

VIRGINIA: AT A REGULAR MEETING OF THE COUNTY OF AMELIA BOARD OF SUPERVISORS HELD IN THE GENERAL DISTRICT COURTROOM OF THE AMELIA COUNTY COURTHOUSE ON WEDNESDAY, MAY 16, 2018.

PRESENT:

THOMAS R. GLEASON	District 1
ROGER A. SCOTT	District 2
RALPH A. WHITAKER, JR.	District 3
CARROLL E. BARNARD	District 4
FRANKLIN D. HARRIS	District 5

Board of Supervisors

TAYLOR HARVIE, III, County Administrator
DAVID WHITAKER, Director of Planning and Zoning
JEFF GORE, County Attorney
CARLA CAVE, Finance Director
BRENDA ARTHUR, Administrative Assistant

Chairman Harris called the May 16, 2018 Regular Meeting of the Amelia County Board of Supervisors to order at 7:00 P.M. and determined there was a quorum with all five members in attendance.

Supervisor Whitaker offered the invocation, and everyone joined in the Pledge of Allegiance.

CONSENT AGENDA

1. Approve/Amend Agenda

The agenda was unanimously approved on a motion by Supervisor Whitaker.

2. Approval of Minutes

The April 18, 2018 Regular Meeting and the April Continued meeting were unanimously approved on a motion by Supervisor Whitaker, with one correction.

3. Approval of Financial Reports

The April 2018 Financial Reports were unanimously approved on a motion by Supervisor Gleason.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

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During the Public Comments, Matthew Brown asked if the proposed water tower was necessary just to allow the current water tower to be cleaned. He asked where the new water tower would be built. He asked if tax payers would pay rent if placed on a private citizen’s property. He asked if the reason a new tower would be built far enough out to expand the sanitary district. He questioned who was making the decisions on behalf of the citizens. He said though it seemed he only spoke when he wants to point out fault, but he said when he read that 3 board members took a stand and the school board would have to pay money back, he said “he was on the edge of his seat and just a touch proud of those three men”.

Taylor Harvie shared an email from Sean Flippen who was unable to attend the meeting but wanted to share his concern regarding the difficulty for wheelchairs and scooters in accessing the sidewalk behind the courthouse. (The email in its entirety is available upon request.)

STAFF/COMMITTEES/ORGANIZATIONAL REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS

1. VDOT Monthly Status Report

David Whitaker, Director of Planning and Zoning reported activity by VDOT in the County. He reported that several roads are scheduled for paving including Routes 153, 609, 604 and 360. Supervisor Gleason asked Mr. Whitaker to report to VDOT about the condition of Fowlkes Bridge Road.

PLANNING AND ZONING

1. Conditional Rezoning for Greenleaf Properties

David Whitaker requested the Board refer the rezoning request back to the Planning Commission for review of the 360 Overlay study.

2. Rezoning for Amelia Industrial Development Authority

Mr. Whitaker also requested the IDA rezoning request to be referred back to the Planning Commission for review of the 360 Overlay study. Supervisor Whitaker motioned to have both rezoning referred back to the Planning Commission and it was unanimously approved.

OLD AND NEW BUSINESS

1. Board of Equalization Ordinance

After no one spoke at the public hearing Supervisor Whitaker motioned and the Board unanimously approved amending the BOE Ordinance.

2. EMS Week Proclamation

On a motion by Supervisor Gleason, the Board unanimously approved to proclaim May 20-26, 2018 as EMS Week to recognize EMS providers.

3. FY2019 Budget Resolution

Before entertaining a motion to adopt the resolution, the Board allowed public comments regarding the changes during the budget workshop. The following residents spoke:

John Burton-He said was very upset that there was going to be a shortfall and believed the teachers and students would be the ones who suffered. He said he has been attending school board meetings and it was announced the school would be paying back the funds that were overspend last year. He wondered if the budget reduction of \$200,000 was a way to get the money back or “does someone have a vendetta against someone? And if you do, three of you have a vendetta against the teachers and against the students”. He said the students are the County’s greatest resource.

Helen Warner-Burke- Ms. Burke brought attention to the valedictorian and the salutatorian. One was going to attend MIT and the other UVA. She felt the schools were turning out excellent students. She congratulated the teachers and staff for making it possible. She was there because the school board requested level funding and the Board planned to cut that by \$200,000. Operating costs are not going down. She began to address Supervisor Barnard directly but Chairman Harris asked that she keep her remarks to the BOS as a group. She then stated to Supervisor Gleason that he seemed to” be wanting to condemn and punish before the investigation is complete and guilt is proven.” She encouraged him to not “look back with anger and revenge as to what might have or might not have happened in the past”. She spoke about the difference of the building conditions of Powhatan and Nottoway compared to Amelia. She reported that out of 144 school divisions in the State, Amelia is ranked 118. She felt that it would be difficult to attract business with the condition of the schools. She said that not raising taxes would be cutting off their noses to spite their face.

Michael Neller-Mr. Neller said he was speaking for himself and not a school board. He explained that the school board went through a process to develop the budget for the next year. As part of the process we asked what do our students need for the best chance of success. They came up with a list and decided to ask for funding for only the top priorities as they could do that will level funding from the County. At the last meeting the Board voted to cut the local contributions to the schools by \$200,000. That means we cannot fund our most urgent priorities. They continue to do the best they can with whatever funding is available. He felt they could do better for the children with more support from the County.

Dr. Jack McKinley-Mr. McKinley said the school was recently made aware of a \$200,000 reduction in the local county contribution to the school accounts. The school board had requested level funding of 5 million dollars and it was voted by the Board to be reduced to \$4,800,000. The student enrollment projection has been reduced from 1740 to 1707. This reduced the budget by \$190,010. The following adjustments have been made: Reduce the

insurance line item by \$200,000. They will require one less kindergarten teacher due to the lower enrollment in kindergarten. They have eliminated a proposed position of instructional leader for K-12 classes and a 5th grade teacher that was proposed in both the last version of the school board budget and the school system's strategic plan. They had been talking about painting of classrooms, hallways and offices. They reduced \$40,665 worth of desks, chairs, tables and boards for the classrooms. They have suspended any rotational repairs and upgrades. They reduced outdated projector replacement by 19,345. He noted that Amelia County Schools are fully accredited for the first time in five years. Their success is connected to the financial support provided by the County Board of Supervisors. He asked that the local contribution be increased by \$200,000.

Jessica Gough-She said she has been coming before the Board since her daughter was in kindergarten and she is now a freshman in college. She said it breaks her heart that she has been coming before the Board all these years asking the Board to support not only her children but all children and every child matters. She said she has asked to have her taxes raised. She said she could not name anybody who couldn't come up with an extra \$50 a year for something they wanted. She said it would be fantastic if the Board gave more than the \$200,000.

Robin Whittington-Ms. Whittington stated she emailed all Board members last week and she thanked Supervisor Barnard and Supervisor Scott for responding. She has spent time running figures and making spreadsheets. She asked other counties for more numbers. She said that taking the tax rate from 47 cents to 51 cents would cost each resident \$64 and she thought everyone could come up with \$64. She said she has 2 rules in her house; be kind and show love. She cannot make the numbers "be kind". She was concerned that young people would leave if they continue with lack of public services.

Bonnie Vega-Ms. Vega spoke as a parent of a current student of Amelia County High School. She understood that Supervisor Barnard said if the school needed money at a later time he would consider that. Her student is an A-B student in the gifted and talented program. Twice in the last three years he was denied entrance, even though he qualified, into the Appomattox Regional Governors School and into the Southside Community College. He was a runner up, he qualified but the only things that was missing was funding. She said Amelia students do not get to go to programs for other training because there is no funding. She requested on behalf of all students to return the funding and more so students have the best possible chance to have careers that would allow them to contribute to society.

Sawyer Whittington-Sawyer said he wanted to say that we should spend the money kindly.

Paul White-Mr. White said he agreed to take a hard look at the funding until there is a good handle on the history of the finances of the school and of the spending and the way it looked like things were going. He realizes that people get emotional when it involves schools and children and it is not easy to cut funding from them. But at the end of the day, the money has to come from somewhere and you have to make hard choices and that is not easy. He thought it was a wise idea to slow down the funding until the school shows a history of managing within their budget. He said he believes that if it is really important he was sure the schools would take volunteer donations from folks that value certain services that they may not be getting.

Juan Whittington-Mr. Whittington said we have been through a period of relatively low inflation. We have to look ahead instead of looking behind. He said that if you provide the same amount of dollars now you are really reducing funding.

Maria Danielle Bordeaux-Ms. Bordeaux said she was there out of a sense of duty to her own children and to all the children being served by Amelia Schools. She was also there out of frustration and a sense of injustice. She said she supports the raising of taxes because we should not have to choose between public safety and quality schools. She thanked Mr. Harris and Mr. Scott for voting to not cut funding to the schools. She said she was more than disappointed with her own Board member for voting to cut it. She recognized that there are many negative feelings associated with the school budget due to financial mismanagement. She said she is a taxpaying citizen, a parent, a volunteer and part time school employee who is also angry and disappointed by it. However she felt you cannot punish the teachers and students and parents who had nothing to do with the mistakes made by others. She said she was confident that there are safeguards to prevent further issues. She said her board member as a reason for not raising taxes quoted a citizen stating that their family could not afford to spend another cent on taxes. The 2 percent increase would cost her family about \$36 a year. She said that is a drop in the bucket to what teachers spend out of their pocket for supplies. If you take into account the unpaid hours the teachers work, the burden placed on school employees is astounding. They need the money to hire qualified staff and keep them. They need it for school supplies and classroom materials. Computer training and updates cost money. Anyone that asks why they should pay for other people's children should ask themselves if they would rather pay for other people's children to receive social services and criminal justice services as an alternative. "We will all pay one way or the other when it comes to the opportunities or the lack thereof that we provide for our children."

Supervisor Barnard motioned to approve the Resolution as presented.

Supervisor Scott said he wanted to make some comments. He thanked everyone for coming out. He spoke of challenges in the County that can't be overcome without participation from active, engaged and committed citizens. He said he believes that everyone believes they are doing the right thing but does everyone share the same vision. (Mr. Scott's full statement is available upon request.)

Supervisor Harris asked Dr. McKinley when he would be offering teachers' contracts. Dr. McKinley said they planned on doing it this month. He asked about procedures that have been put in place to avoid the mistakes that were made last year. Dr. McKinley said that they have been working with the Board and have been operating within budget since December 2017. He stated that he admits to exceeding funds last year. He said that in previous years funds have been returned. Because of that he would request that the overage of \$482,000 be forgiven.

Supervisor Scott made a substitute motion to not vote on the resolution and schedule a public hearing for tax increase.

It was determined that it would take a 30 day notice for a public hearing since it was an equalized tax rate.

That motion was defeated 1-4. The vote was as follows: Supervisor Gleason, Nay; Supervisor Scott, Aye; Supervisor Harris, Nay; Supervisor Whitaker, Nay; Supervisor Barnard, Nay.

Supervisor Barnard called for a vote on his original motion. The motion carried 4-1 and the vote was as follows: Supervisor Gleason, Aye; Supervisor Scott, Nay; Supervisor Harris, Aye; Supervisor Whitaker, Aye; Supervisor Barnard, Aye.

Supervisor Harris thanked everyone for their input and said he wished that people had shown up at the public hearing during the April meeting.

5. RFP and Contract for Engineering Services

The Board unanimously approved the latest contract for engineering services on a motion by Supervisor Scott.

COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

1. Waste Management

The host fee check for the month of April was \$47, 854.95.

2. Southside Virginia Community College

The latest newsletter from SVCC was shared with the Board.

3. Amelia Day Committee

The minutes from the April 23, 2018 Amelia Day minutes were presented to the Board.

4. Commonwealth Regional Council

CRC submitted their *Items of Interest* for the month of April.

5. Piedmont Regional Juvenile Detention Center Commission

The PRJDC submitted the Commission meeting information that was held on April 20, 2018.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS /REPORTS

District 1-The Honorable Thomas R. Gleason

Supervisor Gleason said “he did not want anybody to leave the room thinking the Board doesn’t care about the school system. There are a lot of inconsistencies in our school system. As you can see there was mismanagement, mismanagement of money. Mr. Scott says that he is interested in public schools and economic development. That’s not what we do. We do it all. They are just two things that we do. We have to watch out for everybody and every piece of government in this County. We have to go through reports, the financial ability, what they can have and what they can’t have and we want our kids to have a good education, a solid education. The budget that they asked for was \$18, 917,889. That was their request. We gave them \$18, 717.89. That was adopted. The budget last year was \$18, 515,661. That was an increase of \$202, 228. We didn’t take anything away from anybody. They could have asked for \$40 million if they wanted to but they didn’t use the money that we gave them before wisely, but if they get in trouble, we’re here. But we are not going to give when we don’t know what you’re doing with it. You have to think about that. So it’s like pouring water on a duck’s back. You gotta know where the water’s going before you can do anything.”

District 2-The Honorable Roger A. Scott

Supervisor Scott said he “would like to just clarify the point that I said I was primarily interested in schools and economic development. I know what my job is, Mr. Gleason. And as far as the \$200,000 yes the overall budget for the school increased but for some reason the County seems to think it’s less important this year than last year. We paid \$5 million last year and we’re only paying \$4.8 this year. I think the fact they asked for level funding is something we should have given them. They didn’t ask for more. “

District 3-The Honorable Ralph A. Whitaker, Jr.

Supervisor Whitaker asked Mr. Scott if the ACT testing was next week. And he asked where it was going to be. He said he had a full day Saturday and had not anticipated being able to come to Amelia Day at all but he was blessed to be part of the opening exercise and to experience Katie Stang performing the National Anthem and it was tremendous.

District 4-The Honorable Carroll E. Barnard

Supervisor Barnard said he noticed that Mr. Neller was still there and he hoped they would listen to what he had to say. “Mr. Gleason hit on it somewhat and I am sorry the rest of them left; they could have stayed and I was trying not to say anything but I gave everybody here respect when they came to that mic and each one of us should respect the other one when it comes to our turn to talk and not beat themselves on the back a second time. In the years 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016 that’s four years, the school administration, now I say the school administration, I got no beef with the teachers or the children. I don’t really have a beef with the school board. It’s just that these are facts. And Mr. Neller I know you’re listening. In 13, 14, 15 and 16 they turned back in \$2, 076,745 back into the general fund. That’s in four years. From 2016 to 2017, we’re talking

about fiscal year not calendar year, so for the 2017 budget year, the school division spent \$1, 372,864 more than they spent in the 2016 budget year. Now that included that \$482, 000. It was told in May by the Treasurer of this County, a letter was written and I got that letter. I'm not going to go to all that reading but that letter was in the paper back when it happened, telling them they didn't have any money. You're out of money, you have zero funds. They kept right on spending. They did not come in here to that microphone and say "Look, we're in trouble and we need help". They kept right on spending to the tune of \$482,000. And they finally got that figure when they got their accrual in October, I think. It might have been November, I'm not sure which it was. It makes no difference. Accruals are supposed to be at August 31. School Administration never gets it through on time. Now they may this year but they have not in the past 5 or 6 years. So it takes so long to get our county budget done because we can't get the school's accruals in there. Every other department waiting on them. In one year you overspend your budget or you spend more than the year before, \$1, 372,864, but you take a \$482,000 that you don't know where it went. It looks like a lot of things that they want so bad should have been done. Where's the money at. I am going to leave you all with that thought. We don't have a clue. Now Mr. Scott may and I don't mean that derogatory, Mr. Scott. And so I say to you, just to let you know that we're not totally bad guys, in 2018 budget, \$50,000 was appropriated for lights for the soccer field that have not been put up. That's \$50,000 we gave them out of the CIP. So that money is there. They haven't spent a dime of it yet but the lights are not up either. Why, I don't know. \$150,000 was in last year's budget that went towards paving of school parking lots and roads behind the school. That's money we gave them. This budget we passed tonight \$100,00 out of our pockets again, CIP money, as bad as we need Broadband, for paving of the schools parking lots and bus roads. That's \$200,00 in two years we have given the school system. But we're bad guys. We don't ever do anything for the schools. We've been bad mouthed over and over. But these are facts; cold hard facts. If you don't believe me go see Carla Cave our finance director".

District 5-The Honorable Franklin D. Harris

Supervisor Harris thanked all those that came to the meeting. He said the questions about the problems and where the money is, he was not worried about that because it is in the proper hands and that is not his job to do. He said he was for moving ahead. He said we are on this road together and he appreciated Board members listening patiently and considering your comments. He said it was not one Board member's job but all collectively.

MOTION TO ADJOURN/CONTINUE MEETING

There being no other business, the May 16, 2018 Regular meeting was adjourned.

ATTEST:

Minutes Approved: June 20, 2018



A. Taylor Haryie, III
Amelia County Administrator



Franklin D. Harris, Chairman
Amelia County Board of Supervisors