

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 June 6, 2024 at 5:00 p.m. thereof.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Brian Shoemaker, Vice Chairman
Josh Flanary
Mike Kidwell
Roger Waddell

MEMBERS ABSENT: D.D. Leonard

OTHERS PRESENT: Dane Poe, County Administrator
Robby Wright, Assistant County Administrator

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

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 5:09 p.m.

Mr. Kidwell was participating in the meeting remotely per the Board's Remote Attendance Policy.

BUDGET WORKSESSION

Mr. Poe provided a revised printout with revenue adjustments and all of the previously requested changes along with a few adjustments he made today. He stated adjustments to Solid Waste were made stating the request to purchase a new tractor has been cut from the proposed Fiscal Year 2024-2025 budget as it has already been purchased, and advised repairs to the Transfer Station was added but due to an increase in metal prices the cost will go up. In addition the negotiated agreement with the Commonwealth Attorney's Office for the use of body cams is another \$70,000. He stated with all changes the current deficit total for FY2024-25 comes in at just over \$3.4 million. He stated the Board has voted to schedule public hearings for the proposed tax rate increases on personal property and real estate. If the increases are approved that will generate an additional \$1.4 million. The second proposal scheduled to go to public hearing is to move to split-billing on real estate taxes with half of the taxes due May 31 and the remainder due October 31.

Information on the required local match for the Lee County School System, Department of Social Services and the Children's Services Act were provided.

Mr. Kidwell stated the Treasurer is requesting a closed session meeting with the Board to discuss split-billing.

Mr. Poe stated he spoke with the Treasurer concerning this matter and recommended he collect as much information as he can to present to the Board.

FEE FOR EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

Mr. Poe stated Mr. Kidwell asked if a fee can be imposed for Emergency Medical Services. He stated per State code in order to be eligible, the County's population has to be less than 3,000.

Mr. Kidwell asked if a portion of the taxes can go directly to Emergency Management.

Mr. Poe stated yes and also provided information in regard to a question by Mr. Kidwell that they set the rate of penalty on delinquent taxes. It is currently 10% and that is the highest rate allowed by state law.

Mr. Kidwell stated he would like to set a tax to go to fire and rescue and show the County the amount of money being put into fire and rescue.

Mr. Poe explained if setting a tax rate to automatically go to fire and rescue, if the tax base increases that amount will automatically go to fire and rescue.

LIBRARY FUNDING

Library employees expressed concerns about decreased funding for the library. There was a general discussion about the hours of the two library branches in the county. There were also members of the public present to request support for funding for the libraries.

Mr. Wright explained there are only thirty-four County employees and everyone who works in the courthouse is not an actual county employee but many are funded by the state. He said a lot of cuts have been made in various areas and explained the reasons and effects of the deficit. He stated that Constitutional Officers and State paid employees will receive a 3% raise in July. It would cost \$40,400 to give a 3% raise to County employees and they are currently not scheduled to receive one.

The Board thanked those who attended the meeting in support of the library. They then continued discussing various issues with the budget. There was a discussion about the cost of giving a 3% raise to County employees.

Mr. Flanary stated the Board just told the library employees that County employees were not getting a raise and how would it look if they give a raise now.

There was further discussion about the Library funding and 3% raise for County employees.

PROPOSED TAX RATE INCREASE

There was a discussion about proposed Personal Property and Real Estate tax rate increases.

There was a discussion about the deficit and need to raise property tax rates.

Mr. Shoemaker asked what year the County started using reserves to balance the budget.

Mr. Wright stated 2012.

Mr. Poe explained how COVID funds were spent and the effects of cost increases since COVID.

There was a discussion about increasing the tax rate.

Mr. Flanary asked what the highest the tax rate has ever been.

Mr. Poe stated \$.74.

Mr. Poe explained the advantages and disadvantages for in-house reassessments.

SPLIT-BILLING FOR PROPOSED PROPERTY TAXES

Mr. Poe stated the County Treasurer requested a closed session meeting with the Board concerning split-billing for property taxes.

VDOT SECONDARY ROAD IMPROVEMENTS

Mr. Poe stated the VDOT Secondary Road Public Hearing is scheduled for June 18, 2024 at 5:30p.m. He stated there isn't much that can be added to the plan due to re-calculated costs.

There was a discussion about the roads needing to be added to the Six-Year Plan.

CLOSED SESSION

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

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

It was moved by Mr. Shoemaker, 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. 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.

METAL REPAIR QUOTES

Mr. Poe stated there were a few quotes received on the metal repair at the Transfer Station before being advertised and added they were not sealed bids. He advised they would need to resubmit their quotes. He gave a breakdown of the cost depending on the size and thickness of the metal to be used.

Mr. Waddell recommended using the thickest metal.

Mr. Flanary agreed.

There was a discussion about the metal repairs and cost at the Transfer Station.

It was the consensus of the Board to use one inch 8x10 sheets for the metal repairs at the Transfer Station.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES FUNDING

Mr. Kidwell stated if doing a tax increase the Board needs to look at securing funding for Emergency Medical Services (EMS) for at least 3 locations.

Mr. Wright asked if he wants to fully fund three locations.

Mr. Kidwell stated actually four, the three main locations Dryden, Jonesville and Thomas Walker, and include Keokee if needed. He stated with a tax increase we can say the schools, police department, and EMS are funded. He asked Mr. Flanary to speak on this matter.

Mr. Flanary stated from his conversation with J.R. Long at Thomas Walker the cost would be around \$140,000 per year to have a day time crew 5 days a week and \$300,000 per year to have a 24/7 crew.

There was a discussion about billing and cost of staffing Thomas Walker Rescue Squad per year and possibility of funding three departments in the County.

Mr. Shoemaker recommended staying with \$17,000 across the Board and revisit next year.

Mr. Wright asked for time to run some numbers.

Mr. Poe recommended giving more to EMS agencies than fire departments due to the type of operation.

It was consensus of the Board to increase funding for fire and rescue by \$18,000.

Mr. Kidwell asked if the Board can ask the Town of Jonesville to pick-up some of the cost for Jonesville Rescue Squad.

Mr. Poe stated over the years they have probably made contributions to the rescue squad but they don't have dedicated money that comes from the state.

**POSSIBLE CLOSING OF CONVENIENCE CENTERS & TRANSFER STATION
ON SATURDAYS**

Mr. Waddell asked about the contracts with the convenience center sites.

There was a discussion about closing some convenience center sites and the Transfer Station on Saturdays.

CONTINUED BUDGET WORKSESSION

Mr. Poe stated as of right now the proposed tax rate is \$.75 for Real Estate.

Mr. Flanary stated that amount from the increase will replace the ARPA funds used to balance the FY2024-25 Budget.

Mr. Poe stated basically other than the first half and he will have to calculate those figures into the budget along with the water projects which will be cash-in cash-out and won't have any impact on the budget.

There was a discussion about the allocation of funds for the Western Lee Sewer Project.

POSSIBLE PURCHASE OF MOWER FOR AIRPORT

There was a discussion about purchasing a mower for mowing at the airport.

INCREASE CAPITAL OUTLAY

There was a discussion about increasing the amount of Capital Outlay Funds the County Administrator can approve.

REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE BOARD

None.

Mr. Wright stated Mr. Kidwell had lost phone service.

It was moved by Mr. Flanary, seconded by Mr. Shoemaker, to adjourn to June 18, 2024 at 5:30 p.m. Upon the question being put the vote was as follows.

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