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TOWN & CITY

LOVETTSVILLE

VOL. 56 NO. 7 SEPT. 2021

HILLSBORO

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THE MAGAZINE OF THE VIRGINIA MUNICIPAL LEAGUE

A time for towns to shine!

Welcome to Leesburg
and the Towns of
Loudoun County



Inside:

- The 2021 year in review
- Gateway senior apartments to offer affordable housing in Fishersville
- Member Spotlight on Town of South Hill
- ... and more!

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THE MAGAZINE OF THE VIRGINIA MUNICIPAL LEAGUE

VOL. 56 NO. 7 SEPT. 2021

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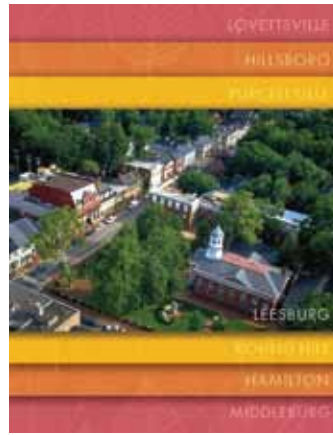
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The wait is almost over... It's annual conference time!

THIS IS THE LAST ISSUE before the 2021 Annual Conference and what fun it has been to read about all the Towns of Loudoun County in each issue of the magazine this year!

Hamilton was first in the January/February issue, and they mentioned Lowry's Crab Shack along with the Serendipity Nail Spa and Halloween House – which sounds really cool! Apparently, you can get a pumpkin spice deep moisture pedicure and see a creepy haunted house all in one stop! I'm pretty sure that option doesn't exist in Richmond.

In the March issue we took a stroll through Round Hill, and I learned that the only lake in Loudoun County is hiding there, the 100-acre Sleeter Lake. Round Hill is located between two Appalachian Trail centers. A big "Thank you" to the Round Hill residents who volunteer to promote and support the Trail!

Hillsboro was up next and after reading that article I'm looking even more forward to seeing the town's transformation thanks to their \$30 million infrastructure project. Even if you don't get to the town to see it, we are going to offer a chance to hear all about their project at the Annual Conference. There are plenty of other reasons to visit Hillsboro that we can't recreate at the conference including the town's deli, bakery and farm market that are part of a 45-acre organic farming operation. The farm is holistically managed to produce delicious, nutrient dense food.

Lovettsville or "Capitalsville" is truly unique with its German heritage and the town's vote to change their name when the Washington Capitals won the NHL Stanley Cup Final a few years back! They are also welcoming a new town manager, Jason Cournoyer who begins on September 27th. Welcome, Jason! The Gold Star Families Memorial Monument in Lovettsville is a one-of-a-kind feature in Northern Virginia. This memorial to Gold Star Families and Relatives pays tribute to those who sacrificed a loved one for our freedom.

June was the month for Middleburg and the famous Salamander Resort and Spa – a beautiful hotel! Middleburg is an equestrian mainstay and popular agrotourism destination that works to keep its small-town charm intact. The town seems to perfectly

balance the old and the new. For example, Middleburg is home to one of the oldest standing churches in the Virginia Piedmont Region, Asbury Church built in 1829. But the town is also working on a new Town Hall which is sure to be a super addition!

Purcellville, the small town with big charm, was next. Situated at the terminus of the 44.6-mile Washington & Old Dominion Railroad Regional Park, the town's Regional Trail and Train Station marks the end (or, depending on how you look at it, the *beginning*) of the park that follows the line to Alexandria. And not to be missed: Nichols Hardware Store. This small-town store opened in 1914 and still has sliding ladders and walls of wooden drawers.

I won't spoil any of the details you will find in this month's final "Towns of Loudoun" article, but I will tell you that Leesburg appropriately ends our series since it is where we all gather in October. Leesburg has so much to offer. Not only is it the home of the Attorney General, but it is also home to the café with the biggest burgers I've ever seen (check out my message in last month's issue of *VTC* to learn more). I'm confident that everyone will enjoy Leesburg and the tastes of all the Towns of Loudoun at the conference's Host City Night to be held on the grounds of the Marshall House. Wear comfortable shoes!

Those of you who have read all the articles will notice I didn't mention any of the beautiful wineries, breweries or distilleries that are found throughout the region. Honestly, I was afraid I'd choose the wrong one! Every time that I ask for suggestions, I am given a new name and told that "you can't go wrong with any of them." So many choices!

So please plan to visit one or more of the towns of Loudoun County on your way to the conference or on your way home if you have time. Whether you stop for sustenance, to admire the scenery, or take in a bit of history, it will be time well spent.

I can't wait to see our members next month. On behalf of the VML Executive Board and staff, we look forward to seeing you October 3-5 in Leesburg!



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Greetings fellow VML members!

We look so forward to welcoming you to the 2021 VML Annual Conference at the Lansdowne Resort in Leesburg. As part of the conference, we have a very special “Host City” event planned for the evening of Sunday, October 3rd. We invite you to join us on the grounds of the beautiful Dodona Manor, home of the George C. Marshall International Center, where you will enjoy local libations from our wineries and breweries, and food representing the culinary expertise of our Towns. Live music from local musician and songwriter, Todd Wright, will greet party goers before Lost Locals, a well-known cover band that frequents Leesburg’s restaurants and bars, takes the stage to keep the party going.

While at the conference, we want to give you plenty of opportunities to experience how our region’s rich history creates its exciting present. This starts Sunday night when docents will be available for tours of Dodona Manor, home of General Marshall from 1941 to 1959. There’s also plenty of time during or after the party to explore Historic Downtown Leesburg, whether you want to enjoy a drink at one our friendly bars or take a stroll through our quaint neighborhoods. And, for those interested in historic architecture and preservation, we encourage you to join the mobile tour on Monday, “Preserving and Promoting Historic Resources” to get a more in-depth look at Leesburg’s historic district.

Each of the Towns of Loudoun County will have a presence at both the event and the conference. Look for each Town’s display in the Lansdowne Resort and stop by to learn more about Loudoun’s seven unique localities. Also, be sure to check your conference bag for information about local attractions.

The Towns of Loudoun are excited to host your visit to Loudoun County, and to making your time with us a truly memorable experience. We can’t wait to be your host!

See you soon!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kelly Burk". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline.

Kelly Burk
Mayor, Town of Leesburg

Leesburg: Welcome to the big town!

LEESBURG, THE LARGEST TOWN in Virginia, is proud to be the host of this year's Virginia Municipal League Annual Conference at the Lansdowne Resort. We hope that while you are learning about the issues and opportunities affecting Virginia's local governments (and taking care of league business) you set aside some time either before, during or after the conference to explore our town and experience all it has to offer.

Leesburg then...and now

In 1722 leaders from the Five Nations of Iroquois and the growing population of British colonists from New York to Virginia signed the Treaty of Albany (also called "The Great Treaty of 1722"). Thanks to the assurances offered by the treaty, colonists, and new immigrants from a variety of ethnic and religious backgrounds began settling land increasingly further from the coast. In Virginia, one of the regions that experienced an influx of settlers is the area that would become Loudoun County. In 1730, Thomas, the sixth Earl of Fairfax, granted 4,054 acres, including what would become Leesburg, to Francis Awbrey.

During this time a small settlement began to take root at the intersection of the major north-south "Carolina Road" (now U.S. Highway 15) and the east-west oriented "Potomac Ridge Road" (now Virginia Highway 7). In 1757, the Virginia General Assembly selected this settlement for the location of the Loudoun County courthouse. At the time, the land was owned by Nicholas Minor, who hired John Hough to survey and plat his 60 acres into 70 lots to form a town, which he called George Town. The following year the name was changed to Leesburg to honor of the prominent Lee family whose members included Francis "Lightfoot" Lee (who would go on to become a signer of the Declaration of Independence). In September 1758, an Act of the Assembly established the Town of Leesburg, although the town was not incorporated until 1813.

Today, the brick-lined streets of the downtown are home to many Colonial and Federal era buildings. The Board of Architectural Review (BAR) works hard to preserve the town's historic resources. With backgrounds in architecture, real estate, historic preservation, construction, building conservation, and the law, the BAR members are well-qualified to review and approve projects and to advise the town's council on preservation issues.

John Hough's 18th Century plan for the town included a grid of streets including King, Market, North, and Cornwall that are still the core of downtown Leesburg. These streets are now lined with a wide variety of mature native and exotic trees. In fact, the Leesburg Tree Commission has created a "Tree Walk" of Historic Leesburg brochure, which highlights more than 20 of these trees in an 8-block section of downtown. We invite you to take the tour!



Want to tour Leesburg? There's an app for that!

Learn more about the history of the downtown, and its buildings, by downloading the "Tour Leesburg" app and taking the "Highlights of Historical Leesburg" self-guided walking tour. Other popular tours include an exploration of the town's public art, including several painted murals, "Leesburg's African American History," and "Loudoun County Foreign War Memorials".





Dodona Manor

as the Stanley Caulkins sculpture installed in 2019 that memorializes the man who contributed so much to the town. Created by local sculptor Jeff Hall, the life-size statue of Stanley sits on a bench outside the building on South King Street that was home to his jewelry store for over 60 years!

The LOVEwork sculpture, located where Harrison Street crosses the W&OD Trail, is another popular attraction. Installed in May 2017, it is a part of Virginia Tourism’s “Virginia is for Lovers” campaign. Created by local sculptor Michael Clay, Leesburg’s LOVEwork is fabricated from bicycle parts, including a bicycle wheel that forms the “O”, highlighting its connection to the W&OD Trail. The LOVEwork is often used as a photo backdrop for marriage proposals, family visits, and other events.

Across the street, at Raflo Park, is the ArtsPARKs sculpture garden. A collaboration between the Commission on Public Arts (COPA) and Friends of Leesburg Public Art (FOLPA), the installation features five pieces of modern artwork chosen by a jury of art professionals. Once installed, the sculptures remain on display for two years.



Stanley Caulkins sculpture



LOVEwork sculpture



ArtsPARKs sculpture garden

A transformed downtown

Leesburg’s Historic Downtown is the heart of the community. For over 250 years, the Town of Leesburg has been the original farm-to-market location and cultural hub of Loudoun County. A wide variety of restaurants, cafes, and breweries occupy historical buildings and are all within walking distance from one another.

Visitors to Leesburg can tour Dodona Manor, the home of General George C. Marshall, take in the beautiful architecture of the Historic Downtown, wander through galleries filled with the creations of local artisans, bike along the Washington and Old Dominion (W&OD) Trail, shop the local farmers market, relax on the Town Green while listening to live music performances, or dine in one of our award-winning restaurants.

The downtown, which is classified as an Arts & Cultural District, helps promote art through local galleries and public installations such



Entertainment series

Music. On Saturday evenings from mid-June through August, the “Acoustic on the Green” concert series brings the best local and regional artists to the Town Green.

Movies. In the third Friday of June, July, and August the “Movies Under the Stars” cinema series brings families together for a family-friendly film on the grounds of the Loudoun County Courthouse.

First Fridays. Residents and guests are invited to stroll the historic downtown on the First Friday of each month while enjoying live music performances as well as art exhibits, wine tastings, lectures, book signings, and so much more.

Outdoor offerings. Throughout the year, the Town of Leesburg’s Parks & Recreation Department presents special events, festivals, and celebrations that bring the entire community together. For example, the town’s signature Flower & Garden Festival is held annually on the 3rd weekend in April and transforms Leesburg’s historic downtown into a wonderland of gardens.

For foodies. A relatively new event, TASTE Leesburg is held in early August. Visitors are invited to experience the flavor of Leesburg while enjoying the area’s best food, beer, wine, local music, and local goods on the streets of downtown Leesburg.

Special events galore! Leesburg celebrates Independence Day with a parade, live music, and fireworks. The Leesburg Airshow provides plenty of thrills with daring aerobatic performances. Other annual events include the Memorial Day observance at the Loudoun County Courthouse, a Veteran’s Day Observance at the George C. Marshall International Center, and a holiday tree lighting and parade in the historic downtown.



Flower & Garden Festival



TASTE Leesburg



Independence Day festival and parade



Leesburg Airshow



AV Symington Aquatics Center

Nature lovers love Leesburg

Celebrate the great outdoors in the town's 17 parks, which offer playgrounds, trails, a skate park, and even a dog park for your furry friends. Ida Lee Park, the town's flagship park, has a full-service recreation center with a fitness center, two indoor pools, a full-sized basketball court, racquetball courts, and fitness classes. You can also get in a game of tennis at the Ida Lee Park Tennis Center which offers both indoor and outdoor tennis courts as well as classes, programs, and leagues. Next door is the AV Symington Aquatics Center, an outdoor water park featuring slides and a lazy river.

Rust Sanctuary and Red Rocks Wilderness Overlook, two parks located adjacent to the town that are managed by NOVA Parks, have a variety of hiking trails and outdoor experiences. Rust Sanctuary is known for wooded and meadow trails and children's educational programming. Trails within the Red Rocks Park provide panoramic views of the Potomac River.

More to explore...

Hiking & Biking. The W&OD Trail runs through the Town of Leesburg and offers a great way to explore the surrounding area. This 45 mile hiking/biking trail runs from Arlington to Purcellville, along the bed of the former Washington & Old Dominion Railroad.

Upscale urban. The Village at Leesburg, near Route 7 on the east side of town, offers an urban aesthetic with upscale retailers like Wegmans Food Markets, diverse restaurants, and plenty of shopping experiences. Catch a movie at CMX Cinemas Village 14 or knock down some pins at Bowlero. The center offers outdoor dining, live music, and festivals throughout the year.



Washington & Old Dominion hiking/biking trail

Outlets. If shopping is your thing, be sure to visit the Leesburg Premium Outlets. It is one of Virginia's top outlet destinations featuring 100+ stores that offer great deals on major designers.

Ice! If you simply want to "chill", you can do just that at ION International Training Center. The 100,000 square foot training center contains two NHL sized ice rinks and offers public skating every day of the year. ION is home to four US teams and three international teams who train at the center's academy. We are proud to share that this October ION will be hosting the national figure skating championship series!



Destination: History

The Loudoun Museum, along with the nearby Morven Park, and Oatlands Plantation offer in-person exhibits and tours. You can also visit Balls Bluff Battlefield Regional Park which commemorates the site of an October

1861 skirmish that led to the first Congressional inquiry into the conduct of the Civil War.

Get some Leesburg while you're here

We invite you to get out and explore everything Leesburg has to offer during the conference and hope that you can return soon. The Loudoun County Visitors Center, located on the ground level of the Market Station Shopping Center in downtown Leesburg, is a great place for more information. You can also visit our website, www.leesburgva.gov as well as www.visitloudoun.org to learn more about the place we call home.

About the author: Leah Kosin is the assistant public information officer for the Town of Leesburg.

A message from VML President Willie Greene

COVID-19 – WHERE ELSE should any annual report begin this year? We had all hoped that this pandemic would be behind us by now, but it's still very much part of our lives, our work, and all the decisions we make as local government leaders. We should be proud of how hard we have worked to overcome all the challenges since March of 2020 and, because our localities are awesome and resilient, we will keep overcoming them as we approach two years with COVID-19 (It pains me to say, "two years"!).

With all the CARES and ARPA money being provided to localities this year, VML made the decisive decision to retain the services of McGuire-Woods Consulting to help our localities navigate the guidance from United States Treasury. Thus far, VML staff working in conjunction with McGuireWoods consultants have presented several webinars, crafted numerous communications, and answered hundreds of questions submitted by our members asking how these funds relate to everything from sidewalks to human resources. VML also worked with VML/VACo Finance to ensure that they could provide auditing and tracking services for these funds and projects. Our focus on helping our members navigate the complicated disbursement, use, and reporting of these funds will continue with sessions at the Annual Conference in October and beyond!

My fellow Virginia mayors may have been surprised earlier this summer when it was announced that the annual VML Mayors Institute would be held in July rather than in conjunction with the Annual Conference in the fall as has been done for many years. Quite honestly, this scheduling decision was made in large part due to the uncertainty of what October would look like with the emergence of the Delta variant and the strong desire to make sure we could have an in-person event (finally!). As it was, the Mayors Conference and the Newly Elected Officials events, which were both held in person at the same time in Charlottesville, were very successful. Personally, it was gratifying to see other Mayors in person, exchange stories with longtime friends and make some new ones as well. Congratulations to all the Mayors and elected officials who made these events a highlight of the summer!

This year we've become all too familiar with variants of COVID-19, but here in Virginia we've also become familiar with variants of General Assembly sessions! VML staff worked overtime during General Assembly Regular Session, Special Session I, Special Session II and is now eagerly anticipating Special Session III! Through it all, successes have included keeping local zoning authority in the marijuana legalization legislation, expanding the number of times a council person can attend a regular meeting electronically, adding a new provision which allows localities to force the removal of clutter if necessary and, (my personal favorite) allowing localities the ability to adopt an ordinance restricting where cars can be test driven!

All joking aside, localities were extremely disappointed early in

the year when the General Assembly mandated moving May elections to November. But locals put up a good fight! Equally disappointing is the continued lack of funding for 599, the ongoing chatter about skill games (or non-skill games) and the qualified immunity discussions.

On the positive side, it's exciting to see that expanding broadband access seems to be becoming less of about words and more about action! The state continues to accelerate deployment which will benefit all our localities though I will say that as a resident of Southwest Virginia I am particularly glad to see this effort finally get some steam. Thanks to the Governor and the General Assembly for their willingness to make affordable and dependable broadband for all Virginians a priority.

Speaking of Southwest Virginia, the VML Executive Board recently spent time in Bristol and Pennington Gap. It was wonderful to hold our first meeting in person in what I think of as the most beautiful region of the state (OK, I admit I'm biased). Thank you to the staff in Pennington Gap for their hospitality and to the Bristol Mayor and Manager for theirs as well. You all did a wonderful job sharing your localities with us. Your enthusiasm is inspiring!

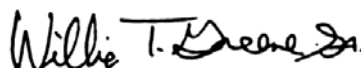
Next up is the Annual Conference in Leesburg. It's already shaping up to be a big event and judging from the registrations so far, I'm not the only one looking forward to a beautiful autumn event with cooler weather! The conference will be my last opportunity to serve as your President, but I

am proud of what VML has accomplished this year. VML's Executive Board and staff have worked very hard to provide timely and relevant information as our members navigate the pandemic, the ARPA funds, the General Assembly, and all the other challenges that come with creating "Better communities through sound government."

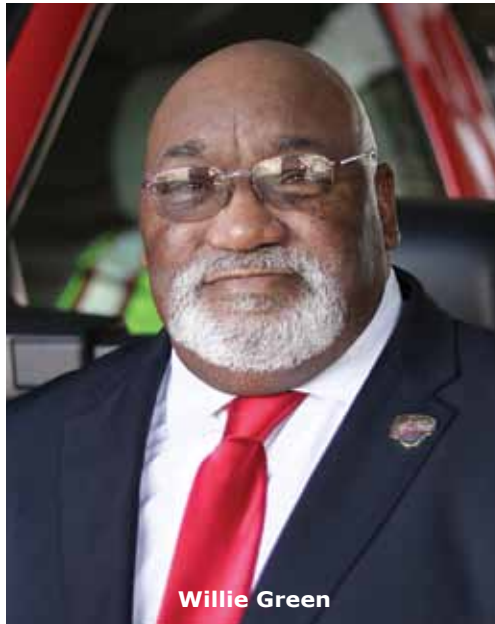
At the beginning of my term as President, Rob Bullington, the VML Communications Director, asked me what I hoped to bring to the forefront during my tenure. My answer was "I want people to be aware of volunteers. We talk about front line folks, and that's all good, but often people forget about volunteers – people who do things just for the love of their fellow citizens."

As a volunteer firefighter for over 35 years – I truly believe in investing time and energy into my community and I want to thank everyone else who does the same. We will be doing a couple things at the Annual Conference to thank volunteers and I look forward to sharing those with you.

VML is in good hands as it moves into 2022 and a new President. Thank you for your support and assistance throughout this year and I hope we can see more of each other in the year to come!



Willie Greene
Mayor, City of Galax



Willie Greene

VML Executive Board



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THIS PAST YEAR COULD BE BEST summed up by phrase often used by former Virginia State Delegate Joe May, *Semper gumbly*: “Always flexible!” Indeed, this year was a testament to the flexibility of Virginia’s local governments and their ability to meet and surmount any challenge thrown at them, including a global pandemic.

Like our members, during the past year VML proved we could be “always flexible” too. While our 2020 Annual Conference in October was a virtual event, we managed to include a bit of the character our members would have experienced in Norfolk (though it still paled in comparison to being in that good city!). Over the course of the two-day event, members found ways to greet one another and catch up between the on-line workshops and sessions. And even though we were meeting remotely, VML was pleased to welcome some special guests including Governor Ralph Northam, Susan T. Gooden, PhD from VCU, and Herndon mixologist Jimmy Cirrito whose fancy virtual bartending skills provided some welcome entertainment!

VML continued its virtual meetings through the winter, with a 2021 General Assembly preview meeting in early January, Local Government Day during the 2021 Session; city, town, and urban section legislative updates after the Session; and Legislative Committee and Policy Committee meetings during the summer.

We weren’t alone in the virtual meeting environment. State government and General Assembly meetings and workgroups also continued online until June, when the Governor’s emergency orders expired.

VML resumed some in-person meetings in mid-summer with the Newly Elected Officials Conference and the Mayor’s Institute. It was delightful to see people in person once again, even if just briefly.

Through it all, VML staff stayed more than busy this year because the General Assembly approved what must have been a near record number of interim studies that covering every policy area – from taxation to human services to environmental issues to public safety, and (with the completion of the 2020 Census) redistricting.

Furthermore, with the passage of ARPA, VML engaged the services of knowledgeable resources from McGuireWoods Consulting to bolster our staff’s ability to assist our members.

It was a busy year!

Lobbying and advocacy

The year 2021 was a busy one for the Virginia General Assembly and those who follow it.

The 2021 General Assembly session began in January and was

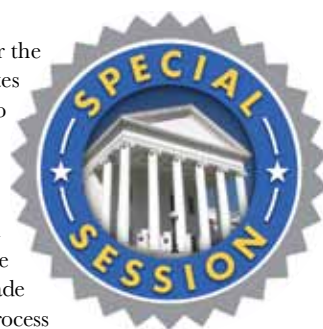
held virtually in the House and in-person for the Senate. But regardless of how the delegates and senators met, the public was permitted to attend the meetings only online. Of course, the upside for the public was that virtual meeting format gave more people than ever an opportunity to see and participate in General Assembly committee meetings. The flip side of this silver lining was that it made the work of the usual participants in the process (i.e., lobbyists and state agency representatives) more challenging. Those who in normal times would make regular visits to members’ offices or talk with members or staff before or after committee meetings had to find new ways to get the legislators’ attention. Zoom meetings sufficed in some cases but it was not the same (it’s never the same!). And while the 2021 Special Session to address the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds was “in-person” for both chambers, it also had a highly virtual aspect for the public because the rise of the Covid-19 Delta variant discouraged in-person participation.

Despite, or perhaps because of, the complications of the pandemic, it was a year of seemingly continuous General Assembly activity. The regular session of the General Assembly was broken into a “regular” session and special session. This was due to a disagreement over the procedural resolution that would normally tack 15 days onto the 30-day odd-year session. Instead, the 30-day session was immediately followed by a Special Session called by Gov. Ralph Northam that equaled the length of the usual odd-year session.

Whatever you called them, regular or special, the sessions were chockful of bills and budget actions. Of particular interest to local governments among bills that passed was a resolution to the issue of tax remittances submitted by on-line travel companies that capped 10 years of discussion and debate; new flexibility for public body members to participate remotely in a limited number of meetings due to personal or family medical care issues; and marijuana legalization legislation that will keep policymakers busy for months to come as the many components get finely tuned. And, of course, bills related to a subject being felt more acutely than ever across the state: broadband!

A big issue that VML worked to ameliorate but was unable to overcome was the mandated change to November elections for local governments. VML had successfully fought against bills on this issue in the past, but it was not to be this year.

Finally, among the things that did not happen that count as successes for local governments were bills to change qualified immunity





(which instead went to study), and proposed changes to municipal authority for cigarette taxes. The cigarette tax changes were ultimately walked back to allow, but not require, municipalities to join regional cigarette tax boards and to include the requirement that the Department of Taxation create a task force to look at modernization of the collection process and to help localities that want to form regional boards.

With so much important legislation in play, VML is grateful for the tireless efforts of local officials who communicated with their legislators and helped on so many bills and budget actions. Thank you!

Local Government Day

On Thursday, January 28, VML hosted a virtual 2021 Local Government Day. Not an ideal way to meet, but practical and accessible for all who chose to participate this year. Governor Ralph Northam kicked-off the event with his legislative agenda to strengthen Virginia's



communities. Following the Governor's remarks, legislators were invited to join the discussion on important bills related to marijuana legalization, sovereign immunity, and more topics of interest to local governments.

The state's COVID-19 vaccine coordinator Danny Avula was also able to join and provide an update. Finally, VML staff provided legislative reports on the major issues facing local government in the 2021 General Assembly Session. We are all hoping for an in-person event for 2022 (save the date February 2-3!).

Policy Committees and Legislative Committee

VML's policy and legislative committees continued to do their work virtually this year. In one of the few silver linings of the pandemic, the virtual format has resulted in greater attendance since it is not necessary to travel to participate in the meetings. The six policy committees met over the course of a week in late July on Zoom. The committees heard presentations and tackled several issues, including state budget issues, broadband funding opportunities under ARPA, FOIA studies on fees and electronic meetings, state transportation

revenues and funding, and housing and community development updated from DHCD.

The Legislative Committee met on Thursday, June 3 to hear presentations on the state budget, the American Rescue Plan, General Assembly issues, preclearance issues for local governments, public safety and qualified immunity, unresolved issues with Marijuana legalization, and housing and local land use studies.

The committee met again on Friday, September 10 to discuss the legislative proposals from VML's policy committees and to begin to create the preliminary legislative program for adoption during the conference.

Education and training

Annual Conference

On October 7-8, the Virginia Municipal League held its 2020 Annual Conference virtually but with a "Norfolk state of mind" in honor of the city that would have been our host had not the pandemic intervened. As it was, several hundred participants from across the Commonwealth attended the virtual event to learn about issues directly affecting local governments, share experiences, visit more than 30 exhibitors, and have a bit of fun.

Over the course of the day and a half event, attendees were able to attend breakout sessions and virtual roundtables that offered opportunities for Q&A with subject matter experts in a variety of fields.

Before and during the conference, VML members had opportunities to review VML's draft policy and legislative statements. During the conference, designated times were set on the agenda for members to ask questions about the drafts of policy and legislative committee chairs and VML staff. During the Annual Business Meeting these statements, as well as an updated VML Constitution and slate of officers were voted on and approved. City of Galax Mayor Willie Greene was elected VML's new president and provided closing remarks.



BETTER COMMUNITIES THROUGH SOUND GOVERNMENT



June webinar series

During the month of June, VML presented several webinars on topics of interest to local governments free of charge to our members.

On June 9, attorneys from Sands Anderson presented “Marijuana: Legal Considerations for Virginia’s Local Governments” in which they discussed the disconnect between federal and state laws, the impacts of recent Virginia laws regarding marijuana, and provided some recommended workplace policies and approaches.

On the June 10, VML began a 3-part offering on the American Rescue Plan funds. First up was “ARPA: Qualifying Uses for Local Fiscal Recovery Funds” in which Margaret Rockwell from McGuire-Woods Consulting provided an overview of how localities could expect to use their ARPA funds. Then, on June 11, Amanda Simpson, Director of Compliance Oversight and Federal Reporting with the Department of Accounts for an overview of the requirements for Non-Entitlement Units (NEUs) to receive and use their ARPA funds.

Finally, on June 30, Margaret Rockwell presented “ARPA: Eligible Water and Wastewater Projects in the State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund” to address the need expressed by many VML localities for information about how the American Rescue Plan Act can be used to fund water and wastewater projects.



Virginia Mayors Institute and Newly Elected Officials Conferences

For those looking for signs of progress over the pandemic, it’s worth noting that in 2020, VML held two conferences aimed at helping newly elected officials. The first was held in January in person and the second was held in July remotely. In 2021, however, the

Newly Elected Officials Conference on January 6 was held remotely and the one held on July 15 was in-person! Indeed, it was a pleasure to return to meeting in person as VML staff and our members gathered at the Omni Hotel in Charlottesville in mid-July for the NEO conference as well as our annual Mayors Institute (July 15-16).

More than 60 mayors and council members from across Virginia met Thursday and Friday, July 15-16, in Charlottesville to review updated FOIA and COIA guidelines, compare experiences in leading localities through a global pandemic, and simply catch up with colleagues. Speakers included Senator Creigh Deeds, Alan Gernhardt of the FOIA Council, G. Stewart Petoe of the Virginia Conflict of Interest and Ethics Advisory Council, Chief Hadezean Smith of the Charlottesville City Fire Department, Mayor Derrick Wood of the Town of Dumfries, and Mayor Bob Coiner and Town Manager Debbie Kendall of the Town of Gordonsville.

Southwest Excursion

Now that people feel a bit more comfortable getting out, VML wanted to take the opportunity to spend time with officials from our Southwest localities. On Wednesday, August 18, VML President and Mayor of the City of Galax Willie Greene hosted a Regional Recep-

tion at the Bristol Hotel. The following day, VML staff and board members travelled to Pennington Gap where Executive Board member and Vice Mayor Jill Carson and her husband Ron provided a tour of the Appalachian African-American Cultural Center and the town.

Communications

2021 was a big year for VML communications. The league continued to publish its magazine *Virginia Town & City* with each issue centered on a theme important to local governments in Virginia. Familiar items such as broadband, housing, and tourism were highlighted as well as timely topics such the American Rescue Plan and a collection of essays by school superintendents from across the Commonwealth speaking about their pandemic experiences.

With so much happening at the General Assembly – and so many sessions of the General Assembly happening! – VML’s *eNews* newsletter played an essential role in keeping our members abreast of the evolving legislation (the good and the bad) and opportunities to learn more about the issues affecting local governments.

Speaking of issues affecting local governments, 2021 will surely be remembered as the year of the American Rescue Plan! In the spring, VML communications worked to funnel individual questions to the best available resources as information seemed to trickle from the U.S. Treasury and then we kicked into high gear with a dedicated page on our website, an issue of the magazine devoted to all things ARPA, a series of webinars, and...well, the journey continues!

In 2021, VML launched two new items that had been in the works for a while. The first was in January with the launch of the secured portal on VML’s website with a member forum and “members only” content. This password protected portal on our site not only offers members a place to discuss issues and share opinions, but it is also where they can access valuable content being produced by VML’s policy team including the *Guidance for Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Funds under the American Rescue Plan: FAQs for Virginia’s Cities and Towns*.

On February 11, VML dropped the first episode of our podcast the *VML Voice* featuring the story of how the City of Petersburg pulled itself out of its financial straits and proceeded to prosper. Subsequent episodes have featured interviews with longtime city and town managers on the verge of retirement, a hurricane preparedness review (and quiz!) with VDEM’s chief deputy state coordinator, and a COVID update from the Virginia Department of Health. Stay tuned for more episodes of the *VML Voice* coming soon!

During the summer of 2021, VML put the finishing touches on our newly revised full edition of the popular *Handbook for Mayors and Council Members*. Since it was first published in 1979, the Virginia Municipal League’s handbook has proven to be a valuable resource for both veteran and newly elected officials alike. We were pleased to

continue that tradition with this Seventh Edition updated for 2021 to ensure they reflect current law.

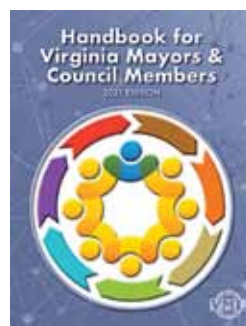
Further, VML annually publishes annually a guide to the Freedom of Information Act, Conflict of Interests Act and Public Records Act that is a valuable resource for local officials who are charged with reading and understanding those laws.



Newly Elected Officials Conference on January 6 was held remotely and the one held on July 15 was in-person! Indeed, it was a pleasure to return to meeting in person as



NEWLY ELECTED OFFICIALS
CONFERENCE



Awards and acknowledgements

Local Champion Awards



In 2020 VML created the “2020 Local Champion” awards to highlight the hard work that our localities are doing to keep their citizens safe and healthy during the COVID-19 outbreak. These champions met a myriad of challenges posed by the pandemic with compassion, determination, and creativity. All were featured during the virtual 2020 VML Annual Conference.

Note – the Innovation Awards are back for 2021 with a new “Local Champion” category! Winners will be honored during the 2021 Annual Conference in Leesburg and featured in the October 2021 issue of *Virginia Town & City*.

“If I Were Mayor” essay contest



Promoting good local government is important to VML, and our annual essay contest provides students the opportunity to reflect on the important role of elected officials in their locality. This year, students were asked to explain what they’ve learned during a year of learning like no other. What new educational practices worked, what didn’t? How would they make those that didn’t work better? Five regional winners selected from around the state each received a \$150 cash prize and plaque. The statewide winner received a \$250 cash prize, the runner-up from the region that received the statewide award became that region’s winner.

VML staff were pleased to attend council meetings to present the awards to the 2021 winners.

The 2021 winners were:

- **Statewide Winner:** Laila Beck-Covington of the Spratley Gifted Center in Hampton
- **Region 2:** Marjorie Davis of Martinsville Middle School in Martinsville
- **Region 5:** Claire Weatherly of Mary Ellen Henderson Middle School in Falls Church
- **Region 6:** Matthew Ezrre of Culpeper Middle in Culpeper
- **Region 7:** Erin Moore of Liberty Middle School in Ashland
- **Region 8:** Dallas Barringer of Montross Middle School in Montross

Note: Regions 1, 3 and 4 did not participate this year.

Wallerstein intern



Chloe Banachoski

During the summer of 2021, VML was pleased to welcome Chloe Banachoski as our Wallerstein Scholarship intern. Chloe is currently majoring in Economics and French with a minor in Women and Gender Studies at the University of Virginia. During her time with the league, Chloe completed research related to the use of ARPA funds for minority and women owned businesses, mental health care, and education. Her work was published in the July/August issue of *Virginia Town & City* as an article entitled “ARPA: An opportunity to support neglected areas of local well being.”

Staff updates



Brendan Hogan

In March, VML’s Information Technology Administrator Brendan Hogan left to begin a new job with the City of Richmond’s 911 emergency services department. Though he was with the league for less than two years, Brendan did a lot of great work helping the league staff transition to a remote work environment during the height of the pandemic and was instrumental in setting up the league’s new secure content portal on our website. Brendan brought a positive attitude to the myriad challenges of coordinating the leagues IT needs and we wish him well in his new role.



Neal Menkes

June 30 was a sad day for VML as long-time Director of Fiscal Policy Neal Menkes zeroed the beads on his abacus, carefully packed his crystal ball, dried his tea leaves, and placed his parking pass on his desk before closing the door of the league’s offices at 13 E. Franklin Street behind him for the last time.

Menkes served the league with sage fiscal policy analysis from September 2007 until his retirement. He was the lead lobbyist on revenue and taxation issues and staffed VML’s Finance Policy Committee. Further, his wealth of knowledge was instrumental in helping VML staff and local liaisons understand the nuances of the state budget and how best to approach budgetary issues on behalf of Virginia’s local governments.

VML staff and members knew Menkes not only as a source of extensive knowledge, but also as the wielder of an unparalleled sense of humor with the ability to coin a phrase and craft missives that both informed and entertained.

Menkes indeed earned his varsity jacket from VML (his idea). His advice and analysis will be missed by his colleagues and by local officials across the Commonwealth.

Prior to joining VML, Menkes served as a legislative fiscal analyst for the Virginia Senate Finance Committee, where he was on the staff of the subcommittee on transportation and the subcommittee on economic development and natural resources. His involvement with Virginia government began in 1976 when he joined the Virginia Department of Planning and Budget where he held analyst and managerial positions eventually becoming deputy secretary for natural resources before leaving to serve as deputy secretary for natural resources under Governor Wilder.



Josette Bulova

In July, VML was pleased to welcome our new Policy Communications Coordinator Josette Bulova who began as an intern with the league in May 2019. Prior to joining the league, Josette worked closely with the General Assembly members as a 2013 General Assembly page. A Christopher Newport University alum, Josette earned her degree majoring in Communication with a double minor in Political Science and Human Rights and Conflict Resolution.

Annual Briefings from VML's Affiliate Organizations



**Chair: Susan Hafeli,
Utility Analyst, Fairfax County**

**Secretary/Treasurer: Sandra Harrington,
VML Affiliate Relations Manager**

THE VIRGINIA ENERGY PURCHASING Governmental Association (VEPGA) is a joint powers association created in 2002 pursuant to authority provided in the Virginia Code. VEPGA negotiates multi-year electricity contracts with Dominion Energy on behalf of its members. VEPGA also keeps its members informed of energy developments in Virginia and offers opportunities for members across the Dominion service area to collectively promote their interests and learn from each other. VEPGA's membership includes over 170 Virginia local governments, public school systems, authorities, and other governmental entities. VEPGA is governed by a Board of Directors elected by its members.

VEPGA's Joint Action Committee meets quarterly with Dominion to identify and resolve operational issues, including those involving construction and streetlighting. Meetings of VEPGA's Energy Efficiency and Conservation Committee include presentations on topics including best practices

and emerging technologies, while VEPGA's Innovative Supply Side Initiatives Committee explores alternative energy options of interest to VEPGA members.

VEPGA's annual spring meeting offers sessions that address educational, technical, and policy topics, as well as opportunities to meet and network with energy professionals from across the Dominion Energy service area.

The VEPGA contract includes rate schedules designed to offer electrical service options for facilities that range from a small, house-sized office building to large school campuses. Schedules address small, medium, and large accounts according to energy usage, all-electric buildings, pumping stations, and traffic control, street, and roadway lighting. The contract also provides a low-cost option for the purchase of renewable energy credits.

Learn more at www.vepga.org.



Municipal Electric Power Association of Virginia

**President: Mike Stover, Director,
Light and Power, Town of Culpeper**

**Secretary/Treasurer: Sandra Harrington,
VML Affiliate Relations Manager**



- Stover

THE MUNICIPAL ELECTRIC Power Association of Virginia (MEPAV), founded in 1954, is made up of 16 localities that operate their own electric systems across the Commonwealth. As an association, MEPAV equips its members with the information and support needed to provide reliable and low-cost energy to their customers.

MEPAV members include Bedford, Blackstone, Bristol, Culpeper, Danville, Elkton, Franklin, Front Royal, Harrisonburg, Manassas, Martinsville, Radford, Richlands, Salem, Virginia Tech, and Wakefield. MEPAV and its members are all affiliates of the American Public Power Association (APPA) which advocates for over 2000 municipal utilities from across the United States.

One of MEPAV's main purposes is to foster a continuing spirit of cooperation among Virginia municipalities operating their own electric utilities. All utilities within the mem-

bership benefit from the knowledge and experiences of others, whether the subject matter is technical or non-technical in nature.

In addition to regular quarterly business meetings, MEPAV also hosts engineering and operations workshops for members to learn and share information. The annual business meeting, held in Virginia Beach, focuses on trends within the industry on a broader scale as well as offers a great opportunity for networking among the attendees.

MEPAV is supported by its associate members which consists of persons, firms, or corporations engaged in or closely allied with the generation, transmission or distribution of electric energy; manufacturers and suppliers of utility equipment; or members of municipalities not engaged in operating electric systems.

Learn more at www.mepav.org.

President: F. Craig Meadows,
County Administrator, County of Montgomery

Executive Secretary: Janet Areson,
VML Director of Policy Development



THE MEMBERS OF the Virginia Local Government Management Association (VLGMA) kept moving forward on its work and its connections with one through virtual and hybrid meetings and on-line communications and forums throughout fiscal year 2021.

VLGMA's monthly e-News played a major role in keeping members informed, in touch, and focused on important issues throughout the year. Each month's issue included features on components of the ICMA Code of Ethics and how the individual tenets intersect with current issues faced by local governments; and a new "community conversations" column in which individual members took on such topics as broadband access, parking, community engagement efforts, and lessons learned from implementing equity and empowerment focus into the budget process.

VLGMA hosted two conferences – one virtual, and one hybrid. The winter conference, originally slated to be in person, moved to a virtual format as COVID-19 cases rose throughout the Commonwealth. The conference theme was "Leading in Challenging times: Local Impacts of Civil Unrest and a Global Pandemic." Conference sessions included discussions of the state budget, a law enforcement panel, and keynote speakers addressing topics such as how the pandemic and civil unrest changed local governments, and lessons learned about race, equity, and inclusion. In the Association's continued efforts to nurture and promote the next generation of local government management professionals, the conference also included a special coaching session for students and early career professionals to connect with experienced members.

VLGMA's annual conference in June was held as a hybrid event with in-person as well as online participation. The theme was "Reconnect, Refresh, Recharge!" and members took the opportunity to visit with one another in person and online. Author John O'Leary gave a powerful keynote address focusing on his own story of the will to live and how you can rediscover your childlike sense of wonder to unleash inspiration, meaning and joy.

Other conference sessions focused on council/board relations and management; ethical, character-driven leadership, and focusing on resiliency for personal health and productivity.

The Deputies, Assistants, and Others (DAO) group also held two meetings in the past year, hosted by the City of Lynchburg in the fall and by Powhatan County in the spring.

VLGMA postponed its annual outstanding assistant award process in 2020 but resumed the program in 2021, bestowing two awards to cover 2020 and 2021. Ashland Assistant Town Manager Matt Reynal and Powhatan County Assistant County Administrator Bret Schardein received their awards during the VLGMA annual conference in June.

VLGMA is a state affiliate of the International City-County Management Association (ICMA) and is an affiliate of VML. To learn more about VLGMA, visit its website at www.vlgma.org.



President: Matt Westheimer,
Chief Building Official, City of Williamsburg

Executive Director: Sandra Harrington,
VML Affiliate Relations Manager



THE VIRGINIA BUILDING and Code Officials Association (VBCOA) is a statewide network of more than 1,000 building safety professionals dedicated to the protection of the health, safety, and welfare of all persons who live, work, or visit the Commonwealth of Virginia. Since 1929, VBCOA has worked to foster relationships with groups dedicated to promoting safety and the uniform interpretation and enforcement of regulations.

VBCOA maintains a strong partnership with the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) and other organizations involved in the codes industry such as the Virginia Fire Prevention Association (VFPA), Virginia Plumbing and Mechanical Inspectors Association (VPMIA), and Women in Code Enforcement (WICED).

President Moss has worked very closely with the VBCOA Board of Directors to ensure the goals of the Association's

strategic plan are met and ensure continued service to the communities served by VBCOA members. Faced with working through operational limitations due to the pandemic, VBCOA has adjusted to utilizing virtual communication tools to conduct the business of the Association, participate in the code development process, provide educational opportunities to the members, and serve as a resource for members to share new work place processes for running day to day operations.

VBCOA typically holds two large conferences a year focusing on leadership development and technical training, in addition to monthly training opportunities at one of the eight regions around the state.

Learn more at www.vbcoa.org.

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The VML Voice is the official podcast of the Virginia Municipal League. Each episode explores a different locality or issue but the focus is always on Virginia and the local governments that make the Commonwealth work for everyone.

Contact Rob Bullington, rbullington@vml.org to suggest topics, ask questions, or inquire about sponsorship opportunities.

Subscribe now at www.vml.org and listen to our newest episode.



VML Member Local Governments

Cities

Alexandria
 Bristol
 Buena Vista
 Charlottesville
 Chesapeake
 Colonial Heights
 Covington
 Danville
 Emporia
 Fairfax
 Falls Church
 Franklin
 Fredericksburg
 Galax
 Hampton
 Harrisonburg
 Hopewell
 Lexington
 Manassas
 Manassas Park
 Martinsville
 Newport News
 Norfolk
 Norton
 Petersburg
 Poquoson
 Portsmouth
 Radford
 Richmond
 Roanoke
 Salem
 Staunton
 Suffolk
 Virginia Beach
 Waynesboro
 Williamsburg
 Winchester

Towns

Abingdon
 Accomac
 Alberta
 Altavista
 Amherst
 Appomattox
 Ashland
 Bedford
 Berryville
 Big Stone Gap
 Blacksburg
 Blackstone
 Bluefield
 Boones Mill

Bowling Green
 Boydton
 Boykins
 Branchville
 Bridgewater
 Brodnax
 Broadway
 Brookneal
 Buchanan
 Burkeville
 Cape Charles
 Capron
 Cedar Bluff
 Charlotte
 Court House
 Chase City
 Chatham
 Cheriton
 Chilhowie
 Chincoteague
 Christiansburg
 Claremont
 Clarksville
 Clifton
 Clifton Forge
 Clintwood
 Coeburn
 Colonial Beach
 Courtland
 Craigsville
 Crewe
 Culpeper
 Damascus
 Dayton
 Dillwyn
 Drakes Branch
 Dublin
 Duffield
 Dumfries
 Eastville
 Edinburg
 Elkton
 Exmore
 Farmville
 Fincastle
 Floyd
 Fries
 Front Royal
 Gate City
 Glade Spring
 Glasgow
 Gordonsville
 Gretna
 Grottoes
 Grundy
 Halifax

Hamilton
 Haymarket
 Haysi
 Herndon
 Hillsboro
 Hillsville
 Hurt
 Independence
 Iron Gate
 Irvington
 Ivor
 Jarratt
 Jonesville
 Keller
 Kenbridge
 Keysville
 Killmarnock
 La Crosse
 Lawrenceville
 Lebanon
 Leesburg
 Louisa
 Lovettsville
 Luray
 Madison
 Marion
 McKenney
 Middleburg
 Middletown
 Mineral
 Monterey
 Montross
 Mount Crawford
 Mount Jackson
 Narrows
 Nassawadox
 New Castle
 New Market
 Newsoms
 Occoquan
 Onancock
 Onley
 Orange
 Painter
 Pamplin
 Parksley
 Pearisburg
 Pembroke
 Pennington Gap
 Phenix
 Port Royal
 Pound
 Pulaski
 Purcellville
 Quantico

Remington
 Rich Creek
 Richlands
 Ridgeway
 Rocky Mount
 Round Hill
 Rural Retreat
 Saint Paul
 Saltville
 Scottsville
 Shenandoah
 Smithfield
 South Boston
 South Hill
 Stanardsville
 Stanley
 Stephens City
 Stony Creek
 Strasburg
 Stuart
 Tappahannock
 Tazewell
 The Plains
 Timberville
 Toms Brook
 Troutville
 Urbanna
 Victoria
 Vienna
 Vinton
 Virgilina
 Wachapreague
 Wakefield
 Warrenton
 Warsaw
 Washington
 Waverly
 Weber City
 West Point
 White Stone
 Windsor
 Wise
 Woodstock
 Wytheville

Counties

Albemarle
 Alleghany
 Arlington
 James City
 Loudoun
 Prince George
 Roanoke
 York



2021 Legislative and Policy Committees

Twenty local officials from diverse localities are appointed each year by the VML president to serve on VML's legislative committee. Committee members develop positions on legislation and urge the enactment, amendment, or opposition to a variety of legislative initiatives. Another 169 local officials work on the VML policy committees. They help to shape the broader policies and make specific legislative recommendations to the Legislative Committee.

All localities are encouraged to participate on policy committees. Nomination forms are sent to each locality in the spring. Let a VML staff member know of your interest or send an email to e-mail@vml.org and we will follow up with you.

Legislative Committee

Chair: Christine Snead, Councilwoman, City of Hampton

Vice Chair: Deanna Reed, Mayor, City of Harrisonburg

City Section

Carolyn Carey, Mayor, City of Emporia
Pat Dent, Council Member, City of Williamsburg
Frank Friedman, Mayor, City of Lexington
Cindy Mester, Deputy City Manager, City of Falls Church
Terry Short, Council Member, City of Waynesboro
David Smith, Mayor, City of Winchester

Town Section

Nancy Bailey, Vice Mayor, Town of Big Stone Gap
Michael Barber, Mayor, Town of Christiansburg
Sara Carter, Town Manager, Town of Amherst
Josh Farrar, Town Manager, Town of Ashland
Keith Harless, Town Manager, Town of Pennington Gap
Ed Owens, Mayor, Town of South Boston

Urban Section

Christopher Blakeman, Environmental Manager, City of Roanoke
Elizabeth Bennett-Parker, Vice Mayor, City of Alexandria
Michelle Davis-Younger, Mayor, City of Manassas
Roger Fawcett, Council Member, City of Suffolk
Tim Hemstreet, County Administrator, County of Loudoun
Robert Ike, Council Member, City of Chesapeake
Alonzo Jones, Mayor, City of Danville
Sena Magill, Vice Mayor, City of Charlottesville
Deanna Reed, Mayor, City of Harrisonburg
Christine Snead, Council Member, City of Hampton
Tina Vick, Vice Mayor, City of Newport News
Sabrina Wooten, Council Member, City of Virginia Beach

Community & Economic Development Policy Committee

Chair: Sara Carter, Town Manager, Town of Amherst

Vice Chair: Signe Friedrichs, Council Member, Town of Herndon

Matt Arcieri, Dir. Of Planning & Development, City of Manassas
Ara Bagdasarian, Council Member, Town of Leesburg
Chris Bernard, Council Member, Town of Middleburg
Valerie Butler, Council Member, Town of Smithfield

Sara Carter, Town Manager, Town of Amherst
Melissa Coates, Community Dev. Specialist, Town of Warsaw
Carolyn Dull, Council Member, City of Staunton
Phil Duncan, Council Member, City of Falls Church
Karen Epps, Director of Economic Development, City of Colonial Heights
Kwasi Fraser, Mayor, Town of Purcellville
Signe Friedrichs, Council Member, Town of Herndon
Mary Katherine Greenlaw, Mayor, City of Fredericksburg
Gary Gillispie, Council Member, Town of Front Royal
Yolanda Hines, Council Member, City of Emporia
H. Hobbs, Council Member, City of Hampton
William Johnson, City Manager, City of Emporia
Christopher Jones, Council Member, City of Harrisonburg
Keith Liles, Council Member, Town of Vinton
Chad Martin, Vice Mayor, City of Martinsville
Tony Matthews, Town Manager, Town of Kenbridge
Susan Mattingly, Council Member, Town of Blacksburg
Daniel McGraw, Council Member, Town of Ashland
Raya Nickerson, Program Manager, DPW, Town of Dumfries
Monae Nickerson, Vice Mayor, Town of Dumfries
Tammy Pearson, Council Member, City of Martinsville
Richard Peters, Town Manager/Economic Dev. Director, Town of Vinton
Steve Potter, Council Member, Town of Vienna
Joseph Quesenberry, Town Manager, Town of Warsaw
Fred Ramey, City Manager, City of Norton
Letasha Thompson, Council Member, Town of Front Royal
Tina Vick, Vice Mayor, City of Newport News
Ella Ward, Council Member, City of Chesapeake
Lue Ward, Council Member, City of Suffolk
Janice Wheaton, Council Member, Town of Amherst
Le Otis Williams, Council Member, City of Suffolk
Mark Wolfe, Council Member, City of Manassas

Environmental Quality Development Policy Committee

Chair: Christopher Blakeman, Environmental Administrator, City of Roanoke

Vice Chair: Vacant

Kathy Abbott, Council Member, Town of Ashland

Tyrone Brown, Council Member, Town of Dumfries
Eleanor Brown, Council Member, City of Hampton
John Bush, Council Member, Town of Blacksburg
Saundra Cherry, Council Member, City of Newport News
Tony Dawood, Director of Utilities, City of Manassas
Laura Dent, Council Member, City of Harrisonburg
Todd Flippin, Director of Public Works, City of Colonial Heights
Andrew Greear, Water Plant Supt., City of Norton
Chris Holloway, Mayor, Town of Front Royal
Robert Jeffrey, Jr., Council Member, City of Roanoke
Timothy Johnson, Council Member, City of Suffolk
Peter Leonard-Morgan, Council Member, Town of Middleburg
Andria McClellan, Council Member, City of Norfolk
Anita McMillan, Planning & Zoning Director, Town of Vinton
Alanna Mensing, Council Member, City of Manassas Park
Eric Monday, City Attorney, City of Martinsville
Laurie Mullins, Council Member, Town of Vinton
Tom Osina, Council Member, City of Manassas
Mark Robertson, Vice Mayor, City of Staunton
Wyatt Shields, City Manager, City of Falls Church
Howard Springsteen, Council Member, Town of Vienna
Neil Steinberg, Council Member, Town of Leesburg

Finance Policy Committee

Chair: Joshua Farrar, Town Manager, Town of Ashland

Vice Chair: Kevin Greenleaf, Assist. Dir. Rev. Div., Dept of Finance, City of Alexandria

Diane Bergeron, Finance Director, City of Manassas
Shelley Butler Barlow, Council Member, City of Suffolk
Anne Cantrell, Finance Director/Treasurer, Town of Vinton
Zach Cummings, Council Member, Town of Leesburg
David Farajollahi, Council Member, City of Manassas
Brian Fields, Council Member, Town of Dumfries
Susan Goodwin, Finance Director, City of Newport News
Bradley Grose, Mayor, Town of Vinton
David Jenkins, Council Member, City of Newport News
Gregory Kochuba, Mayor, City of Colonial Heights
Brenda Mead, Council Member, City of Staunton
Amelia Merchant, Finance Director, City of Roanoke
Jacob Meza, Council Member, Town of Front Royal
Darryl Moore, Council Member, City of Manassas Park
Nisha Patel, Council Member, Town of Vienna

Z. (Debbie) Ritter, Council Member, City of Chesapeake
 Julile Rivard, Deputy Commissioner of Tax Compliance, Town of Middleburg
 Keith Rogers, Town Manager, Town of Dumfries
 Sal Romero, Vice Mayor, City of Harrisonburg
 James Saunders, Council Member, City of Emporia
 Jeffery Shupe, Director of Finance, City of Norton
 Christine Snead, Council Member, City of Hampton
 Michael Stallings, Town Manager, Town of Smithfield
 Brian Thrower, Town Manager, Town of Crewe
 Leon Towarnicki, City Manager, City of Martinsville
 Randall Wheeler, City Manager, City of Poquoson
 Patricia White-Boyd, Council Member, City of Roanoke
 BJ Wilson, Finance Director, Town of Front Royal

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Vice Chair: Michelle Clayton, Town Attorney, Town of Wytheville

Chuck Anderson, Council Member, Town of Vienna
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 William Bradshaw, City Attorney, City of Norton
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 Chris Brown, City Attorney, City of Harrisonburg
 Fabricio Drummond, Chief of Police, Town of Vinton
 Theresa Ellis, Council Member, City of Manassas
 Jerry Ford, Council Member, Town of Blacksburg
 Bryan Foster, Deputy City Manager, City of Manassas
 Donald Goldberg, Council Member, City of Suffolk
 Wayne Hall, Council Member, Town of Smithfield
 Laura Hampton, Council Member, City of Manassas Park
 Celeste Heath, Clerk, City of Falls Church
 Donald Hunter, Council Member, Town of Farmville
 Morris Jacobs, Council Member, Town of Middleburg
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 Doug Napier, Town Attorney, Town of Front Royal
 Andrea Oakes, Mayor, City of Staunton
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 Shaun Pee, Council Member, Town of Dumfries
 Sharon Scott, Council Member, City of Newport News
 Cody Sexton, Assistant Town Manager, Town of Vinton

Timothy Spencer, Former Acting City Attorney, City of Roanoke
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 Dale Temple, Council Member, City of Emporia
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 Ed Somers, Council Member, Town of Vienna
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2020-21 Community Business Members

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Dominion Energy
 Virginia Housing

Silver Members

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 CIMCON Lighting, Inc.
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 Hurt & Proffitt
 Keystone Information Systems, Inc.
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Altumint, Inc.
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 JJM Associates
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 Virginia Association of Assessing Officers

Virginia Housing helps bring affordable senior housing to Fishersville

THERE'S GOOD NEWS for many seniors seeking affordable housing in the Shenandoah Valley. Gateway Senior Apartments, an affordable housing development in Fishersville is currently under construction and is scheduled to be completed in the spring of 2022.

The four-story affordable senior housing project, financed by Virginia Housing, will provide much needed housing for seniors 55 and over with limited incomes. It will offer 50 two-bedroom and 30 one-bedroom apartments, as well as a fitness center and community space for residents. In addition, it's within a mile of the Augusta Health Center and near a wide range of other medical, cultural, and community facilities.

However, the most unique thing about the development is the way that it is being built.

Modular construction saves time and money

"Gateway Senior Apartments is the first development that we've financed using modular construction," says Art Bowen, Virginia Housing's Director of Rental Housing. "This process has a number of advantages, the biggest being time savings. In fact, if this development was built through conventional construction, it would have taken 24 months. By using modular construction, it will be built in 15-18 months – a time savings of approximately 30 percent." As a result, Bowen observes that the units can be placed in service faster to

benefit more readily those in need of housing.

These time savings are due to modular units being constructed in an offsite factory while the foundation work is done onsite. The pre-fabricated units are shipped to the building site 75 percent complete and installed on a stick-built first floor. The developer then connects the electrical and plumbing systems and installs the roof and siding to complete the building.

In addition to saving time, modular construction brings added benefits such as high-quality construction, cost savings, reduced waste, fewer weather-related delays, and reduced risk of worker accidents.

Innovation credits for affordable housing

In 2019, Virginia Housing created a new "Innovation Pool" in its tax credit program to promote the use of innovative construction techniques in affordable housing developments. This led Pinnacle Construction and Development Corp., the developer of Gateway Senior Apartments, to seek funding through the pool.

After Pinnacle's proposal was reviewed and approved by Virginia Housing, they were awarded 9 percent federal housing credits, equal to \$14 million, to offset the cost of construction.

As a result, Pinnacle became the first developer to use the Innovation Pool tax credits and will lease rent-restricted units at Gateway to residents earning 60 percent or less of the area median income (AMI). Pinnacle also received \$6.4 million in financing through Virginia

"The [Gateway Senior Apartments] development meets an existing need in the Fishersville area for affordable senior housing, and Virginia Housing looks forward to financing similar developments using modular and other innovative construction methods in communities across the state."

- Art Bowen, Director of Rental Housing – Virginia Housing





Virginia Housing

Housing for the balance of the project. Park Properties Management Company, a related entity, and a Virginia Housing certified management agent, will manage the property.

Pinnacle is also associated with Regency Senior Living, an assisted living facility next to Gateway, which could provide an opportunity for many residents to age in place.

“Gateway Senior Apartments presents a unique opportunity for Pinnacle Construction to partner with Virginia Housing to learn about and maximize the benefits of innovative construction methods

for affordable housing,” says William Park, President of Pinnacle. “We look forward to sharing the positive impacts of this collaborative endeavor with the local community.”

About Virginia Housing: *Created in 1972 by the General Assembly, Virginia Housing helps Virginians attain quality, affordable housing*



NATALIE BATMAN

Supreme Court Preview for Local Governments 2021-22

By Lisa Soronen

State & Local Legal Center



THE VIRGINIA MUNICIPAL LEAGUE is pleased to reprint this helpful and insightful look on behalf of the Big Seven national organizations representing state and local governments. The original article was published by the State and Local Legal Center (SLLC) in July 2021.

**Indicates a case where the SLLC has or will likely file an amicus brief.*

In *New York State Rifle and Pistol Association v. Corlett** the U.S. Supreme Court will decide whether states may prevent persons from obtaining a concealed-carry license for self-defense if they lack “proper cause.” Per New York state law, in order to carry a concealed handgun for self-defense purposes a person must show “proper cause.” New York case law requires an applicant to “demonstrate a special need for self-protection distinguishable from that of the general community” to satisfy the proper cause standard. The challengers in this case want to carry a concealed handgun but lack proper cause. A federal district court ruled against the challengers based on Second Circuit precedent. In a very brief opinion, noting that same Second Circuit case, the Second Circuit affirmed. In *Kachalsky v. County of Westchester* (2012), the Second Circuit held that “New York’s handgun licensing scheme . . . requiring an applicant to demonstrate ‘proper cause’ to obtain a license to carry a concealed handgun in public” did not violate the Second Amendment. In *Kachalsky*, the Second Circuit applied intermediate scrutiny and upheld New York’s law stating: “New York has substantial, indeed compelling, governmental interests in public safety and crime

prevention” and “the proper cause requirement is substantially related to these interests.” According to the challengers, *Kachalsky* was wrongly decided for the reasons the D.C. Circuit stated in *Wrenn v. District of Columbia* (2017). In that case the D.C. Circuit didn’t apply intermediate scrutiny to the District of Columbia’s similar “good reason” limit to obtain a concealed carry license. The D.C. Circuit held “the law-abiding citizen’s right to bear common arms must enable the typical citizen to carry a gun.” According to the Second Circuit, the “argument that *Kachalsky* was wrongly decided fails under this Court’s precedents.”

The City of Austin allows on-premises billboards to be digitized but not off-premises billboards. In *City of Austin, Texas v. Reagan National Advertising of Texas Inc.** two outdoor advertising companies claim that this distinction is “content-based” under the First Amendment. The City of Austin disagrees. In *Reed v. Town of Gilbert* (2015), the Supreme Court held that content-based restrictions on speech are subject to strict scrutiny, meaning they are “presumptively unconstitutional” under the First Amendment. In *Reed* the Court defined “content-based” broadly to include distinctions based on “function or purpose.” Per Austin’s Sign Code, “off-premises” signs advertise “a business, person, activity, goods, products or services not located on the site where the sign is installed.” The City argued that the definition of off-premises is a time, place, or manner restriction based on the location of signs. The Fifth Circuit disagreed, stating: “*Reed* reasoned that a distinction can be facially content based if it defines regulated speech by its function or purpose. Here, the Sign Code defines ‘off-premises’ signs by their purpose: advertising or directing attention to a business, product, activity, institution, etc.,

not located at the same location as the sign.”

In *Houston Community College System v. Wilson* the U.S. Supreme Court will decide whether the First Amendment restricts the authority of an elected body to issue a censure resolution in response to a member’s speech. David Wilson was an elected trustee of the Houston Community College System (HCC). In response to the board’s decision to fund a campus in Qatar, he arranged robocalls and was interviewed by a local radio station expressing his disagreement with the decision. He filed a lawsuit against HCC after it allowed a trustee to vote via videoconference, which he contended violated the bylaws. He sued the board again when it allegedly excluded him from an executive session. The board publicly censured him for acting in a manner “not consistent with the best interests of the College or the Board, and in violation of the Board Bylaws Code of Conduct.” Wilson sued HCC and the trustees, asserting that the censure violated his First Amendment right to free speech. HCC argued that “it had a right to censure Wilson as part of its internal governance as a legislative body and that Wilson’s First Amendment rights were not implicated.” However, the Fifth Circuit noted it has repeatedly held that “a reprimand against an elected official for speech addressing a matter of public concern is an actionable First Amendment claim.” In this case, Wilson was censured because of his speech.

In *Thompson v. Clark** the Supreme Court will decide whether the rule that a plaintiff must await favorable termination before suing for unreasonable seizure pursuant to legal process requires the plaintiff to show that the criminal proceeding against him has “formally ended in a manner not inconsistent with his innocence” or that the proceeding “ended in a manner that affirmatively indicates his innocence.” Larry Thompson’s sister-in-law, Camille, who was living with him, reported to 911 that Thompson was sexually abusing his week-old daughter. Thompson wouldn’t let police into his apartment because they didn’t have a warrant, blocked their path to entry, and allegedly shoved an officer. It was soon determined that Camille’s report was false; she suffered from a mental illness which the officers “sensed” when they were in the apartment. Police arrested Thompson and he was charged with obstructing governmental administration and resisting arrest. The prosecutor dropped charges against him “in the interests of justice.” The Second Circuit held that Thompson couldn’t bring a malicious prosecution claim because he failed to prove that the prosecution against him terminated favorably. In a 2018 case, *Lanning v. City of Glens Falls*, the Second Circuit held that malicious prosecution claims require “affirmative indications of innocence to establish favorable termination.” In this case Thompson’s innocence wasn’t established because the only reason the prosecutor gave for dismissing charges against him was “the interests of justice.”

In *Cummings v. Premier Rehab Keller** the Supreme Court will decide whether people who are discriminated against in violation of Title VI, Title IX, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, or the Affordable Care Act may sue for emotional distress damages. All these statutes expressly incorporate the private right of action available to victims of discrimination under Title VI. Jane Cummings has been deaf since birth and is legally blind. She communicates mostly through American Sign Language (ASL). She contacted Premier, which offers physical therapy services, to treat her chronic back pain. She repeatedly requested that Premier provide an ASL interpreter, but it refused. She sued Premier under the Rehabilitation Act and the ACA for disability discrimination and sought emotional distress damages. The Fifth Circuit held that emotional distress damages

aren’t available under these statutes. The Rehabilitation Act and the ACA are Spending Clause legislation. According to the Fifth Circuit, the Supreme Court has “repeatedly” likened Spending Clause legislation to contract law—“in return for federal funds, the [recipients] agree to comply with federally imposed conditions.” In *Barnes v. Gorman* (2002), the Supreme Court explained compensatory damages are available under Spending Clause legislation because federal-funding recipients are “on notice” that accepting such funds exposes them to liability for monetary damages under general contract law. In *Barnes*, the Supreme Court also held that punitive damages aren’t available under Spending Clause legislation because they aren’t generally available for breach of contract. So, federal funding recipients aren’t “on notice” that they could be liable for punitive damages. According to the Fifth Circuit, emotional distress damages, like punitive damages are “traditionally unavailable in breach-of-contract actions.” So, the court held, federal-funding recipients aren’t on notice of them and can’t be held liable for them.

In *CVS Pharmacy v. Doe** the U.S. Supreme Court will decide whether disability disparate impact claims may be brought under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and therefore under Section 1557 of the Affordable Care Act (ACA). The Does are individuals living with HIV/AIDS who rely on employer-sponsored health plans for their medications. Per their prescription plan, to receive “in-network” prices they can only obtain specialized medication via mail or pick up at a CVS pharmacy. This means they must “forego essential counseling and consultation from specialty pharmacists.” The Does sued CVS for disparate impact disability discrimination under the ACA. Section 1557 of the ACA prohibits federally funded health programs from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. Section 1557 of the ACA incorporates the anti-discrimination provisions of various civil rights statutes including, for disability, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. So, to be able to sue for disparate impact disability discrimination under the ACA it must likewise be possible to sue for disparate impact disability discrimination under the Rehabilitation Act. The Ninth Circuit assumed that disparate-impact claims could be brought under *Alexander v. Choate* (1985), stating “the Supreme Court concluded that not all disparate-impact showings qualify as prima-facie cases under Section 504.” The Ninth Circuit then applied the “test outlined in Choate” for assessing Section 504 claims and concluded the Does stated a claim for disability discrimination under the ACA. According to the Ninth Circuit, *Choate* required it to look to the ACA to determine “whether Does adequately alleged they were denied meaningful access to an ACA-provided benefit.” The ACA requires that health plans cover prescription drugs as an “essential health benefit.” The Ninth Circuit concluded: “Does have adequately alleged that they were denied meaningful access to their prescription drug benefit, including medically appropriate dispensing of their medications and access to necessary counseling.”

In *Gallardo v. Marstiller** the U.S. Supreme Court will decide whether the federal Medicaid Act allows a state Medicaid program to recover reimbursement for Medicaid’s payment of a beneficiary’s past medical expenses by taking funds from the beneficiary’s tort recovery that compensate for future medical expenses. Gianinna Gallardo has been in a persistent vegetative state since she was hit by a pickup truck getting off the school bus. Florida’s Medicaid program has paid for almost \$900,000 for her medical care. Her parents settled a case against multiple parties for \$800,000. Per the settlement agreement, about \$35,000 was for past medical expenses. The settlement also said some of its balance may represent compensation for future medical expenses. The Florida Agency for Health Care

Supreme Court Preview

Administration (FAHCA) didn't participate in the settlement. The Medicaid statute requires states to enact third-party liability laws under which "the State is considered to have acquired the rights . . . to payment by any other party," "to the extent that payment *has been made* under the State plan for medical assistance." Per Florida law if a Medicaid recipient brings a tort action against a third party that results in a settlement, FAHCA is automatically entitled to half of the recovery (after 25 percent attorney's fees and costs), up to the total amount of medical assistance Medicaid has provided, from the settlement allocated for past and *future* medical expenses. FAHCA sought to recover not just the \$35,000 specifically allocated by the parties for past medical expenses. It argued it was entitled to recover, to pay for past medical costs, the portion of the settlement representing compensation for Gallardo's future medical expenses. The Eleventh Circuit agreed. Gallardo argued that FAHCA could collect only the portion of the settlement allocated for past medical expenses because of the past tense of the language in the Medicaid statute: states have a right to payment from third parties "to the extent that payment *has been made*." According to the Eleventh Circuit, this language "simply provides *for what* the state can get reimbursed now that it has a general assignment on all medical expenses—it can recover medical expenses it has already paid." "[W]hile the language of the federal Medicaid statutes clearly prohibits FAHCA from seeking reimbursement *for* future expenses it has not yet paid (which it is not seeking to do in this case), the language does not in any way prohibit the agency from seeking reimbursement from settlement monies for medical care allocated to future care."

The issue in *Becerra v. Empire Health Foundation* is whether the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services can, for calculating the disproportionate share hospital (DSH) payment, include in the Medicare fraction all of a hospital's patient days of individuals who qualify for Medicare Part A benefits, regardless of whether Medicare actually paid the hospital for those particular days. Medicare hospitals that "serve[s] a significantly disproportionate number of low-income patients," receive a DSH adjustment, which approximately reimburses them for the higher costs of providing care. The Medicare statute contains two fractions intended to capture a hospital's number of patient days attributable to two different groups of low-income patients—the Medicare fraction and the Medicaid fraction. The Medicare fraction looks at what proportion of the hospital's "patients who (for such days) were **entitled** to benefits under [Medicare] Part A" were also "**entitled**" to Supplemental Security income. In 2005 the HHS Secretary removed the word "covered" from the rule interpreting "entitled to [Medicare]" in the Medicare fraction. The practical effect was instead of counting only the hospital stay days *actually* paid for by Medicare Part A, all days Medicare theoretically could have paid for are counted. Someone who qualifies for and receives Medicare but whose hospital stay exceeds the 90 days allowed by Medicare theoretically *could have* their entire hospital stay covered by Medicare but in fact won't past 90 days. HHS argues that this rule is procedurally and substantively valid pursuant to the Administrative Procedure Act. The Ninth Circuit disagreed. The *Medicaid* fraction looks at what proportion of a hospital's non-Medicare patients, i.e., patients who are not "**entitled** to benefits under [Medicare] part A," were "**eligible** for [Medicaid]." Before HHS issued the rule at issue in this case, HHS contended that only patients who actually had their hospital stay paid for by Medicare or Medicaid would be considered "entitled to [Medicare]" or "eligible for [Medicaid]." In *Legacy Emanuel Hospital Health Center v. Shalala* (1996), the Ninth Circuit rejected HHS's interpretation of the word "eligible." In that case,

"[w]e interpreted the word 'entitled' to mean that a patient has an 'absolute right . . . to payment.' In contrast, we interpreted the word 'eligible' to mean that a patient simply meets the Medicaid statutory criteria." In *Empire Health Foundation* the Ninth Circuit rejected HHS's interpretation of "entitled" as simply meeting the Medicare criteria, relying on *Legacy Emanuel*.

In *American Hospital Association v. Becerra* the U.S. Supreme Court will decide whether the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) may set the reimbursement rates for drugs covered by Medicare based on acquisition cost and vary such rates by hospital type if HHS has not collected hospital acquisition cost data. When hospitals provide outpatient care for those insured by Medicare Part B, the federal government reimburses the hospitals for the cost of care. Until 2018 the federal government reimbursed all hospitals for prescription drugs at the same rate. Then the federal government reduced the reimbursement rate for 340B hospitals, who serve underserved populations, by 28.5%. 340B hospitals can obtain drugs much more cheaply than other hospitals. Subclause I of the Medicare statute allows HHS to calculate reimbursement rates for covered drugs using acquisition cost "taking into account . . . **hospital acquisition cost survey data**." If acquisition cost survey data isn't available, Subclause II requires HHS to use the average **price** for the drug, "**adjusted** by [HHS] as necessary for purposes of this paragraph." Hospital acquisition cost data has never been available. So, until 2018, HHS used the average price metric to calculate one reimbursement rate. HHS points out that it has long understood average price to serve as a proxy for average acquisition cost. For 340B hospitals the average drug price exceeded the cost of the drugs. So, for 340B hospitals, per Subclause II, HHS "adjusted" payments "as necessary" based on cost. The American Hospital Association argued that reimbursing hospitals based on the cost of drugs is impermissible under Subclause II. "Because Congress required HHS to 'tak[e] into account' robust study data when setting [drug reimbursement] rates at average acquisition cost under subclause (I), the Hospitals argue, HHS cannot use its subclause (II) authority to adjust [the average sale price] in order to approximate acquisition cost." Applying *Chevron* deference, the D.C. Circuit concluded HHS's interpretation of Subclause II was reasonable. According to the D.C. Circuit: "For the Hospitals' argument to carry the day under *Chevron*, we would need to conclude that Congress unambiguously barred HHS from seeking to align reimbursements with acquisition costs under subclause (II), or that HHS's belief that it could do was unreasonable." "Given that the survey data contemplated by subclause (I) aims to assure the reliability of cost-acquisition data, we do not read the statute to foreclose an adjustment to [average sale price] under subclause (II) that is based on reliable cost measures of the kind undisputedly at issue here." The Supreme Court added a second question regarding whether the American Hospital Association may even bring a lawsuit in this case. The relevant statute states "[t]here shall be no administrative or judicial review" of certain enumerated actions undertaken by HHS. HHS argues that changing the drug reimbursement rate is one of such unreviewable actions. The D.C. Circuit disagreed.



About the author: Lisa Soronen is the Executive Director of the State and Local Legal Center (Washington, D.C.). The SLLC files Supreme Court amicus curiae briefs on behalf of the Big Seven national organizations representing state and local governments and is a resource to states and local governments on the Supreme Court.

Public power is hometown power



Turning on a light ... turning on the oven ... turning on a computer. They all require electricity. Thanks to the members of the Municipal Electric Power Association of Virginia, more than a quarter million residents across the Commonwealth don't have to worry if there will be power to turn on, because it's always there. MEPAV members are your not-for-profit, community-owned

utilities that provide reliable and safe electricity at a reasonable price. Our commitment to the communities that we serve goes beyond keeping the lights on and appliances running. Our success is intertwined with that of each family and local business. MEPAV is part of a vital American tradition that makes communities better places to live and work. It's a tradition that works.



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Wakefield

TOWN OF SOUTH HILL

By Brentley O. Morris

It's a great time to love South Hill!

LOVE IS IN THE AIR in South Hill, and it shows! On July 29, the South Hill Chamber of Commerce unveiled its new LOVE sign located at 201 S. Mecklenburg Avenue, in the heart of the beautiful downtown. The new LOVE sign was designed to suit its location at the original train depot built in 1889 by Atlantic & Danville Railway, today the home of the South Hill Chamber of Commerce and South Hill Tourism Center.

All aboard...for L-O-V-E!

L. uses the original railroad crossing sign from the site with custom blinking lights added.

O. is a recreation of a steam engine wheel cut from plate steel.

V. formed by railroad track donated to the Chamber by Allen Wright.

E. created out of railroad ties mounted with plate steel.

The design of this unique piece of art that represents South Hill's railroad history was spearheaded by a collaboration between Brentley Morris, President, and Shannon Lambert, Executive Director, of the South Hill Chamber of Commerce which worked directly with the Virginia Tourism Corporation on a LOVEworks grant to fund this project and Xtreme Signs & Graphics LLC, to bring the concept to reality.

The LOVE sign was the final part of an ongoing overhaul of the train depot that began in late 2019. The depot has played a significant role in the history for the town which began as a stopping point for the Atlantic & Danville Railroad transporting goods and people throughout southern Virginia. The depot was an open, A-frame loading dock/warehouse with a chalkboard train schedule. After a series of renovations, the depot eventually became home to the South Hill Chamber of Commerce and Tourist Information Center. The most recently completed renovation, which was the largest in the depot's





THE OLD TRAIN DEPOT - SOUTH HILL, VIRGINIA

history, created an open design in which visitors are welcomed by staff, have access to refreshments, and can easily view a plethora of information about the area.

Among the first things that visitors notice is a custom-made chalkboard discovered during the renovation process that displays an original train schedule. Visitors can also enjoy relaxing in the waiting area and exploring a one-of-a-kind model train display featuring many of the towns and landmarks throughout Mecklenburg County. History is literally put in motion as children and adults enjoy watching the model trains travel throughout the displays! Tours provide visitors the opportunity to view model train replicas in the new floor-to-ceiling showcases.

Find your center in South Hill

South Hill is one of a handful of towns in the United States that was laid out in a circle. In fact, South Hill was laid out around a center stake in 1889. The circle encompassed 56 acres that became known as South Hill and in 1901 the Virginia General Assembly approved the incorporation of South Hill as a town. In front of the train de-

pot, a marker near the center of Mecklenburg Avenue represents the original center stake that was dug up when the railroad tracks were removed in 1989.

Along the brick sidewalk to the entrance of the depot lies the original track that is now home to an Norfolk & Western caboose which is open to explore. When visitors are ready for a break, they can enjoy the new patio and seating on the side lawn that has become a popular spot for locals to have coffee or lunch while visiting with friends.

While the LOVE sign is the newest attraction, visitors to South Hill are encouraged to explore the many local shops and restaurants around town. As the gateway to Mecklenburg County, South Hill offers an abundance of overnight accommodations for those looking to get away and experience the best of southern Virginia. From Occaneechee State Park, awarded the Certificate of Excellence in 2019 by TripAdvisor, to 70,000 acres of lake fun to enjoy, and 54 miles of the Tobacco Trail to explore, there's plenty of outdoors activity to enjoy.

You will LOVE discovering the unexpected in South Hill!

About the author: *Brentley O. Morris is the Business Development Manager for the Town of South Hill.*

So Unexpected 
South Hill
virginia

Roanoke County's Loope appointed to commission



- Loope -

Roanoke County Director of Economic Development, **Jill Loope**, has been appointed to the Virginia Manufacturing Development Commission. In this role, Loope will work in coordination with Governor

Northam's administration to assess manufacturing needs and formulate legislative and regulatory remedies to ensure the future of the manufacturing sector in Virginia.

Loope has been with the Roanoke County Department of Economic Development for over 20 years and has served as director since 2013 leading a team in business attraction, expansion and redevelopment strategies.

Before joining Roanoke County, Loope served as director of economic development for the City of Radford and director of development for Caroline County where she led the marketing, business attraction, and tourism development programs for each area.

Loope is a graduate of Radford University with a Bachelor of Science in journalism/public relations, and a minor in business. She is also a graduate of the University of Oklahoma's Economic Development Institute and the Batten Leadership Institute at Hollins University. She previously served on the Virginia Tech Economic Development Advisory Board and has been appointed to numerous economic development advisory councils by state and federal elected officials. Loope has held several leadership positions including the Virginia State Director for the Southern Economic Development Council, and she remains an active member of the International Economic Development Council and the Virginia Economic Developer's Association. She currently serves on numerous regional boards and commissions including the Western Virginia Workforce Development Board.

York County personnel updates: Fuller, Mack-Yaroch, Etheridge, and Hill

York County's Director of Community Services **Brian Fuller** has been named assistant county administrator. Fuller retains his current position and adds to his responsibilities oversight of York-Poquoson Social Services, the York County Public Library, and local offices of Virginia Cooperative Extension.



- Fuller -

He previously served on the Greater Williamsburg Chamber and Tourism Alliance and Victory YMCA Board of Directors.

Fuller holds a bachelor's degree in parks and recreation, leisure services, and physical education from Virginia Wesleyan University, is a Certified Park and Recreation Professional, and is a graduate of the Historic Triangle LEAD program. He completed a graduate certificate in local government management through Virginia Tech University and graduated from the University of Virginia's Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service Leading, Educating, and Developing (LEAD) program.

Margaret Mack-Yaroch is the new director of York-Poquoson Social Services.



- Mack-Yaroch -

In this role, Mack-Yaroch's responsibilities include management of Children and Adult Services, Self Sufficiency, Fraud and Investigations, among others.

Prior to joining York County in 2020, Mack-Yaroch served as the director of person centered supports for Southeastern Virginia Training Center which is part of the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (DBHDS) state system of care. Before that she was the director of community development & services.

Mack-Yaroch holds a Bachelor of Science in education from Kent State University. She is a 2017 graduate of the DBHDS System LEAD Program and completed the Virginia Public Sector Leader III for executive's certification program with Virginia Tech SPIA Graduate School. She is a member of the Virginia League of Social Services Executives and a local Kiwanis chapter member.

Amy Etheridge was made York County's director of human resources after having served as deputy director followed by acting director upon the prior director's retirement. Among her duties are management of recruitment, compensation, employee relations, employee benefits, training, and more.

Etheridge began work for the county

Fuller also represents the county on various regional boards and committees, including the Olde Towne Medical Center, Colonial Group Home Commission, and Yorktown Foundation.



- Etheridge -

in 2013 as a senior human resources analyst and held the position of human resources administrator prior to her director-level roles. Prior to joining York County, Etheridge worked in human resource management for more than 20 years for various private firms – Marriott International, Fisher and Phillips LLP, Riverside Health Systems and Omni Hotels and Resorts to name a few.

Etheridge holds a Bachelor of Science in administration of justice and psychology from Virginia Commonwealth University. Additionally, Etheridge holds two senior level HR certifications: Senior Professional in Human Resources (SPHR) and International Public Management Association - Senior Certified Professional (ICMA-SCP). She is an active member of various local and national training and human resource organizations

Richard Hill was recently hired as York County's new deputy county attorney.



- Hill -

Hill represents the county's departments, boards and commissions and the county in various court proceedings and is the primary contact responsible for advising and representing York-Poquoson Social Services. Hill comes to York County after several years as a senior assistant city attorney in the Office of the City Attorney for the City of Richmond. While in Richmond, Hill defended the city and the local transit system in state and federal courts. Prior to that, he worked for the Commonwealth of Virginia and spent over a decade in private practice on the Virginia Peninsula.

Hill received a Bachelor of Arts in history from Washington and Lee University attended law school at the Antonin Scalia Law School at George Mason University. Hill clerked for United States Magistrate Judge Pamela Sargent in the United States District Court for the Western District of Virginia.

Kaki Dimock named Albemarle County's director of social services

Recently, the Albemarle County Board of Supervisors named Albemarle native, **Kaki Dimock**, as the new director of social services. Dimock began as director in mid-August and succeeds Phyllis Savides who re-



- Dimock -

tired after 23 years with the county. With over 25 years of experience in the field, including community, family, and youth resiliency programs and homelessness prevention, Dimock brings a deep level of expertise to the department.

“On behalf of the Board of Supervisors, we welcome Kaki to Albemarle County. We are thrilled to have her expertise and knowl-

edge in service to our community,” said Chair Ned Galloway in a press release.

In the same press release, Deputy County Executive Doug Walker observed that the county is “glad to have someone with such strong community connections and a demonstrated commitment to collaboration join our leadership team.”

Prior to joining Albemarle County, Dimock’s served as the director of human services for the City of Charlottesville. Dimock has a Bachelor of Arts in sociology from Vas-

sar College and a master’s degree in social work from Columbia University.

Loudoun County: Sullivan made community corrections director; Bayliss to serve as IT director

On August 5, **Terry “Chip” Sullivan**, became the new director of the Loudoun



- Sullivan -

County Department of Community Corrections. Sullivan brings over 20 years of experience in the criminal justice field. Before accepting his new role, Sullivan served as deputy chief probation and parole officer for Fairfax County. In his new position, Sullivan oversees several programs that promote safety and accountability throughout Loudoun County and Virginia including Loudoun County’s Pre-Trial and Probation Services for Defendants and Offenders.

Sullivan holds bachelor’s degrees in history and political science from North Carolina Wesleyan College. He is a certified substance abuse counselor and has conducted districtwide trainings on evidence-based decision making.

Effective September 5, **John Bayliss** began



- Bayliss -

work as the new director of the Loudoun County Department of Information Technology. With over 20 years of experience in administration and managerial work for local governments as well as service as the chief technology officer in Arlington County from 2018 until 2021. In his new role, Bayliss will oversee various programs including IT infrastructure and customer service, enterprise systems support, technology services, security, and IT project management. The department also works to promote broadband services for the residents and business of Loudoun County, administers the county’s cable television franchises, provides staff support to the Loudoun County Communications Commission, provides technology systems and services to the county government and Loudoun County Public Schools, and radio communications services to the county’s public safety agencies.

Bayliss holds a bachelor’s degree in geography from Radford University and a master’s degree in geography and geographic information systems from Virginia Tech.



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DeWitt is the new assistant city manager of Williamsburg



- DeWitt -

On August 2, **Michele Mixner DeWitt** began her new role as the assistant city manager of Williamsburg after a two-year vacancy in the position. Previously, DeWitt served as the city's economic development director for 16 years. Senior economic development specialist Yuri Adams will serve as acting economic development director until a recruitment process can be completed.

Prior to Williamsburg, DeWitt's public sector career included work on the Middle Peninsula, West Point, and for the Commonwealth of Virginia. In Middlesex, she was the first environmental planner in a locality with 135 miles of shoreline. At the state, she started as the manager of a new economic development program and managed several other economic development programs. DeWitt is also a past president of the Virginia Economic Developers Association.

As Williamsburg's assistant city manager, DeWitt will manage strategic planning projects, spearhead special projects, lead the city's legislative effort, and oversee contracts for services. "As a resident and longtime employee of the city, I am continually impressed with the quality of service and the dedication of the employees," DeWitt said in a press release. "I am honored and excited to take on a broader role with the City of Williamsburg as the new assistant city manager."

DeWitt holds a bachelor's degree in city planning from the University of Virginia and a Master of Public Administration from Virginia Commonwealth University. DeWitt is a volunteer with, and former chairman of, Housing Partnerships and sits on the Williamsburg-James City County Superintendent's Advisory Committee and the Williamsburg Farmers Market Board. She is also an active member of the Williamsburg Garden Club and serves on the Finance Committee of the Garden Club of Virginia.

Staples announced as Middleburg's finance director and town treasurer

Tina Staples recently became the Town of Middleburg's new finance director and town treasurer. Previously, Staples served as interim treasurer and office manager for Middleburg and as treasurer with the Town of Hamilton. In her new roles, Staples oversees



- Staples -

the daily operations of the town's finances, utility billing, taxes, payroll, budget, and any other financial obligations that may occur.

In a press release, Town Manager Danny Davis said, "We are excited to have Ms. Staples return to the Middleburg team. She has demonstrated continued dedication to public service and professional development, and she brings the ideal set of skills and experience for Middleburg."

Staples completed her undergraduate degree in accounting at the University of North Carolina. She holds a Master Governmental Treasurer Certification through the Treasurer's Association of Virginia.

Bryce Simmons to be new manager of the Town of Stuart

Patrick County native **Bryce Simmons** began as the Town of Stuart's new manager in early September. He will work alongside longtime manager Terry Tilley until Terry's retirement date. Prior to his new role, Simmons served as the economic development director for Patrick County. With a background in civil engineering Simmons has an extensive knowledge of treatment plants, storm water systems, and high-speed internet. Working in both public and private sec-



- Simmons -

tor positions, Simmons has extensive experience in drinking water and wastewater treatment plant design and operation. He has knowledge of state and federal regulation for those treatment plants, as well as experience in storm water systems and design. During stints with the City of Danville and the Commonwealth of Virginia he managed major infrastructure projects.

Simmons holds a Bachelor of Science in civil engineering from Virginia Tech. He is a long-term member, and currently serves as the president of the board of One Family Productions. He is also a member of the Rotary Club of Stuart, as well as the Patrick County Young Professionals.

Cournoyer named new manager for Town of Lovettsville



- Cournoyer -

Jason L. Cournoyer has been selected by the Lovettsville town council to replace longtime management consultant and occasional manager Sam Finz who will retire in October. Cournoyer will assume his new duties on

September 27.

In memoriam: Former City of Staunton manager Bernie Murphy

Bernie Murphy, who served as the Staunton City Manager from 1992 to 2000, passed away on July 25 at the age of 80 at his home in Cape Cod, MA. He spent over 50 years working in local government. During his time in Staunton, Murphy worked on major projects in the city including the relocation of city hall, streetscape work downtown, the construction of the Gypsy Hill gymnasium and the New Street Parking Garage.

In a City of Staunton press release, Murphy's daughter, Shannon Murphy Thornton, said that her father felt a special connection to Staunton and its people.

"In many respects, Staunton has been the most rewarding tenure in my 33 years of public service. I have enjoyed this community immensely, especially working among and with so many caring people. Staunton truly is a special place," Murphy had written to Staunton in his resignation letter, according to the city press release.

A memorial service for Murphy was held on Oct. 23 at the Trinity Episcopal Church in Staunton.



Murphy and his daughter.

Cournoyer comes to Lovettsville from the Town of Leesburg where he has served as the management and budget officer for the past seven years. Prior to that, he was a senior management analyst for Loudoun County government. Other professional experience includes work for Fairfax County, the North Carolina State Treasurer Department and the Wake County, NC Manager's Office.

In a message to his Town of Leesburg colleagues, Cournoyer said he was looking forward to the new challenges.

"The appointment as town manager is a great honor for me, and I am excited about the opportunity and different challenges that the position will bring," he wrote. "The decision to accept the position was made more difficult due to the quality of professionals and the great working environment at the Town of Leesburg. I know already how much I am going to miss working with all of you; but I am certain that our professional and personal relationships will continue."

Cournoyer holds a master's degree in public administration from North Carolina State University and a bachelor's degree from East Carolina University.



In memoriam: Former Virginia Beach councilwoman Reba McClanan

On Sunday, August 29, former Virginia Beach Councilwoman **Reba McClanan** passed away, but she left a rich living legacy as a champion of maintaining greenspaces and flora.

McClanan arrived in Virginia Beach in 1964 with her husband Glenn McClanan, whom she met while in an international exchange program. Her husband was elected to the state House of Representatives in 1972 and McClanan became active in numerous civic leagues. In 1980 she began serving as a member of the Virginia Beach City Council representing the former Princess Anne Borough from July 1980 to June 1992. During this time, she served as vice mayor for two years. Following an unsuccessful mayoral run in 1992, McClanan represented the same district on council from July 1996 to June 1998. Subsequently, she represented the Rose Hall District from July 1998 to December 2008.

The character and appearance of her beloved city was one of her passions and she drew inspiration from her family's numerous overseas trips. "I saw so many things that I wanted to do for the city," she said in 2016. "I wanted the city to remain attractive as it developed."

McClanan is the recipient of many honors, including numerous awards, including the Virginia Beach Human Rights Commission, the NAACP Image Award for Community Service, the "most Valuable Person Award" from the Princess Anne Plaza Civic League, and the Toastmasters District 66 Award for Leadership in Public Service.

The Reba S. McClanan Fragrance Garden at Redwing Park was named in her honor in 2008. She was also the founder of the Virginia Beach Clean Community Commission, served as president of the Virginia Urban Forest Council, and volunteered at the historic Francis Land House.

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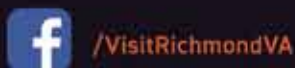
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