

To: Fairfax County Board of Supervisors

From: Dan Storck, Supervisor
Mount Vernon District

Subject: **BOARD MATTERS for January 12, 2016**

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For your consideration, I submit the following Board Matters accompanied by a brief explanation. Your support will be appreciated.

- 1. Request for the Board of Supervisors to Establish Goals for Public Engagement**
- 2. Thank You to the Fairfax County Police and Fire and Rescue Departments for their Support of a United States Marine Corps Civil Affairs Training Exercise**

1. Request for the Board of Supervisors to Establish Goals for Public Engagement

Background

When I first became an elected official twelve years ago, one of the many initiatives I worked with staff to implement was to find new ways to engage and inform the public. As I begin my term of office on the Board of Supervisors, I would like to continue that work with my new colleagues to explore new ways to engage and inform the residents of Fairfax County. Over the past few months, I have had the privilege to meet with all my fellow Supervisors, County Executive Ed Long, County Attorney Dave Bobzien, Clerk to the Board Cathy Chianese, Director of Public Affairs Tony Castrilli, Director of Information Technology Wanda Gibson and many other County leaders to learn about their respective departments and the resources they have to help inform, engage and assist our residents. We have very professional and responsive representatives dedicated to an open and effective government.

In looking at best practices, I have seen the success of the Fairfax County News Center as a central repository of information for residents, news organizations and other groups to learn what is happening in Fairfax County. Additionally, Fairfax Alerts is a great portal to learn of emergencies and to receive alerts from tax administration, transportation, management and budget among other agencies. As we start our new or first terms, I would like our Board to continue to challenge ourselves and our staff to achieve even more.

There are several areas I urge the Board to consider expediting existing plans or implementing changes that could improve the ease, quality and speed of communications essential to the public. I would summarize these as follows:

- Expanding the News Center or Fairfax Alerts to provide information to residents about the submission of zoning applications, site plans and permits, police and fire incidents and many other topics, which could be customized by the end user based on different criteria like zip code, magisterial district, etc.
- Web post agendas for all meetings seven days in advance, but at least three days in advance.
- Web post all materials to be considered at a meeting at least seven days in advance to provide Supervisors and the public with sufficient time to properly review, formulate questions and have prepared answers at the meeting. Where not possible, materials to be provided should be web posted at or before the time they are distributed so residents watching remotely can access them as well.
- In addition to the regular video recording of current Board of Supervisors meetings and hearings, video or audio recordings should be made of all committee meetings, providing real-time access, greater transparency, and reduced travel while saving resources and the environment.
- Initiate remote video testifying for meetings and public hearings, beginning with the FY2017 Budget Public Hearings. South County Government Center would provide an ideal location and the video process could be as simple and cheap as using a Skype or FaceTime type connection. Saving two hours of travel and fuel would make a real difference to all Mt. Vernon-Lee District residents, and especially the least able. This has been a long-standing community request.
- Meeting minutes should be issued in draft form within seven days of a Board or committee meeting and considered for approval at the next meeting.

These are just a few ideas. I am sure other Supervisors will have their own. Some of these are attainable relatively quickly, some are long-term. The end state is that we find a way to leverage technology and the talents of our staff to be the most responsive, transparent, and engaging Board we can be.

Proposed Action

Therefore, I ask, with unanimous consent, that the Board of Supervisors direct the County Executive to return to the Board of Supervisors with a memorandum on ways to improve public engagement and enact those the Board may agree upon at a future date, perhaps in the Board's Procedures Committee.

2. Thank You to the Fairfax County Police and Fire and Rescue Departments for their Support of a United States Marine Corps Civil Affairs Training Exercise

Background

This Sunday my office had the privilege of hosting Marines from the 2nd Civil Affairs Group at the Mount Vernon Government Center so they could conduct training in support of their mission to act as a liaison between military commander and civilian institutions and populations in foreign countries. The Marines were able to conduct key leader interviews and perform an assessment of civic buildings in a refugee relief scenario. The training would not have been possible without the assistance of Police Chief Roessler and Fire Chief Bowers and especially Battalion Chief Jeffery Lewis and Police Sergeant Wilson Lee. Thank you all for your time and assistance.