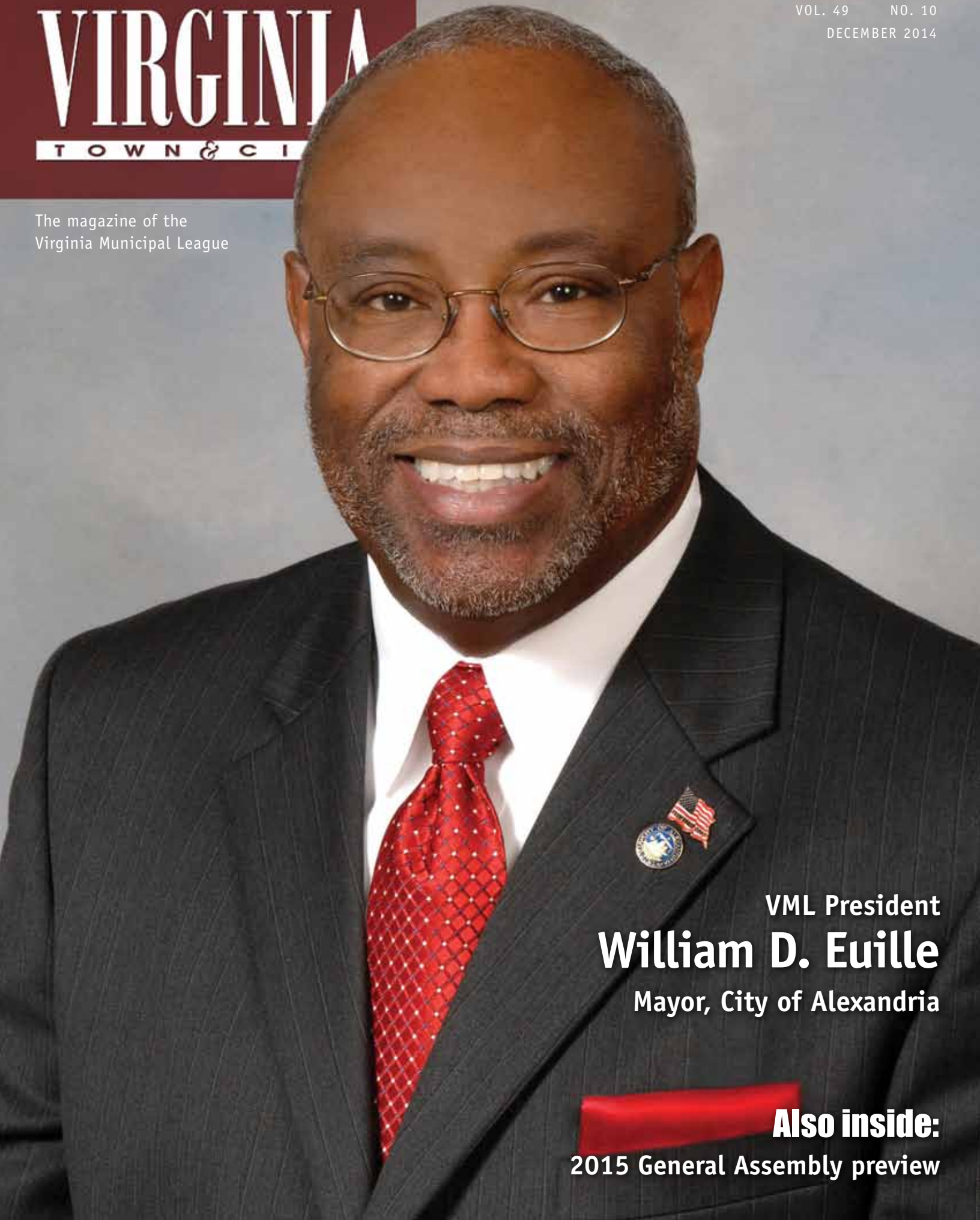


VIRGINIA

TOWN & CITY

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Virginia Municipal League



VML President
William D. Euille
Mayor, City of Alexandria

Also inside:
2015 General Assembly preview



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About the cover

Alexandria Mayor William D. Euille was elected the 96th president of the Virginia Municipal League on Oct. 7 at the VML Annual Conference in Roanoke.

Features

Meet Bill Euille: VML's new president has served as Alexandria mayor since 2003

Alexandria Mayor William D. Euille, the 96th president in the Virginia Municipal League's 109-year history, has served as mayor of the bustling Northern Virginia city since 2003. *By David Parsons*

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General Assembly 2015



Although the 2015 General Assembly session is a short one – only 46 days beginning on Jan. 14 – the gathering will be of keen interest to local governments. Cities, towns and counties will be in the crosshairs once again as state legislators struggle to balance the budget not only for the remainder of FY15, but for FY16 as well.

By VML Legislative Staff

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Change your change plan: Five principles for resolving lingering organizational problems

Are some of your best people leaving for other jobs or other cities? Is there too much fighting going on among your executive directors? Does there seem to be a lack of motivation in some of your departments? If issues like these are present in your city, consider gathering a group of key leaders to tackle the lingering organizational problems. *By Geoffrey Tumlin, Ph.D.*

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Eight tips for collaborative leadership

Silo mentalities and knowledge-hoarding behaviors are wasting the kind of collective brainpower that can save organizations money, lead to the discovery of a time-saving new process, or keep an operation afloat while others are sinking. When collaboration is low, individuals lose the opportunity to work in the kind of inclusive environment that energizes teams, releases creativity and makes working together both productive and joyful. *By Carol Kinsey Goman, Ph.D.*

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DAY TRIP

Apple picking and a taste of history

ON A CRISP, clear October morning, my family and I headed to Graves Mountain in Madison County for a taste of the annual Apple Harvest Festival. The stunning fall foliage made for a scenic drive. The trip home would be punctuated with a stop at one of the state's most historic properties.

Graves Mountain

Our first stop was the Graves Mountain Lodge for a fabulous home-style brunch complete with fried chicken and all the fixin's. Afterward, we had a great time wandering through the festival. The highlight? Selecting our own apples from an assortment of different types. We left with

into the early days of this nation. Despite his shy nature, Madison was the ultimate public servant. He served in the Virginia Assembly, the Continental Congress, and the first four U.S. Congresses. He then served as Secretary of State under the presidency of his good friend Thomas Jefferson. His own presidency, from 1809 to 1817, was a tumultuous time framed by the War of 1812.

While serving as a congressman, Madison married widow Dolley Payne Todd. In sharp contrast to Madison's reserved style, Dolley was a socialite who defined the role as First Lady as a "First Partner" in many ways. Her hospitality was second to none and she served as the official hostess during both the Jefferson and the Madison presidencies.

The home

In 1817, James and Dolley Madison retired to their country estate, Montpelier. Dolley was forced to sell the home following Madison's death. Ultimately, the estate was purchased by William DuPont and his wife who made numerous alterations to the property and the grounds.

I highly recommend taking the time for the guided tour at Montpelier. It is not only a walk through a lovely mansion, but it is a walk through time. Most importantly, it is a walk through the early days of this country in the steps of one of the Founding Fathers. For more information on James Madison's Montpelier, go to www.montpelier.org.



Graves Mountain at apple harvest time.

a bushel that included Rome, Pink Lady and Fuji varieties. We have since enjoyed homemade apple sauce, an apple pie and an apple cake!

Montpelier

We plotted our trip home via James Madison's Montpelier, located on Route 20 about four miles south of the Town of Orange in Orange County. This is to be distinguished from the Hanover County community of Montpelier.

The visit made me realize just how much I did not know about the fourth President. James Madison is often called the Father of the Constitution, but his legacy expands well



Montpelier was the country estate of James and Dolley Madison. The couple retired there in 1817.

Roanoke Co. names Gates administrator

Roanoke County selected Alexandria Deputy City Manager **Thomas C. Gates** to serve as county administrator effective Dec. 29.



- Gates -

Gates began his service with Alexandria in 2009 as assistant city manager for management improvement. In 2012, he was designated deputy city manager and given additional responsibilities. Prior to joining the city, Gates served as the assistant county administrator for Spartanburg County, S.C., where he provided management oversight and coordination of administrative operations and public safety services. Gates has served as the management and budget director for both Spartanburg County and the City of Greenville, S.C.

Lovettsville names Palko town manager

Lovettsville Town Council appointed **Laszlo Palko** as town manager effective Jan. 1. He succeeds **Keith Markel**, who took the job of deputy town manager in Leesburg.

Palko has eight years of public and private sector management experience, beginning as a U.S. Army officer who served two deployments in Afghanistan. During those tours of duty, Palko helped establish provisional governments that were responsible for developing and administering a provincial government and seven county governments. He also served as director of intelligence and as deputy chief operations officer for a battalion.

After leaving the Army, Palko worked as a management and financial consultant for both Booz Allen Hamilton and IBM. Palko also worked in local government as a performance management analyst for the City of Revere, Mass., where he assisted the mayor and the Department of Public Works to design and implement a performance management solution for the city.

James H. Blount Jr. dies; was Woodstock manager

James H. Blount Jr., a former longtime town manager in Woodstock, died unexpectedly in his sleep on Nov. 17. He was 83.

Mr. Blount, a Marine Corps veteran whose service included participation in the Korean War, worked in local government for 34 years. He was assistant town superintendent and superintendent of public works in Christiansburg between 1953 and 1968. He moved his family to Woodstock in 1968 to become town manager, a position he held for 19 years until his retirement in 1987. Mr. Blount later worked as a part-time inspector for the Virginia Department of Transportation. Throughout his local government career, he was active in the affairs of the Virginia Municipal League.

In addition to his local government service, Mr. Blount volunteered much of his time as a volunteer firefighter, assistant chief and honorary chief, as well as leadership positions in regional and state volunteer firefighter associations. He was a certified fire instructor for 30 years.

Staunton fills communication post



- Jones -

Ruth E. Jones was named communications manager for the City of Staunton effective Jan. 5. Jones will collaborate with the city manager's office, all city departments and Staunton City Schools in providing information to the public. She will also work with city departments to develop marketing and communication strategies.

Jones, a longtime Staunton resident, served the past seven years as director of communications for the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank. Prior to that, Jones was a reporter at *The News Leader*, Staunton's daily newspaper. She also is a member of the Staunton Food Policy Council, a body that advises the city manager on ways in which to make healthy, local food available to city residents, regardless of income.

Lexington names Simon city manager



- Simon -

Lexington hired a 40-year-old assistant county manager working in Georgia as its news city manager. **Noah Simon** took over in Lexington on Oct. 27. He succeeded **Jon Ellestad**, who retired after 24 years in the position.

Simon worked most recently as assistant county administrator in Floyd County, Ga. He has worked in local government for the past 14 years in Maryland, Minnesota, Texas, Georgia and as an assistant town manager in Culpeper. His first job was with the International City/County Management Association.

Culpeper taps Read for tourism position



- Read -

Paige Read was named the town of Culpeper's new tourism and economic development director this month.

She will replace **Lori Sorrentino**, who has served in that capacity since 2011.

Most recently, Read served the past seven years with the Virginia Tourism Corp. as its education and development manager. In that post, she worked with localities across the state in developing tourism marketing programs, strategic planning, grant writing and business development opportunities. Read also led VTC's statewide tourism plan, known as DRIVE Tourism.

Hopewell's Gore elected to NLC board



- Gore -

Hopewell Vice Mayor **Jasmine Gore** was elected to a two-year term on the National League of Cities Board of Directors during NLC's Congress of Cities and Exposition in Austin last month.

She was one of 15 local officials elected

to the board along with four municipal league executive directors.

When she was elected to Hopewell City Council in 2012 at the age of 26, Gore became the youngest person ever elected to the governing body.

Portsmouth fills key development post

Portsmouth named **Charles E. “Chuck” Rigney** to director of economic development effective Nov. 3. He had been the assistant director of economic development for Norfolk since 1997.



- Rigney -

In Norfolk, Rigney was instrumental in new development and business expansions that occurred in most of the city’s business and industrial parks. He also facilitated small business deals in urban redevelopment sites, including Chelsea Business District and the Norfolk & Western Railroad Line Historic District – homes to microbrewers Smartmouth and O’Connor Brewing.

David Cundiff dies; served Rocky Mount

Rocky Mount Police Chief **David Cundiff** died Oct. 24 after a five-week illness. Mr. Cundiff, 57, also served as chairman of the Franklin County Board of Supervisors.

According to *The Franklin News-Post*, Mr. Cundiff was a 30-year veteran of the Franklin County Sheriff’s Office when he retired in 2007 as lieutenant of investigations. He took the job of police chief in Rocky Mount in 2010.

He was elected to the Board of Supervisors in 2007 and re-elected in 2011. Mr. Cundiff was elected as supervisors chairman in 2012, 2013 and again earlier this year.

Hugh Cooper dies; served Bristol

Hugh G. Cooper Sr., city manager of Bristol, Va., from 1968 to 1989, died Nov. 15.

Mr. Cooper, who played the saxophone in the U.S. Army Band for four years before his local government service, held a bachelor’s degree in civil engineering and a master’s degree in sanitary engineering from Virginia Tech. He was a past president of the Virginia Section of the International City/County Management Association.

Williamsburg’s Tuttle to retire in June

Williamsburg City Manager **Jack Tuttle** will retire effective June 30. Tuttle became the city’s sixth city manager in 1989.

“Since that time I have had the honor of serving with 12 city councils and five mayors, and with a dedicated and distinguished staff,” Tuttle observed in a Nov. 14 letter to City Council.

Terpenny leaving as Floyd manager



- Terpenny -

Floyd Town Manager **Lance Terpenny** has resigned effective Dec. 31.

Terpenny, who has held the post for four years, said that as he neared the age of 60 that he wanted a slower pace of life.

“I appreciated the opportunity to serve you and the citizens of this wonderfully unique town,” Terpenny said in a letter to Town Council.

Prior to his time in Floyd, Terpenny served as town manager for Christiansburg. He is a former president of the Virginia Municipal League.

Petersburg hires street operations manager

Petersburg named **Michael A. Mee** as general manager for street operations.

He will oversee an annual budget of about \$9 million and 80 employees. Mee will be responsible for street operations, including roadside maintenance, parks and grounds maintenance, refuse collection, fleet management, traffic operations, leaf collection and snow removal operations.

News & notes

Norfolk to build four new schools

Norfolk City Council voted recently to move forward with the construction of four new schools.

Construction will begin in January on a new Campostella School serving grades kindergarten through 8 with a Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) program, as well as a swim program in conjunction with the Southside Aquatic Center.

New elementary schools at Broad Creek, Larchmont and Ocean View will follow, with a goal of all schools being

completed in time for the 2017 school year.

The total cost for the four schools will be \$101.1 million. The comprehensive construction agreement includes an option to build a replacement school for Camp Allen Elementary in the future.

The school designs received significant amounts of community review and feedback, including review sessions with principals, teachers, parents, students and civic leagues. The collective public input included more than 1,000 individuals via online surveys and pub-

lic engagement meetings.

The agreement was negotiated under the leadership of a collaborative, 10-member team from the city government and Norfolk Public Schools. S.B. Ballard was selected to both design and build the schools as part of a process required by the Public-Private Educational Facilities Infrastructure Act (PPEA). The overall project is aimed at building multiple schools, capable of providing 21st century learning environments through a comprehensive agreement with a guaranteed maximum price.

Manassas removes last of utility poles


NEARLY TWO-AND-A-HALF YEARS in the works, the City of Manassas Public Works & Utilities Department has completed the Center Street/Prescott Avenue Overhead to Underground project. The



last of 33 utility poles was removed from the side of the road and lines relocated underground at a formal “pole removal” ceremony on Nov. 19.

The project entailed moving 27,708 linear feet of conductor line from above ground to underground, making the area much more visually appealing. More than 15,352 man-hours were used to move electric lines and to upgrade 3,216 linear feet of water main pipes along the route. Moving the lines from above to below ground will also help ensure reliability of electric service. Local cable franchise lines for Comcast and Verizon were also moved to below ground during the project. In addition, 20 new Sternberg street lights were placed along the route, adding an “old town” ambience to the project.

“This project has really improved, not only the aesthetics of the area, but the reliability of service that we can offer our customers,” said Public Works and Utilities Director Mike Moon. More than 83 percent of the city’s electrical distribution system is underground and the average customer outage time for 2013 was only 66 minutes.

The cost of the project, including new lights, underground power and upgrading of a water main, was \$1.73 million dollars. This included \$1.25 million dollars of electric work and \$480,000 of water main work. The project came in on time and on budget. 

The last of 33 utility poles was removed from the side of the road and lines relocated underground at a formal “pole removal” ceremony on Nov. 19.

Arlington updates green building incentive effort

The Arlington County Board voted recently to update its Green Building Incentive Program. The update emphasizes energy performance and reduced overall environmental impact for site plan developments that voluntarily seek incentives under the program.

The Green Building Incentive Program is designed to encourage the construction of buildings that are more energy-efficient and environmentally sustainable than buildings built to code.

“Building codes are being updated to require more energy efficient buildings,” said Arlington County Board Chair Jay Fissette. “Our Green Building Incentive Program offers project developers the option of reaching beyond code requirements to achieve greater

energy efficiency in return for increased density. This update ensures that we are making a fair trade of density for energy efficiency and overall environmental performance.”

The Board voted 4-1 to approve the updates.

The Green Building Incentive Program update was driven by revisions to the LEED (Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design) green building rating system, advances in green building technology, and the county’s own aggressive energy targets, as laid out in the Community Energy Plan.

Developers, members of the county’s Planning Commission and Environment and Energy Conservation Commission, architects, energy engineers, commercial leasing brokers and county planners helped shape the update to focus on im-

proved energy efficiency in design and construction, and energy performance once the building is occupied.

The update includes:

- Use of the new LEED Version 4 green building rating system, which accounts for changes in technology and building code updates and includes a separate rating system for multi-family buildings.
- More density available for office and multi-family site plan projects that address Arlington’s environmental priorities, including: greater energy efficiency, site ecology, stormwater management and building reuse.
- Incorporation of Energy Star certification as an energy perfor-

mance component after the building is occupied.

- Incorporation of the Earthcraft rating system for projects seeking VHDA (Virginia Housing Development Authority) tax credits for affordable housing projects.
- Incentive for Net Zero Energy development (Net Zero buildings generate as much clean energy onsite as they use over the course of a year).

The updated program is effective immediately. Arlington launched its Green Building Incentive Program in 2000 and has updated it four times since then to ensure that the program encourages developers to build exemplary projects that meet stringent environmental standards. Since 2000, 56 site plan projects have agreed to achieve LEED certification. Nineteen of these buildings have been built, achieved their LEED commitments, and complied with the green building site plan conditions, and another 20 are under construction.

Norfolk joins community obesity partnership

A coalition that includes the City of Norfolk, regional hospitals and health-care institutions announced an initiative recently designed to support and improve community health.

Mayor Paul D. Fraim, City Manager Marcus Jones, Norfolk Health Department Director Dr. Demetria Lindsay and a group of Hampton Roads health-care leaders announced that the Norfolk Healthcare Collaborative, formed in January, was confronting the issue of obesity in the community.

“This is a momentous day for the City of Norfolk and our community,” Fraim said. “Never before have the region’s hospitals and healthcare institutions partnered at this magnitude to support and improve community health. The work of the Norfolk Healthcare Collaborative will bring lasting change not only within the walls of the hospitals but into the community as well.”

Following the results of the hospitals’ Community Health Needs Assessments, it was clear that obesity was a significant but preventable health problem affecting Norfolk residents in many ways. The

collaborative agreed to focus on obesity reduction as its first community health improvement initiative. In the monthly meetings that followed, the collaborative developed a plan to address nutrition and physical activity. It created a set of nutritional guidelines for food service in Norfolk hospitals. Each organization has committed to the following:

- Using pictures of healthy foods in marketing materials
- Displaying healthy options at the cash register
- Patient and retail menus meet collaborative guidelines
- Serving whole grain breads, rolls, buns and bagels
- Eliminating all trans-fats
- Ensuring 75 percent beverage options meet the collaborative’s healthy beverage criteria
- Posters encouraging the use of stairs

The hospitals are in various stages of transitioning to the new collaborative guidelines. By October 2016, all Norfolk hospitals will require 80 percent of their meals will meet the nutritional guidelines.

Alexandria improves vending options

Alexandria has adopted a new policy requiring vending machines in city facilities to stock only healthy beverages and snacks. New machines are being installed at city recreation centers, offices and other locations.

The “Healthy Alexandria” initiative requires vending items to adhere to the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s “Smart Snacks in School” nutrition standards. The new machines offer name-brand bars, chips and other satisfying snacks that provide healthy choices, including fresh fruit and vegetables. The Healthy Alexandria initiative was made possible with funding from the Virginia Foundation for Healthy Youth.

“We’re proud to be a leader in modeling healthy choices for the entire Alexandria community,” said Katie Leonard, a public health planner in the Alexandria Health Department. “This policy recognizes that in addition to be-

ing a large employer, the city is also a public health agency, adult and youth fitness organizer, children’s activity provider, and public facility operator. We want to respect, protect, and enhance the health of everyone in Alexandria.”

The new nutrition standards generally require snacks to contain at least 50 percent whole grain or have as the first ingredient a fruit, a vegetable, a dairy product, or a protein food. Snacks must also contain no more than 200 calories, 35 percent fat, 35 percent sugar, or 200mg salt. Healthy beverages include water, nonfat or low-fat milk, 100 percent fruit juice, and low-calorie flavored or carbonated drinks. The new machines will also accept credit cards, meet federal Energy Star requirements to operate with greater energy efficiency, and offer improved customer service.

A 2013 survey of city employees found that 83 percent of respondents favored a healthy vending machine policy, and a majority cited unhealthy items as a deterrent to using the machines. The new policy does not limit what snacks employees may choose to consume; rather, it prevents the city from being the provider of unhealthy items.

Roanoke app improves delivery of services

Reporting a pothole, flooded road, downed tree, or scores of other issues has gotten easier in Roanoke thanks to iROANOKE, a new smartphone app for Android and iPhone users.

The app allows citizens to report new issues using their smartphone’s GPS and camera capabilities, review existing requests, send updates, and receive phone and e-mail notifications of status changes on their issues. The app integrates directly with the city’s new Citizen Request Management System. That system allows city staff to log, route and manage all citizen service requests.

“With smart phones being in the hands of many of our citizens, iROANOKE will allow them to communicate problems with just a few clicks,” said City Manager Chris Morrill. “With technology changing all the time, it’s important for us as a government to make sure we’re doing what we need to do to meet the needs of our citizens. iROANOKE will help us engage even more

with them, and do all we can to solve reported service requests as quickly as possible.”

Manassas cited for building ratings

While some Manassas homeowners might consider it a minor annoyance to have a new deck or plumbing project inspected, the diligent work of the city’s building inspectors means that residential and commercial property owners will pay lower insurance premiums and be more confident that their homes and businesses can withstand natural disasters.

The Insurance Services Office, Inc. (ISO) recently gave the city a “three” – one of the highest ratings for ensuring building code effectiveness in one- and two-family residential properties. The ratings agency also awarded the city an even better “two” rating for the quality of commercial and industrial property building inspections. These high ratings translate into insurance savings for city property owners.

Only 4 percent of Virginia municipalities received a “two” rating for commercial and industrial inspections, and only 24 percent received a “three” for residential inspections. The ISO report also commended the city for having 100 percent of its inspectors professionally certified.

Google tips its cap to City of Fairfax

Google Corporation recognized the City of Fairfax recently on its list of “digital capitals of America” for 2014, selecting the city for the state of Virginia.

In its recognition, Google observed, “The City of Fairfax Historic District is on the National Register of Historic Places, but Fairfax has a modern online presence too. The city’s comprehensive website offers easy access to school issues, tax assessments and more.”

Google’s eCity Awards “recognize the strongest online business community in each state,” observing how businesses in each city use their Web presence for business development and customer service. Google based its results on examining the economic value provided by Google Search and AdWords, Google AdSense, and Google Ad Grants in 2013.

A complete list of 2014 Google e-cities is available on the Google website: <http://www.google.com/economicimpact/ecities.html>.

Amtrak service coming to Roanoke

Gov. Terry McAuliffe announced Nov. 12 that the state, Amtrak, Norfolk Southern and the City of Roanoke are beginning the first phase of construction for the platform that will serve intercity passenger rail service to the Star City.

Amtrak service to the city will be an extension of the successful Northeast Regional train from Lynchburg and is anticipated to start in 2017. The service will provide a same-seat trip from Roanoke to Lynchburg, Washington, D.C., Baltimore, Philadelphia and cities as far north as Boston.

“Bringing passenger rail service back to Roanoke will be an enormous economic driver for the region and the entire Commonwealth,” McAuliffe said.

It has been 34 years since intercity passenger rail service has served Roanoke.

Williamsburg OKs new chambers

The City of Williamsburg has voted to proceed with a \$5.7 million contract for construction of a new council chambers and library space. The city’s existing Stryker Building will be demolished and replaced with a new Stryker Center.

The center will house new chambers for the City Council, along with gallery and display space for the Williamsburg Regional Library. Construction is expected to take about 10 months.

ELSEWHERE ...

Voters in **Fairfax** told City Council in an advisory referendum held Nov. 4 that the terms of office for mayor, City Council and School Board should not be changed from two years to four years. Council sought the opinion of voters after a recent City Charter Commission recommended the change. The vote was 4,604 against the longer terms and 2,224 in favor. ... The **Town of Vienna** has been broadcasting “The Snow Show” on its community television network, 10 minutes of interviews

featuring hints on how residents can stay safe during winter storms, as well as explanations on the preparation and processes used by the town to remove snow.

The **Newport News Department of Public Works** has been re-accredited for the third time by the American Public Works Association. APWA evaluators reviewed 396 management practices, all of which were rated in full compliance. Five chosen as model practices, including Mission, Vision and Values Statements; Strategic Plan; Safety Responsibility; Methane Recovery and Venting; and Infrastructure Management. ... The **Town of Leesburg** has a newly-designed, feature rich website. Check it out at www.leesburgva.org. ... **Roanoke’s Main Library** re-opened to the public Oct. 14 after an 11-month renovation. New features include bright colors, self-checkout options, an expanded teen area and a kids area with slide.

Standard & Poor’s and Moody’s Investor Service have reaffirmed the **City of Alexandria’s** bond ratings of AAA and Aaa, respectively. The city has maintained these top grades from both major bond rating agencies since 1992. ... The City of Manassas has had its bond rating reconfirmed by Moody’s as Aa1 and by Standard and Poor’s as AA+ with a stable outlook. ... The **City of Richmond** has completed a \$2.6 million renovation at the Richmond Animal Care & Control shelter. The improvements include new spacious dog runs and cat cages. ... The Intelligent Community Forum named **Arlington County** one of the world’s Smart21 Communities of 2015. The county is one of only four communities in the United States to achieve the honor, which recognizes economic and social improvements. This is the fourth time Arlington has achieved the Smart 21 designation.

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Virginia Investment Pool holds first annual meeting in Richmond

PARTICIPANTS IN THE VML/VACo Virginia Investment Pool (VIP) convened on Oct. 24 in Richmond for the program's first-ever annual meeting. The annual meeting, at which participants elect their representatives to the VIP Board of Trustees, is a unique feature of the new investment program.

"One of the key things that sets VIP apart as an investment option for local governments is that VIP is entirely owned and controlled by local participants," said Kim Winn, VML Executive Director. "The elected Board of Trustees directs the investment of assets, selects the advisors, and makes all the rules. VIP is driven by local governments in all respects. That's why the selection of the Board of Trustees is so important."

At the Richmond annual meeting, participants elected 10 people to the 14-member board. Those not up for election included the treasurers of the two founding localities who automatically serve for two initial terms: Barbara Carraway of Chesapeake and Evelyn W. Powers of Roanoke. In addition, the executive directors of VML and VACo serve as ex officio members of the board.

Previously serving as appointees of VML and VACo

during VIP's start-up phase, five treasurers and investment officers were elected to return to the board: Carla de la Pava of Arlington County, Josephine S. Gilbert of Fairfax County, Fred W. Parker of Washington County, Ellen Minga of Smithfield and Valerie Tweedie of Christiansburg.

In addition, five treasurers and investment officers were elected to the board for the first time: David Clark of Alexandria, Brian P. Henshaw of Haymarket, Leigh Kovacs of Virginia Beach, Mindy Moran of Mathews County IDA and Barry W. Thompson of Vinton.

VML and VACo introduced VIP to local governments this past spring. VIP is an investment option designed for political subdivisions to invest funds they plan to hold for one year or longer. VIP Trust Fund invests in a diverse portfolio of high-quality corporate and government securities and offers a higher expected rate of return than typically provided by money market funds. VIP's current yield is 0.69 percent.

For more information about participating in VIP, visit the VML/VACo Finance website, valocalfinance.org, or phone (804) 648-0635. 



The FY15 VIP Board of Trustees are (l-r) Barry W. Thompson, treasurer, Town of Vinton; Evelyn W. Powers, treasurer, City of Roanoke; Ellen Minga, treasurer, Town of Smithfield; Leigh Kovacs, investments administrator, City of Virginia Beach; David Clark, assistant director of finance, City of Alexandria; Carla de la Pava, treasurer, Arlington County; Brian P. Henshaw, town manager, Haymarket; Valerie Tweedie, treasurer, Town of Christiansburg; Barbara Carraway, treasurer, City of Chesapeake; Fred W. Parker, treasurer, Washington County; and Josephine S. Gilbert, investment manager, Fairfax County. Not pictured: Melinda Moran, county administrator, Mathews County.



Meet Bill Euille

VML's new president has served as Alexandria mayor since 2003

THE VIRGINIA MUNICIPAL LEAGUE'S newest president, 64-year-old Alexandria Mayor William D. Euille, has been a leader of one sort or another since his days of attending public schools in the Northern Virginia city. Raised by his community activist mother in public housing, Euille took after her at a very early age.

"She volunteered for a lot of organizations – not only with the church – but with the Red Cross and March of Dimes and PTAs," Euille said. "And I was a mama's boy. I tell folks that I was always on her apron string. And so whenever she left the house, I was with her and I got to attend a lot of meetings and events, and I just saw people being engaged. I concluded that's what you're supposed to do – that's part of life – to be involved in the community and helping to make a difference."

Euille, as it turned out, was a quick study when it came to such life lessons, even as a child.

"It all started back in elementary school where I was very active," he said. "I was in the student government, school patrol, band, Cub Scouts and Boy Scouts. And then when I got to high school it continued, and I was president of the Interact Club, which back then was one of the youth organizations under the Kiwanis Club, and then president of the symphonic band and orchestra, and vice president of my senior class."

Euille graduated from Alexandria's T.C. Williams High School in 1968 and headed off to college later that year.

"I really wanted to go to school locally – within the Commonwealth or the D.C. metropolitan area – and I'd been accepted at George Washington University, UVA and a few others – but financially I couldn't afford to go without support," Euille said.

A small private college in Connecticut, however, provided that support. After recruiters from Quinnipiac College (now

Bill Euille

Quinnipiac University) visited the Washington area, they offered Euille a four-year academic scholarship. He was among the first African American students enrolled at the school. He graduated in 1972.

“I was president of my freshman class, president of my sophomore class and as a junior became president of the student government. That sort of set me on a pathway to where I am today,” Euille said.

Euille earned a degree in accounting and business administration. He thought about going to work for several large companies, including Citicorp in New York City and Corning Glassware in Elmira, N.Y. And he applied for a number of jobs within the federal government in hopes of making use of his accounting degree.

“But then lo and behold, after having completed all those applications and going through all those interviews, a job opportunity was right here in my own back yard in the City of Alexandria,” Euille said. “I was looking at a local newspaper on a Friday morning and saw an ad for a small general contracting construction business looking for a recent college graduate with an accounting degree. And so I called the owner of the company up and said, ‘Hey, I’m looking at this ad and I’m interested, and I was wondering if I can come in for an interview.’”

Euille got the interview and was offered the job the next day after a Saturday morning follow-up visit with the owner.

“And I said, ‘OK, great,’ and I accepted the job with the understanding that – at least in my mind – that it was a first job out of college and I’d probably stay with them for six months or a year and then move on and do something else. I ended up staying for almost 16 years,” Euille said.

The recent college graduate then rose through the ranks, becoming not only the company’s first in-house staff accountant, but as it grew in size, vice president and chief financial officer. Euille said the job provided him with an opportunity to learn much about the various aspects of running and operating a business, but not just from the accounting side. His expanded responsibilities exposed him to issues dealing with human resources, contract administration, insurance and legal matters.

“It provided me with a holistic perspective to the extent that after almost 16 years I decided that I was ready to go out and start my own company,” Euille said. And that he did. “That was in 1987, Euille said. “I formed the William D. Euille and Associates general contracting firm doing construction services for the federal government. I maintained that company up until December 2010.” Most recently, Euille has concentrated on business development and consulting work as the Euille Group, LLC.

Within two years of returning to Alexandria after graduating from college, Euille began what would become a long and distinguished commitment to public service in 1974 when a seat opened up on the Alexandria School Board.

“Having been a recent product of the school system, I was certainly interested and wanted to serve,” Euille said. “I was concerned about the direction the school system had taken after I graduated. The city had gone through a lot of dra-

matic changes in terms of not only redistricting, but there was white flight; there was a decline in enrollment and academic performance and so forth. And I just couldn’t sit by idly and continue to be a resident taxpayer and not offer some insight to help improve the conditions. ... I’m the type of person who believes that rather than standing on the sidelines criticizing that you roll-up your shirt sleeves and you become engaged and involved to make things better.”

City Council appointed the 24-year-old Euille to the vacancy – the last year of a three-year term of a longtime School Board member. He reapplied and was appointed to a full three-year term of his own the next year.

“I thought I would do this for one full term and move on and do something else, but I ended up serving 10 long years from 1974-1984,” Euille said. “I retired in 1984 with the appreciation and the understanding that the school system was on steady footing. We were able to stop the bleeding. Stop the enrollment decline. Stop the white flight. We enhanced and improved academic performance. We became a very competitive school district. The volatility of closing schools and shifting districts around was put to bed.”

Ten years later, busy owning, operating and building his own business, Euille was approached by business associates, friends and other leaders in the community about either running for City Council or going back on the School Board.

“I was 44 at the time and I said, ‘I’m enjoying running my business. I’m enjoying life. I enjoy travel. I enjoy the free time I have to play sports after work.’ I said that if I got on the City Council, that would curtail a lot of those opportunities.”

Euille was not interested in the School Board. “Been there, done that,” he said. He agreed, however, to listen more about a City Council seat. With a broad base of support, Euille opted to run and was elected to a three-year term on City Council in 1994. He was re-elected in 1997 and 2000.

In 2003 he was approached again, this time about running for mayor after the incumbent decided not to run for re-election. He decided to run, won comfortably against two opponents, and made history.

“In 2003 the city was 254 years old and I became the first person of color to serve as its mayor,” Euille said. He was re-elected and unopposed in 2006 and in 2009. He was re-elected most recently in 2012 and will seek re-election again in 2015.

Euille describes his approach to leadership this way: “I’m a good listener. I’m a consensus builder. I’m a team player and I’m an implementer. ... What folks don’t like is someone who procrastinates. They would rather see you make good, hard, tough decisions and then move on. But it’s all about teamwork; it’s about listening, understanding all the facts, hearing both sides of the issue and then making it happen.”

Euille is proud of a number of accomplishments during his service on City Council and as mayor, including maintaining the city’s triple-A bond ratings, advocating for affordable housing initiatives and programs, advocating on behalf of small businesses and redeveloping the Old Town Alexandria waterfront and the Potomac Yard areas of the city.

“Among many first things that I did when I got on the council in 1994 was to push for balancing out home ownership

At a glance ...

William D. Euille

Personal

Age – 64
 Born and raised in Alexandria
 Founder, president and CEO of The Euille Group, LLC
 Member, Ebenezer Baptist Church – Alexandria
 Member, Board of Trustees, Quinnipiac University

Education

Graduate of T.C. Williams High School, Alexandria – 1968
 Graduate of Quinnipiac University, Hamden, Conn. (Accounting) – 1972

Public service

Elected Alexandria's first African American mayor in 2003 and re-elected mayor in 2006, 2009 and 2012
 Elected to Alexandria City Council in 1994 and re-elected in 1997 and 2000
 Served on the Alexandria School Board 1974-1984
 Board of Directors of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transportation Authority
 Board of Directors of the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority
 Past chairman of the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission
 Past president of the Virginia Transit Authority
 Chairman of the Washington Metropolitan Council of Governments
 Member of the Governor's Council on Virginia's Future

Community service (past and present)

William D. Euille Foundation, founded in 1994
 Alexandria Boys and Girls Club
 American Heart Association
 Alexandria United Way Campaign (chairman 1998-2000)
 INOVA Hospital Health System Board of Trustees
 Hopkins House Association
 NOVA Urban League Board of Directors (chairman, 2001)
 Alexandria Community Trust
 Scholarship Fund of Alexandria

Business and construction industry service

Alexandria Chamber of Commerce
 U.S. Chamber of Commerce
 National Association of Minority Contractors
 Associated Builders and Contractors Inc.
 NOVA Building Industry Association

Honors and awards

Entrepreneur of the Year (1994), Virginia NAACP
 Community Service Award (1995), Hopkins House Association
 Blue Chip Award (1996), U.S. Chamber of Commerce
 Entrepreneur of the Year (1996), Washington Post and Ernst & Young, LLP
 Small Business Person of the Year (1996), U.S. Small Business Administration
 Community Service Awards – Alexandria NAACP (1996), Northern Virginia Urban League (1997), Alexandria Chamber of Commerce (1997) and Alexandria Sportsman Club (1998)
 Philanthropist of the Year (2000), Alexandria Chamber of Commerce
 Graduate of the Year Award (2000), U.S. Small Business Administration
 Whole Village Award (2001), Education Association of Alexandria
 Business Leader of the Year (2001), Alexandria Chamber of Commerce





Euille's involvement helped the city accommodate a new fire station, affordable housing and workforce housing in the sprawling Potomac Yard development – all in one.

opportunities versus rental because we had more folks renting than we did home ownership,” Euille said. “The broad objective was to get more people into home ownership. We did that by growing and expanding our first-time home buyers program and making certain that affordability across all income spectrums was available throughout the city. We’ve been very successful in doing that, plus revitalizing and redeveloping a lot of our old public housing stock to new and modern housing.”

The mayor played an integral role two years ago in getting the City Council to finally vote on whether or not to redevelop the Old Town Alexandria waterfront.

“For 43 long years there was discussion about the development of the waterfront,” Euille said. “Prior City Councils were averse to actually biting the bullet and taking a vote to make it happen, but I was convinced that the times were right to move this issue. ... It was something that we needed to do so that we could move on to other important business. And so we took the vote after a lot of community input, public hearings, work sessions and the like, and it passed the City Council 6-1. And so we are very pleased and proud that after now 45 years we’re no longer discussing and talking about redevelopment of our waterfront. We’re now in the process of implementing and making things happen in terms of economic vitality and open space.”

Euille is also proud of his involvement as mayor in helping solve a problem that unfolded as the city and developers worked to redevelop the massive Potomac Yard area of the city – the Route 1 corridor connecting Alexandria to Arlington’s Crystal City. As part of that redevelopment, according to the mayor, the developers and contractors had agreed to the city’s request to incorporate affordable housing as part of the overall 3,000-plus units of housing stock.

Enter the city’s fire marshal, who became concerned that the 3,000 housing units and 2 million square feet of office, commercial and retail space amounted to a city within the city and that a fire station needed to be located on the site. The developers agreed and offered to donate the necessary land and give the city \$9 million to build the fire station. To do so, however, meant that they could no longer commit to the affordable housing.

“And I said, ‘Wait a minute. Excuse me. What did I hear you say?’ And they said, ‘Well, Mr. Mayor, we believe that the fire marshal is right. We need to have this fire station and we’re willing to donate the space and give the city \$9 million to build it, but by doing so, then we are no longer able to contribute \$10 million in cash toward affordable housing and/or build affordable housing on site.’

“And I said, ‘no-no-no-no, we’re not going to go down that road.’ I said the citizens would kill me and the City Council if we did not incorporate affordable housing as part of this whole new development. And so I said, ‘we must find a way to do both.’ Let’s be visionaries and think outside of the box. Let’s see how we can make this happen. What if we built this new three-bay fire station and built apartments above it – we were talking about affordable housing, about workforce housing – and let’s let families live above the fire station?”

Some people at the table laughed.

“Who would want to live above a fire station?” one of the meeting participants asked. “And I said, ‘well wait a minute, don’t we have employees that work at the Fire Department now living and staying in stations either off to the side or above?’


Euille, convinced something along these lines might work, suggested that they end the meeting and go back to the drawing board. Two weeks later he was summoned to a follow-up meeting of the group, which had taken his suggestion to heart.

“They told me ‘Mr. Mayor, we can build you the three-story fire station *and* we can put 64 units of affordable/workforce housing above it.’ And so that was an earth-shattering, ground-breaking new initiative for the city. We killed three birds with one stone – built a new fire station, provided workforce housing and provided affordable housing.”

As president of VML, Euille’s more than 20 years of service on City Council and as mayor will serve him well.

“Local governments across America, not just in the Commonwealth, are finding themselves in a very challenging and awkward position in terms of the need to move forward, but not having the financial support coming from the state and federal governments,” Euille said. “And so, I subscribe to the notion that it’s an opportunity for all of us to be collaborators and partners in moving forward and that we share best practices as much as possible.”

VML, Euille said, has a changing role to play in charting the future for its member local governments.

“I see VML, as a statewide organization that has been around for 109 years, with an opportunity to retool its messaging, and market and promote itself during my term as president. And we can do that through what I refer to as a shared future. For us to move forward we need to be doing it hand-in-glove in partnership and collaboration. And I honestly believe that despite the economic challenges that many of us are facing that our best days are yet to come.” 

About the author

David Parsons is director of communications at VML.

General Assembly 2015

Much at stake for local governments

ALTHOUGH THE 2015 GENERAL ASSEMBLY session is a short one – only 46 days beginning on Jan. 14 – the gathering will be of keen interest to local governments. Cities, towns and counties will be in the crosshairs once again as state legislators struggle to balance the budget not only for the remainder of the current year, FY15, but for FY16 as well.

Although state revenues through October exceeded the most recent annual forecast, the exact reason why is not clear and even the most optimistic observers question whether that growth rate will continue. Further, those reasons will not make much of difference in local budgets. Even if tax collections come in above the official estimate, half of the “excess” will go to the Rainy Day Fund. To ease the challenges facing local governments in managing their FY15 budgets and developing their FY16 budgets, final collections this fiscal year will have to soar beyond the \$16.9 billion estimate. No one in state government is expecting that to happen.

State budget and taxes

Gov. Terry McAuliffe and the General Assembly approved a budget plan in June to address a \$1.55 billion revenue shortfall and then another plan in September to respond to the yawning budget gap that had grown to \$2.4 billion for this biennium. Those plans included a number of one-time as well as unspecified actions, perhaps as much as a half-billion dollars. When legislators return to Richmond in January, they will be working with the governor to flesh out those details. Arbitrary changes to the state’s funding formulae for public education are likely as well as targeted cuts to local programs affecting law enforcement, jail operations, state constitutional officers, and local social services operations. In the absence of

additional revenue, the governor and General Assembly are likely to depend on deep spending cuts to manage the revenue shortfall in FY16 and the state budget's structural imbalance in the next biennium.

Another looming issue for state finances falls under transportation funding. Specifically, if Congress fails to pass the Market Place Fairness Act (which seems increasingly likely) and the General Assembly eliminates or postpones its replacement revenue (a scheduled increase in the sales tax on gasoline from 3.5 percent to 5.1 percent), this could result in loss of funds for local road maintenance, transit systems and passenger rail.

History tells us that legislators will neither eliminate or reduce mandates, nor come up with new funding. The more likely scenario is that local governments, particularly cities and counties, will shoulder a disproportionately high share of the reductions.

A state legislator who is a former member of the city council in Alexandria perhaps said it best in a Nov. 20 article in the *Alexandria Times*: "I think legislators and representatives from Northern Virginia know it's a problem, but down in Richmond, they're still all too happy to pass the buck on to local governments and property taxpayers," said Del. Rob Krupicka. "All of these state agencies end up subsidized at much higher levels at local government, because the alternative is that the locals stop using state services, but since we need things like the health department, that's just not viable.

"Local governments highlighting the issue is helpful, but people are being sold a bill of goods. The state gets to say, 'Oh it's just those evil local governments raising your taxes.' But in reality, they're the ones forcing local governments to do it."

Local officials need to talk with their legislators now to remind them that we are all in this together, and to make sure their citizens know why local taxes may have to be raised: the continued onslaught of state mandates.

VML and VACo, in a letter sent in September to McAuliffe, made these points about the budget shortfall:

- The economic and budget situation today differs significantly from

financial conditions before the Great Recession.

- Relying exclusively on spending cuts jeopardizes mandated public services. Public education must be the budget's highest priority. The reality is that on an inflation-adjusted basis, state per-pupil funding is below FY07 levels, and is below FY09 levels even without adjusting for inflation.

- It's time to look at how services are delivered and to focus more on measurable results than on process. The state must pay its fair share; if not, state standards, requirements and deadlines should change. The state can find ways to allow local governments to operate more efficiently. As an example, some voter registrars have noted that costs can be reduced by allowing voters to cast their ballots through the mail, granting greater access for seniors to cast absentee ballots, or allowing early voting. State agencies should be examining how services are delivered and not just applying 5 percent and 7 percent cuts across-the-board, particularly when the service requirements are left untouched.

- State tax credits, tax deductions, and tax relief programs must undergo the same scrutiny as spending programs. Tax preferences and credits adopted since 1990 take \$2.5 billion out of the general fund budget. VML advocates converting tax preferences into grants where appropriate and supports the freeze, suspension, or proration of those tax preferences that have not evaluated in the last 10 years.

In Virginia, every year is an election year, and in 2015 all 140 seats of the legislature are open. Although redistricting heavily determines the election outcomes, this will not deter legislators from introducing "campaign-brochure" bills to motivate voters. Restricting local government's taxing authority, particularly on machinery and tools taxes and BPOL, and exempting religious facilities from service fees are favorite past targets and will pop up again in the next legislative session.

Conflict of Interests Act

The General Assembly passed what some legislators, but not the governor, considered a meaningful ethics reform bill last session. Last September, McAu-

liffe created a commission to recommend more significant revisions. Some members of the legislature are also working on additional changes. VML supports several changes to the law, but cautions against adopting any legislation that creates unnecessary burdens on local public officials.

The legislation passed in 2014 requires filing disclosure statements with a state ethics council. As an alternative, VML supports local officials having the right to file with the state council or with the clerk of the governing body, who would then send the forms to the state council.

The current statute amends the Conflict of Interests Act disclosure form to require local council and board members, and others, to report the costs of meetings and conferences they attend as an official of the locality. Travel to represent a locality or to learn how to better serve the public is inherently not a conflict. Further, the local finance office or clerk will have the expense information, not the official.

Any state ethics council must include local government members. While VML supports having an advisory council, it does not need the power to impose penalties. The law already contains enforcement provisions that have proven to work well.

The governor's commission has proposed a ban on all gifts exceeding \$250 per year. VML supports that general proposition, but the rules must accommodate gifts that bear no relation to the recipient's serving on a local governing body. For example, a grandparent who is a lobbyist should be able to set up a trust for a grandchild's college tuition, but that would not be allowed under a proposal being considered by the governor's commission.

Stormwater funding

Virginia local governments are feeling the pinch when it comes to funding to reduce stormwater pollution. The problem is two-fold. First, new mandates from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency will make it necessary for urban localities to implement expensive capital projects such as collecting and treating stormwater runoff in greater volumes after rainfall events. Secondly, a new stormwater construction permit

program requires many localities to expend additional local dollars to administer state-imposed standards for reducing stormwater pollution that result from new development.

In order to address the burgeoning costs borne by local governments the General Assembly created the Stormwater Local Assistance Fund (SLAF) in 2013 and seeded it with \$35 million in bond proceeds. Administered by the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), SLAF grants provide 50 percent matching funds to qualifying locality projects that reduce stormwater pollution as required by federal and state law. In 2013 DEQ awarded \$22.9 million in cost-share assistance to 31 local governments for 71 projects to reduce stormwater runoff pollution. With an additional \$20 million in bond proceeds approved by the legislature in 2014, DEQ is making \$28 million in matching grant funds available for distribution in the current fiscal year (a review of grant applications is currently underway).

While the initial commitment in sharing the costs with locals is promis-

ing, the current financial position of Commonwealth to make future allocations to the SLAF is problematic. First, shaky state revenues likely means no excess general fund dollars will be available. Second, the ability of the Virginia to issue more debt in coming years is extremely limited. This is because the state credit card is nearing its limit. With annual debt service payments now exceeding \$700 million in annual general fund dollars, an increase from just over \$200 million in the last 10 years, stormwater will have to compete with transportation, higher education, and other capital fund programs for a dwindling pool of available credit. Absent any new dedicated sources of revenue for SLAF, local governments in the coming years are looking at “going it alone” in reducing stormwater pollution.

Making matters worse, 2015 will mark the third legislative session in a row that bills that seek to exempt churches from paying local stormwater utility fees will be considered. Local governments are authorized to establish a stormwater utility whereby charges are determined

by the amount of impervious surfaces such as pavement and rooftops. Such an exemption, if ever adopted, would likely result in other classes of non-profit property owners (including federal and state government) seeking relief, thereby further diminishing revenues. Also, in a new wrinkle, legislation has already been pre-filed that would exempt churches from paying any fees associated with reviewing plans under the new stormwater construction permit program.

There is no more rationality for churches or other entities to be exempted from making payments for stormwater utilities than there is for exempting them from any other utility payment. Further, capital projects that reduce stormwater related damages prevent the loss of property value.

VML will continue to monitor the prospects for our members to meet these mandates, and where appropriate advocate for additional state funding. Additionally, the league will actively protect local revenue sources specifically dedicated to addressing stormwater costs.

Virginia spending rankings reflect tax policies and priorities

VIRGINIA'S SKEWED RELIANCE on local taxes to pay for core services readily shows up in the examination of rankings of state spending, published each year by the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission. Virginia ranked 15th in per capita local taxes in FY2011, but 34th in per capita state taxes. The state ranked 25th in per capita spending for education when state and local spending is combined, but only ranked 39th when state per pupil funding is considered separately.

Here's a handy list of facts and figures from the 2014 edition of JLARC's *Virginia Compared to Other States*.

Quick Facts & Figures on Where Virginia Ranks

Expenditure	Amount	Virginia ranking
Per Capita Personal Income, 2012	\$48,377	10
Per Capita State and Local Taxes, FY2011	\$3967	25
Per Capita State Taxes, FY2011	\$2,148	34
Per Capita Local Taxes, FY2011	\$1,819	15
State Per Pupil Funding Pre-K-12, 2010-11	\$4,278	39
State and Local Per Pupil Funding, 2010-11	\$10,386	25
Average Salary of Public School Teachers, 2011-12	\$48,703	29
Per Capita Medicaid Expenditures, Federal FY 2011	\$865	46
In-State Tuition and Fees at Public 4-Year Institutions, 2013-14	\$10,366	13
State Corrections Expenditures Per Offender	\$12,274	13

Source: *Virginia Compared to Other States*, JLARC, 2014 Edition <http://jlarc.virginia.gov/reports/Rpt453.pdf>

Public education

Many of Virginia's public schools are rated as some of the best in the United States but others have had persistent and long-term difficulties in meeting state accreditation standards.

Money is not the only solution but a lack of funding is part of the problem, particularly for school divisions that have a high proportion of students who are educationally at-risk and/or who are more expensive to educate.

The State Department of Education reported in September that the percentage of schools meeting state accreditation standards declined for a second consecutive year as a consequence of the growing impact of more rigorous reading, writing, science and mathematics Standards of Learning tests introduced since 2011. The state failed to mention that state per-pupil funding for K-12 education remains below FY09 levels.

The state's tougher requirements for students, teachers and schools are not matched by a commitment to adequate funding.

And unfortunately it is likely that the General Assembly will be looking for new ways to reduce the state's price tag for public education, without taking measures to reduce to state mandates. Local governments are already the major funder for public education, pumping in an extra \$3.4 billion for school operations in FY13 above the required \$3.3 billion. Bluntly put: Local governments are tapped out.

Regardless, a presentation at the House Appropriations Committee retreat in Abingdon in November highlighted a couple of potential routes that legislators might take to close the budget gap in the area of public education:

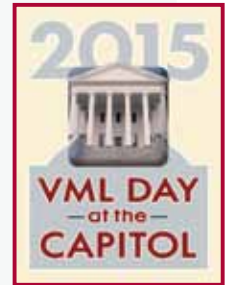
- Review funding methodologies for programs such as school nurses and resource teachers.
- Change the eligibility criteria for the at-risk add-on, in which additional funds are directed toward students who are educationally at-risk, by using an average calculation for free-lunch figures (instead of annual figures).

Both of these approaches embody the typical state approach to K-12 education: Change a funding formula to

Important dates, contact information

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY has not adopted its procedural resolution that will guide the deadlines for the upcoming 2015 session. The deadlines for legislative action in the list below, however, are based on previous calendars.

- Jan. 14:** General Assembly convenes at noon; deadline for filing VRS bills or bills/resolutions continuing or creating a study; Gov. Terry McAuliffe delivers the State of Commonwealth address at 7 p.m.
- Jan. 16:** Deadline for requests for drafts or re-drafts of bills and budget amendments.
- Jan. 23:** Deadline for filing bills and resolutions.
- Jan. 28:** VML Day at the Capitol.
- Feb. 8:** House Appropriations and Senate Finance committees present their budgets.
- Feb. 10:** Cross-over day: Each house completes work on its own legislation, except for the budget.
- Feb. 12:** Houses of introduction complete work on budget.
- Feb. 18:** Last day for each house to act on budget bill of the other house.
- Feb. 23:** Last day for committee action on legislation.
- Feb. 24:** Conference on budget bill to complete its work
- Feb. 28:** Details of budget conference report made public
- Feb. 28:** General Assembly scheduled to adjourn.
- April 8:** Reconvened (veto) session.



Contact information for House of Delegates and Senate members:
<http://lis.virginia.gov/151/mbr/MBR.HTM>

Look up a bill online:
<http://lis.virginia.gov/cgi-bin/legp604.exe?151+men+BIL>

Track which groups and individual make donations to legislators:
<http://www.vpap.org/>

reduce the state share of a program to the amount the state can, or wants to, pay. The changes are not based on any kind of policy research and are not tied to what it actually costs to deliver the educational service. The problem for local governments, however, is that the cost of the actual program does not go down simply because the state changes the funding formula. Local governments are left to pick up the slack.

In an October meeting of the Task Force on Local Government Mandates, VML suggested that the state should identify mandates that exceed federal requirements. If those mandates are not adequately funded, then they should be curtailed.

In particular, in public education, the funding formulas that determine the state and local required share of the cost of education are out of whack. The biggest driver of state costs for public education is the staffing and other requirements included in the Standards of Quality. The SOQ determine what the state and localities are required to pay. But the Standards of Accreditation determine what requirements the schools and school divisions have meet in order to attain accreditation. The Standards of Learning determine what students must know in order to obtain necessary credits to graduate. Both the SOA and SOL have been made stringent over the last several years, even while funding under the SOQ has not kept pace. The SOL, SOA and other

administrative regulations should be in sync with the SOQ. If Virginia cannot afford its own accountability standards, then the state should develop an affordable set of standards.

The state budget will not be the only issue that local officials focus on in the area of public education. This past year, a Norfolk Circuit Court judge ruled that the Opportunity Educational Institution was unconstitutional. The OEI, which was created in the 2013 session, established a statewide school division that would take over the management of schools that were persistently low-

performing. The decision of the court was not appealed. VML's Legislative Program supports repealing the statute that established the statewide division.

Legislation has already been pre-filed that would eliminate the OEL. HB 1299, introduced by Del. Richard Bell, requires each school division that contains a school that has been denied accreditation to enter into a memorandum of understanding with the state Board of Education that permits the board to make any changes that it deems necessary to improve the school's accreditation rating, including changes to


the school's budget and personnel and the instructional practices of teachers. At first blush, this bill seems to run into some of the same constitutional problems surrounding the OEI, as the state constitution places the management of schools in the hands of the local school boards. Local governments, too, have to question a bill that would allow an unelected state body to make budgetary decisions about the allocation of local tax dollars, as this would do.

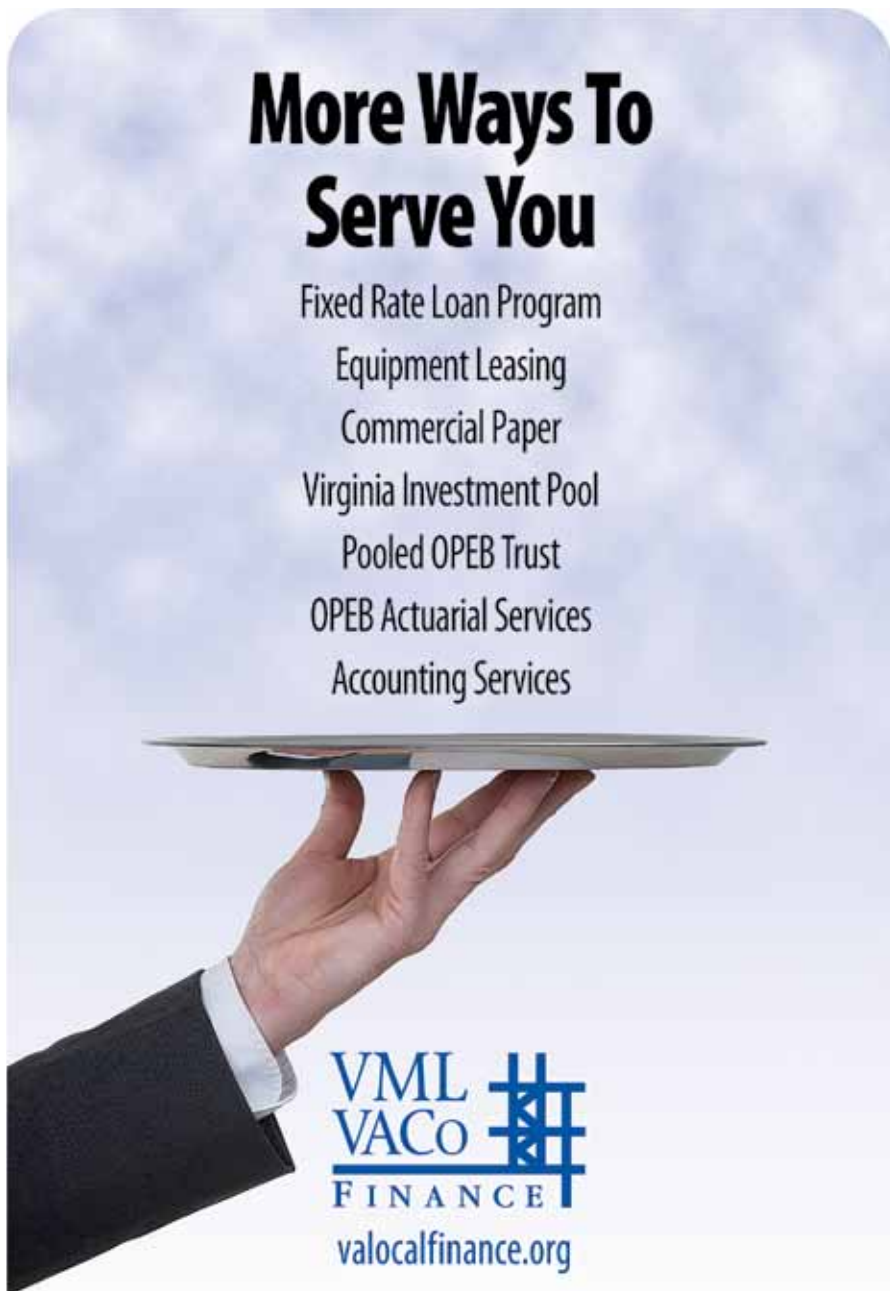
While VML supports the repeal of the OEI statute, VML also recognizes that the problem of low-performing schools needs to be tackled head-on, and supports increased state funding for the Virginia Preschool Initiative, the K-3 reduced class size program and Early Reading Intervention program. Further, VML also supports increased state stipends for highly effective teachers in high-poverty schools, and other innovative programs.

Local governments stand ready to work with the state

The members of the Virginia Municipal League recognize that the fiscal ship of Virginia is headed into turbulent waters, and that sacrifices will need to be made at all levels of government. Local governments stand ready to work with the General Assembly and the administration to build solutions to the fiscal challenges ahead.

There is no shortage of legislative issues crucial to helping local governments build vibrant communities where businesses thrive, and where the citizens we serve live, work and play. Local governments depend on a fair, reliable partnership with state government to carry out their numerous responsibilities, many of which are mandated by the General Assembly.

A problem is that state officials are all-too-ready to make decisions that result in a lack of funding for core state services that localities are required to provide, and are not inclined to consult with local officials on how elected officials can identify ways for the state to continue to move forward. Local governments stand ready to work with the state in meeting mutual goals to promote the long-term prosperity of Virginia. 



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Change your change plan:

Five principles for resolving lingering organizational problems

ARE SOME OF YOUR BEST PEOPLE leaving for other jobs or other cities? Is there too much fighting going on among your executive directors? Does there seem to be a lack of motivation in some of your departments? If issues like these are present in your city, consider gathering a group of key leaders to tackle the lingering organizational problems.

Everyone knows it's demoralizing to work for an organization that can't – or won't – fix obvious problems. But the flipside is also true: a city that takes aim at a longstanding issue and resolves it inspires confidence in its ability to handle future challenges. And the very good news is that your employees are more receptive to making work-related changes than you may think.

My colleagues and I have spent many years helping organizations of all sizes gather a critical mass of supporters and grapple with serious organizational problems. In our experience, few things unlock employee motivation as much as tackling a problem that's negatively impacting their daily work life. In fact, fixing a persistent organizational problem provides a double-barreled return on investment: the problem gets resolved, and employees see that the organization has the capacity to self-correct.

1 Get plenty of cooks into the kitchen.

Most organizational-level problems require a critical mass of supporters to resolve, so gather up your working group from the start. To address an important problem like disengaged employees, feuding department heads, or alienated staff, you need a number of employees who will work with you long enough to implement lasting solutions. The number of people you need will vary depending on the situation.



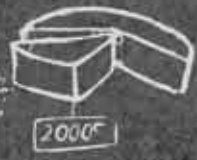
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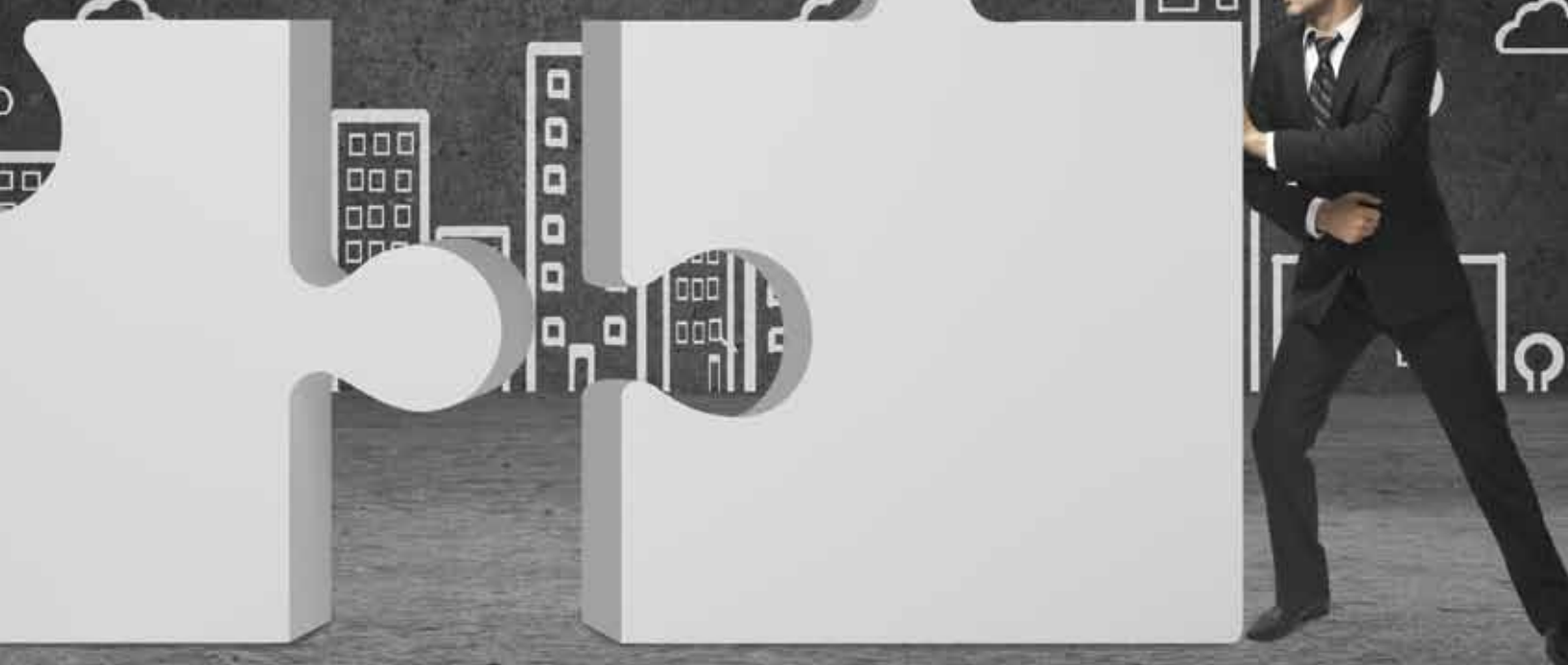
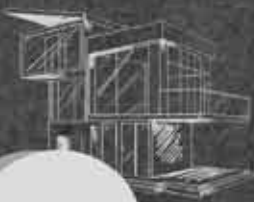


TEAM



MARKETING

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For example, you'll need a smaller number of people to deal with feuding managers than you will to address disengaged employees. Just remember that it's essential to include people early in the problem-solving process, as a mountain of research says that input is a crucial factor in generating buy-in. It's much easier for people to support a change they had a hand in crafting in the first place.

Organizational change initiatives fail for many reasons, but a main reason is that people reflexively resist solutions that they feel are jammed down their throats. Giving people who have a stake in the problem a meaningful voice in the solution usually channels their good intentions in support of finding a workable remedy to the issue.



Don't tell people what they want to tell you.

Problems are an organization's worst-kept secret, but that's actually a source of strength because by the time most organizations get around to addressing a lingering issue, employees have been thinking about it for months (if not longer). By then, there have usually been plenty of informal discussions about the problem, and people are more than ready to address the situation.

By the time an organization addresses a simmering issue, it's usually remarkably easy to get agreement on two things: (1) there's something wrong, and (2) we need to do something about it. Unfortunately, it's even easier for the formal leader of the meeting to just explicitly state these two things. Even if the problem is obvious, what you miss by short-circuiting the process is the ready-made unity that's on offer. Don't squander the opportunity to secure this easy agreement. In any human interaction – but especially when you are trying to build consensus – remember this rule of thumb: never tell people what they want to tell you. People will work much harder to solve their problem than they will to solve your problem. And when it comes to longstanding – and, consequently, well-defined – organizational issues, those problems are the same.



Don't get hijacked by the 'how.'

Once you have consensus that there's a problem requiring resolution, don't let that unity get dismantled by contentious debates about the "how." The "how" – the steps to solve the problem – are obviously important, but can easily drive a wedge into your critical mass of supporters when discussed *ad infinitum*. It's important to periodically remind the group of their unity around the problem and the need to solve it. The need to solve the problem is your rallying point: come back to it, let people regroup, and then move

forward with a discussion about the steps toward a solution. Use the agreement around the need to solve the problem as a reminder of the consensus and the shared commitment to resolve the issue.



Love the complainers.

At first, it's hard to separate the people who care the most about an organization (or a department) from the people who are complaining the most about it. As you start to tackle a lingering organizational problem, some of your biggest allies will have a strange way of showing their support. The people who care the most will often complain the most forcefully about problems, and express some of the most stinging criticisms.

But you are going to need the energy and the passion of these committed complainers to make the change stick. Besides, a funny thing happens when you start making progress on the problem. The complainers who were sincerely focused on the problem will usually stop criticizing and start pushing. And the much smaller number of people who are still complaining – after you've included them in the process, and after you've made legitimate strides in addressing the problem – will reveal themselves as perpetual complainers who are unlikely to ever be satisfied.




Work on people problems last.

People problems – like unmotivated employees, fighting department heads, or frustrated staff – are often caused by structural problems (the underlying conditions; something your city or a department is or is not doing).

What looks like a problem with Bob, Jim and Suzy may really be a problem with new city policies. An apparent problem with the fire department or with the HR department is really a problem of unclear performance expectations. Or maybe you didn't have an employee motivation issue until public works saw a dramatic decrease in road improvement projects. The strong link between individual behavior and work structure means that the most effective way to solve people problems is to first look for likely structural causes of the behavior. That's because structural issues like unclear lines of authority, confusion on priorities, problems with oversight, ineffective meetings, or outdated organizational processes are usually responsible for a lion's share of people problems.

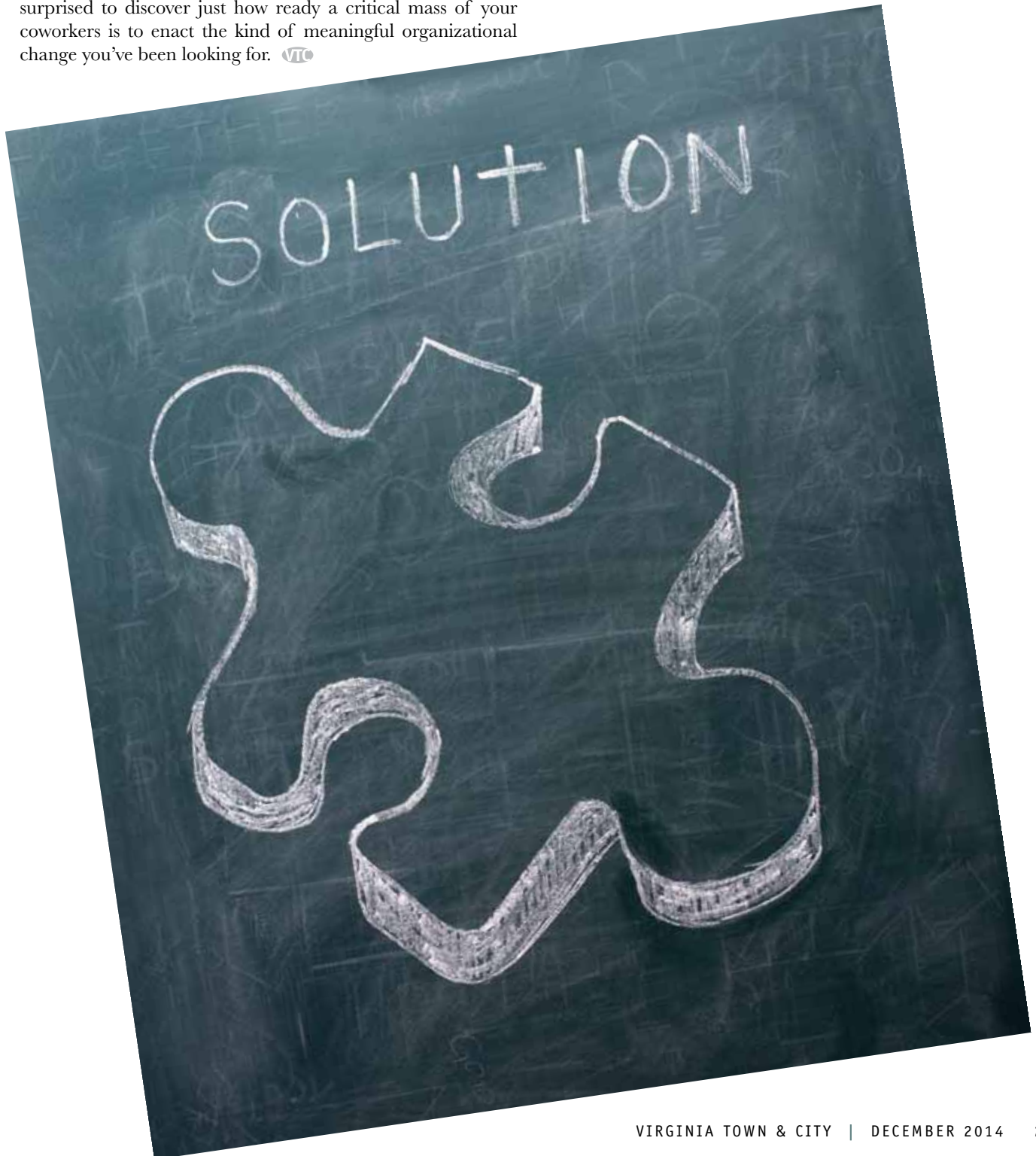
More than a handful of unmotivated employees, complacent managers, or discontent workers usually suggest that there's a structural fix required before the people problems

can be meaningfully addressed. Your supervisory structure might be out-of-date, new tasks might be more onerous than you'd expected, or something you can't see might be happening during interactions with citizens that's sapping employee morale.

Resist the urge to hire or fire your way out of people problems until you have addressed the structural part of the problem first. Structural solutions will often eliminate many of your people problems. And once you've addressed the structural issues, the much smaller number of people problems that remain become extremely obvious and can usually be addressed quickly and confidently. Consider gathering a group of key leaders to tackle an organizational problem that's currently causing you headaches. You might be pleasantly surprised to discover just how ready a critical mass of your coworkers is to enact the kind of meaningful organizational change you've been looking for. 

About the author

Geoffrey Tumlin, Ph.D. is the author of "Stop Talking, Start Communicating: Counterintuitive Secrets to Success in Business and in Life." Tumlin is the founder and CEO of Mouthpeace Consulting LLC, president of On-Demand Leadership, and founder and board chair of Critical Skills Nonprofit, a 501(c)(3) public charity dedicated to providing communication and leadership skills training to chronically underserved populations. He was a featured speaker at the 2014 Texas Municipal League Leadership Academy on the topic of ethical leadership. Reprinted from Texas Town & City with permission of the author.



Eight tips for collaborative **LEADERSHIP**



THE POWER OF COLLABORATIVE Leadership is one of my most popular speaking topics. The popularity stems from clients who realize that silo mentality and knowledge-hoarding behaviors are wasting the kind of collective brainpower that could save their organization billions, lead to the discovery of a revolutionary new process or product, or keep their entity afloat while others are sinking! Profits aren't the only thing that suffers when collaboration is low. The workforce loses something too. Individuals lose the opportunity to work in the kind of inclusive environment that energizes teams, releases creativity and makes working together both productive and joyful.

Here are eight tips for building collaboration in your team or organization:

1 Realize that silos can kill your organization.

Silo mentality is a mindset present when certain departments or sectors do not wish to share information with others in the same organization. This type of mentality will reduce efficiency in the overall operation, reduce morale, and may contribute to the demise of a productive culture. Silo is a business term that has been passed around and discussed in many boardrooms over the last 30 years. Unlike many other trendy management terms, this is an issue that has not disappeared. Silos are seen as a growing pain for organizations of all sizes. Wherever it's found, a silo mentality becomes synonymous with power struggles, lack of cooperation and loss of productivity.

2 Build your collaboration strategy around the 'human element.'

In trying to capture and communicate the cumulative wisdom of a workforce, the public and private sectors have invested hundreds of millions of dollars in portals, software and intranets. But collaboration is more than the technology that supports it, and even more than a business strategy aimed at optimizing an organization's experience and expertise. Collaboration is a change in attitude and behavior of people throughout an organization. Successful collaboration is a human issue.

3 Use collaboration as an organization change strategy.

Over the past 25 years, I've worked with a variety of talented leaders. One thing I've learned is that regardless of how creative, smart and savvy a leader may be, he or she can't transform an organization, department, or team without the brain power and commitment of others. Whether the change involves creating new products, services, processes, or a total reinvention of how the organization must look, operate, and position itself for the future, success dictates that the individuals impacted by change must be involved in the process from the beginning.

4 Make visioning a team sport.

Today's most successful leaders guide their organizations not through command and control, but through a shared purpose and vision. These leaders adopt and communicate a vision of the future that impels people beyond the boundaries and limits of the past. But if the future vision belongs only to top management, it will never be an effective motivator for the workforce. The power of a vision comes truly into play only when the employees themselves have had some part in its creation.

5 Utilize diversity in problem solving.

Experiments at the University of Michigan found that, when challenged with a difficult problem, groups composed of highly adept members performed worse than groups whose members had varying levels of skill and knowledge. The reason for this seemingly odd outcome has to do with the power of diverse thinking. Group members who think alike, or are trained in similar disciplines with similar bases of knowledge, run the risk of becoming insular in their ideas. Diversity causes people to consider perspectives and possibilities that would otherwise be ignored.

6 Help people develop relationships.


The outcome of any collaborative effort is dependent upon well-developed personal relationships among participants. Not allowing time for this can be a costly mistake. For example, all too often, in the rush to get started on a project, team leaders put people together and tell them to “get to work.” You’ll get better results if you give your group time upfront to get to know one another, discover each other’s strengths and weaknesses, build personal ties, and develop a common understanding about the project.

7 Focus on building trust.

Trust is the belief or confidence that one party has in the reliability, integrity, and honesty of another party. It is the expectation that the faith one places in someone else will be honored. It is also the glue that holds together any group. I recently conducted a survey of middle managers in an attempt to pinpoint the state of trust and knowledge sharing in their various organizations. What I found is a crisis of trust: suspicious and cynical employees are disinclined to collaborate because sharing knowledge is perceived as weakening a personal “power base.” Leaders demonstrate their trust in employees by the open, candid, and ongoing communication that is the foundation of informed collaboration.

8 Watch your body language.

To show that you are receptive to other people’s ideas, uncross your arms and legs. Place your feet flat on the floor and use open palm gestures (which is a body language display inviting others into the conversation). If you want people to give you their ideas, don’t multi-task while they do. Avoid the temptation to check your text messages, your watch, or how the other participants are reacting. Instead, focus on those who are speaking by turning your head and torso to face them directly and by making eye contact. Leaning forward is another non-verbal way to show you’re engaged and paying attention, as is head tilting. (The head tilt is a universal gesture of giving the other person an ear.) To encourage team members to expand on their comments, nod your head using clusters of three nods at regular intervals. Today’s cities exist in an increasingly complex and ever-shifting ocean of change. As a result, elected and appointed leaders need to rely on the intelligence and resourcefulness of their colleagues and city staff.

Collaboration is not a “nice to have” organizational philosophy. It is an essential ingredient for organizational survival and success. 

About the author

Carol Kinsey Goman, Ph.D. is a body language coach who helps politicians, business executives and sales teams align their verbal and nonverbal messages for greater impact and professional success. She is president of Kinsey Consulting Services in Berkeley, California. Learn more at www.carolkinseygoman.com. Reprinted from Texas Town & City with permission of the author.



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