

COUNTY CONNECTIONS

The Newsletter of the
Virginia Association of Counties

July 18, 2018



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2018 Presidential Initiative: Healthy Virginia Counties

By Sherrin Alsop | VACo President

Spotlight on Physical Activity - Healthy Virginia Counties in Action

In my last [column](#), we looked at the benefits of physical activity and how Virginia stacks up relative to other states. Virginians exercise at rates slightly above the national average, but as a state, we have plenty of room for improvement. Fortunately, as with the issues of food insecurity and obesity, Virginia's counties have stepped up to meet the challenge of promoting active living.

Access to Recreational Facilities

One barrier to getting enough exercise is lack of access to safe recreational spaces; when roads are unsafe for pedestrians or cyclists, off-road options, such as bike paths and trails, are great alternatives for outdoor recreation. By working with state and community partners, **Powhatan County** was able to leverage federal funding awarded through the state Department of Conservation and Recreation to renovate and expand the trails at Fighting Creek Park. In order to stretch the federal dollars and the required local match, the County divided the project into phases; County staff installed the bulk of the trail, local companies donated easements, and community volunteers such as the Boy Scouts, Goochland-Powhatan Master Gardeners, and the Rotary Club cleared brush, built benches, and donated fitness equipment. The result is a 2.5 mile loop that can be used for walking or jogging and connects the community to the many resources in Fighting Creek Park, including the YMCA, picnic shelters, and the public library.

A key funding source for these types of projects is the [Transportation Alternatives Program](#), which is funded through the major federal surface transportation bill (most recently the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act) and largely administered by the Virginia Department of Transportation. Recreational trails, projects that facilitate children walking or biking to school, and other non-traditional transportation projects are eligible to apply, based on certain criteria.

Another often-cited barrier to regular leisure-time physical activity is cost. **Dinwiddie County** tackled this challenge by

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The Opioid Crisis Part 4: Addiction's Impact on Community Resources



In recent years, American communities have struggled to effectively address the scourge of opioid abuse currently plaguing our nation. Knowing of the catastrophic impact of this addiction crisis, VACo wants to assist its members by providing easy access to helpful resources. We continue to explore research concerning the origins of the epidemic, overdose intervention, treatment options, and more.

Keep in mind that VACo is not endorsing any particular content or opinion, rather we hope that an array of information will aid those deliberating the most appropriate avenue for their community effort. It is important to remember that each resource is just one piece in a much larger puzzle, so weigh all material against other reliable sources.

Click on the link below to engage with material that will help you understand this complex issue.

VACo Contact: [Angela Inglett](#)

Read 1207 to the 95 Blog

Discussion Commences on School Safety Recommendations



As the House Select Committee on School Safety continues to discuss recommendations for the 2019 Virginia General Assembly Session, legislators are making it clear in advance what they think the recommendations need to address. In a [letter](#) to Speaker Cox and the rest of the Committee, Delegates VanValkenburg, Mullin, and Bourne emphasized the need to create 'communities of trust' within schools while ensuring that minors do not have access to guns.

Mental health recommendations emphasized funding mental health counselors in the Standards of Quality equal to guidance counselors, lifting the support cap, providing more support to the recovery phase of crisis response team training and policy, and exploring ways to incorporate trauma-informed schooling. Physical safety recommendations sought to double the current physical infrastructure grant to \$12 million and lower the local match requirement by 5 percent (eliminating match requirements for high risk divisions), increase the use of Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) between school districts and law enforcement agencies, share data between the Department of Education and the Department of Criminal Justice Services, and create a risk warrant protective order for minors. School community recommendations include requiring review of mandatory referrals to law enforcement, and allowing for a local match waiver for Children's Services Act funding for wraparound services. Lastly, gun recommendations would extend prohibition of minor possession of handguns to all firearms (excluding supervised use and guns as gifts and for sport), increase the penalty for improper storage of handguns and other weapons, and implement reporting standards for lost and stolen weapons.

During the July Committee meeting, the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission (JLARC) briefed members on recommendations related to prevention, planning and personnel, and facilities. Though JLARC found no 'single perfect approach,' a combination of methods used across states guided their recommendations. Citing 2017 Virginia Safety Audit data that shows 80 percent of students felt 'safe' in schools, JLARC asserted that the Commonwealth has no significant safety shortcomings.

Prevention recommendations emphasized measuring school climate through threat assessments. Threat assessments have been conducted in the Commonwealth for almost six years. During the 2016-2017 school year, there were 9,238 threat assessments conducted across the state. Other recommendations highlighted the use of crisis response apps and tip lines, following models in Colorado, Ohio, and North Carolina. In addition, school safety plans and school safety and SRO coordination plans were also found across districts in many states. Council members discussed funding strategies for the school climate survey beyond 2020, standardizing vendor selection for apps, and consolidating all school safety data.

Recommendations aimed at planning and personnel emphasized the use of local law enforcement in safety plan development, and making plans accessible. In this section, JLARC also discussed the benefits of training and use of SROs and School Security Officers (SSOs). According to the audit, student perceptions of safety increased with SRO presence. In Virginia, the Commonwealth is above average on staffing, with 53 percent of public schools with SROs and 76 percent of secondary schools with SROs, above the national averages of 42 and 58 percent. Though funding for SROs mainly comes from local dollars, the new biennium budget increases the SRO grant (ITEM 395 F.1.) from \$1.7 million each year to \$3 million in the first year and \$1.7 million in the second year. Language, also included in the original budget, allows for over \$1.7 million each year to be deposited into the grant fund if available. The Committee discussed current state funding of SROs and ways to standardize the certification of safety plans.

Facility recommendations compared capital grants for school safety across states. For example, in Florida, divisions may apply for and have access to \$99 million for one-time capital grants. In Virginia, divisions may apply for to up to \$100,000. To date, a total of \$6 million had been distributed since 2013.

The first round of recommendations will be shared at the next committee meeting on September 11 at 10 a.m. in the Pocahontas Building.

VACo Contact: [Khaki LaRiviere](#)

VACo SPOTLIGHT

Danny P. Mann Scott County District 5 Supervisor



Q1. You were first elected to the Board of Supervisors in 2011. What made you decide to run for elected office? What advice would you give to others who are thinking about entering public service?

Danny Mann: Yes, I was elected in 2011 and started my service to the county in January 2012. The reason I ran? I could see a political shift coming with the national election in 2008, and I didn't like what I was seeing. I have always expressed my opinion about how I thought things ought to be, so I decided to get more involved in my county. I've worked in coal mining most of my adult life (26 years with a coal company and the last part of my career as a mine inspector) and what I perceived as a "war on coal" was reason enough. My advice to anyone thinking about entering any public service is: Be optimistic and not political. Be prepared. I started as Chairman of the Board of Supervisors and served in that position for five years. Never let politics get in the way of doing the right thing.

Q2. You serve as a coal mine inspector, so you've had a front-row seat to the changing fortunes of the coal industry, a major component of the economy in southwest Virginia. What do you see as the major challenges and opportunities facing Scott County and southwest Virginia in the next 10 years?

DM: As a coal mine inspector I see the faces of many coal miners and have been asked, "What are we going to do if we lose our jobs?" Heart breaking...period! Scott County does not receive any revenue, such as coal severance tax, but a lot of coal miners live in our county. There is a company in Scott County (Town of Duffield) that produces/rebuilds mining equipment, and they are an excellent company and contribute much to the county. They nearly went under during the peak of the downturn in coal. But things have turned around for them. The steam coal market (electrical generation) is gone and that market will not come back. But on a higher note, the metallurgical market (steel making) has rebounded well. Virginia is blessed to have a higher-grade coal (high BTU, low ash, and low sulfur) and is a product that is in high demand. The next 10 years is going to be exciting with recent job announcements (50 in the northern part of the county). I think there are many more to come. One concern I have is getting a work force prepared for the opportunities that are ahead. And I think the substance abuse issue is almost an "epidemic" as it is in most other localities causing some folks to be unemployed.

Q3. You serve on an advisory committee for Scott County Junior Appalachian Musicians (JAMS), which works to pass down the traditions of old-time and bluegrass music to a new generation. How do you see Southwest Virginia's rich cultural heritage fitting into its future?

DM: The JAMS program (Junior Appalachian Musicians) is working well. The purpose of JAMS is to introduce old-time music to our youngest folks through the school system (after hours). Scott County has the deepest roots in the nation as far as musical heritage, especially country music and old-time music. With Scott County being the home of the Carter family and home to the Carter Fold, which is open every Saturday night in Hiltons, VA, it is very important to bring a program (like JAMS) into the county.

Q4. What are the must-do activities for a first-time visitor to Scott County?

DM: For first-time visitors, I would encourage them to visit some, if not all, our recreational venues in Scott County, starting with Natural Tunnel State Park. To me this is a "must do" activity, and there are cabin rentals on site. From there, if one is into old-time music, visit the Carter Fold in Hiltons. The falls at Little Stony Creek is a sight to behold. And, there is the Devil's Bathtub. This is an attraction that has recently gained nationwide attention. On most days, especially weekends, there may be as many as 50-100 vehicles parked along the tiny narrow road leading to the site. Scott County is in the process of purchasing property in that immediate area to alleviate some of the issues that we are experiencing. The Devil's Bathtub was recently declared nationally one of Virginia's "best kept secrets."

Q5. Scott County has advocated strongly for state parks as key elements of economic development. What are your hopes for the new Clinch River State Park, which is in the process of development?

DM: The Clinch River State Park would be a great asset to the county. The Clinch River cuts through the middle of Scott County. I live beside that river (99 feet from the river's edge) and to get that designation would be a boost to our local economy. On most days, especially weekends, there may be as many as 100-plus "floaters" passing my backyard. They are fishing, kayaking, tubing, etc. And, they are spending money! So, to get that designation (State Park) would be great. The town of Dungannon (my hometown) is now marketing itself as at "The Heart of the Clinch" and they are seeing a boost.

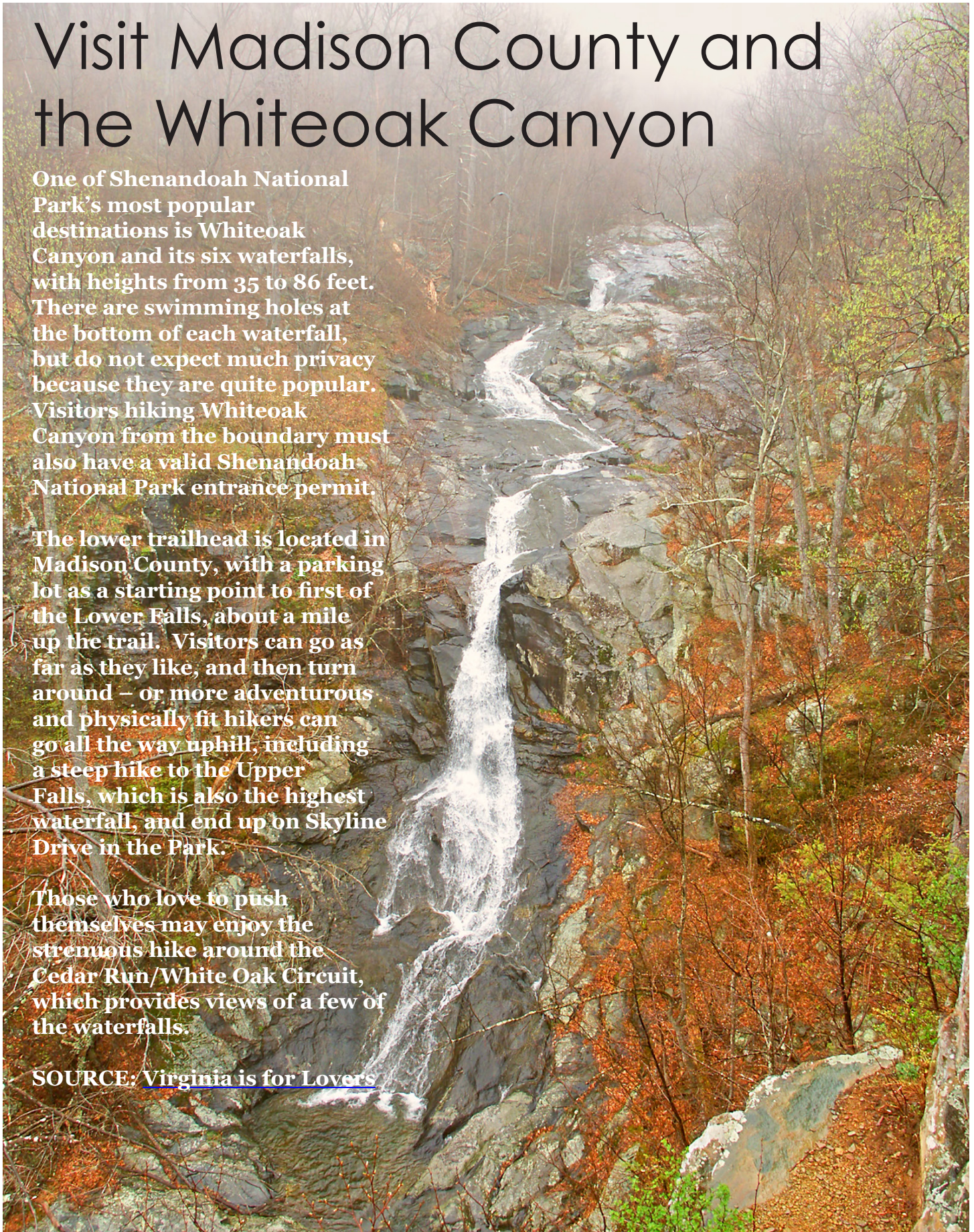
Visit Madison County and the Whiteoak Canyon

One of Shenandoah National Park's most popular destinations is Whiteoak Canyon and its six waterfalls, with heights from 35 to 86 feet. There are swimming holes at the bottom of each waterfall, but do not expect much privacy because they are quite popular. Visitors hiking Whiteoak Canyon from the boundary must also have a valid Shenandoah National Park entrance permit.

The lower trailhead is located in Madison County, with a parking lot as a starting point to first of the Lower Falls, about a mile up the trail. Visitors can go as far as they like, and then turn around – or more adventurous and physically fit hikers can go all the way uphill, including a steep hike to the Upper Falls, which is also the highest waterfall, and end up on Skyline Drive in the Park.

Those who love to push themselves may enjoy the strenuous hike around the Cedar Run/White Oak Circuit, which provides views of a few of the waterfalls.

SOURCE: [Virginia is for Lovers](#)





Mark Your Calendars

VACo Regional Meetings



VACo is excited to start the 2018 Regional Meetings season. We visited Westmoreland County on May 22 and Dinwiddie County on May 30. We traveled to Albemarle County on June 14 for the Region 5 Meeting and then to Grayson County on June 21 for the Region 12 Meeting. Regional Meetings are held annually to give local elected officials, county administrators, and legislators an opportunity to discuss challenges and offer solutions.

Region 10 | Tuesday, July 24 | 2-4PM | Pittsylvania County | [Agenda](#)

Region 3 | Wednesday, August 8 | 2-4PM | Hanover County | [Agenda](#)

Regions 7 & 8 | Thursday, August 30 | 7-9PM | Stafford County | [Agenda](#)



VACo greatly values these meetings and offers sponsorship opportunities. [Sponsor one meeting or the entire season.](#)

VACo Contact: [Angela Inglett](#)

**NEWS FROM OUR
ASSOCIATE MEMBERS**

Chris Crouch Joins RRMM Architects as Director of Business Development

RRMM Architects is pleased to announce that Chris Crouch has joined the firm as the Director of Business Development. Chris will oversee all external business development opportunities for RRMM, as well as internal marketing operations.

“We welcome Chris to the RRMM family,” says Duane Harver, CEO and President of RRMM Architects. “I can already see how Chris will bring great value through his organizational skills, research capabilities, and visionary thinking. He’s simply a great fit for our needs.”

Chris comes to RRMM Architects from S.B. Ballard Construction where he served as the Marketing and Business Development Manager. Prior to working at S.B. Ballard Construction, Chris served as the Director of Football Operations at Old Dominion University.

Chris is active in the community, and serves as a board member on the Chesapeake Public Schools Education Foundation and the Chesapeake Regional Healthcare Foundation. He is also involved with the Little Feet Meet (Special Olympics) for Norfolk Public Schools.

Chris is a 2005 graduate of Old Dominion University with a masters in Sports Management and a 2003 graduate of Lock Haven University with a degree in health and physical education. He resides in Chesapeake with his wife Adeena and their two sons, Landon and Dawson.

About RRMM Architects

RRMM Architects is an award-winning, full-service architecture, planning, and interior design firm with offices in Chesapeake, Richmond, Roanoke, Arlington, and Rockville, MD. Founded in 1988, the firm recently celebrated their 30-year anniversary. RRMM is committed to client success and to their mission of creating great places to live, work, play and learn. To learn more about RRMM Architects, please visit <http://rrmm.com>.

Media Contact

Danielle Ruble | Marketing Coordinator | druble@rrmm.com

Governor Announces Revenue Surplus for FY 2018



BUDGET

Governor Northam announced last week that the state appears to have closed FY 2018 with a significant General Fund (GF) revenue surplus, based on preliminary figures. According to the Governor's statement, the surplus is estimated at \$551.9 million, representing 6.3 percent growth relative to the previous year, and is largely attributable to growth in individual income tax withholding and nonwithholding payments. Payroll withholding revenues grew by 5.4 percent, comfortably ahead of the forecast of 3.5 percent growth, and nonwithholding revenue far outpaced the forecast of 4.3 percent growth, increasing by 15.1 percent. Sales tax collections grew by 3.1 percent, slightly above forecasted growth of 3 percent.

In a [Richmond Times-Dispatch article](#), Secretary of Finance Aubrey Layne suggested that the increase in income tax withholding may reflect long-term economic growth, while some of the large increase in income tax nonwithholding, traditionally a volatile revenue source, may be subject to refunds later this year, as some taxpayers have made estimated payments but not yet filed returns. A portion of the growth in income tax withholding may also be attributable to a quirk of the calendar this year, as businesses may have made deposits at the end of June rather than the first week of July to accommodate the Independence Day holiday falling on a Wednesday. July 2018 revenues will need to be assessed in concert with June 2018 revenues to determine if some of the additional June collections reflected a shift from one month to another.

In accordance with statutory and budget language passed earlier this year, the surplus will be deposited into the new Revenue Reserve Fund, after any required deposits to the Revenue Stabilization Fund and the Water Quality Improvement Fund. The new cash reserve was created in part to alleviate concerns expressed by Standard and Poor's last year that Virginia's reserves were insufficient to weather potential future economic downturns.

The Governor will present more detailed information to the "money committees" on August 17.

VACo Contact: [Katie Boyle](#)

Review of Education Mandates Underway



As part of its periodic reassessment of mandates on local government, the Department of Education is currently soliciting comments on three mandates: school staffing ratios for certain instructional and support staff, Standards of Accreditation requirements, and reporting on broadband connectivity in schools. Comments are due to Rebecca Askew, Senior Policy Analyst at the Department of Education, by August 31, 2018, and may be provided using the Commission on Local Government's [Locality Fiscal Impact Comments Form](#). Comments should be emailed to Ms. Askew at rebecca.askew@doe.virginia.gov.

Additional information about the mandates currently under review is available at [this link](#). Additional information about the mandate review process is available on the Commission on Local Government's [website](#).

VACo Contact: [Katie Boyle](#)

County Officials' Summit shaping into form



VACo Education and Steering Committee Meetings
Thursday, August 16

VACo Board of Directors Meeting
Friday, August 17

[Fredericksburg Expo and Conference Center](#) | 2371 Carl D. Silver Parkway | Fredericksburg, VA 22401 | [Agenda](#)

VACo's County Officials' Summit is now less than one month away! We hope you're making plans to join us at this exciting event on August 16 at the Fredericksburg Expo and Conference Center. If you haven't yet registered, you can do so [here](#). Registration deadline is August 6. Hotel accommodations can be made at the Homewood Suites by Hilton Fredericksburg by clicking [here](#). Keep in mind that to take advantage of VACo's room block, you must reserve your room by July 26.

The 2018 County Officials' Summit will feature incumbent U.S. Senator Tim Kaine and U.S. Senate Republican candidate Corey Stewart, who will separately share their policy agendas and take your questions about issues of importance to Virginia's counties. VACo is also pleased to welcome 7th District Democratic candidate Abigail Spanberger. Stay tuned to VACo's website as additional candidates confirm their participation. Don't miss this unique opportunity to engage with those seeking to represent Virginia in the United States Congress.



Following the legislative portion of the Summit, we'll adjourn to our Steering Committee meetings, where committee members will discuss the issues facing their counties, deliberate policy proposals, and engage with experts on matters of note to each committee. These steering committee meetings are some of the first steps to the creation of VACo's Legislative Program for 2019 and should not be missed.

We look forward to seeing you at the 2018 County Officials' Summit!

VACo Contact: [Angela Inglett](#)

Mixed-Delivery Preschool Grant Program



The Virginia Early Childhood Foundation (VECF) is pleased to announce a third round of Mixed-Delivery Preschool grants – an opportunity for local communities across Virginia to field-test strategies and solutions to barriers that have prevented all eligible children from participating in Virginia’s preschool initiative.

Funding and [legislation](#) establishing the Mixed-Delivery Preschool Fund and Grant Program were originally approved by the 2016 General Assembly. We are delighted that continued funding was provided by the Governor and General Assembly in the FY19-20 biennial budget to support communities’ capacity to provide quality-focused early learning settings through public/private partnerships.

Additional details about the FY19 Mixed-Delivery Preschool grants, including grant priorities, eligibility requirements, and award amounts can be found in the [Grant Announcement](#).

Important dates:

- August 3, 2018 - Request for Proposals released
- October 8, 2018 - Proposals due to VECF
- October 31, 2018 – Notification of decisions
- November 1, 2018 – Project period begins

*Technical assistance in the form of webinars, FAQs, and phone calls will be provided throughout the application period.

We hope that communities will begin to think now about innovative strategies and collaborative partners to address barriers to at-risk preschool services. For inspiration, take a look at the [project summaries](#) of our 10 mixed-delivery grantees.

To receive announcements and reminders about the grant program, follow VECF on [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#).

Visit our [Mixed-Delivery webpage](#) for all information regarding the grant program and application process. For questions or comments, please send inquiries to mixeddelivery@vecf.org.

A robust mixed-delivery system, made up of early learning services in both public and private settings, is not only an important strategy for reaching the most at-risk children but it also contributes to an integrated systems approach to high quality early childhood education for all young children in Virginia. We hope to engage many of you and your communities in this important work.

Sincerely,

Kathy Glazer | President





Virginia Freedom of Information Advisory Council

2018 FREEDOM OF INFORMATION (FOIA) “RECORDS” TRAINING

July 25 | August 29 | October 3 | November 7

The Commonwealth of Virginia’s Freedom of Information Advisory Council will conduct its 2018 FOIA “Records” training in Richmond starting July 25. The training sessions will be held at the Pocahontas Building located at 900 East Main Street, Richmond, VA 23219, near the Virginia State Capitol.

Citizens, media representatives, public officials, and public employees with an interest in learning more about access to public records under the Virginia Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) are invited to register for this free training presentation. The presentation will provide an overview of the legal requirements regarding access to public records under FOIA, including what is a public record, how to make a public records request, how to respond to records requests, information on exemptions from mandatory disclosure, and the remedies available should a violation occur.

The training sessions are scheduled for July 25, August 29, October 3, and November 7. Each session will provide 1.5 hours of continuing legal education credit for attorneys, and will also count as the required annual training for FOIA officers.

For registration information, check the FOIA Council’s website at <http://foiacouncil.dls.virginia.gov/foiacouncil.htm> OR contact the FOIA Council directly at 866.448.4100.

Contact: Darlene Jordan

Organization: Virginia Freedom of Information Advisory Council

Telephone No: 804.698.1810 / 866.448.4100

Email: djordan@dls.virginia.gov

Website: <http://foiacouncil.virginia.gov>

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creatively reusing a building that was generously donated to the community to help meet the need for recreation programs in the southern part of the county. Dinwiddie County's significant investment in renovating the building, paired with community donations and foundation support, allowed the new Robert and Betty Ragsdale Community Center, which opened in May 2017, to offer a seniors' lounge, an indoor playground, and a computer lab, among other amenities. The center also includes an exercise room, which residents may use for a fee of \$1 per hour. This pay-as-you-go fee structure is much more affordable than a traditional gym membership, which often requires a significant monthly fee. The center has been an immediate success: in its first year of operation, approximately 13,500 people visited – including VACo members from Regions One and Four, who met at the center in May as part of VACo's 2018 regional meetings.

Botetourt County is also finding ways to enhance county assets through community investment. The Recreation Incentive Fund provides matching funds for recreation improvements on County-owned property, as well as property owned by towns within the County. Projects can include repairs or enhancements to property as well as the creation of new facilities on County property, and funding is awarded through an application process that includes vetting by an advisory commission of community volunteers. Assistant to the County Administrator Cody Sexton cited the Greenfield Disc Golf Course as a particularly successful project; the course was built on County-owned land by a local disc golf association with the assistance of the Recreation Incentive Fund, creating a wonderful public amenity by leveraging public dollars with private funding and volunteer labor. Since the Fund was established in 1998, it has generated more than \$1.5 million in improvements, with less than half of that amount contributed in County funds. The Recreation Incentive Fund has been so successful that it has served as a model for a sister program for Botetourt County library projects.

Healthy Habits for Children

Recent research is confirming what we know intuitively to be true – children who are active early in life grow into healthy adults. An [interesting study](#) in 2013 found that the greatest predictor of its subjects' health status at age 75 was whether they had played varsity sports as teenagers! The benefits of exercise for children can be academic as well as physical – a [recent Danish study](#) found that kids who rode bicycles or walked to school performed better on tasks that required concentration.

Walking or biking to school has declined significantly in America over the past several decades; in a national survey, parents cited distance and a variety of safety-related concerns as barriers to this transportation option. The [Safe Routes to School \(SRTS\)](#) program, created in the 2005 federal surface transportation reauthorization bill, provides funding to encourage children to bike and walk to school by making these transportation options safer. In 2013, SRTS was folded into the Transportation Alternatives program (a limited amount of non-infrastructure grant funding remains, which may be used for purposes such as education and enforcement).

Stafford County's "Select-a-Sport" Day, a free community event hosted in partnership with several local youth sports organizations, allows children to try out a variety of sports without having to make what can often be a substantial financial commitment for equipment and registration fees. This fun event, which started in 2014, allows children to experiment with sports such as field hockey, tennis, soccer, lacrosse, volleyball, football, basketball, and golf, at no charge to the participants, and at a relatively low cost to the County. This year's event was held this past weekend – you can hear about all the fun on offer in this video shared on Stafford County Parks and Recreation's [Facebook page](#).

Workforce Wellness

County governments are major employers in Virginia, and efforts to improve the health of the county workforce can ripple out into the community at large in meaningful ways. In addition to the benefits of leading by example and encouraging employees who serve others to take care of themselves, promoting a culture of health within county governments can lead to potential savings in benefit costs. The Centers for Disease Control points out that four of the ten most costly health conditions for American employers are all related to heart disease and stroke – conditions for which regular physical activity can reduce risks.

Henrico County implemented an intensive employee fitness and wellness program in 2009, pairing employees with fitness trainers who worked with them to set goals and design an individual fitness plan. Participating employees made major improvements in their health even in a short period of time. The County also offers free fitness programming to all employees, with access to a weight room, fitness classes, and group fitness training sessions.

Extensive resources on workforce wellness are available at the CDC's [Workplace Health Promotion](#) site, which includes information on evidence-based programs for specific conditions, research projects, and resources for employer self-assessments.

DEQ Opens Stormwater Grant Application Window - OCTOBER 12 DEADLINE

Just to make sure you didn't miss this, DEQ recently issued its Stormwater Local Assistance Fund (SLAF) solicitation for county applications. Here are a few highlights about timing:

- Due to the limited amount of funding available this year, any local government that was authorized for SLAF funding in the FY 2014 and FY 2015 funding cycle that have not received construction bids on all remaining authorized 2014 projects and on at least one authorized 2015 project **by October 1, 2018** will be ineligible for funding from this (2019) funding cycle.
- Applications are due by **October 12, 2018**. See DEQ announcement for details.

In terms of grant amounts and use:

- Approximately \$20 million in matching grant funds available for distribution based on the new appropriation.
- In addition to stormwater projects, local governments may apply on the basis of contracting for Non-Point Source Nutrient Credit purchases (capped at 25 percent of total funds available)
- Cost effectiveness remains a very important consideration. In previous years only SLAF project applications with costs below \$50,000 per pound of Total Phosphorous were authorized for funding, and DEQ says that it may apply a similar cost effectiveness cap to this funding round that will be based on the applications received.

The DEQ announcement is available here: <https://www.deq.virginia.gov/Programs/Water/CleanWaterFinancingAssistance/StormwaterFundingPrograms.aspx>

Application forms and guidelines are available here: <https://www.deq.virginia.gov/Programs/Water/CleanWaterFinancingAssistance/ApplicationsInfo.aspx>



The reservation form for rooms at The Omni Homestead during the 2018 VACo Annual Conference was emailed to county administrators, VACo Board of Directors and confirmed exhibitors on June 18.

If you have questions about the room reservation process or did not get the form, call Carol Cameron at 804.343.2507. For anyone new to the reservation process, click here to review the [VACo Lodging Policy](#).

VACo Contact: [Carol Cameron](#)



The new Tax Cuts and Jobs Act (the Act) has a lesser known provision that provides for new community development incentives designed to increase long-term investments in low income communities. Sections 1400Z-1 and 1400Z-2 of the IRS Code tries to spur economic development and job creation in distressed communities by providing incentives to investors.

The Act provides for the designation of specific low-income community population census tracts as Qualified Opportunity Zones (QOZs). A QOZ must be nominated by the State in which the tract is located and certified by the Secretary of the U.S. Treasury. The Act grants potential significant tax incentives to distressed communities through investments in QOZs.

VACo Contact: [Vicky Steinruck, CPA](#)

Digital Counties Survey 2018 – Winners Announced

The Center for Digital Government (CDG) and the National Association of Counties (NACo) announced the winners of the 15th anniversary Digital Counties Survey. The survey, conducted by CDG in partnership with NACo, identifies the best technology practices among U.S. counties, including initiatives that streamline delivery of government services, encourage open data, collaboration and shared services, enhance cybersecurity and contribute to disaster response and recovery efforts.

“Innovative counties are utilizing technology and data to better inform and protect themselves and their citizens, to save taxpayer money and to provide a better citizen experience,” said Teri Takai, executive director, CDG. “The Center for Digital Government congratulates this year’s winners for all the efforts they are making to improve the lives of their residents and others.”

“Effective technology has proven to be a key tool for efficiency in many facets of county government,” said NACo Executive Director Matthew Chase. “We applaud this year’s Digital Counties Survey winners for showcasing the value of innovation and adaptation. Their embrace of cutting-edge approaches has benefited residents while ensuring good stewardship of taxpayer resources.”

Virginia was well represented with Arlington County winning the 150,000-249,999 population category. Other Virginia counties placing in the top 10 of different population categories include Fairfax County, Chesterfield County, Albemarle County, Montgomery County, Roanoke County, Franklin County, York County and Gloucester County.

Here’s this year’s first-place winners:

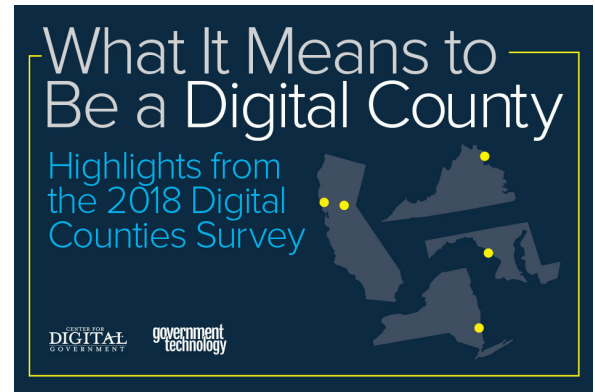
Montgomery County, Md. (1,000,000 or more population category): As part of their digital government strategy, Montgomery County added 47 new datasets to complete 150 published, consumable datasets, and added a Chief Data Officer to manage the expanded open government, open data, open budget, open spending and performance management portals. The county also completed an Artificial Intelligence pilot using Amazon Alexa as a virtual assistant to help people access their open data.

County of Sonoma, Calif. (500,000 – 999,999 population category): During and after last fall’s wildfires, which destroyed over 5,300 residences and businesses, the County of Sonoma and City of Santa Rosa collaborated on a co-branded website to provide citizens with comprehensive response/recovery information, including a Fire Debris Removal request and tracking function. Online resources were built to facilitate communications, visualizations, evacuation/shelters, housing, debris removal and more. Facebook, Twitter and additional social media were used and continue to be strong tools.

Dutchess County, N.Y. (250,000-499,999 population category): County progress was made with shared services, cloud-based migrations, cybersecurity and county end-user training. Shared services are robust with a new coordinator position; an annual summit; 32 shared services for municipalities; a \$1 million annual incentives grant program; and additional IT offerings -- saving municipalities millions of dollars. GIS applications are shared with 30 municipalities, businesses and the public for a \$15 million annual savings.

Arlington County, Va. (150,000-249,999 population category): Arlington ensures that investments in smart city technologies and infrastructure fulfill citizen expectations. Measures include the Digital Destiny campaign, input from community groups and a data analytics partnership with Virginia Tech. The county formed a Digital Innovation team to initiate the Open Data Portal, Data Analytics program, mobile applications and the use of Microsoft 365 tools.

Nevada County, Calif. (up to 150,000 population category): Citizen engagement is a priority in the county with the “Participate Nevada County” crowd-sourcing website for residents’ ideas and comments on upcoming county projects. Additional strategic initiatives include increased agility, moving additional applications to the cloud, and taking a proactive approach to cybersecurity. The Board of Supervisors’ strong ICT investment policies and enterprise technology reserve funding has been a key to success.



[Click here to read the entire press release.](#)

**RICHMOND REGIONAL
PLANNING DISTRICT COMMISSION**

9211 FOREST HILL AVENUE, SUITE 200
RICHMOND, VIRGINIA 23235
(804) 323-2033

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
June 12, 2018

Contact: Martha Shickle
office: (804) 323-2033
mshickle@richmondregional.org

NEW OFFICERS INSTALLED

Richmond, VA – The Richmond Regional Planning District Commission (RRPDC) installed new officers for its fiscal year 2019 during its meeting held on Thursday, July 12, 2018. New officers will serve effective immediately for a one year term ending June 30, 2019.

Officers are:

Chair Cynthia I. Newbille, Richmond City Council

Vice Chair Tyrone E. Nelson, Henrico County Board of Supervisors

Treasurer George F. Spagna, Jr., Ashland Town Council

Secretary Patricia A. Paige, New Kent County Board of Supervisors

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The **Richmond Regional Planning District Commission** is an intergovernmental agency that facilitates collaboration among the nine local jurisdictions in the Richmond Region. The RRPDC is staff to the **Richmond Regional Transportation Planning Organization**, the federally-designated forum for regional transportation decision-making and funds-allocating. The 33-member RRPDC board includes 22 elected officials, seven local Planning Commission members, and four citizens representing the combined 1 million residents of the Town of Ashland, the City of Richmond, and the Counties of Charles City, Chesterfield, Goochland, Hanover, Henrico, New Kent, and Powhatan.

WWW.RICHMONDREGIONAL.ORG

TOWN OF ASHLAND CITY OF RICHMOND COUNTY OF CHARLES CITY COUNTY OF CHESTERFIELD
COUNTY OF GOOCHLAND COUNTY OF HANOVER COUNTY OF HENRICO COUNTY OF NEW KENT COUNTY OF POWHATAN

FREE SUMMER MEALS

AVAILABLE HERE FOR ALL CHILDREN 18 YEARS AND YOUNGER

No registration required.

COMIDAS GRATIS PARA NIÑOS DURANTE EL VERANO, DISPONIBLES AQUI
NO SE REQUIERE INSCRIPCIÓN PREVIA.

TEXT "FOOD" TO 877-877
ENVIE UN TEXTO "COMIDA" AL 877-877

Visit NoKidHungry.org or
text **FOOD** to **877-877** to find more sites.



Thank you for your continued support of the Summer Meals Program in Virginia. Because of you, 2018 has shaped up to be an innovative and exciting year.

Here are just a few examples of the wonderful programs happening around the state:

- North: Fairfax County Public Schools

<http://www.fairfaxconnection.com/news/2018/jun/27/fairfax-county-schools-launch-summer-meals-program/>

- Southwest: People Inc, Feeding America Southwest

https://www.heraldcourier.com/news/people-incorporated-provides-free-meals-to-kids-this-summer/article_ff0436b7-4cb8-50a2-a1d1-b56b78553388.html

<https://www.wsls.com/daytime-blue-ridge/feeding-america-works-to-keep-local-kids-fed-during-summer-1>

- Southside: Danville City Public Schools

<https://www.wsls.com/daytime-blue-ridge/feeding-america-works-to-keep-local-kids-fed-during-summer-1>

- Central: Louisa County Public Schools

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SMvzhS6TV98&feature=youtu.be>

- Southeast: Suffolk Public Library, Virginia Peninsula Foodbank

<https://wtkr.com/2018/06/25/suffolk-library-offering-free-lunch-activities-to-youth-this-summer/>

<https://www.13newsnow.com/article/news/local/peninsulanow/virginia-peninsula-foodbank-participates-in-summer-food-service-program/291-563717265>

"Summer Action Week" was promoted July 9-13.

<https://spark.adobe.com/page/SK0lMNuPU09E8/>

With most programs in full swing, now is the perfect time to remind families about texting "FOOD" or "COMIDA" to 877-877 to find meal sites near them.

<http://www.vaco.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Summer-Action-Week-Toolkit-for-Partners-Virginia.pdf>

We hope that this outreach will help combat the participation decreases that we often see in the second half of the summer (due to heat, travel, and a number of other factors).

THANK YOU for all that you do to make sure that no kid goes hungry in the summer!

Become a Certified Supervisor



SIGN UP TODAY! | [The Supervisors' Certification Brochure](#)

The Virginia Association of Counties, in partnership with Virginia Tech and Virginia Cooperative Extension, offers Virginia's county supervisors an opportunity to enhance their capacity to effectively and efficiently lead their respective counties by participating in the Virginia Certified County Supervisors' Program.

Since its inception in 2005, 70 supervisors representing more than 40 counties spanning from Bath County and Highland County in the west to Stafford County and Richmond County in the east have completed the training program and have earned their credentials as a certified county supervisor. Of greater importance, each supervisor has gained the insight, perspective and confidence needed to address the issues and opportunities that constitute the governance challenge in the 21st century.

The Virginia Certified County Supervisors' Program, originally designed by a cross-section of county supervisors and appointed officials in 2005 and subsequently reviewed and reaffirmed in 2009, features a five course curriculum. The format used with each course is designed to maximize learning and student engagement. Each course begins with a six-hour classroom session that is topically driven and reflective of the subject matter being covered. Following the classroom session is an eight-week home study session. Each course participant is assigned relevant articles and books, and completes assignments drawn from the readings on a weekly basis. One or more essays are also assigned during this portion of the course. The third and final course component of each course is a concluding six-hour classroom session.

A variety of topics are discussed during the closing session including a review of the books read and the assignments completed by each class member. Each course is designed to provide the participant with a solid understanding of the subject or topic being examined. Faculty from Virginia Tech and Virginia Cooperative Extension, VACo staff and local government practitioners from across the state serve as the program's core faculty. Each course is designed to address fundamental learning objectives which, in turn, challenge traditional thinking while highlighting best practices models that can enhance governance at the local level.

[Managing While Leading](#)

Understanding Your Powers, Duties, and Responsibilities

Opening Session | September 7 | Albemarle County

Closing Session | November 2 | VACo Training Center

Registration Deadline | August 20

[Registration Form](#) | [Register Online](#)

employment opportunities



The Virginia Association of Counties accepts employment ads in a PDF file or a link to a job site. Please include information for applying, and a link to other important information. Please do not fax your employment ad. VACo members are not charged for placing an employment ad. The cost is \$50 per ad for non-VACo members. VACo publishes the ad on its website and mobile app as well as the upcoming County Connections issue. If you have any questions or concerns, please email [Valerie Russell](mailto:Valerie.Russell@vacounty.org).



AUTOMATION SPECIALIST | Chesterfield County | Posted July 16



PROGRAM COORDINATOR | James City County | Posted July 13



BENEFIT PROGRAM SPECIALIST I | James City County | Posted July 13



ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT | James City County | Posted July 13



FAMILY SERVICES SPECIALIST I/II | New Kent County | Posted July 13



SENIOR PLANNER | Fauquier County | Posted July 11



COUNTY ATTORNEY SERVICES REP | Madison County | Posted July 11



EMERGENCY SERVICES COORDINATOR | Grayson County | Posted July 11



EROSION & SEDIMENT CONTROL INSPECTOR | Carroll County | Posted July 10



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR (HUMANE SOCIETY) | Warren County | Posted July 10



DIRECTOR OF UTILITIES/PUBLIC WORKS | Spotsylvania County | Posted July 10



ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT | Hampton Roads Regional Jail | Posted July 10



DEPUTY SHERIFF | Montgomery County | Posted July 9



DIRECTOR OF REAL ESTATE | Fairfax County | Posted July 9



BUDGET ANALYST | Fauquier County | Posted July 9



DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT | Albemarle County | Posted July 9



EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER I/II/III/IV | James City County | Posted July 6



INTAKE OFFICER | James City County | Posted July 6



LEAD LIFEGUARD | James City County | Posted July 6



PARKS & GROUNDS FOREMAN | James City County | Posted July 6



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR | City of Bristol, VA | Posted July 6



WATER RESOURCES SCIENTIST/ENGINEER | Hampton Roads Planning District Commission | Posted July 5



ACCOUNTING TECHNICIAN | James City County | Posted July 2



DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT | Isle of Wight County | Posted July 2



PLANNER II & PLANNER III | Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission | Posted July 2



FINANCIAL SYSTEMS & BUSINESS OPERATIONS MANAGER | Albemarle County | Posted July 2



TAX COMPLIANCE AUDITOR | Chesterfield County | Posted July 2



CUSTOMER SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE | James City County | Posted June 29



ASSISTANT ATTORNEY | Essex County | Posted June 29



ASSISTANT COUNTY ATTORNEY | Augusta County | Posted June 29



ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT | Hampton Roads Regional Jail | Posted June 29



DIRECTOR OF FACILITIES & ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES | Albemarle County | Posted June 28



PLANNER | Fluvanna County | Posted June 25



CAPTAIN (DEPT. EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES) | Westmoreland County | Posted June 25



INDUSTRIAL MECHANIC | James City County | Posted June 25



POLICE CHIEF | City of Hopewell | Posted June 25



QUALITY ASSURANCE COORDINATOR | Hanover County | Posted June 22



CUSTOMER SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE | James City County | Posted June 22



MAINTENANCE SPECIALIST | James City County | Posted June 22



FOOD SERVICES SUPERVISOR | Frederick County | Posted June 22



PC TECHNICIAN | Frederick County | Posted June 22



COUNTY SCHOOL ATTORNEY | Albemarle County | Posted June 22



ASSISTANT BRANCH MANAGER | Floyd County | Posted June 21



DIRECTOR OF TECHNOLOGY | Essex County | Posted June 18



EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

President: Sherrin C. Alsop | King and Queen County

President-Elect: Tim A. Reeves | Wythe County

1st Vice President: Stephen W. Bowen | Nottoway County

2nd Vice President: Jeff C. McKay | Fairfax County

Secretary Treasurer: Donald L. Hart | Jr., Accomack County

Immediate Past President: Mary W. Biggs | Montgomery County

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Director of Technical Services: John N. Kandris, A+, ACT, CCA

Administrative Secretary: Valerie M. Russell

VACORP: Chris Carey, Administrator, 888.822.6772

VACo exists to support county officials and to effectively represent, promote and protect the interests of counties to better serve the people of Virginia.

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