

# HENRY COUNTY ENTERPRISE

Saturday, February 12, 2022

(USPS-6)

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## County mulls tax hike to offset funding gaps

**Callie Hietala**  
Staff writer

The Henry County Board of Supervisors will have some difficult decisions to make when it comes to this year's budget, including whether to raise taxes.

"We all need to understand there are some tough decisions that are going to have to be made this year," Henry County Administrator Tim Hall told the board. "There's no way around it."

Hall presented a number of budgeting and financial challenges to the board during its annual planning session held Feb. 8 at the new Henry County Jail. Within those challenges, he identified several funding gaps that the supervisors and county officials will need to close to help balance the budget.

"We think you will need new revenue," Hall told the board. Though county officials do not know yet what sources they will recommend, Hall spent a good deal of time discussing the county's tax rates.

### The challenges

One challenge facing the county is the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

"We've spent probably over \$1 million from our self-insurance pool to address healthcare costs for our employees," Hall told the board.

However, "Our building has been open every day that it was supposed to be open ... we show up and we work," he said, but that comes with both a fiscal and



Henry County Administrator Tim Hall (standing) reviews the budgetary goals of the previous fiscal year with the Henry County Board of Supervisors. Many of the goals, Hall said, had been achieved or were still being worked toward, including broadband expansion, helping local companies, and telling the county's story. One goal that was not met during the year was aligning pay scales.

physical cost. Hall said that many employees, including those in the sheriff's office, public safety, and others, are exhausted.

Inflation was another issue, Hall said, noting the rising price of materials. "The routine costs more than the routine used to cost," he said.

Unfunded mandates, including the 5 percent pay raise for teachers included in former Gov. Ralph Northam's budget, presents a challenge to the county as well. "They deserve it," Hall said, "they need it, they have to have it, but part of that is the money that the locality has to put in to match that by law. We don't get any extra money to do that, that's got to come from our own pocket. We

had no vote on whether that was implemented, we had no input on whether that was implemented, but we have to do it."

The costs of the Children's Services Act (CSA) have "skyrocketed," Hall said. County Attorney George Lyle said before the pandemic, the county had 47 children in foster care. Now there are 97, and, Hall noted, "all those are locally borne costs."

Hall said the county spent approximately \$175,000 on CSA in 2010, and by 2020, that amount spiked to \$1 million. "I don't see it getting any better," Hall said. "Those are costs we have to pay."

See Tax Hike, page 8



Henry County Public Schools' Assistant Superintendent for Operations and Administrative Services Dr. David Scott (at podium) presented the division's proposed budget to the Henry County School Board at its Feb. 3 meeting. The proposed budget includes pay raises for employees and funds for additional staff.

## Schools budget proposal includes pay raises, additional staff

**Callie Hietala**  
Staff writer

Increased salaries across the board, additional staff, and increased operational costs were among the highlights of Henry County School's proposed budget for the upcoming fiscal year.

The proposal reflects an increase of nearly \$12 million in state funding and an estimated request of \$947,842 in local funds.

Superintendent for Operations and Administrative Services Dr. David Scott presented the budget to the Henry County School Board at its Feb. 3 meeting.

He said the current budget is built upon outgoing governor Ralph Northam's introduced budget which, he said, "is very healthy for K-12 schools and we hope to see much of it remain intact."

See Budget, page 8



City Attorney and Assistant City Manager Eric Monday (at podium) speaks in opposition to Stanley's bill on reversion. City Council member Chad Martin (right) voiced his opposition later in the meeting.

## House approves reversion legislation, Senate bill passes out of committee

**Callie Hietala**  
Staff writer

Two bills in the General Assembly addressing the issue of reversion have each passed the next hurdles on their respective journeys to becoming law.

On Feb. 4, the House of Delegates approved House Bill (HB) 173, sponsored by Del. Danny Marshall, R-Danville, in an 82-18 vote, and on Feb. 7, Senate Bill (SB) 85, sponsored by

State Sen. Bill Stanley, R-Moneta, passed out of the Senate's Local Government Committee (of which Stanley is a member) in a 9-5 vote.

If approved, the companion bills would require a voter referendum within the city of Martinsville prior to a special court granting Martinsville town status.

"All other Virginia change of government

See Reversion, page 10

## New jail nears completion

**Callie Hietala**  
Staff writer

Construction of the new Henry County Adult Detention Center is on time and on budget, Henry County Administrator Tim Hall said several times during the Henry County Board of Supervisors annual planning session, which this year was held in the soon-to-be-completed jail facility. (See related story.)

The Board of Supervisors, county officials, and members of the media toured the facility by Lt. Col. Steve

Eanes of the Henry County Sheriff's Department.

The \$70 million, 400-bed facility was constructed at the former DuPont site, bringing new life to the former brownfield that was unused for several decades.

The former industrial site had issues with hazardous materials and, according to Deputy County Administrator Dale Wagoner, was an eyesore in the community. DuPont, he said, took the necessary steps to make the site environmentally sound and safe.

Wagoner said the site selection was a methodical process, which included public hearings. "We've been totally transparent with the board and the public the whole way," he said.

The budget, Wagoner said, was approved by the Virginia Department of Corrections, which will reimburse the county up to 25 percent of that total construction amount, and "we're still in line to get 25 percent of every dollar that we spend back."

He said the county was criticized

See New Jail, page 5



Henry County Sheriff's Lt. Col. Steve Eanes served as the guide during a recent tour of the county's new jail. Eanes is pictured in the male work-release pod of the jail, marked with a yellow line. Inmates in this pod will never come into contact with the rest of the jail population, thus reducing the amount of contraband entering the facility.

## Board puts mask mandate to vote

**Callie Hietala**  
Staff writer

The Henry County School Board voted 6-1 in favor of adhering to Gov. Glenn Youngkin's executive order making masking optional for public school students.

Board member Ben Gravely, of the Iriswood District, was the sole vote against following the order.

Gravely broached the topic near the end of the board's Feb. 3 meeting.

"Sometimes the hardest decisions, the hardest things we do, have the best results and I think what we're going through now is one of those times," he told his fellow board members.

"I was elected by the citizens of the Iriswood District of Henry

County. As a board member, I believe that an effective school board represents the interests of the professional school staff and workers of the school who are committed to meeting the needs of our young people.

"I think schools and boards across this country are being used as pawns for individual personal agendas on political issues," he

said, and clarified his thoughts and actions were not reflective of any party affiliation but rather "what I believe is right to keep schools safe, schools open, and the people that are sacrificing so many things because of what they love—our teachers."

"This board has been accused

See Mandate, page 10

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# COMMUNITY CALENDAR

(Event information/calendar items must be received by 5 p.m. on the Tuesday before the desired publication date. Email to news-reporter@theenterprise.net)

## Saturday, Feb. 12-14

The Blue Ridge Public Library is hosting a free Valentine's Day giveaway for children ages 10 and under. Visit one branch of the library to receive your special treat while supplies last. Child must be present at pick-up.

## Saturday, Feb. 12-13

Martinsville UP's Valentine's Artisan Pop-Up Shop will be open Saturday from 12-6 p.m., and Sunday from 12-4 p.m. Located at 20 Walnut Street, this is the perfect time to browse and buy from some of your favorite local artists and artisans.

## Monday, Feb. 14-28

The Blue Ridge Regional Library is celebrating Black History Month by giving away free keepsake sets. Visit your library branch to pick up your 2022 wall calendar and a "The Power of a Dream" laminated tote bag while supplies last. Limit one set per patron.

## Tuesday, Feb. 15

The Martinsville City School Board will hold its regular school board meeting and public hearing regarding the 2022-2023 fiscal year budget at 6 p.m. in city council chambers of the Martinsville City Municipal Building (5 W. Church Street.).

## Wednesday, Feb. 16

The West Piedmont Health District will provide free, drive-through PCR testing for COVID-19 from 12:30-4 p.m. at the National Guard Armory parking lot (315 Commonwealth Boulevard, Martinsville.) The tests are limited to the first 100 participants. No registration is required and there is no age limit for testing. Participants must wear a mask and no pets are allowed in vehicles.

Longwood University's Small Business Development Center is offering an interactive Zoom workshop, CO.STARTERS Get Started from 9 a.m. until 12 p.m. This workshop will provide a jumpstart for anyone hoping to move toward an idea they've had, those stuck on a particular issue, or anyone just in need of a refresher. To register, visit clients.virginiasbdc.org/events.

## Thursday, Feb. 17

The American Red Cross is hosting a blood drive at the Martinsville Elks Lodge (300 Fairy Street Ext., Martinsville) from 12-6 p.m. To schedule an appointment, visit redcrossblood.org.

Henry County Public Schools will hold a public hearing for input on the 2022-2023 budget priorities at 5 p.m. in the third-floor board room of the Henry County Administration Building (3300 Kings Mountain Road, Martinsville.)

## Saturday, Feb. 19

In conjunction with the National African American Read-In, Piedmont Arts (215 Starling Avenue, Martinsville) invites the community to take part in a celebration of African American artists, performers, and writers. Community members will read excerpts from books, stories, and poems by their favorite African American authors and a selection of books will be on display. All ages are welcome. The read-in takes place from 11 a.m. until 2 p.m.

The Martinsville YMCA and Miles in Martinsville is bringing back its popular Nail the Rail 9-Miler and Run the Rail 5-Miler for 2022. Runners have the chance to run their choice of 9 or 5 miles beginning at milepost 0 of the Dick & Willie Trail. For more information or to register, visit milesinmartinsville.com.

The Spencer-Penn Centre (475 Spencer-Penn Road, Spencer) is hosting a charcuterie class. Charcuterie boards are all the rage. Learn how to create your own and wow your friends at your next get-together. All supplies will be provided. Cost is \$25 and participants must pre-register by calling the Centre at (276) 957-5757.

## Sunday, Feb. 20

The Spencer-Penn Centre (475 Spencer-Penn Road, Spencer) will host a barn quilt class from 12-4 p.m. All supplies are provided, and pricing is based on size, ranging from \$75 to \$85. The registration deadline is Friday, Feb. 11. For more details or to register, call the Centre at (276) 957-5757.

## Monday, Feb. 21

The American Red Cross is hosting a blood drive at the Collinsville Church of Christ (2115 Daniels Creek Road, Collinsville) from 1-6 p.m. To schedule an appointment, visit redcrossblood.org.

## Tuesday, Feb. 22

The Henry County School Board and

the Henry County Board of Supervisors will hold a joint budget work session beginning at 5 p.m. in the 4th floor conference room of the Henry County Administration Building (3300 Kings Mountain Road, Martinsville.)

## Wednesday, Feb. 23

The West Piedmont Health District will provide free, drive-through PCR testing for COVID-19 from 12:30-4 p.m. at the National Guard Armory parking lot (315 Commonwealth Boulevard, Martinsville.) The tests are limited to the first 100 participants. No registration is required and there is no age limit for testing. Participants must wear a mask and no pets are allowed in vehicles.

## Thursday, Feb. 24

Longwood University presents a Zoom workshop, Building the Foundation for Your New Business with business analyst Michael Scales. Participants will prepare to start a successful business by evaluating their entrepreneurial abilities, learning about marketing strategies and financial resources, and gaining tips on preparing a business plan. This virtual workshop will take place from 10-11:30 a.m. To register, visit clients.virginiasbdc.org/events.

## Thursday, March 3

The Henry County School Board will hold its regular meeting beginning at 6 p.m. in the Summerlin Meeting Room of the Henry County Administration Building (3300 Kings Mountain Road, Martinsville.)

P&HCC is offering a hyflex (in-person or virtual) professional development workshop, "Customer Service: Rev Up Your Engines" from 9-11 a.m. This workshop focuses on ensuring guests have the best possible experience at hotels or restaurants. Cost is \$49 (register by Feb. 17 for a \$10 discount.) To register, visit ph.augusoft.net or call (276) 656-0260.

## Thursday, March 17

The Henry County School Board will hold a special meeting beginning at 6 p.m. in the Summerlin Meeting Room of the Henry County Administration Building (3300 Kings Mountain Road, Martinsville.)

## Saturday, March 26

The Martinsville-Henry SPCA, the Martinsville City Police Department, and PetSense are partnering to host a microchip clinic from 10 a.m. until 1 p.m. at PetSense (240 Commonwealth Blvd. W, Martinsville.) The cost of a microchip and registration is \$10. Dogs must be on leashes and cats must be in carriers for the safety of the animal.

## ONGOING

The Louise R. Lester Spay/Neuter Clinic is hosting wellness clinics every Tuesday beginning Feb. 1. Clinics are by appointment only—walk-ins are not accepted. February's clinics will be dedicated to families with public assistance only, but will open to everyone beginning in March. Call (276) 638-7297 to schedule your appointment.

The Warming Center of Martinsville and Henry County, located at Forest Hills Presbyterian Church (725 Beechnut Lane) is open to provide a warm place to sleep, a

warm meal, and personal supplies at no cost to those in need. Anyone who needs transportation to the center can be picked up at 6:45 p.m. at the Martinsville library and 6:25 p.m. at the Collinsville library. Weekly schedules are posted at the Martinsville library, YMCA, and on the MHC Warming Center Facebook page every Saturday. For more information, call (276) 207-9660. Anyone who wishes to volunteer at the Warming Center or make a donation can find more information on Facebook or at www.forest-hillspc.com/mhc-warming-shelter.html.

Patrick & Henry Community College is organizing a virtual Leadership Learning Community. If you have leadership questions, P&HCC can connect you with answers through this virtual community. Participants have the opportunity to collaborate and brainstorm current, real-time challenges and successes with fellow leaders while learning from each other or gaining insights from professionals skilled in areas of concern. Sessions will be held from 4-5 p.m. every other Wednesday through June 22. Prices range from \$225 for 12 sessions all the way to \$25 for individual sessions. For more information or to register, visit ph.augusoft.net or call (276) 656-0260.

Piedmont Arts hosts three exhibits: "Our Living Past: Platinum Portraits of Southern Music Makers," "Dear B.J.: Postcards from the Pandemic," and "Tara Compton." All exhibits run through March 12. Museum admission is free.

Henry County Parks & Recreation invites you out for a trek along the trail. Meet as a group and walk along a different trail each week. Explore the trails of Martinsville-Henry County, make new friends, and get some fresh air and exercise. Call the HCPR Senior Services office at (276) 634-4644 to find out where the week's trek is happening. Trail Trekkers meet Thursday of each week (weather permitting) at 1 p.m. in the fall and winter, and 9:15 a.m. in spring and summer.

The Blue Ridge Regional Library offers free one-day passes to the Virginia Museum of Natural History and the Henry County YMCA with your library card. The passes are good for one day and exclude special events. There is a wait period before you can check out the pass again. For more details and exclusions, visit brrl.lib.va.us.

The Fontaine Ruritan Club hosts Bingo every Tuesday at its headquarters (1903 Joseph Martin Highway, Martinsville.) Doors open at 5:30 and games begin at 7. Money from Bingo supports community service awards, scholarships, and other community efforts.

MHC Coalition for Health and Wellness offers no contact Medicaid application assistance for eligible Virginia residents from birth to 64 years of age. No sign-up fees, no premiums, no deductibles. Including Children's Medicaid/FAMIS, Pregnancy Medicaid and Adult Health Care -19 to 64 years old. Questions can be answered, and applications completed by phone. In-person application assistance is available from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Thursdays at The Community Storehouse. Call or text Ann Walker 276 732-0509 to see if you qualify.

The Henry County Adult Learning Center offers free in-house and online classes to help prepare for college, career, or earn your high school equivalency or GED. Classes can help improve your digital literacy, job skills, English language skills, and earning potential. Contact the Center for Community Learning (15 Primary School Road, Collinsville) at (276) 647-9585.

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- Cholesterol numbers
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  - Biblical Hamath
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  - A carefree adventure
  - Mariner or sailor
  - Modern chair designer
  - \_\_\_ Gin Fizz cocktail
  - A Far East wet nurse
  - Axiom
  - The frame around a door
  - Fruit drink
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  - Real Estate Services
  - Brass that looks like gold
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  - spice
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  - Vaselike receptacle
  - Highest card
  - Unction
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  - One point E of SE
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  - Three toed sloth
  - \_\_\_ student, learns healing
  - Liquid body substances
  - Act of selling again
  - Stroke
  - Selector switches
  - Speed, not slow
  - City founded by Xenophanes
  - Picasso's mistress Dora
  - Having two units or parts
  - 2nd largest Spanish river
  - Delta Kappa Epsilon nickname
  - The cry made by sheep
  - Air Chef Marshall
  - Perceive with the eyes
- CLUES DOWN
- Chew the fat
  - A prince in India



# Grace Potter to headline Rooster Walk 12 Music & Arts Festival

Rooster Walk Music & Arts Festival has announced the third and final wave of music performers for the much-anticipated 2022 festival, scheduled for May 26-29 in Martinsville. Rooster Walk returns with an extraordinarily diverse bill featuring a remarkable selection of roughly 50 artists performing across 6 unique stages over the four-day festival.

Grammy-nominated rock'n'roll artist Grace Potter will bring her full band to the 12th annual Rooster Walk Music & Arts Festival for a headlining set. In today's announcement, she is joined by arena rockers Moon Taxi, 16 more bands, and five Artists at Large.

Described by Spin Magazine as "one of the greatest living voices in rock today," and heralded as one of the world's best live performers, Grace Potter has played every major music festival from Coachella and Lollapalooza to Bonnaroo and Rock in Rio. She's had the honor of sharing the stage with artists such as The Rolling Stones, Willie Nelson, Robert Plant, The Allman Brothers Band, Neil Young, Mavis Staples, and The Roots, to name just a few. She will be making her Rooster Walk debut at Rooster Walk 12.

Other new bands added to the RW12 lineup today include: Moon Taxi (arena rock), Ryan Montbleau (singer/songwriter), Town Mountain (honky tonk/bluegrass), Kendall Street Company (jam/rock), Fireside Collective (progressive bluegrass), Dead Reckoning (Grateful Dead tribute), Daniel Donato (cosmic country), TK & Know Nothings (rock), Disco Risqué (funk/hard rock), Goodfellers (bluegrass), After Jack (folk), Into The Fog (progressive bluegrass), TC Carter Band (blues), Jules & The Agreeables (rock/



**Rooster Walk will be held Thursday-Sunday of Memorial Day weekend. The 4-day festival celebrates music, art, and the great outdoors at the idyllic Pop's Farm venue in Martinsville, Va.**

Americana), The McGee Family Band (bluegrass), DJ What (DJ), and Pumphouse Blues (blues).

In addition, Rooster Walk 12 will feature five immensely talented Artists at Large in Ron Holloway (saxophone; Allman Brothers, Susan Tedeschi Band), John Bryant (drums; Ray Charles), Josh Shilling (keys; Mountain Heart), Roosevelt Collier (pedal steel; The Lee Boys) and Wallace Mullinax (guitar; Dead 27s). This quintet of artists will form the basis of the RW12 Artist at Large Band, which will perform a different themed set on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, respectively, at the festival.

The new additions above join a Rooster Walk 12 lineup that already included Little Feat, Lettuce, BIG Something, The War and Treaty, Tab Benoit, Andy Frasco & The U.N., Sammy Rae & The Friends, Fruition, Brandon 'Taz' Niederauer, The Nude Party, Yarn, Mike & The Moonpies, Mountain Heart, Sol Driven Train, The Wooks, Crawford & Power, Los Colognes, Caitlin Krisko & The Broadcast, Sanctum

Sully, Isaac Hadden Organ Trio, Striking Copper, The Stews, Big Fat Gap, The Wilson Springs Hotel, Pirates of the Piedmont

Rooster Walk will take place Thursday-Sunday of Memorial Day weekend in the rolling countryside surrounding Martinsville, Va. Rooster Walk is a 4-day festival celebrating music, art, and the great outdoors at the idyllic Pop's Farm venue. With roughly 50 bands performing on 6 different stages, an eclectic roster of great music guides the Rooster Walk experience.

In addition to four days of amazing tunes, the family-friendly Rooster Walk will offer a wide variety of kids' activities, craft beer, great food, arts and numerous opportunities to enjoy Virginia's great outdoors with kayak tours, bike rides, yoga, a disc golf course and beautiful on-site camping.

VIP tickets, General Admission weekend passes and camping upgrades are on sale now through [www.roosterwalk.com](http://www.roosterwalk.com). Single day tickets will go on sale in the coming weeks.

Rooster Walk has been consistently voted as a Top 3 Best Music Festival

and Best Family-Friendly Festival by the Blue Ridge Outdoors Magazine's Best of the Blue Ridge. It also has been voted the region's Most Creative Charitable Event by readers of Virginia Living Magazine, among other accolades. The festival was created in memory of late Martinsville natives Edwin "The Rooster" Penn and Walker Shank, who graduated from Martinsville High School in 2000.

A portion of proceeds from the festival will be donated to local and regional charities, including Rooster Walk's own Penn-Shank Memorial Endowment Scholarship Fund for students at Martinsville High School, and the Rooster Walk Music Instrument Program for public band programs in the local city and county school systems.

The festival is produced by Rooster Walk Inc., a 501c3 nonprofit dedicated to promoting music, arts and education in its home of Martinsville-Henry County. Since 2009, Rooster Walk Inc. has donated more than \$220,000 to local and regional charities.

## Local residents among JMU's fall graduates

Several Martinsville and Henry County students were among those to graduate during the December 2021 commencement exercises at James Madison University.

Colin Miner, of Collinsville, graduated with a degree(s) in history.

Mary Gilbert, of Martinsville, graduated

with a degree(s) in nursing.

Britney Terry, of Collinsville, graduated with a degree(s) in occupational therapy.

Jacob Eames, of Bassett, graduated with a degree(s) in political science.

Joanna Murillo, of Bassett, graduated with a degree(s) in sport and recreation management.

## Historical Society to host "Navigation in the Age of Sail"

The Martinsville-Henry County Historical Society will host its monthly Lecture Series, "Navigation in the Age of Sail," on Sunday, February 20, at 3 p.m. in the Historic Henry County Courthouse.

Tom Apple will present an overview of the technological history of navigation on sea and on land during the days when sailing ships were the primary means of ocean travel. He will cover tools and basic methodology on how our forebears found their way about our planet's seas — a story filled with tragedy that motivated so many to ply their wits in figuring out how to get there from here and back home again. Examples of many of these navigation tools will be exhibited.

Apple is an engineering analyst for Wing Inflatables, the primary U.S. manu-

facturer of inflatable craft and safety products. He and his family moved to Bassett a year and a half ago from Suffolk, Virginia, where he worked at the Naval Surface Warfare Center, Norfolk, Virginia, as the Navy's Engineering Agent for inflatable craft and life rafts. His interest in technological history drew his interest to navigation and associated tools. He has fabricated reproductions and restored original examples of these tools. He has also reproduced period navigation maps and publications. Apple is a compatriot in the Colonel George Waller Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution.

Admission is free. The Historic Henry County Courthouse is fully handicap accessible. Visit <https://www.facebook.com/events/470549888047975/> for more information.

## Piedmont Arts hosts annual African American Read-In, Family Day

All are invited to participate in a celebration of African American artists, performers and writers at Piedmont Arts' annual African American Read-In and Family Day on Saturday, February 19, from 11 a.m. — 2 p.m. Held in conjunction with the National African American Read-In established in 1990 by the Black Caucus of the National Council of Teachers of English to make literacy a significant part of Black History Month, the National Read-In and related events have reached more than 6

million participants around the world.

Sponsored by Carter Bank & Trust, the free event will feature a performance by Kuumba Dance Ensemble, Inc., drumming workshops, story time, crafts and a public read-aloud. The Martinsville Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. will also host a book drive at the event. Guests may bring new or gently used books to donate to local pre-schools. Complimentary snacks will be provided. All ages are welcome.

Event Schedule:  
11 a.m. — 12 p.m.

- West African-inspired beaded jewelry craft, coloring pages and more  
12 — 1 p.m. - Kuumba Dance Ensemble, Inc. will perform West African dance and drumming workshops  
1 — 2 p.m. - Public read-aloud

Throughout February, Piedmont Arts is celebrating Black History Month with free exhibits, events and educational programs. To learn more about Piedmont Arts' Black History Month events, visit [PiedmontArts.org](http://PiedmontArts.org).

Piedmont Arts is located at 215 Starling Avenue, Martinsville.



**Kuumba Dance Ensemble, Inc. will perform West African dance and drumming workshops at Piedmont Arts' African American Read-In and Family Day on Saturday, February 19, 2022.**

## Partners sought for summer meals program

The Virginia Department of Education is seeking partners to participate in the commonwealth's Summer Food Service Program this year to ensure that children have access to nutritious meals during months when school is not in session.

The department reimburses approved organizations for meals served and for associated administrative costs. In addition, all participants receive training and technical assistance from VDOE.

The Summer Food Service Program operates at sites such as schools, public housing centers, community centers, playgrounds, camps, parks and churches. Organizations that may qualify to participate in the program include public and private schools, local governments, public and nonprofit private residential summer

camp, and faith-based and community-based non-profit organizations.

Despite the challenges posed by COVID-19 pandemic, Virginia's 160 Summer Food Service Program partner organizations served more than 13 million meals to children between June and August last year.

The program — which is funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture — allows organizations to combine a feeding program with another activity in communities where at least 50 percent of the children are eligible for free and reduced-price meals.

Information for organizations interested in applying to participate in the Summer Food Service Program — including details on application deadlines — is available on the VDOE website.

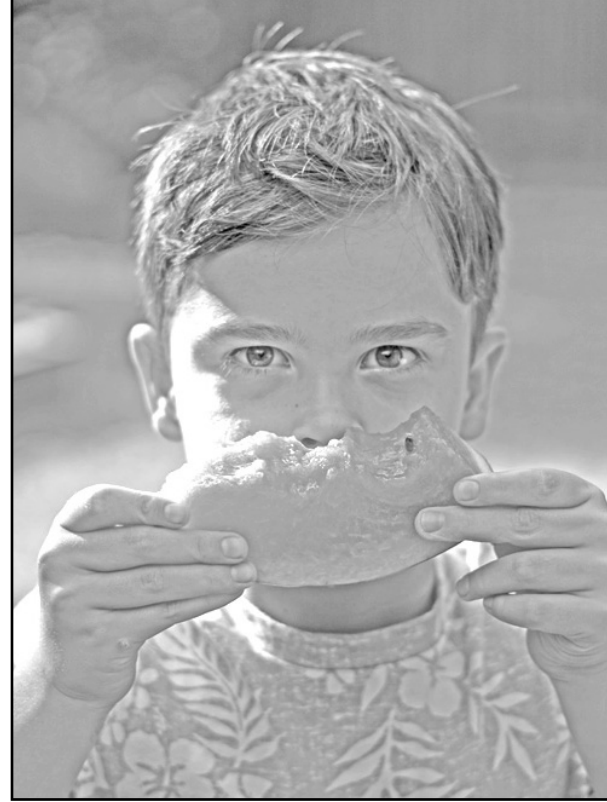


PHOTO BY THOMAS PARK



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# OPINION

## Sour candy

A few weeks ago, Mars, Incorporated announced they were making a change to the way they market M&M's.

Mars issued a press release stating that M&M's was announcing "a global commitment to creating a world where everyone feels they belong, and society is inclusive."

That strikes me as a pretty tall order for little pieces of chocolate with a candy shell, but let's keep reading.

Cathryn Sleight, Chief Growth Officer at Mars, said that "M&M's has long been committed to creating colorful fun for all, and this purpose serves as a more concrete commitment to what we've always believed as a brand: that everyone has the right to enjoy moments of happiness, and fun is the most powerful way to help people feel that they belong. As one of the world's most iconic candy brands, who better to commit to a world with more moments of fun by increasing a sense of belonging around the globe than M&M's?"

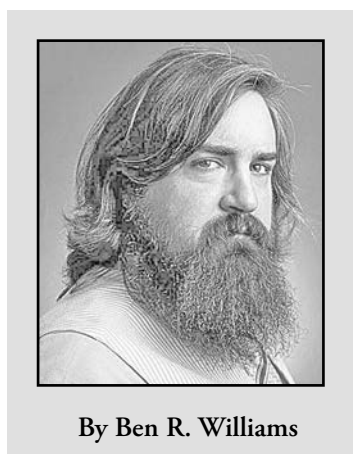
With all due respect to Cathryn Sleight, that statement rides the line between empty PR jargon and the announcement of a New Age cult based around eating M&M's.

The press release goes on in this fashion for some time, saying a lot while saying nothing at all. What it all boils down to is that Mars, Inc. was announcing that the cartoon M&M's you see on TV are going to be modified to be more inclusive. The biggest change is that the green M&M will no longer wear white go-go boots, but will now wear a pair of comfortable sneakers.

I honestly can't remember if I heard about this before it became a controversy or not. If I did hear about it, I promptly forgot about it because I am an adult with actual problems and I have a hard time caring if a multi-billion dollar company wants to engage in a little virtue signaling. I'm more worried about paying my bills and climate change and stuff like that.

However, one person cared very deeply about this change: Tucker Carlson.

If you're unfamiliar with Carlson — and I deeply envy you



By Ben R. Williams

if you are — allow me to get you caught up. A trust fund heir who pretends to hate the elites, Carlson hosts "Tucker Carlson Tonight" on Fox News, a program where he gets paid a great deal of money to pretend to be offended by everything left of hunting the homeless for sport. You may know him best as the reason that your uncle has become emboldened to use racial slurs at Thanksgiving dinner.

And here's another thing about Tucker Carlson that you probably don't want to know: he is apparently very attracted to the green M&M.

"M&M's will not be satisfied until every last cartoon character is deeply unappealing and totally androgynous," Carlson actually said on television. "Until the moment you wouldn't want to have a drink with any one of them. That's the goal. When you're totally turned off, we've achieved equity; we've won."

Carlson's tirade was objectively if unintentionally hilarious, and the internet quickly and rightly mocked him for his feigned outrage at no longer being attracted to a cartoon depiction of a piece of candy. There's only so far he can push his shtick until it descends into outright absurdity, and this seemed to be a major tipping point.

But there's something pretty interesting that's gotten lost in all of this comedy, and it's the timing of Mars, Inc.'s announcement that they're going to change the world by having the green M&M wear sneakers.

In late 2021, Mars, Inc., Nestle, Hershey, and a few other chocolate companies were sued for the second time in two years over allegations of aiding and abetting child slavery. The most

recent suit was brought forward by eight citizens of the west African country of Mali who say that when they were children, they were trafficked to plantations in Cote D'Ivoire and forced to harvest cocoa.

These allegations are certainly nothing new. A study by the University of Chicago determined that 1.56 million children harvest cocoa in west Africa, and I'm betting far more than eight of them are not there by choice. Even if they're not slaves, they're still child laborers, so it's not exactly a great look either way. But hey, whatever keeps the overhead down and the shareholders happy, am I right?

I can't imagine that Mars, Inc. was getting a whole lot of angry letters about the green M&M's go-go boots. Is it possible that they manufactured this whole controversy to distract from the real issue and Tucker Carlson swallowed it hook, line, and sinker?

I have my suspicions. And while I'm certainly not the first person to point out the convenient timing of Mars' announcement, I can tell you that whether it was an intentional distraction or not, it worked like a charm.

## Weekly Update

**Del. Les R. Adams**  
16th House District

At the time of this writing, the General Assembly is in the final full week of considering legislation prior to the midpoint of the regular session known as "crossover." Following that date, marked in the procedural resolution adopted several weeks ago, the House of Delegates will then take up bills that passed the Senate, and vice versa. Accordingly, the shape of this year's legislative work is starting to take form and provides a glimpse of what challenges we will have in the Democrat controlled Senate.

With the crossover date

looming, the full committees are striving to finish on time, resulting in longer hours in the committee rooms. In last week's column, I described the committees on which I am privileged to serve and briefly touched on some of the topics before them. As mentioned, the Privileges and Elections Committee has been busy addressing the subject of election integrity. It is a pleasure to report that the House Republican majority has thus far remained united in passing out bills that require stronger voter identification, will clean up voter rolls, and generally provide more assurance of accurate results. This is a complete reversal in priority from the past two sessions that saw repeated

attempts to remove or diminish checks on voter fraud.

In like manner, the direction taken by this year's Courts of Justice Committee provides a stark contrast in priorities between the Democratic and Republican leadership. It is important to remember that prior to the spring of 2020, there was no concerted effort to drastically remake the criminal justice system in the Commonwealth. However, when the mob violence of that year began, the Democrat led House and Senate responded by (in the words of their leadership at the time) "reimagining" public safety and policing. To them this meant viewing every interaction from a false narrative that implied systematic racism everywhere and a presumption that criminals were the true victims of a society that "marginal-

ized" them.

This mindset drove a significant amount of legislation that began with a special session previously called for the purpose of resolving budget issues resulting from Governor Northam's lockdowns under the pandemic. Instead of focusing on those budget concerns, that special session, and the regular one that followed in 2021, saw an inordinate focus on so-called criminal justice reform. And despite the fact that the Commonwealth had the lowest rate in the nation of criminal recidivism, was one of the top five best states for low crime rates, and nevertheless enjoyed long term declines in prison populations, the Democrats passed bills to remove features of our system that led to that success.

Included in these measures were bills that prevented law

enforcement from stopping vehicles despite obvious violations, eliminated presumptions against bail for violent offenders, removed a court's ability to punish violations of probation in many circumstances, and weakened what is known as "truth in sentencing." These are all areas we are now working to restore with legislation in the Courts committee.

In future columns I will describe some of my bills that have thus far met with success this year, including those addressing the issues mentioned above, and on other matters that will promote the common good.

To contact my office, write 16th House District, P.O. Box K, Chatham, Virginia, 24531; or call (434) 432-1600 in Chatham or (804) 698-1016 in Richmond.

## Biden's use of profanity

JFK: Democrat, LBJ: Democrat, Nixon: Republican, Trump: Republican, and Biden: Democrat. All have held the Presidential office, and while

their parties differ, they share a commonality: cussin' like sailors.

Ronald Steel tells in his RFK biography, "In Love With Night," that the

Kennedy brothers had a beloved list of vulgar sayings used behind closed doors. Any biography on LBJ will discuss his open-door-bathroom meetings where profanity flew. Nixon's own audio recordings sound him cursing to Charles Colson on the other end of the line. Trump used the "F-word" on the Limbaugh radio show, and now President Biden has joined their club with his recent "stupid S.O.B" reference to Fox News reporter, Peter Doocy. This has generated a lot of talk in all forms of media, and I think it is an astronomical display of hypocrisy. People at home heard President Biden say this on the news, and afterwards

they turned the channel to watch any given television show laden with profanities at which they did not bat an eye. If you stop at a redlight with your windows down you are subject to hearing explicit lyrics coming from someone else's car radio. Give me a break.

Obviously, as a Christian, I'm not supportive of coarse/vulgar language (see Ephesians 4:29, and 5:4 for my proof texts). I just wish people would wake up and realize there is no "moral vote:" they're both immoral. There is no "lesser of the two evils:" they're both evil. He's our President, not our preacher.

Someone says, "Caleb, it's about the office; the office demands more diplomacy and aplomb." It's not that I don't agree with that, but in

one way I believe it to be total nonsense! Citizens define this country, not the past or sitting President. It's still "we the people," and until we remember that and begin to band together, I believe we should expect things to get worse. Why are people holding the President to a standard that they don't even demand in their daily lives?

In all honesty I don't care if the President cusses. My question is are our elected officials working on national security (which includes boarder control)? Are they staying out of the way of the free market rather than regulating it to death? Here's a quote from Barry Goldwater's 1960 book, "The Conscience of a Conservative:"

"The legitimate functions of government are actually conducive to freedom.

Maintaining internal order, keeping foreign foes at bay, administering justice, removing obstacles to the free interchange of goods — the exercise of these powers makes it possible for men to follow their chosen pursuits with maximum freedom."

We have not had maximum freedom for two years. "Two weeks to flatten the curve" turned into "two years to flatten the curve." But, I digress — Take away the titles of "President" and "reporter" and what you have is one neighbor disrespecting the other. It might be un-presidential, but it's certainly un-neighborly. Stop cursing at each other; let's learn to disagree without being disagreeable.

Caleb Robertson,  
Martinsville

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# HENRY COUNTY ENTERPRISE

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Michael Showell, *Publisher*

Debbie Hall, *Editor*  
dhall@theenterprise.net  
(276) 694-3101

Callie Hietala, *Reporter*  
newsreporter@theenterprise.net

Randy Thompson, *Advertising Manager*  
advertise@mainstreetnewspapers.com  
(540) 230-1129

Liz Moonbury, *Advertising Specialist*  
advertising@theenterprise.net  
(276) 694-3101

## Letters to the Editor Guidelines

Henry County Enterprise welcomes letters to the editor and/or reader viewpoints of 500 words or less. Submissions may be edited for clarity, length, legal ramifications or general taste at the editor's discretion. We reserve the right to refuse to publish submitted letters for the same reasons. All letters must be signed by an individual and include community. Letters that do not meet these guidelines will not be considered for publication. Viewpoints and opinions expressed in letters selected for publication are the opinions of the writers, and do not necessarily reflect the views of Henry County Enterprise.

## Former nurse at Danville hospital sentenced on federal charges

Former nurse at Danville hospital sentenced on federal charges

A former registered nurse working at Sovah Health-Danville was sentenced last week to 36 months in federal prison for tampering with consumer products (fentanyl and hydromorphone) and making false statements.

Emilee Kathryn Poteat, 31, pleaded guilty in May 2021 to one count of tampering with consumer products (fentanyl and hydromorphone) that affect interstate commerce, with one count of reckless disregard for the risk that another person be placed in danger of death or bodily injury, and one count of making false statements.

"Those who are trusted to keep opioids and other pain medications secure must be held to the highest standards possible," United States Attorney Christopher R. Kavanaugh said. "When those individuals break that trust, the United States Attorney's Office will hold them accountable to ensure the public's trust in our medical institutions."

"Health care professionals who steal needed medications from their patients put those patients at increased risk of

harm and create a disruption in the legal drug supply chain," said Special Agent in Charge Mark S. McCormack of the FDA Office of Criminal Investigations — Metropolitan Washington Field Office. "We will continue to protect the public health and bring to justice health care professionals who take advantage of their unique position and compromise their patients' health and comfort by tampering with prescription drugs."

According to court documents, beginning in January 2020, Poteat diverted and tampered with fentanyl vials and hydromorphone injectables (a/k/a Dilaudid) intended for the use of patients at Sovah Health-Danville.

On May 19, 2020, it was discovered that the tops of several vials of fentanyl stored in an AcuDose machine on floor 6A had apparently been removed and tampered. Of the twenty vials of fentanyl inspected, fourteen of the vials had the tops popped off while the remaining tops fell off when touched. One of the vials had a dry white film around the rim which appeared to be superglue. To access an AcuDose machine, each registered nurse has their own unique code that must be entered to

gain entry, and a review of the machine on floor 6A revealed that Poteat was the only employee who accessed the drawer where the tampered vials were found.

On May 28, 2020, Poteat was interviewed by law enforcement. She denied tampering with any controlled substances and said she did not drink alcohol or use drugs. During a subsequent interview with law enforcement on June 28, 2020, Poteat again told investigators that she did not tamper with, use, or sell drugs, and suggested another person used her password to gain access to the AcuDose machine on 6A.

In her interview with the Virginia Department of Health Professions after being terminated from Sovah Health-Danville, Poteat admitted she had a substance abuse problem, self-medicated with opioids, and diverted the fentanyl and hydromorphone she accessed at Sovah Health-Danville for her own use.

The Food and Drug Administration, the Drug Enforcement Administration, and the Virginia Department of Health Professions investigated the case.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Randy Ramseyer prosecuted the case.

**Give us your view:**  
The Henry County Enterprise encourages letters from our readers on topics of general interest to the community and responses to our articles and columns. Letters must be signed and have a telephone number where you can be reached to be considered for publication. All letters will be verified before publication. The Henry County Enterprise reserves the right to deny publication of any letter and edit letters for length, content and style.  
If you have news about or an upcoming event for your organization, company or church, email dhall@theenterprise.net and/or call (276) 694-3101



# Musical icons featured in “Our Living Past” exhibit

For 35 years, photographer Timothy Duffy has forged a unique vision immortalizing Southern musical heroes and the world in which they live. His portraits of many of these musical icons can be seen in the new exhibition, “Our Living Past,” currently on view at Piedmont Arts.

The exhibit includes 25 black-and-white portraits taken with an early photographic process called tintype, and printed with the platinum/palladium process.

The artists captured by Duffy’s lens range from guitar virtuoso and Allman Brothers Band member Derek Trucks and legendary bluesman Taj Mahal to lesser-known blues and soul artists. The exhibit also includes a musical element, so you can hear the music behind the faces.

“Guests will recognize many of the artists they see here,” said Director of Exhibitions and Marketing Bernadette Moore. “Many are from our region, and some have even played in our community,” she said gesturing to a photograph of Dom Flemons and his wife Vania Kinard as they jump the broom on their wedding day. Flemons is a former member of the Carolina Chocolate Drops who performed in Martinsville in 2007.

To capture these portraits, Duffy traveled the American South from Virginia to Florida, covering seven states in all. Deep in the mountains of Southwest Virginia, where the rich tradition of old-time music flourishes, Duffy

found Martha Spencer and her fiddle Smokey. Spencer grew up performing with her family band in Rugby, Virginia, and now delights audiences around the world with the joyous intensity of her singing, dancing, and playing on fiddle, banjo, and guitar.

“Martha and I grew up in the same area of the Blue Ridge,” said Moore. “I feel a deep connection to the music of the mountains, so her portrait makes me think of home.”

In his own home base of Hillsborough, North Carolina, Duffy found R&B music television pioneer Ironing Board Sam. Early in his career, Sam performed for a year at the Club Del Morocco in Nashville, Tennessee, while a promising young guitarist named Jimi Hendrix was playing in the lounge downstairs. He became a true pioneer by performing weekly in the first African American R&B television show, “Night Train,” which was produced by Nashville’s WLAC-TV from 1964 to 1967. “Night Train” was the first television program to feature an all-Black cast and predated the well-known “Soul Train” by five years.

And deep in the Louisiana bayou, Duffy found Pat “Mother Blues” Cohen. Cohen made her living entertaining in New Orleans until Hurricane Katrina took her home in the Ninth Ward. Not one to let tragedy hold her back, Cohen returned to her birthplace in North Carolina and resurrected her career. She is known for her warmth and com-

passion and often plays virtual gigs for nursing homes to brighten the lives of residents during the COVID-19 pandemic.

“These portraits not only capture the essence of each artist, they capture a true love of music and community,” said Moore. “You can see it reflected in their eyes, a real passion for what they do, and the love that Tim feels for these artists and the music they make.”

Duffy’s love of music developed at an early age. By the age of 16, he became interested in ethnomusicology, or the study of the music of different cultures, and went on to get his undergraduate degree in the subject. He then trained as a folklorist at the University of North Carolina for his graduate degree.

It was on his travels recording the history of his favorite artists that Duffy was inspired to go beyond his role as an observer and researcher and become an active collaborator with the musicians he sought out.

Seeing how the incredibly rich musical legacy that his favorite artists carried was juxtaposed by the pervasive poverty they often faced, Duffy knew he had to take action. So, in 1994, he and his wife Denise created Music Maker Foundation, a non-profit organization that preserves the musical traditions of the South by directly supporting the musicians who make it.

“Music Maker provides services to artists marginalized by factors such as age, poverty,



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Timothy Duffy’s “Our Living Past” exhibit is currently on view at Piedmont Arts.

race, and gender because they are least likely to have the resources to share their music,” said Moore.

In the past 27 years, the foundation has served more than 500 musicians whose work spans the entire history of American music, including blues, gospel, folk, singer-songwriter, Appalachian string band and Native American artists.

Moore says the work Music Maker does makes this exhibit even more important.

“It’s really special to have these portraits in the galleries,” she said. “Tim’s photographs will preserve the musical legacy of these artists for lifetimes, and the work he and Denise do through the foundation will allow future generations to be inspired by the rich musical history of the American South.”

Another photography exhibit, “Dear B.J.: Postcards from the Pandemic” by L.S. King, features images created using another early photographic

process called photogravure. In March of 2020, when social isolation became the normal way of life, King began photographing her neighborhood in Pulaski, Virginia, during her daily walks. Her black-and-white images are accompanied by hand-written postcards, all addressed to a mysterious “B.J.” and signed by “ME.”

Moore says King’s intent is for the viewer to interpret these images and correspondence as it relates to them.

“Who is B.J., who is ME, how do these messages relate to your experience during the pandemic? It’s all subjective. You have to come to your own conclusions.”

King’s images are purposefully reminiscent of the photography prevalent during the 1918 pandemic, specifically Pictorialism.

“Pictorialism was a turn-of-the-20th-century movement that employed photographic manipulation to heighten grain and increase

shadows,” said Moore. “This enhances an image’s emotive qualities, and focuses more on the beauty of the image than on capturing reality.”

Local artist Tara Compton has work on display in the Lynwood Artists Gallery. Compton, a painter and jewelry maker, grew up in Martinsville. She recently moved back to the area and has a new studio located on Broad Street.

“Tara is doing some really dynamic work,” said Moore. “She’s using color and shapes in interesting ways.”

“Our Living Past,” “Dear B.J.: Postcards from the Pandemic,” and “Tara Compton” will be on view at Piedmont Arts through March 12. The museum is open to the public Tuesday through Saturday from 10 am to 5 pm. Admission is free of charge.

To learn more about these exhibits and related events, visit the museum’s website, PiedmontArts.org.

# Visitor Center to close as EDC realigns Tourism Division

The Martinsville-Henry County Economic Development Corporation’s Tourism Division announced modifications to its comprehensive tourism effort to better align with visitor feedback and current tourism trends nationwide.

“We have seen changing trends in how people access destination information for some time,” said Mark Heath, the EDC’s President & CEO, “but everything changed in the spring

of 2020 when the world was hit with COVID-19. From that point until now, virtually all information is accessed online through numerous platforms including websites, social media, and e-newsletters.”

As the EDC staff analyzed how best to deliver tourism services going forward in the current landscape, it became evident that a new direction was needed. The Martinsville-Henry County Visitor Center has seen a substantial

decrease in foot traffic over the past four years to an average of less than two guests per day. As a result of this decline, a key component of the Tourism realignment will be to close the Martinsville-Henry County Visitor Center as of February 25. Until then, the Visitor Center will be open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. for anyone wanting to pick up brochures or purchase merchandise.

Going forward, a

primary focus will be to work more closely with key destination attractions like the Martinsville Speedway, Virginia Museum of Natural History, the Smith River Sports Complex, Piedmont Arts, Philpott Lake, the Bassett Historical Center, Blue Ridge Airport and the Spencer Penn Centre. In addition to ongoing promotion via the EDC’s Tourism website (VisitMartinsville.com) and numerous

social media platforms, the new approach includes the possibility of a ‘mobile’ visitor center to be placed at major destinations during events, and kiosks - both stationary and web-based - at major locations.

“In addition to these changes, Tourism staff will work diligently with our local partners to enhance our capacity to draw out of town visitors,” said Sarah Hodges, the EDC’s Director of Tourism and Talent

Development. “These efforts will include the recruitment of new lodging properties, expansion of our trails system, and beautification and redevelopment support in Uptown Martinsville.”

“Staff has done a tremendous job of constantly evaluating our overall Tourism efforts,” said Larry Ryder, EDC Board Chair. “I’m confident this realignment will pay dividends for the Martinsville-Henry County Tourism program going forward.”

# New Jail

from page 1

for spending \$1.2 million to demolish a brick structure and concrete pad that still stood on the site. “We took that \$1.2 million worth of dilapidated building and concrete, put it through a rock crusher, and created \$3 million worth of rock that’s sitting under the foundation of this (building), under the asphalt in the parking lot.”

Wagoner said the jail will be ready to house inmates beginning April 1.

Henry County Sheriff Lane Perry said, “this has been a project that’s a long time in coming, but I want to say thank you. I want to thank you on behalf of our officers because you

all came and saw what our current jail looked like ... I also want to say I’m thankful on behalf of the inmates. One of the things is managing personality types, managing issues they might be fighting. Now we can control that a lot better, we can be more effective, we can have more people in here helping inmates out. There’s numerous people who are going to come in here and talk to them about their life, there are people who are going to come in here and help them with their reading skills, GED, and other things.”

Hall said, “There are things in this facility that we cannot do in the old

facility—mental health work, work release, things of that nature. The medical facility is second to none.”

“I’ve always believed that incarceration should be a holistic approach,” he continued. “You want to take the person that has made the mistake and needs to pay for that mistake, but you also want to do all you can to make sure they don’t come back, and if we can help them with job release, with mental health services, with medical services, get them out of here and get them to be a productive member of society,” that is one of the major goals of the facility.



Several members of the Henry County Board of Supervisors and other officials gathered outside of the jail’s master control room which, Lt. Col. Steve Eanes said, will be staffed by 1 or 2 people charged with controlling all the locks, watching 550+ cameras, and maintaining the security of the facility.

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# OBITUARIES

## Pearl Mae Grady Richardson

Pearl Mae Grady Richardson, 92, of Andover, Kansas and formerly of Martinsville, Va., passed away Thursday, January 27, 2022. She was born January 8, 1930, in Patrick County to Hughes Grady and Lucy Vernon Grady. In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her husband Arthur C. Richardson, brothers, Frank and James Grady and sister, Lottie G. Purcell.

She is survived by her son, Jeffrey Draughn and his wife Christie of Douglass, Kansas; grandchildren, Craig O'der, Jr., Brian O'der, and Shannon Harris; and 5 great grandchildren.

Pearl was a 1949 graduate of Hardin Reynolds Memorial School in Critz, Va. and attended Perry Business School in



Martinsville. She was employed by Piedmont Trust Bank for many years. She was a member of the garden club and the Daughters of the American Revolution. She loved her family and was loved by everyone. A graveside service was held February 4, 2022, at Nettle Ridge United Methodist Church Cemetery in Patrick County, officiated by the

Rev. Ron Gibson.

Memorials may be made to the Nettle Ridge United Methodist Church Cemetery fund, C/O Willie Lawless, 2290 Mountain View Loop, Stuart, Va. 24175.

Arrangements are by McKee-Stone Funeral Home-Martinsville, VA. To express condolences online, please visit [www.collinsmckeeestonemartinsville.com](http://www.collinsmckeeestonemartinsville.com).

## Elsie Marie Nance Robertson

On February 2, 2022, our precious and faithful mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother, Elsie Marie Nance Robertson, was welcomed into God's Heavenly Kingdom. He graciously allowed her to be in her home and surrounded by her loving family, as He quietly took her to her eternal home.

Elsie was the only child of Myrtle Amos and John D. Nance. She was born in Sandy Ridge, North Carolina, on January 6, 1923. She had a wonderful childhood, surrounded by a large family and a doting father.

While visiting her father's tobacco warehouse in Martinsville, Virginia, she caught the eye of a young farmer and employee, thus beginning a long-distance Virginia/North Carolina courtship. She and the young farmer, Dan S. Robertson, of Axton, Virginia, were married by Dr. Chevis Horne, on April 19, 1948. They remained married until his passing on November 21, 2005. After their marriage, the young couple moved into the Axton home of Dan's family and lived there until their home was built. Dan came from a large family, and some of his siblings still lived at home. Elsie was welcomed into this dynamic family household. She learned to cook under the watchful eye of her mother-in-law, whom she adored.

Elsie and Dan were blessed with a long marriage, welcoming three children, four grandchildren, and recently three great-grandchildren. Throughout her life, Elsie always treated others with kindness. She did not gossip. I doubt she ever told a lie in her life. She was honest to a fault. An ugly word never crossed her lips. She loved her family fiercely. Elsie was a quiet person, who was more comfortable talking one on one, rather than in a large group setting (the complete opposite of Dan, who never met a stranger and loved to talk). But in her quietness was her strength. She was a woman of faith, which deepened over the years. She was a loyal listener of Dr. Charles Stanley and the Rev. Billy Graham. Programs that featured gospel and Christian music were often on her television.

Thanks to the care and support of her family, Elsie was able to live in her home until her death. She was very grateful for this and told us many times. Her memory



was excellent and until the last few days, she did most things for herself. She had a blessed life, and she knew this and was grateful for it.

During the last three days of her life, she had several conversations with God. He let her visit heaven and told her she was coming there when she died. What a blessing!

In addition to her parents and husband, Elsie was preceded in death by her son, Dana Kent Robertson. She will be deeply missed and is survived by her son, Danny Keith, and wife, Janice and daughter Donna R. Wilson and husband, Bill. Also surviving are four grandchildren, John Robertson, Kristin Miller, and husband Christopher, Lynn Ann Smith and husband Bentley, and Dan Wilson. Her three great-grandchildren, whom she spent time with and FaceTimed and added so much joy to her life, are Franklin Smith, Calia Mykenna Miller, and Graham Smith. She is also survived by her sister-in-law, Alta Robertson, and numerous nieces and nephews.

Her family would like to thank the doctors, nurses, and staff of Martinsville Hospital for their care and kindness over the past week. We would also like to thank Mountain Valley Hospice for the excellent care and support given to our mother and family.

We especially want to thank Dr. James Isernia and his entire staff for the excellent medical care, encouragement, and kindness shown to our mother over the past 25 years. We are saddened that he was unable to attend to her during her final days.

Our mother was very upset with the way our country has changed over the past few years, and she often said if people would simply treat each other with kindness and live the life God intended for us, then everything would be better. What a wonderful idea!

A graveside service was held February 5, 2022, at Roselawn Burial Park, officiated by the Rev. Alan Black.

Memorials may be made to Charles Stanley In Touch Ministry, PO Box 7900, Atlanta, GA 30357, or your local church.

Arrangements are by McKee-Stone Funeral Home-Martinsville, VA. To express condolences online, please visit [www.collinsmckeeestonemartinsville.com](http://www.collinsmckeeestonemartinsville.com).

## Benny Ray Setliff

Benny Ray Setliff, 68, of Collinsville, VA passed away on Wednesday, February 2, 2022. He was born on December 18, 1953, to the late Ruby Fulcher Setliff and Noel William Setliff. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his siblings, Bill Setliff, Barry Setliff and Betty Pannell.

Mr. Setliff was a long-time member of Stone Memorial Christian Church. He was an announcer for Basketball and Football games at FC and Bassett High School for many years. Benny served in the United States Air Force and worked at Miller Brewing for thirty years. He loved his family and grandchildren dearly.

He is survived by his wife, Pamela Setliff; children, Chad Setliff (Amy), Jessica Clark (Joe), Jonathan Setliff and Lauren Guzi (Patrick); brothers,



Bobby Setliff (Diane) and Brant Setliff; brother-in-law, Kevin Pannell and Connie Miles (Louise); sister-in-law, Betsy Dillon (Mike) and many nieces and nephews. Also surviving are his grandchildren, Grant, Jack and Vivian Setliff, Nathan, Colin, Liam, and Ava Clark, Thomas Wimbish, and William Guzi.

The funeral was held February 7, 2022, at Stone Memorial Christian Church with Pastor Tim Wood officiating. Burial was at Roselawn Burial Park.

Memorials may be made to Stone Memorial Christian Church, 3030 Virginia Ave, Collinsville, VA 24078.

Norris Funeral Services, Martinsville, VA is serving the Setliff family. Online condolences may be made at [www.norrisfuneral.com](http://www.norrisfuneral.com).

## Judy Wingfield Robertson

Judy Wingfield Robertson, 68, of Bassett, Virginia passed away Friday, February 4, 2022, at Franklin Memorial Hospital. She was born July 27, 1953, in Danville, Virginia to the late Orville Allen and Viola Walker Wingfield. She was married to Robert Earl "Butch" Farley. Judy worked at Walmart for 23 years as Department Manager.

Judy was very active with the Eagles Auxiliary. She served as Past President of Auxiliary 3739 multiple times, Virginia State President 1992-1993. She was elected to the Eagles Auxiliary State Hall of Fame and Regional President 2017-2018. In 2016, Judy was awarded the Alta Browning Smith Award. In addition, she helped raise money for all the Eagle charities.

In addition to her parents, Judy was preceded in death by her brother, Ronnie Wingfield.

In addition to her loving husband, Judy is survived by her daughter, DeDe Clark (Joey), son, Justin Wade Robertson; sisters, Joyce Turner, Donna Nichols, Lisa East, Mary Frances Lankford; brothers, Allen Wingfield, Donald Wingfield, Raymond Wingfield, Victor Wingfield; and 4 grandchildren.

The funeral was held February 10, 2022, at Wright Funeral Service, with Pastor Ken Horsley officiating.

Wright Funeral Service & Crematory is serving the family. Online condolences may be made at [www.wrightfuneralservices.net](http://www.wrightfuneralservices.net).

## Vivian Wall Martin

Vivian Wall Martin of Axton, Virginia departed this life to be with her Heavenly Father and loving husband, Melvin on Friday, February 4, 2022. She was born on October 7, 1939, to the late Holland Wilburn Wall and the late Minnie Lou Wall. Vivian attended Lone Oak Baptist Church and loved singing in the choir. She was an avid bowler and bowled in many tournaments. She also loved her flowers and gardening. In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her brothers, Ralph, Leonard, Donald, Eddie, and Wayne Wall; sisters, Mildred Morton and Jewel Wall.

She is survived by her son, Jeff Martin;



daughters, Jennifer Motley (Dan), and Janice Ferguson (Tommy); brother, C.W. Wall; grandchildren, Danny Motley, Justin Motley, Matthew Martin, Ashlie Martin, and Clifton Ferguson; great-grandchildren, Morgan Vest, Kinleigh Motley, Jayson Turney, Dylan Motley, Ryland Lynch, Constance Ferguson, and Tomascus Ferguson. The funeral was

held February 10, 2022, at Lone Oak Baptist Church. Pastor Josh Allen officiated. Burial was at Lone Oak Baptist Church Cemetery. Wright Funeral Service & Crematory is serving the family. Online condolences may be made at [www.wrightfuneralservices.net](http://www.wrightfuneralservices.net).

## John Edwin "Johnny" Hundley

John Edwin "Johnny" Hundley, 81, of Bassett, VA passed away Sunday, February 6, 2022, at his home. He was born February 11, 1940, in Franklin County, VA to the late Clifford Benjamin Hundley and Nannie Mason Hundley. He was also preceded in death by one brother and three sisters.

Johnny was the owner of Southeastern Outdoor Supplies since 1966.

He is survived by his wife, Ruth Hodges Hundley; sons, Jonathan Hundley (Kara) and Edwin Hundley (Tawni); and daughter, Donna Hundley, all of Figsboro. Also surviving are grandchildren, Hayes Hundley, Larson Hundley, Joe Hundley, Dusty Hundley, Crystal Sink, and Chris Turner; seven great-grandchildren; broth-



ers, Robert and Harry Hundley; and sisters, Becky Eanes and Ethel Jamison.

The funeral will be held at 11 a.m. on Friday, February 11, 2022, at Norris Funeral Services, Martinsville Chapel, with Pastor Glenn Stinnett officiating. Visitation will be from 5 to 7 p.m. Thursday, February 10, 2022, at Norris Funeral Services. Burial will be at Roselawn Burial Park.

Memorial donations may be made to Mountain Valley Hospice, 730 East Church Street, Suite 13, Martinsville, VA 24112.

Norris Funeral Services, Martinsville, VA is serving the Hundley family. Online condolences may be made at [www.norrisfuneral.com](http://www.norrisfuneral.com).

## Betty Ann Cameron

Betty Ann Cameron passed from this life to eternal life on February 2, 2022. Beloved by all of her family, she was the wife of Jack Cameron; the mother of David Cameron (Mary Helen) of Martinsville, VA, and Jackie Cameron Mason (Eric) of Algonquin, IL; and the grandmother of Anna Mason, also of Algonquin. Betty was born

on May 15, 1938, in Wayne County, IL, the youngest of John and Gladys Smith's twelve children. She and Jack met at Airtex Products in Fairfield, IL, where they both worked until retiring. They married on June 24, 1967, in Fairfield and were active members of First Baptist Church. They moved to Collinsville, VA, in 2021, where they joined Chatham



Heights Baptist Church of Martinsville.

Betty enjoyed cooking, sewing, gardening, and spending time with her family and friends.

In addition to her husband, children, and grandchild, she is survived by sister Imogene Caudle of Lee's Summit, MO, and numerous nieces, nephews, and their extended families. She will be deeply missed by all who knew her.

A memorial service for Betty will be held at Chatham Heights Baptist Church in May.

Arrangements are by McKee-Stone Funeral Home-Martinsville, VA. To express condolences online, please visit [www.collinsmckeeestonemartinsville.com](http://www.collinsmckeeestonemartinsville.com).

## Larry Wayne Stanley

Larry Wayne Stanley, 72, of Ridgeway, VA passed away on Thursday, February 3, 2022. He was born on October 3, 1949, the son of the late Gaynell Wilson Stanley. In addition to his mother, he was preceded in death by his sister, Patricia Stanley.

Mr. Stanley is survived by his wife, Judy Purdy Stanley; daughter, Crystal Wyatt (Jason) of Axton, VA; son, Bradley Stanley (Juanita)



of Ridgeway, VA; sisters, Linda Conner (David) of Collinsville, VA and Joyce Johnnides (Vic) of Jacksonville, FL; brother, Andrew Stanley of Greensboro, NC; and grandchildren, Taylor Stanley, Austin Stanley, and Sarah Wyatt.

All services will be private. Norris Funeral Services, Martinsville, VA is serving the Stanley family. Online condolences may be made at [www.norrisfuneral.com](http://www.norrisfuneral.com).

## Bobby Gene Eanes

Bobby Gene Eanes, 90, of Martinsville, Virginia passed away Sunday, February 6, 2022, at Kings Grant. He was born on February 6, 1932, in Martinsville, Virginia to the late Homer Robert Eanes and Mary Beatrice Richardson Eanes. Bobby proudly served in the United States Army. He was a Tobacco Contractor for fifty-five years and was of the Christian faith.

In addition to his parents, he is preceded in death by his sisters, Lois Frith, and Inez Shorter; brothers, Stafford Eanes, Jim Eanes, Ralph Eanes, and Ted Eanes. He is survived by his wife,

Carolyn Parker Prillaman Eanes. A special Thank You to Kings Grant Memory Care Unit for their thoughtful and Loving Care.

A special Thank You to Mountain Valley Hospice. Memorials can be made to Mountain Valley Hospice, 730 East Church Street, Martinsville, Virginia 24112.

A private memorial service will be held at a later date.

Wright Funeral Service & Crematory is serving the family. Online condolences may be made at [www.wrightfuneralservices.net](http://www.wrightfuneralservices.net).



# OBITUARIES

## Nathan Clem Walker

Nathan Clem Walker, 63, of Martinsville, VA passed away on Monday, February 7, 2022, at Martinsville Health and Rehabilitation Center. He was born on May 27, 1958, to the late Elizabeth Rigney Walker and Clem Walker. In addition to his parents, he is preceded in death by his son, Malcolm Ausborne and brother, Jack Walker.

Mr. Walker is survived by his daughters, Robin Hurd (Brian) and Samantha Powell; sisters, Ruby Thacker (Billy) and Estelle Doss; sister-in-law,



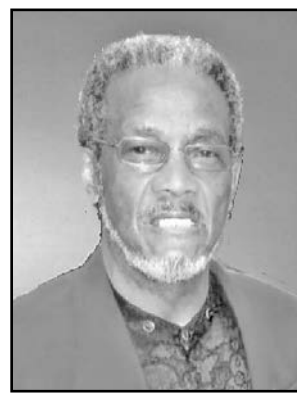
Ruth Walker; grandchildren, Kaylie Hurd, Seth Powell, and Titus Ausborne; step-grandsons, Jacob Hurd, and Elijah Hurd.

The funeral was held at Norris Funeral Services on Thursday, February 10, 2022, with Joseph Wooldridge officiating. Burial was in Henry Memorial Park.

Norris Funeral Services, Martinsville, VA is serving the Walker family. Online condolences may be made at [www.norrisfuneral.com](http://www.norrisfuneral.com).

## James Clarence Taylor

James Clarence Taylor, 71, of Martinsville, Virginia passed away February 6, 2022, at SOVAH Health of Martinsville. He was born December 11, 1950, in Reidsville, North Carolina to the late Clarence and Mary Jane Brim Taylor. He had worked for Fieldcrest Mills for over 24 years and was also a truck driver. He loved working on cars,



singing in choir and was on the usher board with Oak Hill Cathedral of Glory. He attended the Galilean House of Worship.

He is survived by his wife, Faye Wimbush Taylor; daughters, Teresa Scales, Linda Michelle Eggleston (Brian), Tonya T. Moss, Tiffany Patterson, Demedrian Latrell Taylor

Witcher (Cassandra), and Kakila Sherrie Taylor; son, David Tyrone Taylor; sisters, Naomi Wray, Mary Draper (Sammy), Betty Gravley, and Juanita Dalton; brothers, Creed D. Taylor (Judy), and John Taylor (Sharon); twenty grandchildren and fifteen great-grandchildren.

The funeral will be Friday, February 11, 2022, at 1 p.m., at Wright Funeral Service Chapel, with Eldon Creed Taylor officiating. The family will receive friends for one half hour before the service on Friday. Interment will follow in the Fair Haven Memorial Park.

Wright Funeral Service & Crematory is serving the family. Online condolences may be made at [www.wrightfuneralservices.net](http://www.wrightfuneralservices.net).

## Aubrey Lee Compton

Aubrey Lee Compton, Sr., 93, of Stoneville, N.C. passed away, Saturday, February 5, 2022. He was born March 13, 1928, to Elmo Powell Compton and Grace Barrow Compton.

In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his son, Keith M. Compton; brothers, Gerald (Gertrude), Elmo P., Jr. (Christine), Edward (Gladys), James and Floyd (Gayle) Compton; sisters, Evelyn Norman-Spencer (Philip), Ruth Gregory (Leonard), Lucille Peters (Zera), Reamona Bussey (W. Herbert), Dorothy Snyder (David); niece, Gwendolyn Bricker (Steven); nephews, Gary Peters, J.B. Compton and David Snyder, Jr.

Aubrey is survived by his wife Phyllis Warren Compton; son, Aubrey Lee Compton, II; Daughter-in-law, Michelle Rickman Compton; grandsons, Caleb Shane and Ian Lee Compton; sister-in-law Mary Ruth Compton; brothers-in-law, Jack S. Warren and Thomas K. Warren; also many beloved nieces and nephews.

Aubrey was an active member of Fontaine Baptist Church, Martinsville,



Va. for many years, serving as usher, deacon and trustee. Aubrey also enjoyed working with his friend and co-member, the late Harold Draper, 'fixing' things around the church property.

He was inducted into the Army in October 1950, during the Korean Conflict and received an honorable discharge in 1956.

A visitation will be held from 12:30 to 2 p.m. Friday, February 11, 2022, at Collins Funeral Home. The funeral will begin at 2 p.m., be officiated by the Rev Meryl Brown. Interment will be at Roselawn Burial Park.

Memorial donations may be made to The Gibson House (Hospice of Rockingham County), 2150 NC 65, Reidsville, NC. 27320; Fontaine Baptist Church, 170 Fisher Farm Road, Martinsville, VA 24112 or to The Gideons International, Henry Co. East Camp, P.O. Box 1243, Martinsville, VA 24114.

Arrangements are by Collins Funeral Home, Bassett, VA. To express condolences online, please visit [www.collinsmckeestonebassett.com](http://www.collinsmckeestonebassett.com).

## Jo Ann Lawson Shelton

Jo Ann Lawson Shelton, 69, of Martinsville, VA, went to her eternal home in Heaven on Friday, February 4, 2022. While she will be greatly missed, we celebrate that she is with her Savior and reunited with her husband, Mike. Jo Ann was born to James and Erma Lawson on November 11, 1952, in Martinsville. She married her childhood sweetheart, Michael Shelton, at the age of 18. After giving their lives to Christ, Mike and Jo Ann served together in ministry in several local churches as pastor for over 30 years.

Jo Ann was a loving mother to her children and her grandchildren were her pride and joy. She loved to laugh, gave generously, and dedicated her life to serving God and her family. Jo Ann is preceded in death by her husband, her father, and her sister, Barbara Sue



Lawson. She is survived by her son, Jamie Shelton and wife, Shannon; her daughter, LeAnn West and husband, Chris; her grandchildren Ella and Miller; her mother, Erma Lawson; her sister, Brenda Souther; her sister, Becky Patterson and husband, Bryan; her nephew, James Souther and family; and her cousin & friend, Freda Collier and family.

The family will receive friends at Collins-McKee-Stone Funeral Home in Martinsville, VA on Saturday, February 12 at 12 p.m. A memorial service will be held following the visitation at 1 p.m., and burial service will be at Roselawn Burial Park at 2 p.m. Arrangements are by McKee-Stone Funeral Home-Martinsville, VA. To express condolences online, please visit [www.collinsmckeestonemartinsville.com](http://www.collinsmckeestonemartinsville.com).

## Georgie E. Kidd

Georgie E. Kidd, 91, of Roanoke, Va. passed away Tuesday, February 8, 2022. She was born in Ridgeway, Va. May 26, 1930 to H.L. "Boss" Eanes and Mattie Wall Eanes.

In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her husband, Thomas A. Kidd; sisters, Bessie E. Pulliam, Geneva E. Knight, Lois E. Cobbler, Jettie E. Walker, Eunice E. Warren and Velma E. Campbell; brothers, Lester, Vincent, Robert, Willard "Bill" and Irvin Eanes.

She is survived by her daughter Elizabeth K. Hammond; grandsons, T. Rigsby Wickham (Hunter), G Barry Hammond II (Heather); great grandchildren, William Wickham, Mason Wickham, Austin Hammond and Cassidy Hammond; sisters-in-law, Naomi Eanes, Geneva Eanes and Betty



Durham; also numerous nieces and nephews.

A visitation will be held from 11 a.m. to 12 p.m. on Saturday, February 12, 2022, at Collins Funeral Home in Bassett, Va. The funeral begins at 12 p.m., officiated by the Rev. Charles Wickham. Interment is private.

Memorial donations may be made to the Ridgeway United Methodist Church, 160 Church Street, Ridgeway, VA 24148

The family is very thankful for the kind and compassionate care provided to Georgie by the staff at South Roanoke Nursing Home in Roanoke Va.

Arrangements are by McKee-Stone Funeral Home-Martinsville, VA. To express condolences online, please visit [www.collinsmckeestonemartinsville.com](http://www.collinsmckeestonemartinsville.com).

## Nancy Clanton Bain

On January 31st, 2022, Nancy Clanton Bain entered peacefully into the joys of Heaven with her family by her side. Nancy was eighty-six years old.

Nancy was born in Martinsville, Virginia on October 14th, 1935, to the late Benjamin and Nannie Gravely Clanton.

Nancy was a graduate of what was then Randolph-Macon Women's College in Lynchburg Virginia in 1958, where she majored in English.

In 1959, Nancy married the love of her life, Walter Thomas Bain. And through that love, two wonderful children, Eleanor and Thomas, were born.

Nancy always loved to be active and enjoy life. She loved to play golf with her husband and friends and even enjoyed horseback riding. She often enjoyed a good book to read.

Nancy is survived by her daughter Eleanor Mawyer, her son, Thomas Bain, and his fiancé' Sylvia. She also leaves behind many memories for her grand-



children, Tracy Mawyer, Andrea Vest, and her husband Hunter, Sarah Norcock, and her husband Corey, Lauren Rodriguez, and her husband Ed, Rebecca Bain, Rachael Bain, and John Bain. Nancy was also a great-grandmother to nine.

Nancy was preceded in death by her husband, Walter Thomas Bain.

The funeral was held at the Church of the Epiphany in Amherst, Virginia on February 5th, 2022. Burial was at the Amherst Cemetery in Amherst, Virginia.

The family would like to thank the caring staff of Centra Hospice and all support during Nancy's illness. Special thanks to caregivers, Sylvia Griffin, Gwen Banks, Diana Jones, Berline Morris, and Leanne Coley.

Driskill Funeral Chapel of Amherst Virginia is assisting the family. For online condolences, please visit [www.driskillfuneralchapel.com](http://www.driskillfuneralchapel.com).

## Crossroads introduces digital health screening to its treatment centers

Crossroads, one of the largest behavioral health networks in the country, has partnered with Blueprint, the leader in measurement-based care software, to bring advanced treatment options to their more than 26,500 patients. With this partnership, Crossroads, which has operations in Martinsville, Danville and other areas of Virginia, is giving its patients access to an easy-to-use tool proven to enhance treatment success and reduce time to remission through measurement-based care and patient-provider engagement.

Studies have shown that measurement-based care, which Blueprint supports, leads to the following:

- Increases the likelihood of patient response to treatment by up to 30%
- Maintains consistent, objective measurements with industry best standards
- Strengthens the therapeutic alliance between patient and provider
- Reduces time to remission

by up to nine weeks

"We are thrilled to introduce this mobile-based technology across all Crossroads locations. It will improve the way our patients and clinicians collaborate for better, more effective addiction treatment," said Dr. Trey Causey, Chief Medical Officer at Crossroads. "Combatting the opioid crisis requires new solutions that integrate into our patients' lives and routines."

Blueprint is a HIPAA-compliant software platform that helps behavioral health organizations deliver measurement-based care. It automatically administers assessments and routine health check-ins to patients on their mobile devices, which objectively measure the nature and intensity of opioid cravings, mental health status, and depression or suicide risk. Data-driven insights from these assessments are then shared with their physicians, providing additional information to support clinical decision-making. This connection enables Crossroads to schedule in-person or virtual visits with those who need addi-

tional support or to intervene immediately in urgent situations.

"While the benefits of measurement-based care are well established at this point, it has been historically challenging to implement, especially across large populations," said Danny Freed, Founder and CEO of Blueprint. "With our platform helping to automate and supercharge this process, Crossroads is now better positioning its patients for success through a data-driven approach to care."

Crossroads has already seen positive results since it started using the Blueprint digital health screen in many of their centers in 2020. This new partnership ensures all Crossroads locations, patients, and physicians across the country have access to the technology and its benefits. The Crossroads partnership with Blueprint represents a significant advancement in the battle against the opioid crisis, increasing access to care, and ensuring mental health support when and where patients need it most.



Dr. Trey Causey, Chief Medical Officer at Crossroads.

See more at [www.henrycountyenterprise.com](http://www.henrycountyenterprise.com)

# Tax Hike

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“We have some challenges as gradual minimum wage increases are put into play - if they remain in play. We have a certain number of employees that will be affected” at additional cost to the county, he said, including 28 full-time, 56 part-time, and numerous temporary employees.

A number of bills still alive in the General Assembly also could present fiscal challenges to the county, if they become law, including one to eliminate the grocery tax. “That’s fine, I think that’s a good idea,” said Hall. However, “there’s no provision to pay us for what we would lose by eliminating the grocery tax” which “is significant money” to the tune of possibly \$1 million annually.

Another bill would require localities to hold a referendum if real estate growth exceeds 1 percent of the previous amount. Currently, Hall said, if that situation occurs and the board chooses to keep the money, it must hold public hearings and declare it a tax increase. At the end of that process, board members can choose to keep the money or not or roll the rate back. The bill would eliminate the board’s ability to choose, putting the issue instead to the voters.

Meeting future obligations is yet another issue Hall brought to the attention of the board, including potential reversion costs.

The board’s legislative package included a request for one-time funding to address reversion expenses, but those issues “did not get a lot of play,” Hall said, mostly because the county’s representatives spent a good deal of time and social capital on the bills calling for a voter referendum in the city on reversion.

The board previously approved pay increases for the Henry County Sheriff’s Office, using funds from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) to cover the costs for the remainder of the current fiscal year. However, now other revenue sources must be identified to

continue the ongoing obligation.

Funding the operations of the new jail also will come with a hefty price tag, Hall said. “Clearly we will save the money that we are spending to outsource inmates,” which he said was roughly \$1 million per year, which will help but not cover all the operational costs.

School funding, Hall said, is another financial obligation to consider. While he has not received formal information from the school division, Hall said he saw a local media report indicating the system would be requesting \$947,842 in additional local money.

## Tax hikes or budget cuts?

“Last year, for the first time in my time here, we dipped into fund balance to do a one-time balancing. I don’t want to do that anymore,” Hall said. “It makes all of us on staff nervous to do that, so you either generate the revenue to cover the expenses or you find a pot of money somewhere or you raise revenue.”

He illustrated the fiscal impact of some of the county’s new funding obligations using the county’s real estate tax, where, he said, one penny equals approximately \$300,000.

Addressing the school board’s request for additional local money equates to a 3-cents increase in the county’s real estate tax.

The pay increases for police and public safety, totaling \$1,170,804, equates to 4-cents on the real estate tax.

The estimated cost of reversion, Hall said, equates to 8-cents on real estate taxes.

All told, those funding obligations equate to a 15-cents increase in the real estate tax to bring in an equivalent amount of revenue to cover the expenses. “It’s startling,” Hall said.

“We are not advocating for all of this, or any of it, to go on real estate,” he clarified, “I’m just trying to put it in simple terms that we can all understand.”

However, he noted that adding an additional 15 cents to real estate would bring the county’s rate to 70 cents (currently 55.5), which is still well below Martinsville’s rate and the rates of several neighboring counties.

In terms of personal property taxes, Hall said the county’s \$1.55 is “significantly better than most surrounding counties” and the city of Martinsville.

Besides real estate and personal property taxes, Hall said the board also could opt to raise the meals tax. Increasing that tax from 4 cents to 6 cents could, he estimated, generate approximately \$1 million.

“The three biggest parts of our budget—law enforcement, public safety, and education—any significant cuts that you wish to make to avoid any (tax) increases, those significant cuts have to come from the areas that you significantly fund.”

Garrett Dillard, of the Iriswood District, asked Hall about delinquent tax collections, and how much revenue the county might be missing out on by not being more aggressive in collecting delinquent taxes.

“Our percentage of rate collection is fairly impressive,” Hall said, “but there’s still a chunk of money that’s sitting out there.”

## Looking ahead

Paired into groups of two, Hall challenged the supervisors to work within their groups to “list what they think we need to do and where we need to be in the next 5 years” and to “tell us as a staff what you’re willing to bite off. Do you want to bite off the full funding ask of the school board? We need to know that. Do you want to bite off the full funding mechanism of staffing this facility? We need to know that ... We need to know what you want to see.”

Chairman Jim Adams, of the Blackberry District, and Debra Buchanan, of the Horsepasture District, said they wanted to focus on continuing to support

the Blue Ridge Airport and its expansion because it is an economic driver.

Also noted was the need to identify space for a new shell building (the previous one was purchased by the German company Shock in 2021), and space for a new industrial park to continue attracting and recruiting industry to the area.

The expansion of utilities up U.S. 58 West also was on the list, along with broadband expansion, and continuing to support and encourage educational partners.

Ryan Zehr, of the Ridgeway District, and Vice Chairman Joe Bryant, of the Collinsville District, also noted delinquent tax collection efforts and asked county staff to explore how those taxes are collected.

“There’s no telling how much money we’ve got in unpaid taxes in this county,” Bryant said. “Someone’s got to be held responsible for collecting those. Somebody’s not doing their job.”

“I know some of the heavy hitters are businesses,” Zehr added.

County Treasurer Scott Grindstaff presents reports on delinquent tax collection efforts to the board during its regular monthly meetings.

Zehr said he and Bryant “don’t really see a way we can do all of what the schools are asking for” while recommitting to the board’s promise to deliver permanent pay raises to police and public safety staff.

Dillard and Tommy Slaughter, of the Reed Creek District, told Hall they would like to explore a Healthy Henry County initiative to promote healthy lifestyles.

The board’s list included score boards for basketball games, PSA in Iriswood on Horsepasture Price Road, recognizing Parks and Recreation League champions, and completing a sheriff’s salary study.

Dillard broached the idea of streaming board meetings via Facebook live so more people could watch, and potentially upgrading technology in the

board room itself to ensure high-quality live streaming and audio.

Meetings of the Henry County School Board, he said, are streamed on Facebook via cell phone and often it is difficult to hear clearly.

## Board raises?

Bryant raised the issue of pay received by the board members themselves. “Everyone has had a pay increase other than the supervisors,” he said.

He said that supervisor pay was previously decreased and was never restored to its original, full amount. Hall recalled that the board decreased its pay by 10 percent in the early 2000s.

The chairman is paid \$8,635 per year. Other board members are paid \$8,181 each, according to county records.

“Don’t you think that supervisors deserve some type of pay increase?” Bryant asked.

Slaughter said constituents often ask him to come look at something, which leads to a great deal of driving. “Gas prices definitely haven’t gotten cheaper,” he said.

“Sometimes a person needs, I don’t want to say a pat on the back, but an incentive to keep going,” Bryant said.

Hall said there are code requirements governing when supervisors can vote on pay raises for themselves. Lyle said it has to occur in a year when there is an election, but he would have to research other requirements.

## Timeline

The county and school will hold a joint budget work session at 5 p.m. on Feb. 22, with the school budget request due April 1.

The total county budget will be presented to the Board of Supervisors at 5 p.m. on April 7, and public hearings on school and county budgets will be held on April 8 at 7 p.m.

Adoption of school and county budgets is scheduled for April 26.

# Budget

from page 1

Scott said the proposed budget for fiscal year 2023 included \$71,497,373 in state funding and a total local effort of \$20,321,619, which includes \$15,951,224 in local required effort and \$4,370,395 in requested local leeway funds.

The previous budget year included \$59,524,689 in state funds and a total local effort of \$19,373,777, including \$14,312,173 in local required effort and \$5,061,604 in local leeway funds.

The increase in state funding, Scott said, was attributed to 4 major categories: \$3.5 million to serve at-risk youth, \$1.92 million in teacher and support position supplements, \$3.83 million in school construction funds, and other fund adjustments to programs including special education and early reading interventions.

Scott said the budget includes plans for a 3-step increase to the teacher salary scale, and an average 6 percent teacher salary increase, which comes with a price tag of \$3,040,000.

“Every year we investigate our scales,” he said, “we take a critical look at them to make sure there’s fairness within our system, but also (to see) how it compares to neighboring school divisions.” He explained that the county wants to make sure it stays competitive, using a salary scale that incentivizes employees to stay and attracts new employees to the district.

In addition to pay hikes for teachers, Scott said the division plans to increase pay across the board. Bus drivers and aides can expect a 5-10 percent increase, which will cost the division \$285,000, while classified scales and administrator scales are

budgeted for a 7 percent salary increase, costing \$662,000 and \$435,000 respectively.

In total, Scott said the increases will cost \$4,422,000, with a state compensation supplement of \$1.92 million and a local share of \$535,000.

Other pay scale adjustments include adjusting rates for part-time positions to ensure that minimum wage requirements are met, and moving health office assistants and office assistants to equitable pay scales.

In addition to wage increases for existing staff, the budget Scott presented included plans to hire a number of new personnel.

“We know that our student population is subject to change every year, and we are blessed to have students from all demographics coming into our area, so we want to respond to that,” he said. “We also know the introduced

budget includes a large increase in at-risk funding” which will help put teachers in classrooms to address learning loss.

The proposed new hires include 3 coordinators (for a total of \$276,000), 2 English language teachers (\$183,000), 3 special education teachers (\$276,000), 5 special education paraprofessionals (\$270,000), 13 classroom teachers (\$1,081,000) and 3 related service positions (\$250,000.)

Scott said that the proposed budget included \$1,470,000 in increased operational costs. That total included \$125,000 increase to the transportation budget, a \$600,000 increase to the general maintenance budget, and \$200,000 in instructional resources, among other items.

The proposed budget contains a number of new capital improvement project proposals, including a bus rider canopy at Drewry Mason Elementary, renovations necessary for reversion, the relocation of the central office, and turf fields at the high schools.

Projects already on the list include field houses at the high schools, placing generators at secondary schools, handicap upgrades at several school locations, and a number of HVAC replacements.

The list of capital improvement projects, Scott said, “would be a lot longer” if not for the influx of COVID relief money received by the schools.

The school division has received “a significant amount of money in grant funds”—just over \$32 million, according to Superintendent Sandy Strayer.

She emphasized that the funding must be used on COVID-related issues—air quality, personal pro-

ductive equipment, testing kits, and addressing learning loss.

“There’s a common misconception,” Strayer said, “that because we have all this grant funding, it’s allowed us to save money on the local side that we can use for other expenditures, but this is not the case. The grant funds have to be used for these certain projects that might not have ever been completed if we hadn’t received this money, or they wouldn’t have been completed for decades.”

Lisa Millner, assistant superintendent for teaching and learning, enumerated the ways the funding was being spent.

Some money went toward funding several years of after school tutoring and summer school expenses, and the placement of a paraprofessional at each elementary and middle school (elementary schools with 400 or more students were assigned on additional paraprofessional each.)

Additionally, funds were spent for stipends and compensation of various staff members—teachers and paraprofessionals covering classes due to the substitute shortage for COVID-related absences, compensation for nurses on night and weekend duty, and teachers teaching additional virtual classes on top of their normal class load.

Millner said funds also were tapped to hire additional nursing staff, 2 elementary assistant principals, and other positions to assist with small-group instruction or to help shorten learning gaps.

Funds went toward a number of other items, including the installation of Wi-Fi in school parking lots, a variety of technology, personal protective equipment, no-touch thermometers, COVID

testing kits, updated furniture to allow for social distancing, and various online resources and platforms.

Some of the money was directed toward subsidizing cafeteria funds and purchasing packaging materials and other supplies to allow for meal deliveries, Millner said.

Director of Facilities Maintenance Keith Scott told the board funding also was used to buy Clorox machines, HVAC upgrades and equipment, and paying staff for the additional hours worked to sanitize schools.

In other matters, the board:

\*Heard from Jeff Evans, a pastor at a Ridgeway church, who said he was thankful for Gov. Youngkin giving authority back to the parents in regard to mask mandates. He also spoke out against critical race theory. “I think it’s ugly. I think it’s the opposite of what America stands for,” he said.

\*Recognized February as School Board Appreciation Month.

\*Recognized School Board Clerk Appreciation Week.

\*Recognized February as Black History Month.

\*Read a resolution recognizing February as Career and Technical Education Month.

\*Read a resolution proclaiming Feb. 7-11 as School Counseling Week.

\*Presented a certificate to Campbell Court Counselor Clifton Jones, who was named a “Difference Maker” by the Virginia Department of Education.

\*Heard an update from Millner on the Inspire 2025 program which, she said, was the division’s strategic plan “and it is what guides and leads our work in Henry County Public Schools.”



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# Legal Notice

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC OF  
AN APPLICATION BY APPALACHIAN POWER COMPANY  
FOR APPROVAL AND CERTIFICATION OF THE FIELDALE TO RIDGEWAY 138 kV  
REBUILD PROJECT  
UNDER TITLE 56 OF THE CODE OF VIRGINIA  
CASE NO. PUR-2021-00219

On November 23, 2021, pursuant to § 56-46.1 of the Code of Virginia (“Code”) and the Utility Facilities Act, Code § 56 265.1 *et seq.*, Appalachian Power Company (“APCo” or “Company”) filed an application and supporting documents with the State Corporation Commission (“Commission”) for approval and certification to construct, own, operate, and maintain the Fieldale to Ridgeway 138 kilovolt (“kV”) Rebuild Project, to be located in Henry County, Virginia (“Application”).

Specifically, APCo seeks approval of its proposal for: (a) an approximate 15-mile long rebuild of the Company-owned portion of the Fieldale-Dan River 138 kV transmission line from the Company’s Fieldale Substation to existing structure 28-103 near the Virginia/North Carolina border; (b) re-conductoring an approximately 0.3-mile portion of that line between existing structures 28-38A and 28-41A; and (c) upgrades and replacement of equipment at the Ridgeway Substation and updates to relay settings at the Fieldale, Ridgeway, and Commonwealth crossing Substations (collectively, the “Project”).

The Company asserts that the infrastructure needs to be replaced due to deteriorated condition, performance, and risk associated with the asset, including its inability to meet current National Electrical Safety Code (“NESC”) standards. According to the Application, the Project will replace aging infrastructure that is 70 years old, contains numerous open conditions due to age related deterioration, and does not comply with current NESC Grade B loading criteria. The Company asserts that the Project is necessary to ensure adequate and reliable electric service and accommodate future growth in Henry County and the surrounding area. The Company further states that the transmission line to be rebuilt has experienced poor operational performance due to multiple permanent and momentary outages, has outage risk to customers directly served by the associated circuits, and has outage risk to the Company’s interconnection with Duke Energy Carolinas, LLC, which occurs near existing structure 28-103 at the Virginia/North Carolina border.

According to the Application, approximately forty percent of the Project will be constructed on the existing 100-foot wide right-of-way (“ROW”) already acquired by the Company. The Company further states that in order to minimize the duration of the time the transmission line will be out of service, the remaining portion of the Project will be rebuilt parallel to or near the existing ROW on new 100-foot wide ROW.

APCo states that the proposed in-service date is July 2025 and estimates that it will need approximately three years after entry of the Commission’s final Order for engineering, design, ROW acquisition, permitting, material procurement and construction to place the Project in service. The Company further states that the estimated total cost of the Project is \$32.6 million, with \$32.2 million in transmission line-related costs and \$0.4 million for substation-related costs.

## Description of the Proposed Project

The Proposed Route for the Project is approximately 15 miles long and is largely within or parallel to the existing transmission line ROW. The Proposed Route begins at the Company’s existing Fieldale Substation (4645 Appalachian Drive) located in the central extents of Henry County and on the east side of the Smith River. The Proposed Route exits the Fieldale Substation within the existing ROW for about two miles and crosses State Route 57 (Appalachian Drive), Daniels Creek Road, Longview Drive, S. River Road and the Smith River. South of the Smith River crossing, the Proposed Route shifts to parallel the existing ROW to the west for 1.8 miles and then crosses Lookout Mountain Road. Continuing parallel for one mile, the Proposed Route crosses U.S. Routes 58 (A. L. Philpott Highway) and 58 and 220 Bypass (William F. Stone Highway). After the highway crossings, the Proposed Route crosses Cameron Road and the existing centerline to continue near or parallel to the existing ROW.

The Proposed Route continues on the east side of the existing ROW for 1.3 miles to existing structure 28-38A. At this point, approximately 0.3 mile of the existing line will be reconducted on three existing structures near the Sheffield Substation (1986 Joseph Martin Highway). Past the Sheffield Substation, the Proposed Route is located within the existing ROW for approximately four miles and continues southeast crossing several residential roads including, Joseph Martin Highway, New Light Church Road, Owsley Drive, Ken Lane and Steve Drive. After Steve Drive, the Proposed Route continues in the existing ROW across U.S. Route 220 (Greensboro Road), Mica Road, Phospho Springs Road and Old Mill Road before entering the Ridgeway Substation (2689 Old Mill Road). After the Ridgeway Substation, the Proposed Route parallels the southwest side of the existing ROW for about two miles crossing Mitchell Road, Flanagan Branch Road, and Morgan Ford Road, before crossing to the northeast side of the existing ROW at Keeling Drive. The Proposed Route continues southeast paralleling the existing ROW for 1.1 miles crossing Powell Road and continues for 0.6 mile to an existing transmission line structure near the Virginia/North Carolina border, and southeastern extents of the Company’s service territory.

Final structure types will be determined during detailed engineering, which incorporates information from ground surveys and geotechnical studies. Based on preliminary engineering, the Company anticipates primarily using galvanized steel H-frame and monopole structures with a low-reflective finish for the Project. The anticipated structure heights for the H-frame and monopole structures range from 55 feet to 85 feet tall, with an average structure height of approximately 67 feet, excluding the two proposed lattice tower structures. Lattice structures are required at the Smith River crossing and will be 119 feet tall. The proposed structures for the rebuild line will be approximately 10 feet taller to meet current engineering requirements but will be constructed near their existing locations in ROW or close to the existing ROW.

All distances and directions are approximate. A sketch map of the proposed route accompanies this notice. A more detailed map of the proposed route may be viewed on the Commission’s website: [scc.virginia.gov/pur/elec/transline.aspx](http://scc.virginia.gov/pur/elec/transline.aspx). The Commission may consider a route not significantly different from the route described in this notice without additional notice to the public.

A more complete description of the proposed Project also may be found in the Company’s Application. Copies of the Application and other supporting materials may be inspected at <https://www.aeptransmission.com/virginia/Fieldale-Ridgeway/>. An electronic copy of the Company’s Application also may be obtained by submitting a written request to counsel for the Company, Matthew P. Pritts, Esquire, Woods Rogers PLC, Wells Fargo Tower, Suite 1400, P.O. Box 14125, Roanoke, Virginia 24038 or [pritts@woodsrogers.com](mailto:pritts@woodsrogers.com).

The Commission has taken judicial notice of the ongoing public health issues related to the spread of the coronavirus, or COVID-19. In accordance therewith, all pleadings, briefs, or other documents required to be served in this matter shall be submitted electronically to the extent authorized by 5 VAC 5 20-150, *Copies and format*, of the Commission’s Rules of Practice and Procedure (“Rules of Practice”). Confidential and Extraordinarily Sensitive Information shall not be submitted electronically and should comply with 5 VAC 5-20-170, *Confidential information*, of the Rules of Practice. Any person seeking to hand deliver and physically file or submit any pleading or other document shall contact the Clerk’s Office Document Control Center at (804) 371 9838 to arrange the delivery.

Pursuant to 5 VAC 5-20-140, *Filing and service*, of the Rules of Practice, the Commission has directed that service on parties and the Commission’s Staff in this matter shall be accomplished by electronic means. Please refer to the Commission’s Order for Notice and Hearing or subsequent Hearing Examiner’s Ruling for further instructions concerning Confidential or Extraordinarily Sensitive Information.

The Commission entered an Order for Notice and Hearing in this proceeding that, among other things, scheduled public hearings on APCo’s Application. On June 1, 2022, at 10 a.m., the Commission will hold a telephonic hearing, with no witness present in the Commission’s courtroom, for the sole purpose of receiving the testimony of public witnesses. On or before May 25, 2022, any person desiring to offer testimony as a public witness shall provide to the Commission (a) your name, and (b) the telephone number that you wish the Commission to call during the hearing to receive your testimony. This information may be provided to the Commission in three ways: (i) by filling out a form on the Commission’s website at [scc.virginia.gov/pages/Webcasting](http://scc.virginia.gov/pages/Webcasting); (ii) by email to [SCCInfo@scc.virginia.gov](mailto:SCCInfo@scc.virginia.gov); or (iii) by calling (804) 371-9141. This public witness hearing will be webcast at [scc.virginia.gov/pages/Webcasting](http://scc.virginia.gov/pages/Webcasting).

On June 2, 2022, at 10 a.m., either in the Commission’s second floor courtroom located in the Tyler Building, 1300 East Main Street, Richmond, Virginia 23219, or by electronic means, the Commission will convene a hearing to receive testimony and evidence related to the Application from the Company, any respondents, and the Commission’s Staff. Further details on this hearing will be provided by subsequent Commission Order or Hearing Examiner’s Ruling.

On or before May 25, 2022, any interested person may submit comments on the Application by following the instructions on the Commission’s website: [scc.virginia.gov/casecomments/Submit-Public-Comments](http://scc.virginia.gov/casecomments/Submit-Public-Comments). Those unable, as a practical matter, to submit comments electronically may file such comments by U.S. mail to the Clerk of the State Corporation Commission, c/o Document Control Center, P.O. Box 2118, Richmond, Virginia 23218-2118. All comments shall refer to Case No. PUR-2021-00219.

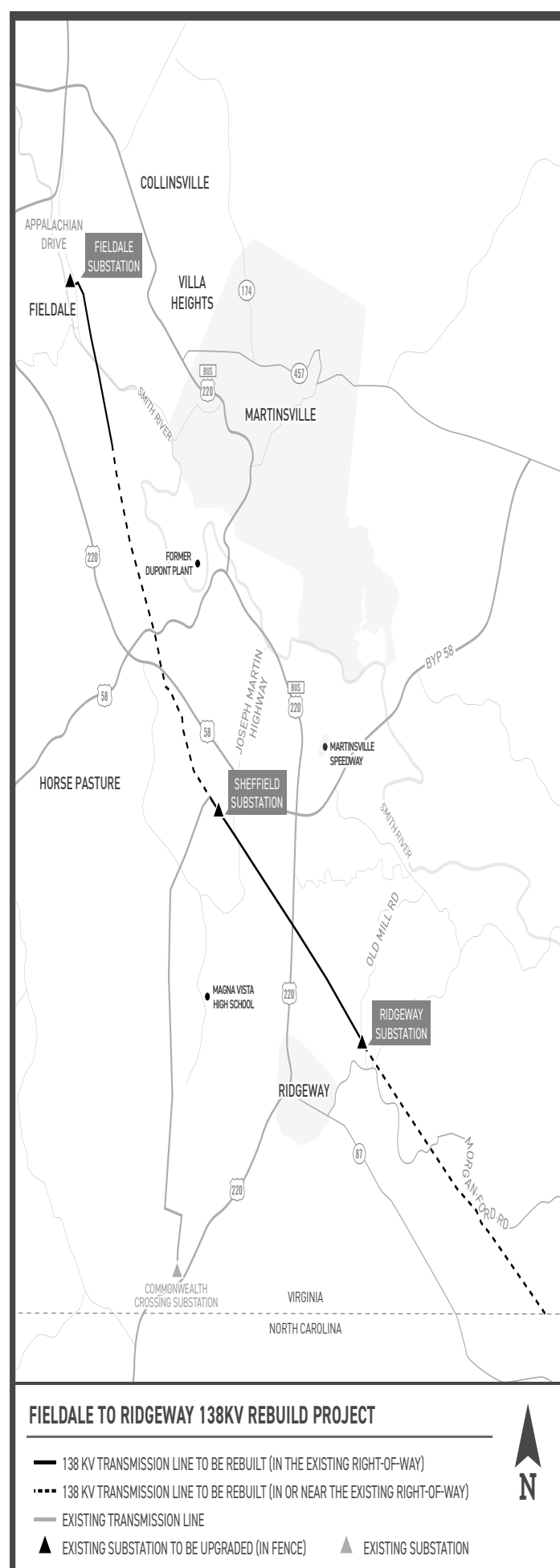
Any person or entity may participate as a respondent in this proceeding by filing, on or before March 16, 2022, a notice of participation with the Clerk of the Commission at [scc.virginia.gov/clk/efiling](http://scc.virginia.gov/clk/efiling). Those unable, as a practical matter, to file a notice of participation electronically may file such notice by U.S. mail to the Clerk of the Commission at the address listed above. Such notice of participation shall include the email addresses of such parties or their counsel. The respondent simultaneously shall serve a copy of the notice of participation on counsel to the Company at the address set forth above. Pursuant to 5 VAC 5-20-80 B, *Participation as a respondent*, of the Commission’s Rules of Practice, any notice of participation shall set forth: (i) a precise statement of the interest of the respondent; (ii) a statement of the specific action sought to the extent then known; and (iii) the factual and legal basis for the action. Any organization, corporation, or government body participating as a respondent must be represented by counsel as required by 5 VAC 5-20-30, *Counsel*, of the Rules of Practice. All filings shall refer to Case No. PUR-2021-00219. Interested persons should obtain a copy of the Commission’s Order for Notice and Hearing for further details on participation as a respondent.

Any documents filed in paper form with the Office of the Clerk of the Commission in this docket may use both sides of the paper. In all other respects, except as modified by the Commission’s Order for Notice and Hearing, all filings shall comply fully with the requirements of 5 VAC 5-20-150, *Copies and format*, of the Rules of Practice.

The Company’s Application, the Commission’s Rules of Practice, the Commission’s Order for Notice and Hearing, and other documents filed in the case may be viewed on the Commission’s website at: [scc.virginia.gov/pages/Case-Information](http://scc.virginia.gov/pages/Case-Information).

## APPALACHIAN POWER COMPANY

## FIELDALE TO RIDGEWAY 138 KV REBUILD PROJECT





# Williams casts deciding vote in Voter ID bill

Del. Wren Williams, R-Stuart, voted to pass a historic Voter-ID law following his campaign promise to secure Virginia's elections. HB544, which allows Virginia voters to secure their individual votes through opt-in Photo ID, passed the House 51-49, with Williams casting a deciding vote. Williams, who sits on the Committee for Privileges and Elections, previously supported HB544 through committee.

The passing of HB544 in the Virginia House marks a fulfilled campaign promise for Williams, who had pledged throughout the campaign to carry and support legislation securing Virginia's elections. Before seeking office, Williams volunteered for Trump's legal team to aid the 2020 recount effort in Wisconsin. Williams worked for nearly two months adjudicating ballots on the courtroom floor, where he compiled

hard and detailed evidence of fraud and abuse by election officials and party/campaign/community organizers affecting more than 200,000 ballots. After the Wisconsin Supreme Court decided to kick the case on a technicality by one vote, Williams resolved to work on securing elections through the state legislative process. The passage of HB544 through the Virginia House marks the first achievement towards that end.

"A year ago, Election Integrity was a main reason why I decided to run for office," Williams said. "While I was volunteering in Wisconsin for Trump's legal team, I saw firsthand how rogue bureaucrats gave a pass to illegal ballot harvesting and committed fraud by illegally curing absentee ballots. Something had to be done, so I ran for office. I promised my constituents that I would fight to stop fraud and safeguard

our elections here in Virginia. Passing HB554 in the House is our first big step towards fulfilling that promise. "But this is just the beginning. I look forward to passing more election-integrity legislation, which will go even further to secure our elections and assure voters that our democratic system is trustworthy," he said. The proposal will be considered by the Senate at a later date.

# ValleyStar Credit Union 300 to be held at Martinsville Speedway in September

The ValleyStar Credit Union 300, the nation's biggest, richest and most prestigious NASCAR Late Model Stock Car race, at Martinsville Speedway will be held on Saturday, Sept. 24. "The ValleyStar Credit Union 300 is a tradition at Martinsville Speedway that brings the racing community together for the nation's biggest, richest and most prestigious NASCAR Late Model Stock Car race," said Martinsville President Clay Campbell. "We are grateful to our long-time partners at ValleyStar Credit Union for their continued support to bring the best Late

Model racers together to compete on the most storied short track in motorsports." "The ValleyStar Credit Union team is honored to be a part of such a celebrated and distinguished race. The excitement that comes from this NASCAR event is felt throughout our communities, across Virginia and well outside the Commonwealth," said Mike Warrell, ValleyStar Credit Union CEO. "This partnership between ValleyStar Credit Union and Martinsville Speedway gives us the chance to drive economic growth and highlight the amazing place that

we, our families, friends and fellow businesses call home." To download the ValleyStar Credit Union 300 logo, click here. Landon Pemberton, the 2021 NASCAR Advance Auto Parts Weekly Series Southeast Region Rookie of the Year, won last year's ValleyStar Credit Union 300. The sixteen-year-old from Amelia, Va. won in his debut at Martinsville Speedway. The ValleyStar Credit Union 300 will be a 200-lap feature race will include three segments: 75 laps, 75 laps and 50 laps. Additional details on the format of the

ValleyStar Credit Union 300 will be announced. Tickets for the ValleyStar Credit Union 300 are \$30 and unreserved. Youth 12 and under are free with a paying adult. Parking is free for the event. The Brake Pad is available for \$45. Tickets are available for purchase at the ticket office, via phone at 877-RACE-TIX or online at martinsvillespeedway.com. For more information on the ValleyStar Credit Union 300, visit www.martinsvillespeedway.com/events/valleystar-credit-union-300. Also, as part of its 75th Anniversary season,

Martinsville Speedway will host its first-ever consecutive three race weekend of night races with all three-premier series on April 7-9, featuring the NASCAR Camping World Truck Series on Thursday, April 7 at 8 p.m., NASCAR Hall of Famer Dale Earnhardt Jr. competing in the NASCAR Xfinity Series Dash 4 Cash race on Friday, April 8 at 7:30 p.m. and the Blue-Emu Maximum Pain Relief 400 Cup Series race on Saturday, April 9 at 7:30 p.m. In the fall, Martinsville will host the NASCAR Whelen Modified Tour season finale on

Thursday, Oct. 27 and penultimate races with the Dead On Tools 250 Xfinity Series Playoff race on Saturday, Oct. 29 at 3 p.m. and Xfinity 500 Cup Series race on Sunday, Oct. 30 at 2 p.m. In short track battles that can only happen at Martinsville, the fall races will crown the Whelen Modified Tour champion and set the field for the Xfinity and Cup Series championships the following week at Phoenix Raceway. NASCAR tickets are available for purchase today via phone at 877-RACE-TIX or online at martinsvillespeedway.com.

## Mandate

from page 1

of making a vote on this mask optional process," Gravelly said. "As a board, our relationships depend on openness and communication ... I think we need to be transparent and have a vote on whether or not we're going to continue with this process." Gravelly then made a motion calling for a vote on whether or not masks should be optional for Henry County's students.

Francis Zehr, of the Ridgeway District, seconded the motion. "The previous governor had a different viewpoint than the new governor," he said, adding that the board previously decided to follow the governor's recommendations and executive orders which, he said, is continuing to do, just with a new governor and a new order. The vote on whether to vote

on the issue passed 5-2, with Chairman Francis Auker, of the Blackberry District, and Elizabeth Durden, of the Collinsville District, voting against. Zehr then made a motion that the board comply with Youngkin's executive order, which was seconded by Durden. Zehr's motion passed 6-1, with Gravelly as the sole nay vote. It all comes down to relation-

ships said superintendent Sandy Strayer. "Every teacher that I have talked to that had some apprehension about mask wearing, I talked to about their relationship with their students." If a student doesn't want to wear a mask, "if you have a great relationship with that student and you explain that there's someone in your family with a health problem, or you have a health problem, and it

may cause you not to be in that classroom," then most students would comply because they have a great relationship and respect for their teachers. Strayer said so far, "things have been going very well in schools, and I hope they stay that way." Martinsville City Public Schools previously announced it would continue requiring its students to wear masks in school.

## Reversion

from page 1

statutes require a voter referendum except for reversion," Stanley told the committee. He recounted traveling to Martinsville with his family for vacation and, later, to practice law. He told the committee about the history of Martinsville High School and said he had a Bulldogs sweatshirt. "Martinsville is and remains a great city with incredible people who do great things," he said, telling the committee that things were beginning to look up for the community. "We have seen a slow turnaround in the economic fortunes of the city of Martinsville and in Henry County ... we have seen a slowing down in the depletion of our population" and more young people staying in the area. He said his bill would not stop reversion, but rather put the issue "to the people, because it's their right to determine their fate and their form of government, not have

it determined for them." Stanley said that he met with faith-based leaders and activists in Martinsville regularly, and they expressed dissatisfaction with how reversion has been handled in the city. "We have not had a say, we have not been able to have a voice in this reversion process," Stanley said, recounting his conversations. To support his assertions, Stanley presented the committee with letters from the Martinsville-Henry County Democratic Committee, a letter from local pastors, and a letter from the local chapter of the NAACP penned by chapter president Naomi Hodge-Muse. "No citizen committees were ever formed to provide public input on emerging agreements," Stanley said. "Our city council met formally with city school officials only once during this period." The issue of ongoing litigation came up several times during questioning by other committee members and in testimony, similar to when Marshall presented his companion bill to the House committee on counties, towns, and cities. There, several delegates expressed hesitation in approving a bill that might interfere with an issue currently being litigated in the courts.

Stanley asserted that there was no ongoing litigation, and repeated that assertion in response to a question from Sen. Bryce Reeves, R-Fredericksburg. He further clarified when Sen. Jen Kiggans, R-Virginia Beach, again asked about litigation, this time saying there was "potential future litigation"—that city council approved an ordinance by special meeting to petition the court to form a 3-judge panel to rule on reversion. He said the ordinance "seems to be a reaction to this bill rather than some natural course" of action, and that it was an attempt to stop the bill. City Attorney and Assistant City Manager Eric Monday, who travelled to Richmond along with Mayor Kathy Lawson and council member Chad Martin to speak in opposition to the bill, countered Stanley's claim. "There is ongoing litigation and there has been since August of 2020," he told the committee, adding that council voted unanimously in Dec. 2019 to begin the contested litigation process. "What we hope you will not do is inject the General Assembly's finger on the scale on something that is currently in litigation," he said. Lawson read the same

statement she issued after the Henry County Board of Supervisors requested City Council join them in a joint resolution supporting the two bills, which included the accusation that "over the last decade Henry County has repeatedly sought to change the framework for how the reversion process works, and their goal has always been to prevent Martinsville, and only Martinsville, from being able to do it. This legislation is another last-minute attempt to do the same." Martin told the committee that he had the well-being of both city and county residents in mind, as his parents were county residents. Vice Mayor Jennifer Bowles, and former mayor and city council member Gene Teague, both appeared virtually to speak in opposition to the bill. Teague noted that reversion has been a topic of discussion since 1994 and part of the conversation during every election since then. Monday, responding to a question by Sen. Lionell Spruill, Sr., D-Chesapeake, who asked what was wrong with allowing the referendum, said that city council has held elections since the unanimous vote was taken in 2019 to proceed with reversion. Martin, who was vice mayor at the time, and Lawson were both "overwhelmingly reelected," he said. "I assume that there are significant economic factors in your decision to revert," said committee chairman Lynwood Lewis, D-Accomac. Monday agreed. "We are one of the most fiscally stressed communities in the commonwealth. We have a declining school population, and each year they ask for a larger and larger appropriation. It's on an ultimately unsustainable track." In discussing the

city's finances, Monday challenged a previous statement by Stanley, who claimed residents of the future town of Martinsville would face double taxation upon reversion. Monday said that, while town residents would receive two tax bills—one from the city and one from the county—the city's studies indicated that town residents would enjoy a net decrease in taxes while county residents would see an increase in their taxes. Stanley countered Monday's characterization of Martinsville's fiscal stress, noting that Martinsville rejected the offer of a 1 percent sales tax increase for school modernization. "The response was, 'we don't want the income,'" Stanley told the committee. Martinsville Commissioner of Revenue Ruth Easley testified before the committee in person, telling members there are 17 references in Title 15.2 of the Code of Virginia that require a referendum to change "some form of your local government." Reversion, she argued, is a permanent decision and should be voted upon by the people. Henry County Administrator Tim Hall, the Rev. Charles Whitfield, former school board member Lawrence Mitchell, Donald Williams, and City Council Member Tammy Pearson all appeared virtually to speak in favor of the bill. Mary Martin was also in the queue to speak, but did not respond when her name was called. "It has felt very, very disrespectful," Williams said of the reversion process. Sen. Jeremy McPike, D-Woodbridge, said he was not interested in getting involved in litigation, "and I'm certainly not (getting) involved in

changing for one locality an entire code section that lays out a very coherent and logical process to have the Commission on Local Government address this, set out MOUs, and this seeks to basically torpedo it." Lewis said that while he understood the value of referenda, "I have to assume that the people on city council who at various times voted unanimously or with one dissenting vote to go down this path have taken a look at the books and the books are not pretty." "The Commission on Local Government has weighed in on this," he continued, "and they've (the city and county) signed MOUs. I'm just afraid that if you open it up to referendum, there are going to be people my age, your age (referring to Stanley), with those Bulldog sweatshirts hanging in the closet, and they're going to vote on nostalgia rather than on cold, hard reality." Martinsville released a statement on Feb. 8 in which it said it would "continue to follow the laws governing how Martinsville may become a town." "City Council began this process confident that reversion will result in the best possible future for Martinsville's citizens," it stated. "A single school system for our region, and elimination of duplicative functions such as jails, courts, and the independent constitutional offices ... will result in a lower tax burden upon Martinsville's citizens and businesses, and will enable improved services," the release continued. "The city remains confident that reversion is in the best interests of Martinsville's citizens and Martinsville's future success—better and more efficient government at a significantly lower cost to our citizens."

**CROSSWORD ANSWER**

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# Virtual graduation ceremony held for GED student



**Gavin Scott's accomplishments were celebrated in a virtual ceremony last week. Principal Aji Dixon (left to right), Scott, and Schools Superintendent Dr. Zeb Talley are pictured.**

Gavin Scott completed the requirements for the General Equivalent Diploma on December 21, and participated in a virtual graduation ceremony last week.

Scott participated in Martinsville City Schools' Individual Student Alternative Education Plan (Aspire to Success) Program, or ISAEP, which prepares secondary students who are at least 16 years of age, enrolled in high school programs, and who are having difficulty finding success in a regular classroom environment to take the Tests of General Educational Development (GED) while developing career and technical education skills. The Martinsville ISAEP program is one of 131 programs operating in the state.

The graduation ceremony was filled with congratulatory sentiments and words of encouragement from school administrators and Scott's teachers. Joanne Galloway, coordinator of Alternative Programs, facilitated the virtual graduation.

Rosabelle Holmes, the former coordinator of Alternative Programs, began the process with Scott. "I am so proud of you. Earning a GED diploma is not easy, and you have overcome to complete your goal. I am thrilled for you. Continue on because this doesn't have to stop here."

"This is your day, it's all about you," said Executive Director of Special Education and Student Services Dr. Paulette Simington. "This day is about you sticking to your goals of complet-

ing your high school requirements to complete your GED. This day is about your investment in yourself to create a better future and you have what it takes to do so."

Schools Superintendent Dr. Zeb Talley focused on the resiliency it took to achieve this milestone. "You have overcome a lot of odds and have been patient. Congratulations and kudos to you for having the resilience and drive to see this accomplishment through. I know you have had obstacles, but we are so proud of your success."

"It's really easy to get to where you want to be when the path is straight and clear," said Assistant Superintendent of Instruction Angilee Downing. "When the path is filled with twists, turns, and challenges, it takes skill to maneuver through it and you have shown your ability to successfully navigate through a challenge. You can do anything you set your mind to, as you've shown us all."

Scott's instructor, Helen Howell, said, "Gavin showed up every day and worked extremely hard. To see another student graduate, it is extremely rewarding."

Principal Aji Dixon discussed the importance of focusing on passions and working hard to make them a reality. "Find whatever it is you like to do, work, and do that. Immersing yourself in your passion doesn't feel like work and will be extremely rewarding, you will find success, and love what you do. I am excited for you and your future."

# CLASSIFIEDS

To place a classified ad or for more information call (276) 694-3101.

## PUBLISHER'S NOTICE

All real estate advertised in this newspaper is subject to the Federal Fair Housing Act of 1968, which makes it illegal to advertise "any preference, limitations or discrimination based on race, color, sex or national origin," or an intention to make any such preferences, limitation or discrimination. Our readers are informed that all dwellings advertised in this paper are available on an equal opportunity basis. This newspaper will not knowingly accept any advertising for real estate or employment which is in violation of the law.

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## VIRGINIA: IN THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE CITY OF MARTINSVILLE

CITY OF MARTINSVILLE, VIRGINIA )  
Plaintiff, )  
v. )  
COUNTY OF HENRY, VIRGINIA )  
Defendant. )  
SERVE: George A.H. Lyle, Esq. )  
Henry County Attorney )  
County Administrative Building )  
3300 Kings Mountain Road )  
Martinsville, Virginia 24112 )  
SERVE: Jimmie L. Adams )  
Chairman, Board of Supervisors )  
County Administrative Building )  
3300 Kings Mountain Road )  
Martinsville, Virginia 24112 )

### NOTICE

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE, pursuant to § 15.2-4101(B) of the Virginia Code, that, on February 7, 2022, or as soon thereafter as may be feasible, the City of Martinsville will file a petition in the Circuit Court for the City of Martinsville for an order granting it town status within the County of Henry. Attached to this notice and incorporated herein by reference is a certified copy of the ordinance of the Martinsville City Council, passed by a recorded majority vote of all the members, and authorizing the filing of the above-referenced petition.

Respectfully submitted,  
CITY OF MARTINSVILLE, VIRGINIA  
By: /s/ Stephen C. Peipgrass  
John S. West (VSB No. 34771)  
Robert S. Claiborne, Jr. (VSB No. 86332)  
Troutman Pepper Hamilton Sanders LLP  
1001 Haxall Point, Suite 1500  
Richmond, Virginia 23219  
Telephone: 804.697.1200  
Facsimile: 804.697.1339  
john.west@troutman.com  
stephen.peipgrass@troutman.com  
robert.claiborne@troutman.com  
Counsel for the City of Martinsville

### CERTIFICATION

I, Karen Roberts, Clerk of the City Council of the City of Martinsville, do certify that the foregoing is a true copy of an Ordinance passed by a recorded majority vote of all members of the City Council at that time consisted of five members, including the Mayor, and the Ordinance was passed by the City Council by a recorded vote of four ayes and one nay.  
This, the 4th day of February, 2022.

/s/ Karen Roberts  
Karen Roberts, Clerk of the City Council

## CITY OF MARTINSVILLE, VIRGINIA ORDINANCE No. 2022-U-1

### AN ORDINANCE TO PETITION THE CIRCUIT COURT FOR THE CITY OF MARTINSVILLE FOR AN ORDER GRANTING TOWN STATUS

**WHEREAS**, on December 10, 2019, the City Council voted in favor of the City of Martinsville's (the "City" or "Martinsville") reversion from an independent city to a town located within and constituting part of the County of Henry (the "County" or "Henry County"), following discussion and study regarding the feasibility of the same;

**WHEREAS**, on September 18, 2020, the City, by counsel and pursuant to Virginia Code § 15.2-2907(A), filed with the Commission on Local Government (the "Commission") a notice of its intent to petition for an order granting it town status, seeking to establish a traditional town-county relationship with Henry County, including the same rights, powers, and responsibilities as are granted to existing towns consistent with Virginia law, and this notice is incorporated herein by reference;

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to Virginia Code § 15.2-2908, the city-to-town reversion proceeding was deemed to have been instituted upon City's filing of the notice with the Commission;

**WHEREAS**, the City notified all local governments located within or contiguous to, or sharing functions, revenue, or tax sources with, the City of its intent to petition for an order granting it town status, seeking to establish a traditional town-county relationship with Henry County, including the same rights, powers, and responsibilities as are granted to existing towns consistent with Virginia law;

**WHEREAS**, on November 30, 2020, Henry County, by counsel, filed its response to Martinsville's notice of intent to petition for an order granting it town status;

**WHEREAS**, the City and the County entered into negotiations to seek a voluntary settlement of the city-to-town reversion proceeding;

**WHEREAS**, the City and the County entered into a Memorandum of Understanding dated April 29, 2021, in contemplation of a comprehensive settlement agreement providing for the City's reversion to town status and addressing the allocation of governmental services following that change in governmental structure, the transfer of certain properties, the sharing of certain revenues, a temporary moratorium of annexation rights, and other matters;

**WHEREAS**, on May 26, 2021, at a joint public meeting, the respective governing bodies of the City and the County approved the Memorandum of Understanding;

**WHEREAS**, the City and the County reached a Voluntary Settlement Agreement (the "Agreement"), pursuant to Title 15.2, Chapter 34 (§ 15.2-3400, et seq.) and Chapter 41 (§ 15.2-4100, et seq.) of the Virginia Code and consistent with the terms of the Memorandum of Understanding;

**WHEREAS**, the reversion of Martinsville from an independent city to a town pursuant to the terms of the Agreement would have established a traditional town-county relationship between Martinsville and Henry County, with the same rights, powers, and responsibilities as other towns and counties, except as provided by special law or modified in the Agreement;

**WHEREAS**, the City and the County concluded that the City's reversion to a town located within and constituting part of Henry County in accordance with the terms of the Agreement meets the requirements of Virginia Code § 15.2-4106;

**WHEREAS**, on August 24, 2021, the respective governing bodies of the City and the County approved the Agreement by resolution, directing that the Agreement be referred for review by the Commission and stating their intention, after the Commission's review, to adopt the Agreement and thereafter to petition the appropriate Circuit Court to affirm and validate the Agreement and give it full force and effect;

**WHEREAS**, on August 25, 2021, the City and the County, by counsel, filed a joint notice with the Commission, requesting that the Commission review the Agreement, find that the City's reversion to town status pursuant to the Agreement is in the best interests of the Commonwealth, and recommend that the Agreement be affirmed and given full force and effect by a special, three-judge court;

**WHEREAS**, the Commission heard evidence and argument presented by the City and the County and conducted a hearing in September 2021 as required by law and issued its findings and recommendations in a report dated October 2021 (the "Report"), and this Report is incorporated herein by reference;

**WHEREAS**, the Commission's Report dated October 2021 found the City's reversion to town status to be in the best interests of the City, the County, and the Commonwealth and recommended approval by a three-judge, special court;

**WHEREAS**, on November 9, 2021, the City Council passed an ordinance approving and adopting the Agreement by recorded affirmative vote of a majority of its members, after having advertised its intention to approve the Agreement at least once a week for two successive weeks in a newspaper having a general circulation in its jurisdiction, containing a descriptive summary of the Agreement, and holding a public hearing on the Agreement prior to the adoption of the ordinance;

**WHEREAS**, on December 14, 2021, despite its many prior representations and commitments, the Henry County Board of Supervisors voted against an ordinance approving and adopting the Agreement by recorded vote of a majority of its members, for reasons other than the best interests of the City, the County, and the Commonwealth;

**WHEREAS**, Chapter 41 of Title 15.2 of the Virginia Code (§ 15.2-4100, et seq.) requires the City, subsequent to the Commission's review, to pass an ordinance by a recorded majority vote of all the members of the City Council, to petition the Circuit Court for the City of Martinsville, alleging that the City meets the criteria set out in Virginia Code § 15.2-4106 for an order granting town status to the City;

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to Virginia Code § 15.2-4107, the three-judge, special court may, in its discretion, direct any appropriate state agency, in addition to the Commission, to gather and present evidence, including statistical data and exhibits, for the court, to be subject to the usual rules of evidence;

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to Virginia Code § 15.2-4106, the three-judge, special court shall enter an order granting town status if, after hearing the evidence, the court finds that criteria set out therein are met;

**WHEREAS**, based on the latest United States decennial census, the City has a current population of less than 50,000 people;

**WHEREAS**, Henry County is the adjoining county and will be made a party defendant to the proceedings;

**WHEREAS**, the proposed change from city to town status will not substantially impair the ability of the County to meet the service needs of its population;

**WHEREAS**, the proposed change from city to town status will not result in a substantially inequitable sharing of the resources and liabilities of the Town of Martinsville and the County;

**WHEREAS**, the proposed change from city to town status is, in the balance of equities, in the best interests of the City, the County, the Commonwealth, and the people of the City and the County;

**WHEREAS**, the proposed change from city to town status is in the best interests of the Commonwealth in promoting strong and viable units of government; and

**WHEREAS**, the change from city to town status should be under terms and conditions that ensure an orderly transition from city to town status; adjust financial inequities; balance the equities between the parties; and ensure protection of the best interests of the City, the County, the Commonwealth, and the people of the City and the County;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED** by the Council of the City of Martinsville, Virginia,

1. The City Council, by this Ordinance, hereby declares that the City desires to revert to the status of a town within and constituting part of Henry County, pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 41 of Title 15.2 of the Virginia Code (§ 15.2-4100, et seq.).
2. The City Council, by this Ordinance, hereby declares that the City desires the change from city to town status to be under terms and conditions appropriate to ensure an orderly transition from city to town status; adjust financial inequities; balance the equities between the parties; and ensure protection of the best interests of the City, the County, the Commonwealth, and the people of the City and the County.
3. The City Council hereby authorizes the City Manager and the City's legal counsel to petition the Circuit Court for the City of Martinsville for an order, pursuant to Chapter 41 of Title 15.2 of the Virginia Code (§ 15.2-4100, et seq.), establishing Martinsville as a town within and constituting part of Henry County, and Henry County shall be made a party defendant to the proceeding.
4. The City Manager and the City's legal counsel are hereby authorized to take all other actions, and to employ such special consultants as may be needed, to accomplish the objectives set forth in this Ordinance.
5. This Ordinance shall be in full force and effect on the date of its adoption.

Adopted this 27th day of January, 2022.

\*\*\*\*\*

Attest:  
/s/ Karen Roberts  
Karen Roberts, Clerk of Council





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