

The City FOCUS

A Report to the Citizens of the City of Colonial Heights



CITY BUDGET LOWER NEXT YEAR



Declining consumer-based revenues, like sales and personal property taxes, will somewhat reduce the City budget for next year. City Manager Rick Anzolut presented his Recommended Budget with overall annual revenue of 1.6% less than last year. City Departments reduced operating expenses with a target cut of 10% in an attempt to maintain all services. City Council has also initially authorized the use of 7% of the City's cash reserves to avoid laying-off City employees in the near future. The City Manager also cut many requests for capital outlay and equipment bringing his budget for next year to City Council with less than half the amount of equipment purchased in the last budget. City Council will be considering the budget with a goal of maintaining all services until economic conditions recover from their current decline.

Residents and businesses are reminded that 2010 is a reassessment year. The City Manager's Recommended Budget maintains all tax rates and service fees at their current levels, except for trash charges. The City's five-year contract for curbside recycling renews this year. Increased contractual charges for recycling necessitated the City Manager to recommend increasing the trash charge 5% beginning October 1, 2009. That increase will keep our weekly curbside recycling service in place through at least 2010.

Copies of the Recommended Budget are available for review at the Library or the City Clerk's Office in City Hall. The City Manager's Recommended Budget Message to City Council is available on the City's website at www.colonial-heights.com.



SAVE ON SEWER BILLS



The City has exclusion meters used to record outside water usage, such as watering your lawn and garden or the water used in washing your car. This water does not enter the sanitary sewage system. A sewage credit can be issued on your bimonthly bill for this usage. These meters may be purchased for \$48.00 in the Treasurer's Office and then picked up next door in the Utility Billing Office located in City Hall at 201 James Avenue. The meter reading can be called in 24 hours a day at (804) 524-8777 or on the City website at www.colonial-heights.com under E-Gov't Services. For additional information, please call Utility Billing at (804) 520-9288.

CITY STILL OPERATES "THE DUMP"

Many residents do not know that the City still operates what used to be the Dump or Convenience Center behind Wal-Mart. We call it the Recycling Center now and it's located on Dimmock Parkway between the Dominion Auto Group dealerships and Wal-Mart. It is still next to the City Animal Shelter. Residents with valid identification can still dispose of brush, tree limbs, leaves, grass and yard waste at the Center. We also handle household hazardous waste like oil-based paints and primers, solvents, motor oil, petroleum products, cooking oil and antifreeze. Small businesses and apartment residents can take their traditional recyclables like cardboard and paper, glass, metal and aluminum cans, and plastic to the Center since they do not have curbside recycling. We also take old appliances. The City operates the Recycling Center on Friday and Saturday from 8:00 a.m. to Noon and 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. All of these recycling services are FREE.

The City no longer accepts bulky waste at the Recycling Center like junk, furniture, debris or old construction materials. Junk can usually be included with your household trash and collected by the City's contractors at the curb. If you do not want your junk on the curb and want to haul it yourself, take it to Cal's at 101 Boulevard (down by the bridge to Petersburg) or Shoosmith Brothers at 11800 Lewis Road in Chester. There is a fee for bulky waste disposal at both locations.



DATE CHANGE FOR NATIONAL NIGHT OUT



Through the years, City residents have overwhelmingly supported the Police Department's *National Night Out* celebrations. Held annually on the first Tuesday in August, this event has presented a challenge to many participants due to the extreme heat and humidity. Interested participants have spoken and the Police Department has listened. This year's community celebration will be held on the first Tuesday in October in order to get relief from Summer temperatures and allow more residents to participate. Although the event will no longer be recognized as *National Night Out*, the Police Department is confident that our City celebration will be a great success. If your neighborhood, church or civic group would like to host an event, please contact Officer Sophie Benkendorf at 520-9318, or e-mail her at benkendorfs@colonial-heights.com.

STOP ILLEGAL STORMWATER DISCHARGES

The City needs your help to stop illegal dumping in our storm drains. Most people know the intentional disposal of oils, paints and other solvents down storm sewer drains is an illegal activity. You should know that intentionally putting anything other than water down the storm sewer is considered an illegal discharge.

Federal regulations require that Colonial Heights track and eliminate illegal discharges. As a consequence, Colonial Heights City Code Chapter 245 defines an illegal discharge as "any direct or indirect non-stormwater discharge to the storm drain system". The ordinance is enforceable by suspension of storm sewer access and by a fine. There are steps you can take to help identify whether or not you have an illegal discharge. Preventative measures are a big part of eliminating illegal discharges. The City asks you to take steps to prevent contaminants from entering floor drains, like installing screens that keep solids out and shallow berms that prevent chemicals and solvents from reaching them. Consider sealing your shop floors with an epoxy or finish that makes sweeping and dry cleaning methods more efficient than wash-downs. If you are working on vehicles or machinery, use drip pans to catch excess oil and chemicals, then use absorbents to eliminate water-based cleanups. For more information on illegal discharges and what you can do to help ensure you eliminate them, visit the City's website at www.colonialheights.com/PublicWorksStormWaterManagement.htm.



FIRE & EMS RECEIVE AN "A"



The Office of Emergency Medical Services (OEMS) under the Virginia Department of Health conducts bi-annual inspections of all licensed EMS agencies in Virginia. On March 24th, the OEMS inspected the City's EMS system. This inspection included the auditing of training records and provider certifications, evaluation of standard operating procedures and policies including the quality management of patient care, and the inventories and cleanliness of all licensed ambulances and fire engines.

Thanks to the staff's pride and commitment to excellence, we are proud to report that Colonial Heights Fire & EMS received a perfect evaluation and has been issued a license to continue to operate as the City's primary EMS agency. Since beginning EMS operations on March 1, 1987, the Department has received exemplary inspections and has never been cited for any violations.

FIRE DEPARTMENT ANNUAL COMMUNITY COOKOUT

Dunlop Farms Fire Station

May 13th, 5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Adults \$15

Children 12 & under eat free (hot dog & chips provided)

Advance ticket sales only: contact Colonial Heights Fire Administration at 520-9387 for further information.



COMMUNITY BUILDING EXPANSION UPDATE



If you have been down Roanoke Avenue lately, you undoubtedly have seen the construction taking place at the Community Building. Last year, City Council approved plans for the renovation of the Senior Center/Community Building to include the addition of a new "Teen Center". In January, the winning bid for project construction went to OKJ Construction Company, under the supervision of Mr. Alan Harris. Groundbreaking took place at the end of January and the tentative project completion date is set for June 2009.

Senior citizens in our community are eagerly looking forward to having the space to freely exercise in the expanded multi-purpose room – without stepping on someone's toes. All citizens will enjoy the remodeled kitchen area and bathrooms.

The newly developing "Teen Center" will serve as a place for youth to gather after school and in the evening. It is anticipated the teens will participate in developing programs, rules and regulations, a teen center website and much more. The Office on Youth will team with the Department of Recreation & Parks to bring a variety of recreation and education programs for the youth at the Center. Items such as a new computer, a Wii video game system, pool table and television have been donated from the community. The City of Colonial Heights Foundation is available to accept any additional tax-deductible donations for the "Teen Center". For additional information, please contact Sean Gleason, Director of Recreation & Parks, 520-9390 or Eileen Brown, Director of Youth & Human Services, 520-9286.

GREENWAY TRAIL CONSTRUCTION SET TO START

The Colonial Heights Appomattox River Trail System (CHARTS) had its Phase I groundbreaking on May 1st. The first phase is now under construction near the Roslyn Landing Park behind the City Animal Shelter.

The next section of the trail has also received VDOT funding and could be out to bid by the end of 2009 or early 2010. Phase I is for 1,800+ LF of trail. Phase II would add another 2100+- LF and complete the section from Roslyn Landing Park to the I-95 Bridge.

Phase III would be from the I-95 Bridge to the Boulevard and Phase IV would extend the trail west under the Boulevard to Appamattuck Park. The total project cost is estimated at about \$1,000,000 with 85% of the total project cost coming from State and Federal grants. The balance will be composed of City support and private fundraising.

For more information, please check out the CHARTS web page at www.colonialheightstrails.org.

LIBRARY'S ONLINE SERVICES

Have you heard about a book on television, or read about one in the newspaper? Residents can complete an online request form for any title that interests them at <http://www.colonial-heights.com/LibraryNewRequestForm.htm>

"The library receives 10 – 20 online requests each day, and depending on the demand for the title, we're usually able to have the requested title in the hands of the patron in one to three weeks", according to Bruce Hansen, the Library's Director.

Residents can also search the library's collection from home by going to <http://www.colonial-heights.com/Library.htm>, and if the library does not have the title you are looking for, just click on the convenient request form next to the online catalog icon.

Residents can also visit the library and set up an online account that allows them to monitor their checkouts and renew titles at their convenience even when the library is not open.

The library staff also maintains a huge online Virtual Library. The Colonial Heights Virtual Library allows residents to search over 7,000 publications ranging from Time Magazine and Consumer Reports to more sophisticated academic journals to retrieve full-text articles. These articles are not generally available through a Google search. <http://www.colonial-heights.com/VirtualLibraryMasterFrame.htm>.



SENIOR CITIZEN CRIME PREVENTION UNIVERSITY



The Police Department, in partnership with the Colonial Heights TRIAD, will present the City's first Senior Citizen Crime Prevention University. Funded by a grant from the Virginia Attorney General's Office, the University will provide seniors with valuable information and tools to decrease chances of becoming victims of crime. The twelve-session course is open to all City residents and business owners age 55 or over. The University will provide insight on current crime trends, prevention techniques and proactive information useful to all attendees. In addition to a crime prevention curriculum, the University will also provide an overview of law enforcement showcasing City departments and services especially important to seniors. A complete course description and registration information are available on the City's website (www.colonial-heights.com), or by calling the Police Department at 520-9306.



The City Focus is a newsletter mailed to residents of the City of Colonial Heights, published by the Office of the City Manager, to inform residents of government actions and events of interest in the City. This newsletter is printed on recycled paper.

RECREATION & PARKS

☆ **34th FORT CLIFTON ARTS, MUSIC, AND CRAFTS FESTIVAL** will be held on Saturday, May 9th, and Sunday, May 10th, at Berberich Park/Fort Clifton. Festival hours are 10:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. on Saturday and 12 Noon to 5:30 p.m. on Sunday. Entertainment on Saturday will include Tussing Elementary 4th Graders, North Elementary 4th Graders, Tae Kwon Do, CHMS Chorus, Dancing Grannies and Moogly Blues Band. Sunday's entertainment is the Wil Gravatt Band from Northern Virginia, Civil War Displays, Reenactors, Concessions, Rides, and Pony Rides.

☆ **MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL TRIPS: Washington Nationals vs. the World Champion Philadelphia Phillies** at Nationals Park on Sunday, May 17th. Trip fee is \$75.00. **Atlanta Braves vs. the Baltimore Orioles** on Sunday, June 14th. Trip fee is \$69.00.

☆ **4th of JULY FIREWORKS** will be displayed on Saturday, July 4th, at 9:15 p.m. Same site as last year off Charles Dimmock Parkway. Best viewing spots will be in Wal-Mart and K-Mart parking lots.



"GREEN" LAWN MAINTENANCE



Spring is a perfect time to make a few easy adjustments around our homes to help protect our local water resources. As the days begin to get longer and the weather begins to warm, many of us gear up for a season of lawn care that regularly utilizes fertilizers and pesticides. A significant portion of these chemicals carried by stormwater runoff end up in Swift and Old Town Creeks, Fleets Branch and the Appomattox River. There are a host of things that we can each do to make our Spring and Summer lawn care less expensive and much less harmful to the health of the City's waters. Consider using natural fertilizers as an alternative to traditional synthetics. Due to their slow-release properties, natural organic fertilizers like manures, dried blood, bone meal, and other natural products are less apt to leach from the soil, burn turfgrass or cause rapid growth spurts. They help to reduce the ground- or surface-water contamination often seen with synthetic fertilizers. Natural weed and insect controls are also a healthy alternative to synthetic compounds. Corn gluten meal has been found effective for weed control and has the additional benefit of nitrogen fertilization. Bacillus popilliae is a naturally occurring product that can be spread onto the lawn causing what is known as 'doom' or 'milky spore disease' in Japanese Beetles providing a natural and effective beetle and grub control. These are just a few steps that can be taken to save money, reduce the work our lawns require and help keep our waters free of harmful chemicals. For more information on natural landscaping and organic gardening techniques, visit the City's website at www.colonial-heights.com/PublicWorksStormWaterManagement.htm.



SIGN UP FOR E-NEWS



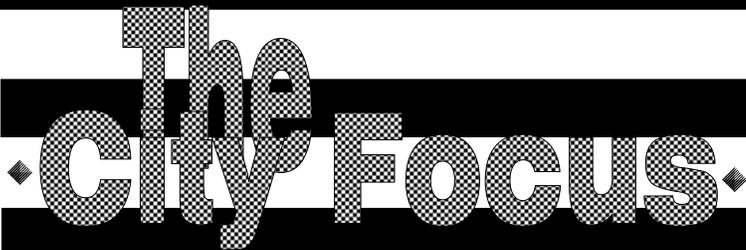
The City recently launched a new public information campaign we call E-News. Residents and businesses can get valuable information from the City through their email. Current events, news stories, public notices and more can be brought right into your computer. Follow this link and sign up today: www.colonial-heights.com.

RECREATION & PARKS (CONTINUED)

☆ **SUMMER PLAYGROUND PROGRAM** will be held June 22 thru August 7, 2009 at the following sites: Shepherd Stadium, North Elementary, Flora Hill Park, Lakeview Elementary and Berberich Park/Fort Clifton. Ages are 6 thru 12 and must be a City resident. Registration fee is \$6.00 which includes a t-Shirt and a wristband which is for registration at the playground site. All trips have an additional cost.

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