*

The goals are lofty, high-principled and essential but the reality for local governments can be confusing, opaque and time-consuming. Local procurement officials must tread carefully to ensure that they adhere to both the spirit and the letter of the procurement laws while retaining maximum flexibility in the choices they make.

This issue of *Virginia Town & City* seeks to address that dynamic and to shed light on some resources and alternatives for those walking the procurement path.

**Brendan Hefty**, a shareholder with the Richmond law practice of Hefty Wiley Gore, P.C., discusses the alternatives under Virginia law that afford localities some flexibility in choosing a contractor.

**Sydney Daigle**, the manager for the Healthy Eating, Active Living (HEAL) Cities and Towns Campaign, outlines the tools that can be used to encourage the procurement of healthier food for vending machines, government cafeterias and catered events.

**Sandra Gill** with the Virginia Department of General Services explains how that state agency helps local governments with what she calls the “one constant” of the procurement professional: To obtain high quality goods and services that meet the needs of the public body and its citizens at a reasonable cost.

Finally, the **Virginia Municipal League Insurance Programs** explains how that agency can review contracts, help localities avoid procurement risks and receive training in procurement.

We hope you enjoy – and learn from – this series on an important “back office” function of local government.



# Construction procurements: Alternatives to design-bid-build

**W**HEN PLANNING TO BUILD a new school, fire station or other local government building, a locality typically follows what's called the design-bid-build procurement process. It hires an architect to design the building, puts those specifications out to bid and chooses the lowest priced responsive and responsible bidder to build the project. There are times, however, when a locality may want to use a method other than design-bid-build. Reasons to explore other methods include the need to get the project done on a fast track, the ability to handle a complex project, the flexibility to be able to choose a design/construction team (rather than having to take the lowest bidder), and/or the desire to borrow funds at the beginning of the project rather than after bids have been received.

There are three alternative methods to design-bid-build permitted under Virginia law that afford localities some flexibility in choosing a contractor. This article outlines those alternative approaches and discusses some of the pros and cons associated with each.

## Design-Build

The design-build approach is allowed by Section 2.2-4382 of the *Code of Virginia*. In design-build, the locality selects a team of an architect and a contractor to both design and build the project. The design and construction team is chosen through a competitive process in which the locality issues a request for proposals and then selects the team on the basis of several factors. The locality does not have to take the lowest price and can choose the team that makes the "best" proposal based on the listed criteria. The criteria might include the team's general experience, specific experience with the project being considered, approach to the project, ability to deliver the project on schedule, and price. The design-build team typically gives the locality a guaranteed maximum price when the contract is entered into and is contractually responsible for any costs that exceed that amount.

In order to use design-build, the law requires the locality to adopt guidelines based on a two-step state process. The first step is to accept general proposals from the design-build teams focusing on qualifications, and then a second step to review more detailed proposals from the teams interviewed. The locality then chooses the team which it feels made the "best" proposal based on the listed criteria. At the beginning of the process the locality must either retain an outside architect or engineer, or have one in-house, to advise the locality on whether design-build is the best method of procurement, and the locality must make a determination that using design-bid-build is not "practicable" for the project. One advantage of using design-build is that the locality gets to choose the design team and contractor that it feels will do the best job, rather than having to take the bid of the contractor with the lowest price. The countervailing argument is that by not taking the lowest price the project will cost more. However, that may or may not be the case (since a locality can only use one method at a time, it is impossible to compare the cost of design-build v. design-bid-build for a specific project). Another advantage of using design-build is that the locality only has one contract, rather than individual contracts with the architect and contractor, which often result in finger-pointing between the two when a problem arises,



leaving the locality in the middle. With design-build, the architect and the contractor are on the same contract, so they cannot get around a problem by blaming each other.

Another advantage associated with design-build projects is that they can normally be finished more quickly since some parts of construction, such as site work, can occur while the design is still progressing. Another factor that is often overlooked with design-build is that since the locality gets a total price for the project at the beginning, rather than when the architect finishes the design and the bids are received, the locality may have the ability to borrow funds when interest rates are lower. A one percent difference in interest rates over a 20-year period can make a huge difference to the total amount the project ends up costing the locality.

One word of caution regarding design-build: In a traditional design-bid-build contract, the architect works for the locality and watches the contractor very closely during construction to make certain that the specifications are being followed. In a design-build contract, however, the architect and contractor are working together so you do not have the same level of oversight. Consequently, the locality should consider hiring a company to function as a Clerk of Works (CoW) during construction or have an experienced in-house CoW to ensure that both the architect and contractor are completing the job without cutting corners.

## Construction Management

Section 2.2-4382 of the Code of Virginia also allows localities to use construction management as an alternative to design-bid-build. This is normally referred to as "CM at Risk" because the construction manager, who is really the contractor, gives the locality a guaranteed maximum price and is at risk for any costs above that amount. The difference between this and design-build is that in a construction management contract the locality hires an architect who does a pre-

## Construction procurements

liminary design; once the preliminary design is completed the locality puts out a request for proposals asking contractors to submit their qualifications and price based on the preliminary design. The locality then chooses the construction manager that it feels will do the best job, and the construction manager and the architect work together from that point forward. In contrast to design build, the locality has two separate contracts and the architect is not a subcontractor of the construction manager.

There are some additional requirements that localities must adhere to for construction management contracts that are not in effect for design-build. One is that for construction management projects expected to cost less than \$10 million, the governing body must specifically vote to approve using construction management and must make a determination that the project is “complex.” A two-step process similar to that used in design-build must be followed, again following state guidelines.

## Public-Private Education Infrastructure Act (PPEA)

The third alternative to using design-bid-build is to use the PPEA, which was passed by the General Assembly in 2002. The PPEA is not a part of the Virginia Public Procurement Act and is found in a separate chapter of the *Virginia Code* (56-575.1 et. seq.). The PPEA provides for public-private partnerships and allows a locality to either accept unsolicited proposals for a construction project or to issue its own request for proposals for such projects. The statute contains a list of qualifying projects, which includes schools, public safety buildings, utility infrastructure, recreational facilities, technology infrastructure, and “any building or facility that meets a public purpose and is developed or operated by or for any public entity.” The chosen PPEA team


then develops the project, which is defined as “to plan, design, develop, finance, lease, acquire, install, construct or expand.”

As with the other two alternative methods, the PPEA requires a locality to adopt procedures prior to either accepting unsolicited proposals or soliciting proposals directly. The proposals (whether solicited or not) normally involve both design and construction by a team of an architect and a contractor. If the locality receives an unsolicited proposal, it needs to also request other competing proposals before deciding.

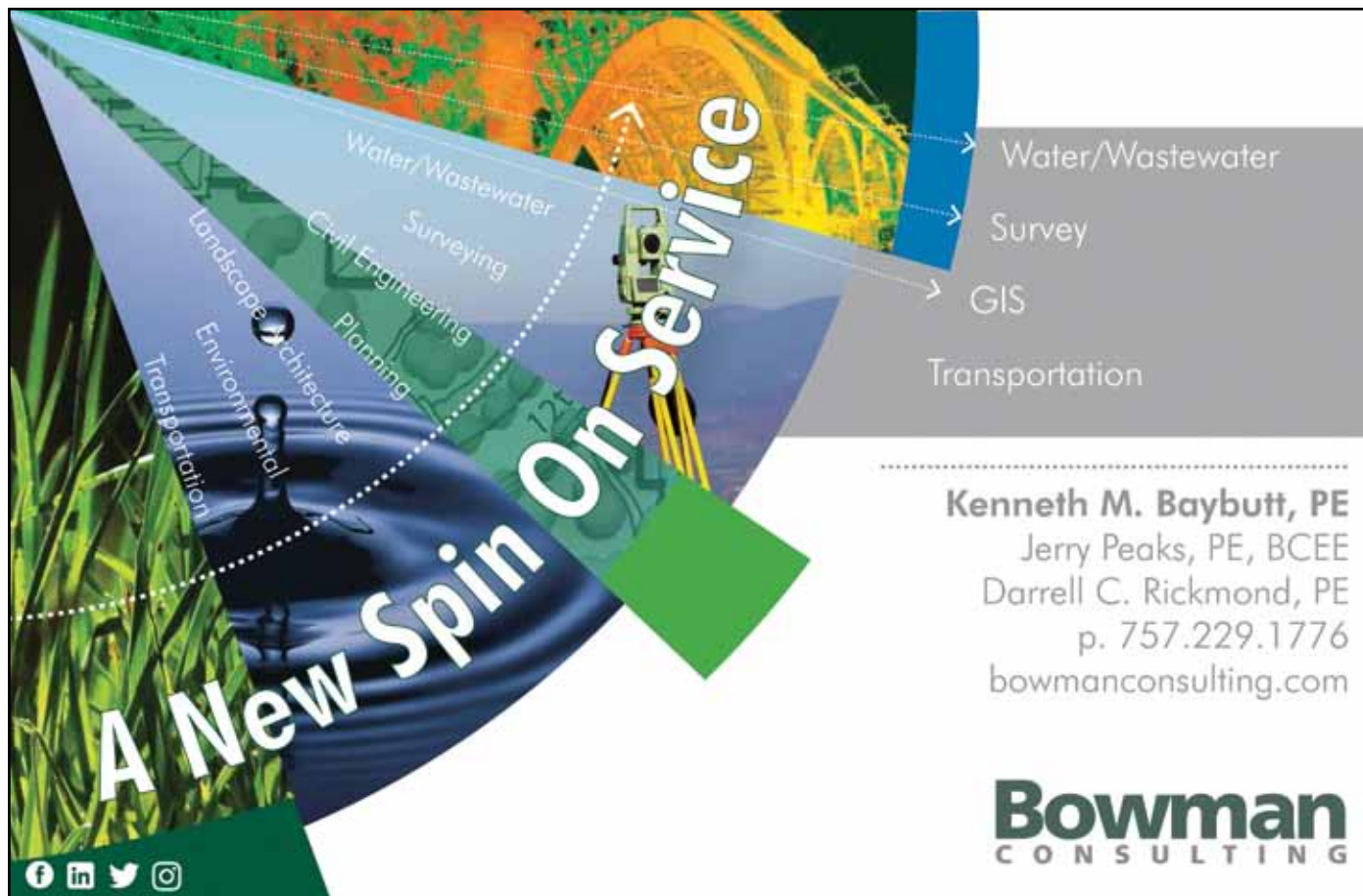
The advantages and disadvantages of using PPEA are similar to using design-build and construction management. The locality gets to choose the team that it feels most comfortable with to design and build the project, and the project normally is finished in a shorter time period. As with both other alternatives, a locality receives a guaranteed maximum price at the beginning of the process rather than after design is completed and works with the team that it chooses rather than having to take the lowest bidder.

## Conclusion

Localities may feel most comfortable using the traditional design-bid-build process for the construction of public buildings because they know they are getting the lowest price based on a set of carefully drawn specifications from an architect with loyalty to the locality. However, as outlined above, there may be times when design-build, construction management or PPEA are the better option to consider.

Each of the four methods comes with advantages disadvantages; none are right or wrong. It is important to note, however, that these alternatives are available to cities, counties and towns in Virginia. 

**About the author:** *Brendan Hefty is a shareholder with Hefty Wiley & Gore, P.C.*




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# Healthier meals for a thriving community

## How municipalities can leverage food procurement dollars to support healthier diets, economies, and environments

**P**ROCUREMENT REFERS TO THE PROCESS of finding, contracting for, and acquiring goods and services. One of those “goods” procured by municipalities is the food for vending machines and concession stands on government property; the meals served in employee cafeterias, schools, or senior centers; and even options provided at catered meetings and events. We all know that food, whether purchased for a municipality or one’s family, can add up to a significant monetary expense. Not as often considered, at least at the municipal level, are the calories associated with consuming the food – which can really add up as well. A recently released Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) funded study, published in the *Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics*, showed that employees buy an average of 1,080 food calories at work each week. Soda, sandwiches, chips, donuts, and pastries accounted for more than one-third of those calories, along with burgers, burritos, and candy.

It should come as no surprise that regular overconsumption of such foods can contribute to increased rates of diet-related chronic disease and unhealthy weights. What may come as a surprise, however, is that full-time workers who are overweight or obese and have other chronic health problems miss about 450 million more days of work each year than healthy workers. A 2016 article by the National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion estimated that more than \$153 billion in productivity is lost each year due to employee illness.

Moreover, according to a 2010 Snack Food Association report, 74% of consumers are trying to eat healthier pushing the sales growth of healthier snacks ahead of traditional snack foods by 4 to 1.

The bottom line for municipalities: If healthy options aren’t part of your food procurements, you may not only be contributing to higher costs and leaving revenue on the table, you may also be failing to offer the types of foods consumers increasingly prefer.

### The good news

With only modest investments of start-up time and money, municipal leaders can use food purchasing dollars to create a more equitable food system and promote good health. The advantages include reduced health care costs and improved diets and health outcomes for employees and citizens. Furthermore, redirecting dollars to invest in local, sustainably grown and produced foods advances a more equitable food system (which can increase a community’s healthy food options and health outcomes), stimulates the local economy, and reduces a municipality’s carbon footprint.

Elected officials and municipal staff have an array of tools available to advance healthier food procurement, including executive orders, legislation, contracts, permits, rules, and/or regulations. Of course, since food is often purchased, distributed, and sold via differing municipal agencies and staff members, restrictions, regulations,

### What is health equity?

*“Health equity means that everyone has a fair and just opportunity to be healthier. This requires removing obstacles to health such as poverty, discrimination, and their consequences, including powerlessness and lack of access to good jobs with fair pay, quality education and housing, safe environments, and health care.”*

– Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

and jurisdictional control may vary depending on the setting and population served. Suffice it to say, it can get complicated!

To help, HEAL has compiled resources, including a roadmap, to help municipalities identify where to focus energy when launching a successful healthy and equitable food procurement policy.

### What is a food system?

A “FOOD SYSTEM” is the process that food undergoes to reach our plates. It is a complex web of interlocking processes that combine production, processing, distribution, consumption and waste recovery. It also includes all the inputs, like infrastructure and people, that interact with our food at each stage in the process and all the outputs that are generated, like waste.



## Seven questions to get started

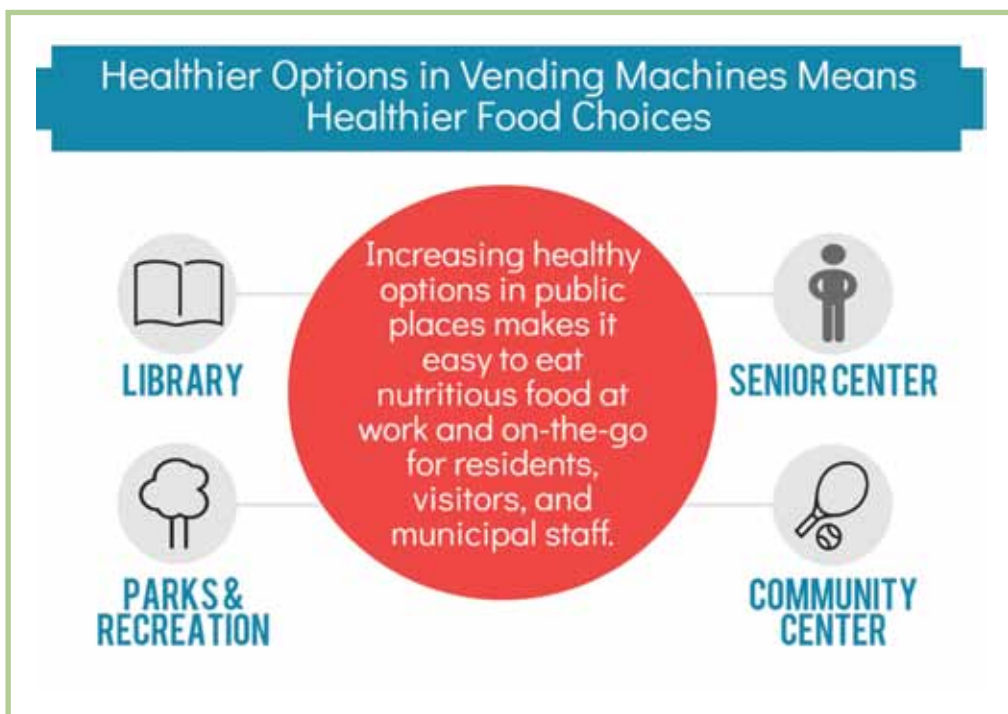
To better assess where they stand and to chart a path forward, we encourage municipalities to consider the advice of Nessia Berner-Wong, a Senior Policy Analyst at ChangeLab Solutions, a nonprofit that works to advance equitable laws and policies. Berner-Wong recommends taking the following steps:

- 1. Take Inventory:** Assess who currently purchases, distributes, or vends food within your municipality. What do they buy? How much? From whom? What policies and contracts exist? Are there new policies and standards that need to be created to address gaps? Can various standards be streamlined into jurisdiction-wide policy to maximize your impact on resident and employee health?
- 2. Find Your Partners:** Who cares about healthy food procurement and needs to be at the table? Who are the key staff members responsible for putting procurement policies into effect? Who can support your efforts down the line and during implementation? Consider those partners as you develop your taskforce for researching, adopting, and implementing new food procurement policies.
- 3. Identify Control Levers:** Who officially has the authority to change food procurement and does this person vary depending on the program and setting? These staff should become part of your taskforce. Interview them to determine where you actually have jurisdiction to make changes. Some food programs may have regulatory “ceilings” that prevent you from enacting stricter guidelines.
- 4. Select Standards:** There are many nutritional and sustainability guidelines for different programs and settings. Based on your earlier research, which standards make sense for the areas you have jurisdiction over? What does healthy and equitable mean to your community and what other values (e.g. good local jobs or environmental sustainability) are you interested in addressing through your policy?
- 5. Adopt a Policy:** What level will you set your procurement policy at? What will the associated fiscal impact be? Will you provide rewards or incentives for participation? How will you monitor progress and ensure compliance?
- 6. Implement:** How will you keep your taskforce of supporters involved? How will you get buy-in from staff and the public? The taskforce should be actively engaged in implementation and monitoring. You will need to create new contracts and may need to identify new vendors – will you do this immediately or take a phased-in approach?
- 7. Enforce:** You want to educate your suppliers, vendors, staff, and clients (e.g. residents) about your new standards and ensure there is a process in place for monitoring and reporting progress over time. You also need to communicate up front how you will address non-compliance.

Although the first three “steps” of food procurement policy change may seem time-consuming, they are important to follow. A robust internal assessment enables municipalities to make the best decisions about where to focus resources and serves as an excellent baseline against which to measure progress to promote “wins” to staff, elected officials, and the public.

## HEAL can help: Healthy vending and values-based procurement

Staff at the HEAL Cities and Towns Campaign of the Mid-Atlantic provide free technical assistance to Virginia municipal leaders who want to adopt Healthy Eating and Active Living (HEAL) policies and practices. The HEAL Cities and Towns Campaign provides healthy vending policies and toolkits to help Virginia’s localities successfully launch healthy procurement initiatives. For municipalities interested in creating deeper impacts with their food procurement dollars, HEAL staff are happy to provide guidance on integrating values-based procurement principles into policies and contracts.



### Healthy Vending

Providing healthier vending machine options is low-hanging fruit (pardon the pun) since many municipalities already provide vending machines in buildings for the convenience of their workers and residents. Since our launch in 2012, the HEAL Cities and Towns Campaign has helped municipalities get started with healthy food procurement for vending machines. Oftentimes, it’s as simple as mandating that a certain percentage of the snacks and beverages offered meet nutritional standards when negotiating vending contracts.

For example: In 2014, Leesburg’s Parks and Recreation Department (PRD) adopted nutritional guidelines for its vending machines. The PRD viewed its healthy vending options as consistent with its goal of combating childhood obesity. Leesburg, a Silver Level HEAL town, received technical assistance from the Campaign through a webinar, fact sheets and in-person meetings.

As with most new initiatives, Leesburg’s PRD faced some initial apprehension that they were able to overcome. “The town



incorporated a gradual increase to the percentage of healthy options over a period of time, as opposed to an immediate drastic change," explains Rich Williams, Director of Parks and Recreation. "This was acceptable to our vendor and they were able to see over a period of time that their bottom line was not being impacted."

The City of Richmond, a Gold HEAL City, has also taken steps to provide

healthier vending options. Michael Winborne, PhD, who serves as a Management Analyst II in the City of Richmond's Human Services Department, became concerned about the City's vending machines after seeing one too many "Honey Buns" on his coworkers' desks and realizing that vending machines were serving as a meal replacement for some of the staff. Dr. Winborne explains that for city employees, "depending on the weather outside, we really don't want to leave the building to go find food for lunch...so, we use the vending machines."

The city partnered with its vendor and reviewed six months of sales data. After seeing high sales of calorie-dense, nutrient-poor items, they decided to launch a healthy vending program. "We had to make better choices and give people that option," said Dr. Winborne. Staff reviewed healthy vending guidance from the American Heart Association and found that its vendor already offered many compliant items. Armed with the sales data, nutritional guidelines, and a strong vendor partner, they piloted a year-long process to swap out their vending machine offerings with healthier choices. After an initial adjustment period, staff and residents started enjoying the healthier options. "I had no idea how much people loved white popcorn," said Mr. Winborne of an early healthy vending machine favorite. "Small changes matter," he concludes.

## Values-based Procurement


For those municipalities that have embraced the healthy vending machine and are looking to achieve the next level of economic revitalization, food system and public health improvements, and environmental benefits to their community, we suggest you consider values-based procurement.

The Center for Good Food Purchasing (CGFP) is a pioneer and leading non-profit that supports public institutions that pursue values-based procurement. The CGFP model uses a flexible, metrics-based, framework of five "Core Values" to direct institutional buying power in support of a more transparent and equitable food system:

- **Local Economies:** Support small and mid-sized agricultural and food processing operations within the local area or region.
- **Nutrition:** Promote health and well-being by offering generous portions of vegetables, fruit, whole grains and minimally processed foods, while reducing salt, added sugars, saturated fats, and red meat consumption, and eliminating artificial

additives. Improve equity, affordability, accessibility, and consumption of high quality culturally relevant Good Food in all communities.

- **Valued Workforce:** Provide safe and healthy working conditions and fair compensation for all food chain workers and producers from production to consumption.
- **Environmental Sustainability:** Source from producers that employ sustainable production systems that reduce or eliminate synthetic pesticides and fertilizers; avoid the use of hormones, routine antibiotics and genetic engineering; conserve soil and water; protect and enhance wildlife habitats and biodiversity; reduce on-farm energy and water consumption, food waste and greenhouse gas emissions; and increase menu options that have lower carbon and water footprints.
- **Animal Welfare:** Provide healthy and humane care for farm animals.

When fully adopted, procurement centered on these values can have a positive and transformative impact on the local food system and community. To date, Washington, DC is the only jurisdiction on the East Coast that has adopted the Good Food Purchasing Program framework. Will your municipality be the next? 

**About the author:** *Sydney Daigle, HEAL Cities and Towns Campaign Manager, Institute for Public Health Innovation. Sydney provides technical assistance to municipal leaders to adopt policies and practices that make it easier for their residents and employees to eat healthier and move more.*

## Resources on healthy vending and equitable procurement:

More information on healthy vending standards and tips to get started can be found on HEAL's Workplace Wellness page at [www.healcitiesmidatlantic.org](http://www.healcitiesmidatlantic.org).

In addition, the HEAL Cities and Towns Campaign recommends resources from the following sources:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Health Food Service Guidelines: [www.cdc.gov/obesity/strategies/food-serv-guide.html](http://www.cdc.gov/obesity/strategies/food-serv-guide.html)

Center for Good Food Purchasing, Values-Based Procurement Framework: <https://goodfoodpurchasing.org/>

ChangeLab Solutions Procurement & Healthy Vending Resources:

<http://changelabsolutions.org/tools-policy-change>

<http://changelabsolutions.org/publications/making-change-healthier-vending-municipalities>

Exceed: The Tool for Using Healthy Food Service Guidelines, Resource Library: [www.exceedtool.com/resources](http://www.exceedtool.com/resources)

## Become a HEAL City or Town:

For model policies and practices and more information about becoming a HEAL city or town, contact Sydney Daigle, HEAL Cities and Towns Campaign Manager, at [sdaigle@institutephi.org](mailto:sdaigle@institutephi.org) or 240-253-1036. HEAL Cities & Towns Campaign of the Mid-Atlantic is a project of the Institute for Public Health Innovation, in collaboration with strategic partner the Virginia Municipal League and funded by Kaiser Permanente, founding partner.



# Procurements made easier: Working with DGS can save time and money

**T**HE VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT of General Services (DGS) is a resource for local governments. As the Commonwealth's centralized agency responsible for the procurement of goods and services, we are available to support your staff as they develop solicitations, explore ways to attract better responses to your business opportunities, and help make your purchases and solicitations more transparent for your citizens.

In Virginia, procurement is governed by a hodgepodge of laws, regulations, ordinances and rules that vary by locality, school board, state agency, institution and authority. The one constant across all those public bodies is the goal of the procurement professional: To obtain high quality goods and services that meet the needs of the body and its citizens at a reasonable cost.

## Meet eVA

All state agencies are required by Code to use eVA, the state's electronic procurement system managed by DGS. However, this powerful, convenient tool also is used by nearly 1,000 local government entities. We know that local governments value transparency. eVA provides free, public access to past, current and future procurements while also giving access to detailed information on the rules, regulations, processes and standards behind these procurements so your citizens can feel confident in how their tax dollars are being spent.

We have account executives dedicated to localities and are located throughout the state. They are your procurement office's primary resource. They will provide consulting, assist with the utilization of eVA, help identify vendors registered in your county, city, or town, assist with putting them in touch with the right people related to contracts, fleet, construction, and any other area where they need assistance.

Local procurement officials also can take advantage of eVA's numerous web-based tools such as Quick Quote, a paperless alternative to faxed and telephone quotes that allows them to get electronic bids from suppliers for small-dollar purchases. Other tools include the eM-all online shopping feature, sealed eSourcing, contract management and a variety of analytical reports that allow you to evaluate spending, manage workloads and monitor buying. We also have an award-winning mobile application that puts procurement at users' fingertips.

Overall, more than 13,000 state and local government buyers use eVA to publicize business opportunities, receive quotes for goods and services, and place orders. Currently, there are over 95,000 vendors registered with eVA.

## eVa in action

Bedford, VA: Anthony Browning, the Bedford Regional Water Authority's logistics coordinator, needed to purchase a new turbine pump, but every quote he received was nearly twice as expensive as the pump it was replacing.

Browning asked his department head for a few more days and called the Department of General Services' Division of Purchases and Supply (DPS). The next day a DPS account executive helped

Browning place a Quick Quote in eVA, the state's electronic procurement system. The move paid off when a few days later, Browning made the award to a vendor that previously had not served the authority at a price that was nearly \$10,000 less than the paper quotes he had received.

That was in July of 2017. Since that time, Browning and the authority have used eVA more than 110 times to purchase everything from carpeted floor mats for their cubicles to a tri-axle dump truck. Through the end of 2018, the authority had spent more than \$469,000 using eVA and saved tens of thousands of dollars in the process.

"It's probably one of the best systems I've ever worked with," Browning recently told DGS. "It's so easy to use. It only takes a couple times playing with it to feel like old hat. It used to take me a couple-three hours to put out a small bid request; the other day I did two in less than an hour!"

Hanover County: Steven Rusch, the Purchasing Division Director for Hanover County, was looking for a less expensive way to manage the county's contracts. He also wanted to make the contracts and solicitations available to the public. DGS provided Hanover County with a custom link to their solicitations posted in eVA that the county linked from its website. Rusch said the move not only saved the county money and improved transparency, it has helped with contract management.

## Contracts

One of the key areas in which we render assistance to localities is in establishing contracts. DGS establishes long-term, statewide contracts that leverage the buying power of state agencies, institutions and local governments to reduce the cost of goods and services. This leveraged buying power results in approximately \$30 million in annual savings. Types of contracts we've assisted with include school buses, office supplies, and fuel. The 2018 General Assembly expanded the use of our fuel contracts to include volunteer fire companies and emergency medical services that are recognized by an ordinance to be a part of the safety program of a county, city, or town.

These contracts provide the highest quality goods and services with minimal cost and risk, as they are compliant with the Virginia Public Procurement Act (VPPA) and legislative requirements, and are usable by all public bodies (which have easy access for ordering through eVA). Many of our contracts are for multiple awards, which offer a variety of vendors from which to choose.

On the other hand, we know there are goods and services you need that we don't have readily available; in these cases, our account executives are ready to help you draft solicitations that follow your local rules.

## Training

Our mission to ensure quality, ethical government purchasing extends beyond our more than 100 employees in our procurement division. Through our Virginia Institute of Procurement (VIP), we educate



other state and local public procurement professionals on the essential principles and best practices of contract development and management, supplier relationship management, and advanced knowledge of the Virginia Public Procurement Act and other regulations.

VIP offers professional certification at three levels: Virginia Contracting Associate Officer (VCA); Virginia Contracting Officer (VCO); and the Virginia Contracting Master Program (VCM). More than 1,400 public procurement officials in Virginia have obtained a VCA, with more than 760 VCOs and nearly 50 VCMs, our newest and most advanced certification. We also offer continuing education opportunities to satisfy the recertification requirements.

Our most popular educational opportunity is the annual Public Procurement Forum, which will be held Nov. 17-20, 2019, in Virginia Beach. DGS recently sponsored the 30th Public Procurement Forum, which provided 73 workshops on 48 different topics and was attended by nearly 800 public procurement professionals and over 160 suppliers.

Our goal with our training programs is to enhance the quality of procurements statewide by arming our public procurement professionals with the most up-to-date knowledge, skills and best practices in the field.

## Virginia Distribution Center

DGS' procurement division also manages the Virginia Distribution Center (VDC), a cooperative procurement and distribution facility that provides goods and materials to state and local government entities across the Commonwealth.

VDC leverages the collective buying power of state agencies, local governments, mental health and correctional institutions, universities and colleges, and political subdivisions, along with efficient freight methods to stock over 1,000 high quality, low-cost items such as food, janitorial supplies, paper and plastic products, and safety supplies.

Approximately 185 localities and local school districts use VDC. Schools benefit from our statewide milk and dairy contract, which saves money and administrative staff time. This is one of our more than 70 contracts for products that local governments and school systems use.

VDC houses an onsite Quality Assurance Laboratory that randomly tests every product – from toilet paper and flags, to chicken tenders and flashlights – to ensure the products it sells meet specifications.

## Other DGS local government resources

The Department of General Services' commitment to local governments does not end with our procurement division. We also serve localities through fleet management, our state and federal surplus programs, and our graphic communications services.

Local governments can take advantage of the DGS Office of Fleet Management Services' contracts for short-term vehicle rentals, as well as our contracts for motor fuels and alternative fuels. Localities also can enroll their vehicles in the Vehicle Management Control Center program, which provides roadside assistance, routine vehicle maintenance, and help with vehicle crashes.

The DGS Office of Surplus Property Management is another great resource for local governments to purchase everything from educational supplies, to office equipment, vehicles, heavy equipment and more for pennies on the dollar. You can visit either our Richmond or Wytheville location.

If you are looking for something special, our Surplus team can go out and find it.

**The City of Virginia Beach needed a wrecker and two cargo trucks. The items were originally procured for more than \$378,000 new. The city was able to procure the surplus items from DGS at a cost of \$13,000.**

**In Middlesex County they were able to procure a boat and 7 pieces of office furniture that originally cost over \$47,000, for a little over \$1,025 from DGS Surplus.**

DGS also provides creative services for local governments through its Office of Graphic Communications. OGC can help by designing a new logo, web graphics for social media, brochures, posters, tradeshow materials and more.

## Collaboration

We at DGS are grateful to our local government partners and look forward to continuing to work together on procurement opportunities and challenges.

**About the author:** Sandra Gill is the Deputy Director at Virginia Department of General Services

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# Did you know?

## VMLIP members receive procurement services as part of their membership

**R**ISK MANAGEMENT AND COMPLIANCE are integral parts of a locality's procurement process, which is why VML Insurance Programs (VMLIP) is committed to reducing its members' total cost of risk through expansive coverages, services and resources.

### Contracts

"It is important that contracts be scrutinized through a risk management lens," observes VMLIP Director of Education and Training Thomas Bullock. "Many of them contain sections detailing insurance requirements and other terms which may be foreign to some."

**For nearly 40 years, VMLIP has partnered with its local government members to help them protect their assets and reduce risks to their organizational goals.**

The Virginia Public Procurement Act (VPPA) contains more than 50 pages of definitions, processes, rules and regulations designed to regulate the purchase

of goods and services by public bodies. Understandably, abiding by the VPPA can be complicated, especially when working with public contracts that inherently carry risk.

At no cost to its members, VMLIP reviews contracts to ensure that they contain the required insurance placement and that the member does not unintentionally waive rights or accept liability on behalf of another.

"As part of our review," explains Bullock, "we may suggest insurance requirements or alternate language."



### Grants

"Another way we are able to assist members in avoiding procurement risks is through the provision of Risk Management Grants," notes Bullock. "Since 1999, we have provided grants to help members expand their risk management programs through purchasing safety equipment, attending training sessions, and more."

In 2018, VMLIP provided nearly \$300,000 in grant funds to more than 130 members for the purchase of equipment such as first aid kits; security cameras; AED's; traffic wands, vests, and barricades; body cameras; air monitors and confined space entry equipment; lightning detectors; and life preservers.

The grant funds were also used to pay for risk training sessions such as LawFit (used to maintain a fitness standard for law enforcement personnel), CPR and AED, and the use of personal protective equipment.

Bullock observes that "through the grant program, we have been able to help members obtain safety equipment and training that they might not have otherwise been able to procure in that budget year or in a timely manner."


### Training

"We encourage our members to reach out to us – especially when it comes to securing an instructor for training," notes Bullock. "There are a variety of topics where we may be able to provide an instructor at no-cost to our member."

For example, recently a member requested information on locating an instructor to provide certified Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) training. They had budgeted \$7,500 for the training, but VMLIP was able provide the training at no-cost, helping the member save money and avoid a lengthy and arduous procurement process.

Training and personalized consulting is also available in areas such as human resources, communications, public safety, and local government.

VMLIP recently released a list of topics for which its pool staff can provide training. This list is available on the VMLIP website under "Resources" at: <https://www.vmlins.org/home/resources/>.

For more information on how VMLIP can help your organization, contact its Member Services staff at 800-963-6800. 

**VMLIP maintains a diverse list of training sessions that can be provided to members by its experienced pool of staff.**

# Friendly faces at VML's January events

For more pictures of the recent 2019 Finance Forum, Newly Elected Officials Conference and the 2019 VML Legislative Day event visit [www.facebook.com/viriniamunicipalleague](http://www.facebook.com/viriniamunicipalleague).







# FOCUS ON OUR MEMBERS

Local officials are a fascinating bunch of people who have careers all over the board and a range of backgrounds and interests. Over the next several months VML will include a brief focus on various members so that we can all gain an appreciation of what a diverse group occupies the seats in council and board chambers. Do you know someone who could be featured? Email Rob Bullington at [rbullington@vml.org](mailto:rbullington@vml.org).

By Mary Jo Fields

## Katie Cristol, Arlington County Board Member

KATIE CRISTOL WAS FIRST ELECTED to the Arlington County Board in 2015. She served as vice chair of the board from 2017-2018 and as chair from 2018-2019. She was the first millennial to lead the county board, saying in an interview last year that “This is a generation that is actually incredibly passionate about having jobs with purpose, volunteerism and the sense of wanting to be a part of something bigger than ourselves and I think that when you give young people opportunities to plug into local government in a purpose driven way, they flock and rise to the occasion.”



As an advocate for women and girls in Arlington and for the importance of women’s representation in elected office, Katie describes how these issues motivated her run for the County Board in 2015. “I knew that Arlington County had important work to do to improve child-care affordability and community response to sexual assault, among other issues. As a crowded primary field took shape for two open seats on our five-member Board, there were no other women candidates, and I believed that we needed an advocate and champion to make a change for women in our community.”

Katie came to the Arlington County Board with a background in education policy, both local and national. A reading buddy since 2011 at Randolph Elementary School, Katie served as the school’s liaison to the Arlington Public Schools Advisory Council on Instruction. She also worked professionally for a number of years with Education First, a national organization that partners with school districts, states and nonprofits across the U.S., with a focus on student success. Currently, she maintains a practice as an education policy advisor, supporting research, strategic planning, resource allocation and community engagement projects. During her time on the Arlington County Board, Katie has served on the first Joint Subcommittee on Facilities of the Arlington School and County Boards and helped create a joint citizen advisory body on facilities.

Prior to running for office, she was appointed to the Arlington Commission on the Status of Women. She is an advocate for support for survivors of sexual assault and is the co-chair of Project PEACE, an interagency collaboration that addresses domestic and sexual violence in Arlington.

She holds a public policy master’s degree from Princeton University, a bachelor’s degree from the University of Virginia, and is a 2012 graduate of Arlington Neighborhood College. The Neighborhood College is a civic leadership development program.

## Armstead D. “Chuckie” Reid, Vice-Mayor, Farmville

CHUCKIE REID’S FIRST TERM on the Farmville town council began in 1986; he has served as vice mayor since 2008. During his tenure on the Farmville council, the town has undergone many changes including the reopening of an historic hotel, the opening of the High Bridge Trail state park and an expansion of the physical campus and academic offerings at Longwood University.

Among the first things people notice about Chuckie is his congeniality, a trait that served him well during his 29-year career as a mail carrier in Farmville. During those years he came to know a lot of people in town because he was more than just a postman – he was a one-person safety net or social services agency as well. He learned which of his customers – typically those who were elderly – needed and liked for him to check on them whether they were receiving mail or not. They wanted to talk to him and as a result over time he learned about them and he learned the names of their children, grandchildren and dogs. As Chuckie says, it was like he was part of the family, they shared so much with him. Chuckie retired from his job at the end of December 2018. It’s hard to say who will miss those interactions more: Chuckie or the people on his route.



Chuckie is a member of “the lost generation” affected by the closing of the schools in Prince Edward County from 1959-64 as a result of the passage of the Massive Resistance legislation. During those years, there was no provision for educating the county’s black students. Some of the children went elsewhere for educational services, some pupils went to makeshift schools, and some children missed part or all of their education for those five years.

Chuckie enlisted in the US. Air Force in 1972 and spent four years in military service as a supply clerk. After completing his military service in 1976 Chuckie returned to Farmville and went to work for Longwood. After 11 years he began his career with the post office. His decision to run for town council was inspired by the late Rev. L. Francis Griffin who believed “working with people is a great thing.” Griffin was the pastor of the First Baptist Church in Farmville who was an influential advocate for civil rights and a strong opponent of the closing of the public schools in the county.

**About the author:** *Mary Jo Fields is an adjunct VML staff member and a contributing editor to Virginia Town & City.*



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