



# Albemarle County

## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 19-341, **Version:** 1

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**AGENDA DATE:** 6/19/2019

**TITLE:**

Proposed Change to Thomas Jefferson Holiday

**SUBJECT/PROPOSAL/REQUEST:** Proposed change to Thomas Jefferson Holiday observation

**ITEM TYPE:** Consent Action Item

**STAFF CONTACT(S):** Richardson

**PRESENTER (S):** N/A

**LEGAL REVIEW:** Not Required

**REVIEWED BY:** Jeffrey B. Richardson

**BACKGROUND:** Former president of the United States, Founding Father, and principal drafter of the Declaration of Independence, Thomas Jefferson, was born in Albemarle County on April 13, 1743. Recognizing the cultural and historic significance of Mr. Jefferson's contributions to the County of Albemarle, the organization has long observed April 13<sup>th</sup> as an official holiday.

Currently, all local government employees are granted Thomas Jefferson's Birthday as one of their 12 holidays, except those employees following the State's Holiday schedule and those who follow the School Division's Holiday schedule.

County local government offices close on April 13<sup>th</sup>. If Mr. Jefferson's birthday falls on a weekend, local government offices are closed on the directly adjacent weekday. In 2019, April 13<sup>th</sup> fell on a Saturday and local government offices were closed Friday, April 12<sup>th</sup> in observation of the holiday.

Aside from the City of Charlottesville, no other local government office is closed in recognition of Mr. Jefferson's birthday. Albemarle County Public Schools do not close in observation of the Thomas Jefferson holiday.

**STRATEGIC PLAN:** Quality Government Operations Ensure County government's capacity to provide high quality service that achieves community priorities

**DISCUSSION:**

**Customer Service Issue**

Albemarle County's Pillars of High Performance (the Pillars) provides the organizational standard for excellence in local government operations (Attachment A). The Public Service Covenant, illustrated within the Pillars as a Core Value, speaks to commitment to customer service as a component of local government's service to the public. Observation of Thomas Jefferson's birthday as an official holiday does not best enable staff to provide exemplary customer service.

Staff recognizes that the lack of commonality with the community in closing on April 13<sup>th</sup> can create confusion for the public and agency partners. In addition to the day not being a widely recognized holiday, there is a lack of consistency-the actual day of the week changes every year. It is not uncommon for several individuals to come to the County office building on this holiday looking for service only to be turned away. This is particularly sensitive given the timing of the holiday and its proximity to the tax deadline (April 15<sup>th</sup>).

### **Proposed Solution**

To provide excellence in public service by ensuring accessibility to the public on standard work days while also ensuring employees receive a similar number of holidays throughout the year staff is proposing that a floating holiday be created in place of the Thomas Jefferson Birthday holiday.

The floating holiday would be granted January 1, 2020 and would have to be used by June 30, 2020.

Providing a floating holiday in place of the Birthday holiday will allow for:

- employees to have a choice regarding what day to take
- honoring needs for diverse employees
- work-life balance

If approved by the Board the change to a floating holiday would take effect for the upcoming FY 21. The required changes to P86: the Leave Policy would be made by Human Resources staff and brought back to the Board for approval.

### **Recognizing Mr. Jefferson**

It is important to note that the floating holiday as proposed does not prevent interested staff from taking time off to participate in local celebrations of Mr. Jefferson's birthday, nor does it prevent the County from taking other appropriate measures to recognize his contributions to this community.

**BUDGET IMPACT:** No impact to the budget is anticipated.

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends that the Board:

- approve the proposed 2019-2020 Holiday Schedule (Attachment B) with proposed change incorporated
- approve the proposed change to the Thomas Jefferson Birthday holiday including:
  - local government offices open for regular business on April 13<sup>th</sup>
  - replacement of the birthday holiday with a floating holiday for staff

### **ATTACHMENTS:**

Attachment A: Albemarle County Pillars of High Performance

Attachment B: Proposed 2019-2020 Holiday Schedule