

VIRGINIA: County of Lee, to-wit:

At the Recessed Meeting of the Lee County Board of Supervisors in the Conference Room of the Lee County Courthouse on May 7, 2024 at 5:30 p.m. thereof.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Brian Shoemaker, Vice-Chairman
Josh Flanary
Roger Waddell
Mike Kidwell
D.D. Leonard, Chairman – via phone

OTHERS PRESENT: Vera Ely, Lee County School Board Member
Nancy Garrett, Lee County School Board Member
Brian Dean – Lee County School Superintendent
Stacey Belcher – Asst. Lee County School Superintendent
Dane Poe, County Administrator
Robby Wright, Assistant County Administrator

OTHERS ABSENT: Angie Thomas, Administrative Assistant
Stacy Munsey, County Attorney

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 5:33p.m.

REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

AIRFIELD ELECTRICAL REHABILITATION CONTRACT

Mr. Poe stated this is a project has been in the works for over a year and the contractor is scheduled to start on May 13, 2024. Prior to starting this rehabilitation project, the contract needs to be signed. The total contract is for \$609,292.00 with Lee County’s portion of the contract being approximately \$13,000.00 with the FAA and DOAV paying 98% of the total cost.

APPROVAL OF AIRFIELD ELECTRICAL REHABILITATION CONTRACT

It was moved by Mr. Flanary, seconded by Mr. Leonard, to approve the contract with Appalachian Foothills Contracting, Inc. in the amount of \$609,292.00 for the Airfield Electrical Rehabilitation Contract and to authorize the Vice-Chairman to sign the contract. Upon the question being put the vote was as follows.

VOTING AYE: Mr. Flanary, Mr. Kidwell, Mr. Leonard, Mr. Shoemaker, Mr. Waddell

BUDGET WORKSESSION

Mr. Kidwell said he was pleased to have School Board members along with the Superintendent agreeing to meet with the Board. He asked Mr. Dean about the budget request of an additional \$2,000,000.00 of funding stating it could potentially create a large additional tax burden on the citizens of Lee County.

Mr. Dean responded in saying the 2023-24 school year was budgeted on having an enrollment of 2,710 students. The final number was a large increase totaling 2,772. This increase as due to a large number of students that were being home schooled and the new program allowing these students to take part in Lee County School's curriculum, which in turn added them to the enrollment. He stated this was a good program for the county and its students and was created during the pandemic. The estimated enrollment for the 2024-25 school year was entered at 2,730 and with the additional funding in the proposed state budget, this was the reason for the increased Lee County budget request. The County is required to provide match funding based on the Composite Index determined by the State which is currently 17.14%. If the funding from the state increases or decreases, the funding request from the county would fluctuate accordingly. He added that although the state budget has not been adopted and was subject to change, he felt it was prudent to put in the request to ensure that everyone was fully aware of the potential increase in required funding. In either case, Lee County Schools has always only asked for the minimum required by law.

Mr. Kidwell asked about the feelings on St. Charles Elementary School saying he had heard some rumors about this school having too low of an enrollment and this may cause this school to be closed.

Mr. Dean stated the current enrollment is around 90. The school has had a few projects to improve the facilities and there would potentially be a redistricting of the school zones to try and alleviate some of these issues. He stated the School Board was looking at the Poor Valley section to redistrict to St. Charles Elementary. He also stated there was no intention of closing this school at this time.

There was discussion between the board members on other topics such as heating & air, electric school buses, and potential renovation of windows in various projects at every school.

Mr. Kidwell asked attending members of the School Board about a potential project at Elydale School that would include building a softball and football practice field on the property. He stated he had been told the project was to be a donation of time and materials by local citizens which would be at zero cost to the school board and would like an explanation of why the school board did not want to have this work completed.

Ms. Ely asked Phil Hensley to speak to this potential project.

Mr. Hensley stated that the project would need to be looked into further than just the offer to complete the work. There were many considerations that would need to be made concerning the septic for Elydale School and power lines located on the property as well as permits from other organizations such as Soil & Water Conservation. The project had the potential to have a negative effect on the school as a whole without due diligence being done prior to starting a project such as this.

Both attending School Board members and Mr. Dean stated they would be more than willing to entertain allowing this project with the proper paperwork and authorizations being obtained. However, no action was warranted at this time as it would be inappropriate to allow a project such as this to start prior to knowing the full effect after completion.

Mr. Poe stated he would like to also discuss the county property adjacent to Thomas Walker School. He said Lee County owned the property consisting of the Thomas Walker softball and baseball fields as well as the swimming pool. He advised the tennis courts at Lee High School were also County property and should be deeded back to the School Board.

There was discussion between all board meeting attendees on having more joint meetings to maintain communications. The general consensus was to have a budget meeting in the early Spring and another one in the Fall.

The Vice-Chairman called for a five-minute recess at which time School officials left the meeting as their discussions were completed.

The meeting was called back to order.

The Board continued discussions regarding budget issues.

Mr. Poe restated the \$2,000,000.00 additional funding request along with the fact that the county budget had been in deficit for many years and the County would be out of money in a short period of time if there was no increase in revenue.

Mr. Kidwell stated hard work needed be done on the budget to ensure every cut that was possible be made to the 2024-25 budget.

Mr. Dean added that Lee County Schools works hard to not waste taxpayer money and reminded everyone that when there was money left over at the end of a budget year, a portion of these funds were returned to the county.

The Vice-Chairman called for a five-minute recess at which time School officials left the meeting as their discussions were completed.

The meeting was called back to order.

The Board continued discussions regarding budget issues.

Mr. Poe stated he had not completed many changes to the budget as presented in the last workshop. He said he had some questions on some submissions and needed to have a discussion with some department heads concerning their requests. He added that he felt he could easily cut

\$400,000.00 from the requests but that would only be about 10% of the amount needed to balance the budget. He stated that all surrounding counties were dealing with the same issues such as the state school funding and there had already been discussion on some potential action they were considering to take if this holds to be true in other counties.

Mr. Kidwell stated he had read that Scott County had already been in discussion of increasing taxes 23% for the next fiscal year.

Mr. Poe stated he thought it would be good to start with the outside agencies prior to working on internal departments so the board members would have more time to think about these requests.

There was a general discussion concerning the DSS and School Board budgets.

All other outside agencies were discussed to ensure each member understood what agency the titles on the worksheets represented, the agency's function and any detail that was given in reference to their request. He encouraged the Board members to mark any items to which they had questions and contact him for any information request they may have between meetings.

CLOSED SESSION

It was moved by Mr. Flanary, seconded by Mr. Kidwell, to enter Closed Session pursuant to Code 2.2-3711 A.1. Discussion, consideration, or interviews of prospective candidates for employment; assignment, appointment, promotion, performance, demotion, salaries, disciplining, or resignation of specific public officers, appointees, or employees of any public body; and evaluation of performance of departments or schools of public institutions of higher education where such evaluation will necessarily involve discussion of the performance of specific individuals; and 2.2-3711 A. 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.

VOTING AYE: Mr. Flanary, Mr. Kidwell, Mr. Leonard, Mr. Shoemaker, Mr. Waddell

It was moved by Mr. Kidwell, seconded by Mr. Flanary, to exit Closed Session. Upon the question being put the vote was as follows.

VOTING AYE: Mr. Flanary, Mr. Kidwell, Mr. Leonard, Mr. Shoemaker, Mr. Waddell

CERTIFICATE OF CLOSED SESSION

It was unanimously agreed as follows.

WHEREAS, the Lee County Board of Supervisors has convened a Closed Meeting on this date pursuant to an affirmative recorded vote and in accordance with the provision of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act; and

WHEREAS, Section 2.2-3711 of the Code of Virginia requires a Certification by this Lee County Board of Supervisors that such Closed Meeting was conducted within Virginia law;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Lee County Board of Supervisors hereby certified that, to the best of each member's knowledge, (i) only public business matters lawfully exempted from Closed Meeting in which this Certification Resolution applies and (ii) only such public business matters as were identified in the Motion convening the Closed Meeting were heard, discussed or considered by the Lee County Board of Supervisors.

SOUTHWEST REGIONAL RECREATION AUTHORITY APPOINTMENT

It was moved by Mr. Kidwell, seconded by Mr. Flanary, to appoint Roger Waddell to the Spearhead Trails Board contingent upon receipt of a letter of resignation from the current appointee, Pam Fannon.

VOTING AYE: Mr. Flanary, Mr. Kidwell, Mr. Leonard, Mr. Shoemaker, Mr. Waddell

It was moved by Mr. Shoemaker, seconded by Mr. Flanary, to adjourn the meeting. Upon the question being put the vote was as follows.

VOTING AYE: Mr. Flanary, Mr. Kidwell, Mr. Leonard, Mr. Shoemaker, Mr. Waddell