

Board of Supervisors
Thomas M. Branin, Chairman
Daniel J. Schmitt, Vice-Chairman
Tyrone E. Nelson
Patricia S. O'Bannon
Frank J. Thornton

Supervisors' Agend-O-Gram



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County Manager
John A. Vithoukias

Summary of Actions Taken by the Board on April 28, 2020

Mr. Branin led the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. Nelson delivered the invocation.

The Board approved the minutes of the April 14, 2020, Regular Meeting.

MANAGER'S COMMENTS

Mr. Vithoukias pointed out that during these unprecedented times, the public reads articles and watches videos showing the ravaging effects of COVID-19. Every part of the world's population is impacted – whether it is related to their bottom line, income, health, or safety – and is constantly bombarded with negativity. What Henrico and the central Virginia region are experiencing, however, is unprecedented in another, more positive manner. To fight an invisible enemy, it is necessary to gather as much information as possible to have a better understanding of the war that is being fought. The County has set up a testing site at Virginia Center Commons (VCC) with numerous public and private partners, including long-term care facilities, healthcare workers, GRTC Transit Company operators, state and federal agencies, the Health Department, and the Human Resources Department's Employee Health Services Division. The County has also supported the business community by working with more than 100 restaurants since March 28 to provide meals to the County's frontline employees, including public safety officials, landfill employees, and others. Furthermore, Economic Development Authority (EDA) Executive Director Anthony Romanello and his team have reached out to more than 1,000 existing businesses to help them through these difficult times. Mr. Romanello convinced the EDA Board to take \$2 million out of the EDA fund balance for use by Virginia Community Capital, which is facilitating loans to Henrico businesses. This deposit helps provide liquidity for the loans. So far, the program has issued \$3.3 million in loans to 23 companies, which has resulted in 261 jobs being retained. The County must prepare for what the EDA is calling "A New Tomorrow." Internally and regionally, the County has begun planning for what the future of Henrico looks like for its businesses, citizens, employees, and non-profits. This includes facilitating meetings and conversations with the EDA and business groups like ChamberRVA and the Retail Merchants Association in preparation for the re-opening of local businesses in what will be a post-COVID-19 world. The County must do everything it can to inspire Henrico's residents and businesses with hope and confidence in the days and months ahead.

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Mr. Vithoulikas recognized Tony McDowell, Deputy County Manager for Public Safety, who provided an overview and timeline of events relating to the County's response to COVID-19 on the day that marked the County's two-month anniversary of establishing a formal command system to organize its response and participate in the regional response. Since that time, the County has continued to provide services across the board to the community while keeping its employees and residents well. The Board has enacted emergency ordinances and engaged in other efforts to support local businesses, ease any burden of tax payments and fees to the extent possible, and ensure the continuity of government operations. The County's Finance team has been crafting a completely new proposed budget that will reflect not only significant revenue challenges but also incorporate broad input from employees, businesses, and the general public. During the past week, the County has begun a very aggressive and widespread drive-through antibody and antigen testing program for public safety personnel, frontline employees, health care providers, and participating partners at the VCC test site. Henrico County is the only local government in the region, and possibly the state, that is providing this level of access to testing and may be the only locality in the nation that is providing access to testing for the spouses and partners of public safety employees. Of the more than 1,000 persons tested by the County as of April 28, only one has been positively identified as being infected. In terms of the results seen so far, the test data tells the County that it does not have a large number of infected employees working on the front line, which also means they are not asymptomatic carriers of the virus. In considering the number of COVID-19 cases that the community has experienced, the testing results indicate Henrico's use of personal protective equipment (PPE), along with its other precautions, has been effective. The County's Emergency Operations Center (EOC) team has begun to focus its attention more on testing, community engagement and education, planning for the future, and making sure the County has learned from the incredible events of the past few months.

Mr. Vithoulikas noted Henrico's first social media post related to COVID-19 was made two months ago, on February 28. Since then, the County has pushed out several hundred more messages on social media. The Department of Public Relations has produced dozens of news stories, videos, podcasts, electronic newsletters, graphics, flyers, postcards, Henrico County Television (HCTV) bulletins, and video town hall meetings. These efforts have all been aimed at providing vital information to Henrico residents about County operations and services and how to keep themselves and their families safe during this public health crisis. These messages have been both informative and positive.

Mr. Vithoulikas recognized Ben Sheppard, Director of Public Relations, who shared a resource flyer developed by his department to show Henrico residents where they can go to get information related to COVID-19. The department also created a postcard that is being mailed out to nearly 160,000 Henrico addresses and added Nextdoor to its list of social media platforms. Nextdoor reaches nearly 60,000 residents, and more than 400 neighborhoods in Henrico receive information through NextDoor. The short-term plan is to use NextDoor to promote meeting participation. Long term, the County can take advantage of this platform's ability to target specific communities and neighborhoods. The department has been working non-stop to get information out to residents in every possible way. The best means of communication for residents is to telephone the County's call center at 501-5655 or the dedicated line for older adults at 501-5454.

Mr. Vithoukias recognized Mike Schnurman, Assistant to the County Manager for Intergovernmental Relations, who provided an update on the Virginia General Assembly's 2020 Reconvened Session. Mr. Schnurman summarized amendments that were proposed by the Governor and agreed to by the General Assembly for several bills of special interest to the County addressing the Central Virginia Transportation Authority (CVTA), gray gaming, collective bargaining, the minimum wage, equal taxing authority among cities and counties, and the state budget. Key amendments to the CVTA legislation include developing a priority process for project selection, making the Commonwealth Transportation Board representative a voting member, changing the transit maintenance of effort (MOE) date from 2020 to 2019, indexing transit funds to inflation beginning 2023, requiring a study of the GRTC Transit System maintenance structure by CVTA by December 2020, and delaying the sales tax increase associated with CVTA until October 2020. Key amendments to the gray gaming legislation include continuing the legality of games of skill available for play in ABC retail licensees and truck stops until July 1, 2021, and imposing a tax on those games during that period. A key amendment to the collective bargaining legislation is delaying its effective date to May 1, 2021. Key amendments to the minimum wage legislation include delaying the effective date of the phased series of increases until May 1, 2021, and conducting a study by December 1, 2023, by the Department of Housing and Community Development and Virginia Economic Development Partnership to review the feasibility and potential impact of instituting a regional minimum wage and the economic benefits of utilizing the minimum wage in the Commonwealth. Key amendments to the equal taxing authority legislation include delaying the effective date of the authority to impose a transient occupancy tax above the current maximum rate or to impose a cigarette tax until May 1, 2021, and July 1, 2021, respectively; and calling for a study by the Department of Legislative Services by October 31, 2020, of different legal authorities and requirements that apply to cities and counties not related to taxation. A key amendment to the state budget includes a provision allowing public bodies to conduct electronic meetings during a declared state of emergency when it is impractical or unsafe to assemble in a quorum or single location. Based on the economic picture, Mr. Schnurman anticipates there will be another special session of the General Assembly in July or August after the Commonwealth has done a revenue reforecast.

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS' COMMENTS

Mr. Branin remarked that spring is a busy season for public observances at the national, state, and local levels. Many challenges have come to the Board during the COVID-19 situation that have required the Board to streamline its meeting agendas, prioritize its agenda items, and temporarily change the way it recognizes annual public observances. The Board's most recent agendas have not included proclamations, ceremonial resolutions, or presentations. The Board hopes to return to presenting proclamations at Board meetings as soon as it gets back to normal operations. Mr. Branin stated the Board did wish to mention three especially significant observances that are on the immediate horizon.

Mr. Branin noted May 3 - 9 is designated as Correctional Officers Week in honor of the men and women working in correctional facilities and charged with the difficult and often dangerous assignment of ensuring the custody, safety, and well-being of those persons who are awaiting trial or who have been convicted of a crime. On behalf of the Board, Mr.

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Branin saluted the correctional deputies serving in the trenches at the County's two jails for their invaluable contributions to the community, especially during a time when they are potentially placing their personal health at risk. He also thanked Sheriff Alisa Gregory and her dedicated command staff for their active oversight and positive management.

Mr. Schmitt announced that May 10 - 16 is designated as Law Enforcement Officers Week and Wednesday, May 13, will be recognized as Law Enforcement Memorial Day in Henrico. The County's law enforcement officers endure grace danger, and on occasion, loss of their lives while serving our citizens daily, protecting lives and property, and upholding local ordinances and state laws. A video ceremony will be held on May 13 to remember Henrico police officers who died in the line of duty. On behalf of the Board, Mr. Schmitt saluted Henrico's law enforcement officers for their steadfast commitment to the County's public safety efforts and for contributing appreciably to the quality of life of this community. He also commended Police Chief Hum Cardounel and the Chief's talented command staff for their excellent leadership and strong commitment.

Mr. Thornton reported that Drug Court Month will be recognized nationally during the month of May as Henrico's own Drug Court celebrates its 17th Anniversary. Henrico's Drug Court is truly a collaborative effort of the 14th Judicial Circuit, the Commonwealth's Attorney Office, the Sheriff's Office, Henrico Area Mental Health & Developmental Services, the Police Division, the Community Corrections Program, and the Probation and Parole District 32 Office of the Virginia Department of Corrections. On behalf of the Board, Mr. Thornton saluted the entire team of men and women who have contributed to the success of the Drug Court while restoring numerous lives and families and saving the County up to \$13,000 for every individual they have served. He also extended the Board's appreciation to the County's distinguished Drug Court Judges, Randall Johnson, Jr., and John Marshall, and to the County's hard-working Drug Court Administrator and Community Corrections Director, Sarah Perkins-Smith and Shelby Johnson, for their exceptional dedication and exemplary approach.

Mrs. O'Bannon highlighted a valuable source of news and information for Henrico residents, the Henrico County Government channel on You Tube, which along with HCTV provides 25 years of Emmy Award-winning programs produced by the County's Department of Public Relations. The videos are arranged by topic and include documentaries on local historical figures and places of interest as well as County services, agencies, and occupations. Spanish language versions are also available for many of the videos. Mrs. O'Bannon suggested these fascinating videos are a particularly great resource for parents who have school-aged children.

RECOGNITION OF NEWS MEDIA

There were no media representatives present.

APPOINTMENTS/RESIGNATIONS

109-20 Resolution - Appointment of Members - Finance Board. (Meghan F. Coates,
Approved Vaughan G. Crawley, and Christopher A. Sorenson)

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110-20 Resolution - Resignation of Members - Local Emergency Planning
Approved Committee. (Stephen L. Weis and Emily Ashley)

111-20 Resolution - Appointment of Member - Local Emergency Planning
Approved Committee. (Jackson P.F. Baynard)

PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS

112-20 Resolution - Real Estate Tax Levies, 2020.
Approved

113-20 Resolution - Personal Property, Aircraft, Manufactured Homes, Qualifying
Approved Vehicles Owned or Leased by Members of a Volunteer Rescue Squad or Volunteer Fire Department, Disabled Veterans' Vehicles, Motor Vehicles Specially Equipped to Provide Transportation for Physically Handicapped Individuals, Computer Equipment and Peripherals Used in a Data Center, Machinery and Tools, and Machinery and Tools for Semiconductor Manufacturers Tax Levies, 2020.

114-20 Ordinance - To Amend and Reordain the Following Sections of the Code of
Approved the County of Henrico Titled:

- 20-414 "Enumerated; amount of license tax"
- 20-416 "Scientific research and development services"
- 20-446 "Enumerated; amount of license tax"
- 20-475 "Enumerated; amount of tax"
- 20-506 "Tax on owners and operators"
- 20-507 "Tax on promoters generally"
- 20-509 "Tax on promoters of athletic contests or races"
- 20-531 "Levy of tax; amount"
- 20-559 "Amount of tax"
- 20-560 "Speculative builders"
- 20-600 "Hotels"
- 20-601 "Restaurants, soda fountains and similar businesses"
- 20-624 "Small loan companies"
- 20-625 "Persons other than small loan companies lending money for purchase of chattels secured by liens; purchasers of conditional sales contracts"
- 20-626 "Other moneylenders"
- 20-627 "Persons making first mortgage loans or purchasing mortgage notes"
- 20-648 "Amount of tax"
- 20-650 "Commission merchants"
- 20-691 "License required; tax basis"
- 20-692 "Amount of tax"
- 20-793 "Term defined; amount of tax"
- 20-818 "Amount of tax on persons furnishing water"

20-819 “Amount of tax on persons furnishing heat, light and power, and gas”

and

20-821 “Amount of tax for telephone and telegraph businesses”

to Raise the Threshold and Deduction for Business License Taxes from \$400,000 to \$500,000.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Max Maizels, a resident of the Tuckahoe District, requested that the Board cut the appropriation in the County’s budget for membership in the Virginia Association of Counties (VACo), which he referred to as a discretionary non-necessity. Dr. Maizels expressed concern that the County is funding an organization that lobbies the General Assembly against the interests of the citizens who fund it.

GENERAL AGENDA

115-20 Introduction of Ordinance - To Amend and Reordain Section 9-2 of the Code
Approved of the County of Henrico Titled “Precincts and polling places” by Temporarily Changing the Polling Places for Certain Precincts Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic.