

HENRY COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MINUTES

April 20, 2015 – 7:00 pm

The Henry County Board of Supervisors met on April 20, 2015, 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 '15-'16 School Budget and Total County Budget. The following Board members were present: Chairman H. G. Vaughn, Vice Chairman Jim Adams, Debra Buchanan, Tommy Slaughter, Joe Bryant and Milton Kendall.

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 were present.

Ben Williams of the Martinsville Bulletin was present. Also in attendance were Lt. Col. Steve Eanes, Lt. Troy Easter and Deputy Mike Hooper of the Sheriff's Office.

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mr. Hall gave the invocation and Ms. Buchanan led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Vaughn 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 '15-'16 School Budget and the second public hearing is on the FY '15-'16 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 '15-'16 SCHOOL BUDGET

Mr. Vaughn opened the public hearing at 7:03 pm.

School Superintendent Dr. Jared Cotton thanked the Board for its support over the past year, citing funding for additional iPads, land purchase for a new school, and carryover funds. However, Dr. Cotton said the school division's inability to offer needed step raises to staff has resulted in highly qualified teachers leaving the county each year to find better salaries in other school systems. Dr. Cotton said he understood it was unlikely any changes would be made to the budget, but he hoped that with the Board's partnership, we can address these salary issues in future budget years so that we can ensure students in Henry County are taught by highly qualified teachers.

Dorothy Carter, President of the Henry County Education Association, urged the Board to consider fully funding the schools' budget request. Ms. Carter said it has been four years since school employees received step raises. But, Ms. Carter said her biggest concern in the proposed budget is a jail needs assessment study and construction of a new jail that could cost the County \$40,000,000. Ms. Carter cited statistics that show a direct correlation between the lack of education and a troubled adult life. Ms. Carter said the focus should be to prevent the need for a jail by educating our students and fully funding our schools.

Ashby Pinkard, Stanleytown Elementary School librarian, also spoke and said she and other teachers were very disappointed that their voices were not heard last month when they addressed the Board. Ms. Pinkard said you will not be able to keep qualified teachers in Henry County if salaries are not aligned with other school systems.

There being no further comments the public hearing was closed at 7:16 pm.

PUBLIC HEARING - PROPOSED FY '15-'16 TOTAL COUNTY BUDGET

Mr. Vaughn opened the public hearing at 7:17 pm.

Dick Ephgrave, Director of the Longwood University Small Business Development Center, requested a funding increase of \$3,000 to create a five-week program called Simple Start for prospective business owners.

Others who spoke at the public hearing included Barbara Parker with Piedmont Arts Association; Jack Hanbury, Patrick Henry Community College; Rick Ward, Karen Barley, and Amy Bunn of the Blue Ridge Regional Library system; Joe Keiper and Denny Casey of the Virginia Museum of Natural History; and Melissa White and Nicole Harris of the SPCA, all of whom thanked the Board for their support.

There being no further comments the public hearing was closed at 7:55 pm.

CONSIDERATION OF ANY PROPOSED BUDGET CHANGES

Mr. Hall said at the conclusion of tonight's meeting, staff will need any changes the Board wishes to make to the proposed FY '16 budget, as it will be included in the Board package for adoption at the April 28 meeting and scheduled for appropriation at the May meeting.

Mr. Vaughn asked Board members for comments and suggestions on the FY '16 Budget. Mr. Vaughn addressed one comment made during the public hearing concerning funding for a new jail that was included in the capital improvements plan (CIP). Mr. Vaughn said projects and items listed in the CIP for fiscal year 2017 and beyond are merely a wish list. Mr. Vaughn said these numbers are often shifted further out and may not ever materialize.

The Board did not recommend any changes to the proposed budget. There being no further business to discuss, Mr. Slaughter moved at 7:58 pm to adjourn its meeting, seconded by Ms. Buchanan and unanimously carried.