

# The City Focus

A Report to the Citizens of the City of Colonial Heights



## DUMPING CHARGES BEGIN JULY 3RD



In an effort to help reduce tax rates, City Council approved dumping charges at the City's Solid Waste Convenience Center beginning July 3, 2007. In the past, the City's real estate and other taxes have paid for this service. City Council decided that those residents who use the Center should pay for its operation. This payment will come in the form of a per load dumping charge. Charges will be based on the size of the load being dumped.

The Convenience Center is located behind Wal-Mart with its entrance on the Charles Dimmock Parkway. Residents of the City have been dumping trash, junk and brush at the Convenience Center for free since it opened many years ago. The Convenience Center costs the City over \$250,000 per year to operate.

In an effort to keep our neighborhoods attractive, brush, tree trimmings and yard waste dumping at the Center will remain free to residents of the City. Any commercial operators with this form of waste will be charged. Residents of the City are encouraged to trim their trees and keep their properties tidy with free dumping of yard waste.

Charges for dumping solid waste, including household waste, junk, building materials and any other discarded items will be based on the following rate schedule:

**Small Load (\$10)** – Any amount that is less than a medium load.

**Medium Load (\$20)** – A load that fits into a 8 foot pick-up truck bed loaded approximately even with the sides of the bed.

**Large Load (\$30)** – Any amount that exceeds a medium load.

Attendants at the Convenience Center will accept cash or checks for payment of these dumping fees. The City will be working over the next year so that debit and credit cards can be taken at the Center.

A great majority of the City's residents do not use the Center for trash and junk and therefore should not have their taxes paying for something they do not use. Any questions regarding these charges should be directed to the Public Works Department at 520-9372.

## GOT JUNK? PUT IT ON THE CURB

Many residents are not aware that the City's contract for trash collection includes the removal of some junk with your weekly trash collection. The City is a member of the Central Virginia Waste Management Authority (CVWMA). The CVWMA hires a trash collection service to pick up our solid waste each week. Many residents believe they must haul household junk and appliances to the City's Solid Waste Convenience Center. In fact, much of this junk and these old appliances can be collected from in front of your house by the City's trash collection service on the day your trash is collected.

The City's contract with the CVWMA provides for the collection of what is called "Bulky Waste". This is defined as "a large appliance, piece of furniture or waste material from a residential source, other than construction debris or non-household hazardous waste, that cannot be placed in a cart or container". In other words, certain things that do not fit into your rolling trash cart can still be collected with your weekly trash. The trash collection service has a special vehicle to collect this residential bulky waste if it cannot fit in the trash truck. Since most households in the City do not have Bulky Waste Collection more than once or twice a year, residents can probably get this done with the City's trash service in their pick-up truck at no additional charge.

The contract also provides for something called "Special Bulky Waste Collection". This means "the collection of an amount of Bulky Waste that exceeds the quantity of material that could not safely be placed in and transported by a one-half ton pick-up truck". This service provides for a large quantity of junk collected from a residence, but additional charges will apply. If a household were to have a Special Bulky Waste Collection, residents should contact the Department of Public Works at 520-9372 or the CVWMA at the phone number listed on your trash can. A Special Bulky Waste Collection can then be scheduled at your home within three working days. If a household gets a Special Bulky Waste Collection, you will be billed for it.

Continued on Page 2

**GOT JUNK? PUT IT ON THE CURB (CONTINUED)**

Residents are advised that you can put an old appliance out at the curb and the trash service will collect it. They will deliver it to the City's Solid Waste Convenience Center and it will be disposed of properly at no cost to you. In addition, residents that are willing to bundle yard and garden trimmings can also have them collected by the trash service. A bundle is defined as "yard and garden trimmings securely tied together forming an easily handled package not exceeding 4 feet in length or 75 pounds in weight". If you have some sticks or tree trimmings that you cannot fit in your trash cart, you can bundle them and the trash service will take them away.

Residents of the City are encouraged to use the convenience of Bulky Waste Collection a few times a year if you need it. Please be advised that those households that regularly have Bulky Waste Collection can be charged for it if it occurs too frequently.

City Council hopes that residents will have Bulky Waste removed from their property through the use of the trash service or through the City's Convenience Center to help keep our neighborhoods clean and looking attractive.



**JULY 4<sup>TH</sup> FIREWORKS**

Everyone knows that the new Regal 16 Cinema Complex is being constructed on the site where the City used to detonate the fireworks on July 4<sup>th</sup>. Some people are wondering if the City is still having a fireworks display. Due to the generosity of the Roslyn Farms Corporation, the City has secured another site to use as a detonation area. This site is on Roslyn Farms property down by the American Family Fitness Center and the construction site for the two new hotels. While the viewing angles are different than when the fireworks were shot from the mall site, the City expects them to be clearly visible from all viewing locations in the Southpark area and most locations on the east side of the City.

Residents are encouraged to enjoy the July 4<sup>th</sup> fireworks display. The Members of City Council certainly hope you will invite your friends and family to Colonial Heights for your Independence Day Celebration.



**The City Focus**

*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.*



**COUNCIL ADOPTS BUDGET AND CUTS REAL ESTATE TAX RATE**



On May 8, 2007, City Council adopted the \$68.5 million budget for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2007. The budget provides for the City's growth in the coming fiscal year and maintains the quality services our residents expect. The budget also provides funding to keep the Colonial Heights Public Schools one of the best school systems in our area.

In adopting the budget, City Council reduced the real estate tax rate from a \$1.18 to \$1.15 per \$100 of assessed value effective January 1, 2008. City Council did this to partially offset the projected effect of the January 2008 real estate reassessments. While this tax rate reduction will not affect tax bills in calendar year 2007, property owners should see some partial relief from the impact of reassessment. Property values in Colonial Heights continue to advance due to higher than average residential and commercial demand because of our education system, responsive public safety and quality of life.

City Council also adjusted the personal property tax reimbursement percentage for calendar year 2008. Most of our residents are aware that the Commonwealth of Virginia attempted to eliminate personal property taxes at the local level beginning during Governor Gilmore's term in office. Unfortunately, the Commonwealth was only able to afford a 70% reduction on vehicle values under \$20,000 back in 2003. In a further move most residents did not notice, in 2005 the Commonwealth capped its reimbursement to localities throughout the State. This cap was based on the total amount the State paid in fiscal year 2004. In other words, while the value of new vehicles has been rising since 2004, the State's reimbursement to localities has remained at 2004 levels.

City Council made an adjustment to the personal property tax reimbursement percentage so that the City could also cap its total personal property tax revenues at fiscal year 2004 levels. As a result, residents with newer vehicles could pay slightly more local tax during calendar year 2008. City Council has taken action to stabilize the City's total revenue from personal property taxes at 2004 levels. In other words, the Commonwealth capped its contribution at 2004 levels, so the City is capping its total personal property revenues at 2004 levels as well.

The upcoming budget provides for all of our services, the maintenance of City facilities and the replacement of worn out equipment. Any questions about the budget can be directed to City Manager Rick Anzolut at 520-9265.





## **PROJECT LIFESAVER IS COMING TO COLONIAL HEIGHTS**



The Colonial Heights Police Department, Sheriff's Office and Fire/EMS have joined forces to bring the citizens of Colonial Heights *Project Lifesaver* through a grant from the Cameron Foundation.

*Project Lifesaver's* mission is to use state-of-the-art technology in assisting those who care for victims of Alzheimer's and other forms of dementia. *Project Lifesaver* trains, equips and deploys public safety agencies to rapidly locate wandering people and bring them home to their caretakers through the use of individually programmed battery-operated wrist/ankle transmitters, the signal from which can be tracked from the ground or in the air over several miles.

For additional information concerning the Colonial Heights *Project Lifesaver* program, please contact the Chief's Office at the Colonial Heights Police Department at 520-9311.

### ***Inside This Issue:***

- ☒ Dumping Charges Begin July 3rd
- ☒ Got Junk? Put It On The Curb
- ☒ July 4th Fireworks
- ☒ Council Adopts Budget and Cuts Real Estate Tax Rate
- ☒ City Council Denies Itself a Pay Raise
- ☒ Beautification Commission Selling Memorial Bricks for the Legacy Garden
- ☒ Regional Tourism Corporation Up and Running
- ☒ In Memory of Lennie M. Smith - Street Superintendent
- ☒ Project Lifesaver is Coming to Colonial Heights

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