

**GLOUCESTER COUNTY  
COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR'S  
AUGUST 2009 MONTHLY REPORT  
Presented Tuesday, September 1, 2009  
Prepared by Brenda G. Garton, County Administrator**

**CALENDAR ITEMS**

Upcoming events:

- **Labor Day County Holiday**, Mon., Sept. 7.
- York District Town Meeting with Ms. Altemus, Sept. 8, 7:00 pm at Achilles Elementary School.
- Reassessment Public Information Meeting, Thu., Sept. 10, 7:00 pm at Petsworth Elementary School.
- Regular Board Meeting, Tue., Sept. 15, 7:00 pm.
- Gang Violence Forum, Thu., Sept. 17, 2009 from 7:00 pm – 9:00 pm, Gloucester High School auditorium.
- Joint Meeting of Board of Supervisors and School Board, Tue., Sept. 29, 2009, 6:00 pm, Gloucester High School, Duke Rock Cafe.
- Regular Board Meeting, Tue., Oct. 6, 7:00 pm.
- Regular Board Meeting, Tue., Oct. 20, 7:00 pm.

**AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION**

The Director of Planning spoke with Bay Aging (Community Action Agency -- CAA) staff at a meeting this month about helping us with an affordable housing program administration. Although we are still not sure how it will work, we are working on setting up a meeting.

**ANIMAL SHELTERING AT PEASLEY DURING A DECLARED EMERGENCY**

County Administration, Emergency Management, and Animal Control staff met this month with School Administration Staff to reaffirm Animal Sheltering at Peasley Middle School in the event of a locally declared emergency when sheltering for our citizens occurs. Animal sheltering in Virginia is an unfunded mandate. We are very anxious to make this work, as little or no options at this point appear readily available, since the County does not have other facilities that could adequately address this need. The Animal Control Department and lead staff from Social Services and the Schools participated in a Table-Top Animal Sheltering Exercise facilitated by our Emergency Management Coordinator focusing on the opening, managing, and closing of a shelter at Peasley on Monday, August 31.

**ARRA RECOVERY ACT REPORTING**

The Finance Director and other staff from the department spent some time this month listening to several ARRA webinars. The federal reporting web site opened this month. We have designated primary and back up individuals in the Finance Department for reporting purposes. We need to have the registration completed by October 1<sup>st</sup>. The Auditor of Public Accounts for Virginia has indicated that the State Compensation Board will be filing for the funds substituted in the jail. The school system and social services are still waiting for direction from their state agencies. Our first "real" reporting on the federal website is October 10<sup>th</sup>. It will be a cumulative filing from February 17, 2009 to September 30, 2009. There will be no extensions. The reporting requirements are demanding, especially in the beginning months.

**AUDIT REPORT**

Our auditors completed their initial audit field work this month and will return during September to complete audit field work. The Finance Director and staff are working on required standard audit documents and preparation.

## **BEAVERDAM RESERVOIR – LETTER TO ADJACENT PROPERTY OWNERS**

The County's Director of Utilities and Director of Parks, Recreation, and Tourism plan to send a letter out to property owners adjacent to Beaverdam Reservoir. The purpose of the letter is to point out that adjacent property owners have some stewardship responsibility for our water reservoir. We are taking a proactive approach to making sure adjacent property owners do not encroach on our right of way or do anything which might be detrimental to our water reserve. It also provides a mechanism for them to report activity to us that might not be appropriate. These letters should go out next month.

## **BROADBAND PROJECT**

With the Board's approval in the August Board meeting, the County is participating in the submission of a request for American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) grant funding for a "middle mile" Broadband Project, which is a cooperative project between the Middle Peninsula Planning District Commission (MPPDC) and the Northern Neck Planning District Commission (NNPDC). The initial commitment for the County for the cost of preparing and submitting the application and related documents is \$2,500. The actual cost to each locality of the local match required if we are awarded the grant will depend on what other sources of funding may be made available. The County Administrators in the Middle Peninsula Planning District Commission (MPPDC) met with staff of the MPPDC and legal counsel this month to discuss the next step in the Broadband project. Assuming the project gets funding approval, the MPPDC localities will need to take the steps to apply for and establish a regional Broadband Authority.

## **CERT TEAM**

Emergency Management Department staff report that the County's Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) is becoming more involved and active. The Department hosted a CERT brainstorming session meeting.

## **CLEAN COMMUNITY COMMITTEE MEETING WITH DELEGATE HARVEY MORGAN**

The Gloucester Clean Community Committee will be hosting Delegate Morgan at its September 28<sup>th</sup> meeting, at 6:30 p.m. at Page Middle School. The committee wishes to discuss issues with Delegate Morgan regarding litter laws, types of fines, increasing litter fines, laws to require that garbage trucks be covered, a bottle return bill, requiring community services for litter law violators, and awarding citizens who report violations with a portion of the fine.

## **COLEMAN BRIDGE SUNDAY CLOSING POSTPONED**

The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) had previously announced the closing of the Route 17 George P. Coleman Bridge for maintenance on Sunday, August 30 from 6:00 am to 12:00 noon. Since then, VDOT has announced that this planned closing has been postponed. The re-scheduling was done due to possible inclement weather issues related to tropical storm Danny. Once it is rescheduled, the bridge will be closed to both motorists and maritime traffic for VDOT crews to perform electrical maintenance on the bridge. The closure is necessary because the bridge must be in an open position in order to perform this routine maintenance. Maritime traffic is suspended for the safety of the maintenance crew. Several trial openings will be necessary to test the replaced electrical components. The work is planned to be scheduled during one of the slower travel periods for the area, to reduce inconvenience to the traveling public. Motorists should plan for delays and use the following, approximately 75-mile detours:

From Yorktown US 17 North: Take George Washington Highway to Fort Eustis Boulevard (VA 105 North) to I-64 West. Use Exit 220 to VA 33 North, Eltham Road, and follow VA 33 North to US 17 North/South

From Gloucester US 17 South: From George Washington Highway turn onto VA 33 South, Eltham Road. Follow VA 33 South to I-64 East/West

For an update on traffic and travel information, visit [www.511virginia.org](http://www.511virginia.org), call 511 from any telephone, listen to Highway Advisory Radio 610AM or to Coleman Bridge Advisory Radio 530AM.

### **COLEMAN CROSSING DEVELOPMENT REZONING**

At the Planning Commission (PC) Meeting on August 6, the PC recommended forwarding the Coleman Crossing Development rezoning to the BOS for approval with one dissenting vote.

### **COMMUNICATIONS PROJECT**

Our Director of Public Works reports that the Temporary Emergency Communications Center is very close to final with a few punch list items remaining. We learned that the replacement 911 equipment will be purchased for significantly less than budgeted amounts. Note that State PSAP grants received for this project were ear-marked for this equipment. Dispatch furniture will also cost significantly under budgeted estimates. The net result of our “firming up” these two expenditures from budget to actual is that our project is back on budget. We previously reported to the Board that we were over budget due to the geotechnical conditions.

### **COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCY – BAY AGING**

During August, County staff initiated a meeting with Bay Aging to include representatives who would have contributions to suggest regarding its new designation as the County’s Community Action Agency (CAA). At the meeting, a number of folks from Bay Aging were present, as well as County Human Services Department Directors, School System representatives, and others. We discussed various needs in the community and gave Bay Aging valuable feedback and ideas as to where they might focus some of their efforts. It is expected that additional meetings and communication efforts will result from this initial meeting. Following that meeting, School System representatives and the Community Education Director met with Bay Aging staff to further discuss how the school system might partner with CAA to benefit the students/youth of Gloucester County. Bay Aging staff explained the three funding streams, with the stimulus money stream having about \$85,000 remaining targeted for youth programs for the 10-county region. This is “one-time stimulus money” which will not be available next year. After considerable discussion, there appeared to be some interest in two main areas:

1. Establishing a system/process whereby those in need could come to one place to find assistance/help (clearinghouse concept) and have a universal referral/eligibility system which we discussed at our group meeting earlier this month.
2. Mentor program for all youth in Gloucester thru a partnership with the Virginia Mentoring Partnership group.

There was also discussion about the following identified needs: transportation for alternative ed students, programs targeting dropouts and potential dropouts, and school attendance. There will be a future meeting concerning the mentor program prospects.

### **COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

The Hampton Roads Planning District Commission (HRPDC) staff continues to work with Gloucester County on the preparation of our Comprehensive Plan update. A meeting to include HRPDC staff, the Planning Commission (PC), and the Comp Plan Steering Committee (SC) at a work session instead of a regular meeting some time in October (due to other issues on the Planning Commission schedule) is anticipated. HRPDC staff would like to share their progress to date and get feedback from the PC and the SC.

### **CONSENT ORDER -- UTILITIES**

The County’s Director of Utilities met with consulting firm URS regarding the ongoing and upcoming activities required under the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Special Order of Consent, of which we are a part as a member of Hampton Roads Sanitation District (HRSD). The cost for Fiscal year 2010 may be larger than originally anticipated due to a change in requirements imposed by the EPA/DEQ

(Virginia Department of Environmental Quality). We will provide more details on this matter as they become available. The anticipated savings in the interest participation fee which the County will incur if the Board approves the HRSD MOA may be needed to help cover this cost.

**CONTINGENCY FUND FOR FY 09-10**

The following is a summary accounting at August 30, 2009 for the contingency funds included in the fiscal year 2010 budget:

FY 2010 Adopted Budget Amount	\$	316,291
Estimated Employee Health Insurance Benefits	\$	(121,526)
Replacement of Beaverdam Park Boat Motor	\$	(2,900)
Jail Study for Occupancy Limits	\$	(12,800)
Estimated Unemployment Payment	\$	(11,000)
Broadband Study for regional grant	\$	(2,500)
Balance Remaining 8-30-2009	\$	165,565

**CULTURAL RESOURCE ASSESSMENTS**

Representatives of the Fairfield Foundation discussed with our Planning Director new enabling legislation that allows localities to require an applicant to “*submit documentation that any development in an area of the locality of known historical or archaeological significance will preserve or accommodate the historical or archaeological resources.*” This requirement could be significant, since previously we could only obtain information regarding cultural resources on rezoning through voluntary proffers. The Director has suggested that they speak to the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors members to see if the County has an interest in requiring Cultural Resource Assessments (CRA’s) for new developments. The Department of Historic Resources (DHR) has a list of known sites and staff is working with DIT to have these sites mapped as part of the internal GIS. The County (Planning Department and Historical Committee) has asked for money in the budget to cost share with DHR for the preparation of a Cultural Resources Survey for the Gloucester County which would further assist in identifying and planning for cultural resources in the County.

**DISASTER PREPAREDNESS PRESENTATIONS**

Our Emergency Management Coordinator made disaster preparedness presentations at Bethany Methodist Church and the Kiwanis Club, at their requests.

**EASEMENTS ON PLATS**

The Planning Director and staff are working on a policy regarding easements on plats. Our ordinance requires all easements to be shown, but surveyors indicate that they cannot ensure all easements are shown without a title report, which can be costly to the property owner. We have had issues where the surveyor has not shown easements and then later on, the issue becomes a problem. The state requires surveyors to note that a title report was not done and that the plat may not show all easements. Staff is working on making sure that our local policies and requirements are consistent with state requirements, and prevent problems with reliance on what is on the plat documents.

**EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT -- MIDDLE PENINSULA EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT REGIONAL EXERCISE**

The Emergency Management Coordinator reports that the Middle Peninsula will be hosting a regional emergency management exercise on September 30<sup>th</sup>. The scenario will be that strong winds and tornados touch down in the region, forcing us to use mutual aid resources and plan for communications. Gloucester’s

scenario will be extensive structural damage at Rappahannock Community College, including a car fire in the parking lot and missing/injured people. County Staff will participate.

### **EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT MEETING WITH VOLUNTEERS**

The Emergency Management Coordinator met with the Gloucester Volunteer Fire and Rescue and the Amateur Radio Group at their respective monthly meetings.

### **EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN**

Staff will present and discuss the proposed Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) at the September 1 Board meeting. Copies of the plan will be distributed to Board members on CDs at the meeting. We plan to schedule it for adoption for the September 15 Board meeting, which should give us sufficient time to meet what we've told the state. Two major changes in the proposed revisions to the EOP are:

- the name change from Emergency Services to Emergency Management and
- the County Administrator being named as the Director as opposed to the Board Chair.

### **EMPLOYEE PHOTO ID BADGES**

The Human Resources Department has been creating and distributing photo ID badges to all employees. We developed an Administrative Policy which requires employees to display their ID badges while working, which helps citizens as well as fellow employees identify County employees, both for security and name-recognition.

### **FARM FRESH FUEL CENTER**

The Farm Fresh Fuel center is beginning to store materials for construction.

### **FEMA GRANTS**

The Finance Department is working with homeowners for the "true-up" of their portion of the grant program. Homeowners are required to provide a match of 5% of the cost of the elevation projects, with 95% of the funding coming from FEMA (the Federal Emergency Management Agency) and VDEM (the Virginia Department of Emergency Management). We estimate the total project cost, and homeowners pay their 5% match up front. At the end of the work, when the actual costs are known, we send them a statement indicating how much additional money they owe (if any) or reimbursing them for any excess funds collected from them in the initial estimate. In almost all cases, the homeowner must provide some additional money in order to supply the 5% match.

### **FINANCIAL ADVISOR**

Staff is planning to extend our contract with our Financial Advisors, Morgan Keegan, for one year until June 15, 2010. We also plan to put the financial advisory services out for proposal to take effect next year. We do not anticipate needing their services over the next year, so there probably would be no or very little costs associated with the extension of the contract.

### **FINANCIAL UPDATE**

Once the audit work has been completed by Finance Department staff, we will present a summary of the financial status for the county as of fiscal year end, June 30, 2009. We should also provide an update soon for revenues and expenditures against budgeted amounts for FY 09-10.

### **FLOOD PLAIN MANAGEMENT PLAN**

The public hearing on the Flood Plain Management Plan will be held at the September 1 Board Meeting. This plan analyzes the causes of flooding in the County and identifies the vulnerabilities within the community. The plan also documents and analyzes the County's existing flood management practices and provides feasible solutions to strengthen the County's overall flood management system, helping to lessen the amount of damage caused by flooding. Due to the amount of repetitively flooded properties in the

County, adoption of a Flood Plain Management Plan is required in order for the County to continue to participate in the Community Rating System (CRS). While participation in the CRS program is voluntary, the benefits for citizens in participating localities are numerous. Under the program, flood insurance premiums are modified based on a point system which calculates the community's efforts to reduce future flood damage in the area beyond the minimal national standards. Gloucester is only community on the Middle Peninsula to participate in the CRS program.

**FOIA POLICY AND GUIDELINES**

The County Administrator, the County Attorney, and the Community Education Director (FOIA Officer) met this month to review our current FOIA policies and guidelines, and to discuss ways to increase efficiency and more effectively communicate all aspects of FOIA to the department directors as well as to the public when a request is made. We will be making some modifications for review, especially in the area of allowable charges for staff time, as our current policy does not list charges related to this area. There have been some FOIA requests in past months which have required significant amounts of staff time. Some of the changes we are considering are administrative and some may require Board approval at a later date.

**FROZEN COUNTY POSITIONS**

The following county positions are currently frozen. Positions listed as “frozen and unfunded” remain on the position chart, but were not budgeted for FY 09-10 and remain vacant. As positions have become vacant since the beginning of FY 09-10, each position is frozen and the County Administrator makes the decision, on a case-by-case basis, as to whether to allow that position to be filled or to fill one of the other vacant positions which has remained open for a longer period of time. Therefore, there are also some positions which are “frozen and funded”, as those positions are funded in the current fiscal year, but have been vacated since the start of the fiscal year and have not yet been released to fill.

<b>Office</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Type</b>
<b>Frozen and Unfunded:</b>		
County Attorney	Assistant County Attorney	FT
Commissioner of the Revenue	Revenue Technician	FT
Codes Compliance	Inspector I	FT
E-911	Dispatcher	PT
Emergency Services	Administrative Assistant III	FT
Engineer	Public Works Engineer	FT
Buildings & Grounds	Custodian	FT
Tourism	Office Assistant	PT
Utilities	Assistant Director	FT
Utilities	Utility Worker I	FT
<b>Frozen and Funded:</b>		
Parks, Recreation, & Tourism	Park Ranger	FT
Codes Compliance	Permit Technician	FT
Purchasing	Buyer	FT
Parks, Recreation, & Tourism	Program Assistant	PT

**GLOUCESTER ANIMAL SHELTER**

The County Administrator's Office recently received notification from the State Veterinarian's Office that during an unannounced inspection, the Gloucester Animal Shelter received a 100% Compliance rating. This is an excellent reflection on County staff in that we were not cited for any violation.

**GLOUCESTER COUNTY FAIR**

The Gloucester County Fair was held in August, and was very successful, though attendance was slightly down.

## **GRASS MOWING**

The County continues to receive numerous complaints, by phone and e-mail, from citizens who are unhappy with the high grass along County roadways, particularly along Rt. 17. The Director of Public Works will discuss options with the Board at the September 1 Board meeting.

## **GUINEA ROAD CONVENIENCE CENTER IMPROVEMENTS**

The Director of Public Works reports that we received a letter from Waste Management about the Guinea Road Convenience center improvements. A Waste Management representative told the Board of Supervisors what he would cause to happen when he spoke to them in May. In the letter, he indicates that the improvements were more complex than first thought and he has now received three bids. He further notes that he now must determine how to fund this unbudgeted expense. No commitment was made as to when the work would be completed.

## **HAMPTON ROADS SANITATION DISTRICT (HRSD) MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT**

The County's Director of Utilities has worked during the month of August to finalize the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with Hampton Roads Sanitation District (HRSD) for inclusion in the Board packet. This proposed MOA reserves a capacity of 200 Equivalent Residency Units (ERUs) into the proposed Mathews Transmission line, which has been designed by HRSD to address a treatment problem with a facility in Mathews County. Any additional flow beyond 200 ERUs into the Mathews Transmission line would require additional capital improvements, and HRSD would expect Gloucester County to fund some of the costs for these additional improvements. The MOA also removes the Interest Participation Payment which Gloucester County has been paying to HRSD for the past seventeen years. This item has been placed on the agenda for the September 1 Board meeting.

## **HURRICANE PREPAREDNESS CONFERENCE CALL**

The Emergency Management Coordinator participated in a conference call with the Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM) in August, followed by the County Administrator's participation in a conference call with the Governor, regarding emergency preparedness and evacuation plans. Key elements discussed by state emergency management personnel and the Governor included:

- There has been a downgrade in predictions for the current hurricane season, as noted below.
- A reminder was given that even though the season's forecast has been downgraded, it still only takes one major hurricane in the area to negate all predictions.
- The State's Hurricane Plan was updated in June with the big changes being:
  - The state will consider an emergency declaration 120 hours out from when the hurricane force winds are predicted to hit the area.
  - The state will consult with elected officials and administrators at 48 hours out.
  - The Governor will call for mandatory evacuation at 38 hours out.
  - Lane reversal will be announced at 36 hours out and begin at 30 hours out.
  - Lane reversal will cease at 6 hours out in order for folks to be able to prepare and "hunker down".
  - There is no longer a phased evacuation and lane reversal will be used for Category 2 and higher hurricanes (previously it was Category 3 and higher).
  - The areas vulnerable for storm surge have been expanded, which has eliminated some state sites for potential state shelters needed for evacuees.
  - VECTOR (Virginia Evacuation Coordination Team for Operational Responses) is a hurricane group brought together by the state to discuss evacuation plans and activity.
  - The state is continuing to work on identifying Shelters of Last Resort. The first large scale exercise for a Shelter of Last Resort was held June 29 at James Madison University.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) downgraded their outlook for the 2009 hurricane season on August 6, based on effects from El Nino:

<b>Storm Type</b>	<b>2009 Outlook</b>	<b>Normal</b>
Total Named Storms	7-11	11
Hurricanes, Category 1 or 2	3-6	6
Major Hurricanes, Category 3, 4, or 5	1-2	2

### **HURRICANES AND TROPICAL STORMS**

Hurricane Bill and Tropical Storm Danny occurred in August but had no impact of significance on Gloucester County or the area in general.

### **JAIL CAPACITY STUDY**

We have engaged the consulting engineer to perform the jail capacity study, as approved by the Board. This cost for this study will be covered by a transfer out of the County Administrator's Contingency Fund.

### **MAIN STREET PLAN**

Our Planning Director has received the final draft Main Street Plan from the Main Street Preservation Trust in her office for review.

### **MAIN STREET PRESERVATION TRUST SURVEY OF HISTORICAL PROPERTIES**

The Director of Planning reports that the Main Street Preservation Trust (MSPT) is working with a consultant to do a survey of the courthouse area to identify properties eligible for the National Register and possibly nominating a larger district area. Designation would provide the potential for federal and state tax credits but no regulation. MSPT is planning a public information meeting, possibly in September, and intends to reach out to as many people in the Courthouse area as possible.

### **MAIN STREET PROJECT**

The Director of Public Works reports that work is progressing on the Main Street Project. Staff will work to schedule a public meeting after we meet with the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) to make sure we do not present anything to the public that is unacceptable to VDOT.

### **MEREDITH DRIVE RURAL ADDITION**

Planning Department staff is working with the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) and the County Attorney on the Meredith Drive rural addition. They are working on obtaining the right of way which is required before VDOT can begin to work on bringing the road up to VDOT standards.

### **MIDDLE PENINSULA REGIONAL AIRPORT AUTHORITY**

The Executive Director of the Middle Peninsula Regional Airport Authority (MPRAA) has announced his retirement and the Authority is currently in the process of considering how to fill the position. The County Administrator attended a special called meeting of the Middle Peninsula Regional Airport Authority, called by the Chairman to discuss how to proceed with filling the position to be vacated when the current Executive Director retires, as well as to discuss the budget previously adopted, which had not been amended to reflect lower appropriations from localities than requested.

### **NIMS TRAINING**

Our Emergency Management Coordinator conducted a training of the School Crisis Management teams in NIMS 700.

### **NO WAKE SIGN IN HEYWOOD CREEK**

The County has received correspondence from the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries indicating that we can proceed to have the No Wake sign in Heywood Creek removed, recommending removal of the pole as well. Our Public Works Director is working to have it removed. We do not yet know the cost.

### **OFF-SITE SEPTIC EASEMENT ISSUE**

Our Director of Planning is working on another "off-site" septic easement issue on a boundary line adjustment for a property in the Guinea area, consulting with the County Attorney and with the Alternative Sewage Disposal Systems (ASDS) group, who concur with her interpretations. She continues to work on a possible solution by working with the property owner to improve the configuration of her lots without violating County ordinances.

### **OLIVER LANDING -- BOAT LANDING PIER**

The boat landing pier at Oliver Landing is very near completion. The decking is completed. Toe boards need to be placed and the pier must be inspected before it can be opened for public use. The neighboring community is eager to have the pier completed and staff is working to get the pier completed as soon as possible.

### **ON-LINE SALE OF SURPLUS PROPERTY**

Central Purchasing is expanding the use of on-line sale of surplus property using Public Surplus. The website is [www.publicsurplus.com](http://www.publicsurplus.com). The school system has been using this service for a couple of years. Rather than having one sale each year, which requires we store a large amount of surplus items, we can now list items for sale on a regular basis.

### **PANDEMIC EMERGENCY PLANNING**

The Department of Emergency Management has submitted a grant application which would allow for all Fire and EMS to have N95 masks in case of a pandemic event. Community Education and the Department of Information Technology (DIT) staff continue to post updated and pertinent information to the County's website, especially updates from the Virginia Department of Health and Three Rivers Health District. Several informative videos and webcasts are listed.

### **PERSONAL PROPERTY TAXES -- FINAL NOTICES**

Our Treasurer reports that final notices for personal property taxes and real estate taxes were mailed in August. These notices are the last notices that we send out before beginning "active" collections for those owing 2009 taxes. Active collections include Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) registration holds, liens against wages and bank accounts, etc. The Treasurer does not take these actions if the individual is meeting the requirements of a payment plan with the Treasurer's Office.

### **PURCHASING CARDS**

Our Finance Director and Purchasing Manager are moving forward with implementing purchasing cards in lieu of our business credit cards and multiple merchant "house" accounts. Purchasing cards will enable us to gain efficiency in processing low dollar purchases, while improving reporting and data tracking capabilities. Initial test areas will be the Facilities area of the School System and the County's Building and Grounds area. This change should make much of our purchasing more efficient and streamlined.

### **REASSESSMENT INFORMATIONAL MEETINGS**

We have held Reassessment Informational Meetings on Monday, August 3, in the Colonial Courthouse and on Monday, August 24 at Achilles Elementary School. Personnel from County Administration, Finance, Community Education, Information Technology (DIT), and Reassessment Departments, as well as several Board members, were in attendance to answer questions following the showing of the informational video, produced by the Community Education Department, explaining the reassessment process. About 20 citizens

were on hand at both meetings to ask questions. The third meeting is scheduled for Thursday, September 10 at 7:00 pm at Petsworth Elementary School. The video is also being shown on the local cable channel several times a day in a continued effort to share the information with citizens. A brochure on reassessment, developed by the Reassessment Team and also prepared by Community Education, was distributed at the meetings and is available for citizens.

### **REASSESSMENT NOTICES**

Reassessment notices for the locally done reassessment effective for the 2010 tax year will be mailed in September. Work is progressing on finalizing the models, testing the system, reviewing the results, creating the appeals process, and finalizing the format of the notices themselves.

### **REGIONAL CATASTROPHIC PLANNING GRANT TEAM**

The Regional Catastrophic Planning Grant Team met, and Gloucester will be able to enhance our planning capabilities especially with mass care and in evacuation.

### **RO ELEMENTS IN SKID #2 AT THE WATER TREATMENT PLANT**

Replacement of RO Elements in Skid #2 at the Water Treatment Plant is complete. The department continues to operate the RO unit with the new elements in order to test their effectiveness.

### **ROOF AT DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DIT)**

The final inspection of the DIT roof work was accomplished in August. This roof has been problematic for a while, and although all capital projects were frozen during the fall of 2008 in anticipation of the budget crisis, County Administration released this project for completion due to the critical nature of the equipment which might be jeopardized by a serious leak. This roof was designed with additional insulation and reflective, high emissivity roofing material which should reduce our HVAC costs for the building.

### **SENIOR CENTER PROPOSED REPAIRS AND RENOVATIONS**

After being approached by County staff to request consideration of assistance in funding to repair the Senior Center on Main Street, the County received an offer of \$25,000 from the Main Street Preservation Trust toward the repairs needed, provided that we install two externally accessible rest rooms. County staff met with Bay Aging staff this month to discuss this proposal with them, and plan to present the matter to the Board at the September 1 meeting. While Bay Aging will lose some square footage in office space, they would like to retain their very accessible spot on Main St. and understand the attractiveness of receiving the funding toward the repairs.

### **SHOP LOCAL CAMPAIGN**

The County's Economic Development Department is working with the Gloucester Chamber of Commerce, the Main Street Preservation Trust, and other agencies and business representatives on a "shop local" campaign in Gloucester County. The plan is to survey a group of Chamber and Main Street businesses to begin to develop focus group concepts regarding how to better serve them as both sellers and purchasers of goods. This is going to be a long-term -- probably a year -- effort to engage the community in shopping Gloucester first.

### **SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL BUILDING HEIGHTS**

The Planning Commission (PC) discussed single family residential building heights for the past several months and will be having a public hearing on September 3 on a proposed code amendment to change the way residential single family buildings are measured (to the ridge versus at the mid-line of the ridge), to allow primary structures to be 50 feet high (55 in flood zone) and accessory structures within the primary building envelope to be allowed to be the same height. Accessory structures outside the principal structure setbacks and within 5 feet of a property line are proposed to be 35 feet and no more than 2 stories.

## **SOCIAL SERVICES PROGRAMS**

The following items were reported by the Director of Social Services:

- COOLING program ended Aug. 17th: Total applications were 452 for the 2009 season, compared to the 2008 season with 224 applications. This was an increase of 228 cases, or double the amount from the prior year. Total monies approved and provided to vendors within the community will not be available until later in Sept.
- SNAP (Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program, formerly food stamps): Approved cases (not individuals) ending July 31, 2009, was 1491. This number represents an increase of 495 cases over 2008. According to State and Federal reporting, we are serving approximately 72% of the eligible population in Gloucester, up from 62% this time last year.
- MEDICAID: As of July 31, 2009, we had 1971 cases (not individuals), up by 78 cases from last year.
- APPLE TREE PROJECT: This is a back to school program to aide foster care youth in being prepared for school. Walter Reed Hospital, Hudgins Olds, Abingdon Ruritan Club, and Newington Baptist are strongly supporting this project and seeking supplies on behalf of the foster care youth. Every school aged foster care youth will have a backpack filled with supplies and most likely additional supplies and needed items as well.

## **SPECIAL NEEDS**

With regard to special needs citizens during an emergency, a group met with our Emergency Management Coordinator to discuss Special Needs with the possibility of using a local church as a special needs shelter. We will provide further updates on this as the planning proceeds.

## **TABLE TOP EXERCISE AT WALTER REED HOSPITAL**

Walter Reed Hospital is hosting a table top emergency exercise on September 28, and the County will have a small role with Emergency Services and Fire.

## **TOWN MEETING – YORK DISTRICT**

Ms. Altemus will conduct a York District Town Meeting beginning at 7:00 p.m. at Achilles Elementary School on Tuesday, September 8<sup>th</sup>. The main topic of her meeting will be reassessment, and she has requested that appropriate staff join her to help answer any questions.

## **TRAFFIC SIGNAL AT GLOUCESTER BUSINESS PARK**

The Request for Quotations for the traffic signal at the Gloucester Business Park was sent out in August. Quotations are due by close of business September 8, 2009. Requests for funds from the Transportation Opportunity Fund have been submitted for the current design costs and a request has been made to Sentara to release escrow funds that were committed to help defray signal costs. Six companies have been identified as tentative bidders.

## **TRANSITIONAL HOMES**

After another presentation on the subcommittee's recommendations for transitional homes, the Planning Commission (PC) plans to discuss this issue as a work session on September 17, 2009. At the September 1 Board of Supervisors (BOS) meeting, the PC is requesting that the BOS give them more time, but have committed to having a draft ordinance ready for public hearing in December and will hold work sessions to come up with consensus in order to meet that goal.

## **TRANSPORTATION PLANNING: LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLANNING**

The Planning Director is working with Hampton Roads Planning District Commission (HRPDC) on the 2034 Long Range Transportation Plan, which will identify regionally significant projects for Gloucester for the plan. Since the long range transportation plan is also fiscally constrained, Gloucester's projects may not

be in the plan, but future widening of Route 17, express busses, and bike/pedestrian access could be part of the vision plan, which will be a new section of this plan and is not fiscally constrained.

### **UTILITIES ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

At a special meeting of the Utilities Advisory Committee, members of the committee and attendees heard a presentation by a representative from the U. S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), who indicated that Gloucester County may not be eligible for grants to finance utility expansion due to the restrictions on maximum medium income. The Director of Utilities and the Utilities Advisory Committee are exploring ideas presented at the meeting and moving forward with the Preliminary Engineering Reports authorized by the Board for sewer projects.

### **UTILITY BILL COLLECTIONS**

At a Board member's request, at the September 1 Board of Supervisors meeting, our Director of Utilities will discuss the County Code sections allowing the County to collect utility bills outstanding before connections may be made for a new tenant or owner.

### **VACO REGIONAL RURAL CAUCUS MEETINGS**

We received notification from the Virginia Association of Counties (VACo) regarding Regional Rural Caucus Meetings to be held over the next couple of months around the state. The meetings are being hosted by the Virginia Rural Center with participation from many local governments and VACo. The purpose of the meetings is stated to be: "To build policy collaborative through dialogue and briefings on issues important to regional development. Promote a collaborative regional effort within state, federal, local and private sectors." Issues to be discussed include:

- Briefing of 2009 General Assembly Session and Rural Issues and Economic Status
- Briefing and Status of the Stimulus Funding for the Commonwealth
- Regional Transportation
- Community Structure and systems
- Education
- Agriculture
- Energy
- Other as requested
- 2009 Rural Summit Plans

### **VDEM GRANT REPORTING FOR FEMA PROJECTS**

The Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM) has notified us that they accepted all our June 30<sup>th</sup> Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) grant reports and reimbursement requests for the FEMA acquisition/elevation projects without questions. We should receive the reimbursements in the next couple of weeks.

### **WALKER HOUSE**

The Director of Economic Development is meeting with Hampton University in preparation for a September meeting at the State Board regarding the T. C. Walker House. The side porch of the Walker House has been removed and the house sealed to help stabilize the structure.

### **WATERVIEW MOBILE HOME**

The Director of Utilities has been working on a draft of a response to the Preliminary Engineering Report for Waterview Mobile Home Park for solutions to the septic problem on that property proposed by the owner and the engineers.

**WOODVILLE ROAD CONSTRUCTION PROJECT**

A mandatory pre-bid construction meeting was held this month for the road construction project at Woodville Park. Twenty-four contractors attended. Bids will be due on September 9.

Tuesday, September 1, 2009; 3:24 pm