



April 18, 2018
Spring Update

Board Approves Property Tax Exemptions for Spouses of First Responders Killed in the Line of Duty

The Board approved my request to provide a property-tax exemption for spouses of firefighters, law-enforcement officers, emergency service personnel, and search-and-rescue workers killed in the line of duty.

ICE Representatives Told they Could Not Speak

It is a sad day in Fairfax County when we prohibit open, honest discussion.

Request for Funding of School Security Needs

The safety of our students is paramount. Because our budget is the primary funding source of the Fairfax County Public Schools, I proposed we establish a reserve that would be used for one time school security enhancement measures.

Plan For Richmond Highway Corridor Approved

The Board approved a comprehensive plan amendment which we hope will encourage economic development in the Richmond Highway Corridor. I had several recommendations that I hope will be evaluated as the plan moves forward.

Update on Pension and Compensation Discussions

The Board heard from the Retirement Work Group that it could not endorse any recommendation on the pension plan. It now appears the Board is poised to make a recommendation on pension changes in budget language prior to public discussion of options by the whole Board.

Other Happenings

- Neighbor to Neighbor (N2N) Meeting - April 18 (**tonight!**)
- Operation Medicine Cabinet Cleanout - April 28
- Fairfax County Scam Jam - April 28
- 8th Annual Fairfax Run for the Children - Hosted by Fairfax CASA - April 28
- Reminder: South Lakes and West Springfield Teen Job Fairs
- A Community Conversation about the Opioid Crisis - April 28
- Fairfax 50+ Employment Expo - April 30
- NVRC's Celebrate Communication 2018 at Springfield Town Center - May 5
- NV Rides Presents: Safe Driving as You Age - May 17
- Training: Human Trafficking Identification - May 24
- Where to Report High Risk Trees in Fairfax County
- Outdoor Experiential Learning Opportunities
- Burke Lake Park's Marina Road Improvements

Board Approves Property Tax Exemptions for Spouses of First Responders Killed in the Line of Duty

At our March 20th meeting, the Board of Supervisors approved a property-tax exemption for spouses of firefighters, law-enforcement officers, emergency service personnel, and search-and-rescue workers killed in the line of duty. I proposed this exemption last year after "The Virginia Property Tax Exemption for Surviving Spouses of Police and Emergency Service Providers Amendment" was approved overwhelmingly by voters in November 2016. Delegate Tim Hugo carried the legislation that enabled localities to adopt the exemption. I was pleased the Board approved this tax relief for the spouses of our first responders that have made the ultimate sacrifice for our residents.

ICE Representatives Told they Could Not Speak

At the April 3rd meeting of the Board's Public Safety Committee Meeting, the Board of Supervisors decided, over my objection, that Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) representatives would not be allowed to participate in the discussion on our joint efforts to remove violent criminals and gang members from our streets, despite being invited, in attendance, and listed on the agenda.

ICE representatives were prepared to discuss their focus on violent criminals and gang members and the steps they take to avoid schools, places of worship, etc., as well as how they work with our local law enforcement to keep our streets safe. They were also prepared to talk about the impact of these criminals on the immigrant community. Instead the Board was presented a poorly-orchestrated defense of Sheriff Kinkaid's decision to terminate the agreement with ICE and its impact on law enforcement. However, the participants were unable to describe how they would remove a gang member from our streets if not caught committing a crime. The participants also could not answer how they identify gang members without the technology available to federal law enforcement and where they could be held.

To me this is about public safety. Since 2014, 35 percent of murders in Fairfax County were gang-related. I know firsthand the importance of cooperating with ICE in keeping our streets safe from my ride alongs with the Northern Virginia Gang Task Force. [As I described in greater detail in my last update on gangs](#), this is about removing dangerous gang members from our streets - gang members that threaten and prey on our immigrant communities. There are no known cases of the ICE group we coordinate with or our police department doing civil immigration enforcement.

I believe it was wrong to invite our federal partners to an "Agency Coordination/Discussion", have them be on the agenda and in the room and not let them participate. The ICE representatives were both sworn law enforcement officers that have been with the agency for many years. At least one is a Fairfax County resident. It is a sad day in Fairfax County when we prohibit open, honest discussion.

You can review the materials for yourself here:

[Agenda](#)

[Video of Meeting](#)

[Chairman Bulova's statement](#)

Request for Funding of School Security Needs

There has been a lot of discussion over safety in our schools as a result of the recent school shooting tragedies. It is clear to me from the feedback I've received from my constituents, from the proactive actions of other jurisdictions, and from my discussion with school staff that

while Fairfax County is and has been proactive on school safety, there is a need for greater safety enhancements at our schools.

The Fairfax County School Board has tasked Fairfax County Public Schools' staff with completing a safety and security assessment by June, which will allow us to see in greater detail what those needs are. School safety reviews are also being undertaken at the state level.

Because our budget is the primary funding source of the Fairfax County Public Schools, at our March 20th meeting I proposed a third quarter review and/or budget consideration reserve that would be used for one time school security enhancement measures. This amount would be supplemented by Fairfax County Schools funding.

Plan for Richmond Highway Corridor Approved

On March 20th the Board approved a comprehensive plan amendment (Embark Richmond Highway) which we hope will encourage economic development in the Richmond Highway Corridor. The plan calls for significant transportation improvements including a Bus Rapid Transit system in the center of Richmond Highway. It provides a vision for the development in each of the various sections of the corridor. The plan was the culmination of significant effort by a citizens' advisory committee, county staff and Supervisors Storck and McKay. I supported the plan but had several recommendations that I hope will be reviewed as the plan moves forward.

My follow on suggestions included:

- * Investigate dark fiber in the corridor - one of the keys to the success of the Dulles corridor was the decision to provide robust internet infrastructure (dark fiber) in the corridor before it was developed. In today's world, this capability is even more critical and should be fully explored.
- * Provide the capability to run express bus - the BRT system as currently designed will have every bus stop at every station along the corridor with no ability for the buses to pass stations. Every transit study shows that that people will use transit if it gets them there quicker. Designing the system without the ability to run express buses, which could skip some or all of the stations, would be short sighted and limit the appeal of transit service in the corridor and increase congestion.
- * Look into the possibility of a special tax district to underground utilities - we need to at least investigate the feasibility of a tax district to fund undergrounding the utilities. It may turn out to be too large a burden but it is an option worthy of investigation. Property owners would have the last word in approving or denying a tax district.

* I shared the Mt Vernon-Lee Chamber's sentiments on design elements - the more onerous the design elements the higher the potential for potential development to go elsewhere. We need to have flexibility in the design elements.

Also related to the Richmond Highway Corridor, on April 3rd the Board had a follow on discussion on my September 12, 2017 proposal to investigate the potential pros and cons of Economic Revitalization Zones. This was new authority given to counties by HB 1970. At both meetings I indicated that the Richmond Highway Corridor would be an obvious location to utilize these zones to encourage development and leverage our investments in infrastructure. The Board agreed to have staff further develop options for the use of Economic Revitalization Zones in select parts of the County including the Richmond Highway Corridor.

It is important to the future of the county as a whole that we bring jobs and economic opportunity to this long overlooked corridor.

Update on Pension and Compensation Discussions

As Herrity Report readers know I have been working to address our pension and compensations issues since I joined the Board. Please see my [last update](#) for a full discussion. Last fall the Chair of the Personnel Committee, Supervisor Penny Gross, formed a Retirement Work Group to discuss changes to the pension system. The work group consisted of two supervisors and representatives from many of the employee unions.

In my opinion, and that of many of the members of the work group, the work group had a poorly defined mission. The group was only permitted to look at pensions and not compensation in general. The employee unions wanted to conduct a comprehensive survey of employees to find out which elements of compensation (salary, benefits, pension, etc.) were most important to employees and if they even understood their pension benefits. Unfortunately they were not allowed to conduct the survey.

The Retirement Work Group did develop a list of potential changes to the pension system that would be in effect for yet to be hired employees only. [Those recommendations can be found here.](#) In the end, the group could not endorse any changes to the pension plans.

It now appears the Board is poised to make specific recommendations on changes to the pension system this week via budget language. This will happen before any real review or public discussion of options by the whole Board. While my efforts to reform the pension system appear like they will meet some success, I fear the Board will do as it did in 2012, and nibble around the edges of the issue again. What the Board should do is look to properly

balance the compensation system - salary, retirement, and benefits - so that we can attract, reward and retain the best employees. This can't be accomplished when the Board continues to look at each component in a standalone fashion.

Neighbor to Neighbor (N2N) Meeting - April 18

The Neighbor to Neighbor (N2N) effort, an initiative of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors' 50+ Community Action Plan, seeks to provide the tools to create a caring community that helps neighborhoods be livable for people of all ages. The goal is to offer neighbors the opportunity to connect and communicate whether in-person, by phone, by email, or through a digital communication tool such as NextDoor.com.

Supervisor Herrity, along with the Springfield District Council, is hosting a meeting on April 18 at 7 pm at the West Springfield Government Center (6140 Rolling Rd) so that you can learn more about the N2N initiative from other homeowner and civic associations that have initiated a program in their communities. Whether you want to begin a program to simply connect with your neighbors or to initiate a volunteer driver program in your community, you will be given information about the various types of neighbor-helping-neighbor organizations in Fairfax County, how to create a caring, connected community and the tools to get you started. Please contact Marlae Schnare, Supervisor Herrity's aide, at 703-451-8873 or marlae.schnare@fairfaxcounty.gov for further information.

Operation Medicine Cabinet Cleanout - April 28

Residents are encouraged to participate in Operation Medicine Cabinet Cleanout, a free, convenient, confidential, and safe medicine disposal event on Saturday, April 28, 2018. Unused or expired medications can be dropped off at all eight Fairfax County District Police Stations from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Only pills and liquids will be accepted, no pressurized canisters or needles. Drop-off locations are [available online](#). [Safe disposal](#) of unused or expired medications prevents drug abuse and misuse, accidental poisoning, and protects the environment. This event is being held in conjunction with National Prescription Drug Take Back Day.

Fairfax County Scam Jam - April 28

AARP and Fairfax County are sponsoring a Scam Jam on Saturday, April 28, 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. at the Fairfax County Government Center, 12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax.

This free event features experts and law enforcement officials who will discuss how to avoid door to door solicitor schemes, bogus investment deals, lottery scams, email fraud, the grandparent ruse and the latest identity theft shams. Registration is required. Go to aarp.cvent.com/OSSFairfax or call 1-877-926-8300. Document shredding will be offered on-site free of charge. (Please, no plastics or electronics!)

Find out more about the county's [Silver Shield Anti-Scam Campaign!](#)

8th Annual Fairfax Run for the Children - Hosted by Fairfax Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) - April 28

This year's 8K and 3K race will be held in at the Fairfax County Courthouse complex on Saturday, April 28, 2018 at 8:00 a.m. The superhero themed race attracts nearly 1,000 runners and walkers, 250 volunteers, and raises almost \$85,000 each year to support Fairfax CASA's advocacy work with abused and neglected children in the community. Fairfax CASA's Run for the Children has been touted as a "must-do" event by runners, families, and the media. The race is such a family centric event - from the kid's superhero fun run itself (3K) to our after race celebration including superhero meet and greets, a DJ, free food, face painting, kids' crafts, photo booth, and more, this is more than just a race. It's a real community event that brings together everyday people to become superheroes for abused and neglected children. Please visit: <https://www.fairfaxrunforthechildren.com/>

Reminder: South Lakes High School and West Springfield High School Teen Job Fairs

First jobs are a critical part of growing up. Below are the remaining dates for my annual Teen Job Fairs and Resume Building Workshops. They will give our teens the opportunity to speak with employers and businesses an opportunity to connect with teens looking for jobs. [Click here](#) for more information.

Saturday, April 21st

11 am to 1 pm

South Lakes High School

Co-sponsored by Supervisor Cathy Hudgins and Reston Chamber of Commerce

Saturday, April 28th

12 noon to 2 pm

West Springfield High School

Co-sponsored by West Springfield HS Student Government Association and Greater Springfield Chamber of Commerce

A Community Conversation about the Opioid Crisis - April 28

Learn from those who are working with students and others who have made the dangerous choice to use opioids--the illegal drug heroin, synthetic opioids such as fentanyl, and pain relievers available legally by prescription, such as oxycodone (OxyContin®), hydrocodone (Vicodin®), codeine, morphine, and many others. What are the symptoms of opioid abuse? What are the treatment options? Can we work together in our community to end this very real threat to the health and safety of our youth? What steps should we take? Students in 7th-12th grades and their parents are invited to join this conversation on Saturday, April 28 from 1 pm to 5 pm at Epiphany Episcopal Church, 3301 Hidden Meadow Drive, Herndon, VA 20171. Please register online by visiting <http://epiphanyec.org/occc/>

Fairfax 50+ Employment Expo - April 30

Meet dozens of job recruiters at the [50+ Employment Expo](#) on Monday, April 30 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Fair Oaks Marriott, 11787 Lee Jackson Highway, Fairfax. Registration is NOT required - just show up! Free admission and parking.

Attend seminars on changing careers, online job searching, continuing education, starting your own business, job training, and job interviewing. Be sure to look for Adult and Community Education's table and talk to a free career counselor!

Bob Levey, the prize-winning Washington Post columnist, is the keynote speaker. The event is sponsored by the Jewish Council for the Aging, Fairfax County, AARP Virginia and

community partners. Request reasonable accommodations or more information at mgordon@AccessJCA.org or call 301-255-4209, TTY 711.

NVRC's Celebrate Communication 2018 at Springfield Town Center - May 5

Celebrate Communication 2018 is the area's premier information fair for anyone with an interest in or connection to hearing loss. This year between 10 am and 2 pm, they will have over 30 vendors offering information on a wide variety of resources including State and Local government programs, cutting edge technologies, audiologists, cochlear implants, ASL and Cued Speech, crafts, and social groups for people who are deaf or hard of hearing. Free face painting by Dee Vinchey Entertainment from 11 am to 1 pm and photo ops during the event with NVRC's Yellow Dog all in the Springfield Town Center's Grand Court (near Starbucks). More information at nvrc.org/celebrate-communication/

NV Rides Presents: Safe Driving as You Age - May 17

On Thursday, May 17 from 9:30 am to 1 pm, NV Rides will host a FREE morning of workshops offering tips and best practices to help you stay on the road safely, and for as long as possible. Workshop highlights will include steps you can take to ensure safety, using technology to find transportation, tips on keeping your body and mind healthy, how to help your non-driving neighbors, and securing safe and reliable transportation after you stop driving. This event will take place at Lord of Life Lutheran Church, 13421 Twin Lakes Drive, Clifton, VA 20124.

A light lunch will be provided. If you plan to stay for lunch, RSVP is requested by May 10 for planning purposes. RSVP to Gina Cocomello at 703-537-3070 or email ginac@nvrider.org.

Training: Human Trafficking Identification - May 24

The Northern Virginia Human Trafficking Task Force is hosting a training on human trafficking identification in the Springfield area. The training will be held on May 24th from 10 am - 12 pm at the Greater Springfield Volunteer Fire Department (7011 Backlick Road). Speakers include Michael Lynn, Co-Chair, Outreach & Awareness, The Northern Virginia Human Trafficking Task Force and Erin Johnson, Co-Chair, Outreach & Awareness, The Northern Virginia

Human Trafficking Task Force. Please direct questions to TaskForceSpeakersBureau@gmail.com

Where to Report High Risk Trees in Fairfax County

Fairfax County receives many inquiries regarding individual trees that are a potential high risk to the public. Here is a rough guideline on how potential high risk trees are reported and processed by the Urban Forest Management Division.

If the tree is on private property and threatens the general public or if you are not sure, call the Urban Forest Management Division (UFMD) at (703) 324-1770, TTY 711. UFMD will assess the tree as to its degree of risk to the general public once ownership is verified. If the tree is determined to be a hazard to the general public, then UFMD will issue a health and safety code enforcement violation and require the property owner to remove the tree or part of the tree that is a hazard.

If the tree is threatening another private property and not the general public, then the tree is considered a civil issue between neighbors. UFMD does not have the authority to assess trees that are civil issues, nor can UFMD offer an expert opinion of the tree.

If there is a potential high-risk tree from a private property threatening your property, urban foresters recommend the following:

1) Talk to your neighbor to work out a solution. Open, honest, friendly communication often yields satisfactory results. Many neighbors are unaware of potential high risk trees on their property. If the neighbor doesn't think that the tree is a safety issue, see if he or she would be willing to have an International Society of Arboriculture Certified Arborist assess the tree and agree to abide by the arborist's assessment. A certified arborist can be found at www.goodtreecare.com

2) If the neighbor will not cooperate, then you may want to enlist the services of a private attorney to help you address this issue. The Fairfax County Bar Association offers a Lawyer Referral Service at <https://www.fairfaxlawyerreferral.org/>

If you see a dead, dying or decaying tree or otherwise a tree you suspect may be a high risk on public property, please contact the following agencies:

- If the tree is located within a few feet of a public street, it is most likely in the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) right-of-way. Contact the VDOT customer service center at 1-800-367-7623, TTY 711 or fill out a VDOT work request at <https://my.vdot.virginia.gov/>
- If power lines are down as a result of a storm or tree failure, contact Dominion Power at 1-866-366-4357.
- For trees on county park property, please contact the Fairfax County Park Authority at (703) 324- 8594, TTY 711.
- If the tree is on Fairfax County Public School property, please call (703) 764-2429, TTY 711.

If the tree is located on other Fairfax County property, please call the Fairfax County Facilities Management Department at (703) 324-2055, TTY 711.

Outdoor Experiential Learning Opportunities

The EDGE, George Mason University's Center for Outdoor Experiential Learning, is located on the Science and Technology Campus in Manassas, Virginia. The Center provides hands-on experiential learning programs that offer thought-provoking, yet fun, team development activities. Learning takes place on 35 low-elements and three high-elements, plus a variety of portable activities. Programs are designed to meet the specific needs of each group. Phone: (703) 993-3761; Web: edge.gmu.edu

Burke Lake Park's Marina Road Improvements

The current construction work at Burke Lake Park to improve Marina Road from the Information Center to the marina parking lot is wrapping up. The final stage of the project, to include paving, will begin on April 30th, with construction ending in mid-May (weather dependent).

Access to the Marina Road Parking Lot and all facilities within Burke Lake Park will remain open during these final phases of construction. Visitors may still encounter occasional construction traffic, traffic control flagmen and signage during construction times.

Once completed, the improvements will include widening of gravel shoulders, installation of drainage swales and ditches, and rock lining installation of swales and drainage ditches to better accommodate the existing storm water flows and reduce erosion along the roadway.