

HENRY COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MINUTES

Annual Planning Session February 2, 2015 – 3:00 pm

The Henry County Board of Supervisors held its annual planning session on February 2, 2015 at 3:00 p.m. at the Henry County Public Safety Complex. Prior to the start of the meeting, members of the Board of Supervisors and several members of County staff traveled to and toured Commonwealth Crossing Business Centre.

The following Board members were present: H. G. Vaughn, Chairman; Jim Adams, Vice Chairman; Debra Buchanan, Tommy Slaughter, Joe Bryant and Milton Kendall.

Staff members present were Tim Hall, County Administrator; Dale Wagoner, Deputy County Administrator; Darrell Jones, Director of Finance; Richard Stanfield, Deputy Director of Finance; Tim Pace, Director of Engineering; Roger Adams, Director of Parks and Recreation; Susan Reynolds, Human Resources Director; Rodney Howell, Director of Public Safety, Lt. Colonel Steve Eanes and Captain Eric Hairston of the Sheriff's Office.

Also present were Ben Williams of the Martinsville Bulletin and Ron Morris of B99 Radio.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Vaughn called the meeting to order at 4:15 p.m.

Marina Update

Roger Adams, Director of Parks and Recreation, presented an update on the Philpott Marina and group campground. The marina opened on March 30, 2014. All 42 slips are rented and there are currently 35 people on the waiting list. Mr. Adams noted that he had only heard positive comments about the marina. Visitors often commented about the beauty and convenience of having the marina at the lake.

A copy of the presentation is included in the file.

Public Safety Update

Mr. Hall presented an update on public safety activities and the deployment of the S.A.F.E.R. grant. The S.A.F.E.R. grant was implemented in March 2014 and allowed the County to hire 13 additional emergency responders to assist with fire and EMS calls. The grant has helped to increase advanced life support availability, reduce response times, provide more assistance on fires, and provide for better coordination of volunteers. Mr. Hall noted that advanced life support care is available on 95% of the EMS calls in Henry County. The average response time has improved to approximately 8 minutes and 30 seconds. Deputy County Administrator Dale Wagoner

pointed out that the percentage of ALS availability and the response times are some of the best in the State of Virginia, particularly with localities the size and population similar to Henry County. Public Safety Director Rodney Howell noted that one of the challenges going forward will be the ability to fund needed capital items such as ambulances and response vehicles. It was the consensus of the Board that the supplemental staffing program has greatly improved emergency services in Henry County and it would be incumbent upon the Board to continue to fund it once the S.A.F.E.R. grant is exhausted.

A copy of the presentation is included in the file.

REVIEW OF BOARD'S 2014-15

Mr. Hall reviewed the Board's priorities from last year's planning session, and the progress made on those goals. The report included:

Economic Development

- Begin grading at Commonwealth Crossing Business Park
 - *Grading began in April 2014; on target for "substantial completion" in January 2016.*
- Support the EDC, including efforts of industry recruitment, retail recruitment, and tourism.
 - *Funded EDC at consistent level; retail uptick; tourism impact*
 - *Virginia Tourism Commission report shows 2.3% increase in tourism spending in Henry County from 2012 to 2013*
- Support I-73 and completion of U.S. 58 to I-77
 - *Several meetings with Transportation Board; part of the legislative priorities*
- Further develop infrastructure at Patriot Centre and CCBC
 - *Discussions with National Guard to return*
 - *CCBC utilities and water tank construction*

Education

- Support NCI & PHCC and continue collaboration on industrial recruitment and workforce readiness efforts
 - *NCI Building on Baldwin opened; Advanced Manufacturing training efforts*
- Develop a path forward to address school facility needs in Collinsville
 - *Ongoing; decision time is coming*
- Support pre-K-12th grade education
 - *Funding for HCPS relatively flat from County; increased funding from Commonwealth*

Public Safety

- Improve recruitment and retention of fire and EMS volunteers

- *Previously discussed under public safety update*
- Deploy SAFER grant and improve overall response to fire and EMS calls
 - *Previously discussed under public safety update*
- Explore ways to improve jail facility
 - *Average daily population of the jail in November 2013 was 168. In November 2014, it was 181.*

Quality of Life

- Support recreational activities including expansion of walking trails
 - *Lauren Mountain Trail – Bassett*
 - *Applied for MAP-21 funding toward expansion of the Dick & Willie Passage trail; Preliminary engineering report for expanding the trail is expected soon.*
- Improve curb appeal / Decrease litter
 - *Minimal progress, but not through lack of effort. More than 4,000 inmate hours was invested in picking up trash in 2014.*
- Support recreational tourism (SRSC, Smith River Fest, etc).
 - *Philpott Marina has been a smash hit*
 - *National Junior College Athletic Association national soccer tournament in fall 2015*
- Mitigate possible deterioration of employee benefits
 - *Compensation issues still exist*

REVIEW OF CURRENT YEAR BUDGET

Mr. Hall presented a brief review of the general fund balance. In the year ending June 30, 2014, the total general fund balance increased to \$30,092,977. The unassigned portion of the fund balance has increased to \$21,043,246, up from \$18,459,968.

A copy of the presentation is included in the file.

PRIORITIES FOR 2015-16

Mr. Hall asked the Board to individually reflect on their significant accomplishments since they started office and then to ask themselves, "What if we had not done this, where would be today?"

The following items were identified as significant accomplishments:

- Consolidated County and PSA Offices
- Consolidated Social Services with Martinsville
- Moved Animal Control to Sheriff's Office
- Funding for laptop and iPad initiatives
- Citizen opportunity for vote for mixed beverages
- Pipeline, school consolidation, County leadership (public input)

- County audits (financial accountability)
- Continued to increase of fund balance
- Decision not to build a landfill
- Creation of the EDC (including office of tourism and retail development)
- Purchase of the land for business parks (Bryant, CCBC)
- Public Safety improvements (EMS, EMD, career staff, volunteer collaboration)
- Developing talent (internally), good line of succession
- Marina (tourist destination, quality of life)
- Investment in quality of life (trails, recreation, parks)
- Planning for the future
- CCBC
- Revenue neutral funding of agencies (no cuts)
- Board collaboration and cooperation
- Early support of new school in Collinsville
- Quality County staff
- Fund balance increases
- CCBC, place to attract mega-projects
- Shell building program
- Public Safety, Sheriff's Office (safe place to live)
- Route change of I-73 will be impactful once built
- Support of Education (NCI, PHCC, schools)
- Board made a statement that they are willing to work together as a community (Henry County and Martinsville) – Revenue Sharing, EDC, Social Services, etc.
- Good at leveraging funds (grants, collaboration for cost savings)

There was general discussion about many of these accomplishments and what would have been the consequences if the decision would not have been made to accept the risks with moving these forward. Mr. Hall noted that the Board has done a good job and should continue to adequately measure risks, effectively mitigate negatives, and have the conviction to move it forward.

There was general discussion about how best to address the jail issue. Mr. Hall indicated that there are many variables to a project this size, including determining the specific jail needs of the County, evaluating the possibility of regional collaboration, and most importantly, how to pay for it.

The Board was asked to identify its goals for FY 15-16. Mr. Bryant said he would consider the replication of many of the goals from the current year. The Board then identified the following items as specific goals for the County for the next fiscal year and beyond:

Economic Development

- Start early planning for development of Bryant Property
- Support EDC
 - Retail development
- Marketing of CCBC
- Preserve fund balance for economic development opportunities

Education

- Support NCI and PHCC / Workforce training / Adv. Manufacturing
- Promote development of the College of Henricopolis School of Medicine
- Support K-12 (cutting edge initiatives, quality education)

Public Safety

- Support current initiatives (career staff, volunteer support)
- Committed to the continued support of staff at end of SAFER grant
- Recognize continuing demands on system (increasing calls, aging population) and capital needs

Law Enforcement

- Explore possibilities to remedy jail needs
- Needs assessment and review regional opportunities for jail
- Support Sheriff's Office

Quality of Life

- Continue QOL initiatives and look for other opportunities for the future

There being no further business to discuss, Mr. Slaughter moved to continue the meeting until February 17, 2015 at 5:00 p.m. for a joint meeting with the Henry County School Board, seconded by Joe Bryant and unanimously carried.