

COUNTY OF FREDERICK, VA

Spring 2014 FINANCIAL NEWSLETTER

FY 2015 Budget is Approved—No Tax Increase

Written by Jennifer Place, Budget Analyst, Frederick County Finance Department

The fiscal year (FY) 2014-2015 budget totals \$351,630,800, including transfers between funds. This is an increase of 6.7% over the FY 2013-2014 adopted budget. New local revenue of \$8.1 million was realized this year. This new revenue is split with 43% remaining in the General Fund and 57% going to the Frederick County Public School System. This equates to \$4,620,419 for the schools and \$3,485,579 for the General Fund. Fund balance funding remained constant with \$4,300,000 being used (see page 3 for further explanation of fund balance). Property tax rates remain unchanged at .585 cents per

\$100 of assessed value for real estate and \$4.86 per \$100 for personal property.

The largest funds that make up the budget are the General Fund, Northwestern Regional Adult Detention Center Fund, School Operating Fund, and School Debt Service Fund. The General Fund budget totals \$142,387,562, a 7% increase over FY 2014. The Northwestern Regional Adult Detention Center Fund budget totals \$19,387,370, a 5.2% increase over FY 2014. The School Operating Fund Budget totals \$140,504,479, a 4.8% increase and the School Debt Service Fund budget totals \$15,754,651, a 5.3% increase over

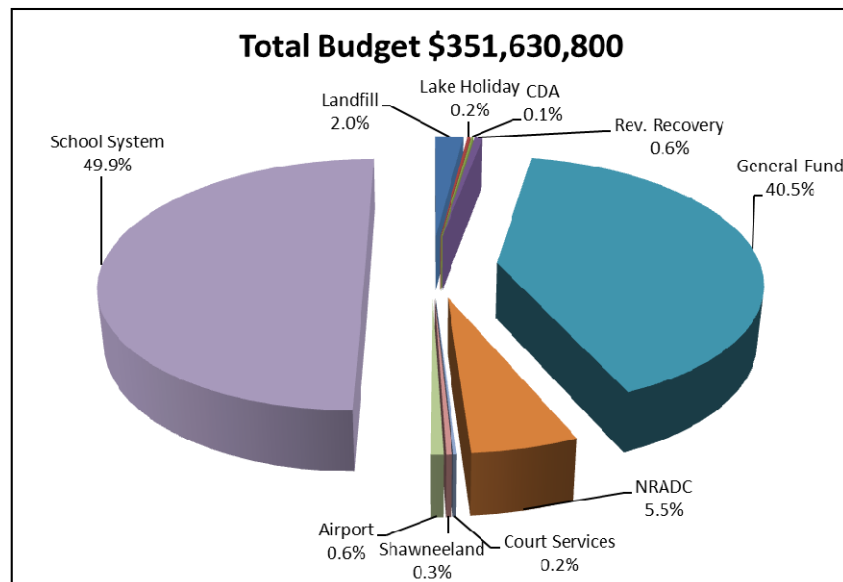
FY 2014. The increases mainly consisted of mandated Virginia Retirement System increases, full day kindergarten, increased Public Safety overtime, minimal increases in operating costs, health insurance increases, annualization of prior fiscal year salary increases, and limited capital purchases.

The Board of Supervisors held several budget work sessions and the public hearing was conducted on March 26, 2014. The budget was formally adopted on April 9, 2014. The 2014-2015 fiscal year begins on July 1, 2014.

More budget info can be found at: www.fcva.us/budget2015.

Inside this issue:

General Fund	2
Fund Balance	3
Revenue Information	4
NRADC	6
Landfill	7
IT Upgrades	8
Investment Series	9
New Convenience Center	9
Energy Management	10
Finance Committee	11



Overall Fund Performance

Frederick County's overall General Fund revenue comparison through March 31, 2014 shows a total increase of \$2,585,359. Included in this increase are the property taxes, local taxes, recovered taxes, and state revenue detailed in the following pages. The total increase, in the amount

of \$2,901,189 when comparing FY 2013 expenditures to FY 2014 represents the net of an increase in expenditures and decrease in transfers. The expenditures were impacted by the Cisco VOIP solutions upgrade for the telephone system, the IT Virtualization Project for the

Sheriff's department, Gainesboro Citizens site, and the design of the Round Hill Fire Station. Also, the Economic Development incentive for McKesson Medical Surgical, Navy Federal Credit Union, and HP Hood. The decrease includes School re-appropriation for \$1.1 million.



Photo courtesy of LeeAnna Pyles
Weeping Cherry

Year to date revenue for the period ending in March increased \$2,585,359. Included in this increase are the property taxes (\$4,433,701), which are the largest single revenue stream in the General Fund.

General Fund expenditures represents the net of expenditures and transfers. The expenditures are impacted in December and June each year for half of the School Operating (FY 2014 \$30 million) and School Debt Service (FY 2014 \$7.3 million) transfers.

General Fund Revenue Comparison

	FY2014 Revenue	FY2013 Revenue	Monthly Variance
JUL	3,802,718	4,345,885	(543,167)
AUG	5,101,233	3,707,448	1,393,785
SEPT	3,812,516	3,665,765	146,751
OCT	4,755,402	4,323,570	431,832
NOV	27,861,181	28,890,727	(1,029,546)
DEC	16,746,592	15,590,847	1,155,745
JAN	4,940,066	4,859,259	80,807
FEB	5,496,761	4,950,691	546,070
MAR	6,343,274	5,940,192	403,082
APR	-	4,458,649	-
MAY	-	30,102,448	-
JUN	-	26,332,052	-
Totals	78,859,743	137,167,533	2,585,359

General Fund Expenditure Comparison

	FY2014 Expenditures	FY2013 Expenditures	Monthly Variance
JUL	5,166,416	4,834,861	331,555
AUG	5,111,081	4,929,548	181,533
SEPT	4,540,351	4,816,500	(276,149)
OCT	5,364,483	7,565,276	(2,200,793)
NOV	5,541,996	4,485,496	1,056,500
DEC	42,248,239	40,029,267	2,218,972
JAN	6,467,159	4,534,013	1,933,146
FEB	4,263,176	5,124,802	(861,626)
MAR	4,698,232	4,180,180	518,052
APR	-	5,453,827	-
MAY	-	4,080,429	-
JUN	-	40,950,333	-
Totals	83,401,132	130,984,532	2,901,189

Unassigned Fund Balance 5-year Comparison

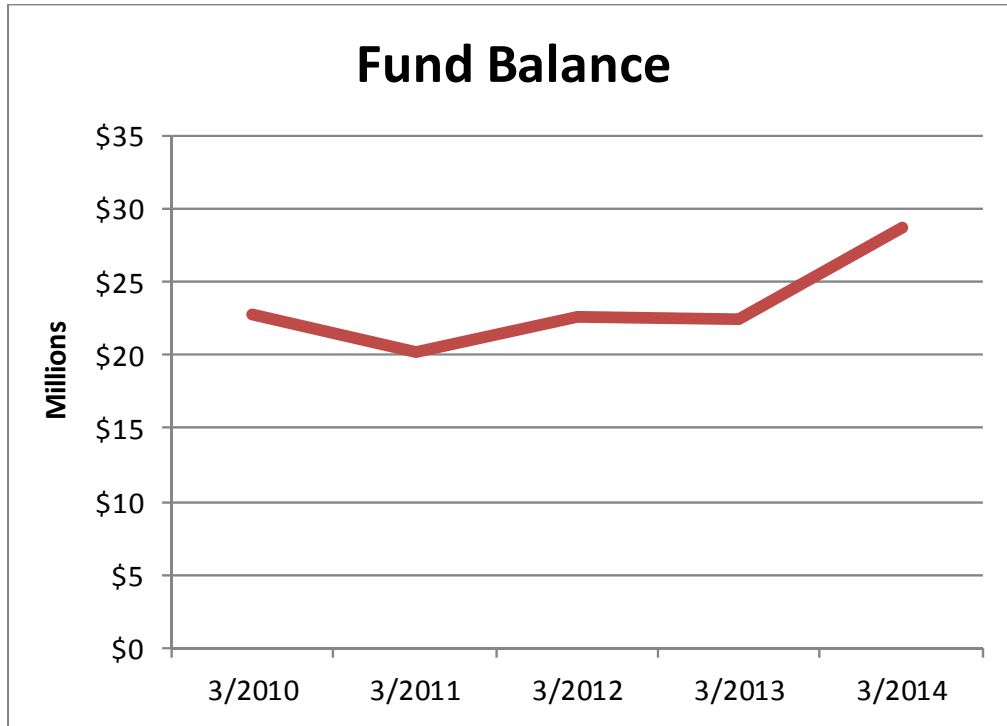


Photo courtesy of Lorraine Mossburg
Magnolia

The Importance of Fund Balance

Fund Balance is the excess dollars of what the County owns (assets) and what the County owes (liabilities). There are several reasons that fund balance is important. It is a critical factor in financial planning and budgeting. It provides funds for unforeseen expenses or emergencies. Fund balance reduces the need for short-term borrowing for operations and cash flows. Cash flow becomes a critical component since half of the largest revenue source is collected at the end of the budget year with the June 5th tax collection.

The Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) recommends that unassigned fund

balance be maintained at no less than two months of regular operating revenues or regular operating expenditures. For Frederick County's general fund, that equates to approximately \$22.2 million or 16.7% of the total general fund budget for FY 2014. Currently, the County's fund balance is above the recommendation at 21.5% (\$28.7 million).

The County monitors unassigned general fund balance monthly. Over the years, fund balance has been used to balance the General Fund budget. The General Fund fund balance was reduced by \$4.3 million to balance the FY 2014 budget and the same amount will be used to balance

the FY 2015 budget. At year-end those funds have been routinely returned to unassigned fund balance as a result of unbudgeted revenues or unspent expenditures. Returning those funds is a conscience effort on the part of management and the Board of Supervisors remains committed to retaining a healthy fund balance.

Unassigned General Fund fund balance has increased over \$6 million compared to March 2013. This is a result of year end revenues being greater than expenditures and year to date supplemental appropriations being \$3.2 million less than the prior fiscal year.

Unassigned General Fund fund balance at March 31, 2014 is \$28,663,201.



Photo courtesy of Lorraine Mossburg
Early Bird Gets the Worm

Revenue Information

Property taxes include real estate, personal property and machinery and tools tax. Total property taxes increased \$1,433,701 year to date and the majority can be attributed to personal property (+\$1,241,947). Other significant variances in-

clude real estate (+\$368,306) public services (-\$264,679) and penalties, interest & administration fees for liens & distress (+\$88,127).

Included in the permits and privilege fees are land use, transfer fees, development review fees,

building, mechanical, electrical, plumbing, sign, land disturbance, commercial burning, septic haulers, and sewage installation permits. These permits collections fluctuate with the economy and housing industry. The total

(Continued on page 5)

Property Tax Comparison 2013–2014

	FY2014	FY2013	Variance
JUL	2,852,053	2,899,488	(47,435)
AUG	390,778	(176,697)	567,475
SEPT	432,218	460,577	(28,359)
OCT	710,726	572,640	138,086
NOV	21,528,019	21,586,474	(58,455)
DEC	12,626,207	12,469,116	157,091
JAN	1,120,305	830,361	289,944
FEB	783,177	596,706	186,471
MAR	886,565	657,682	228,883
APR	-	1,264,639	-
MAY	-	25,777,745	-
JUN	-	11,593,370	-
Totals	41,330,048	78,532,102	1,433,701

Permit Fees Comparison 2013–2014

	FY2014	FY2013	Variance
JUL	114,415	89,758	24,657
AUG	140,296	93,481	46,815
SEPT	110,791	88,319	22,472
OCT	97,891	90,682	7,209
NOV	76,578	148,529	(71,951)
DEC	75,499	84,730	(9,231)
JAN	88,352	107,046	(18,694)
FEB	91,581	88,414	3,167
MAR	117,056	68,927	48,129
APR	-	105,864	-
MAY	-	81,983	-
JUN	-	166,318	-
Totals	912,460	1,214,051	52,574

Other Local Taxes Comparison 2013–2014

	FY2014	FY2013	Variance
JUL	263,117	747,278	(484,161)
AUG	872,088	98,954	773,134
SEPT	2,101,859	2,164,919	(63,060)
OCT	1,975,353	2,148,947	(173,594)
NOV	1,904,547	1,831,475	73,072
DEC	2,288,320	2,145,917	142,403
JAN	2,285,696	2,093,221	192,475
FEB	3,552,978	3,450,613	102,365
MAR	3,914,970	4,161,853	(246,883)
APR	-	2,036,935	-
MAY	-	2,994,665	-
JUN	-	6,058,649	-
Totals	19,158,928	29,933,427	315,751

Included in other local taxes are: local sales and use tax, communications sales tax, utility taxes, business licenses, auto rental tax, motor vehicle licenses fees, bank stock taxes, recordation taxes, meals and lodging taxes, street lights, and Star Fort fees. The categories that increased substantially were local sales tax, utility taxes, motor vehicle license fees, and meals and lodging taxes.

Sales Tax Comparison 2013–2014

	FY 2014	FY2013	Variance
JUL	1,011,266	943,592	67,674
AUG	969,208	982,739	(13,531)
SEPT	993,183	919,355	73,828
OCT	994,407	1,023,120	(28,713)
NOV	944,357	915,179	29,178
DEC	912,601	894,605	17,996
JAN	989,362	967,816	21,546
FEB	1,011,997	937,243	74,754
MAR	798,926	804,964	(6,038)
APR	-	780,249	-
MAY	-	889,794	-
JUN	-	926,388	-
Totals	8,625,306	10,985,043	236,693

Sales tax collection has risen by 2.8% through the third quarter of FY 2014. This chart is presented on a cash basis to reflect a better third quarter comparison.

Revenue Information

(Continued from page 4)
permits and privilege fees increased \$52,574 year to date. The volume of permit fees was a contributing factor of the increase.

Local sales taxes consist of the portion of the state sales tax that is remitted to the locality. The

state sales tax is 5.3% with the state returning 1% back to the locality. The sales tax increased \$236,693 through the third quarter of FY 2014 compared to the prior year and officials view the increase as a positive economic indicator.

The total variance of \$315,751 in

other local taxes through March is a net increase which was significantly impacted by the increase in sales tax, utility taxes, motor vehicle licenses fees, meals tax, and lodging tax.



NRADC
 "Serving the Criminal Justice System Since 1991"

Northwestern Regional Adult Detention Center

Written by James Whitley, Superintendent, NRADC

The Northwestern Regional Adult Detention Center (NRADC) is a regional governmental agency, with representation from each participating jurisdiction, and is considered to be a jointly governed organization. Frederick County serves as the jail's fiscal agent and jail activities are included in the

county's annual approved budget.

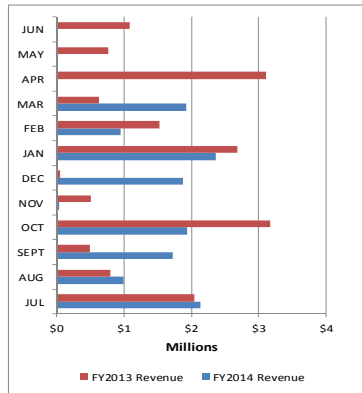
The NRADC is located in the Fort Collier Industrial Park, just northwest of Winchester. Situated on a 33 acre parcel of land, the complex consists of a Main Jail, an Annex Facility and a Community Corrections Center.

Detention Center operations are funded by the four participating jurisdictions based upon their individual utilization of facility beds over the three previous complete years. Local contributions are augmented by state assistance in the area of salaries and inmate per diem. In addition, some fees are collected from inmates and their activities.

Economic conditions at the state level continue to impact negatively upon state assistance levels; however, there has been a slight increase from FY11 to FY13 of about 1.6%. Although the Detention Center tried to remain at reduced expenses over the last few fiscal years, a state mandated increase to the life insurance premiums and rising inmate health care costs made it impossible for expenses to be reduced, causing increases each year in the contributions required of the participating jurisdictions.

NRADC Revenues

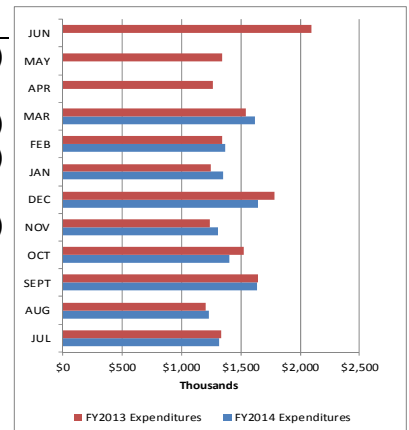
	FY2014 Revenue	FY2013 Revenue	Monthly Variance
JUL	2,141,636	2,046,504	95,132
AUG	1,001,336	794,843	206,493
SEPT	1,732,025	495,608	1,236,417
OCT	1,934,489	3,169,052	(1,234,563)
NOV	46,318	504,158	(457,840)
DEC	1,879,421	57,291	1,822,130
JAN	2,369,499	2,681,807	(312,308)
FEB	946,394	1,534,475	(588,081)
MAR	1,929,500	626,549	1,302,951
APR	-	3,115,074	-
MAY	-	772,378	-
JUN	-	1,089,284	-
Totals	13,980,617	16,887,023	2,070,330



NRADC Expenditures

The increase in revenue can be attributed to the timing of local contributions for \$1.5 million, an increase of \$200,628 for the local share and \$221,000 for bond proceeds.

	FY2014 Expenditures	FY2013 Expenditures	Monthly Variance
JUL	1,320,300	1,334,653	(14,353)
AUG	1,233,335	1,207,919	25,416
SEPT	1,640,822	1,643,388	(2,566)
OCT	1,406,298	1,526,073	(119,775)
NOV	1,306,520	1,237,260	69,260
DEC	1,642,485	1,784,033	(141,548)
JAN	1,349,565	1,246,852	102,713
FEB	1,368,375	1,342,084	26,291
MAR	1,618,509	1,540,078	78,431
APR	-	1,268,688	-
MAY	-	1,346,752	-
JUN	-	2,090,651	-
Totals	12,886,209	17,568,431	23,869



Frederick County Sanitary Landfill

Capital Improvements Plan 2014

- Boroscope (Gas to Energy)—piece of equipment used to view inside an internal combustion engine without having to disassemble the engine. Equipment has been rented in the past at a cost of nearly \$1,000 per day and ownership will recognize savings. Cost: \$10,000
- New track loader—will replace an existing one at the Municipal Solid Waste Landfill. The current unit was purchased with a guaranteed buy back after five years or 10,000 hours and the five year mark will be met in FY 2014. The track loader is one of the primary pieces of equipment for waste handling and needs to be in good working order at all times. Cost: \$193,956 includes trade in and dis-
- New equipment for recycling of cardboard and plastics—Compactor units will be added to more efficiently collect and transport plastics and cardboard to recycling centers. Cost includes the purchase of equipment

count (purchased 1/23/14).

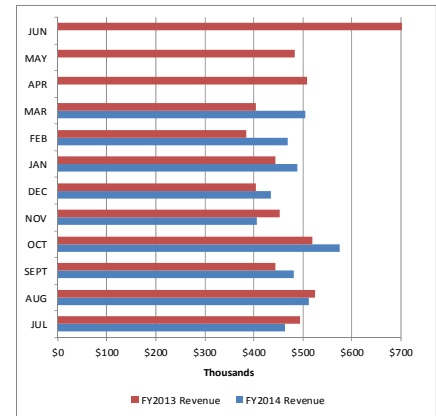
and site work. Equipment should help to lower operation cost. By using a compactor, more material will be able to be transported per trip, essentially reducing the amount of money that is paid to have the material transported to a recycler. Cost: \$150,000



Photo courtesy of Steve Frye
A rainbow shines over the Construction Demolition Debris (CDD) Landfill.

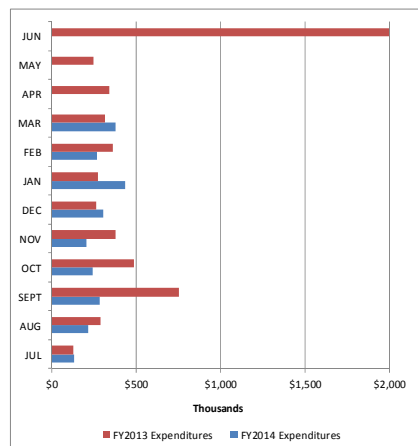
Landfill Revenues

	FY2014 Revenue	FY2013 Revenue	Monthly Variance
JUL	463,851	493,721	(29,870)
AUG	512,398	525,521	(13,123)
SEPT	481,218	443,332	37,886
OCT	574,633	518,991	55,642
NOV	406,825	453,331	(46,506)
DEC	435,036	403,940	31,096
JAN	489,162	444,150	45,012
FEB	468,402	385,046	83,356
MAR	504,559	403,497	101,062
APR	-	507,636	-
MAY	-	482,573	-
JUN	-	781,749	-
Totals	4,336,084	5,843,488	264,555



Landfill Expenditures

	FY2014 Expenditures	FY2013 Expenditures	Monthly Variance
JUL	132,819	129,602	3,217
AUG	218,622	292,154	(73,532)
SEPT	286,108	753,515	(467,407)
OCT	243,580	489,278	(245,698)
NOV	207,239	375,625	(168,386)
DEC	304,054	263,595	40,459
JAN	435,794	272,218	163,576
FEB	270,122	360,799	(90,677)
MAR	375,846	317,565	58,281
APR	-	343,974	-
MAY	-	246,370	-
JUN	-	1,998,792	-
Totals	2,474,184	5,843,488	(780,167)



The decrease in expenditures were impacted by the completion of capital projects in the previous year.

IT Replaces Microsoft Windows XP, Receives Valley Health Monitors Donation, & Streamlines IT Purchasing Process

Written by Walter Banks, IT Director, Frederick County Information Technology Department

“The plan allowed for the purchase of 166 replacement desktop units and 45 laptops for a total project cost of approximately \$199,000.”

The deadline for replacing any computers running outdated operating systems was April 8th, 2014, and Frederick County was more than prepared. In late February, the Board of Supervisors approved a plan to remove any computer running Windows XP from service in the county operations, to include the County Administration Building, the Public Safety Building, the Frederick County Animal Shelter, and the Frederick County Landfill. The plan allowed for the purchase of 166 replacement desktop units and 45 laptops for a total project cost of approximately \$199,000. The computer refresh project took one month and involved six members of the Frederick County Information Technology staff.

This initiative was a direct result of Microsoft’s announcement that it would retire and no longer support their Windows XP product line. Removing the Windows XP operating system from the county network is critical to ensure that the county’s computer systems remain secure and meet the service expectations of citizens and staff.

During the preparation to order the replacement units the IT department received a tip from a county employee that Valley Health Medical Center was upgrading its monitors to accommodate a new program. The IT department, in coordination with

Valley Health, received 125 used seventeen inch flat panel monitors. This donation allowed an initial savings of over \$12,000 while eliminating Valley Health’s \$1,250 monitor disposal fee. The monitors were in excellent condition and have allowed the county the flexibility to connect multiple monitors, replenish monitor replacement stock, and lower the need to purchase monitors in the foreseeable future.

The IT staff and various committees viewed the PC replacement project as an opportunity to form a process that addresses the need to keep workstations relevant, while at the same time minimize the need to mass purchase computer equipment in the future. A new refresh policy that would phase out computers after five years has been drafted as is awaiting approval. In the meantime, there are 40 computers that will need to be replaced in the next fiscal year.

The partnership with Valley Health Medical Center yielded great savings and demonstrates the power of common interests and great communication. The Frederick County IT department will continue to focus on providing high quality service and sound purchasing control processes.

The next major IT project involves upgrading the county from Microsoft Exchange 2003 to Microsoft Exchange 2010.



Top: IT Administrative Assistant, Alisa Scott, scans asset tags on new PCs to prepare for distribution.

Bottom: Donated monitors from Valley Health Medical Center await delivery.

This will be another huge advancement in technology that will involve each member of the IT department as well as county staff. This upgrade will improve and neutralize security threats and protect users against viruses, spam, and hackers.

Economic Indicators Used by the Treasurer

Written by Angela Whitacre, Deputy Treasurer, Frederick County Treasurer's Office

Economic indicators are vital tools when investing monies. The Treasurer's Office uses many of the same national economic indicators that most investors use. These include the unemployment rate (Bureau of Labor and Statistics), the Fed Funds rate (Federal Reserve), the inflation rate (Bureau of Labor & Statistics), and gross domestic product (Dept of Commerce).

These benchmarks give our office a sense of where the economy is headed, and correspondingly, where interest rates are headed. During the past five years, with the Fed Funds rate flat-lined at zero percent, low-risk investment rates of return

have been historically low. This has led to an increased reliance on the actions/opinions of the Federal Open Market Committee of the Federal Reserve, as a barometer of when interest rates might rise.

The other major source of information our office relies on for investment decisions is regional economic data from the Richmond Federal Reserve (Fifth District). The Fifth District includes Maryland, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia, and DC. It also has specific data for Virginia. Some of the most informative metrics are: payroll employment, personal income growth, industry growth by sector, wages and

salaries, and number of building permits. The aggregate of these points paint a picture of our region and our state in relation to national trends. It gives context to whether our local economy is expanding and improving or contracting and slowing.

The first set of tools help us determine what is a good rate of return for investments, while the local metrics help give insight into the length of the term for cash flow purposes as previously discussed in part two of this series. The final installment of this series will be in the Summer Financial Newsletter and will look into the results of our investment policy versus market returns.

“Economic indicators are vital tools when investing monies.”

Gainesboro Citizens' Convenience Site Relocated

Written by Gloria Puffinburger, Solid Waste Manager, Frederick County Public Works Department

Considering this past winter's weather patterns, Thursday, January 23, was unremarkable in Frederick County, except for one thing – a new county facility opened to residents.

Gainesboro District Supervisor Robert Hess, County Administrator John Riley, Jr., and public works staff braved the frigid two degree temperature just before sunrise to officially open a new citizens' convenience site in the Gainesboro community and greet the first residents to drop off their refuse and recycling.

Construction began on the 1 ½ acre site in July of 2013 and was completed in December. The

facility, located just behind the Old Gainesboro Elementary School, boasts new refuse equipment, improved ingress and egress, an expanded parking area, and greater recycling opportunities. It represents an investment of just under \$500,000 and a long-identified need on the county's Capital Improvements Plan.

Residents using the facility have been impressed by the offerings of an expanding recycling area and the site's size and ease of use. Just over 5,000 residents used the

former facility during August 2013, making the Gainesboro facility one of the busiest convenience sites in the western end of the county.



Photos courtesy of Gloria Puffinburger

Top: **Gainesboro Supervisor Robert Hess** recycles newspaper.

Left: **Jason Rickard of Cross Junction** is the first customer at the new convenience site.



Energy Management Program Update

Written by Jon Turkel, Park & Stewardship Planner, Parks & Recreation Department

“... energy use behavior presents our greatest opportunity for savings ahead.”

Over \$800,000 in energy bills related to electricity and natural gas use passed through the Frederick County Finance Department in fiscal year 2013. Natural gas and electricity are used in a wide variety of applications allowing County departments to function; whether it is keeping office buildings warm in the winter or keeping pool pumps running in the summer. As most are aware, reducing energy consumption has benefits including cost savings and reduced pollution. To realize these benefits the county, in 2010, invested in energy efficiency improvements including replacing older less efficient lights and heaters. These efficiency steps have reduced consumption around \$100,000 per year, with an estimated additional \$35,000 annual savings the new equipment realized in reduced maintenance costs.

With volatility in energy pricing

becoming normal and the significant amount of resources put to energy at County facilities, keeping track of consumption is necessary in order to manage costs. As we can't control the price of energy, we must keep track of consumption in order to understand the implications of past operational decisions and to inform future ones. Without accessible and useful data the significant cost of energy gets lost in the decision making process.

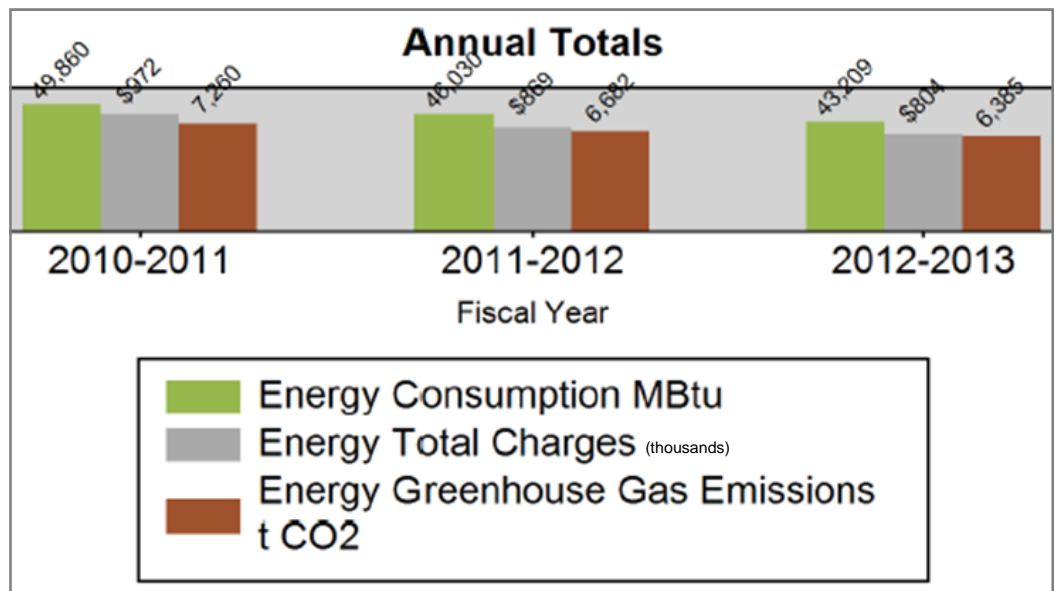
Escalating energy costs leading up to the great recession spurred the County's first investigation into energy completed in the summer of 2008. The results of this study showed that along with cost, energy consumption was escalating rapidly. This was not so much of a surprise considering the addition of the Public Safety Building, yet still proved instructive to fully understand the cost implications for the

County budget. Following the initial effort, staff was directed to monitor energy use for all accounts on a consistent basis.

Today, the County utilizes a subscription service to input, store, and create useful representations of energy use by department, facility and individual meter with five years data currently stored and more as time progresses. Data is checked for completeness by algorithms to ensure accuracy and variations in consumption exceeding 20% (over previous year) are reported to staff for review. Consumption and cost information is presented at various levels and allows for both quick scanning of overall performance and that of individual facilities. By having readily available and understandable information, staff is able to identify, communicate and respond to consumption changes to deter-

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The big picture: County wide electricity and natural gas consumption has decreased in the past 3 years.



Energy Update Continued

(Continued from page 10)

mine causes.

Among the savings realized from the energy monitoring program, some of the more notable include avoiding annual monitoring charges from major energy efficiency measures, rate structure changes at the administra-

tion building and of course the reduced staff time from no longer having to collect, input, and interpret data. In total, the annual subscription fee amounts to a fraction of the realized annual saving benefits.

Of course the effort of energy management is not an end in itself. Graphs and tables are a

tool by which the County can understand its energy consumption and exposure to the associated costs of energy consumption. The process of becoming efficient with energy use is something that everyone has a part in and energy use behavior presents our greatest opportunity for savings ahead.

Frederick County Finance Committee Summary of Action Items—FY 2014 QTR 3

The Finance Committee generally meets at 8:00 a.m. on the third Wednesday of each month in the First Floor Conference Room in the County Administration Complex. The committee is comprised of three board members and three citizen members.

The primary function of the committee is to review matters of a financial nature including proposed changes to fiscal/procurement policies and the review and recommendation for matters of a financial nature coming forward to the Board including, but not limited to, supplemental appropriations, transfers and contracts.

The following are the meeting dates for the third quarter of fiscal year 2014:

January 15, 2014

February 19, 2014

March 19, 2014

All Finance Committee Agendas and Reports can be found online, <http://www.fcva.us/departments/f-n/finance/finance-committee>.

The following are **General Fund** supplemental appropriation requests which required no local funds:

- \$10,855 for an insurance reimbursements and restitution for Sheriff vehicles automobile damages;
- \$30,757 for a grant awarded to Fire & Rescue for the purchase of Lucas Auto Pulse devices;
- \$52,583 for a Virginia Homeland Security grant awarded to the Fire & Rescue HazMat Team;
- \$6,657 to return unspent VJCCCA funds to the State of Virginia;
- \$85,352 for Fire Program funds collected by the State of Virginia and disbursed to the 11 volunteer fire & rescue stations;
- \$10,000 for unbudgeted Fire School Programs revenue collected to be used for gasoline costs; and
- \$9,000 for the purchase of portable field equipment to create cable channel programming from the Comcast Public Education and Government (PEG) grant.

The following are **General Fund** supplemental appropriation requests which required local funds:

- \$140,000 for the purchase of case management software & equipment upgrades for the Commonwealth Attorney's Office;
- \$167,973 to upgrade Windows XP computers; and
- \$280,000 to cover overtime expenses for Fire & Rescue through June 30, 2014.

The committee also held discussions on the following topics:

- A proposed lease agreement between the Glass-Glenn Burnie Foundation and Frederick County to establish Rose Hill Park;
- The proposed site plan for the new Round Hill Fire Station; and
- The FY 2013 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR).

County of Frederick

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Photo courtesy of LeeAnna Pyles
Graphics courtesy of Jeremy Coulson

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National & Local Headlines

- Regional unemployment rate for February 2014 and February 2013 was 4.9%.
- Average fixed mortgages rates fell for a second straight week with the 30-year at 4.7% and the 15 year at 3.33%.
- The Energy Department predicts the average retail price of gas between April and September will be \$3.57 per gallon, one penny less than last year.
- Family Dollar will cut some jobs and close about 370 underperforming stores.
- GM announced a \$1.3 billion charge, up from \$700 million, for costs related to an ignition switch recall.
- Frederick County government, as an employer, had \$3,067 unemployment claims for the March 2014 quarter compared to \$5,138 for the previous year.
- Hedge fund SAC Capital was sentenced on criminal fraud charges under a \$1.8 billion deal that included the largest criminal fine ever for insider trading.



"Flowers" created with discarded materials are on display in celebration of Earth Day.

Photo courtesy of Rhonda Sargent