

Board of Supervisors Special Meeting (Wednesday, May 15, 2024)
Northumberland County, Virginia

Members Present:

James M. Long, Richard F. Haynie, James W. Brann, Chip Williams, AC Fisher, Jr.

Other Staff Present:

Mr. Luttrell Tadlock, County Administrator

Mr. Drew Basye, Assistant County Administrator

Ms. Morgan Wilson, Executive Assistant

Mr. Carl Hayden, IT Technician

1. Opening of Meeting 2:00 P.M.

Information: A. Call to Order

The special meeting was convened by Chairman Haynie and held at the Northumberland Courthouse located at 220 Judicial Place, Heathsville, VA 22473.

2. Items Related to Closed Meeting

Action: A. Convene into Closed Meeting

Motion to Action: A. Convene into Closed Meeting: convene into closed meeting as permitted by Virginia Code Section 2.2-3711 (A)(7),(29); 7. Consultation with legal counsel and briefings by staff members or consultants pertaining to actual or probable litigation, where such consultation or briefing in open meeting would adversely affect the negotiating or litigating posture of the public body. For the purposes of this subdivision, "probable litigation" means litigation that has been specifically threatened or on which the public body or its legal counsel has a reasonable basis to believe will be commenced by or against a known party. Nothing in this subdivision shall be construed to permit the closure of a meeting merely because an attorney representing the public body is in attendance or is consulted on a matter. 29. Discussion of the award of a public contract involving the expenditure of public funds, including interviews of bidders or offerors, and discussion of the terms or scope of such contract, where discussion in an open session would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the public body.

Motion by: James W. Brann, second by: Chip Williams.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Aye: James M. Long, Richard F. Haynie, James W. Brann, Chip Williams, AC Fisher, Jr.

Action, Information: B. Reconvene into Open Meeting

Motion to reconvene into open session.

Motion by: James W. Brann, second by: AC Fisher, Jr.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Aye: James M. Long, Richard F. Haynie, James W. Brann, Chip Williams, AC Fisher, Jr.

Action, Information: C. Certification of Closed Meeting

Motion that the Northumberland Board of Supervisors return to Public Meeting and certify by roll call vote that only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements by the Virginia Freedom of Information Act, and as were identified in the motion convening the closed meeting were heard, discussed or considered during the closed meeting.

The vote on the motion was passed by a roll call vote as follows:

Aye: Richard F. Haynie, AC Fisher, Jr., James M. Long, James W. Brann, Charles H. Williams

Motion by: James W. Brann, second by: AC Fisher Jr.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Aye: James M. Long, Richard F. Haynie, James W. Brann, Chip Williams, AC Fisher, Jr.

3. Budget Presentations 5:30 p.m.

Information: A. Northumberland YMCA - Allison Cockrell

Ms. Allison Cockrell, Executive Director, provided background information related to the YMCA and explained that currently, the YMCA is the only place with a recreational pool in the County. She believes that the love for swimming for many individuals starts at the YMCA and this is evident through the creation of the NHS swim team. She stated that the usage of their pool necessitates the YMCA to take action in efforts to cover their pool so that they can serve more year-round. Ms. Cockrell informed the Board that they've explored several options in relation to their costs, longevity, maintenance, aesthetics, feasibility and presented the Board with information on the "dynadome" pool enclosure. She explained that the retractable enclosure will open in the spring and summer to allow sunshine to fill the space. In the fall and winter, the roof is closed to create a protected space for year-round programming and enjoyment. Ms. Cockrell stated that they believe this project will transform their YMCA service to the community and they'd like the Board's support. She requested that the Board consider granting the YMCA an additional \$25,000 for the next five years, totaling \$125,000.

Supervisor Long asked how many schools have swim teams.

Ms. Cockrell stated that Lancaster, Northumberland, Middlesex, and Christ Church all swim and have to utilize the Kilmarnock YMCA's indoor pool.

Supervisor Williams asked if the pool size was sufficient to hold VHSL swim meets.

Ms. Cockrell explained that it was. It's six lanes that are competition size.

Vice Chairman Brann asked if the \$1.5M (already raised or anticipated) came from the community.

Ms. Cockrell stated that most of it is from the local community. She explained there were a few grant requests that they submitted, and they are hoping to hear back from those in June.

Vice Chairman Brann asked if the YMCA was contributing to the funding as well.

Ms. Cockrell stated that their Y is a 501(c)(3), but they are a part of the YMCA of the Virginia Peninsulas which is an association who has given them permission to move forward with this project.

Chairman Haynie asked if they had an amount of grant money that they applied for.

Ms. Cockrell stated about \$300,000.

Information: B. Bay Aging - Tinsley Goad and Ken Pollock

Mr. Tinsley Goad, CFO, informed the Board that they are requesting a 3% increase in funding for their aging services for FY25 to accommodate rising costs both in products and personnel costs. Their services include meals on wheels, homecare hours, information and education, caregiver support, housing and other services that help citizens of all ages live their lives independently in their communities.

Mr. Ken Pollock, transit director, explained that Bay Transit provides door-to-door transit service and thanked the Board for 24 years of support. He then shared some partnerships and programs of Bay Transit and informed the Board of their 3% funding increase request for FY25.

Supervisor Long asked what the number is for those who need transportation.

Mr. Pollock stated that the number is 877-869-6046.

Information: C. Draft FY25 Budget

Dr. Wargo explained that they have tried to be very responsive to the questions and answers that have been shared with the public. She also stated that the school is being very cooperative in regard to the forensic audit. Dr. Wargo asked the Board to consider approving the budget for the school division so that they can issue their contracts to employees.

Vice Chairman Brann asked if they have heard anything from the State.

Mrs. Booth stated that it was passed but she hasn't had time to sit down and look at all the numbers as she just received it.

Vice Chairman Brann stated he'd like to see what the State did.

The Board scheduled another budget work session for May 22, 2024 at 5:30 p.m.

Dr. Wargo stated that the School Board had a meeting, and they fully applied the responses to the RFPs to the new construction fund, so they are moving forward with all of those projects. She stated that they have upheld their end of the agreement regarding the EVB Bank building.

County Administrator Tadlock stated that the Board has authorized him to move forward with advertising for a public hearing on the potential transfer of the old EVB Bank property at the June regular meeting.

Supervisor Williams asked what projects those RFPs cover.

Dr. Wargo stated on Monday they will begin resurfacing the track and if the transfer of the deed for the EVB Building property goes as planned, they will be using some of the money for painting, similar to what was just done at the Courthouse.

Vice Chairman Brann asked if any of the schools are designated as a shelter.

Dr. Wargo stated that the middle/high school is.

Mr. Brann stated that if that generator has issues, the Virginia Department of Emergency Management sometimes has grant money for generator replacement, so that may be a source of funding for when the time comes for it to be replaced.

Supervisor Williams asked what the timeline is for the replacement of the wells at the schools.

After some discussion, Dr. Wargo stated that she'd get back to him with that information.

Supervisor Williams brought attention to the School Board minutes the other night and how they approved someone to assist with ESSER III reimbursements.

Dr. Wargo stated that there is a consultant who has been assisting them with the ESSER III grant reimbursements.

County Administrator Tadlock presented the Board with the draft FY25 proposed budget and explained that it does reflect an increase of about \$4.9M, the tax rate is set at \$0.69 (\$0.08 increase), it does include all the budgets requested by the various departments and outside agencies, four new positions, the capital improvement plan, the regional radio debt service (\$500,000 annually), the reassessment cost (\$450,000), and a 5% salary increase for staff with two departments receiving adjusted salary rates. The draft budget can be accessed in board docs.

Vice Chairman Brann asked if Mr. Tadlock could provide a list of all the budget increases so the public can see the increases since some are costs that we cannot control.

Supervisor Williams asked Ms. Dodson what size increase we are facing in relation to the Virginia Retirement System (VRS).

Ms. Dodson stated that we're looking at \$48,000 just for the hybrid. Based on the new VRS rate, it's over \$100,000 alone just for the VRS group life in comparison to last year. Ms. Dodson informed the Board that the group life rate went down, but it's based on what has been proposed in the budget.

Supervisor Long brought attention to two departments asking for a higher salary increase.

County Administrator Tadlock explained that those departments were looking at various adjustments to their salary scales to be competitive with adjoining localities.

Vice Chairman Brann stated a year or so ago, the Board went through this process with the school.

Chairman Haynie stated that's true, and the Board increased their salaries to be competitive. Mr. Haynie said that he has a problem with the EMS and the Sheriff's Department's salaries being low.

Vice Chairman Brann stated that the County is obligated to provide public safety and we have the lowest paid salaries around, so the Board needs to discuss this.

Chairman Haynie asked if anyone in the public had any comments on the proposed budget.

Dr. Pica stated that the County needs emergency services, so we need to make sure they are taken care of. She encouraged the Board to look at the additional funding coming from the State and to look hard at the budget for the school and see if there's something you can do to try to help the rest of the County without raising a penny for taxpayers. She doesn't want to see residents panicking and leaving the County when reassessment comes next year.

Chairman Haynie explained when the new appraisal comes into effect, if it's higher it will lower the tax rate.

Dr. Pica said only if you make the equitable adjustment.

Chairman Haynie stated that they always lower the tax rate.

4. Items Related to Closed Meeting

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open session would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the public body.

Motion by: Chip Williams, second by: James W. Brann.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Aye: James M. Long, Richard F. Haynie, James W. Brann, Chip Williams, AC Fisher, Jr.

Action, Information: B. Reconvene into Open Meeting

Motion to reconvene into open session.

Motion by: AC Fisher, Jr., second by: James W. Brann.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Aye: James M. Long, Richard F. Haynie, James W. Brann, Chip Williams, AC Fisher, Jr.

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Aye: Richard F. Haynie, AC Fisher, Jr., James M. Long, James W. Brann, Charles H. Williams

Motion by: AC Fisher, Jr., second by James W. Brann.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Aye: James M. Long, Richard F. Haynie, James W. Brann, Chip Williams, AC Fisher, Jr.

5. Closing of Meeting

Assistant County Administrator Basye stated that he reached back out to Brandon with Southern Air, asking him to rerun numbers on the HVAC quote based on some of the concerns raised by the Board. He was able to reduce the number of labor hours which brought the replacement cost to a total of \$24,954.83. Mr. Basye stated the original cost was near \$28,000.

Vice Chairman Brann asked what the upstairs is going to be used for once we put heating and air back up there. Mr. Brann doesn't want to invest in something they aren't going to do anything with.

County Administrator Tadlock explained that the upstairs needs climate control for all the County records.

Supervisor Williams stated that he doesn't like that they're in a contract with someone who charged such an inflated price to start off with.

Vice Chairman Brann asked if the Board could ponder on this topic.

Supervisor Fisher commented on the paint splashes on the down spouts on the old courthouse. He stated that he knows it's built up over a number of years, but it looks awful.

Supervisor Williams asked the Board when they wanted to discuss the engineer to bring on board.

Vice Chairman Brann suggested that they look at what direction they'd like to County to go into first and then decide which firm will serve best in that role.

Supervisor Long stated that the Board needs to discuss the County properties and the Social Services building. He asked who pays that rent.

County Administrator Tadlock stated that Social Services pays rent for that building.

Chairman Haynie asked if that came from the County side of the budget or the State.

Mr. Tadlock stated he could find out that information for the Board.

Action: A. Carry Over

Motion to carry over to the special called meeting on May 22, 2024 at 5:30 p.m.

Motion by: James M. Long, second by: AC Fisher, Jr.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Aye: James M. Long, Richard F. Haynie, James W. Brann, Chip Williams, AC Fisher, Jr.