



**VACo  
2024  
COUNTY OFFICIALS'  
SUMMIT**

**THURSDAY | 15TH AUGUST**

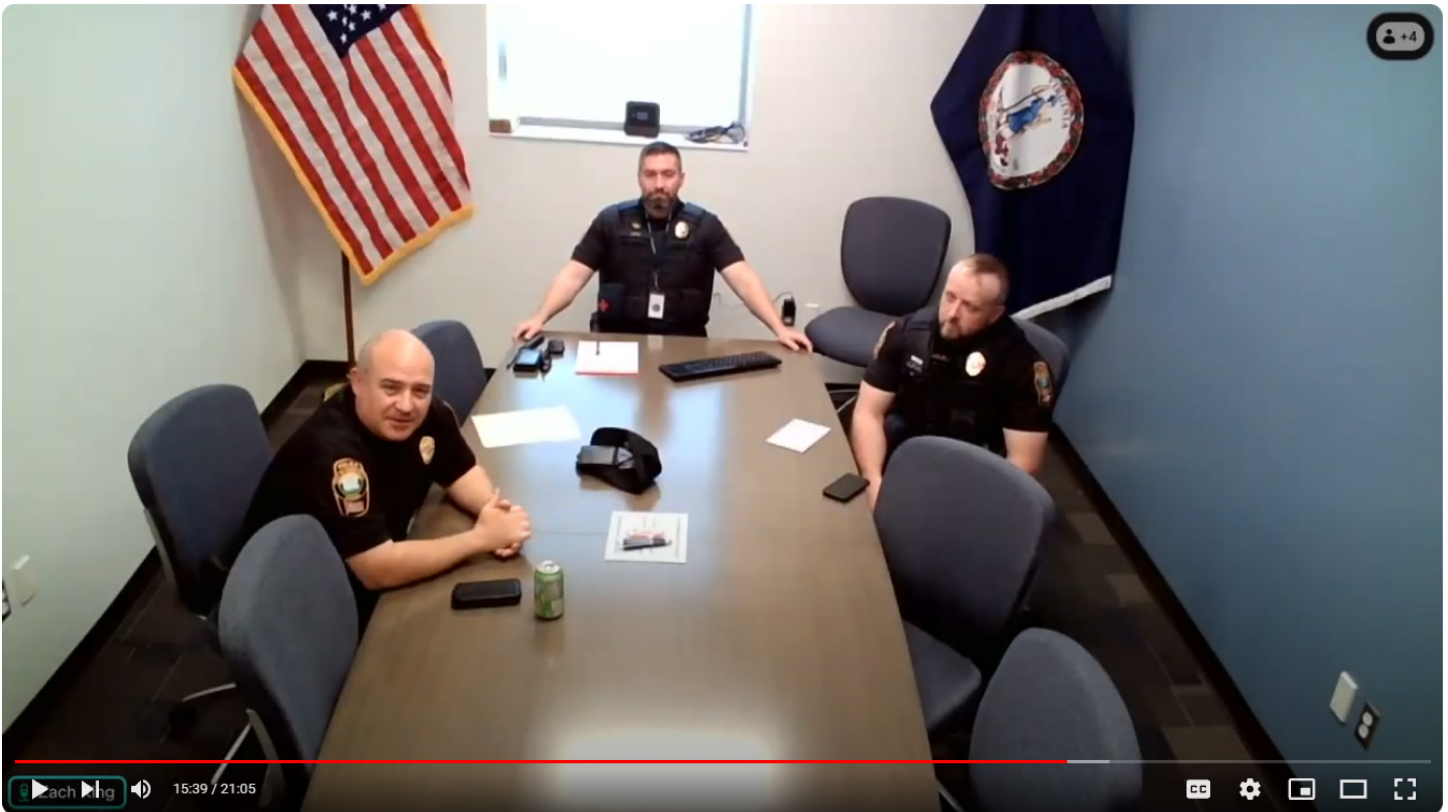
**RICHMOND MARRIOTT**

**9AM - 1230PM | SUMMIT PROGRAM**

**1230PM - 130PM | LUNCH**

**145PM - 5PM | STEERING COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

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## Premier Partner Spotlight

# Blue Line Solutions Testimonials

**Blue Line Solutions** is making a positive impact on communities all over Virginia. In Smyth County - **Blue Line Solutions** recorded during a five-day period that there were 3,530 vehicles traveling through school speed zones at 10mph or higher above the speed limit. That's over 12,000 speeding vehicles a month during school days.

**Blue Line Solutions** uses information and communications rather than focus on enforcement to reduce speeds in school zones.

During **Blue Line Solutions** Public Information Phase of its program in Smyth County - the number dropped to 213 over a five-day period. That's without writing one ticket. The community heard the problem and reacted to it. During the warning phase - the number dropped to 175. Then during the enforcement phase - it dropped to 72. That's a 98 percent reduction of speeders compared to before the **Blue Line Solutions** program.

“That’s absolutely fantastic that we can make a difference in a community,” Blue Line Solutions CEO/Founder Mark Hutchinson said. ([Click to hear what VACo members are saying about Blue Line Solutions!](#))



# April is a “Solid Month” for State Revenues



State General Fund revenues continued to perform well in April, which Secretary of Finance Stephen E. Cummings characterized as a “solid month” for revenue collections in his remarks to the House Appropriations Committee on May 28. Although total General Fund revenues declined by 1 percent in April, revenues outperformed expectations for the month by \$162.6 million; total General Fund revenues have increased by 5 percent on a fiscal year-to-date basis, relative to last year, and are ahead of projections in the December 2023 introduced “caboose” FY 2024 budget by \$1.22 billion, or 5.4 percent. (In May’s revenue report, comparisons will be made to the revised FY 2024 forecast that was incorporated into the budget that was signed in May, which assumes an additional \$546.8 million in General Fund revenues.) Secretary Cummings expressed the Administration’s continued confidence in its revenue forecast in the near term, but highlighted some risk factors and signs of softening in the economy that will need to be monitored closely.

Individual income tax withholding collections were up by 8.3 percent in April relative to last year (although approximately 1 percentage point is attributable to extra deposit days this year), and are ahead of the December 2023 forecast by 3.8 percent, or \$502.3 million, on a fiscal year-to-date basis. Individual income tax nonwithholding collections are down 9.5 percent in April and 3.9 percent for the year, but are \$441.6 million ahead of the forecast on a year-to-date basis, assuaging concerns that had been raised earlier in the year when January collections unexpectedly plunged by 27.5 percent. Secretary Cummings’s presentation notes that nonwithholding collections are “very likely to finish in line with or above projections” for the year. Sales tax collections dropped by 0.1 percent in April relative to last year, and are down by 1 percent year-to-date, but are ahead of the forecast by 3.3 percent, or \$125.4 million, on a fiscal-year-to-date basis.

Corporate income tax collections, which are often volatile, dropped by 7.6 percent in April relative to last year, and are \$134.2 million behind projections year-to-date. Secretary Cummings explained that this decline is largely attributable to the processing of a backlog of corporate returns that were under review from previous years.

Secretary Cummings discussed several areas of concern in his presentation. Inflation remains above the Federal Reserve’s 2 percent target; the core personal consumption expenditures price index (the Federal Reserve’s preferred measure of inflation, which excludes the volatile food and energy categories) was 2.8 percent in March (and was unchanged in April, [as announced on May 31](#)). Job growth was modest in Virginia in April (a growth of 3,400 jobs) after a large increase in March (18,200), similar to the national trend. Nationally, the personal saving rate is now lower than it was prior to the pandemic, and the percentage of credit card balances that are past due is higher than pre-pandemic levels.

The April revenue report may be found at [this link](#) and Secretary Cummings’s slides from May 28 may be found at [this link](#). House Appropriations Committee members also received [a briefing on the Virginia Military Survivors and Dependents Education Program](#) and [an update on the consolidation of workforce development programs into the new Virginia Works agency](#).

VACo Contact: [Katie Boyle](#)



**Coming soon to this space at VACo Headquarters - the VACo Wall of Presidents (by decades)!**





**PHOTO CREDIT:** [Calder Loth, 2023](#)  
Virginia Department of Historic Resources



## Visit Middlesex County and the Middlesex County Historic Courthouse

**Location:** NE – School Street / Gloucester Road

**Built:** 1852 – 1853

**Style:** Colonial Revival

**Architect:** John P Hill

**Contractor:** John P Hill

**Description:** The building faces south and is a two story red colored brick structure. The south front has three large arches along the front and arches at either end of the arcade. There is a pediment at the roof line and the roof is hipped. On the east side is the Woodward Building constructed in 1966. That building has a similar arcade and wide pediment at the roof. The two buildings are connected by a one story arcade. On the east side is the old jail built by William R Jones.

**Note:** John P. Hill was builder of the courthouse building and was paid \$1.010.95 out of a sheriff's levy of taxpayers to provide for that purpose.

**SOURCE:** [courthouses.co](http://courthouses.co)

# VACo 2024 REGIONAL MEETINGS

## IN-PERSON MEETINGS

REGIONS 1&4 - MAY 1 | PRINCE GEORGE

REGION 2 - MAY 22 | JAMES CITY

REGION 13 - JUNE 11 | SCOTT

REGIONS 10&12 - JULY 10 | FLOYD

REGION 3 - TBA | HANOVER

## VIRTUAL MEETINGS

REGIONS 6&7 - JULY

REGION 8 - AUGUST

REGIONS 5&9&11 - AUGUST



In Partnership With

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# PREMIER PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

Talking Solar with **Michael Zehner**  
Director of Planning & Community Development  
The Berkley Group

**Part 1**  
*Helping Counties Navigate the Land Use  
Challenges and Opportunities*

**WITH THE BERKLEY GROUP**



# PREMIER PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

Talking Solar with **Michael Zehner**  
Director of Planning & Community Development  
The Berkley Group

**Part 2**  
*The Legislative and Regulatory Framework  
for Approving Applications in Virginia*

**WITH THE BERKLEY GROUP**



# PREMIER PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

Talking Solar with **Michael Zehner**  
Director of Planning & Community Development  
The Berkley Group

**Part 3**  
*The Future Energy Landscape of Virginia*

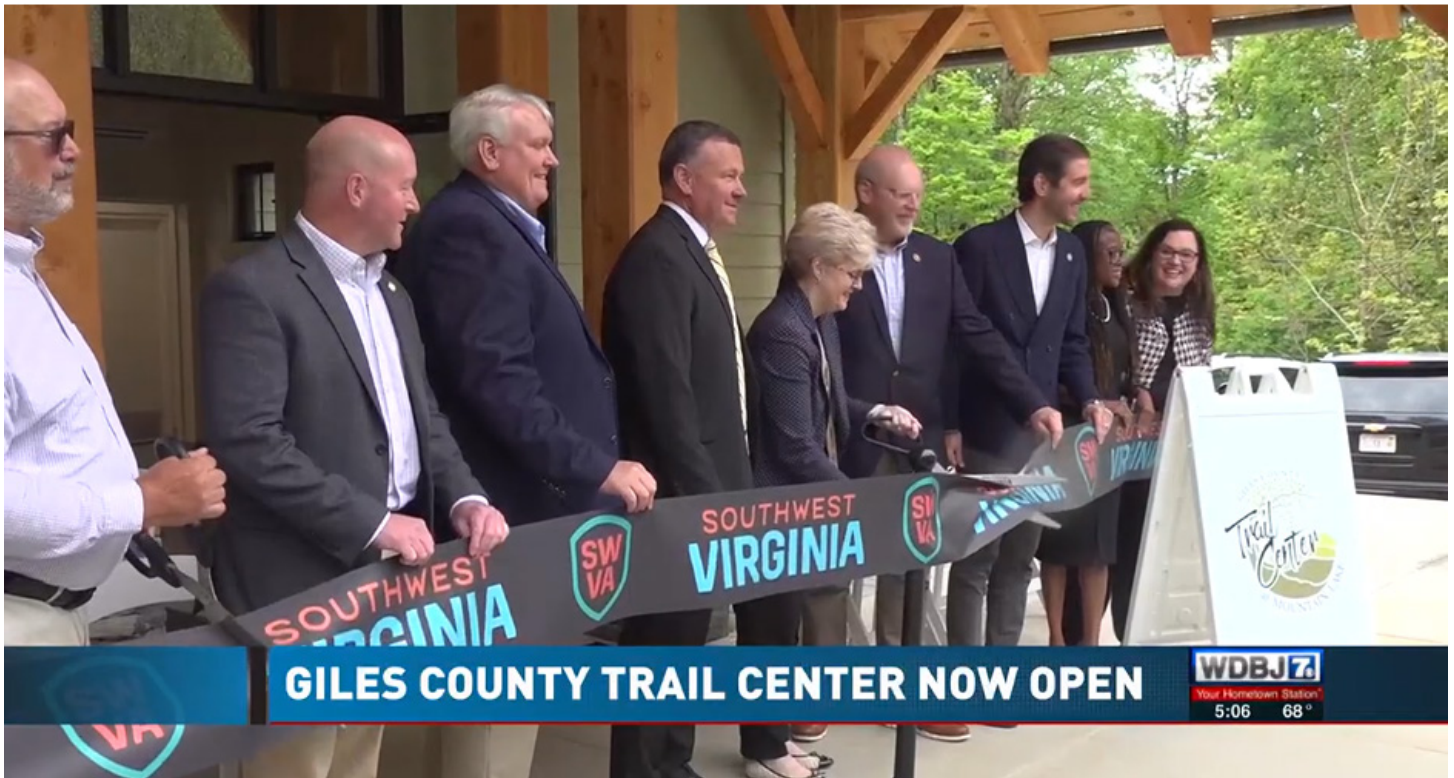
**WITH THE BERKLEY GROUP**



Talking Energy with the Berkley Group's Director of Planning & Community Development **Michael Zehner.**

Join us for this 3-part series. Click on each panel to view videos.





**GILES CO., Va. (WDBJ)** - With a quick cut of the ribbon, the Giles County Trail Center is now open as a space for anyone appreciating the outdoors in Virginia's Mountain Playground on the Mountain Lake property.

"This is a great place because when you come into the trail center, it's going to show you the new water trail, it's going to show you all the hiking trail, outfitters, everything that there is to do in Giles," said Heidi Stone, the President and CEO of Mountain Lake Lodge. "And you can find it all in just one location."

Along with providing resources about the activities in Giles, the trail center also provides everything you need for a quick, or extended, break during activities.

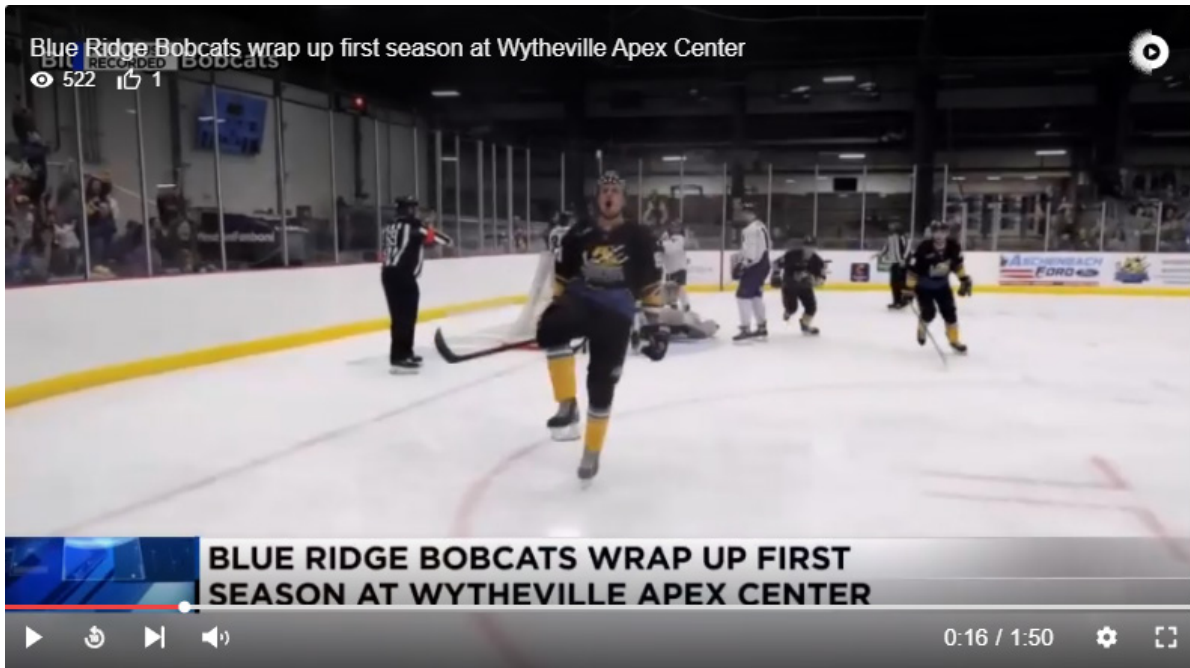
"This will give it a little additional parking, you get some bathrooms, it gives a space that if you get caught in a rainstorm, maybe you can go in and look at some stuff or just get ideas of places you want to go in the region," said Congressman Morgan Griffith (R-9). The Congressman came back to his hometown in Salem to attend the ribbon cutting ceremony. "And hopefully people will come for a trip and maybe then decide to stay for a couple of days or, or longer on another trip," he added.

With hundreds of thousands of visitors coming to enjoy the area each year, Giles County Administrator Chris McKlarney said the trail center is a welcoming place. He mentioned the new addition is another feature that makes Giles unique.

"I think it just gives people a warm feeling when they get here, right, a place they can gather a place that they can get into a restaurant place, they can change clothes, and the amenities that Mountain Lake offers."

The trail center is now open for any needs while exploring Giles County this summer.

**SOURCE:** [WDBJ7](https://www.wdbj7.com)



## Apex Center in Wythe County completes first hockey season

**WYTHE COUNTY, Va.** – Wythe County’s Apex Center took up a new role this year as the home for the Blue Ridge Bobcats, and after their first season, county leaders said they cannot wait to see what is next.

“It was a really fantastic first year from the county’s perspective,” said Matthew Hankins, deputy county administrator for Wythe County. “It has made an economic impact for the county.”

Hankins said it was not easy getting everything set for the season.

“This time last year, the hockey floor behind me was still a dirt floor,” Hankins said.

He said now that the season is over, they know what is up next on their to-do list.

“We’re installing new seats, so the seats that are in here will go away,” said Hankins. “We are going to have seats that are much closer to the ice, and they’ll be on a steeper rise, so everybody is going to be closer to the action.”

They said while at the beginning of the season, there were not as many fans as they were hoping, by the end of the season, it was getting loud almost every game.

“They’ve been very loud, and with the new seating we have coming in next season, the people are going to be closer to the ice,” said Vojtech Zemlicka, the head coach of the Blue Ridge Bobcats. “It’s going to get even louder.”

I talked to the executive vice president of the team, and he told me for the turnaround being so fast, he was happy with the results.

“The fans got more boisterous throughout the season, and it was a great place to play,” said Jimmy Millikin. “The players love playing here. We put goals in place and we strive for those goals and hit them, and we feel good about season two coming up”

They said next year, the goal is to bring even more events to the Apex Center.

**SOURCE:** [WSLS](#)





## Region 2 Meeting Features Robust Local Authority Discussion

VACo held its second of eight regional meetings for 2024 on May 22 at the Law Enforcement Center in James City County. VACo staff had the honor of traveling to James City County, which graciously hosted the event, to meet with local elected officials and staff. Region 2 encompasses the counties of Essex, Gloucester, James City, King and Queen, King William, Lancaster, Mathews, Middlesex, Northumberland, Richmond, Westmoreland and York. These regional meetings allow us to hear directly from county staff and elected officials on the important issues facing localities across Virginia. They also help VACo staff craft the legislative program for the upcoming 2025 legislative session.

The meeting began with VACo President-Elect, Supervisor Ruth Larson from James City County, welcoming all attendees to her lovely county. After introductions, we welcomed Cheryl Wilson, Executive Director of the [Virginia American Revolution 250 Commission \(VA250\)](#), who spoke about the great things the Commission is doing in preparation for the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of American independence.

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The Commission's goal is to educate, engage and inspire Virginians and to do this, they offer many programs and [grant funding opportunities](#) for localities to highlight their unique stories and exclusive resources.

Next on the agenda was an opportunity for a representative from each county to outline top issues or legislative priorities. Several issues emerged as common areas of concern, including local authority, school funding, pressures on local revenues and affordable housing.

Local authority, like at most VACo meetings, was a major discussion topic. Emphasizing local authority for land use decisions, including housing, short term rentals, data centers and solar siting is and has always been a priority for VACo. VACo staff reaffirmed this commitment during the meeting as county leaders shared examples of the importance of this authority to county governance. School funding was discussed often and specifically county leader support for the elimination of the cap on recognition of support positions in the state K-12 funding formula. An issue that has been gaining relevance in county circles has been the impacts of the constitutional amendment that provides for a real estate tax exemption for certain disabled veterans and their surviving spouses. First implemented in 2011, this amendment is having varying impacts to counties depending on their population. While county members reaffirmed their strong commitment to supporting veterans, they also encouraged the state to assist in mitigating the impact on local tax revenue, particularly in localities with a large portion of the local tax base that is exempt. Lastly, affordable housing was discussed, and county leaders reiterated their desire for the state to pursue incentives for localities to adopt more affordable housing instead of proposed mandates to do so.

VACo is grateful to the regional members, Senator Diggs's office, and business partners who participated in the meeting. VACo would like to give a special thanks to Cheryl Wilson from VA250 for coming and speaking to the group. Lastly, VACo would like to thank James City County and the staff at the Law Enforcement Center for hosting and sharing their wonderful facility with us.

VACo Contact: [James Hutzler](#)



**VACo President-Elect and James City County Chair Ruth Larson welcomes folks to the Region 2 meeting.**



## Behavioral Health Commission Sets Preliminary Course for 2024



After an initial organizational meeting of the full Behavioral Health Commission in May, which included a preliminary discussion of its 2024 workplan, the Commission's Executive Committee met on June 3 to refine the proposed set of studies for the year and adopt a preliminary study plan to recommend to the full Commission. The full Commission will act on the proposed workplan at its meeting on June 12.

As recommended by the Executive Committee, the Commission will address the following topics this year:

- **Tracking current efforts on health care workforce programs:** As part of the Commission's ongoing charge to map current initiatives in behavioral health, staff will collaborate with the Joint Commission on Health Care (which is conducting a study of all health care workforce programs, to include behavioral health programs), as well as with the Virginia Healthcare Workforce Development Authority, and provide a report in December.

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- **Tracking current efforts on crisis services implementation:** As another element of the Commission's work to document current initiatives, staff will develop a map of efforts to improve the state's crisis services system. Budget language directs the Secretary of Health and Human Resources to report on the use of funding appropriated during the 2023 and 2024 General Assembly sessions to expand and modernize the state's crisis services system. A report is scheduled for December.
- **Reporting on system metrics:** Staff plans to continue quarterly updates on key metrics, to include additional data points such as the use of private psychiatric hospital beds.
- **Program monitoring:** Staff suggested that the Commission develop a rolling list of programs to be evaluated, which would allow staff to work continuously on these efforts without requiring formal direction via the adoption of a new workplan each year. Further discussion of this plan is scheduled for September.
- **Monitoring and evaluation of Permanent Supportive Housing:** Staff plans to evaluate the effectiveness of this program in improving long-term outcomes, with a report planned for October.
- **Law enforcement interactions with individuals with mental illness and other disorders:** Legislation to provide an affirmative defense to prosecution for assault or assault and battery for individuals whose behaviors resulted from mental illness or neurocognitive disorders was vetoed by the Governor, and the Disability Commission referred the issue to the Behavioral Health Commission. Staff suggested that additional research into other states' statutes would be unlikely to change the outcome of legislation and proposed instead to determine to what extent law enforcement officers receive adequate training in interacting with individuals in crisis and what barriers might be impeding adequate training.
- **Alignment of civil admissions laws and processes with crisis system:** Legislation enacted in 2024 directs the Commission to study how best to align current civil admissions statutes and processes with the delivery of services in the crisis system. Staff plans to provide an interim briefing in November and a final report in fall 2025.
- **STEP-VA implementation:** Staff explained that the data and metrics needed for a full evaluation of STEP-VA are still being developed. Budget language directs the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services to report to the Commission, among other entities, on the changes to STEP-VA performance measures and benchmarks that are anticipated to be included in Community Services Board performance contracts. The Department is also required to conduct a needs assessment for each of the nine service components of STEP-VA, as well as a cost estimate for these unmet needs. Both reports are due by December 1. Commission staff anticipate using the data and metrics that are developed this year to begin conducting oversight of the programs beginning in 2025.



# JLARC Adopts Workplan for 2024

## JLARC JOINT LEGISLATIVE AUDIT AND REVIEW COMMISSION

The Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission (JLARC) met on May 21 and formally approved its plan of work for the remainder of the year. Planned studies include several items of interest to local governments:

- **Data centers:** The Commission’s study resolution directs staff to review the overall impacts of the data center industry in Virginia, to include factors affecting future growth; the impacts of data centers on natural, historic, and cultural resources, and on energy demand and supply; effects on local revenue; and effects on residents, such as noise pollution. Staff are also directed to “identify guidance and assistance state agencies could provide to local governments for use in making decisions about the location and expansion of data centers” and to assess the potential benefits of more geographic diversity in data center industry growth, as well as Virginia’s competitiveness in attracting data centers, to include reviewing the existing data center tax exemption. *(Planned briefing: December 2024)*
- **Access to broadband:** This study directs staff to review the state’s efforts to expand access to broadband throughout the Commonwealth, including an evaluation of the use of funds provided through state programs; determine whether the state has taken advantage of federal broadband programs, as well as whether the state is prepared to distribute forthcoming federal funds; determine whether the state is equipped to monitor broadband deployment projects and assist stakeholders; and assess progress towards the state’s universal connectivity goals. *(Planned briefing: December 2024)*
- **Virginia Department of Health:** This study will provide a review of the operations and management of the Virginia Department of Health (VDH), to include the adequacy of its staffing structure and its financial management. The study will also assess the management and operations of the Office of Emergency Management Services, the extent to which VDH has used federal COVID-19 funding to improve its response to future public health emergencies, and the agency’s healthcare workforce pipeline programs. *(Planned briefing: November 2024)*
- **Tolling and traffic congestion reduction:** This study will review the state’s efforts to reduce traffic congestion on I-81 and in Northern Virginia and on I-95 through tolling and public-private

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partnerships. Staff will evaluate the clarity of tolling information for drivers in Northern Virginia; determine the effect of public-private partnerships on the state's ability to address congestion; and evaluate the availability and sustainability of funding for congestion-related improvements on I-81, to include potential opportunities to raise additional revenues for this purpose. *(Planned briefing: June 2024)*

- **Potential transfer of the Department of Juvenile Justice to the Health and Human Resources Secretariat:** This study will examine the feasibility, costs, and benefits of transferring the Department from the Secretary of Public Safety and Homeland Security to the Secretary of Health and Human Resources. The study resolution notes that many youths admitted to DJJ's direct care programs may have mental health or substance use disorders and that the juvenile system is intended to be remedial rather than punitive. *(Planned briefing: December 2024)*
- **Higher education institutional outlook, academic program alignment, and costs:** This study has been divided into two briefings, the first of which will focus on trends in student enrollment, the alignment of degree offerings with skills needed to meet workforce needs, factors contributing to institutions' revenues, and institutions' financial sustainability. The second briefing will address institutional spending, staffing, and cost of attendance, as well as opportunities to reduce the cost of public higher education. *(Planned briefings in September and October 2024)*
- **Virginia Commonwealth University Health System Authority:** This study will review the VCU Health System Authority's structure and the relationship between the health system and the university, to include an evaluation of the Health System's procurement function and oversight of capital projects. *(Planned briefing: June 2024)*

JLARC staff will also provide periodic reports as part of JLARC's ongoing oversight of economic development incentives, the Virginia Retirement System, the Virginia College Savings Plan, and the Virginia Information Technologies Agency. Staff will also be preparing JLARC's suite of annual reports (a review of state spending, a review of state spending on the Standards of Quality, and a comparison of Virginia with other states on a variety of data points). The full workplan for 2024, which includes the scheduled briefings for each JLARC meeting, is available at [this link](#).

VACo Contact: [Katie Boyle](#)



## Virginia Commission on Youth Approves Study Plans for 2024



The Commission on Youth held its first meeting of the year on May 21. In addition to receiving an update from the Office of Children’s Services and a [briefing](#) from a nonprofit providing essential items to economically disadvantaged young children in the Central Virginia region, the Commission discussed its work plan for the remainder of the year.

The Commission will be undertaking three major projects in 2024:

- **Review of Virginia’s Special Education Dispute Resolution System:** This study was directed as part of omnibus legislation that was enacted this session making a series of changes to Virginia’s special education system; a report is due by November 1, 2025. The legislative language directs the Commission to review the state’s special education dispute resolution system, to include its effectiveness in responding to parents’ concerns; compare Virginia’s system with best practices from other states; and make recommendations for improvement. The legislative directive requires the Commission’s recommendations to include proposals to improve the Department of Education’s data collection and reporting on parents’ interactions with the dispute resolution system and the

[More on Next Page](#)

outcomes of these interactions. Commission staff presented a work plan for this study at the May 21 meeting; as part of the study, staff will hold a series of listening sessions to hear concerns from parents; interested participants may register at [this link](#). Staff will then convene a stakeholder advisory group and conduct further research to develop recommendations and a final report.

- **Use and Impact of Relief of Custody on Care and Support of Youth:** The increased use of petitions for relief of custody of troubled youth or children was a topic raised by local departments of social services and the Office of the Children’s Ombudsman during the Commission’s 2023 foster care study, and the Commission approved a study resolution in November 2023 on this issue. Commission staff will convene an advisory group, which is planned to include the Department of Social Services, Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services, Department of Juvenile Justice, the state’s Court Improvement Program, local departments of social services, and Community Services Boards, among others, and will hold regional roundtables as part of the process of developing recommendations for the Commission to consider. Staff plan to develop a better understanding of the reasons for relief of custody petitions being filed, as well as how the process varies by locality and how it is affected by the availability of services.
- **Collection of Evidence-Based Practices for Children and Adolescents with Mental Health Treatment Needs:** This document, which was most recently updated in 2023, is a resource for families, providers, and others who work with children and adolescents with mental health needs. Commission staff will be working to disseminate the 2023 edition of the document as well as preparing for the 2025 biennial update.

Scott Reiner, Executive Director of the Office of Children’s Services, reported to the Commission regarding [legislation from 2023](#) that was left in committee; this legislation would have allowed members of family assessment and planning teams and community policy and management teams to share information with local law enforcement or local threat assessment teams if a child is determined to pose a threat of violence or physical harm to himself or others; generally, proceedings of these teams are confidential. The Commission referred the bill to the State Executive Council (SEC) for review, with a request that the SEC and the Attorney General provide clarification on policies regarding confidentiality. Mr. Reiner reported that the Office of the Attorney General is expected to provide information to the SEC this summer.

VACo Contacts: [Katie Boyle](#) and [Jeremy R. Bennett](#)



# Joint Commission on Health Care Prepares for 2024 Work



The Joint Commission on Health Care met on May 22 to organize its work for the remainder of the year. Delegate Rodney Willett was elected as the new Chair, and Senator Ghazala Hashmi was chosen as the new Vice-Chair.

Commission members previously planned for two major studies to be conducted this year:

- **Performance of health care workforce programs:** Commission staff will develop a framework to measure the performance and effectiveness of health care workforce programs and consider policy options by which their performance may be improved.
- **Strategies to extend health care access to vulnerable populations:** Commission staff will evaluate alternative models for delivering health care (such as community paramedicine, home visiting, mobile health clinics, telehealth, and community health workers); identify alternative models in peer states; and develop policy options for effective expansion of access to care for vulnerable populations.

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Commission members will also receive briefings on several other topics that were requested by members last fall: social determinants of health, services for individuals with traumatic brain injury in long-term care settings, and the impact of technology on children's health.

Several additional items were referred to the Commission this year for potential action:

- **HJ 41 (Srinivasan)**, which was passed by the General Assembly during the 2024 session and directs the Commission to study policy solutions to the fentanyl crisis, to include policy recommendations to reduce the prevalence of fentanyl and the number of fentanyl overdoses.
- **HB 1322 (Sickles)** and **SB 33 (Locke)**, which were continued to 2025 and referred to the Commission by letter. These bills deal with the supervision of certified registered nurse anesthetists; expected study goals would include documenting the existing anesthesia provider workforce, as well as supervision and regulatory requirements in other states and their effects on the workforce and patient outcomes.
- **HJ 60 (Hayes)**, which was continued to 2025 and referred to the Commission by letter. This resolution would direct the Commission to study sickle cell disease in the Commonwealth, to include the availability of health care and support services and sufficiency of data collection, and current state funding and programs focused on the disease, among other aspects, and make recommendations for improvements.
- **The issue of Medicaid program eligibility criteria and Medicaid "benefit cliffs,"** which was referred to the Joint Commission on Health Care via letter from the Virginia Disability Commission. Preliminary study objectives would include determining the extent to which individuals move between eligibility categories and identifying strategies to reduce the impact of these transitions, as well as reducing the administrative burden of eligibility determinations.

The Commission's next meeting is scheduled for June 11, at which time members will decide how to address the newly-referred study topics.

VACo Contact: [Katie Boyle](#)



# Independence Day at the Virginia State Capitol

## A Celebration of Freedom and Our Nation's Founding

July 4, 2024 | 5:00 – 9:00 pm



*"...I am apt to believe that it will be celebrated, by succeeding Generations, as the great anniversary Festival... with Pomp and Parade, with Shews, Games, Sports, Guns, Bells, Bonfires and Illuminations from one End of this Continent to the other from this Time forward forever more..."* – John Adams, 1776

This year, [Virginia's Fourth of July celebration](#) promises to be unlike any other. Inspired by John Adams' vision of a grand festival, the majestic Virginia State Capitol grounds will transform into a vibrant hub of activity, bursting with the sights and sounds of Virginia's diverse communities.

Imagine the sights, sounds, and energy of Virginians from all walks of life engaging with what Freedom means today through performances of spoken word, dance, and music as a prelude to unifying and inspiring keynote remarks and a very special finale. Confirmed speakers and performers include:

- Master of Ceremonies: [Geoff Bennett](#), **PBS News Hour** Co-Anchor
- [Quantico Marine Band](#)
- [Roanoke Symphony Orchestra & Chorus](#)

Enjoy free parking and shuttle service to this exciting, FREE public event! [Please RSVP](#) to help us plan for the best experience and receive the latest updates.

As this event takes place in Capitol Square, please [click here](#) for a list of prohibited items from Capitol Police.

## Cardinal News to host conference on cannabis October 15



[Cardinal News](#) will present an educational conference on cannabis October 15 in partnership with Roanoke College in Salem.

Virginia is the only state where personal possession of small amounts of cannabis is legal, but retail sales are not. The theme of the day-long conference is “Confused about cannabis?” and will feature speakers who will address the political, economic, health and legal aspects of cannabis.

Confirmed speakers include:

- **Jeremy Preiss**, acting head and chief officer of the Virginia Cannabis Control Authority
- State health commissioner **Karen Shelton**
- **Chuck Slemp**, currently chief deputy attorney general
- **Kyle Kilgore**, Scott County commonwealth’s attorney
- **Tahir Johnson**, president of the Minority Cannabis Business Association
- **Chelsea Higgs Wise**, Marijuana Justice
- **Jason Blanchette**, Virginia Cannabis Association
- **Cat Packer**, Drug Policy Alliance
- **Sabrina Bergen**, American Bankers Association
- Multiple state legislators from both parties
- Researchers from the Fralin Biomedical Institute, the University of Virginia, Johns Hopkins University and Temple University.

Visit Virginia’s Blue Ridge is also helping to smooth logistics for those traveling to the Roanoke Valley, and sponsorship opportunities are available. The conference is expected to attract participants from across Virginia, but space is limited. More information about the program, sponsorships and early bird registrations [are available now](#). To take advantage of a \$25 discount off the \$150 ticket, use the promo code “early bird” before August 1.



May 23, 2024

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### LOCAL GOVERNMENT ATTORNEYS ASSOCIATION HONORS MEMBERS

The Local Government Attorneys of Virginia, Inc. (LGA), held a spring conference in Richmond, Virginia last month. During the conference, LGA awarded the A. Robert Cherin Award for Outstanding Deputy or Assistant Local Government Attorney to Cynthia A. Bailey, Deputy City Attorney for Fairfax County. LGA's Walter C. Erwin, III Special Project Award was given to the Leadership Training ad hoc committee.

#### *2024 A. ROBERT CHERIN AWARD*

The Cherin Award recognizes a deputy or assistant local government attorney for exemplary public service and unwavering commitment to the highest ethical and professional principles. Ms. Bailey has served with the highest distinction in the Fairfax County Attorney's Office for approximately 25 years. As Assistant County Attorney, Cynthia worked in all sections of the office, handling land use issues, child abuse and neglect proceedings, and procurement matters. She was later appointed Deputy County Attorney and tasked with guiding the office's legal work on public-private partnerships and affordable housing matters. Under Cynthia's leadership, the section flourished, and its work now also includes public records, budgets and grants, procurement, and pensions. Cynthia also undertook the role of legal liaison to the County's boards, authorities and commissions. She has devoted countless hours to office reorganization initiatives, including development and oversight of a thoughtful and creative new section of the office. Cynthia was also quick to volunteer to teach courses for the office's paralegals.

#### *2024 WALTER C. ERWIN, III SPECIAL PROJECTS AWARD*

The Erwin Special Projects Award recognizes LGA members who have worked on a project of significant importance to LGA or local government generally. From its genesis in Fall 2022, the effort to create and implement a program tailored to local government attorneys resulted in the Leadership Training Program that rolled out earlier this year. Members of the committee are co-Chair Kathleen A. Dooley, City of Fredericksburg; co-Chair Brandi A. Law, City of Hampton; Cynthia A. Bailey, County of Fairfax; Walter C. Erwin, III, Retired City of Lynchburg; Michael W.S. Lockaby, Spilman Thomas & Battle, PLLC; Brian J. Lubkeman, Briglia Hundley, P.C.; Rysheda M. McClendon, County of Stafford; Sharon E. Pandak, Pandak & Taves, PLLC; and Mark C. Popovich, Guynn Waddell P.C.

LGA promotes common interests and an exchange of information among its members on legal issues that are particularly relevant to Virginia's counties, cities, and towns. The LGA's member services include conferences, a legal handbook, a monthly newsletter, and other services.

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lesa.yeatts@herndon-va.gov

Amy V. Sales  
LGA Executive Director  
(804) 643-4433  
amy.sales@easterassociates.com



**For Immediate Release: May 23, 2024**

### **LOCAL GOVERNMENT ATTORNEYS ASSOCIATION ELECTS NEW OFFICERS**

The Local Government Attorneys of Virginia, Inc. (LGA) elected new officers and members of the Board of Directors at its annual meeting last month in Richmond, Virginia. LGA has over 300 organizational members, represented by more than 800 attorneys from Virginia localities, private law firms, and other entities that specialize in local government matters, and by members of the judiciary.

The following officers and directors will lead LGA for the 2024-25 year, beginning September 1, 2024:

For a one-year term as officer:

- President - Andrew "Andy" H. Herrick, County of Albemarle
- Vice President - Kelly J. Lackey, City of Fredericksburg
- Treasurer - Courtney R. Sydnor, County of Loudoun
- Secretary - Ryan C. Samuel, County of Arlington

For an initial two-year term as director:

- Jeffrey "Jeff" S. Gore, Hefty Wiley & Gore, P.C.
- Sarah "Sally" E. Kegley, County of Scott

For a second two-year term as director:

- John C. Blair, City of Staunton
- Brandi A. Law, City of Hampton

These newly elected LGA leaders will join sitting directors Martin R. Crim, Sands Anderson; Patrick C. Murphrey, City of Newport News; Alan B. Spencer, City of Danville; Tyler C. Southall, County of Dinwiddie; and Lesa J. Yeatts, Town of Herndon who will be the immediate past LGA president.

LGA supports common interests and an exchange of information among members on legal issues that are particularly relevant to Virginia's counties, cities, and towns. LGA's member services include two conferences and a regional seminar each year, which present in-depth analyses of legal issues related to local government. Mandatory Continuing Legal Education credit can be earned by attorneys attending LGA's conferences and seminars.

Other member services include:

- The annual LGA Handbook of Virginia Local Government Law, authored by Virginia attorneys with specialized expertise in the areas of law addressed.
- A monthly newsletter, the Bill of Particulars, summarizing recent federal and state court cases.
- Amicus curiae briefs filed periodically in cases involving issues important to local government.
- An ethics committee that works closely with the Virginia State Bar on ethics issues of significance to local government attorneys.
- Practice groups that focus on social services, local taxation, eminent domain, employment law, procurement, housing law, town attorneys, and younger local government attorneys.
- A group forum/email service that allows members to exchange legal inquiries and information.
- A website library of legal documents and related materials.

For more information on LGA and its programs, visit the LGA website at [lgava.org](http://lgava.org).



## Pittsylvania County Deputy Clerk Earns Prestigious State Award



Pittsylvania County Deputy Clerk, Kaylyn McCluster, was named Clerk of the Year by the Virginia Municipal Clerks Association during its Annual Conference on April 18, 2024, in Charlottesville.

The award was based on a nomination process of clerks throughout Virginia and is considered a great honor. The award reflects McCluster's dedication, hard work, and commitment to the community. Her family and supervisor were present at the conference for the award presentation.

"The Board congratulates Kaylyn for this well-deserved award, as it speaks volumes about the important role she plays within the County. We have found that Kaylyn not only performs any task put before her to the best of her abilities, but she is known to extend herself beyond the call of duty to help those who need assistance. The Board is proud of Kaylyn's accomplishment, and it only reinforces what we already know – that she is a highly talented and capable member of the organization and the County as a whole," said Darrell Dalton, Chairman, Pittsylvania County Board of Supervisors.

McCluster provides direct support to the Board of Supervisors, as well as the County Administrator, as part of her many duties. She has served Pittsylvania County for 12 years.

[More on Next Page](#)

“Kaylyn does a tremendous job supporting the Board of Supervisors, but her role within the organization extends far beyond the monthly meetings. Kaylyn regularly assists other Boards, Committees, Commissions, and departments within the County, as well as meetings and events. Her wealth of institutional knowledge is an invaluable asset to the organization and her professionalism and positivity has an enormous impact on the County as a whole. We’re very proud of Kaylyn and are grateful to the Virginia Municipal Clerks Association for awarding her this honor,” Dave Arnold, Assistant County Administrator.

“I am deeply humbled and honored to accept the Virginia Clerk of the Year Award. Serving Pittsylvania County for the past 12 years has been an absolute privilege, and receiving this recognition is truly heartwarming. I am thankful for the opportunity to make a difference and contribute to the betterment of our beautiful County, that I also call home. This award is not just a reflection of my efforts, but also of the support and collaboration of those around me, and together we continue to strive for excellence within the County. Thank you for this incredible honor and I will continue to uphold the highest standards of excellence in my role as the Deputy Clerk for Pittsylvania County,” McCluster said.

Organized in 1977, the Virginia Municipal Clerks Association (VMCA) is an organization dedicated to promoting the interests of municipal clerks. The Association promotes professional development through continuing education and networking opportunities. Its objectives are to promote education and certification of Municipal Clerks, promote better municipal government, increase efficiency of municipal clerk operations, be alert and responsive to federal, state, and local legislation which impacts the clerk's office, and educate the public and colleagues regarding the role of the Municipal Clerk.

To learn more about VMCA, visit [www.vmca.com](http://www.vmca.com).





## NEWS RELEASE

**CONTACT:** Irina Calos  
[Irina.Calos@DEQ.Virginia.gov](mailto:Irina.Calos@DEQ.Virginia.gov)  
(804) 659-1333

May 28, 2024

## Tangier Island Receives Funding for Critical Environmental Projects

*\$2.3 million grant to protect Tangier's environment and residents*

**RICHMOND, Va.** – The Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) today announced a \$2.3 million grant that it has awarded to Tangier Island, a unique and vulnerable Chesapeake Bay community. The funds will be used to plan and implement several important environmental protection and mitigation projects.

The primary project involves protecting Tangier's only petroleum storage facility, which is exposed to flooding and will benefit from additional environmental controls to prevent petroleum spills. Safe, continued operation of this storage facility is necessary to support the Island's fishing fleet and other equipment.

The Town is using a portion of the grant to purchase the tank facility from the existing owner. The Town will replace the old tanks and failing infrastructure with new double walled tanks and associated infrastructure. These improvements, which will be completed by the end of 2024, will prevent spills or breaches from reaching the waters of the Chesapeake Bay.

Additionally, the grant will fund the purchase of critical equipment and spare parts for the Town's wastewater treatment plant. Funding will also be used for the installation of floodgates at areas around the island that are particularly affected by recurrent flooding.

“When we learned about the significant threats to this unique community from an unprotected fuel facility and recurrent flooding, DEQ was ready and eager to help,” said DEQ Director Mike Rolband. “We are pleased that DEQ was able to provide funding and technical support that Tangier Island and its residents so critically need.”

“On behalf of the residents of Tangier Island, many thanks to DEQ for its financial and project management support,” said Tangier Mayor James “Ooker” Eskridge. “DEQ’s assistance will allow us to move these important projects forward.”

### About DEQ

The Virginia Department of Environmental Quality protects and enhances Virginia's environment and promotes the health and well being of the citizens of the commonwealth. We are committed to cleaner water, improved air quality and the productive reuse of contaminated land. For more information, please visit [www.DEQ.Virginia.gov](http://www.DEQ.Virginia.gov).

**Virginia Opioid Abatement Authority**

701 East Franklin Street, Suite 803

Richmond, Virginia 23219

[www.voaa.us](http://www.voaa.us)

## NEWS RELEASE

**Opioid Abatement Authority Announces \$22.7 Million  
in Annual Grant Awards to Virginia Cities and Counties***Total awards rise to more than \$56 million in last twelve months*

May 28, 2024 – On May 23 the Virginia Opioid Abatement Authority (OAA) approved \$22,672,333 in grants to communities across Virginia for opioid abatement and remediation efforts.

“These grants will help communities across the commonwealth develop and expand programs to prevent opioid addiction, to provide treatment, and to support people in recovery,” said Senator Todd Pillion, Chair of the OAA Board of Directors. “Virginia fought back against companies that were pushing their highly addictive drugs on vulnerable people, and now we are making sure those settlement funds are bring used to save lives, support families, and restore communities.”

The list of awards from this most recent round of applications is attached.

In June 2023 the OAA [announced](#) its first major round of awards to cities and counties, totaling nearly \$23 million, followed by a subsequent [announcement](#) of funds for state agencies totaling nearly \$11 million. The total amount of awards made to date exceeds \$56 million.

Virginia expects to receive a total of approximately \$1.1 billion from litigation against manufacturers, distributors, and pharmacies that were alleged to have contributed to the opioid crisis. Payments from these settlements and bankruptcies began in 2022 and are expected to conclude by 2041.



## VACo to Present at Virginia Disability Commission on Housing; Seeks Examples of Innovative County Programs



At the request of the [Virginia Disability Commission](#), VACo has been asked to address how counties work to address housing needs for those with disabilities. Over the years we have recognized several outstanding and innovative programs counties have implemented, often in partnership with local stakeholders, to find solutions for those needing assistance in this area. VACo will be addressing the commission at their next meeting, at a date to be determined later this summer. Please share any programs that your county has implemented to meet the needs of the individuals and families your community serves.

Share your specific programs and policies with Joe Lerch at [jlerch@vaco.org](mailto:jlerch@vaco.org).



## Office of Broadband

# Mathews County first locality to submit application to Virginia Affordability and Adoption Planning Grant Program!

Dear Virginia Broadband Community,

Happy June, everyone! See below for updates on the Office of Broadband's program initiatives.

### High Priority Updates:

#### Digital Opportunity

- Congratulations to **Mathews County** for being the 1st locality to submit an application to the **Virginia Affordability and Adoption Planning Grant Program!**
- The Office of Broadband is still accepting applications for this opportunity! **Submitted applications are reviewed on a rolling basis on the 15th of every month.** The purpose of this program is for local and Tribal governments to conduct needs assessments, identify priorities, and develop plans with implementation strategies to address digital opportunity gaps in their communities.
- The Office of Broadband has submitted their application for the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) State Digital Equity Capacity Grant to implement the Virginia Digital Opportunity Plan.

For additional questions and concerns, please contact [broadband@dhcd.virginia.gov](mailto:broadband@dhcd.virginia.gov).

DHCD Website - <https://www.dhcd.virginia.gov/broadband>.

See how **Blue Line Solutions** helped **Smyth County** become a safer community **VIDEO**



**Mark Hutchinson | CEO/Founder  
Blue Line Solutions**



What makes **Blue Line Solutions** stand out? **VIDEO**

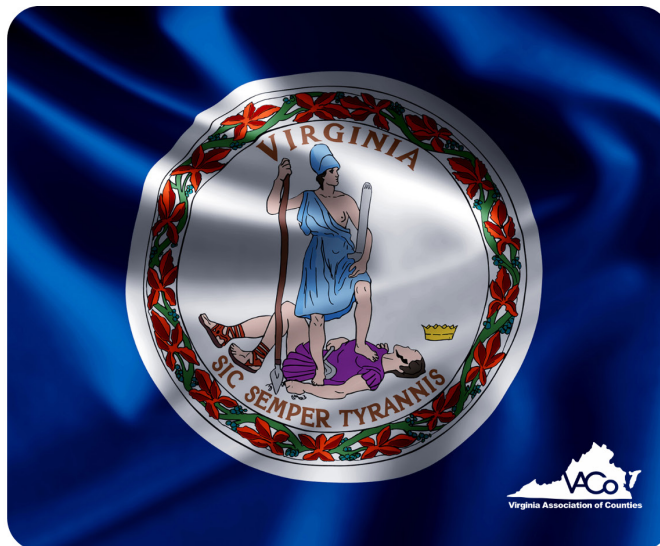




# VACo Releases 2024 Legislative Summary

## VACo LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY

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**2024 Edition**

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[www.vaco.org](http://www.vaco.org)

The [Legislative Summary](#) details the actions of the 2024 General Assembly. It also includes information on legislation of interest to counties.

This edition contains links to bills through the General Assembly's Legislative Information System and includes studies and statistics of importance to counties.

[Read VACo's 2024 Legislative Summary](#)

**VACo Contact: [VACo Legislative Team](#)**



# Your high school senior could win \$2,500 for college!



## Nationwide/NACo 2024 College Scholarship

To enter and for full details, go to [nrsforu.com/scholarship](https://nrsforu.com/scholarship)

Submission period: April 1 - May 31, 2024



For more information, contact:

LYNN ROBINETTE

434-534-5673

[LYNN.ROBINETTE@NATIONWIDE.COM](mailto:LYNN.ROBINETTE@NATIONWIDE.COM)



Nationwide Retirement Solutions (Nationwide) partners with the National Association of Counties (NACo) to provide counties and their employees with a competitive deferred compensation program. As part of this partnership, Nationwide pays a fee to NACo in exchange for NACo's exclusive endorsement, marketing support and program oversight of Nationwide products made available under the program. For more information, including fees paid, Nationwide encourages you to visit [NRSforu.com](https://nrsforu.com).

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# Aetna® Statewide Wellness Campaign Brings Comprehensive Master Planning and Wellness Programming to Your County

VACo Premier Partner Aetna believes healthier happens together. That's why Aetna has teamed up with [National Fitness Campaign](#) to address health disparities by increasing access to health and wellness solutions for Virginia Counties.

**In Part 1 of this video series**, you'll hear from **Dean Lynch**, VACo Executive Director, **Trent Matthias**, National Fitness Campaign Director, **Bill Deal**, Head of Sales, Public Sector and Labor, Keystone and Capital Markets of Aetna on the exciting new statewide sponsorship and what it can deliver for your county.

**In Part 2**, learn more about the feasibility study process available for your county and hear from leaders in Virginia like [Pulaski County](#) and the [Town of Dumfries](#) who have successfully launched and integrated the comprehensive wellness campaign in their communities.

## Additional Resources

- [Virginia Campaign](#) – Funding Outdoor Fitness Courts across the state
- [Campaign Video](#) – How the fitness court campaign got started, how it works, and how it involves and impacts communities.
- [Outdoor Fitness Court in Pulaski County](#)
- [Outdoor Fitness Court in the Town of Dumfries](#)
- Please click [here](#) to learn more about getting started!

## Aetna Contact

Marcus Duckworth, VP, Client Management | [DuckworthM@aetna.com](mailto:DuckworthM@aetna.com)



## Part 1

[Discover how Aetna's exciting new statewide wellness program can help your county](#)



## Part 2

[Hear from Pulaski County and the Town of Dumfries, which have successfully launched and integrated Aetna's comprehensive wellness campaign](#)



# BLU<sub>E</sub>LINE

SOLUTIONS



## PHOTO SPEED ENFORCEMENT

What it means for your community

Photo Speed Enforcement in school zones means safer streets and a safer community.

We are Blue Line Solutions, standing out from other traffic safety firms. Founded by former law enforcement, we combine over 300 years of experience with a commitment to saving lives. Our mission is clear – to enhance safety, reduce vehicle speed, and empower law enforcement agencies with advanced tools to prevent and combat dangerous speed efficiently.



We combine public information and education with photo speed enforcement and advanced technology to effectively decrease speeding by an average of 94% and simplify ticketing and collections. Our seamless, comprehensive services cover everything from equipment and surveillance to citations and collections, providing a hassle-free experience. By enhancing police resources, our solutions enable officers to focus on other priorities. Aligned with the principles of Vision Zero, our ultimate goal is to achieve zero injuries, zero crashes, and zero lives at risk.

**Western Virginia RSM Greg Hogston**  
 276-759-8064  
 ghogston@bluelinesolutions.org

**Eastern Virginia RSM Randy Campbell**  
 434-485-4683  
 rcampbell@bluelinesolutions.org



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**Equipment Lease-Purchase Financing is a great tool to make your locality's and school division's budget go further!**

**Contact us for details.**

**VML/VACo Equipment Lease-Purchase Financing offers:**

- Competitive rates and low closing costs.
- Predictable and level payments.
- Lease terms up to the expected life of the equipment.
- Streamlined process – we handle the details for you.

**Budget less in the current year by spreading payments out over the useful life of the equipment** – perfect for school buses, fire engines, and police cars.

**CONTACT US TODAY**

**Questions?**

Contact Steve Mulroy

804-648-0635

[smulroy@valocalfinance.org](mailto:smulroy@valocalfinance.org)







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Berkley Group is the go-to consultant for local governments and other public agencies. 100% of our services are dedicated to serving public agencies. We understand local government because we have worked in local government and continue to serve them proudly.

Contact us today at 540-208-5188 or [info@bgllc.net](mailto:info@bgllc.net) for any of your community's needs.



# Enter the 2024 VACo Achievement Awards

## Deadline is July 1, 2024



Dear **VACo Members** –

It's time for the 2024 Achievement Awards Program. Any county department is eligible to compete so **ENTER NOW!**

### [2024 Achievement Awards Submission Form](#)

All entries are required to be submitted in electronic form. No paper copy submissions are necessary. The electronic submissions should be a PDF or WORD file. Email entries to Gage Harter at [ggharter@vaco.org](mailto:ggharter@vaco.org). **Electronic submissions must be received by July 1, 2024.**

Last year, [we processed 135 entries](#) and selected 33 winners from 21 Counties. VACo presented awards at Board of Supervisors Meetings, recognized winners at the 89th Annual Conference, and issued a news release to statewide media.

The judges for the 2024 Achievement Awards will be announced soon.

VACo has received more than 1,000 entries over the past decade. Last year's Best Achievement winner was **Alleghany County** for its "**Alleghany/Covington School Consolidation**" program.

VACo encourages all Counties, big and small, to enter the 2024 Achievement Awards Program. Please contact [ggharter@vaco.org](mailto:ggharter@vaco.org) with questions or for more information.

[Achievement Awards Submission Form](#) | [Achievement Awards Website](#)  
[2023 Achievement Awards Press Release](#) | [Past Achievement Award Winners](#)

**ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS**  
**SUBMISSION FORM**

# VACo Seeks to Create Mentorship Program for Supervisors



Dear Members/County Administrators...

VACo is blessed to have many smart and experienced Supervisors. This year we welcomed a slew of newly elected Supervisors, some of whom have expressed interest in being mentored. VACo thrives when Supervisors connect and share experiences and challenges. Therefore, we would like to establish an informal, voluntary mentoring program to offer opportunities for personalized connections among Supervisors.

If you are interested in being a mentor or being connected with a mentor, please contact Karie Walker, [kwalker@vaco.org](mailto:kwalker@vaco.org) or 804-343-2504.

We look forward to hearing from you!

Sincerely,

**Karie Walker**  
Director of Programs and Development  
Virginia Association of Counties



## You are VAcorp

You are not merely a customer of VAcorp; you **are** VAcorp! We are both owned and governed by you – our members! VAcorp is created under 15.2-2700 of the local government code where all assets and surplus belong to the members. In addition, VAcorp is controlled by a Supervisory Board that is elected from and by our members. The Board determines and approves all major risk pool decisions, and as a voting member, you have a voice in the decisions that matter most.

### Know Who You Are

Because you are VAcorp itself, we think it is critical that you understand exactly what VAcorp is and why it exists. Many simply think of us as their “insurance carrier” – writing customized coverages and handling claims when they occur – but we are so much more!

## Our History

### The Birth of Risk Pools

VAcorp is not an insurance company, but rather a Risk Pool.

Unstable economic conditions in the mid-1980s led to a commercial insurance crisis with ballooning premiums and widespread policy cancellations. As a result, Risk Pools began to form as an alternative to volatile traditional carriers, allowing Pool members to exert more control over their coverages and costs. Today, almost all public sector entities throughout the country get their coverage from Risk Pools rather than from commercial insurance companies.

### VAcorp’s Origin

VAcorp was founded by a handful of Virginia counties in 1993. The ultimate goals of the program were to provide **cost stability**, the most **comprehensive coverages** possible, and **custom services** tailored specifically to the unique needs of our members. While we are pleased by how well our prices compare against the competition, our goal was never to guarantee the lowest cost. Instead, we promised to avoid the wild price swings that we’ve seen in other providers and provide stable pricing year after year, and that is exactly what we have delivered. VAcorp rates are actually **lower today in 2024 than they were in 1993!**

### VAcorp’s Growth

Today, VAcorp is the **largest self-insurance risk pool** for public sector entities in the Commonwealth with a membership retention rate of better than 98%. Over the years, we have expanded beyond counties to include municipalities, school divisions, authorities, volunteer fire & rescue companies, state agencies, and non-profits funded by taxpayer dollars. **Over 560 members** have joined VAcorp, including 8 of the 10 largest counties, 8 of the 10 largest cities, and 8 of the 10 largest school divisions. We believe that the extraordinary success of the program can be attributed to our unwavering commitment to our founding principles.



## VAcorp Exists to Serve You

VAcorp was created solely to serve Virginia's public sector entities, and from day one until now, we have never lost sight of that purpose. Because we answer only to our members, every decision is designed to benefit the group over the long haul.

VAcorp advocates for local government through a myriad of partnerships with affiliated associations including: VACo, VSBA, VLGMA, VASS, VFGOA, VASBO, LGA, Regional Jail Association, PDC, etc. While there is a cost associated with these partnerships, they add value to the group by aiding in our ability to lobby the General Assembly on behalf of our members.

You may not always see the immediate payoff, but every VAcorp decision is made in alignment with our vision to serve our members and promote the health and longevity of your program.

Take a look at a few of VAcorp's milestones over the years:

- **1993** - VAcorp is established with 12 founding members and less than \$700,000 in annual contribution.
- **1998** - VAcorp terminates service contract with claims administration vendor and hires staff to promote more control and efficiency.
- **1999** - VAcorp offers coverage to K-12 Public Schools across the Commonwealth.
- **2001** - VAcorp begins offering Public Officials Liability coverage in response to VARisk offering limited coverage.
- **2004** - VAcorp begins providing Environmental Liability coverage to all members at no additional cost. Even in 2024, VAcorp is the only provider offering this coverage with a low \$25,000 deductible. Other providers offer this coverage with a \$250,000 deductible.
- **2008** - VAcorp responded to the great recession by freezing rates and providing financial relief with over \$8,000,000 in dividends to members.
- **2011** - VAcorp introduces Line of Duty Act (LODA) coverage, creates the only LODA trust in the state, and absorbs existing LODA losses in response to the state pushing this cost to the local level. VAcorp paid all of its members 2010 past liability for over \$1,000,000.
- **2013** - VAcorp merges with the VSBA Self-Insurance Group and assumes their liabilities to prevent School Boards from being assessed. This action saves Local Governments in excess of \$5,000,000.
- **2013** - VAcorp becomes the first to offer Cyber Risk coverage in Virginia offering the broadest coverage available to local governments anywhere in the US.
- **2016** - VAcorp offers Student Accident and Catastrophic Accident coverage in order to fill VHSL coverage gaps.
- **2020** - VAcorp provides over \$5,000,000 in rate credits during the COVID pandemic to assist members.
- **2023** - VAcorp includes security risk management coverage (active shooter) for all members (coverage has been included for Schools since 2013).





### Aetna® Statewide Wellness Campaign Brings Comprehensive Master Planning and Wellness Programming to Your County

Accessible world-class outdoor wellness infrastructure for communities and schools across Virginia is now being made possible thanks to the new sponsorship [announced last month](#) between [National Fitness Campaign](#) and [Aetna®](#). Here's what this means for your County:

- Ability to work with experts on comprehensive wellness master-planning services in alignment with County goals;
- Support with community consensus, to engage people to spend more time outdoors to improve physical and mental well-being;
- Invitation to qualify for grants from a pool of \$350,000 in funding that is now available for municipalities and schools across Virginia to build a wellness culture as part of the Aetna® campaign.



Most recently, the Town of Dumfries and Mayor Derrick Wood [celebrated the first Fitness Court® Studio in the state this past fall](#) after responding to community voices who were asking for enhanced outdoor recreation options in their community. Residents can now walk, jog or cycle to their free Fitness Court® Studio at Ginn Memorial Park. Dumfries joins Loudoun County, Pulaski County and a number of other municipalities as the campaign continues to grow across Virginia.

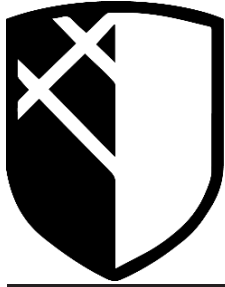
Grant funding and comprehensive planning services will be allocated to support municipalities, schools, and organizations across the state in joining the growing NFC wellness campaign, an award-winning initiative now celebrating its 500th Healthy Community in America.

VACo is pleased to share this opportunity with our members who may be interested in qualifying for funding and sponsorship. If you would like to learn more about the Aetna® wellness campaign in Virginia and how to qualify, please fill out the short contact form at [nationalfitnesscampaign.com/virginia](https://nationalfitnesscampaign.com/virginia).

Briefings with NFC require attendance from the Park Director, Public Health Director and/or County Manager/Administrator to qualify for funding and participation in Virginia.

**Let's build a healthier Virginia, together.**

[Learn More About the Campaign in Virginia](#)



# PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACADEMY

**WE MAKE LEADERS BETTER**

## **NACo Cyberattack Simulation**

### **Simulation Topic: Supplier Management Access**

We'd like to share that our **June '24** simulation has been fully sponsored! That means you and an unlimited number of your colleagues/peers can join the virtual training at **NO COST**. Details to review and share with your network are below -- both public and private sector cybersecurity managers and risk leaders are welcome to attend.

### **Simulation Topic: Supplier Management Access**

**Virtual: June 17 - 21**

**[Register Here](#) - No Cost**

Effective supplier management is integral to the operational efficiency of any organization, yet it poses inherent cybersecurity risks, especially concerning supplier access to sensitive systems and data. This cyber attack simulation focuses on evaluating the vulnerabilities and potential threats associated with supplier access including third-party vendor breaches, unauthorized use of supplier credentials, and supplier-initiated cyber threats. The simulation aims to foster a deeper comprehension of the complexities surrounding supplier access risks and to facilitate the development and testing of robust strategies for mitigating these risks effectively.

### **WHAT IS THE TIME COMMITMENT?**

Designed with a daily commitment of 45 to 90 minutes for the duration of one week, activities can be accessed anywhere online and can be completed at the convenience of the participant's schedule. The intentionally designed data injections followed by participant responses (nine in total) foster high levels of engagement that assess current preparedness and tools to close security gaps.

### **WHO SHOULD PARTICIPATE?**

The cyberattack simulation is designed for any cybersecurity manager as well as teams responsible for risk defense, protection, and recovery (including managers in HR, policy, finance, public safety, and emergency services).

**REGISTER TODAY: [sign up here!](#)**

If you have any questions, please email the Academy at [moderator@pdaleadership.com](mailto:moderator@pdaleadership.com).

The Professional Development Academy | [www.pdaleadership.com](http://www.pdaleadership.com)  
Cyberattack Simulation Training: *for a growing threat landscape.*





## OneDigital is thrilled to be one of VACo's newest Premier Partners.

What truly distinguishes OneDigital as a leading **insurance, financial services, and HR consulting advisory firm** is our holistic approach to creating environments that enable people to do their best work and live their best lives. OneDigital understands that counties face rising insurance costs while still struggling to attract/retain talent. This is why we use proprietary software to provide accurate and predictable insurance consulting projections for those core benefits that impact your bottom line and incorporate solutions to improve retention. While voluntary benefits may be the focus of other providers, OneDigital has the expertise in alternative funding strategies, best-in-class analytics, and an in-house actuarial team.

OneDigital has a track record of providing cost-saving solutions to counties. This has been achieved through creative funding strategies, rate holds, and exclusive partnerships with various carriers. One of these exclusive partnerships is through VACORP and Anthem Life. OneDigital is responsible for the inception of the Virginia Local Disability Program (VLDP) which is through the Virginia Retirement System (VRS). Our team of fierce advocates negotiated a 5-year locked rate, including short-term and long-term disability benefits. Your division may already work with us in this capacity, as we currently serve over 270 public sector entities in the VLDP program.



### OUR SOLUTIONS FOR EMPLOYERS

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