

The Voter



LEAGUE OF
WOMEN VOTERS®

Virginia Peninsula MAL Unit of the League of Women Voters of VA.

This is our Water Issue

Water affects all our lives. We may work on it. We may drive across it every day. We all drink it. Some people get flooded by it. Several events happen this month that are related to water issues around the area. The following items the League should know about are covered in this newsletter:

- The EPA goal for cleaning the Chesapeake Bay and where Virginia stands in the process.
- The Navy meeting with communities in regard to fixed firing ranges.
- Hampton City Wetlands Board
- Our meeting speaker with the head of the FM-FADA regarding flooding and munitions issues was cancelled again due to the rain last month. We are trying to reschedule for a date before the end of the year.

Two Upcoming Important Meetings Same Date and Time

Thursday October 7 meetings

- EPA public hearing on Virginia Plan to clean up the Chesapeake Bay.
- Hampton City is having a public input session for their Community Plan Update Kick Off Event. The meeting is from 5:30—9 at the Hampton Convention Center.

If you can't make Hamptons meeting you can still have input. Take the survey about the cities future at

<http://bit.ly/b9yv7P>



Voter Guides and Upcoming Elections

Several people in the League have questioned the response to building wind turbines or oil rigs in firing ranges of the Navy. This is one of the questions we asked the candidates for Congress. These questions as well as others will be posted in our voters guide for the 2nd, 3rd and 4th district. To receive notices when these are available follow us on twitter at **vplwv** or on facebook at **Virginia Peninsula LWV** . You will be able to see the Voters Guides at our website www.lwvpeninsula.org or by visiting the website voter411.org



Upcoming Debates

District 2 Congressional Debate—Oct 9

District 3 Congressional Debate—Oct 15

The debates are invitation only but will be rebroadcast on WHRO a few days after the debate. Any members can attend debates. Please email vplwv@lwvpeninsula.org and let us know if you wish to attend.

EPA & Chesapeake Bay

The Navy at Firing Ranges

The Navy had a meeting for citizens on the Atlantic for an Environmental Impact Statement. One of our members attending with the hope of finding information about the existing munitions in this area as well as the issue of building wind turbines or oil platforms in this region.

The meeting was disappointed on a couple items. One being the fact there was not real public interaction. Mostly reps standing in front of displays scattered around room handing out flyers. Another disappointment was the lack of attendance by the general public.

To see Atlantic Fleet Training and Testing Environmental Impact Statement go to <http://www.afteis.com>



VIMS

The Gulf Oil Spill: A Report from the Front Lines, 7:00 pm, October 28, 2010. VIMS After-Hours Lecture. Details at:

<http://bit.ly/bEHDet>

VIMS has announced it Fall Center for Coastal Resources Management Workshop. The date is Nov. 4, 2010 from 9am—3:30 pm . The cost is \$25 dollars and includes a boxed lunch. For more information go to :

<http://bit.ly/bSvQoO>

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency will hold a public hearing Thursday on its revamped Chesapeake Bay restoration plan.

The meeting, from 6 to 8 p.m. at Crowne Plaza Hampton Marina Hotel, 700 Settlers Landing Road, is one of four in Virginia.

The agency plans to impose a "pollution diet" on the bay, which, despite increased awareness, remains overloaded with nutrients and sediments. The pollutants cause poor water quality.

EPA officials said they will clamp down on farms, sewage treatment plants, heavy industry and other polluters. They asked each of the bay's six watershed states and the District of Columbia to devise ways to cut pollution.

Last month, EPA officials said the plans of Virginia and four other states had "serious deficiencies." Virginia's plan is neither specific nor strong enough, they said.

EPA officials, acting under separate presidential and court orders, ordered states to submit their final plans by Nov. 29. It will gather them into a single document and release it by the end of the year.

Pollution reduction efforts will begin in earnest next year and be in full effect by 2012.

The public comment period runs until Nov. 8. To submit comments after Thursday night's meeting, visit

<http://www.epa.gov/chesapeakebaytmdl/>

-DailyPress

The Sierra Club put on a "Healing Our Waters" forum. They had impressive speakers :

- **Jeff Corbin** – Senior Advisor, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 3
- **Ted Henifin** – General Manager, Hampton Roads Sanitation District
- **Jack Frye** – Director, Soil & Water Conservation Division, VA Department of Conservation and Recreation
- **Dr. Carl Hershner** – Director, Center for Coastal Resources Management, Virginia Institute of Marine Science

At this meeting the speakers were asked about the effect munitions has upon the pollution. Which would be a Federal issue. Both Dr. Hershner and Jeff Corbin said studies proved that they did not contribute to the problem in the Chesapeake Bay. We were of course curious about these studies. Dr. Hershner has been contacted several times. Also Jeff Corbin was contacted and asked for the studies they referred to. Neither has responded at this date.

Note from the President



Why is the wetlands board so important to our community.

At the past meeting of the wetlands board, Hampton University put in a request to get a permit for improvements to the area around Strawberry Banks. The process is that before approving a permit the board goes out and views the property and sees what the requestor is suggesting. Then they look to see if this work will accomplish what the requestor wants to accomplish. They also look at the effects the work would have on surrounding properties. When it came to Hampton University request there were several issues.

- When the board looked at the property, four days before the hearing, the property had not been flagged for the suggested work.
- When questioned about Hampton University plans for the area the petitioners said there were several options discussed but would not give details.
- They also suggested items such as rebuilding a beach which had existed years ago. They had found images showing the beach when it was in existence.

Where the problems exist as pointed out by the board:

- The beach, even if it existed in the past, could wash away during a storm and fill in the river/creek on the adjoining property. The petitioner said they would put up a screen to hold the sand. One board member informed the petitioner that the screens would not work in holding the beach sand from eroding.
- They also noted that most of the “improvements” for wetlands issues were not actually improvements but could be a hindrance.
- The applicant corrected the board in saying the property had been flagged. This was insulting as if he were implying that the board did not go to the site? Or were they suggesting the board was lying about the flagging?
- One member told the applicant that it appeared they were trying to get an approval on a plan without delivering a plan. This allowed the applicant to then take the actual plan to the Planning Board and say the Wetlands Board had approved a plan they had never seen.

The Wetlands Board rejected this application unanimously, as they should have. The reason this is important is that Hampton Cities Wetlands Board are a board of qualified citizens who are looking out for the good of the whole city. Gone is the past where you can request any change, send in a presenter who is an “expert” and get what ever you want approved regardless of the effect it has on adjoining properties and the city in general. These individuals attend VIMS bi-yearly training on wetland issues. This is unusual as many cities only send a staff to report back, if they send an attendee at all.

This is a good reason that we and the city should follow and learn what this board is accomplishing. Currently the minutes are not available on line. This is one of the important boards which Hampton should broadcast their meetings on channel 47. This could be accomplished as Wetlands Board already meets in Council Chambers. At the very least their minutes should be on line.

Wetlands Board Next Meeting Oct 26 at 5:00

Hampton City Council Chambers

2nd time may be a charm for Hampton University

- Hampton University has requested to install a riprap revetments, reconstruct a pier and construct two wetlands mitigation sites.
- The board will also vote on the resolution for Coastal Primary Sand Dunes.

Links to

Wetlands Freedom Of Information Act (FOIA)
Request

The Virginia Peninsula MAL Unit of the League of Women Voters requested the audios of the meetings that did not have minutes. We also requested the resolution for Coastal Primary Sand Dunes. Both these items have been posted on our website. They can be found at

<http://www.lwvpeninsula.org/wetlands.html>



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