

HENRY COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MINUTES

April 15, 2013 – 7:00 pm

The Henry County Board of Supervisors met on April 15, 2013, at 7:00 pm in the Summerlin Meeting Room of the County Administration Building, King's Mountain Road, Collinsville, Virginia. The purpose of the meeting was to hold public hearings on the FY '13-'14 School Budget and Total County Budget. The following Board members were present: Chairman Jim Adams, Vice Chairman Tommy Slaughter, Debra Buchanan, H. G. Vaughn, Milton Kendall, and Joe Bryant.

Staff members present were Tim Hall, County Administrator; Dale Wagoner, Deputy County Administrator; George Lyle, County Attorney; Michelle Via, Administrative Assistant; Darrell Jones, Director of Finance; Richard Stanfield, Deputy Director of Finance; and Susan Reynolds, Director of Human Resources.

School Superintendent Dr. Jared Cotton, Chief Financial Officer Dawn Lawson, and several School Board members and staff were present.

Paul Collins of the Martinsville Bulletin and Ron Morris of B99 were present. Also in attendance were Sheriff Lane Perry, Lt. Colonel Steve Eanes, Maj. Ricky Walker and other members of the Sheriff's Office.

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mr. Adams gave the invocation and Mr. Kendall led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Adams called the meeting to order. He welcomed everyone present and stated there are two public hearings scheduled; the first public hearing is on the FY '13-'14 School Budget and the second public hearing is on the FY '13-'14 Total County Budget. He stated if anyone wishes to address the Board to come to the podium, state your name and the district in which you live. He stated those who wish to speak will agree to exhibit respect to the Board and they would receive the same level of respect.

PUBLIC HEARING - PROPOSED FY '14 SCHOOL BUDGET

Mr. Adams opened the public hearing at 7:04 pm.

The following persons spoke in support of restored funding for the school system:

- Dr. Cotton, Superintendent, urged the Board to consider funding at least an additional \$152,000 so that three school resource officers can be provided for security at 10 elementary schools.

- Joe DeVault, Chairman and At-large member of the School Board
- Curtis Millner, Iriswood District representative of the School Board
- Kathy Rogers, Collinsville District member of the School Board
- Tyler Millner, Iriswood District
- John Morris of the Fraternal Order of Police and Michael McPeck, a retired Virginia State Police trooper, suggested using retired law enforcement officers to help improve school security.

There being no one else who wished to speak, the public hearing was closed at 7:29 pm.

PUBLIC HEARING - PROPOSED FY '13-'14 TOTAL COUNTY BUDGET

The public hearing was opened at 7:31 pm.

Supporters of the Blue Ridge Regional Library were present to express their concerns about the funding allocation for the library system and urge Board members to consider giving additional money to help offset the increased cost of employees' group health insurance, Virginia Retirement System mandates, and increased overall operational expenses. The following persons spoke in support of increased funding for the library system:

- Janet Demiray, chairman of the board of directors of Blue Ridge Regional Library
- Rick Ward, Executive Director of the Blue Ridge Regional Library, implored the Board at least consider an additional \$5,277 to cover the cost of increased employees' group health insurance.
- Carol Meyer, Ridgeway member of the Library Board
- Paula Burnette, Collinsville District representative of the Library Board

Other individuals present to address the Board included:

- Dr. Joe Keiper, Executive Director of Virginia Museum of Natural History, and Dr. Dennis Casey, Director of Education for the museum, were present to provide an update on activities and thank the Board for their continued support.
- Ms. Robbin Hall, Executive Director of the West Piedmont Business Development Center was present to thank the Board for their continued support of the incubator.

Supporters of the Martinsville-Henry County SPCA were present to request that the Board consider allocating the remaining \$15,000 in the current year's Contingency Fund to help make Henry County a no-kill locality.

- Carol Berlauk, Collinsville District
- Joe Grogan, SPCA board member

- Melody Cartwright
- Tiffany Smart, Iriswood District
- Scott Stone, Iriswood District
- Regina Harris, Blackberry District
- Nicole Cooke, Iriswood District
- Jessica Hale, Reed Creek District
- Lisa Smith, Iriswood District
- Doug Stegall, Collinsville District, spoke in support of increased funding for both the SPCA and library system.
- Amy McGuire

There being no further comments the public hearing was closed at 8:14 pm.

CONSIDERATION OF ANY PROPOSED BUDGET CHANGES BEFORE EXHIBITS ARE FINALIZED FOR BUDGET ADOPTION

Mr. Hall said at the conclusion of tonight's meeting, staff will need any changes the Board wishes to make to the proposed FY '14 budget, as it will be included in the Board package for adoption at the April 23 meeting and scheduled for appropriation at the May meeting. Mr. Hall said any changes the Board wishes to make to the current FY '13 Budget may be done any time prior to the end of the fiscal year.

Mr. Adams asked Board members for comments and suggestions on the FY '14 Budget.

Mr. Bryant expressed concerns that the real estate tax rate will increase from the current 46 cents per \$100 of assessed value to 48.8 cents to offset the loss of revenue due to the drop in real estate assessments.

Mr. Vaughn commented that when he was elected to the Board in 1996, real estate taxes were 61 cents per \$100 and over the years, the Board has lowered taxes in order to equalize revenues due to changing property values.

Ms. Buchanan said the suggestion to use retired officers to increase school security has some merit and she asked the school board to consider the pros and cons of doing that.

Mr. Vaughn suggested parking a marked police car at each elementary school as a major deterrent.

Mr. Bryant and Mr. Slaughter concurred with comments by Ms. Buchanan and Mr. Vaughn about school security.

Mr. Kendall said all of the requests tonight have been reasonable and he hoped the Board could help each organization if possible.

Mr. Adams said he fully supports a level-funded budget and feels the Board has been straightforward from the beginning, even during budget discussions last year about the upcoming reassessment and possible need to adjust tax rates. Mr. Adams said without the proposed tax adjustment, the Board would be faced with deciding where to make reductions and the many organizations present tonight would be faced with much less than level funding.

After some continued discussion, the Board made no changes to the proposed FY '13-'14 Total County Budget. Mr. Slaughter commended Mr. Hall and staff for their work on the budget.

There being no further business to discuss, Mr. Slaughter moved at 8:35 pm to adjourn its meeting, seconded by Ms. Buchanan and unanimously carried.