



Dulles Direct Newsletter January 2014

Welcome to the January edition of the Dulles Direct Newsletter. The Board had a busy month in January, which will give way to an even busier February and March as we prepare the FY2015 budget. County Administrator Tim Hemstreet will begin this year's budget deliberations on February 5 when he presents his proposed budget. Below you will find more information about opportunities for public input during the budget process.

I once again had the opportunity to speak to the Loudoun Chamber of Commerce earlier this week at the annual Board of Supervisors breakfast. I spoke about the Board's long term strategy to attract commercial development, which will lead to additional revenue for schools, public safety and other needs. Regarding the budget, I made the following comment:

"It is my core belief that high levels of taxation are fundamentally at odds with growing the economy—at any level. And that includes here in Loudoun. The real question we face is: do we pursue fiscal policies that are fundamentally at odds with our long term strategy of attracting more investment?"

"The Board is under a lot of pressure to raise taxes this year. But we also must remind our citizens that if we fail to attract commercial investment—or if the technology and industrial base that we currently have begins to erode because of high cost—than we will have taken a step backward in our quest to support our school system and other public services."

I will be holding my next Dulles Direct Town Hall meeting on Monday, February 10 (details below). I've asked Loudoun County Administrator Tim Hemstreet to join me for an "Inside the Budget" presentation. I look forward to seeing you there.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

Greenway Wins Round One of SCC Challenge on Tolls

Yesterday, the State Corporation Commission Hearing Examiner ruled against Delegate Ramadan and Loudoun County in our challenge to the Greenway's toll structure. In doing so, the examiner cited legislation authored by then-Senator Mark Herring which prescribed the rate of toll increases on the Greenway until 2020. Essentially, she argued that the legislation made it impossible for the SCC to lower rates even if it wished to do so.

However, she also ruled that the Greenway's toll rates do not materially discourage drivers from using the Greenway. Obviously, we strongly disagree.

The hearing examiner's ruling was not unexpected, and it is not the final step. We now have the option of appealing the ruling to the full SCC. If that ruling also doesn't go our way, the case could potentially be appealed to the Supreme Court of Virginia.

On the plus side, the hearing examiner did order the Greenway to conduct a distance-based pricing study, and also order changes to the financial apparatus by which the Greenway uses to justify its toll increases.

The County will continue to work closely with Delegate Ramadan and his legal team to put forward the best strategy. I appreciate the hundreds of hours that Delegate Ramadan has spent on this case to date and know that he won't give up.

Action Needed to Prevent Another Greenway Toll Increase

The SCC is currently considering another toll increase. The Board of Supervisors has already voted to oppose this toll increase, and our letter states that it is highly inappropriate for the SCC to even consider such a case until the legal challenge to the Greenway's toll structure is complete. TRIP II, the owner of the Greenway, is proposing a 15-20 cent increase on each trip.

We need you to once again weigh in in opposition to this toll increase. To do so electronically, go to the SCC website at www.scc.virginia.gov/case. Click on the PUBLIC COMMENTS/NOTICES link and then the SUBMIT COMMENTS button for case number PUE-2013-00139.

Amendments to the Home Child Care Regulations

At the beginning of January, the Board of Supervisors adopted amendments to the Home Child Care regulations. These changes became needed when the Commonwealth of Virginia began requiring compliance with local zoning ordinances before approving a daycare. Loudoun County previously allowed a maximum of nine children in a home daycare, while the Commonwealth allowed up to 12. Numerous home daycares were not in compliance with the

County ordinance, and immediate enforcement would have led to parents having no place to bring their children for daycare on short notice.

At my request, the Board initiated a comprehensive process to amend our ordinance to allow for up to 12 children in certain situations—including such factors as space constraints and the size of the lot. The amendments also prescribe a process for seeking a change from 9 to 12 children.

There was a great deal of input from parents and providers during this process, and now the County will be conducting workshops to share information about the new ordinance. For more details on the workshops, see the Announcement section of the newsletter.

Initiative to Ensure Appropriate Board Appointments

A recent nomination by another Supervisor to the Library Board of Trustees has brought to light the need for changes in the Board's process to appoint members of advisory boards and commissions. Tradition has always dictated that district-specific appointments be vetted by the district Supervisors and that the full Board defer to the wishes of the district Supervisor. In this case, the Board approved an individual who was not well suited to serve on the Library Board. While I had no specific knowledge of this individual's past, I will note for the record that I abstained from the vote due to a lack of information on the nominee.

At next week's Board meeting, I will be bringing forth an item that would create a standard application form for all individuals that are nominated. The form would request basic information such as criminal history, education and would ask nominees for relevant experience specific to the commission they are being considered for.

I will be also asking staff to bring the Board options for a background check system for nominees. While this may prove to be cost prohibitive, I believe it is worth looking into. I hope my proposal will be well-received by the rest of the Board, and I'll provide an update at a future meeting.

EMS Billing Implementation

At the beginning of the year, the Board implemented a change in the way Emergency Medical Services (EMS) transports are billed in the County. Loudoun was one of the only localities in the region who was not already charging for EMS services. We have now begun an EMS Transportation Reimbursement program. This will help to recoup the costs of supporting timely EMS service. No individual will ever be denied needed EMS transport of any type for any financial reason.

The County will bill insurance or Medicare/Medicaid for EMS transport. We looked carefully at other rate structures and systems. Private insurances already have these transport fees worked

into their rate structure, so in a sense Loudoun residents were already paying for EMS service by nature of their premiums. Now at least we can actually receive those funds and put them back to use in the community. When a volunteer EMS company (such as Arcola Pleasant Valley) is the first responder, a formula has been devised to distribute the funds back to the company to support the work they do. This will help sustain our volunteer EMS system, though our volunteer fire fighters still need community support.

Additional Residential Units in Ashburn Denied by Board

The Board recently considered an application to rezone a commercial parcel in the Goose Creek Village area to build more residential units.

The Goose Creek Village North application would have rezoned 12.5 acres from a commercial parcel to a residential parcel. On that parcel, Goose Creek Commercial proposed to build 282 multifamily residential units. I voted against this application and it was denied by the Board on a 7-1 vote.

I am generally hesitant to rezone commercial parcels into residential. While I recognize that some commercial parcels are slow to develop, the Board must consider the impact that building residences in zoning districts which were not planned for them will have on our schools and transportation network. As I've discussed many times, we need to take full advantage of all commercial opportunities to increase our tax base.

DULLES DISTRICT UPDATES

Why Isn't Tall Cedars Parkway Open?

Lately, many of you have asked me why Tall Cedars Parkway between Riding Center Drive and Pinebrook Road is not yet open, since the road appears to be completed.

The answer is a bit complicated. This stretch of road was built by a developer to fulfill a proffer agreement. The developer still controls the road—think of it like a private driveway. Typically, when a road is completed, it would be opened even though it would be under developer control. At some point, developers will initiate a VDOT acceptance process which transfers control to VDOT. In this case, the developer that built the road seems reluctant to open it before the entire transfer process takes place. The process can take months, depending on how the VDOT review goes. So, unfortunately, I can't tell you exactly when it will be open. We are continuing to work with staff and VDOT to try to push this along. As you'll recall, we'll also be initiating our own County project shortly both to expand the road that was just built to four lanes, and to build the connection from Pinebrook to Gum Spring.

Center Street Update

A brief update on the Center Street/Loudoun County Parkway intersection: The County has completed the field work related to the follow-up traffic study to determine the impact of the intersection. While we are still waiting for some additional information from the traffic engineers, we have begun reviewing the data with VDOT. Our initial information is very positive, and the intersection changes still appear to be working well. I will provide much more detail when we have the additional data.

Dulles District Appointees Assume Leadership Positions



We are fortunate to have a dedicated group of Dulles district volunteers serving on over 15 Advisory Boards and Commission to the Board of Supervisors. I assembled the group for a meeting last night to get updates on all the work they are doing and to share some of the Board's goals. Many of the individuals I have nominated have assumed leadership roles on their boards. Recently, Dulles District Planning Commissioner Jeff Salmon was elected Vice-Chairman of the Commission, and Kristen Reed was appointed Vice Chairman of the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Board. In addition, Shawn Sutherland enters his second year as Vice Chairman of the Transportation Safety Committee. Finally, Jim Botteicher is wrapping up his time as Vice Chairman of the Communications Commission, after helping to lead the group through a major restructuring, which will make them well positioned to better assist the Board on broadband and cable issues in the future.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Dulles Direct Town Hall Scheduled for February 10

I will hold my quarterly Dulles Direct Town Hall meeting on Monday, February 10, at Lunsford Middle School, which is located at 26020 Ticonderoga Road off Braddock Road. The meeting will begin at 7:00 pm. County Administrator Tim Hemstreet will be joining us to give an "Inside the Budget" presentation. As always, I will take all questions and comments.

Dulles South Sheriff Station Quarterly Meeting

The Loudoun County Sheriff's Office will hold a quarterly meeting for the Dulles South Station on Monday, February 3, 2014, at 7 p.m. The Dulles South Station is located on Loudoun County Parkway in South Riding.

The meeting will include discussion on smoke detector safety, crime data, criminal events, significant events in our area, and a time for public input. Please respond to Bridgette.Griffin@Loudoun.gov if you plan on attending so the Station can plan appropriately.

Public Input for the FY2015 Budget

There will be three dedicated opportunities for the public to provide comments concerning the FY2015 budget. Recording equipment will also be provided in a conference room for members of the public who would like to record their comments, but are not able to wait for a speaking slot.

The first hearing will be held Wednesday, February 26, from 3:00 – 5:00 pm and again from 6:00 – 10:00 pm. The hearing will be held at the Loudoun County Government Center. **If there are remaining speakers**, a follow-up public hearing will take place on Thursday, February, 27, from 6:00 – 8:00 pm, also at the Government Center.

The final public hearing is scheduled for Saturday, March 1, from 9:00 am – 12:00 pm at the LCPS Administration Building in Ashburn. Speakers are free to address any topic and are generally given two minutes. Of course, you may also provide comments by email either directly to me at matt.letourneau@loudoun.gov or to the entire Board at loudounbudget@loudoun.gov.

Child Care Provider Informational Workshop

Loudoun County Zoning Administration Staff is holding informational workshops to brief the public on the adopted revisions to the Child Care Home Regulations in the Zoning Ordinance. In the case of inclement weather, please check the website at www.Loudoun.gov/ChildCareHome or call 703-777-0442.

The next workshop will be offered on Tuesday, February 18, 2014, from 7:00 – 9:00 pm, with an alternate snow date of February 20, 2014. This workshop will be held at the Cascades Library (21030 Whitfield Place, Potomac Falls).

Free Tax Preparation Services for Low-Moderate Income Families

The Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program is in full swing in Loudoun County, providing free tax services to Loudoun County taxpayers earning less than \$52,000 a year. Certified IRS volunteers provide one-on-one assistance to customers on a walk-in basis. Free tax services will be available through April 15, 2014, at four sites in Loudoun County and other additional sites in Northern Virginia.

- Loudoun County Family Services - Workforce Resource Center: Tuesday and Thursday evenings from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. and Saturdays from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon, beginning January 30 through April 15, 2014. The Workforce Resource Center is located in the Shenandoah Building at 102 Heritage Way on the first floor (enter at the back of the building) in Leesburg. Wages are limited to \$52,000 and under. No appointments needed.
- Loudoun County Area Agency on Aging - Rust Library: Monday and Friday from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. beginning February 10 through April 11, 2014. The library is located at 380 Old Waterford Road in Leesburg. Wages are limited to \$52,000 and under. No appointments needed.

In addition, AARP offers free tax preparation at the following locations:

- Cascades Library: Tuesday and Thursday from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. and Monday and Wednesday from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. beginning February 4 through April 15, 2014. Service is available to all wage earners or retirees and there is no income eligibility. Cascades Library is located at 21030 Whitfield Place in Sterling. No appointments needed.
- Falcons Landing: Monday, Thursday and Saturday from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. beginning February 1 through April 15, 2014. Service is available to all wage earners or retirees and there is no income eligibility. Appointments are needed. To schedule an appointment, call 703-404-5216. Falcons Landing is located at the corner of Algonkian Parkway & Potomac View Road in Sterling.

Additional sites in Northern Virginia are listed at www.nvacash.org. For additional information, contact Karen Velez at 703-771-5718 or email karen.velez@loudoun.gov.

Loudoun Symphony Concert

On Friday, February 15, 2014, the Loudoun Symphony will be performing at 7:30 pm. The musical score will be appropriate to Valentine's Day and supported by silent film footage featuring Rudolf Valentino and Charlie Chapin. The concert will take place at Community Church/Virginia Academy off of Route 7. Tickets can be obtained through their website: LoudounSymphony.org

Snow Removal Information

The continued snowfall this winter reminds us of the necessity of snow removal. VDOT's policies bring the most focus on major roads first (like Route 50), then major local roads and

finally neighborhood streets. Generally, I've been pleased with snow removal this year. We have had a few issues to work out, including damage to the Braddock-Edgewater roundabout.

During a snow event of more than two inches, you can view the status of plowing at www.VDOTplows.org. If you feel your street may have been missed you can call 1-800-FOR-ROAD to report an unplowed road. As always, residents can reach out to my office during winter events if they feel there is a situation which warrants extra attention.

Among the tips from VDOT are:

- When shoveling driveways, leave the last 5 feet of snow at the curb until after the plow
- Shovel to the right facing the road
- Park on the odd numbered side of the street or in driveways
- Allow room for the plow to come through
- Call 511 for road conditions, or visit www.511virginia.org for traffic cameras

More information is available at www.virginiaDOT.org, www.YouTube.com/VDOTweb, @511northernva on Twitter.

Loudoun Small Business Development Seminars

During the month of February the Loudoun Small Business Development will be offering several seminars for small businesses. Please visit LoudounSBDC.eventbrite.com to register for any of the seminars. Seats and handouts are not guaranteed without registration. All of the seminars are held at the Mason Enterprise Center located at 202 Church Street SE, Leesburg – on the 1st floor training room. For questions please call 703-430-7222.

Start Your Business – a highly informative overview of what it means to start your own business
February 13, 2014 from 11 am – 1:30 pm
Registration is \$10 online and \$15 at the door

The Accidental Salesperson – Author, Allan Barmak, will help you learn how to identify sales interactions and take your business to the next level
February 20, 2014 from 6:00 – 8:30 pm
Registration is \$25 online and \$30 at the door

Loudoun Federal Contractors' Group - work together to build business relationships in the Loudoun County Federal Contracting arena
February 25, 2014 from 5:30 pm – 7:30 pm
Registration is free, but please register online to save your spot

Small Business Taxes and Tax Law Updates – become knowledgeable concerning tax law updates, records to keep, worker classifications, and tax calendars
February 27, 2014 from 11:00 am – 1:30 pm
Registration is \$25 online and \$30 at the door

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