

COUNTY CONNECTIONS

The Newsletter of the
Virginia Association of Counties

March 20, 2019



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Bills Are Now On the Governor's Desk: What Comes Next?

While the General Assembly may have wrapped up the bulk of its business for the year and adjourned *sine die* on February 24, the legislative process keeps churning in Richmond.

Over the course of a short, 46-day session, legislators introduced over 3,100 bills and resolutions. Two months of hearings and debates later, only approximately 2/3 of these bills survived the scrutiny of the House of Delegates and the Senate.

So, what now?

Pursuant to [Article V, Section 6 of the Constitution of Virginia](#), when presented with a bill, the Governor has three options.

First, the Governor may **sign the bill** if he approves of it, and the bill shall become law. Similarly, if the Governor does not take *any* action on the bill within its constitutionally required timeline (seven days if there are seven or more days remaining in the session; 30 days if there are less than seven days remaining in the session), the bill shall become law without his signature.

Second, the Governor may **recommend amendments** to the bill and return it to the chamber in which the bill originated. From here, there are several possible paths which the bill can take. If both the House and Senate agree to the Governor's entire recommendation by a simple majority vote, the bill shall become law. If both the House and Senate agree by a two-thirds vote to the original bill that was sent to the Governor's desk (thus rejecting all of the amendments), the original bill shall become law. If the Governor has offered several amendments, each chamber may act on the amendments either en bloc (in total) or individually. If one chamber agrees to one or more of the amendments, the bill and recommended amendments are sent to the other chamber for consideration. If either chamber fails to agree to the Governor's full recommendation or fails to agree to at least one of the Governor's amendments, the bill will return to the Governor in its originally passed form for action. If, on the other hand, both houses agree to some of the recommended amendments (but not all), the bill will be resent to the Governor with the agreed-upon amendments.

Third, the Governor may **veto the bill** and return the bill with his objections to the chamber in which the bill originated. There, the chamber may override the Governor's veto by a two-thirds vote of the members present. If the chamber successfully overrides the Governor's veto, the bill will travel back to the other side of the Capitol building for consideration by the other chamber, who also have to override the veto with a two-thirds vote. If both chambers successfully override the veto, the bill will become law without the Governor's signature. If either chamber fails to override the veto, however, the veto will be sustained and the bill shall not become law.

Currently, the Governor has until midnight on March 26 to act on (sign, amend, or veto) the bills that the General Assembly has sent him. Next, both the Senate and House of Delegates are scheduled to reconvene on April 3 to appropriately deal with any possible amendments or vetoes that they have been presented.

VACo Contact: [Chris McDonald, Esq.](#)



VACo Regional Meetings Sponsorship Opportunities April to September 2019

#VACoEducation #VACoRegionalMeetings

Sponsor one or more of the 2019 VACo Regional Meetings and be part of the event. Participants will include Board Chairs and Vice Chairs, Supervisors, Legislators, Planning District Commissioners, County Administrators and Executive Staff from neighboring counties who face similar regional issues and concerns. The priority issue could be something your company or organization can help with.

Choose from the list below of this year's regional meetings and return completed form as instructed. Your \$200 sponsorship will provide light refreshments at one meeting and you will receive a place on the agenda to address the membership.

As we continue to schedule meetings, details will be updated on our website at http://www.vaco.org/legislative/2019-regional-meetings/ or call us at 804.788.6652 for more information.

Check the meeting(s) you wish to sponsor. VACo Regions are shown on map, Pg. 3.

Sponsor all meetings and be invited to address meeting attendees throughout the summer.

SOLD 2019 VACo REGIONAL MEETINGS PREMIER SPONSOR -- PIERCE GROUP BENEFITS

Sponsor one or more meetings and be invited to address meeting attendees. \$ 200

- VACo REGIONS 1 & 4 MEETING (April 30) Nottoway County
VACo REGION 2 MEETING (April) York County
VACo REGION 3 & 5 MEETING (May) Powhatan County
VACo REGION 6 MEETING (May) Warren County
VACo REGION 7 MEETING (June) Orange County
VACo REGION 9 MEETING (June) Augusta County
VACo REGION 10 MEETING (July) Henry County
VACo REGION 11 MEETING (August) Bedford County
VACo REGION 12 & 13 MEETING (August) Washington County

Henrico County names Alec Oughton as Chief of Division of Fire



Henrico County has appointed Alec W. Oughton to serve as chief of the Division of Fire, effective immediately. Oughton joined the division in 1999 and served most recently as its deputy fire chief for operations. He has been acting chief since December, when Anthony E. McDowell was promoted to deputy county manager for public safety. McDowell had served as chief since 2012.

As chief, Oughton will oversee an agency responsible for fire prevention and suppression, emergency medical services (EMS), technical rescue, hazardous materials mitigation and disaster preparedness in Henrico.

Fire has an approved budget of \$61.5 million and 595 employees in fiscal year 2018-19. The division responds to more than 52,000 calls for service each year and operates 21 firehouses, with two additional stations planned, along Staples Mill and East Nine Mile roads.

Henrico holds the highest-possible Class 1 rating from the Insurance Services Office, which is based on a comprehensive review of the county's fire response, including its fire department capabilities and training.

Oughton began his fire service as a volunteer with the Virginia Tech Rescue Squad and the Manassas Park Volunteer Fire Department before taking a staff position with Spotsylvania County Fire, Rescue and Emergency Management in 1996. He joined Henrico Fire in 1999 as firefighter/paramedic and held station operations leadership positions before transitioning into administration in 2014.

Oughton served in 2018 as chairman of the Central Virginia Operations Chiefs subcommittee, which is part of the Central Virginia Fire Chiefs Association. He holds associate degrees in fire science and emergency medical services from J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College and a bachelor's degree in interdisciplinary studies from Liberty University. He is scheduled to graduate in August from the Executive Fire Officer Program at the National Fire Academy.

VACo
SPOTLIGHT

**Ruth M.
Anderson**
**Prince William
County
Supervisor**



Q1. You had an unusual childhood – what was it like to grow up in rural Alaska?

Ruth Anderson: I was one of three daughters born into a very adventurous family that stayed in Alaska after my father's service in World War II. Before moving to Minnesota in the 60s, we had lived in five Alaskan villages: Nome, Bethel, Unalaska, Unalakleet and Russian Mission. With amenities like roads, plumbing and electricity hard to come by, our focus was on family, helping out in our father's trading posts and enjoying the Alaskan wilderness. In one village we had our own dog team. I learned perseverance, how to overcome obstacles and the wonder of nature!

Q2. You served in senior leadership positions throughout your career in the U.S. Air Force, including as Chief Nurse at Hickam Air Force Base. What aspects of your military experience prepared you best to serve as an elected official?

RA: I am grateful for my military career...from day one in the military, I was honed to lead small to very large projects and groups...all focused on accomplishing a mission and realizing a vision to preserve the American dream and America's freedoms. In elected office, I continue on that mission.

Q3. Your experience in health care is extensive and varied, from working in a neonatal intensive care unit to working for the Brother's Brother Foundation to organize international shipments of medical supplies. Are there some advances in health care (either in practice or policy) that you're particularly excited about? If you could wave a wand, what aspects of health care would you change?

RA: From watching my mother provide first aid in Alaska, to being on the cutting edge of medicine as a nurse in a Mayo Neonatal Intensive Care Unit in Minnesota, to serving in many military facilities and leading over a dozen humanitarian mission trips to rural Asia in recent years, I now care most about the prevention aspect of healthcare. I believe we should make policy, plan our communities and incentivize projects and businesses that help to prevent disease. This includes preserving our environment with plenty of green space, promoting natural foods and creating walkable, bikable communities.

Q4. You're serving your first term on the Board of County Supervisors, although you've lived in Prince William County and been an active community volunteer since 2001. Were there elements of serving in elected office that surprised you? What advice would you give others who might be considering running for office?

RA: Having worked on campaigns since 2003, I can honestly say that almost nothing surprised me about local elected office. However, I was pleasantly encouraged by the effort in Virginia and beyond to think regionally...that is why I am honored to serve on the VACo Board of Directors. My advice to those considering running for office: "Be passionate about being a public servant and enjoying the people and communities you serve. The challenges and sacrifices of time and energy are enormous, but the opportunities are even greater! You will never please everyone you represent, but you can work on building consensus for the greater good every single day you are privileged to serve."

Q5. In your view, what are the biggest challenges and opportunities facing Prince William County in the next ten years?

RA: Prince William County is similar to all Northern Virginia jurisdictions...the need for economic development that is not dependent on the federal government, mitigating traffic congestion while welcoming an increasing population, keeping our communities safe from current and emerging threats and encouraging changes in education to provide the workforce for tomorrow. I love the opportunities all of these challenges bring. Even in my first three years, our Board has enjoyed approving projects to improve transportation, save green space, improve public safety and encourage workforce education. Each day, I do something to help move more good projects forward.



Visit Floyd County and the Appalachian Trail Hut at Rocky Knob Recreation Area

Rocky Knob is one of the first developed areas on the Blue Ridge Parkway and is noted for its rustic and rural landscape, plus great camping and hiking. It is an outdoor lovers' paradise with easy access to the Parkway's Mabry Mill and the Chateau Morrisette Winery.

A campground has over 100 sites for tents or recreational vehicles but no water or electrical hookups to individual sites. There are no showers or sewer hookups. Comfort station and dump stations are available.

The Rocky Knob area offers many diversions for the visitor, including a visitor center. Located near the intersection of the Parkway with Virginia Route 8, the Rocky Knob recreation area covers more than 4000 acres. Interpretive talks and demonstrations are given in the summer months and four trails offer a variety of scenic and historical wonders. Rocky Knob is an accurate description of the shape of the mountain that bears its name. Rock Castle Gorge, known for its beautiful rock crystalline quartz formations, was once home for several mountain families whose lives we remember through the apple orchards and abandoned stone chimneys.



SOURCE: [Virginia is for Lovers](http://www.visitvirginia.com)



Mark Your Calendars



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 in the 21st century by participating in the Virginia Certified County Supervisors' Program.

Since its inception in 2005, more than 75 supervisors representing more than 40 counties 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.

Making a Governance Difference:
The Role of Purpose Driven Policy, Deliberation and Decision Making

Opening Session | May 31
 Albemarle County

Closing Session | July 26
 VACo Training Center

Registration Deadline | May 21

Inventing Your County's Future:
The Role of Community Planning

Opening Session | September 6
 Albemarle County

Closing Session | November 1
 VACo Training Center

Registration Deadline | August 27

NEWS FROM OUR
ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

QUINN EVANS ACQUIRES BCWH



QUINN EVANS
ARCHITECTS

Since our founding in 1986, BCWH has focused our architectural practice on collaborative placemaking experiences that enrich and inspire. Working closely with clients and colleagues, we are proud to have created many distinctive, award-winning buildings and landscapes that have enhanced both culture and community throughout Virginia and beyond.

Today, our collaborative spirit leads us to make an important announcement—one that presents BCWH and our clients with access to deeper expertise, resources, and geographic reach. As of November 1, our 30-person office will become part of Quinn Evans Architects, a nationally renowned design firm with five offices and 140 employees throughout the East Coast and Midwest.

Charles D. Piper, AIA, LEED AP, will serve as the office director, which will operate under the Quinn Evans Architects name. The BCWH leadership team and all project teams and administrative staff will remain in place. In particular, BCWH president and founding partner Robert E. Comet Jr. AIA, LEED AP will focus his efforts to support his clients and ensure a smooth transition into Quinn Evans Architects' organization. Our Richmond roots run deep, and we will continue to serve our clients from our current office at 1840 West Broad Street. This location will become QEA's sixth office and first in Virginia.

We have been fortunate to team with Quinn Evans Architects on two important projects for Virginia Commonwealth University. Through this productive association, we found that BCWH and QEA not only share a similar portfolio in civic, academic, and library projects, we share a strong belief in what matters most: our clients, our employees, and our legacy of meaningful, impactful design work.

Quinn Evans Architects offers nationally recognized expertise in historic preservation—a specialty that has transformed properties here in Virginia and across the U.S. Currently, QEA is overseeing the renovation of Old City Hall for the Virginia Department of General Services, and we are already working together on an adaptive use study for the historic West Hospital on the Medical College of Virginia campus.

Like BCWH, QEA has focused much of its practice on lifelong learning, completing many exceptional K-12, higher education, campus planning, library, and civic projects. The firm is widely known for its work in museums and cultural facilities, and recently completed the design of the modernization of the National Air and Space Museum in Washington, D.C.—the largest renovation ever undertaken by the Smithsonian Institution.

This is an exciting transition for us. We look forward to the opportunity to introduce you to QEA's diverse and talented team of professionals, and to share with you the benefits of our combined resources and expertise.

Sincerely,

Charles D. Piper, AIA, LEED AP | Managing Principal

Robert E. Comet, Jr., AIA, LEED AP | Principal

Syd Knight, ASLA | Principal

Roger D. Richardson, AIA, REFP | Principal

Charles Tilley, AIA, REFP, LEED AP, BD+C | Principal

Charles W. Wray, Jr., AIA, LEED AP | Principal

[Click here to see Quinn Evans Architects' page on the VACo website.](#)

**NEWS FROM OUR
ASSOCIATE MEMBERS**

A. Morton Thomas and Associates, Inc. is now 100% Employee-Owned



A. Morton Thomas and Associates, Inc. (AMT) is excited and proud to announce that effective December 2018, the firm has transitioned to 100 percent employee-owned through an Employee Stock Ownership Plan (ESOP).

Established in 1955, AMT is a multi-disciplined engineering firm with more than 525 employees in 20 offices across the Mid-Atlantic and Southeast regions. Ranked #204 among ENR Top 500 Engineering Firms, AMT has been recognized as one of the best firms to work for by Civil Engineering Magazine, Zweig Group Hot Firms List, The Washington Post, Baltimore Sun, and Richmond Times Dispatch.

“The ability to maintain control within current ownership and senior management while providing all employees with a vested interest in the company was very important to AMT,” said firm President Mike Wiercinski, PE, PS. “An ESOP allows us to reward our dedicated and loyal employees with additional benefits from the company’s stock as well as an incentive to continue building a high-performance ownership culture.”

About AMT

AMT provides multidisciplinary services including engineering, environmental, landscape architecture, surveying, and construction administration and inspection on a regional basis to a variety of public and private clients. We strive to deliver high-quality, environmentally friendly, and sustainable projects that are both timely and cost-effective. Through our continued utilization of engineering best practices, ever-growing company of talented staff, and lasting partnerships with clients and communities, we aim to remain a respected leader in our industry.

Reprinted by Permission. A. Morton Thomas and Associates, Inc. is a VACo Associate Member and exhibits yearly at the VACo Annual Conference.

NEWS FROM OUR ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

DJG is participating in the 20th Annual CANstruction Competition March 18–22 at MacArthur Center in Norfolk. Stop by and see our “canned art” that supports the Foodbank of Southeastern Virginia.



DJG was excited to participate in CANstruction again!! CANstruction is the design industry’s annual “canned art” charity competition benefitting the Foodbank of Southeastern Virginia. Check out the fun competition at www.canstruction.org.

This year, the event’s theme was “Fighting Hunger”—since DJG has a deep connection with the military—we decided to make our design a fighter jet. DJG was part of ten other design firms to showcase their design/build talents and will compete for prizes in the categories of Structural Ingenuity, Best use of Labels, Best Meal, and Best Design.



On Sunday March 17, our team which consists of Sara Firman—Team Captain, Jo Brooks, Milissa Cheves Joey Garland, Austin Jefferson, Alec Kaljian, Paige Meijer, and La’Veesha Rollins were busy constructing our masterpiece. It will be showcased all week until March 22 at the MacArthur Center Mall in Norfolk.

We used 2,980 cans, breaking down to: 210 cans of Corn, 2,700 cans of Tuna Fish, 60 cans of Brunswick Stew, 2 Tomato Sauce, 9 cans of Tomato Paste, and 1 case of water which equaled out to be 2,312 pounds of goodness! Our fighter jet was 8’ x 8’ x 6’ tall.

After the event, all the food will be donated to the Foodbank of Southeastern Virginia and the Eastern Shore.



Virginia Association of Counties
ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS



2019 VACo Achievement Awards

Dear VACo Members -

It's time for the 2019 Achievement Awards Program. Any county department is eligible to compete so **ENTER NOW!**

All entries are required to be submitted in electronic form. No paper copy submissions are necessary. The electronic copy should be a PDF or WORD file. Email entries to Gage Harter at gharter@vaco.org.

Submissions must be received by June 3, 2019.

Last year we processed a record 106 entries and selected 25 winners from 19 counties. VACo presented awards at 19 Board of Supervisors Meetings, recognized winners at the Annual Conference, sent a news release to statewide media and highlighted winning counties in an Achievement Awards booklet.

The judges for the 2019 Achievement Awards will be announced soon.

VACo has received more than 700 entries over the past decade. Last year's Best Achievement winner was Pittsylvania County for its "Park Project" program.

VACo encourages all counties, big and small, to enter the 2019 Achievement Awards Program. Please contact gharter@vaco.org with questions or for more information.

[Achievement Awards submission form](#)

[Achievement Awards website](#)

[Click here for 2018 Achievement Awards Press release](#)

[Browse all of the 2018 entries](#)

[View past Achievement Award winners](#)



Counties encouraged to use NACo app testing access to broadband

The National Association of Counties in partnership with the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) and the Rural Community Assistance Partnership (RCAP) has developed a mobile app designed to show locations with low or no connectivity to help ensure adequate federal funding for areas lacking access to the internet. [TestIT](#) is an iOS/Android mobile app that leverages a broadband sampling tool designed by Measurement Lab (M-Lab) to aggregate broadband speeds across the country from app users. With the press of a single button, users will be able to test their broadband speed from anywhere. NACo developed TestIT because connectivity data provided to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) is often inaccurate and inflated – leaving many rural communities overlooked and disconnected.

Every time a user taps the “Test Speed Here!” button, the app will record both upload and download speeds, time of day and location. A snapshot of each sample will be sent to a database which will allow NACo and partners to analyze connectivity data across the country. The data collected through this app will help identify areas where broadband service is overstated and underfunded by comparing the data to the [National Broadband Map](#). NACo plans to provide graphical representation of the data through its [Counties Futures Lab](#) this Fall.

VACo members are encouraged to download the app using the instructions on this [flyer](#). No personal information will be collected through this mobile app.

VACo Contact: [Joe Lerch, AICP](#)

Northam Sticks to Environmental Priorities; Vetoes Bills Limiting Virginia's Ability to Combat Pollution



Sticking to his environmental priorities, Governor Ralph Northam has vetoed two bills that sought to limit the Commonwealth's ability to combat air pollution generated from vehicles and power plants.

First, Governor Northam vetoed [HB 2269 \(Poindexter\)](#), which prohibits the Governor or any state agency from adopting any regulation establishing or bringing about the participation by the Commonwealth in the Transportation and Climate Initiative or any other regional transportation sector emissions program. Additionally, [HB 2269](#) stipulated that the Commonwealth could participate in such a program only if the House of Delegates and Senate both adopt resolutions by a super-majority (two-thirds vote) that specifically references and approves the regulatory text proposed for adoption. Should it have become law, this bill would have effectively blocked the Administration from participating in programs like Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ), which currently provides funding to both the Commonwealth and numerous local governments in Virginia for transportation projects and programs to help meet the requirements of the Clean Air Act.

In a similar move, Governor Northam vetoed [HB 2611 \(Poindexter\)](#), which prohibits the Governor or any state agency from adopting any regulation establishing a carbon dioxide cap-and-trade program or bringing about the participation by the Commonwealth in a regional market for the trading of carbon dioxide allowances. Like [HB 2269](#), [HB 2611](#) further stipulated that the Commonwealth could participate in such a program only if the House of Delegates and Senate both adopt resolutions by a super-majority (two-thirds vote) that specifically references and approves the regulatory text proposed for adoption. [HB 2611](#) would have prohibited the Administration from participating in a program like the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI), which would allow Virginia to sell emission allowances through auctions and in turn invest proceeds in energy efficiency, renewable energy, and other consumer benefit programs.

Currently, the Air Pollution Control Board has a regulation at the proposed stage that establishes an emissions trading program for Virginia like RGGI. The Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), estimates that participation in a such a program would not simply result in a decrease in pollution from power general facilities, but it would also generate approximately \$65 million annually beginning in 2020, with yearly reductions of three percent until 2030. Under the proposed regulation, 95 percent of these funds will be passed on to the public through utility rebates, and five percent would be used by the Virginia agencies for further abatement and control of carbon dioxide air pollution.

The General Assembly will reconvene on April 3, 2019 to consider and vote on all of the Governor's amendments and vetoes. The General Assembly can override a veto by a two-thirds vote of each house, though that is unlikely to happen for either [HB 2269](#) or [HB 2611](#). Both bills passed each chamber by strict party-line votes ([HB 2269](#) passed 50-48 in the House and 21-19 in the Senate while [HB 2611](#) passed 51-48 in the House and 21-19 in the Senate), and no Democrats are likely to switch their votes. Moreover, in 2018 Governor Northam vetoed a similar bill to [HB 2611](#) ([HB 1270 \(Poindexter\)](#)) and the House ultimately sustained the veto.

VACo Contact: [Chris McDonald, Esq.](#)



Virginia Growth and Opportunity Board (GO Virginia) Meeting, Grant Announcements, and Site Development Presentation

The GO Virginia [Board](#) met on March 12 to approve \$6.7 million in competitive economic development grants to support seven regional initiatives. The Board is a public 24-member policy board that provides oversight to the nine regional councils and provides state incentives to match with local, federal, and private funds to encourage regional economic cooperation and development.

The seven proposals unanimously approved by the Board were:

- Smart Farming at the Center for Workforce and Innovation of Appalachia, which involved Mountain Empire Community College and the Counties of Wise, Lee, and Scott to expand unmanned systems coursework applied to agricultural uses.
- Increasing the Birth Rates of New High Growth Companies for Region Two, which involved the counties of Alleghany, Botetourt, and Roanoke and the towns of Bedford and Winton to help fund personnel, operations, and outreach to increase the number of high growth companies in the region.
- 757 Angel Network, which involved the Cities of Hampton, Norfolk, and Virginia Beach to connect promising startup and early stage companies with smart growth capital.
- Cybersecurity Certification Program, which involved King George and Stafford counties and the City of Fredericksburg to allow the University of Mary Washington to establish a cybersecurity preparatory program to train Certified Information Systems Security Professionals (CISSP).
- Shihadeh Innovation Center for Career and Technical Education, which involved Clarke County and the City of Winchester to allow the renovation of a former elementary school to establish academies of professional skill, health sciences, and information technology.
- Catalyst Accelerator Program, which involved Albemarle County and the City of Charlottesville to create support services to up to 20 high potential companies in collaboration with the University of Virginia's Darden School of Business.

GO Virginia Continued from Page 13

- Great Opportunities in Technology and Engineering Courses (GO-TEC) Phase II, which involved the Counties of Cumberland, Greensville, Halifax, Henry, Mecklenburg, Patrick, Pittsylvania, Prince Edward, and Nottoway and the Cities of Dansville and Martinsville to build a regional workforce training system beginning with middle school students. Full funding was approved, contingent on the success of a scaled model after one year.

The complete list can be found [here](#).

The Board also approved FY 2020 Capacity Building match recommendations to waive the 1:1 match requirement and the recommendations to create Per Capita FY 2020 Allocation for Regions 1,3, and 9 of \$1 million.

GO Virginia also administratively approved four proposals from three regions up to \$100,000 aimed at enhanced capacity building. The four projects were:

- Ignite Internship Program Expansion submitted by Region 2 on behalf of the United Way of Southwest Virginia. This proposal expands to Giles and Pulaski County and the City of Radford a previously approved project to align school curriculums with local employer needs by building a web-based platform to encourage post-secondary attainment, streamline workforce credentialing, and provide work-based learning opportunities.
- Virginia's Growth Region (VGR) Site Readiness submitted by Region 4. VGR will work with an engineering firm to characterize 89 sites identified by the [Virginia Business Ready Sites Program](#) in Dinwiddie, Prince George, Sussex, and Surry Counties and the Cities of Colonial Heights, Hopewell, and Petersburg to develop a plan for advancing the sites to Tier 4 Infrastructure Ready Status.
- Hampton Roads Coalition for Talent Development submitted by Region 5. This proposal subsidizes personnel and operations to establish implementation and communication plans for business leaders and regional workforce providers from 14 localities in the Hampton Roads area to identify and address regional needs.
- Accomack-Northampton Sewer and Sites Study submitted by Region 5 on behalf of the Accomack-Northampton Planning District Council. This proposal will help fund contract services and project oversight for the completion of the Eastern Shore Main Force Sewer Transmission line study and identify more than 25 sites for possible development.

Lastly, the Board received a presentation from Christy Morton, Vice President, External Affairs at the Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP) on their Virginia Business Ready Sites Program ([VBSRP](#)). This program was created in 2015 to identify and assess readiness of development sites across the Commonwealth after an estimated 47 high-profile projects totaling approximately \$6.5 billion in capital investment were lost to other states. The program assesses existing levels of readiness for development and targets development efforts to move identified sites to higher tiers of readiness. The five tiers of site characterization range from Tier 1 (raw land with an interested seller) to Tier 5 (shovel ready, permits in place). To date, less than 20 percent of 25+ acre sites in Virginia have been characterized. Using new funding, VEDP plans to estimate and prioritize site development for all remaining 25+ acre sites they've identified, evaluate the economic development potential of the sites, and prioritize sites for investment. The proposed timeline to complete characterization is August 2019.

VACo Contact: [Jeremy R. Bennett](#)

Virginia Retirement Service (VRS) News Bulletin

In the [latest](#) monthly publication from VRS, the independent state agency provided an overview of its 2018 Annual Financial Reports, IRS increases to the amount participants may contribute to Commonwealth's 457 Deferred Compensation Plan, a detailed guide to retiring in 2019, legislative updates from the General Assembly, and notice of an upcoming system maintenance outage for [myVRS](#).

VRS serves 706,045 total members, retirees, and beneficiaries and has 460 participating political subdivisions. The system paid out \$4.8 billion in retirement benefits last year and generated a 7.5 percent return on investments. The fiduciary net position of the trust fund is \$79.2 billion and as based on assets, is the 19th largest among public and private pension systems in the United States. The funded status of the State, Teacher, and Political Subdivisions plans was 76.3 percent, 74.5 percent, and 89.3 percent, respectively.

The VRS Board of Directors will meet for their Annual Retreat on March 25 in Richmond. VACo staff plan to attend. An archive of past bulletins and a link to subscribe to future news bulletins can be found [here](#).

VACo Contact: [Jeremy R. Bennett](#)

42nd Annual Virginia Municipal Clerks Association Conference



**The 42nd Annual VMCA Conference will be held
April 17-19 at the Hotel Roanoke**

[Important Conference Information](#) | [VMCA Website](#)
[Hotel Reservations can be made by clicking here](#)

CONFERENCE REGISTRATION NOW OPEN!
[Conference Information Packet](#) | [Click here for Conference Registration](#) |
[Conference Registration Form](#)

State General Fund Revenues Up in February, Trail Annual Forecast; Unemployment Remains Low



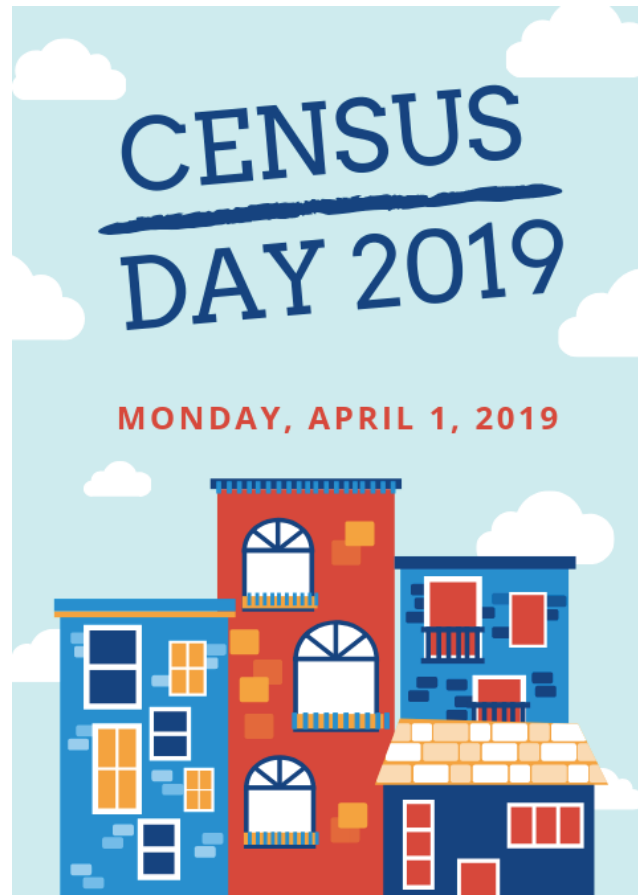
Governor Ralph Northam announced last week that state General Fund revenues experienced a significant increase in February, but remain below the annual forecast on a fiscal year-to-date basis; the Administration expects stronger growth later in the fiscal year. The spike in revenues in February, representing growth of 26.6 percent, is largely attributed to slower-than-normal issuance of income tax refunds; the Department of Taxation was unable to process tax returns until the General Assembly acted on tax conformity legislation to align Virginia's tax code with the federal Internal Revenue Code. State legislation largely conforming to provisions of the federal Tax Cuts and Jobs Act was enacted in mid-February and signed by the Governor on February 15. Secretary of Finance Aubrey Layne's [February Revenue Report memorandum](#) notes, "March should provide a better assessment of refund activity as the backlog of returns is processed."

On a fiscal year-to-date basis, revenue collections grew 3.5 percent, lagging the annual forecast of 5.9 percent growth. Individual income tax collections grew by 3.1 percent on a year-to-date basis, also behind the forecast of 6.7 percent growth for this revenue source. Continued strength in sales and use tax collections is a positive indicator; February collections grew 4.2 percent, and are outpacing the annual estimate of 3.7 percent growth with year-to-date growth of 4.1 percent.

In another positive sign, Virginia's unemployment rate remains low, with January's seasonally-adjusted unemployment rate at 2.8 percent for the sixth month in a row. The Virginia Employment Commission (VEC) [notes](#) that Virginia's seasonally-adjusted unemployment rate remains below the national level, which was 4 percent in January; the VEC also points out that between January 2018 and January 2019, the state's seasonally-adjusted total nonfarm employment increased by 1.1 percent (or 44,100 jobs), with the largest gains in the professional and business services sector, followed by leisure and hospitality. Between January 2018 and January 2019, all metropolitan areas experienced some job growth, with the largest gains in Northern Virginia, followed by the Richmond area.

The national economic picture is difficult to decipher. The [February jobs report](#) was disappointing, with only 20,000 nonfarm payroll jobs added, following a strong January report showing the addition of 311,000 jobs. In its 10-year economic forecast released in January, the Congressional Budget Office projects real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth of 2.3 percent in 2019, a slowing of growth relative to the 3.1 percent growth experienced in 2018, and average annual growth of 1.7 percent from 2020 to 2023. The Federal Reserve's Federal Open Market Committee also projected 2.3 percent growth in real GDP in 2019 at its December meeting, slowing to 2 percent growth in 2020. By contrast, the Trump Administration's economic forecast, included in the *Economic Report of the President* released on March 19, projects real GDP growth of 3.2 percent in 2019 and 3.1 percent in 2020. The Federal Open Market Committee is meeting again this week and is expected to take a measured approach to interest rate increases this year in light of concerns about slowing global growth.

VACo Contact: [Katie Boyle](#)



The U.S. Census Bureau Hosts Census Day 2019

WHAT

The U.S. Census Bureau will host a live operational press briefing to mark the one year out milestone from the 2020 Census. On April 1, 2019, Census Bureau Director Dr. Steven Dillingham and Census Bureau leadership will brief the public on the status of operations and provide updates on the success of the integrated partnership and communication campaign. The Census Bureau will also be joined on stage by several organizations that highlight a handful of the partnerships that are key to ensuring a successful 2020 Census.

Additionally, Census Bureau leaders will be available to discuss national hiring efforts and highlight what partners and other stakeholders can do to ensure complete and accurate counts in communities across the country.

WHO

[Dr. Steven Dillingham](#), Director, U.S. Census Bureau

[Albert E. Fontenot Jr.](#), Associate Director for Decennial Census Programs, U.S. Census Bureau

[Timothy Olson](#), Associate Director for Field Operations, U.S. Census Bureau

[Michael Cook](#), Chief, Public Information Office, U.S. Census Bureau

[Lisa Hamilton](#), President and CEO, The Annie E. Casey Foundation

[Loida Garcia-Febo](#), President, American Library Association

[Bill Anoatubby](#), Governor, Chickasaw Nation

WHEN

Monday, April 1, 2019, 11 a.m. to 12 p.m. (EDT)

ACCESS

Members of the public and the media are invited to watch the live webcast at <https://www.census.gov/newsroom/census-live.html>.



It's not too late to register . . .

2019 Virginia Agritourism Conference **Wednesday, April 3, and Thursday, April 4, 2019** **Hotel Roanoke – Roanoke, Virginia**

Visit <https://ext.vt.edu/agriculture/agritourism.html> and select the 2019 Conference . . . review the program, register, and make your hotel reservation.

The fifth annual Virginia Agritourism Conference provides agritourism entrepreneurs access to the best resources and the opportunity to gather ideas that can be adapted to their own farms. The 2019 conference features interaction with experts on

- developing an agritourism operation,
- celebrating the successes and managing the challenges of agritourism,
- delivering exceptional customer service, marketing the operation through multiple sources,
- ensuring farm safety,
- hosting events,
- building a regional approach, and
- networking with other agritourism farms.
- During the afternoon of Day 1, participants will visit two or three agritourism venues related to orchards, wineries, festivals, and local products.

Conference Registration

Register by visiting <https://tinyurl.com/2019Agritourismconference> and complete the registration process.

- Conference Registration is \$200 with no refunds offered after Friday, March 22.

Hotel Reservation

Rooms are available at the Hotel Roanoke and Conference Center for the nights of April 2 and April 3.

- *Individuals are responsible for their own lodging.*
- Currently the rate for a standard king is \$153.

For more information, contact Dr. Martha A. Walker, Virginia Cooperative Extension, by phone at 434.766.6761 or by email at walker53@vt.edu.

Conference Sponsors

- The conference is sponsored by **Virginia Cooperative Extension, Virginia State University Small Farm Outreach Program, Virginia Tourism Corporation, Virginia Association of Counties, Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Virginia FAIRS, Virginia Farm Bureau, Virginia Tech, and Virginia Agribusiness Council.**



On behalf of the Virginia delegation of the *Local Government Advisory Committee to the Chesapeake Executive Council* (LGAC), you're invited to join local elected officials in Tappahannock for a discussion about protecting and restoring local waterways!

During our time together, we will have an open discussion about YOUR community's water resource goals and share successes and lessons learned.

We will gather information about your community's resource gaps (staffing, technical assistance, funding, etc.), and identify what it is you need to more fully participate in watershed protection and restoration.

Tappahannock Region Local Government Forum

Wednesday, April 10, 2019, 2:30 - 4:00 PM

Beale Sanctuary

202 South Church Lane, Tappahannock, VA 22560

Beale Annex Conference Room

To RSVP, please fill out the form at the following URL: <https://goo.gl/forms/wimR1kfCHPq9qOQ92>

For questions, please contact Monica Billig at 717-372-1970 or lgac@allianceforthebay.org

LGAC's purpose is to advise the Chesapeake Executive Council, including Virginia's Governor, on how to effectively implement projects and engage the support of local governments to achieve the goals of the Bay Agreement. We provide a local government voice to the Chesapeake Bay Program and want to bring as many leaders to the table to share in that voice.

Click on flyers to enlarge



On behalf of the Virginia delegation of the *Local Government Advisory Committee to the Chesapeake Executive Council* (LGAC), you're invited to join local elected officials in Lynchburg for a discussion about protecting and restoring local waterways!

During our time together, we will have an open discussion about YOUR community's water resource goals and share successes and lessons learned.

We will gather information about your community's resource gaps (staffing, technical assistance, funding, etc.), and identify what it is you need to more fully participate in watershed protection and restoration.

Lynchburg Region Local Government Forum

Friday, April 12, 2019, 10:30 AM - 12:00 PM

Greater Lynchburg Transit Company

800 Kemper St, Lynchburg, VA 24501

GLTC Meeting Room

To RSVP, please fill out the form at the following URL: <https://goo.gl/forms/wimR1kfCHPq9qOQ92>

For questions, please contact Monica Billig at 717-372-1970 or lgac@allianceforthebay.org

LGAC's purpose is to advise the Chesapeake Executive Council, including Virginia's Governor, on how to effectively implement projects and engage the support of local governments to achieve the goals of the Bay Agreement. We provide a local government voice to the Chesapeake Bay Program and want to bring as many leaders to the table to share in that voice.

VIRGINIA COUNTY SUPERVISORS' MANUAL

EIGHTH EDITION, 2019

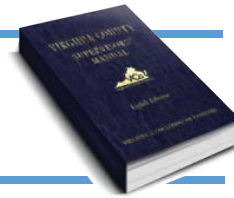


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employment opportunities



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).



CITY MANAGER | City of Covington | Posted March 15



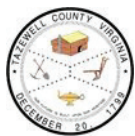
FIREFIGHTER I/II/III/IV | James City County | Posted March 15



TRANSIT BUS OPERATOR ET | James City County | Posted March 15



TRANSIT BUS OPERATOR PT | James City County | Posted March 15



SUPERVISOR OF BUDGET & FINANCE | Tazewell County Schools | Posted March 14



PLANNING ZONING DIRECTOR | Essex County | Posted March 13



BUILDING OFFICIAL | Sussex County | Posted March 11



HOUSING SPECIALIST I/II (HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION COORDINATOR) | James City County | Posted March 11



PRETRIAL & PROBATION OFFICER I | James City County | Posted March 11



BUDGET & PROGRAM ANALYST | Gloucester County | Posted March 8



UTILITY SUPERVISOR | Gloucester County | Posted March 8



COUNTY PLANNER | Shenandoah County | Posted March 8

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ALL HAZARDS EMERGENCY PLANNER | Hampton Roads Planning District Commission | Posted March 8



OPERATIONS MANAGER (School Age Programs) | James City County | Posted March 8



TAX TECHNICIAN | Montgomery County | Posted March 7



WATERWORKS OPERATOR | James City County | Posted March 7



PARK MANAGER | Frederick County | Posted March 7



TOWN SUPERINTENDENT (MANAGER) | Town of Dayton | Posted March 6



ROANOKE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR | City of Roanoke | Posted March 6



BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT & OUTREACH COORDINATOR | Region 2000 | Posted March 6



COUNTY MANAGER | Northampton County, NC | Posted March 5



BENEFIT PROGRAM ASSISTANT | James City County | Posted March 5



LEAD ELECTRICAL TECHNICIAN | James City County | Posted March 5



CARE TEAM SOCIAL WORK CASE MANAGER | James City County | Posted March 5



ASSISTANT REGISTRAR | Montgomery County | Posted March 5



PARKS & RECREATION SUMMER CAMP SITE LEADER | New Kent County | Posted March 4



PARKS & RECREATION SUMMER CAMP COUNSELOR | New Kent County | Posted March 4



ADMINISTRATOR OF ZONING & ECONOMIC /COMMUNITY PLANNING | Buckingham County | Posted March 4



DEPUTY COMMISSIONER OF THE REVENUE III | Westmoreland County | Posted March 1



CIVIL ENGINEER | Western Virginia Water Authority | Posted March 1



ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS | City of Harrisonburg | Posted March 1



HUMAN SERVICES ASSISTANT | Montgomery County | Posted February 28



FAMILY SERVICES SPECIALIST | Montgomery County | Posted February 28



ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF UTILITIES | Gloucester County | Posted February 28



CUSTODIAN PT | Gloucester County | Posted February 28



RECREATION DIRECTOR | Highland County | Posted February 28



CHIEF OF MEDICAL & FIRE SERVICES | City of Norfolk | Posted February 27



SENIOR PLANNER | Fauquier County | Posted February 27



CIVIL ENGINEER/SENIOR CIVIL ENGINEER | Rivanna Water & Sewer Authority | Posted February 27



CONSTRUCTION INSPECTOR III | City of Chesapeake | Posted February 26



ASSESSOR | Gloucester County | Posted February 26



GYMNASTICS ASSISTANT | Gloucester County | Posted February 26

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1207 East Main Street
Suite 300
Richmond, VA 23219-3627
Phone: 804.788.6652
Fax: 804.788.0083
www.vaco.org

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804.343.2502