



## BUSINESS Queen Anne's

*April 2011*

### *BQA on Facebook!*

BUSINESS Queen Anne's  
has joined the world of Social Networking!

If you have a Facebook profile, make sure to check out  
<http://www.facebook.com/home.php#!/pages/Business-Queen-Annes/197514576936772>  
and "like" us!

Already there are several interesting conversations going on regarding issues such as Four Seasons and the County's deficit. As it states on the site, "The dialogue on this page is to keep an open forum of informative, educational and exchange of ideas. We welcome your comments and hope we can all respect each others opinions. If we can't agree on some of the issues; then at the very least we can agree to disagree in a civil manner."

### *Water & Sewer Rate Adjustment Public Hearing Set April 12th at Percy Thomas Center*

A public hearing has been scheduled at 7:00 p.m. on April 12 at the Percy Thomas Center (Kent Island Senior Center) regarding proposed changes to the County's public water and sewer rate schedules. The proposed rate increases and adjustments will serve to adequately fund the day-to-day operations and maintenance, emergency repairs, system improvements and fund depreciation. In addition, the proposed changes will help to encourage water conservation, and simplify the rate schedules, which differ throughout the service area. Immediately prior to the hearing at 6:30 p.m., an overview of the proposed modifications will be presented by Public Works staff.

There are a total of six rate adjustment proposals to be considered by the County Commissioners, who will be convening as the Sanitary Commission. In the largest rate increase scenario, a typical homeowner's sewer and water bill is estimated to increase by approximately \$2.50 per month.

The Public Works Advisory Board recommended the water and sewer rate increases after careful review of the 124-page study conducted by Springsted Inc., a professional utility rate consultant. Springsted, Inc. was asked to evaluate current water and sewer rates and determine an appropriate rate structure to adequately fund operations through 2020. The findings were also presented to the county's Task Force for Government Sustainability which unanimously voted to forward the proposal to the County Commissioners for the public hearing. Currently, sewer and water rate increases are each capped at 2.5 percent annually. This is insufficient to meet the long-term maintenance objectives, said Todd Mohn, Director of Public Works. The proposal for sewer rates

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#### *Your BQA Board!*

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recommends adjusting the annual cap to 4.5 percent to assist with the payment of the debt service for the new Enhanced Nutrient Removal Wastewater Treatment Plant on Kent Island. An alternative proposal would increase the annual sewer rate cap up to 6.5 percent to also fund depreciation of all sewer infrastructure assets.

The proposal for water rates calls for either a 3.5 percent annual rate adjustment to assist with funding future water system improvements or up to 5.5 percent annually to fund both water system improvements and depreciation of all water infrastructure assets.

Historically, all annual water rate increases were applied to the entire customer bill which includes fixed or ready-to-serve expenses and usage or consumption expenses. With the goal of promoting conservation, this proposal would hold the fixed fees flat and applying an equivalent rate adjustment to the consumptive portion of the bill only. By implementing this proposal, designed to be revenue neutral overall, customers that use less water will pay less and those that use more will pay more, said Alan Quimby, Chief Sanitary Engineer. This proposal does not impact customers that are not connected to the County's water system.

Sewer and water allocation fees, which are paid once generally at the time of a new customer connection, are proposed to be set at \$28.00 per gallon for new sewer and \$16.00 per gallon for new water connections. Current rates are \$25.00 per gallon for most residential sewer connections and \$34.60 per gallon for commercial sewer connections. Water allocation fees currently range from \$15.80 to \$22.50 per gallon. In both cases these connection fees will continue to be adjusted by their respective annual escalator each January (5.0% for sewer allocation and 2.5% for water allocation). **Allocation rates for commercial use will be reduced!**

The final proposal will raise the cost for Septic Haulers, who have not seen any rate increase since 1997. This proposal recommends an increase in disposal fees from \$0.06 to \$0.09 per gallon to cover the actual cost of treating septic waste that is trucked into the sewer plant for treatment. This rate increase impacts non-system customers residing outside of the public water and sewer service area that use private on-lot septic systems.

Mohn said these recommendations came after several years of study and discussion between the Department of Public Works Citizen's Advisory Board, the Sanitary Commission, county staff, county residents, and Springsted, Inc. A public information meeting was held last summer. The January 2010 Final Evaluation Report by Springsted, Inc., is available on line at <http://www.qac.org/default.aspx?pageid=75&template=3&toplevel=34>

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### ***Important Planning Commission Meeting!***

On Thursday April 14th at 9:00 am the Queen Anne's County Planning Commission will be hearing testimony and public comment on a number of citizen and County sponsored proposals for text amendments to the County's Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision regulations.

Included in the proposed amendments are proposals to eliminate the 65,000 SF maximum size cap for individual uses or tenant spaces in the Suburban Commercial zoning district. This arbitrary size cap on certain retail uses imposed many years ago to stop plans for a specific major retailer from locating in the County is a significant economic detriment to the County's commercial tax base and should be removed.

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### ***BQA Membership New Investment Rate!***

Business Queen Anne's is now offering a special rate for new members!

**\$99 a year for three years!**

Click the link below to download an application!

[Membership Application](#)

### ***Membership Renewal***

Thank you to

**MDIT, LLC**

and

**K. Hovnanian  
Homes**

for renewing their membership!

### ***Mark Your Calendar...***

**Tuesday, April 12th 7 PM**  
**Percy Thomas Center**  
Public Hearing Water & Sewer  
Rate Adjustments

**Thursday, April 14th 9 AM**  
**Planning and Zoning**  
160 Coursevall Drive  
Centreville, MD 21617

**Monday, April 25th 6 PM**  
**Sudlersville Town  
Hall Meeting Room**  
Hearing regarding sewer capacity  
increase

### **COUNTY BUDGET HEARINGS**

**June 13th, 7 PM**  
Bayside Elementary School

**June 14th, 7 PM**  
QACHS Auditorium  
(Constant Yield Hearing)

**June 15th, 7 PM**  
Sudlersville Middle School

Other important amendments proposed would lower the permitted residential density in the Countryside zoning district from 1DU/5 Acres to 1 DU/8 Acres for cluster subdivisions and raise residential multi-family residential density in the Town Center zoning district from 4.5DU/Acre to 10DU/Acre. The County Department of Public Works has proposed an amendment to allow more than 5 lots on a Private Road subject to Planning Commission approval.

Here is the April 14th Planning Commission agenda: [APRIL PC AGENDA](#). Copies of all the proposed amendments can be obtained from the County Planning and Zoning Office. BQA members are encouraged to review all the proposed amendments and attend the PC meeting to support those amendments that would create jobs and help improve the County's tax base and economy.

### *Sudlersville Sewer Plant Expansion Hearing*

A Public Hearing for expanding Sudlersville's sewer plant is scheduled for April 25th at 6 PM. Members able to attend should speak up for the expansion. Hearing will be at Sudlersville Town Hall.

### *County Budget Hearings Set For June*

The Queen Anne's County Commissioners will be holding three public hearings in June regarding the FY12 county budget and the constant yield. The constant yield rate is the rate that will bring a county the same amount of tax revenues in the coming fiscal year as the previous fiscal year. Public hearings will be held at:

June 13th, 7 PM  
Bayside Elementary School

June 14th, 7 PM  
QACHS Auditorium  
(\*Constant Yield Hearing)

June 15th, 7 PM  
Sudlersville Middle School

*\*The constant yield rate is the rate that will bring a county the same amount of tax revenues in the coming fiscal year as the previous fiscal year. For more info on constant yield visit <http://www.dat.state.md.us/sdatweb/cytr.html>*

**Annual BQA  
Membership Meeting**  
**Thursday, August 25th**  
Mear's Point Marina  
from 6-8 PM  
MORE INFO TO COME!!

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