THE STATE OF THE COUNTY IS SOUND, WITH A CONTINUING COMMITMENT TO COMMUNITY PRIORITIES DESPITE CONTINUING ECONOMIC CHALLENGES. THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS FOR ST. MARY’S COUNTY CONTINUES ITS FOCUS ON THE COUNTY’S MISSION:

ST. MARY’S COUNTY GOVERNMENT WILL:

BE RESPONSIBLE AND ACCOUNTABLE TO THE COUNTY’S CITIZENS;

PROVIDE HIGH QUALITY, COST EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT SERVICES;

PRESERVE THE COUNTY’S ENVIRONMENT, HERITAGE AND RURAL CHARACTER; AND

FOSTER OPPORTUNITIES FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS.

The County Commissioners, President Francis “Jack” Russell, Lawrence Jarboe, Cynthia Jones, Todd Morgan and Daniel Morris continue to forge ahead on key initiatives and projects while balancing budgetary challenges on the local and state levels.

MAINTAINING CRITICAL SERVICES IN TOUGH ECONOMIC TIMES

We recognize the economic realities of the world in which we live. Our approach to the budget is one of adaptation and attention to detail. We want to ensure critical local government services are maintained, not for the next year but well into the future.

The FY13 operating budget of $211.3 million was achieved without increases to the property tax rate of $.857 (per $100 of assessed value) or the Constant Yield Tax Rate of $.8608. This was done despite the backdrop of declining assessments. Most recent available audited information indicates that after using about $10.5 million in the FY13 budget, we have close to $20 million which remains unapplied. While we are only two months into our FY13 budget year, the potential remains for weather and other unexpected events.

It is the County’s intent not to apply fund balance to recurring costs. This position is supported by rating agencies and governmental best practices, and just good common sense. We need to have the ability to respond to emergencies, like Hurricane Irene or the 2010 snowfall, without decimating necessary services elsewhere. Additionally, using fund balance for recurring costs only leads to structural deficits by building recurring costs on a non-recurring source. We believe that is irresponsible fiscal practice which must be avoided. Our FY13 budget uses fund balance only for one-time costs, and we intend to stay true to that practice.

OPENNESS...

Meetings of the Board of County Commissioners for St. Mary’s County are scheduled for Tuesdays at 9 a.m. each week in the Chesapeake Building, 41770 Baldridge Street in Leonardtown. Board of County Commissioners meetings are televised live on St. Mary’s County Government TV 95 (SMCG TV 95) and streamed live on the county’s website at www.stmarysmd.com. The meetings are also rebroadcast on SMCG TV 95 and are also downloadable for viewing from the county’s home page.

St. Mary’s County Government is now on Facebook at http://tinyurl.com/95kt4mw. News releases, special announcements and updates from County Government are frequently posted.

Click on E-Notices on the home page to sign up to receive news releases, procurement bids, agendas, meeting minutes, SMCG TV 95 schedules, the Dept. of Economic and Community Development weekly e-newsletter, emergency notifications, Sheriff’s Office announcements, FEMA notifications, finance audit and budget documents, web page updates, Library announcements, MD Amber Alerts, Public Safety announcements, Recreation and Parks announcements, tourism news and vacancy announcements.

The county commissioners want and need your input. Public Forums are held the first Tuesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. in the Chesapeake Building (unless otherwise noted). Citizens can also email comments.
to bocc@stmarysmd.com or mail comments to Board of County Commissioners for St. Mary’s County, PO Box 653, Leonardtown, Maryland 20650.

The St. Mary’s County Commissioners appoint members to more than 40 boards, commissions, committees and task forces. These citizen-led groups advise them on topics ranging from land use and development to human services. Through this system, civic-minded citizens can be involved in County Government and local government can benefit from the knowledge, experience and expertise of these citizens. Vacancies are announced through news releases and information found on the county’s website at www.stmarysmd.com. Click on Boards and Commissions inside the Government box.

**ST. MARY’S COUNTY GOVERNMENT**

County Government is organized into nine departments. Each department has its own webpage and department heads can be contacted for questions, concerns and suggestions.

Department of Economic and Community Development
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301-475-4200, x1400

**AGRICULTURE AND SEAFOOD**

The Home Grown Farm Market is celebrating its first full year of operation. The market opened on March 31 and has been widely supported by the community. Sixteen vendors are providing a wide variety of products, including local wine. The road improvement construction which was required by the Maryland State Highway Administration is almost complete. The next phase of construction at the site will include restroom facilities.

The Board of County Commissioners is also pleased to add the U.S. Navy as another partner in its land preservation efforts. The Navy is helping to preserve farm land and forested land south of Lexington Park in order to protect the Patuxent River Naval Air Station from encroachment.

**BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT**

The Division’s mission is to promote St. Mary’s County’s competitive advantages to current and prospective businesses as well as develop a more diversified economy. Business Development facilitates and coordinates strategies for new and existing businesses; provides confidential site location assistance; and identifies workforce challenges, opportunities and solutions. The division also provides informational data for key decision makers and community leaders. Business Development continually reaches out to all St. Mary’s County businesses, business organizations and agencies to ensure the business community has the resources needed to prosper and are knowledgeable of growth opportunities.

Business Development held the St. Mary’s County Small Business Simplified Acquisition Conference in November, 2011 which attracted approximately 200 attendees. The 2011 St. Mary’s County Technology Handbook was printed in hardcopy as well as a database or pdf online. Fifteen new companies were added in 2012 to the Technology Handbook, for a total listing of 213 technology-focused firms. The Small Business Development Center (SBDC) co-located with the Department of Economic and Community Development in the Governmental Complex.

**TOURISM**

St. Mary’s County Division of Tourism achieved a major milestone with development and debut of a new travel and tourism website. The mobile-enabled site (www.visitstmarysmd.com) features interactive maps, a trip planner and multiple search functions. The site also features an innovative partners section which allows local tourism and hospitality businesses to create and manage their own business and event listings and offer deals to attract visitors.

St. Mary’s County Division of Tourism developed a new brand tagline now employed to market the county to visitors. “Real People. Real Places. Real Close.” conveys the authenticity of the experience which characterizes the county’s tourism resources and emphasizes its proximity to major mid-Atlantic markets.

St. Mary’s County Division of Tourism co-hosted the Mid-Atlantic Travel Public Relations Association Media Marketplace with Calvert and Charles counties, bringing more than seventy travel writers to the region and into the county. The three counties also provided a regional War of 1812 map and guide. For their cooperative marketing efforts, the counties were awarded the Maryland Tourism Council Impact Award.

**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**

The Board of County Commissioners cut the ribbon on a 9.7 million improvement to a 1.4 mile section of Great Mills Road. This project entailed the reconstruction of sewer and water lines and storm water management inlets, resurfacing of the roadway and widening and landscaping of sidewalks between Coral Drive and the entrance to St. Mary’s Square. A partial median strip was constructed between Coral Drive and FDR Boulevard increasing pedestrian and vehicular safety throughout the upper end of MD Rt. 246. An entrance for the section of FDR Boulevard to be built this year between Great Mills Road and South Shangri-La Drive was also constructed as part of the federal, State and County funded project.

County Commissioners participated in the Lexington Park Business and Community Association’s inaugural “Pride in the Park” parade to celebrate the completion of this improvement project.

**HOUSING AUTHORITY OF ST. MARY’S COUNTY**

On July 1, 2012, the Housing Authority of St. Mary’s County, Maryland (HASMC) was privatized and is no longer an agency under St. Mary’s County Government. However, it remains a positive resource for the county and the community. HASMC continues to assist with Housing and Community Development needs, maintain affordable housing and support the residents of St. Mary’s County.

More information on HASMC can be found online at www.stmaryshousing.org. HASMC’s location remains the same at 21555 Lexwood Drive, Suite C, Lexington Park, MD 20653. To contact HASMC, call 301-866-6590 or fax 301-737-5628.

**DEPARTMENT OF AGING AND HUMAN SERVICES**

Lori Jennings Harris, Director
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In August 2011, the Department of Human Services merged with the Department of Aging forming the Department of Aging and Human Services (DAHS). The Department of Aging and Human Services provides a wide variety of programs and services to the community at large.

Programs provided to our county’s senior residents include home delivered and congregate meals, in-home services, Ombudsman services, and caregiver support; information and assistance; social and recreational programs; community outreach; and volunteer opportunities.

The Human Services Division is responsible for the coordination of supportive services to people with mental illness, substance abuse treatment coordination and prevention, supportive services to families and children, and the Teen Court program, to name a few.

In August of 2011, the Department again opened its doors to the Loffler Senior Activity Center (Chancellor’s Run Regional Park) following a partial roof collapse from a heavy snowfall the year before. The center’s grand re-opening welcomed the return of the community in September 2011 with an exciting and warm celebration.

The department also:
Operated three vibrant senior activity centers for programs, exercise, meals and two congregate meal sites.

Provided intensive case management to consumers who were clinically eligible for nursing home placement through the Older Adults Waiver program.

Provided information, referral services, and counseling to consumers and their family members on Medicare and other health insurance benefits.

Guardianship “service” was provided to several individuals under the Adult Public Guardianship Program for vulnerable persons age 65 and older.

Volunteers with the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) of St. Mary’s County donated their time, talents, and expertise in service to more than 30 county agencies, community groups, and nonprofit organizations. More than 300 RSVP volunteers gave nearly 30,000 hours of service valued at more than $600,000 during the past year alone. These volunteers participated in a wide range of volunteer activities, such as delivering meals to homebound seniors, tutoring children in our schools, and providing support services to many worthwhile organizations such as the Adult Literacy Council, Hospice of St. Mary’s, and the American Red Cross.

Throughout the past year the Division of Human Services has provided support to a variety of community initiatives including:

- Coordination of transportation for the Wrapping Arms ‘Round Many (WARM) program addressing homelessness.
- Facilitated parenting programs; poverty and hunger prevention projects; provided training on Asset Development for youth; Mental Health First Aid; Mental Health Crisis Prevention and Intervention.
- Christmas Caring, coordinated efforts with Mike’s Bikes and the U.S. Marines’ Toys for Tots program, assisted over 1000 families with toys, food and clothes.
- Project Graduation, joint effort with local and state law enforcement, Patuxent River Naval Air Station, and the States Attorney’s Office.
- Distributed NACo prescription cards within the community, working with local providers, pharmacies, churches, libraries, etc. to reach consumers who may benefit from the program. http://www.naco.org/programs/residents/pages/pdcp.aspx.

The National Association of Counties, in partnership with CVS Caremark, provides prescription discount cards to NACo member counties. Prescription discount cards are free to member counties and their residents, and help uninsured and underinsured residents receive an average of 24% savings on prescriptions not covered under traditional insurance plans.

The Division of Human Services developed and distributed a county resource directory of Mental Health and Substance Abuse service providers. The directory also includes a comprehensive list of other community and faith-based organizations that participate in offering similar supportive services to our county.

Effective June 30, 2012 the County transitioned the residential treatment program operated by Marcey House by outsourcing state and federal Alcohol and Drug Abuse Administration (ADAA) grant funding to a qualified, independent third-party provider.

**DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS AND TRANSPORTATION**

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The Department of Public Works & Transportation is organized into County Highways Division, Construction & Inspections Division, Engineering Services/Development Review, Transportation, Airport Operations, Administration, Solid Waste, Recycling and Building Services.

- Transitioned solid waste to a Waste-to-Energy facility and maintained user-friendly Single Stream Recycling at the Convenience Centers.
- Programmed the design, land acquisition and construction funding for FDR Boulevard from MD 4 to Pegg Road and along Great Mills Road to Shangri-La Drive to provide relief to the MD 235 corridor.
- Acquired property from the State and initiated a renovation project for the Leonardtown Library to provide improved programmatic spaces for patrons and elevator access to second floor administrative space.
- Leveraged over $275,000 in low interest loans for the Thomas Road and Gibson Road Revetment projects to protect County right-of-ways from the impacts of further shoreline degradation.
- Awarded a construction contract for the new Patuxent River Naval Air Museum and Visitors Center using primarily Federal and State grants as well as private funding.
- Secured over $454,000 in Maryland Energy Administration grants for the replacement of aging infrastructure with energy efficient systems and performed an LED retrofit upgrade in several major county facilities.
- Completed the design, permitting and secured $28,000 in combined federal Bridge and State Hazard Mitigation program funding for the replacement of the Dr. Johnson Road bridge over St. Clements Creek.
- Introduced a new “Green Waste” tipping fee for citizens who utilize the St. Andrews Landfill to dispose of lawn and yard waste.

Fund Phase 2 of the Patuxent Park Neighborhood Preservation project to upgrade and replace aging infrastructure to revitalize the 1940’s Patuxent Park neighborhood in Lexington Park.

Executed grant agreements with the Federal Aviation Administration for the construction of wetlands mitigation and reimbursement of property acquisition required for future St. Mary’s Regional Airport expansion projects.

Opened the bidding process for the Adult Detention Center Minimum Facility Addition and Booking / Inmate Processing Expansion project. The project will provide additional capacity, safety & security improvements and a more efficient inmate processing area.

**LAND USE AND GROWTH MANAGEMENT**

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In 2011, Land Use and Growth Management (LUGM) initiated an update of the Lexington Park Development District (LPDD) Master Plan (due for completion in 2012). The plan focuses on providing an attractive, livable, and economically diversified community capable of absorbing 50% or more of future county development. Extensive public outreach reaffirmed support for recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan goals adopted in 2010 for concentrating development in existing and planned centers of population, commercial development and conserving rural areas.

LUGM also began development of a Local Phase II Watershed Implementation Plan (WIP) to establish County specific milestones and goals for Chesapeake Bay water quality restoration and protection. LUGM staff worked to coordinate efforts of a local WIP steering committee comprised of representatives from local, state and federal agencies, organizations and stakeholder groups to develop recommendations to address nutrient and sediment impacts from agriculture, urban, septic and wastewater sector sources. These would become recommended practices and programs that should be incorporated into Maryland’s statewide response to the Chesapeake Bay Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL).

Department staff assisted with the development of updates to the County’s Land Preservation Parks and Recreation Plan and the Hazard Mitigation Plan. The county began implementation of a number of new and revised regulations, including the adoption of a new residential building code,
changes to the Critical Area Buffer regulations and to forest conservation regulations. The county also started implementation of new State mandated stormwater management requirements and County Commissioners added UGM personnel to perform review of permits on individual lots for compliance with stormwater regulations.

**EMERGENCY SERVICES AND TECHNOLOGY**
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The St. Mary’s County Department of Emergency Services and Technology is a multi-faceted agency that provides 9-1-1 services, radio communications, disaster preparedness and response, technology support, and enforcement of Animal Control regulations. The department works hand in hand with all county departments, county and state law enforcement agencies, and Volunteer Fire and EMS departments.

- Awarded a contract to Harris Corporation for a 9-1-1 radio system upgrade.
- Received approval from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) through the Maryland Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) for the county’s updated Hazard Mitigation Plan.
- Completed necessary electrical upgrades at Leonardsdale High School (shelter) to enable mobile generator connectivity to be utilized. Received grant funding and approval to perform electrical upgrades and complete similar work at Great Mills High School and Chopticon High School.
- Received grant funding and approval to install remote dam monitoring equipment at St. Mary’s Dam.
- Received grant funding and approval to install traffic monitors at several key evacuation route intersections.

**RECREATION AND PARKS DEPARTMENT**
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Recreation and Parks provides programs, facilities, and parks for citizens and visitors. Programs include sports, after school programs, summer camps, leisure classes, theater, therapeutic recreation, and special events. The 1,500 acre park system consists of twenty parks with athletic fields, picnic pavilions, nature trails, tennis and basketball courts, a skatepark, sprayground, disc golf course, and dog park. Other facilities include several recreation centers, a gymnastics center, a swimming pool, and a hiking/biking trail. Fifteen public landings with piers and ramps provide opportunities for boating access, fishing and crabbing. R&P also provides public golfing, dining and banquet opportunities at the Wicomico Shores Golf Course and Riverview Restaurant. The Museum Division also offers opportunities to experience the history, culture, and heritage of St. Mary’s County at the St. Clement’s Island Museum, the Piney Point Lighthouse Museum and Park, and the Drayden African-American Schoolhouse.

- Residents and visitors are enjoying an additional three mile section of trail to explore from John Baggett Park in Laurel Grove to Route 5 in Mechanicsville. Also, design and engineering of the next section of trail - from MD 5 to MD Route 236 in New Market - is underway. Completion of this phase will provide 11 continuous miles of trail in northern St. Mary’s.

**Three Notch Trail Phase V opening**

The Unified Committee on Afro-American Contributions Civil War Memorial at Lancaster Park was unveiled on June 16, 2012 as part of the annual Juneteenth celebration. The memorial recognizes the contributions of the United States Colored Troops, and all Union soldiers and sailors from St. Mary’s County, who fought during the Civil War. Recreation and Parks is working with the UCAC on the second phase of the project which includes the renovation and reuse of the remaining “Flat Tops” building at the site. This Interpretive Center is intended to include displays and information about the Civil War Memorial as well as African American history and contributions in St. Mary’s County. The center will also provide space for meetings and community activities, as well as public restrooms for the memorial park and the adjacent pavilion.

**USCT Civil War Memorial at Lancaster Park**

The public process to update the County’s 2005 Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan was completed in March, 2012. The plan outlines recommendations on recreational land and facility acquisition and rehabilitation, as well as recommendations for agricultural land preservation and natural resource conservation.

- Leonardtown Park - This project will construct a community park on the former Hayden Farm property in Leonardtown. Funding was approved in the Capital Program for design and engineering in FY12 and construction in FY15 and FY16. The proposed park will include multi-purpose athletic fields, a playground, parking and restroom facilities.
- Lancaster Park - Design and engineering is anticipated to get underway this year for new multi-purpose athletic fields, parking and an entrance road at John G. Lancaster Park at Willows Road.
- Three new multi-purpose athletic fields will soon be under construction adjacent to Fifth District Park in Charlotte Hall.
- Public Landings - Piers at several public landings are set to be replaced in the near future. These include Fox Harbor, River Springs and St. George’s Island public landings.
- Recreation and Parks implemented Paralympic Sport - Southern Maryland. This is a community-based sports club developed to involve youth and adults with physical and visual disabilities in ongoing sports and physical activity, regardless of skill level. All programs and activities will be based in Southern Maryland and run by St. Mary’s County Department of Recreation and Parks. Programs being planned include aquatics, kayaking, shooting, archery and cycling.
- St. Mary’s County Museums – Museum events and programs sold out or exceeded attendance expectations for 2011. Tickets for the Potomac Jazz and Seafood Festival sold out in less than two weeks. The Appraisers Fair, History and Heritage Day, Children’s Day and the annual Christmas Doll and Train exhibit all saw increased attendance.

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