

# THE SMITHFIELD TIMES

SERVING ISLE OF WIGHT AND SURRY COUNTIES SINCE 1920

Volume 98 Number 6

Wednesday, Feb. 8, 2017

Smithfield, Va. 23431

75 cents

## SPORTS



Smithfield High's wrestlers are conference champions.  
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## STORMWATER

Isle of Wight may reduce the unpopular annual stormwater fee by 10 percent.  
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## QUOTE OF THE WEEK

“This is by far the biggest opportunity that we will ever see come into our community.”

— Surry County Admin. Tyrone Franklin  
On HRSD invitation, p. 1

# HRSD going to Surry



Staff photo by Ryan Kushner

**Workers crossed Mason Street Monday and moved into the 200 block of the Main Street water line project. The work is being done Monday through Friday, but the town is allowing the contractor to close each block through the weekend so that the company doesn't have to remove its equipment.**

## Waterline work underway

By Ryan Kushner  
Staff writer

Heavy machinery is rumbling in the Smithfield Historic District as construction crews work to replace the road's century-old waterline along its 100 and 200 blocks, a procedure that will disrupt traffic on the busy commercial street for the next couple of months.

Crews finished the first phase of work on the 100 block

and have moved on to the larger 200 block this week.

The project, which officially began Monday, Jan. 30, is being done by Lewis Construction of Virginia. Crews have been tackling one block at a time, starting with the 100 block, digging up the street to upgrade the 8-inch cast iron water main to a 12-inch plastic pipe. Construction, which was set back a week by an early January snow storm,

is scheduled to wrap up toward the end of March, provided all goes according to plan, according to Stacy Lewis, co-owner of Lewis Construction.

Until then, barricades will be used to close the blocks one at a time to through traffic, said Lewis at a public meeting with Main Street business owners Wednesday, Jan. 25.

Construction work will occur from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. week-

days, according to Smithfield Public Works Superintendent Jesse Snead, but the block under construction will be closed around the clock to through traffic, including during the weekends, according to Town Manager Peter Stephenson.

Because of the age of the street, crews are not entirely sure what they will find under

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## County will deed plants to regional agency

By Ryan Kushner  
Staff writer

SURRY — After nearly a year of negotiating, researching and planning, the Surry County Board of Supervisors voted unanimously to deed the county's wastewater treatment systems to the Hampton Roads Sanitation District, which will now oversee the service for the county.

“This is by far the biggest opportunity that we will ever see come into our community,” said Surry County Administrator Tyrone Franklin before the vote at the Feb. 2 meeting.

“This is it.”

The finalized contract between the two entities will allow the county to withdraw from the agreement with HRSD at any point, providing it gives a one-year notice. HRSD, however, would not be able to cut the contract without the county's approval, according to HRSD General Manager Ted Henifin.

“If it's not working, we can terminate it,” said Board of Supervisors Chair Judy Lytle at the meeting of the agreement. “I love that part of it.”

Another amendment to the original contract was a clause giving the county the authority to subsidize rates for county residents.

Users of HRSD's wastewater treatment system will pay around \$37 to \$52 a month, according to a report by the Surry County Chamber of Commerce. The town of Surry charges \$47 per month for 4,000 gallons and \$11.75 for every 1,000 gallons after that.

The transfer of the wastewater system was approved by the

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Board following a public hearing, which showcased both strong support and strong reservations among county residents regarding the transferring of the facilities.

Sam Edwards of Edwards Virginia Smokehouse, which burned down in a fire last January, is looking to rebuild its operating plant. Edwards spoke in favor of HRSD taking over the treatment systems.

“Our hope and our goal is to build here in Surry,” Edwards said at the public hearing. “But in order to do that, we must have HRSD,” due to the 90-year-old ham company’s heavy amount of wastewater production and regulations preventing the company from building its own wastewater treatment system.

Mike Eggleston of Dendron began by stating that he wasn’t sure if he was for or against the plan, but asked if the county lacked the “competence” to run

the sewers by itself, or if it simply did not want to anymore.

“You’re telling me with this ploy to have HRSD take over the sewage plant for a county of 7,000 people, with large administrative costs and maintenance costs, that you are incapable of running a small sewage plant?” Eggleston said.

Two other residents came forward in favor of the transfer, and two more leaned against it.

After the public hearing closed, Franklin stressed the importance of the decision to transfer to HRSD, noting the need for infrastructure in the county.

“When people flush their commodes, they want response — an immediate one,” said Franklin, drawing a few chuckles from the crowded room. “You can’t play with that.”

The decision will also alleviate the county from having to handle the wastewater regulations enforced by the Virginia Department

of Environmental Quality, which has served both the county and the town of Surry with violation notices in the past.

Franklin said at the meeting that since he’s been administrator for the county, he has had to serve more or less as the director of public works for the sewer system, despite having no background related to wastewater treatment.

“Over the years, I’ve learned a bit, but I am still far from capable of being the lead person to kind of get us down the road for what this community needs,” Franklin said in support of transferring the sewer systems to HRSD. “If we go in this direction, we no longer have to be worried with it.”

After the transfer was approved, the Board voted to pay off the debt on its current waste systems in the amount of \$600,000 from the county’s general reserve.

HRSD will take the roughly 20-year-old facili-

ties “as is” from the county, according to Henifin.

“There’s a sucker born every minute,” Henifin joked at the meeting.

Henifin also said that HRSD would probably continue to contract with Sussex Service Authority to provide maintenance on the county’s facilities for now. “Obviously, we’re not ready to step up and staff for this area,” said Henifin.

The town of Claremont opted out of joining the county in transferring its sewer systems to HRSD, as the majority of its 360 residents have individual septic systems or are using a package sewer system, according to Claremont Mayor George Edwards.

As Surry County had ownership of the town of Dendron’s system, the next step would be for the town of Surry to approve transferring its wastewater treatment system to HRSD as well.

Henifin said that with just the county’s system’s flow available, he believes

HRSD would not be able to treat large-scale wastewater, such as that of Edwards Virginia Smokehouse.

“Without additional flow, at least in our initial review, we don’t think we can effectively treat [Sam Edwards’] waste and meet the permit in-stream chloride standards that we have,” Henifin said.

Following the county’s approval, Surry District Supervisor John Seward asked town of Surry residents in attendance at Thursday’s meeting to encourage Surry Town Council members to “join in on the venture”

with the county in the deed-ing of its systems to HRSD.

The town of Surry is currently under investigation by DEQ for potential illegal discharges from its wastewater system for the second time since last fall.

The Surry Town Council is scheduled to vote on whether to transfer its wastewater treatment systems Tuesday, Feb. 14 at 7:30 p.m. at the Surry Town Hall meeting room, 84 Colonial Trail East. HRSD manages the wastewater of 17 other counties and cities, with nine water treatment plants.

## Utility

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the surface, which could potentially lead to some delays, according to Lewis.

“We have a game plan, but we are anticipating that we are going to run into stuff where we don’t know what it is,” Lewis said at the meeting. “Could there be delays? Absolutely. Should they be long delays? No, they shouldn’t.”

After finishing the installation of the water main on both blocks and testing the water quality, crews will then double back to the 100 block, repeating the closure procedure, this time around installing new water service lines to each of the buildings, as well as replacing sewer lateral lines on an as-needed basis.

Water services done during the day would cause a roughly two-hour interruption in a Main Street building’s water flow, according to Lewis.

“If you have an eatery or

a restaurant, then we can arrange to do those services at night after you close,” Lewis told business owners. “But if we’re only talking about restrooms, we can make this happen during the day as well.”

The crews will also attempt to accommodate delivery services for businesses, and Lewis asked that business delivery schedules be emailed to Smithfield 2020 (at smithfield2020@gmail.com), a local organization helping to facilitate communication with businesses and the town during the project.

### Gas Company tag-along

Following discussions with the town, Columbia Gas Company agreed to move a gas line replacements on Main Street to January 2018, according to Town Manager Peter Stephenson, which had been its original schedule.

Columbia Gas, upon learning that Smithfield would be tearing up Main

Street to replace its water main this winter, had earlier expressed interest in seizing the opportunity to also replace and repair a couple of its gas lines on the street’s 100 and 200 blocks.

The town was first approached by the company over the summer to work following along behind the waterline replacement construction this winter.

In an email last week, Columbia Gas said it couldn’t get to work until around April, according to Snead — prime tourist season for Smithfield.

“If they were to come in and work this spring after us and then we milled and resurfaced the street after that, we would be lucky to have everything finished by July,” Stephenson said in an email. “This would be detrimental to our important tourism industry.”

The gas company’s plan will ultimately prevent Smithfield from fully resurfacing the road until next year after the company’s repairs are completed.

“We would have to patch it as smoothly as we could until they’re finished, whenever they’re finished,” Stephenson said at a committee meeting last week.

The town is essentially

at the whim of what the company wants to do, according to Stephenson, but said the company was “very cooperative” after a conference call between the two entities last week.



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## Addiction

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methadone and suboxone, said Martin, who is also a nurse.

cravings and withdrawal symptoms.

Affinity does not run an inpatient clinic, rather, patients come each day for



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