



HENRICO COUNTY VIRGINIA

February 1998

DATE: February 25, 1997

CONTACT: Bev Donati

PHONE: 795-7822

Henrico County Supervisors Jim Donati and Frank Thornton will co-host their next town meeting on Monday, March 16, at 7 p.m., at the Eastern Government Center, 3820 Nine Mile Road. They will discuss the county's new Community Maintenance Program.

"Our new Community Maintenance Program is specifically designed to keep all of our communities looking their best, while promoting safe, happy and healthy neighborhoods," Donati said. "Mr. Thornton and I want all of our eastern neighbors to know how we can help each other to promote beautiful communities throughout the entire county," he said.

Thornton added that "Representatives from Henrico's Community Maintenance staff will discuss ways that we can all work together to reach our goals . . . it's about neighbors helping neighbors, and the county working with them to ensure our neighborhoods are the best they can be."

Both Donati and Thornton encourage public participation, and ask that those planning to attend the meeting invite others to join them.

DATE: February 23, 1998

CONTACT: Tamra Rice, Public Information Specialist

PHONE: 501-4976

Henrico general government and school administrations will host the 41st annual Student Government Day on Tuesday, March 10. Nearly 100 students from Henrico's eight high schools will participate as counterparts to administration officials.

"The event gives students first-hand involvement with real, every day situations that happen in local government," said Public Information Director Coral Gills. "Each student has a specific role within the government structure, and will 'shadow' his or her counterpart throughout the day," she said.

Students will assume the roles of the board of supervisors and the school board, as well as the county manager, school superintendent, police chief, fire chief, constitutional officers and department heads throughout Henrico County.

At 2 p.m., the students will conduct a mock board of supervisors meeting in the Board Room, Government Center, Parham and Hungary Spring roads.

Student Government Day is sponsored by the Kiwanis Clubs of North Richmond, Tuckahoe and West Henrico.

DATE: February 18, 1998

CONTACT: Herbert L. Dunford, Jr., Chairman, Henricopolis

PHONE: 501-5175

The Henricopolis Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD), is now accepting applications for financial assistance from farmers and landowners who install agricultural conservation practices.

The SWCD has \$5,305 available for 1998 from a state agricultural cost-share program administered by the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation. The program, specifically designed to promote conservation, reimburses landowners for up to 75 percent of the installation costs for approved practices.

In order to qualify for these funds, the local SWCD board must pre-approve the practices and see a written conservation plan. There are caps for the amount of money that individuals may receive, and recipients must meet certain criteria. They include maintaining the practice for a certain period of time, and acceptance of periodic inspections. To start this agricultural cost-share program, landowners must contact the SWCD at 501-5175.

The new year also means a new tax savings opportunity for farmers; the Agricultural Best Management Practices (BMP) tax credit begins in 1998. It provides landowners with a state income tax credit for as much as \$17,500, after they pay their share to install any of 41 approved conservation measures.

The tax credit is 25 percent of BMP installation up to \$70,000 (maximum tax credit of \$17,500). The program provides an option to spread the amount of the credit over 5 years if necessary.

Like the agricultural cost-share program, landowners must contact the SWCD to start the process. The SWCD board, prior to installation, must approve practices for tax credit qualification.

For more information about either of these programs, contact the Henricopolis Soil and Water Conservation District at 501-5175.

DATE: February 13, 1998

CONTACT: Lloyd H. Hicks, Extension Agent, 4-H Programs

PHONE: 501-5160

The Henrico County V.P.I. Extension Service is sponsoring the ninth annual Strawberry/Blueberry plant sale to raise funds for local 4-H youth activities. Orders for these plants, recommended for good growth performance in Virginia's Piedmont region, must be placed on or before February 27. Strawberry plants will be sold for \$6 per bundle of 25, and blueberry plants for \$3.50 per plant. To order call (804) 501-5160 between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. weekdays, or pick up order forms at the Henrico Extension Office, 8600 Dixon Powers Drive or any Henrico library. Staff will distribute the plants, along with planting and care instructions, on March 19 and 20, from 9 a.m. until 6 p.m., at the Glen Allen Softball Complex on Mountain Road.

DATE: February 12, 1998

CONTACT: Virgil R. Hazelett, P.E., County Manager

PHONE: 501-4386

Henrico County Manager Virgil R. Hazelett, P.E. announced to the Board of Supervisors last night that he has appointed Gregory H. Revels to be Henrico's new Building Official.

Revels, who succeeds retired Building Official Roddy N. Shingleton, has been with Henrico's Office of Building Construction and Inspections since March 1992. Prior to his joining the county, he was employed by the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development, and the Virginia State Fire Marshal Office. He is a member of the Building Officials and Code Administrators, International; the Virginia Building and Code Officials Association; and the National Fire Protection Association. He is certified by the Virginia Board of Housing and Development as a Professional Code Administrator and Building Maintenance Official, as well as a Fire Protection Inspector General and Fire Protection Plan Examiner. He is a graduate of Oklahoma State University, and continued his education at the University of Tennessee.

"Greg has been with the county for six years, and is a natural to move into this position. His leadership and expertise in this field are exactly what we need to keep the Office of Building Inspections progressive, and in touch with the growing needs in Henrico," Hazelett said.

Revels begins his new duties as Building Official on Wednesday, February 18.

DATE: February 10, 1998

CONTACT: James Mellon, Firefighter

PHONE: 501-5878

February 19 at 6:30 p.m. marks the fundraiser kick-off for the Volunteers of Henrico Division of Fire, and The Friends of Henrico Firefighters. Held at Henrico Fire Station Number 6, 4600 S. Laburnum Avenue, the purchase of new \$18,000 Argus Thermal Imaging Cameras is the goal. Promising quicker rescue of unconscious victims and children hiding under beds or in closets, these cameras are proven to improve firefighter's visibility and limit property damage, says Volunteer Coordinator Smokey Thompson. Staff will provide information and camera demonstration.

"Thick smoke is the firefighters worst enemy," says James Mellon. Firefighters forced to enter a building "blind" often search for victims they cannot see, feel, or sometimes hear. Fire claims the lives of 4,500 Americans including 100 firefighters each year, reports the United States Fire Administration.

DATE: February 10, 1998

CONTACT: Forrest Matthews, Director of Finance

PHONE: 501-4377

After recently being assigned the highest possible bond ratings by Moody's, Standard and Poor's, and Fitch's rating agencies, the County of Henrico is now one of only eleven counties in the nation to hold AAA bond ratings from all three investor service groups.

Moody's Investors Service Analyst Ed Krauss cited Henrico's "good legal structure, high degree of project essentiality, and strong credit characteristics" as reasons for earning the AAA rating, as well as its "diverse and growing economy. . . and strong financial position."

Fitch IBCA cited the same reasons for the AAA rating in a financial wire released last week, adding that Henrico's "financial management is quite strong."

In addition to the county's three AAA bond ratings, Moody's assigned the Henrico Industrial Development Authority's Lease Revenue Bond Issue the Aa2 rating, and raised the Water and Sewer Revenue Bonds rating to Aa2 from their previous A1 position.

According to Henrico's Director of Finance Forrest Matthews, "these bond ratings mean that Henrico continues to be financially sound, which is good news for our taxpayers." He said that the ratings translate into a "strong economy and stable tax rate for Henrico residents."

Matthews compared the ratings to "being a preferred customer at the bank - whenever the county might need to borrow money for a particular project, it can repay the loan at a very low interest rate, which allows us to hold the reins on local taxes."

Henrico's Department of Finance recently received other news from the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA). For the sixteenth consecutive year, the county has won the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for its comprehensive annual financial report. This award, granted by the GFOA, is the highest form of recognition in the area of government accounting and financial reporting. Financial reports are judged by a panel, and must meet program standards including "a spirit of full disclosure," according to the GFOA guidelines.

In addition, for the ninth consecutive year, the department received the Award for Distinguished Budget Presentation from the GFOA. Henrico satisfied the GFOA's national guidelines for effective budget presentation which assess "how well a government budget serves as a policy document, a financial plan, an operations guide, and a communications device."

The GFOA is a nonprofit professional association serving nearly 13,000 government finance officers throughout North America.

DATE: February 3, 1998

CONTACT: Mikki Knight, Deputy Clerk, Board of Supervisors

PHONE: 501-4207

"County Citizen Advisory Boards in Action - Who Are Your District Representatives and What Are They Doing for Your Community?" Vice Chairman and Tuckahoe District Supervisor Pat O'Bannon will answer these and other questions at her next town meeting on Tuesday, February 17, at 7 p.m., in the Maybeury Elementary School Cafeteria, 901 Maybeury Drive.

"We want our Tuckahoe residents to meet their fellow residents who have been appointed to the advisory boards and commissions - to better understand what they do, and how they are an important link between the community and our county government," O'Bannon said.

Members of local boards and commissions will join O'Bannon's meeting to explain their roles and responsibilities. Citizens are annually appointed to serve on special boards and commissions by the Board of Supervisors.

O'Bannon's monthly town meetings are open to the public.

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