

VIRGINIA

TOWN & CITY

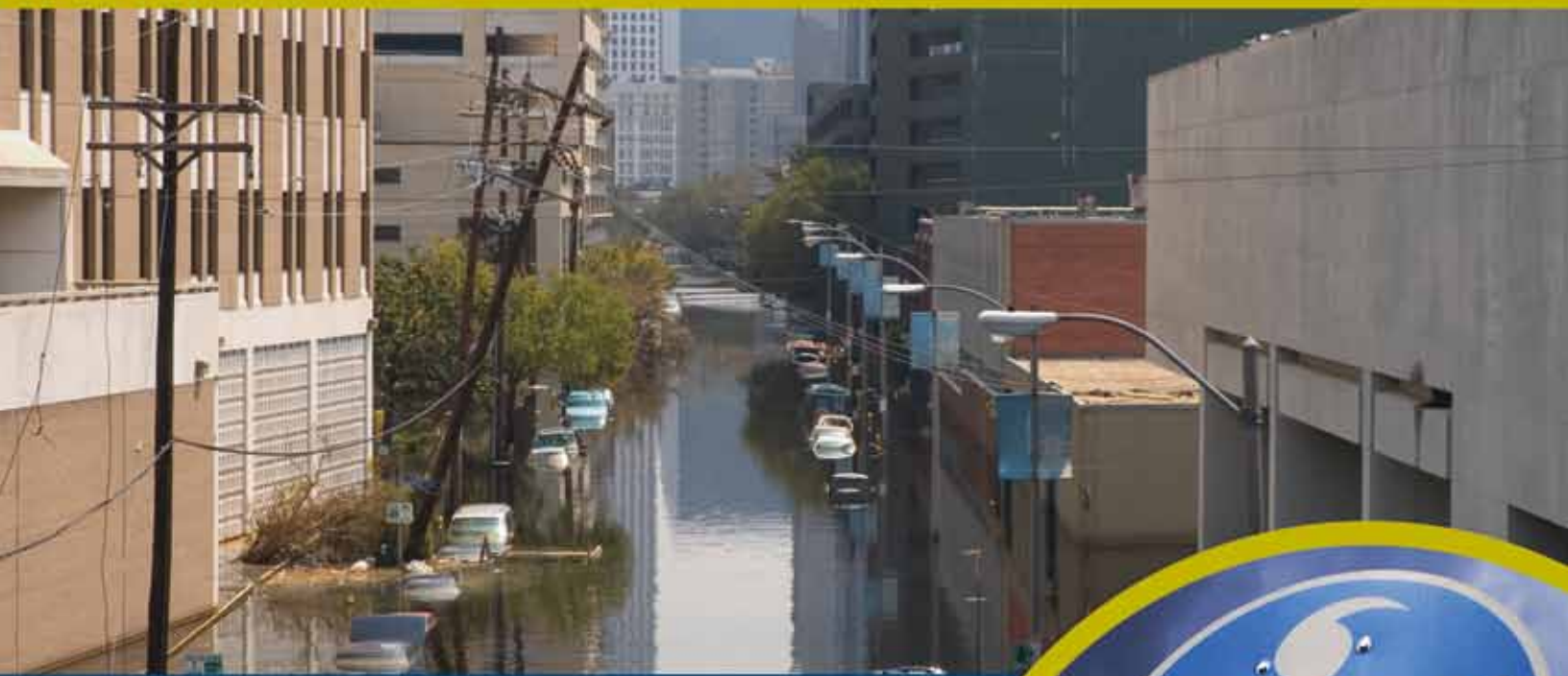
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The magazine of the Virginia Municipal League

Bristol

Capturing a city's vibe
on an iPhone





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About the cover

An image from the City of Bristol – the Birthplace of Country Music – as captured by the city’s public information official on her iPhone using a digital photography application called Hipstamatic. The original image shown here was cropped to fit the cover.
Photo by Jennifer Molley Wilson.

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Hampton wastewater employees recover flushed ring – 4 days later

It all began when an anniversary ring was flushed inadvertently down a toilet in Hampton recently. Nearly four-days later, an industrious crew of city wastewater employees pulled off what seemed impossible when they retrieved the sentimental keepsake from a sewer line.

By Fred Gaskins



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City’s PIO brings Bristol to life with her iPhone

The City of Bristol’s public information official captures the character of the Southwest Virginia community through her keen eye and trusty iPhone 4S. Her images provide potential visitors and new businesses with a vivid impression of the “Birthplace of Country Music.”

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BPOL tax tops list of studies that will play out in 2014 session

An assortment of General Assembly committees and commissions will be busy in the months leading up to the 2014 legislative session examining a hodgepodge of issues. At the top of the list is the future of the Business, Professional and Occupational License tax, and in conjunction with that, two other local levies – the merchants’ capital tax and the machinery and tools tax. Local government officials need to be prepared to jump into the middle of the debate.

By Mary Jo Fields



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Chesapeake's Moore is clerk of the year



- Moore -

Chesapeake City Clerk **Dolores A. Moore** was named the 2013 Clerk of the Year by the Virginia Municipal Clerks Association at its recent meeting in Winchester.

Moore, who holds the professional designation of master municipal clerk from the International Institute of Municipal Clerks, has held the job in Chesapeake for 19 years. Prior to working in Chesapeake, she served in the offices of the city manager and city clerk in Portsmouth.

Moore has been involved in the workings of the clerks association since 1988. She has served in a number of leadership posts and is described by her colleagues as a firm administrator with a kind heart who advocates strongly for continuing professional education.

Hampton fills development post



- Sledge -

Leonard Sledge, director of economic development for the College of William and Mary, was named Hampton's director of economic development effective June 17.

Sledge, a Hampton resident, was serving as a board member of the Hampton Economic Development Authority. At William and Mary he facilitated public-private-university partnerships that strengthened the university and contributed to local, regional and state economic development. Prior to joining William and Mary, he worked extensively in workforce development, both at the Virginia Community College System and in Tempe, Ariz. He began his career in industry managing front-line manufacturing operations for several computer chip manufacturers.

Bernard Griffin dies; served Portsmouth

Former Portsmouth City Council member **Bernard Griffin**, who served the Tidewater city briefly as mayor, died May 9. He was 75.

Griffin served on city council from 1992-2004 and as vice mayor for the last four years of his term. He was appointed mayor and served in the office for about three months in the summer and fall of 2010 following the recall of former Mayor James Holley. Griffin was a retired school teacher.

"He was a great man. He had a tremendous passion for Portsmouth," City Manager John Rowe told the *Virginian-Pilot* newspaper.

Chesapeake deputy named city attorney



- Proctor -

Chesapeake Deputy City Attorney **Jan Proctor** was tapped to succeed **Ronald S. Hallman** as city attorney of the sprawling Hampton Roads municipality effective June 1.

A member of the Chesapeake City Attorney's Office since 1988, Proctor, 53, has represented a wide range of departments and boards in her career, including the Planning Commission, Board of Zoning Appeals, Historic Preservation Committee and Architectural Review Board. She is a past president of the Local Government Attorneys of Virginia. In addition, she has served on state committees to study and address tax reforms, high growth communities and housing initiatives.

Hallman, 69, served as city attorney since 1978.

Gates City names Jones new manager

Greg Jones, who managed the Tazewell County town of Pocahontas for the past 18 years, has been appointed town manager for Gate City in Scott County.

Jones succeeds **Jeremy Keller**,

who resigned effective Jan 31 after about a year on the job.

Zumwalt to retire in Manassas Park



Manassas Park City Manager **Jim Zumwalt** will retire effective June 30 after 2½ years in the position.

Before coming to Virginia, Zumwalt served for 12 years as city manager in Paducah, Ky. He was recently recognized by the International City/County Management Association for his 40 years of local government service.

Neil Morgan accepts Va. Tech training post

Recently retired Newport News City Manager **Neil Morgan** has accepted a position as training director at

Virginia Tech’s Center for Organizational and Technological Advancement effective in August.

Morgan, 55, will coordinate training programs on an assortment of topics, including local government. In addition, he will teach select courses relevant to his expertise. He will be based at the university’s training center at the Roanoke Hotel and Conference Center.

Loudoun fills community corrections position



Loudoun County has named **James J. Freeman** director of the Department of Community Corrections effective May 23. Freeman served most recently as deputy chief probation officer for the Virginia Department of Corrections, Adult

Probation and Parole Division, in the 20th Judicial District, which includes Loudoun.

He was honored as the Virginia Probation and Parole Association Officer of the Year in 2007. Freeman is a Licensed Virginia Substance Abuse Counselor and a Certified Trainer of Addiction Severity Index, a substance abuse assessment tool.

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LGA honors Parthemos, 4 other attorneys

CHESTERFIELD DEPUTY COUNTY Attorney **Stel Parthemos** was honored by the Local Government Attorneys of Virginia recently with the 2013 Cherin Award for Outstanding Deputy or Assistant Local Government Attorney.

Parthemos has worked for the Chesterfield County Attorney's Office since 1987 and served as deputy county attorney since 2010. He was cited for his "demonstrated distinguished public service that has enhanced the image of local government attorneys in the Commonwealth."

The Cherin Award was established in 1994 and renamed in 2000 to honor the memory of Bob Cherin, an outstanding local government attorney who served in the Fairfax County Attorney's Office for 25 years. Parthemos was presented the award during the LGA spring conference held in Roanoke.


In addition, LGA honored the following attorneys:

Vanessa T. Valdejuli and **Bonnie N. Brown** of the Hampton City Attorney's Office were honored with a 2013 Special Projects Award. Valdejuli, senior deputy city attorney, and Brown, an assistant city attorney, were recognized for their work preparing an LGA "white paper" in support of summary judgment reform legislation in the 2013 General Assembly.

M. Ann Neil Cosby, an attorney with the Richmond office of Sands Anderson PC, was honored with a 2013 Special Projects Award for contributing her time and expertise to assist state officials in developing a Model Stormwater Management Ordinance.

Jan L. Proctor, Chesapeake's deputy city attorney at the time, was honored with a 2013 Special Projects Award for her numerous voluntary contributions to assist the LGA Board of Directors in examining strategies it will use to seek new leadership as key staff and board members begin to relinquish their positions in the association.

Proctor, a former LGA president and board member, organized and led numerous meetings with board members and interviews with staff, thereby helping to identify and address issues germane to LGA's present and future activities. She was recently named city attorney in Chesapeake.

The LGA Special Project Award, established in 2003, recognizes members who have performed work on an LGA project or other project of significant importance to the LGA or local government generally. The purpose of the award is to encourage greater service to the LGA and/or local government. 

Wallerstein scholarships awarded to 2 UVA students

TWO UNIVERSITY of Virginia students who will work as interns for local governments this summer have been awarded Wallerstein Scholarships.

Charles Tilley is scheduled to receive an undergraduate degree in politics and Spanish in 2014, and a masters' degree in public policy the following year. He will undertake an eight-week internship with the Office of Economic Development for the City of Charlottesville. He will work on the implementation of recommendations on workforce development adopted by the city council. Tilley is from Henrico County.

Zlata Gogoleva is pursuing a degree in Russian Language and Literature and is scheduled to graduate in 2015. She will have an eight-week internship with the Albemarle County Office of Management and Budget, doing policy and data analysis as part of the budgeting process. She also


serves as a resident adviser in a first-year dormitory. Gogoleva is from Leesburg.

The Wallerstein Scholarship was established in 1973 at the University of Virginia by a gift from Ruth C. and Morton L. Wallerstein to foster interest and research in Virginia local government. It is administered by the Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service at UVA and the Virginia Municipal League. Morton Wallerstein served for 20 years beginning in 1922 as the first paid executive secretary of VML. He served for another 19 years as general counsel.

This year for the first time the Wallerstein Scholarship is being used to provide \$2,500 in financial and academic support for students who have secured internships through the University of Virginia's University



Charles Tilley and Zlata Gogoleva

Internship Program. The program was available to qualified students attending the University of Virginia or the College at Wise who secured internships for the eight-week summer session. 

Leesburg customers can monitor their water use

The Leesburg Department of Utilities recently launched a new online service that allows customers to view and monitor their daily water usage. The new service is part of the town's Customer Self-Service Portal (www.leesburgva.gov/customerportal) implemented earlier this year.

New customers to the portal must first register by creating a User ID and password. After registering, customers can link to their utility account, using the account number and customer ID printed on their water bill. Once linked, customers will have 24/7 access to their account information. Existing customer portal users may use this feature without any additional registration. Water usage can be viewed by day, week, month or year. There is a 48-hour delay in the availability of water usage data; data is available for the past three years. Displayed in a simple bar graph format, usage data can help customers visualize their usage and determine

which water conservation strategies work best.

"The online water usage data is one more way that we are improving our customer service through technology," said Amy Wyks, Leesburg's director of utilities. "Previously customers had to contact town staff to monitor their water usage after receiving a quarterly bill. Now, they have the ability to manage and monitor their daily water usage at their convenience."

HRHA undertakes solar power initiative

Secure Futures, LLC, a developer of solar energy for non-profit institutions in education and other fields, has signed a 20-year solar services agreement with the Harrisonburg Redevelopment and Housing Authority. The company will install, own and operate a solar photovoltaic project on the roof of a 60-unit low-income housing apartment building in Harrisonburg.

When it becomes fully operational by September, the 34 kilowatt solar

photovoltaic array will generate just over 45,000 kilowatt-hours per year and will offset the apartment building's electric usage by nearly 6 percent annually.

"This project exemplifies our mission to create more affordable housing for our residents," said Michael Wong, executive director of the authority. "This is the right thing to do, both economically and environmentally."

Under the solar services agreement, the authority will prepay 85 percent of the solar services for \$78,000 and self-generate electricity from the panels for a projected \$135,000 in avoided electricity costs over the 35-year service life of the solar panels. If the authority elects to purchase the system after five years, it could achieve even more substantial avoided costs. The panels will also generate renewable energy credits that the authority could use in the future to achieve additional savings.

Secure Futures will install the solar array on the roof of a low-income housing property owned and managed by the authority.


Hampton overhauls website features

HAMPTON DEBUTED A NEW website April 30 designed to make it easier for residents to find the city information they need and to stay on top of news and events – whether it's the latest street paving information or the latest parks program.

The new site was more than a year in the making and uses Google technology to search through its entire database. Organized with residents in mind, the top of the new home page includes links to four categories of information: Living, Playing, Doing Business and Government. Within each of those categories, residents can choose from topics such as About Us, Maps, Beaches, Business Loans and Grants, the Voter Registrar's Office and Public Works.

In a column on the left of the page there are quick links to City Council, Jobs, the city's 3-1-1 Call Center, and Notify Me, a new service that will allow residents to register and be notified when there is news concerning an issue they care about.

There are also links to Hampton's social media sites in the left column, including Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. The center of the page is devoted to a rotating gallery of pictures from Hampton.

To see these and other new features, check out the site at www.hampton.gov. 



The screenshot shows the Hampton VA website homepage. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the following categories: LIVING, PLAYING, DOING BUSINESS, GOVERNMENT, and HOW DO I...?. Below the navigation bar is a search bar with the text "Search Hampton". On the left side, there is a vertical menu with links to City Council, Jobs, 311 Call Center, and Notify Me. Below this menu is a "CONNECT" section with links to Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Mayor's Chat, and Coliseum. The main content area features a large image of a building with the text "Welcome to Hampton! Take a look at all the great things Hampton, VA has to offer!". Below the image are three sections: "TOP NEWS" with a link to "CALENDAR", "SPOTLIGHT" with a link to "MEMORIAL DAY", and a "VIEW ALL NEWS" link at the bottom.

Falls Church eyes 'green power' label

The City of Falls Church is on its way to becoming Virginia's first EPA Green Power Community. About 1,800 megawatt hours (MWhs) of renewable energy, or more than half of the 4,371 MWh goal, has been purchased by residents, businesses and the city government. The goal is to support 3 percent of the community's annual electricity usage with renewable energy.

Residents and businesses are encouraged to help the city reach its goal by purchasing renewable energy credits through programs like Dominion Green Power®, or producing renewable green power on-site with solar, geo-thermal, or wind.

Falls Church is purchasing renewable energy equal to 5 percent of its total electricity use. This has qualified the city to become an official EPA Green Power Partner. If successful in becoming an EPA Green Power Community, Falls Church will join 45 other communities across the country in committing to match a portion of their total electricity use with renewable energy. EPA Green Power Communities can be found in more than a dozen states from Texas to Philadelphia. Falls Church is attempting to become the first in Virginia.

Williamsburg market gets a fresh look

The Williamsburg Farmers Market is cultivating a new look thanks to the efforts of one of its local sponsors, Howell Creative Group.

Board members, Market Manager Libbey Oliver and the Howell team began the re-branding

process last year. It culminated with a new brand image, including logo and color palette, introduced to the market in



late April. This is the first change in the logo since the market opened in 2002.

ELSEWHERE ...

The U.S. Small Business Administration's Richmond District Office will honor the City of **Fredericksburg** and the Town of **Marion** as "Small Business Communities of the Year" at a June 24 luncheon in Richmond. The SBA's office in Richmond covers all of the state except for the inner Washington suburbs of Northern Virginia. In a news release from the Richmond SBA office, Director Jayne Armstrong called Fredericksburg and Marion "economic development role models for communities across Virginia." ... The **Arlington County** Board adopted a new format for the county's Zoning Ordinance recently that will make it easier to use, understand and administer. No substantive changes were made. ... Live audio streaming of **Albemarle County** Board of Supervisors meetings will no longer include advertising. The advertisements that periodically interrupted streaming of the meetings proved to be a distraction. ... The Virginia Public Library Directors Association honored the **York County** Public Library recently for having the most "Outstanding Young Adult Program" in communities serving a population between 50,000 and 99,000. The statewide award

recognized the Operation Gratitude Book Sale program sponsored by the library's Teen Advisory Board. ... The City of **Manassas** has been awarded the Gold Hermes Award for the city's website from the Association of Market-

ing and Communication Professionals. ... **Arlington County** issued \$206 million in General Obligation Public

Improvement and Refunding Bonds on April 30. Of the total, \$94 million was new funding issued as traditional tax-exempt bonds. The county received an average interest rate of 2.49 percent on the new money portion of bonds – the lowest Arlington has ever received for a new money bond sale. ... **Abingdon** Main Street has been designated as an accredited National Main Street Program for meeting the commercial district revitalization performance standards set by the National Main Street Center, a subsidiary of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. The accreditation reflects the town's strong revitalization organization and its demonstrated ability in using the Main Street Four Point Approach methodology for strengthening the local economy and protecting historic buildings. ... The **Chesapeake** Information Technology Department has launched two new applications aimed at making interaction with the city more efficient – a web-based application for obtaining property information and one providing mobile access for home owners with bulk waste collection needs. ... The **Manassas** Public Works and Utilities Department received a 2012 Excellence in Water Treatment Plant Performance award by the Virginia Department of Health Office of Drinking Water recently. Manassas earned a silver designation for excellence.

Have news about personnel in your city, town or county government? Send information to David Parsons via e-mail at dparsons@vml.org.

Hampton wastewater employees recover flushed ring – 4 days later

EXTRAORDINARY. Above and beyond the call of duty. Those are just a few of the words used to describe Hampton city employees after an anniversary ring accidentally flushed down a toilet was recovered recently by city wastewater workers nearly four days later. It was

Works would be open on the week-end, the woman and her family waited until almost 1 p.m. the following Monday to make a call to the city’s 3-1-1 Customer Call Center. The call-takers at 3-1-1 transferred the call to Mitchell and his staff.

By Fred Gaskins

On Tuesday, Mitchell and the wastewater workers tried again. This time, the family was told to run water into all the drains and to flush everything in the house while city workers set up a debris trap down the line.

It was a long shot, but when the debris was finally examined back at Wastewater Operations headquarters, “there it was,” Mitchell said. “They were extremely fortunate.”

In her letter to city officials, the ring’s owner wrote: “We cannot express enough gratitude to everyone who had a role in recovering this very special ring to us. It’s not only the monetary value of the ring, but also the sentimental value that could not be replaced. ... Please do anything and everything you can to acknowledge their dedication, honesty and hard work.”

In addition to being recognized by their supervisors and others, including Public Works Director Tony Reyes, each of the wastewater employees received a \$25 “Delightful Dollars”

gift card from the city. The awards program recognizes employees whose actions at work are beyond the job responsibilities, require significant time, effort or resources, or show creativity in finding a solution for a customer.

Mitchell said a recovery like the one involving the ring is rare – happening maybe three or four times in the last 20 years. But it does happen.



About the author

Fred Gaskins is communications coordinator with the City of Hampton.



Standing next to a truck used to clean sewers are (l-r) Wastewater Operations employees Barry Dobbins, Milo Gilliam, Robert Isom, Tony Parker, Jay Parkinson, Leroy Wilson and Jason Mitchell.

“kind of like finding a needle in a haystack,” said Jason Mitchell of Wastewater Operations in the Department of Public Works.

It all began about 11:30 p.m. on a Friday when the ring was flushed by a Richmond-area woman who was visiting family in Hampton. “We employed a professional plumber to begin the search for the ring,” the woman later wrote in a letter to city officials. “But they couldn’t get to it. At that point we considered the ring to be lost forever,” she wrote.

Because they didn’t think Public

Cynthia Laurrell, manager of the Call Center that operates seven days a week from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m., said she didn’t know what the staff in Wastewater Operations would be able to do. She did know, however, that Hampton fosters a “can-do” attitude among its employees.

Mitchell told the family he wished they had called when the accident happened, because he would have sent an emergency crew out to search for the ring on Saturday. He sent a crew out anyway on Monday afternoon. They didn’t find the ring.





City's PIO brings Bristol to life with her iPhone

EVERY TWO MINUTES a day, we snap as many photos as the whole of humanity took in the 1800s.

There have been more pictures taken in the last two years than all of history before it. Perhaps even more amazing, is the fact there are tens of thousands more photos on Facebook than there are in the Library of Congress.

Contributing to photography's rise in popularity is a dramatic increase in mobile photography – the use of smart phone camera technology and the instant gratification to be found in making even the most seemingly mundane event suddenly one worth capturing for posterity.

From leftovers for lunch, to a proliferation of duck-faced self-portraits, it seems no subject is too ordinary to share with the world, or safe from the glaring lens of the smart phone.

Riding the crest of this digital wave in Virginia is the City of Bristol's public information

official, Jennifer Molley Wilson, who has harnessed the powers of this emerging medium to capture images of her city that inspire the need for further investigation. She leaves the viewer wanting to know more about this 12-square mile Southwest Virginia city that straddles the Virginia-Tennessee state line.

"This rise in technology has tremendous implications for promoting cities, engaging citizens and promoting tourism initiatives," Wilson said.

First, according to Wilson, the best camera is the one you always have with you. In this digital age, few are ever far from the connectivity of their phone. Therefore, the rise in the popularity of mobile photography, as well as social media sites, is directly attributable to the dramatic increase in the number of photographs taken each second.

"Mobile photography is a great way to promote interest in your venues, restaurants and events in real time, and to get people engaged in city activities while the activities are still going on and they can still participate," she said.

If your city has fully embraced the importance of the role of social media in cultivating an engaged and informed citizenry, Wilson adds that apps such as Instagram allow you to push your photo to several social media sites with one post, including Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr, Flickr and Foursquare.

Wilson has used the Hipstamatic iPhone app exclusively in the production of her professional

photos and personal art, since being introduced to the app in August 2010.

"I think the images I shoot are true to my artistic vision, yet leave those outside of the area intrigued about what remains to be seen in our city," she said.

"Hipstamatic just happens to be my camera app of choice, because through the selective pairing of both virtual lenses and film, I remain in complete creative

control of the image I shoot, and the mood I choose to convey," Wilson said. "And I find the square format a creative challenge for composition," she added.

"But," she explained, "there are any of a number of camera apps available on the market for a broad range of phones, including Instagram, KitCam and the camera app native to each individual smart phone."

If you find yourself becoming a high volume shooter, and using your phone to extensively capture vignettes from your city or town, Wilson has one final piece of advice to offer.

"You might want to invest in some external batteries. There is nothing worse than missing an important call from your city manager because your phone died while you were using it as a camera," she said.

Turn the page to see more of Bristol through the lens of Wilson's iPhone 4S.







PHOTO BY MALCOLM J. WILSON



About the photographer

Jennifer Molley Wilson, the City of Bristol's (Va.) public information official, is a graphic designer and writer by trade who chronicles life in the city on her iPhone almost daily. She uses an Apple iPhone 4S and the Hipstamatic 262 iPhone camera app. Hipstamatic allows the iPhone to mimic the plastic lensed, toy film cameras popularized by the lomography art movement. Jennifer has exhibited globally by being a featured artist in Hipstamatic's "Adventures in Hipstaland." Her portfolio, "Jennifer's Bristol," brought international attention to Bristol as being the first U.S. city featured in the installation. See more of her work at www.thehipstachick.com.

A dozen tips for mobile photographers

Composition is key. In order for your photograph to be powerful, it must tell a clear and distinct story which should be easily conveyable to the viewer. Think of composition as the sail that carries your message forward. Consider taking a class from a local artist or photographer to learn about composition, or discover the wealth of resources that are available online. You will find that you are able to produce more compelling images once you have a grasp of composition fundamentals, especially the rule of thirds.

Shoot big or stay home. Always shoot photos with the highest resolution setting your camera allows. You never know when you will capture that one award-winning image you would like to print or use for publication. If you get in the habit of shooting high-res, you will be covered for any contingency. You can always reduce the file size of photos for online use, but it's difficult to make a web resolution image print worthy without a severe degradation in quality.

Street cred. Really spend some street-level time in your city. Whether you live in a quaint, picturesque hamlet, or a booming, gritty metropolis, you should easily find enough subject matter on one block of your locale to occupy, at a minimum, one hour of your time shooting photographs.

Change your perspective. When shooting photos, look up, look down, look all around, then take a baby step in all directions, and shoot some more. Get low, climb a wall – look for the unusual angle and vantage point.

Up close and personal. It's your city, so act like you belong there. Move in close to the action. You will be surprised at how close your smart camera phone will allow you to get, so push those boundaries. There is nothing worse than showing someone a photo of a black dot, and having to explain it's a bear. Let your images stand on their own, without explanation.

Having a great time, wish you were here. About once a month, have a “stay-cation” in your own city. Act like a tourist and see your surroundings with a whole new set of eyes. Where do the locals eat? Where do they shop? Look at your merchants' windows. How about that antique doorknob or other interesting architectural details in your historic district? Shoot it, and share it!

Volume, volume, volume. When using your smartphone, no need to worry about wasting film, so shoot away. It takes a lot of photos to get “the” one. If you get a 10 percent yield of usable photos, you've had an excellent day of shooting. Shoot more than one photo of a scene, changing your perspective each time.

A bad photo is a bad photo. Be purposeful in the photos you share. If you aren't a good editor, pass them before another set of eyes before you hit the share photo button. You are only as good as the photos you show, so go for quality over quantity.

She's so pretty in the face, bless her heart. Don't be afraid to show the true personality of your city. Find the beauty in its bumps and warts. Visitors to your city are looking for an authentic experience, and if it's perfection they seek, they will go to Disneyland, instead. Fly your local colors, show the beauty in street art, and embrace the charm of the play of light on cracking paint. Be honest and artistic.

Trip the light fantastic. With a little practice, you can teach yourself to see light, and how it plays out on your surroundings. Capitalize on the juxtaposition of shadow and sun, the reflection of water droplets on a bronze statue, or any of the hundreds of other ways that light can transform your city based on time of day or season of the year.

Tap into your internal camera. Train yourself to see in photographs. Get in the habit of shooting something every day. Your lunch, the flowers by the entrance to City Hall, that seemingly insurmountable pile of paperwork in your inbox, citizen interaction at a public hearing. Before long, you will have amassed an amazing collection of photographs that can provide an intimate glimpse into the inner workings of city government, and which can be used in publications or social media posts to demystify, and humanize, the governmental process for the public.

To thine own self, self be true. Don't shoot with anyone's vision in mind, but your own. Your audience will find the photos they are meant to. Trying to fulfill unknown expectations stifles the creative process, and you will find your photos will start to come alive once you divest yourself of the notion of “demographic.”



... Jennifer Molley Wilson

BPOL tax tops list of studies that will play out in 2014 session

Future of local levy, taxing authority at stake

AN ASSORTMENT OF General Assembly committees and commissions will be busy in the months leading up to the 2014 legislative session examining a hodge-podge of issues. Two of the topics are of particular interest to local governments. Local officials should not only follow the discussions, they should be prepared to plant themselves in the middle of the debate.

At the top of the list is all the attention that will be paid to the Business, Professional and Occupational License (BPOL) tax, and in conjunction with that, two other local levies – the merchants’ capital tax and the machinery and tools tax.

The Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission will release a study in September on changing BPOL from a levy on gross receipts to one on net income. Judging by remarks made at a recent JLARC meeting, regardless of what the commission’s staff reports, there will be a hue and cry from at least some members about BPOL. For example, Del. Johnny S. Joannou of Portsmouth asked if the study would examine the effect of the tax on retail merchants who pay it despite losing money. The staff said that those issues would be explored through interviews with businesses and local governments, which prompted Joannou to remark: “... from the localities’ perspective, all they care about is the money. They don’t care about the citizens.”

JLARC is not the only agency studying BPOL. Legislation introduced in the 2013 session by House Speaker Bill Howell (HJR 755) requested the Virginia Small Business Commission and the Virginia Manufacturing Development Commission to evaluate and develop a plan for implementing tax restructuring to eliminate the three local taxes. The

Senate Rules Committee, however, killed that study resolution. Instead, the chairman of the committee, Sen.

By Mary Jo Fields

Ryan McDougle, wrote a letter to the two commissions urging them to hold meetings after the 2013 session to examine tax restructuring. The commissions are comprised of state legislators and citizens with little or no knowledge of local government.

The bottom line: Local governments are likely to face a robust assault on their taxing authority when the 2014 General Assembly convenes.

Another study of keen interest to towns and counties stems from legislation that was introduced to clarify whether a town or a county has jurisdiction when both localities have statutory authority over the same subject matter. Again, the legislation was not adopted, but Del. Riley Ingram, chair of the House Committee on Counties, Cities and Towns, asked the Commission on Local Government to establish a task force to study the legal rights and responsibilities of towns and counties with regard to police power regulations and related general powers. The Local Government Attorneys Association of Virginia has been asked to appoint four town attorneys and four attorneys from counties in which there are towns to serve on the task force. In addition, the general counsels for VML and VACo will serve on the study group. The task force is to complete its work by November.

Separate from the COLG task force on general powers, the Virginia Housing Commission is examining the responsibilities of a county building official to enforce the building code in a town.

A host of other issues will be studied and various reports will be released between now and the start of the 2014 session. Some studies

commissioned this past session will not be completed until a future year. The list that follows shows the variety that will be undertaken.

Most studies are commissioned through either a resolution adopted by both houses or through language inserted in the budget bill, HB 1500. Sometimes studies are embedded within legislation or result from failed legislation, in which the chair of the committee considering a bill will ask for further study.

Here is a list of the other issues under consideration beginning this summer and fall:

Education

- Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission study of education funding, including the efficiency and effectiveness of elementary and secondary school spending, comparison to other states as to how and to what extent Virginia funds public education and identification of opportunities to improve the quality of education. Report due November 2016. (SJR 328)
- Board of Education to develop student growth indicators by Oct. 1, 2014, to be used in the accreditation of schools and the evaluation of teachers. (SB 1167)
- JLARC to study options to restructure low-performing schools, with the study to be concluded by June 2014. (HB 1500; Item 31 #1c)

Finance/Taxes

- Directs JLARC to study the amount of federal revenue that Virginia receives at the state and local level annually, by functional area, and determine its importance and impact. Report due in 2014, for the 2015 session. (HJR 635)

- HJR 755 (Howell) would have requested VML, VACo, the Virginia Small Business Commission and the Virginia Manufacturing Development Commission to evaluate and develop a plan for implementing tax restructuring to eliminate BPOL, the machinery and tool tax and the merchants' capital tax. The study was killed in the Senate Rules Committee, but the chairman agreed to write a letter to the two commissions urging them to hold at least three-to-five meetings after the 2013 session to examine tax restructuring. Information is posted at this address: <http://1.usa.gov/16MEJz0>.
- JLARC's study of the restructuring of the BPOL tax is scheduled to be given at the Sept. 9 meeting of the Commission. (HB 1301, Item 31, 2012 session)

Human Services

- Virginia State Crime Commission to examine various issues and penalties regarding sexual conduct between secondary school students 18 years of age and older and teachers. (HJR 595)
- Joint Commission on Health Care to study the factors affecting health care costs. The Commission shall (i) study and report on promising policies, practices, and initiatives expected to help control health care costs while maintaining quality of care; (ii) identify factors considered to be the primary contributors to the increase of health care costs; (iii) review approaches undertaken in other states and countries to control health care costs; and (iv) examine the likely impact of federal Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act provisions on the cost of health care. (HJR 687)
- Department of Social Services to develop and present options for implementing the extension of foster care maintenance and adoption assistance payments for individuals up to 21 years of age. (SJR 282)
- Joint Commission on Health Care study of the service needs of individuals with autism and autism spectrum disorders transitioning from public and private secondary schools, including needs related to housing, employment, and day support services. (SJR 330)
- Board of Health, in cooperation with the State Emergency Medical Services Advisory Board, to review the training for emergency medical services personnel throughout the state to identify and address disparities in the delivery of training to and the availability of training for emergency medical services personnel. Report due by Dec. 1, 2013. (HB 1856)
- Medicaid Innovation and Reform Commission to determine whether to expand coverage of Medicaid to persons with income below 138 percent of the poverty level. (HB 1500, Item 4-15)
- Commission on Youth study of the mental health needs of juveniles. SB 928 would have required an interdisciplinary team to evaluate the service needs of juvenile offenders. The bill was not adopted but the study will focus on recommendations for improving screening and assessment of mental disorders in the juvenile offender population.
- Housing Commission examination of town-county building code inspection issues. HB 1574 (Minchew) and SB 1239 (Herring) attempted to clarify the responsibilities of a county building official to enforce the building code in a town. The bills were not adopted but the Virginia Housing Commission was asked to consider the issues in the legislation in time for the 2014 session.

Personnel

- JLARC to update its 2003 report on workforce training in Virginia. JLARC will examine the level of transparency of funding of workforce training and development programs and recommend measures to ensure access to information regarding expenditures and the outcomes generated by such expenditures. The report is due in 2014. (HJR 688)
- Health Insurance Reform Commission is established to monitor the implementation of the federal Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act; determine whether Virginia should establish a state-run health benefit exchange; recommend what health benefits should be required to be provided under health insurance products offered in the Commonwealth; provide assessments of health care benefit mandates; and develop recommendations to increase access to health insurance coverage, ensure that the costs of health insurance coverage are reasonable, and encourage a robust market for health insurance products. The commission will expire on July 1, 2017. (HB 2138)

Local Authority

- Commission on Local Government task force to study legal rights and responsibilities of towns and counties with regard to police power regulations and related general powers. HB 1535 (Rust) attempted to clarify whether town or county ordinances control when both localities have statutory authority over the same subject matter. The bill was tabled but the COLG is asked to convene and facilitate a task force appointed by the president of the Local Government Attorneys of Virginia to review the status of the law and make recommendations to the committee by Nov. 1, 2013, on the need for legislation.

Public Safety

- As part of a bill placing a moratorium on the use of drones, the Department of Criminal Justice Services, in consultation with the Office of the Attorney General and other agencies, is instructed to develop protocols for the use of drones by law-enforcement

agencies and report its findings to the Governor and the General Assembly by Nov. 1, 2013. SB 1331 is identical. (HB 2012)

- Department of Criminal Justice Services will review best practices and potential for using intelligence-led policing model in Virginia law enforcement agencies. Review is to include the feasibility of creating incentives for the development of intelligence-led policing in the allocation of state or federal funds available through the department. Report is due Oct. 15, 2013. (HB 1500, Item 393 #6c)
- Department of Criminal Justice Services will review jail prisoner reentry and drug and alcohol abuse treatment programs that have demonstrated a record of effectiveness in reducing offender recidivism, and consideration of whether effective programs should be expanded. The review will include an assessment of the Kingdom Life Ministries program at the Richmond City Jail. Report is due Jan. 1, 2014. (HB 1500, Item 393 #3c)
- Department of Criminal Justice Services will review the effectiveness of offender reentry and transitional programs including the services provided, the types of funding provided to these programs, the number of released offenders participating in each service and program and the effectiveness of programs based on reducing recidivism. (HB 1500, Item 393 #7c)
- The Department of Juvenile Justice will review current practices in the post-dispositional detention program and consider potential options for expansion of the program, including incentives for increased participation by local and regional detention facilities and increased use of these beds for holding state-responsible juveniles as an alternative to the use of state facilities. Report is due Sept. 1, 2013. (HB 1500, Item 408 #1c)

- JLARC will report on its evaluation of state and local preparedness and planning in October. (HJR 132, 2012 session)
- Governor's Taskforce on School and Campus Safety. Final recommendations due by Oct. 1, 2013. (Executive Order 56)

Retirement/ benefits

- The Department of Human Resource Management will contract for an actuarial study of the feasibility of allowing local governments and school divisions to participate in the state employee health insurance program. (HB 1500, Item 83 #3c)

Transportation

- JLARC will deliver its study of the competitiveness, efficiency, and governance structure of the Port of Virginia in October. (HJR 621)
- Virginia Secretary of Public Safety to establish a Statewide Traffic Incident Management Committee to coordinate the adoption and implementation of the National Unified Goal for Traffic Incident Management by highway and emergency response personnel in order to mitigate highway incidents and improve incident response in the Commonwealth. (SJR 277)
- Senate Committee on Finance to study ways to mitigate the impact of tolls on Virginia's disadvantaged citizens. (SR 30)
- VDOT's evaluation of noise abatement is extended for two additional years, to June 30, 2015. (HB 2040)
- Establish a Transit Service Delivery Advisory Committee (TSDAC) to advise the Department of Rail and Public Transportation and the Commonwealth Transportation Board on the distribution of new funds for transit resulting from the passage of HB 2313, the comprehensive transportation funding bill.

For more information, go to the TSDAC website at <http://1.usa.gov/10pz7WV>. (SB 1140)

- Secretary of Transportation to evaluate the potential benefits of purchasing the Dulles Greenway. The Greenway is a private road. Report due by Oct. 2013. (HB 1500, Item 430 #3c).

Miscellaneous

- As part of a bill dealing with changes to the Public Procurement Act, the bill requires the chairmen of the House Committee on General Laws and the Senate Committee on General Laws and Technology to convene a working group consisting of representatives of the Department of General Services and the contracting community, local government procurement officials, professional service contractors, and other interested parties to examine the provisions of the Virginia Public Procurement Act (§ 2.2-4300 et seq.) relating to competitive sealed bidding and negotiation, with the findings and recommendations for changes in the law on or before Dec. 1, 2013. (HB 2079)
- As part of a bill dealing with movable soccer goals, the Department of Conservation and Recreation and the Division of State Parks are required to convene a work group to examine safety issues related to moveable soccer goals. (SB 933)
- Budget language requires the Commission on Local Governments to assemble a task force to examine the process to analyze the fiscal impacts of proposed bills and budget amendments on local governments. (HB 1500, Item 113 #1c).



About the author

Mary Jo Fields is director of research for VML.

Transformation: Underutilized space becoming transit hub in Norfolk

THE CITY OF Norfolk has started work on the first phase of the Norfolk Passenger Rail Train Station, a modern center that will accommodate rail services, light rail access, taxi and shuttle service, and possibly high-speed rail, city bus transit and river ferry services. Located adjacent to the Elizabeth River and the Harbor Park baseball stadium in downtown, the facility includes a new 3,516-square-foot rail terminal for intercity passenger rail services.

“The train station supports our larger-scale goal of building more sustainable regional transportation options and connections in the Hampton Roads area and in the northeast that will ultimately foster community development,” said Paul Filion, transportation construction project manager for Norfolk’s Light Rail & Intercity Passenger Rail Programs.

In 2012, Norfolk selected Michael Baker Jr., Inc. (Baker) to provide architectural and engineering design, site design, landscape architecture and interior design services for the new station.

Given the limited funds and usage requirements of the city and other stakeholders, the city and Baker carefully planned the building’s footprint and appearance within the available space to maximize the overall benefit to passengers. Specifically, the terminal site is constrained by the ballpark, the river and the adjacent light rail track and interstate highway. From an aesthetic perspective, the city stakeholders wanted to create an inviting and safe environment, along with a sensible and flexible design to attract future development.

The rail station design incorporates a covered train platform, pedestrian and vehicle circulation areas, a service area and parking. Site work will also include utility coordination and improvements, landscaping and stormwater management design. Baker prepared preliminary and final



Norfolk’s first intercity passenger rail terminal in nearly 50 years will be operational by fall 2013.


designs of the site layout and rail station for presentation to the city’s design review committee, planning commission and site plan review committee. The project team also coordinated with Amtrak, local civic groups and the city’s other design consultants.

“It’s a transitional, timeless design that creates another gateway to the city,” Filion said. “The design is such that we can expand as needed – more terminal space, multiple train sets and other transportation connections – with minimal investment.”

Construction crews are scheduled to complete the site work for the new station building this fall, which will set the stage for future work on the center.

The train station will be Norfolk’s first passenger rail facility since 1977. It is expected to serve approximately 67,000 intercity rail passengers annually by as early as 2035. Officials believe the center will become a catalyst for future transit-oriented development, revitalized neighborhoods, provide seamless connections to the city and improve the travel experience.

“I’m proud to be part of another successful rail program in the area that started with a concept and newly formed partnerships, and is now a

reality for patrons who are excited about the options, service and connections the center provides,” Filion said. 

Michael Baker Jr., Inc., a VML sustaining member, provides professional engineering and consulting services for public and private sector clients worldwide. The firm has more than 3,200 employees in the United States and abroad, including five offices in Virginia. It’s consistently ranked by Engineering News-Record among the top 10 percent of the 500 largest U.S. design firms.

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Longer version of job ads posted at www.vml.org

A complete up-to-date listing of job ads submitted to VML for publication is posted at www.vml.org. Visit the VML website and click on "Marketplace" to read the complete descriptions of these and other openings.

Purchasing Agent, Suffolk

SALARY: \$57,877-\$75,241 DOQ/DOE (+) benefits. Performs supervisory administrative and purchasing work in the Finance Department primarily involving the planning, developing and implementing policy and procedures for negotiating and entering into contracts to procure services, including professional and construction, supplies and equipment for city depts. at prices and quality standards that best benefit the city. Reqs. relevant bachelor's degree and 6-9 yrs. progressively responsible exper. in govt. purchasing with supervisory exper., or an equiv. comb. of educ. and exper. CPPB and/or CPPO certification req'd. Apply at www.suffolkva.us. Open until filled. EOE.

Police Chief, Oxford, N.C.

SALARY: \$57,945-\$86,919 hiring range DOQ/DOE (+) benefits. (pop. 8,500; 32 sworn officers; 6 admin. staff) Current chief retiring after 13 yrs. Reqs. min. 10 yrs. exper. in law enforcement, including supervisory exper.; bachelor's degree in criminal justice or related field supplemented by basic and advanced coursework in police science and administration, and extensive exper. in a variety of managerial and supervisory law enforcement roles; or an equiv. comb. of educ. and exper. Additional info and city application at <http://www1.oxfordnc.org>. Submit application, resume, cover letter and min. 3 professional references to the Human Resources director at caroldorsey@oxfordnc.org. Application materials must be submitted online. Application screening begins late June. Open until filled. EOE.

Chief Deputy City Attorney, Charlottesville

SALARY: \$58,760-\$107,994 DOQ (+) benefits. Responsible for providing professional legal services on difficult and complex matters; assists the city attorney in the management of the office; assists the city attorney in a lead capacity in the training and supervision of other attorneys and administrative staff; and performs the duties and responsibilities of the city attorney in his or her absence. Responsibilities include advising city staff and officials, representation before courts and agencies, drafting documents, developing office policy, and

other duties as req'd. Reqs. eligibility to practice law in Va. and 10 yrs. exper. in local govt. law. Apply at www.charlottesville.org/jobs. Deadline: June 14. EOE.

Civil Engineer III, Suffolk

SALARY: \$57,877-\$75,241 DOQ/DOE (+) benefits. Provides professional and technical work involving project management for design and construction of complex capital improvement projects for the department. Reqs. bachelor's degree in civil engineering, civil engineering technology, or closely related field; supplemented by 6 yrs. exper. and/or training that includes project management for design/construction of engineering projects, engineering plan review, computer-aided engineering design, and personal computer operations, or an equivalent combination of education and experience. Must possess valid P.E. license. Apply at www.suffolkva.us. Open until filled. EOE.

Deputy Assessor, Suffolk

SALARY: \$53,724-\$68,499 DOQ/DOE (+) benefits. Performs administrative and supervisory work assisting in planning, organizing and directing an effective and comprehensive assessment program. Work involves supervising appraisers, and assisting and participating in assessments of land parcels and buildings; preparing statistical reports; and assisting in planning and budgeting recommendations; and assisting taxpayers with inquiries pertaining to appraisals and assessment procedures. Reports to the assessor. Reqs. bachelor's degree in business administration, public administration, accounting or a related field and 3-5 yrs. exper. in assessment or appraisal, including supervisory exper., or an equiv. comb. of educ. and exper. Apply at www.suffolkva.us. Open until filled. EOE.

Deputy Fire Chief, Suffolk

SALARY: \$68,998-\$89,698 DOQ/DOE (+) benefits. Performs supervisory and administrative work on assigned shift. Work involves supervising operational matters, organizing and directing emergency response operations and assuming command, as needed. Oversees personnel and evaluates unit operations. Reqs. two-year degree in related field from an accredited college; or be a National Fire Academy Executive Fire Officer graduate with 15 yrs. exper. in the fire/EMS service with 2 yrs. exper. as a battalion chief or above, or an equiv. comb. of educ. and exper. Prefer a relevant bachelor's degree from an accredited college, certification by state of Va. as a Fire Officer Level II (NFPA 1021), Fire Instructor II (NFPA 1041), and certification as an emergency medical technician. Apply at www.suffolkva.us. Open until filled. EOE.

Senior Administrative Assistant (Libraries), Falls Church

SALARY: \$41,820-plus DPQ/DOE (+) benefits. Plan, supervise and participate in providing lead administrative support services to the library director at the Mary Riley Styles Library. Reqs. graduation from H.S. (prefer 2 yrs. of college) plus course work in office technology or related field; considerable increasingly responsible exper. in office mngmnt., purchasing, accounting, administrative and supervisory work in a municipal function, preferably a public library; thorough knowledge of Microsoft Office 2010, especially Excel and Word (Windows 7 and Munis preferred). More info at www.fallschuchva.gov. Send city application or resume to City of Falls Church, HR Division, 300 Park Ave., Falls Church, VA 22046 or hr@fallschurchva.gov. Open until filled. EOE.

County Administrator, Shenandoah

SALARY: Negotiable up to \$120,000 DOQ/DOE (+) benefits. (pop. 42,583; FY13 GF bdgt. \$52.7 million) Reqs. bachelor's degree (master's highly desired) in business or public admin., planning, finance or related field. Desire min. 5-8 yrs. as a chief executive / administrator or deputy chief executive / administrator in a high performing, comparably sized, agriculturally-based growing community with a wide range of duties in operation and mngmnt. Submit letter of application, detailed resume with salary history and work related references to: John A. Anzivino, Senior Vice President, Springsted Incorporated, 1564 East Parham Road, Richmond, VA 23228 or Fax: 804-726-9752 or e-mail at richmond@springsted.com. Complete community/position profile at www.springsted.com. Open until filled. EOE.

Development Services Coordinator, Manassas

SALARY: \$59,051-\$97,406 DOQ/DOE (+) benefits. Coordinates activities, operations and staff of the Development Services Division office, which serves as the one-stop shop for all site and building development projects. Reqs. bachelor's degree in engineering, architecture or closely related field and 3 yrs. progressively responsible exper. in plan review, inspections, bond administration and/or permitting; or an equiv. comb. of educ., training and exper. Must obtain and maintain the following certifications from the appropriate authority: Certified Plan Reviewer (Va. DCR), Certified Zoning Official. May be req'd to obtain additional certification(s). To apply, complete the city application at www.manassascity.org/jobs. Open until filled. EOE.

Assistant Director for Economic Development, Fredericksburg

SALARY: \$62,157-\$75,013 start range DOQ/DOE (+) benefits. (pop. 25,000) Develops and implements strategies for recruiting, expanding and retaining businesses. Performs work furthering economic development goals and strategic plans; develops strategies for re-development of underutilized retail, commercial and industrial sites; serves on the Fredericksburg Main Street program's economic restructuring committee. Reqs. relevant bachelor's degree supplemented by 5-7 yrs. of progressive exper. in economic development, community relations, real estate development, downtown revitalization, or a related field; or any equiv. comb. of educ. and exper. Submit city application and resume by June 7. Application and more info at www.fredericksbrugva.gov or the HR Department, 715 Princess Anne St., Room 217, Fredericksburg, VA 22401. Contact: 540-372-1028. Open until filled. EOE.

Director of Parks and Recreation, Winchester

SALARY: \$64,001-\$102,398 (DOQ/DOE (+) benefits. (pop. 26,000; 9.3 sq. miles; \$2.5 million dept. operating bdgt.) Manage, motivate and lead dept. consisting of 27 professionals and up to 75 PT employees. The dept. oversees 248 acres of park land, including a regional park, neighborhood parks, open space, wetlands and natural preserves (14 parks total); an indoor-outdoor swimming pool; and a 44,000-square-foot recreation center. Plans and directs all recreational programs and building/grounds maintenance activities for the dept. Reqs. bachelor's degree (master's preferred) in parks and recreation admin., public admin., business admin., or related field, with significant exper. in parks and recreation mngmnt. CPRP and/or CPRE certifications preferred. Learn more and apply at www.winchesterva.gov. Deadline: June 18. EOE.

Code Inspector I – (Electrical), Alexandria

SALARY: \$36,588-\$63,359 DOQ/DOE (+) benefits. Conduct technical code inspection work on new and existing construction and renovation projects in residential and commercial buildings. More info and submit application at www.alexandriava.gov/jobs or call 703-746-3780. Job # 2012-00136. Deadline: June 7. EOE.

Business Application Specialist II (Department of Emergency Communications and Citizens Services), Virginia Beach

SALARY: \$47,358-\$71,037 (+) benefits. Report to the appropriate division manager of ECCS on business application matters

for the automation of business applications to enhance efficiency and effectiveness using server- or mainframe-based software programs; analyze E 9-1-1 and 3-1-1 business operations. Visit www.vbgov.com/careers for more detailed job information and to apply online. Job # 5306. Deadline: June 13. EOE.

Assistant County Attorney, Goochland

SALARY: \$58,000-\$64,000 hiring range DOQ/DOE (+) benefits. Assists county attorney in providing legal representation and counsel to the Board of Supervisors, county administration, constitutional officers, as well as county boards, commissions and committees. Must be current member in good standing with the Virginia State Bar. Ideal candidate will have min. 2 yrs. exper. in local govt. practice, preferably with land use and zoning knowledge and exper. Reqs. submittal of Goochland County Employment Application, resume and writing sample. Applications available at www.co.goochland.va.us. Send to: Kelly Parrish, Human Resources, 1800 Sandy Hook Road, P.O. Box 10, Goochland, VA 23063, or by e-mail: hr@co.goochland.va.us, or by fax: 804-657-2032. Background check and drug screen req'd. Deadline: June 21. EOE.

Director of Planning and Zoning, Richmond County

SALARY: \$39,500-\$55,000 DOQ/DOE (+) benefits. (pop. 9,254) Responsible for administration and enforcement of all county land development ordinances, including but not limited to zoning, subdivision erosion/sediment control, and Chesapeake Bay Act regulations. Will serve as staff to the Richmond County Planning Commission and Board of Zoning Appeals. Prefer bachelor's degree in planning, public administration, related fields or be able to demonstrate equivalent qualifications. Applications and full job description may be obtained from the County Administrator Office, 101 Court Circle, Warsaw, VA 22572, by calling 804-333-3415 or at www.co.richmond.va.us. Submit letter of interest, completed county application form, min. 3 professional references and resume to: Richmond County Administrator's Office, P.O. Box 1000, Warsaw, VA 22572. Deadline: June 21. EOE.

City Manager, Manassas

SALARY: Negotiable within range of \$160,000-\$175,000 DOQ/DOE (+) benefits. (pop. 37,821; \$321 million FY13 bdgt., including schools; 468 municipal FTEs). Submit letter of application, resume with salary history and 5 work-related references to: John A. Anzivino, Senior Vice President,

Springsted Incorporated, 1564 East Parham Road, Richmond, VA 23228 or via Fax at 804-726-9752 or via e-mail at Richmond@springsted.com. Complete profile at www.springsted.com. Interviews will begin in late June. Deadline: June 9. EOE.

Town Planner / Zoning Administrator, Round Hill

SALARY: \$45,000-\$65,000 DOQ/DOE (+) benefits. (pop. 600; town-county JLMA appx. 5,000) Responsibilities for growing Loudoun County town include managing planning operations and administering zoning ordinance; site plan and subdivision review; rezoning and special exception process; zoning ordinance amendments, elements of the comprehensive plan, and grant applications. Reqs. any comb. of educ. and exper. equiv. to a bachelor's degree in planning or related field and min. 5 yrs. professional planning/zoning exper. AICP preferred. Submit cover letter and resume to: John C. Barkley, Town Administrator, Town of Round Hill, P.O. Box 36, Round Hill, VA 20142-0036, 540-338-7878, or via e-mail to jbarkley@roundhillva.org. Deadline: June 14. EOE.

Director of Information Technology / Chief Information Officer, Richmond

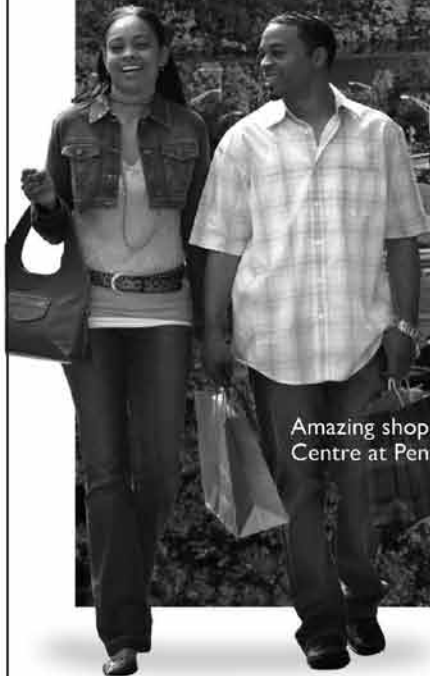
SALARY: Negotiable DOQ/DOE (+) benefits. (pop. 205,000; \$18.8 million dept. bdgt.; 103 dept. employees) Seeking transformational, business-savvy and entrepreneurial leader with a track record of building top notch, business-focused and innovative IT operations. Reqs. min. 10 yrs. exper. in IT with 5 yrs. of leadership exper. Ideal candidates should have progressively responsible IT mngmnt. and leadership exper. in a large complex public agency or private sector organization. Local govt. exper. a plus. Submit letter of interest and resume electronically to Ms. Brett Byers at brett@thehawkinscompany.com or Bill Hawkins at bill@thehawkinscompany.com, or mail materials to: The Hawkins Company, 11040 Bollinger Road, Suite E-216, San Ramon, CA 94582. For more info, contact Byers at 323-403-8279 or Hawkins at 310-348-8800. Recruitment brochure available at www.thehawkinscompany.com. Deadline: June 7. EOE.

SUBMITTALS: *Submit ads as text files via e-mail to David Parsons at dparsons@vml.org. VML posts job ads on its website at no cost to its local government members. Non-members are charged a flat rate of \$25 per ad, which includes a listing in the VML eNews newsletter and publication in Virginia Town & City (deadlines permitting). VML edits position descriptions in printed publications because of space limitations.*

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Taxes: It's déjà vu all over again

LOCAL OFFICIALS MUST feel that they are channeling Yogi Berra when they hear that Virginia's gubernatorial candidates are focusing on the elimination of a local tax – again.

In 1997, it was Republican Jim Gilmore and Democrat Don Beyer and the focus was on the personal property tax. This year, it's Ken Cuccinelli and Terry McAuliffe who have set their sights on the local business, professional and occupational license (BPOL) tax.

Here's a suggestion for both candidates: If you want to focus on the elimination of a local tax, try serving on a city council, town council or county board of supervisors and figure out how you balance the budget while eliminating a significant revenue source. It's really not very difficult to blithely suggest eliminating a tax without taking responsibility for making service cuts or finding a revenue replacement.

To give the two campaigns some credit, both say that revenue neutral replacement is a goal, but from the perspective of local governments, the devil is definitely in the details. One big detail is whether this revenue replacement would be under the control of the locality – or some kind of pass through from the state that would then be subject to a grab by state budget writers down the road. Local governments have every reason to be concerned. Cities, towns and counties remain disgruntled over the anemic growth of the telecommunications tax, the disappearance of shared ABC profits and the machinations that surrounded implementation of the car tax reimbursement program.

BPOL taxes generated about \$683 million in fiscal year 2012. Replacing these revenues with real estate taxes would create a heavy burden: On average, cities would have to raise real estate tax rates by about 11 cents to

make up for BPOL, towns by 7 cents and counties by 5 cents.

Instead of focusing on eliminating local taxes, candidates – and members of the legislature – instead could try eliminating some of the reasons localities have to raise taxes.

For one, legislators could stop ordering localities to provide tax relief on the local dime. The most recent example is the property tax exemption for disabled veterans. It's not that this worthy group is undeserving. For legislators, however, to decide that some other level of government should be the one to provide disabled veterans tax relief is simply hypocritical.

The state could stop putting additional costly requirements on how local governments conduct business. Candidate Cuccinelli should take special note of this, since he promoted legislation in 2005 that requires payment of overtime for police officers in excess of federal standards. The result has been millions of dollars in additional overtime costs and a rash of costly law suits.

The state can stop balancing the budget with local revenues. A recent case in point is the requirement that local fines and fees be paid into the state treasury, accompanied by a state grab of some of the fines collected by selected localities.

The state can stop balancing its budget by shifting required costs to localities. As a recent example, when state revenues tanked, the state decided that it would no longer pay the cost of liability insurance for constitutional officers and instead, localities could be responsible for those expenses. And to make it even worse, localities have to obtain the insurance through the state, even though they are responsible for the entire bill. The free market concept apparently applies only at the convenience of the state.


But the most important step the state could take would be to pay for a

reasonable share of the cost of public education.

In FY09, the state provided per pupil funding of \$5,274. That amount is projected to be only \$4,804 in FY13. The estimate for FY14 is \$4,880.

At the same time, the state has ramped up its accountability requirements under the Standards of Accreditation and Standards of Learning.

Since 2009 the state has instituted requirements for a personal finance course, the use of a graduation and completion index for accreditation, and for the next school year, the development of a career and academic plan for every student. Standards of learning for English, math and science have been strengthened, a move that the Superintendent of Public Instruction acknowledged would have a “dramatic” effect on accreditation. In her 2012 report on the state of public education, Superintendent Pat Wright says “that this will be an indication that we are now expecting more of students, not that they are learning less.” Local officials just wish the state would come up with its share of paying for the additional costs associated with those high aspirations instead of just relying on localities to bear the burden.

It's no wonder that local officials would love to see legislators and gubernatorial candidates follow the medical profession principle that states “first, do no harm.” Doing so would restore some predictability to managing local government finances, an essential ingredient for the long-term economic health of a community. 



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