



Chair Phyllis J. Randall

Newsletter



Hello, Loudoun

This week I have heard from between 250 and 300 residents about a November ballot referendum for a Loudoun Police Department. While the opinion was about even, roughly 80% of people said they prefer to have more information on cost. When that number of people, on both sides of an issue speak, as an Elected Official, I must listen. In addition, much of the information put out by the Sheriff was unfortunately, not accurate. So yes, pausing is appropriate. The motion (that will be put forward by Supervisor Turner) will be for information on cost and process, not for a ballot referendum this November.

In addition, I have received many questions about why I believe a Police Department, especially in a large county, is preferable. Let's answer these questions and get the facts.

Question: Why a Police Chief and not a Sheriff?

Answer: It's not either, it's both.

Loudoun is the only County in the Metropolitan Capital Region and the largest County in the Commonwealth of Virginia utilizing an elected Sheriff as their Chief Law Enforcement Officer. Per Article VII, Section 4 of the Virginia Constitution, a Sheriff is a required Constitutional Officer. However, in every other large Virginia County, the elected Sheriff's duties include mostly court services, civil proceedings, and detention facilities (jails). A Police Department is responsible for all law enforcement duties to include but not limited to: traffic violations, criminal investigations and patrol. To reiterate, Loudoun is an outlier in the delivery of law enforcement services when compared to our neighbors.

Let me be very clear, should the citizens of Loudoun vote to create a Police Department to handle primary law enforcement duties, the citizens of Loudoun will still have the opportunity to elect a Sheriff every four years as they have for decades. That will not change.

Question: The cost?

Answer: Once a Police Department is created, total County law enforcement costs will be very similar to what they are now.

Fairfax County utilizes a Police Department for law enforcement and a Sheriff's Office for court and detention services. In Loudoun, the Sheriff is responsible for both functions. Both counties devote approximately 6% of their operating budgets to these functions, so the law enforcement model a community employs has little bearing on year-over-year operating costs. In other words, having both a Police Department and a Sheriff's Office will not affect overall budgets as there will be no duplication of services. Each entity will be responsible for the delivery of discrete County services.

One-time costs for minor changes such as repainting vehicles and buying new uniforms are to be expected, but the full-time employee count should remain approximately the same. The County Administrator and staff will work through this issue and bring these one-time costs to the Board for consideration during the annual County budget process.

Question: Why? Why fix what is not broken?

Answer: I would posit the process is currently broken.

The most pressing concern I have for the future of our county relating to law enforcement is the risk of having an unqualified Chief Law Enforcement Officer. The only qualifications to be elected Sheriff in the Commonwealth of Virginia and in Loudoun are to:

- be of legal age,
- have a high school diploma, and
- live in the County.

That's it. No law enforcement, investigation, or police experience is required. In addition, no education beyond a high school diploma or experience in financial or personnel management is required. In Loudoun, we are lucky to currently have a person in office who is qualified to be Sheriff. However, there is no guarantee this will be true in future elections. The risk of having an unqualified sheriff is not an appropriate one for a diverse and growing county of more than 400,000 people like Loudoun. Moreover, the elected Sheriff, by definition, is a politician first and a law enforcement officer second. Candidates for Sheriff have their political party affiliation shown after their names on the ballot. County Supervisors do not. In Loudoun, we select our Chief Law Enforcement Officer in a partisan election every four years. I do not believe law enforcement should be a partisan job. In fact, I believe requiring law enforcement to engage in political fundraising is beneath the dignity of the position. I do not believe we should ever know the political affiliation of the Chief Law Enforcement Officer in any jurisdiction.

In contrast, a Police Chief is not selected in a partisan election every four years. A Police Chief is hired by the County Administrator after a nationwide search. That person would undergo a series of interviews, to include appearing before a human resources panel and the County Administrator. They would be required to have an extensive law enforcement background as well as knowledge of how to manage a multi-million-dollar budget. The Board of Supervisors is NOT part of the interview process and takes NO PART in selecting a Police Chief.

Every four years, after an election (and quite frankly, at any time) a Sheriff can, without a human resources review or stated reason, choose not to reinstate the contracts of Sheriff's deputies. This equates to a termination. If the contract of a deputy is not renewed, that individual has no human resources or county grievance recourse. In short, they are out of a job with very little notice and no ability for their case to be reviewed. Our deputies are hardworking professionals for whom I have the greatest respect. I believe

they deserve to have the rights that every other County employee has as it relates to losing their positions and their livelihoods. All employees of a Police Department have grievance rights and their fate is not left to one person, after an election.

Question: Why now?

Answer: This discussion has been going on in Loudoun County for almost fifteen years. This is not a new issue.

Many of the Supervisors elected in November 2019 discussed this issue and consider this change to be important for the future of Loudoun County. Timing is important because the process is fairly lengthy; it must be thorough, complete, and not rushed.

- First, the Board of Supervisors needs to vote on a resolution asking the circuit court to put the referendum question on the ballot.
- Then, the Circuit Court determines whether to approve or deny the request.
- If approved, the question goes on the ballot for the voters – the citizens of Loudoun County – to decide.
- If the referendum passes, the General Assembly adopts legislation authorizing the establishment of a Police Department in Loudoun County.
- This process will likely take until the end of a General Assembly session.
- After that, the County needs to adopt an ordinance and initiate the necessary budgeting and hiring processes.
- The entire process will take two years or more.
- Finally, the combined law enforcement structure of an elected Sheriff and Police Chief would not go into effect before January 1, 2024, after the term of the current Sheriff.

Question: Who would a Police Chief answer to?

Answer: Just as the Chief of our combined Fire and Rescue System reports to the County Administrator, so would the Police Chief of the Police Department.

Just as the Board of Supervisors is not involved in the day to day operations of the combined Fire and Rescue System, they would not be involved in the day to day operations, personnel management, or investigations of a Police Department.

I look forward to having a conversation on cost and process at the Board business meeting on Tuesday, July 21st. I wish to express support to County staff who serves residents with professionalism and treats each person with dignity.

COVID-19 Update

The Virginia Department of Health (VDH) reports 73,527 total COVID-19 cases. Please visit the [VDH website](#) for the daily dashboard. In Loudoun County, the number of confirmed positive cases is 4,519 and there have been 101 deaths associated with COVID-19.



If people are not wearing cloth face coverings, please try to stay six feet away. You may also call or talk to the business owner about your concerns if you see staff or customers who are not wearing face covers in indoor public settings. To file an online complaint about Executive Order 63 involving the requirement to wear a face covering while inside buildings, use this online [reporting form](#).

2020 Census

Have you been counted? The Census is confidential, takes 10 minutes or less to complete, and funds programs that are critical to supporting communities during events like COVID-19, such as school meals, healthcare services, affordable housing, and more. Households that have not responded will be mailed an additional reminder postcard, July 22nd through July 28th. Please respond today [online](#) or by phone 844-330-2020.

Over 75% of Loudoun is counted!

HAVE YOU BEEN COUNTED?



- 1 Visit 2020census.gov
- 2 Select your preferred language
- 3 Click on "Begin Questionnaire"
- 4 Enter your 12-digit Census ID or home address
- 5 Complete the questions for yourself and everyone living in your home

You can also complete your form by phone by calling 1-844-330-2020 or by paper form mailed in April.

Loudoun County
VIRGINIA

2020Census.gov

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Greenway Toll Increase Public Hearing

Residents who did not have an opportunity to participate in the June 30th public hearing still have the opportunity to voice their opinions about the proposed toll rate increase through August 24th. Anyone who would like give input to the State Corporation Commission (SCC) may do so by completing this [online form](#), or by sending a letter to the address below by 5:00 pm on August 24th:

Hon. Joel H. Peck, Clerk
State Corporation Commission
c/o Document Control Center
P.O. Box 2118
Richmond, VA 23218-2118

In all correspondence, please reference: Application of Toll Road Investors Partnership II, L.P., For an Increase in the Maximum Level of Tolls – Case No. PUR-2019-00218.

At the hearing, I said the outrageous toll increases proposed by TRIP II would allow only people who sit at the highest income level or work for a company that covers toll costs to afford this road. The single parent trying to pick up their child from daycare, the senior citizen on a fixed income or the family with two parents working to make ends meet would not be able to use this road. The Greenway would become a class-based system that disallows people from using it. Getting home to your family shouldn't be based on your income. Even in a positive economic environment, an annual increase of 6-plus percent per year is not feasible for most residents to pay; in the COVID-19 economy, it's almost impossible. I hope you will voice your opinion. Thank you.

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Voice for a Cause

Ampersand Pantry Project

Since January, Ampersand Pantry Project has become a staple in the Loudoun community. With the support of local restaurants and community volunteers, the pantry has provided free lunches, and personal hygiene products to Loudoun citizens in need. Operating 7 days a week, the Ampersand Pantry Project has helped thousands of citizens including those adversely affected by COVID-19.



Free Rabies Vaccination Clinic

On Friday, July 17th, Loudoun County Animal Services (LCAS) will host a **free rabies vaccination event** for pets. The clinic will take place at Philip A. Bolen Memorial Park, 42405 Claudia Drive, Leesburg, in the parking lot near Field 12 and will run from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm, or while supplies last, and is open to all Loudoun County residents. Dogs receiving vaccinations at this clinic will also receive a complimentary one-year Loudoun County license.

- All cats and dogs over 12 weeks of age are welcome to attend. Please bring cats in secure carriers and dogs on a 6-foot or shorter leash, no retractable leashes.

- Previous vaccination records are required for those wishing to receive a three-year vaccine.
- Participants are asked to remain in their vehicles; face coverings and social distancing are required.
- Participants are asked to bring a piece of mail or driver's license with their current address on it.

Free Rabies Vaccination Clinic

July 17, 2020 (Friday)
10 am - 3 pm*

*while supplies last

Bolen Park, Leesburg, VA
Open to all Loudoun County Residents.



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