



## SUBMISSION FORM

All submission forms must include the following information. Separate submission forms must be turned in for each eligible program. **Deadline: July 1, 2025.** Please include this submission form as the first page of your electronic entry. If you do not receive an email confirming receipt of your entry within 3 days of submission, please contact [Gage Harter](#).

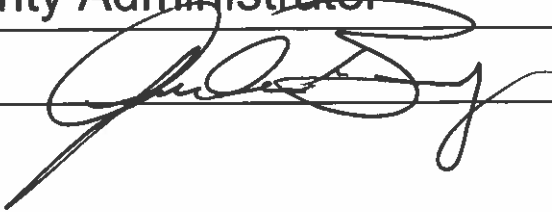
### PROGRAM INFORMATION

County: Hanover  
Program Title: Revamping The Hanover Review Newsletter  
Program Category: Communications

### CONTACT INFORMATION

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### SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR DEPUTY/ASSISTANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Name: John A. Budesky  
Title: County Administrator  
Signature: 

**Program title:** Revamping The Hanover Review newsletter

## **Executive Summary**

In 2024, Hanover County's Communications and Community Engagement team set out to revamp [The Hanover Review](#), the County's 25-year-old print newsletter. The publication's outdated design and lack of visual appeal no longer met the needs of today's audience, and it was time for a complete refresh.

*The Hanover Review* serves as a critical communications tool in a County where many residents either lack access to reliable internet or don't use social media, and local media coverage is limited. While nearly 7,000 people subscribe to the weekly *Here in Hanover* e-newsletter, a significant portion of our residents still relies on our longtime printed newsletter for updates about County news, services, programs and events. Mailed to every household, *The Hanover Review* ensures that all members of our community, regardless of their digital engagement levels, remain informed and connected.

Recognizing the need for a more engaging and accessible format, three of our team members, supported by a longtime contract designer, collaborated to reinvent the publication. The result was a vibrant, full-color newsletter that launched in October 2024.

The inaugural issue featured a striking cover [spotlighting a local firefighter](#) — a powerful image that reflected the inspiring feature story inside. This marked a dramatic shift from the previous issue's lackluster cover photo of a routine groundbreaking ceremony. Compelling “cover lines” encouraged readers to check out the engaging content inside the newsletter.

Delivering relevant, relatable content directly to residents' mailboxes twice a year allows us to reach every corner of the community. The reimagined *Hanover Review* not only informs — it inspires pride and belonging, connecting neighbors through shared stories that reflect the character and values of Hanover County.

### **Challenge: Reimagining a Dated Newsletter**

In 2024, Hanover County's Communications and Community Engagement team embarked on a major overhaul of *The Hanover Review*, the County's longstanding print newsletter. The goal was to transform a dated, text-heavy publication into a modern, engaging resource that reflects the heart of Hanover and better aligns with the County's evolving strategic communications goals.

More than just a vehicle for news, the revitalized *Hanover Review* tells stories that define our community, spotlighting the people, programs, businesses and organizations that make Hanover a great place to live and work.

While the newsletter received a minor design update nearly a decade ago, including the addition of four color pages, the overall layout remained static and outdated. Its dense blocks of text, lack of photos and absence of a strong narrative failed to encourage reader engagement.

Recognizing the need for a significant shift, our team developed a shared vision for a more dynamic publication that would engage residents through compelling storytelling, thoughtful layout and eye-catching visuals. Working closely with our longtime freelance

designer, we transformed the outdated newsletter into a vibrant, full-color magazine-style publication that debuted in October 2024.

Our plans went beyond just redesigning the newsletter. The overall goal was to create a more engaging publication that would capture attention through meaningful stories, attention-grabbing headlines and high-quality photography.

The previous version — a 12-page newsletter published three times a year — provided straightforward information on local government services, events and initiatives. It was functional but lacked emotional connection, because it didn't tell the human stories. And that's where the new *Hanover Review* shines: by putting people at the center and making local government feel relevant, personal and accessible to all.

### **Execution: How We Brought the Vision to Life**

The inaugural issue of the redesigned *Hanover Review* made an immediate impact with a full-page photo of a County firefighter — setting the tone for the story-driven, captivating content inside the 20-page publication. This transformation marked a key milestone in the County's mission to communicate more meaningfully with its residents.

The revamped newsletter reflects the community's character and values. By spotlighting the people, programs, businesses and organizations that shape daily life in Hanover, the new *Hanover Review* promotes deeper understanding, pride and engagement.

This editorial shift drew inspiration from the success of our *Here in Hanover* e-newsletter, launched in July 2023. That platform quickly gained popularity for its relatable tone and

community-centered storytelling. Using a similar strategic approach, the print newsletter now mirrors the tone, style and content structure that have made our digital communications so effective.

Our communications philosophy is rooted in Hanover's Strategic Plan, which prioritizes transparency, inclusion and exceptional customer service. That framework informs everything from content selection to voice. We embrace a conversational yet professional tone — warm, accessible and grounded in the County's core values.

This human-first approach reflects a broader brand identity: one that blends innovation and authenticity with clear, community-focused messaging. By continuously refining our strategy and voice, we ensure our communications do more than inform — they build trust, inspire connection and celebrate the shared experience of life in Hanover County.

### **Financing and Staffing**

Three members of Hanover's four-person Communications and Community Engagement collaborated on the new newsletter. Communications Specialist Alice Garwood wrote most of the County government stories, while Communications Coordinator Shelby Walker wrote one of the stories and took the photos accompanying those features. Additional content was contributed by Hanover County Public Schools, the Town of Ashland and the County's Parks and Recreation Department.

Our longtime freelance designer handled the layout, ensuring a consistent and professional look throughout. All content, including external contributions, was reviewed

and edited by our three-member team to maintain a cohesive tone and visual style throughout the 20-page newsletter.

We printed 55,000 copies of *The Hanover Review* at a cost of \$15,234. The designer's fee totaled \$1,524, which was higher than usual because of the extra time required for the redesign. We estimate that 90% of the work was produced in-house and 10% outsourced.

### **Positive Community Response**

While *The Hanover Review* is a print publication, the reach and impact of the redesigned issue extended to digital platforms. Following the Fall/Winter 2024 mailing to all County households, several featured stories were promoted on social media — and the response was overwhelmingly positive.

- **“Horses, hope and healing”** — A feature on a local ranch that pairs rescued horses with children facing various challenges. The post received 116 likes, nine shares and three comments on Facebook, including “Thanks for sharing these programs with the community.”
- **“Hometown Hero”** — A profile on a Hanover firefighter who has spent 25 years helping expand emergency services in his native Belize. The post garnered 99 Facebook likes, six shares and two comments, and 37 Instagram likes.
- **“Get to Know Team Hanover”** — A spotlight on a longtime employee with the Community Service Board's Day Health and Rehabilitation program. The post drew 75 likes, two shares and four comments on Facebook praising the employee's dedication.
- **Behind-the-scenes video** — A clip showing the glossy full-color newsletter coming off the presses earned 20 Facebook likes, 19 Instagram likes and glowing comments such as: “It looks fantastic. The full-color pages are awesome” and “I loved the new cover design.”

These reactions reinforced the success of the redesign in engaging our community, sparking conversations and building pride in the people and stories that define Hanover County.



# the **hanover**review

HANOVER COUNTY: PEOPLE, TRADITION AND SPIRIT

SPRING 2024



## Construction on Hanover's newest fire station underway

Hanover's newest fire station will improve the safety of both the community and firefighters who serve it. Fire Station 17 will sit near Laurel Meadow Elementary School. County leaders broke ground on the project last November.

"Fire Station 17 will take a substantial amount of pressure off of the Mechanicsville and Henry fire stations," said Henry District Supervisor Sean Davis. "It is a tremendous opportunity to provide an even higher level of service to the residents of this area."

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### IN THE NEWS



Stay connected with the new Hanover County app! Use it to keep up with County news, find services or pay your taxes. Download the Hanover County app on your iPhone or Android today!

**Hanover County VA**  
**PARKS & RECREATION**

**Discover  
Recreation!**

Updates on classes  
and facilities  
begin on page 8



## Board of Supervisors seeks nominees for two School Board seats

The Board of Supervisors is seeking individuals who want to serve on the School Board representing the Ashland and Chickahominy districts. Candidates must submit their names for consideration no later than Wednesday, April 10 when the Board will accept nominations at a 6 p.m. public hearing.

Residents interested in serving are encouraged to reach out to Board members or County Administration to learn more about the position, including eligibility requirements.

The Board will vote on the two appointments on May 22.

Details about the appointment process can be found at [www.hanovercounty.gov/schoolboard2024](http://www.hanovercounty.gov/schoolboard2024).

## Strengthening Our Community

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including Beaverdam Elementary which was originally slated for a major renovation.

The plan calls for the replacement of two fire stations, Station 10 in Chickahominy and Station 8 in Montpelier. It also designates funding for a Public Safety Building — a new combined administrative and training facility for the Hanover County Sheriff's Office and Fire-EMS.

Road improvements make up the largest portion of the CIP with more than \$138 million budgeted for needed transportation enhancements.

Residents are encouraged to share their thoughts on the proposed budget at the Board's public hearing on Wednesday, April 3 at 6 p.m. They can also reach out to the County Administrator and the Board of Supervisors with feedback. The proposed budget can be found on our website: [www.hanovercounty.gov](http://www.hanovercounty.gov).

## Hanover County Municipal Airport Master Plan Update

Hanover County Municipal Airport (OFP) is undergoing a Master Plan update. The goal is to identify future improvements that provide an environmentally conscious, operationally sustainable and economically feasible overall development plan.

Residents interested in participating in the process should reach out to their County Supervisor.



Visit our webpage for details.

[www.hanovercounty.gov/1209](http://www.hanovercounty.gov/1209)

## Upcoming Road Projects & Estimated Completion



### Road Widening

- Route 360 – Spring 2025
- Atlee Station Road – 2029
- Pole Green Road – 2029

### Roundabouts

- Lewistown Road/Ashcake Road – 2026
- Greenwood Church Road/Blanton Road – 2028
- Sliding Hill Road/Peaks Road – 2028
- Creighton Road/Walnut Grove Road – 2028

### Intersection Improvements

- Route 1/Route 30 – 2025

More information is available at [www.hanovercounty.gov/816](http://www.hanovercounty.gov/816).



A firefighter in full gear, including a yellow helmet with 'FIREFIGHTER 406 HANOVER' and a dark jacket with orange reflective stripes, stands in front of a fire truck. The truck's dashboard with various gauges is visible in the background.

# THE HANOVER REVIEW

FALL/WINTER ■ 2024

## A NEW CHAPTER FOR MONTPELIER

Long-Awaited Recreation Center  
and Library Debuts

## HORSES, HOPE AND HEALING

Hanover Ranch Transforms Lives

## HOMETOWN HERO

Firefighter's 25-Year Impact  
on Belize's Emergency Services

Fall/Winter 2024 Issue (Reimagined)

## Team Hanover, residents give back on 9/11 Day of Service

Hanover County employees and residents joined over 30 million Americans in giving back to their community during the 9/11 National Day of Service, a day dedicated to honoring those lost by helping others.

About 400 volunteers, including Team Hanover members, residents and local businesses, came together to make a meaningful impact. They took part in a wide range of projects — from organizing donations at thrift stores and assisting food pantry clients to walking dogs at the Animal Shelter and spending time with seniors. Their efforts strengthened community bonds and honored the spirit of unity and compassion that arose in the aftermath of 9/11.



## Hanover DASH offers personalized ride service

If you're 65 or older, or living with a temporary or permanent disability, Hanover DASH program is here to help. For \$5 per one-way ride, you can enjoy personalized transportation throughout Hanover County and beyond.

Operating from 6 a.m.–6 p.m. seven days a week, riders can travel to County government buildings, medical appointments, shopping, work and more. The service extends up to seven miles beyond the County's boundaries, providing easy access to medical facilities like the VA Medical Center and Stony Point in Richmond.

To begin using Hanover DASH, complete the registration form at [www.HanoverDASH.org](http://www.HanoverDASH.org) and provide proof of residency, age or disability. Have questions? Call 804-365-3274 or visit the website for more details.

