

VACO Achievement Awards  
1207 East Main St.  
Suite 300  
Richmond, VA 23219-3627

June 1, 2011

Encl: (1) Application Form  
(2) Electronic version of the Newspaper supplement placed in the Farmville Herald on 4/19/11  
(3) Actual Newspaper Supplement placed in Farmville Herald on 4/19/11

Dear Mr. Harter;

Enclosed you will find an application from Prince Edward County for a 2011 VACo Achievement Award in the category of Communications (public relations).

For over 40 years the citizens of Prince Edward County have realized the Appomattox River may one day prove not to be an adequate water supply for Farmville and Prince Edward County and have worked to develop a drought resistant water supply. The first step was the location and construction of a reservoir. This was achieved over the course of many years and two bond referenda with the reservoir being filled in 1995. The reservoir is called the Sandy River Reservoir (SRR), named for the river that was used to create the reservoir. The drought of 2002, when the Appomattox River almost completely dried up, spurred the community to greater action.

Over the last nine years the County and Town have worked to determine the best way to use the water in the SRR. During that time, dozens of meetings have been held and many studies have been completed. On October 17, 2008 Prince Edward County received an unsolicited PPEA (Public Private

Education and Infrastructure Act) proposal for the development of a complete water system to include an intake, water plant and distribution system. The proposal was very ambitious as it proposed to develop a regional system to serve not only Prince Edward County and the Town of Farmville but also any of our neighboring Towns and Counties who wished to join.

After 15 months, over which time the County researched the PPEA process, the ability of the County to afford such a project and determine which of our neighbors would consider joining a regional water authority the County signed an Interim Agreement in January 2010 with the design-build team of Crowder Construction and Draper Aden Associates. The purpose of that agreement was to refine the scope of the project and assist with the development of partnerships with the Towns of Crewe and Burkeville and Hampden-Sydney College, all of which had expressed interest in using water from the SRR.

On February 8, 2011 the design-build team delivered the final lump sum cost proposal for the project. The total project cost is \$24.9 million with Prince Edward's portion estimated to be \$19.6 million. The

next step would be a decision to proceed or not in building this water system. If the decision is to proceed, this project will be the largest and costliest project ever for Prince Edward County.

The Board of Supervisors realizes the importance of this decision and wants to involve the citizens in the decision making process realizing citizen involvement will result in a more successful decision. But the Board of Supervisors understands that most citizens are not able to devote the time to stay abreast of all of the issues that have developed over the last nine years. They also realize there are many new residents who are not aware of the water supply problems the County has faced in the past.

As a result the Board directed the County staff to prepare an informational document that (1) explained the purpose of the document, (2) provided a history of the SRR, (3) provided a history of the flow in the Appomattox River and the need to develop a reliable water supply, (4) outlined the options studied to develop a reliable water supply, (5) inform the public of the PPEA process, (6) discuss the development of partners and the importance of regional development to Prince Edward County and the Town of Farmville, affordability of the project and its potential impact on taxes,(7) explained the project scope and (8) describe benefits of a public water system.

Once the document was completed the Board of Supervisors decided the best way to disseminate the document was to print it as a paid supplement to be inserted into the local newspaper, The Farmville Herald. In addition, enough inserts were printed that they were placed in convenience stores, at golf courses, the YMCA and other places frequented by citizens so all citizens could obtain a copy. The supplement informed citizens of six public informational meetings scattered across the County where they could hear a presentation about the project and then ask questions. The cost was paid from the

existing budget. County citizens have commented on how helpful the document has been in informing them of the issues surrounding the water project; as a result this action has been viewed as a success.

You will notice on the actual newspaper supplement there are two items that are not included in the Counties version of the supplement, (1) a picture of the flow in the Appomattox River in 2002 and (2) a highlighted block displaying the countywide informational meetings. The first item was added by the newspaper with the County's approval. The second was added by the newspaper and was not part of the supplement developed by the County.

If you have any questions contact Wade Bartlett, County Administrator at (434)-392-8837.

Sincerely,

W.W. Bartlett  
County Administrator