

Special Called Board of Supervisors Meeting (Thursday, May 26, 2022)

This meeting is held pursuant to and in compliance with the Emergency Ordinance for Continuity of Government due to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Members of the Board of Supervisors were present together at the New Courts Building, 220 Judicial Pl., Heathsville, VA 22473. Members of the public were present in attendance and virtually with approximately 20 call-ins noted.

Members present:

Ronald L. Jett, James M. Long (arrived at 6:15 p.m.), Thomas H. Tomlin, James W. Brann

Other Staff Present:

Mr. Luttrell Tadlock, County Administrator

Mr. Drew Basye, Assistant County Administrator

Ms. Morgan Wilson, Executive Assistant

Mr. Robert Headley, IT Administrator

Mr. Matthew Bailey, IT Assistant

1. Opening of Meeting 5:30 P.M.

Vice Chairman Jett announced that Chairman Haynie was unable to attend the meeting due to a medical emergency. Mr. Jett also asked everyone to take a moment of silence for the school shooting that took place in Uvalde Texas on May 24, 2022.

Action, Information: A. Dehumidification Update

Assistant County Administrator, Drew Basye, gave a brief update to the Board related to the cancellation of the IFB advertised for a dehumidification system. Due to technical and timing issues, the invitation for bid was cancelled and the Board asked staff for quotes to replace three compressors on the existing AAON units. Two local companies were contacted, but they do not perform such services, so staff reached out to James River Air from Richmond who provided a quote of \$24,030 for budgetary purposes only because the County is outside of their service area. Hobbs and Associates, also from the city of Richmond, provided an estimate of \$24,920 to replace the compressors and ensured they could service our area. Assistant County Administrator Basye informed the Board that staff relied on Chairman Haynie's expertise on this service and found that the Chairman was comfortable with moving forward with Hobbs and Associates.

Motion to move forward with Hobbs and Associates for replacement of compressors on the existing AAON units in the amount of \$24,920.

Motion by: Thomas H. Tomlin, second by: James W. Brann.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Aye: Ronald L. Jett, Thomas H. Tomlin, James W. Brann

Not Present at Vote: James M. Long

Action, Discussion, Information: B. Budget Work Session

County Administrator Tadlock stated that the Board had set up this budget work session to allow departments to present their budget information, so staff requested Sheriff Beauchamp and Library Director Jane Blue's attendance for this meeting. County Administrator Tadlock handed the discussion over to Sheriff Beauchamp to begin his presentation in representation of the Sheriff's Department.

Sheriff Beauchamp provided the Board with a budget request in January from the Sheriff's Department. There were some larger requests presented in the budget that Sheriff Beauchamp wanted to go over with the Board and answer any questions they may have.

Sheriff Beauchamp began his presentation by going over the adoption of a pay scale which the office has never had before. Typically, the department goes by what the state compensation board does and deciphers a reasonable salary based on different positions with/without training.

Surrounding counties have increased their starting salaries substantially above Northumberland, so Sheriff Beauchamp feels that we need to address this as well. The pay scale plan incorporates this need which proposes a starting salary at \$44,000 without training. Along with this, the department can take steps to calculate years of service if an individual were to come from a different agency and incorporate that into their salary as well for more competitive pay.

Supervisor Tomlin asked how the department would deal with existing employees and handling compression.

Sheriff Beauchamp explained to the Board that the department took the base pay of \$44,000 and calculated the years of service based on that to give a current salary. Currently, a five percent pay raise is proposed and a four percent pay raise is proposed at the General Assembly. The department took the five percent and looked at those figures versus the pay scale and asked to fund the larger of the two for each individual employee. Sheriff Beauchamp stated that there are more employees that would benefit from the five percent than they would from the salary created using the scale. With this scale, all staff would rise in years so the compression would not be present.

Sheriff Beauchamp asked the Board to keep in mind whatever pay raise the General Assembly passes and if this Board passes as well, the County will receive that reimbursement.

Supervisor Tomlin asked what the state compensation board's salary was for a starting deputy.

Sheriff Beauchamp informed the Board that the comp board's salary for a starting deputy is \$35,000 and the County adds the \$4,000, allowing the salary to reach \$39,000.

Vice Chairman Jett asked what the ratio was used for deputy per person.

Sheriff Beauchamp stated the ratio was one deputy per 1500 population.

Supervisor Tomlin asked what the salary is of a deputy who is not certified in relation to those who are.

Sheriff Beauchamp explained that the starting salary for those who are not certified is \$44,000 and there wouldn't be any increase based on being certified anymore.

Supervisor Tomlin asked if the master deputy program still existed.

Sheriff Beauchamp stated that there is one and he is going to look further into this to see if the department can continue to do more.

Vice Chairman Jett asked how much the department budget would increase this year if moving forward with the proposed pay scale.

Sheriff Beauchamp informed the Board that looking at the salary scale along for full-time employees, the total is \$72,206. The total salary scale for part-time employees is \$26,423, proposing the employees max their hours at 1440 hour a year.

Sheriff Beauchamp went on to present the next large budget request which was additional overtime. In the department, compensation time has been used as long as he can remember but he learned in lawful employment in 2021 that only departments with 100 or more law enforcement officers can use comp time. So, Sheriff Beauchamp reached out to their attorney to see what should be used with 100 or less law enforcement officers. The attorney did not know how to answer this but gave his opinion of the department needing to pay it out if we have it recorded and not use comp time anymore.

The department has offset payout which was right around \$20,000 this fiscal year to eliminate comp time. The sheriff explained that he believes he has enough in his budget this year to offset

that amount but moving forward, the budget amount will be way over. So, the department is estimating an additional \$35,000 on top of what their current amount of \$55,000, putting them at \$90,000 which should cover a year's worth of over time.

An additional request from the Sheriff's Department is \$20,000 for courtroom security. This fiscal year, an extra bailiff was hired, giving the department four bailiffs every court day. As of right now, the funding of this is coming from the court security fund, but the Sheriff emphasized that this fund will be drained within the next two to three years if we don't increase some of the county contributions.

Supervisor Tomlin asked how much court security was needed when running both District and Circuit Court.

Sheriff Beauchamp explained that seven to eight individuals are needed.

Sheriff Beauchamp also acknowledged that the 72 batteries, that back up and run the entire building, are passed the need for replacement. The Sheriff stated that \$18,500 is in his line item for capital outlay and he does not believe that this amount will cover the replacement of this battery backup system.

Supervisor Tomlin asked what the batteries back up.

Sheriff Beauchamp informed the Board that the batteries back up the entire building until the generator starts, which can take up to 30 seconds.

Sheriff Beauchamp stated that he would provide an updated quote to the Board on the replacement of these batteries within the next week or two.

Lastly, Sheriff Beauchamp requested additional money on what is in his line item for yearly maintenance because maintenance is going to be around \$37,000 - \$38,000 this year.

Supervisor Tomlin asked if the department was having any trouble getting ammunition.

Sheriff Beauchamp stated that they were, but it has been better more recently. The biggest concern right now is getting weapons.

Supervisor Tomlin asked about the protocol in the event something similar happen like the Texas shooting.

Sheriff Beauchamp explained that his department is trained to enter the building as soon as you arrive on scene and notify dispatch of the situation. Sheriff Beauchamp states that he is fortunate to have a Student Resource Officer in every school and is thankful for the Board's funding on this.

Supervisor Tomlin asked if there was any inter-agency planning/cross training to make sure everyone understands how to react in specific scenarios like this.

Sheriff Beauchamp stated that to his knowledge no training like this has occurred, but that would be a large training that should take place.

The Board thanked Sheriff Beauchamp for his presentation and welcomed Library Director Jane Blue to begin her presentation in representation of the Northumberland County Public Library.

Library Director Jane Blue presented information on the library's budget.

The Northumberland Public Library's budget request for fiscal year 22-23 is \$198,307. This year's request consists of an 11% increase over the previous fiscal year and includes a 3% increase in staff wages and a 16% increase in overall operating expenses due to the increasing cost of doing business. For further detail on the library's budget request, Library Director Jane Blue's full presentation can be accessed in Board Docs.

After the presentation, Vice Chairman Jett turned the meeting back over to County Administrator Luttrell Tadlock to conclude the budget work session. County Administrator Tadlock informed the Board the staff did advertise for the budget public hearing for fiscal year 2023 scheduled for Thursday June 2, at 7:00 p.m.

Supervisor Tomlin asked Superintendent Holly Wargo and Finance Director Jason Bellows if the salary increase is proposed as 5% this year.

Finance Director Bellows informed the Board that the budget as presented includes the 5% increase plus the step.

Supervisor Tomlin continued by asking about the County having to make up the difference on the given composite index.

Finance Director Bellows stated that the difference this year is the state and federal government increases that are making up that difference in money so that is why there is no requests for additional local money.

Vice Chairman Jett would like to see the County seek other radio system proposals from another vendor to guarantee that the County makes a strategic investment.

Motion to request the Sheriff to seek other proposals from other vendors on this type of radio system (referring to the regional radio system) that he feels the need is there for and not wants.

Motion by: Ronald L. Jett, second: NONE.

Final Resolution: Motion Failed

Aye: Ronald L. Jett

Nay: James M. Long, Thomas H. Tomlin, James W. Brann

Motion to authorize the Sheriff to seek the cost of microwaves for the regional radio system.

Motion by: Thomas H. Tomlin, second by: James M. Long.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Aye: Ronald L. Jett, James M. Long, Thomas H. Tomlin, James W. Brann

Sheriff Beauchamp ensured the Board that he would get this figure to the Board as soon as possible.

2. Items Related to Closed Meeting

Action: A. Convene into Closed Meeting

Motion to Action: A. Convene into Closed Meeting: convene into closed meeting as permitted by Virginia Code Section 2.2-3711 (A)(1); 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. Any teacher shall be permitted to be present during a closed meeting in which there is a discussion or consideration of a disciplinary matter that involves the teacher and some student and the student involved in the matter is present, provided the teacher makes a written request to be present to the presiding officer of the appropriate board. Nothing in this subdivision, however, shall be construed to authorize a closed meeting by a local governing body or an elected school board to discuss compensation matters that affect the membership of such body or board collectively.

Motion by: Thomas H. Tomlin, second by: James M. Long.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Aye: Ronald L. Jett, James M. Long, Thomas H. Tomlin, James W. Brann

Action: B. Reconvene into Open Meeting

Motion to reconvene into open session.

Motion by: Thomas H. Tomlin, second by: James W. Brann.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Aye: Ronald L. Jett, James M. Long, Thomas H. Tomlin, James W. Brann

Action: C. Certification of Closed Meeting

Motion that the Northumberland Board of Supervisors return to Public Meeting and certify by roll call vote that only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements by the Virginia Freedom of Information Act, and as were identified in the motion convening the closed meeting were heard, discussed or considered during the closed meeting.

The vote on the motion was passed by a roll call vote as follows:

Aye: Ronald L. Jett, James W. Brann, Thomas H. Tomlin, James M. Long

Motion by: Thomas H. Tomlin, second by: James W. Brann.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Aye: Ronald L. Jett, James M. Long, Thomas H. Tomlin, James W. Brann

Action: D. Action(s) taken from Closed Meeting

No actions were taken from closed meeting.

A moment of silence was called for those who lost their lives in the school shooting located in Texas.

3. Public Hearing 7:00 P.M.

Discussion, Information: A. In order to consider an amendment to the fiscal year 2022 budget for the purpose of appropriating monies which are part of the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) III funding, various school grants, and previously appropriated funds to be accounted for.

Before opening the public hearing, Supervisor Brann asked if the ESSER funds were a grant or if they are a relief fund to help maintain the schools.

County Administrator Tadlock informed the Board and the public that they are the elementary and secondary school relief (ESSER) funds from the federal government, relating to Covid funding. The funds are a little different than a grant because the County receives them up front and the school receives them by reimbursement.

Supervisor Brann asked if the date that these funds need to be spent is in the year of 2024.

County Administrator Tadlock stated that he would have to confirm the date with the school division.

Supervisor Long asked Superintendent Wargo if she could confirm the date these funds need to be spent.

Superintendent Wargo stated that she believed this date was listed in the packet sent over to the Board of Supervisors.

County Administrator Tadlock went on to present the hearing to the public and stated that the total budget amendment is \$2,632,249.23. To give further clarification, County Administrator Tadlock informed the public that the appropriation amount was higher than the budgeted amount due to some other funding being budgeted but not appropriated earlier in the year.

Vice Chairman Jett opened the public hearing.

Public Hearing Open.

Mr. Gavyn Simpson stated that to his knowledge, the money in question can only be used towards this building so he sees this as an investment for the community. Mr. Simpson shared his experiences with practices in the auditorium and cafeteria due to lack of space and urges the Board to move forward with this construction proposal.

Mrs. Lynn Stuart understands the importance of having a place for students to have the ability to drill and shoot archery, but her concern is that the ESSER III funds used to build this building will not maintain it.

Mr. Alexis Wormley stated that this building is an investment to further the kid's education and development. Mr. Wormley expressed the need of space for the JROTC program because numerous kids enter this program and turn their entire life around. Furthermore, Mr. Wormley volunteered to pay higher taxes if it meant providing more opportunities for our school system.

Ms. Susan Titus is a real-estate agent that has brought a lot of families into Northumberland County for the desire of quality of life and our schools. Ms. Titus stated that given the way material prices have been changing, it's less expensive to maintain this building than it will be to build it in the future.

Mr. Rafael Vega created a PowerPoint presentation for the public to view. Mr. Vega emphasized that the only way to continue growing a community is to continue investing for the youth in the community.

Mr. Jay Lightfoot is a teacher at Northumberland and believes that the Board should listen to the people in the school system on their need for this facility building. Mr. Lightfoot stated that the County should further invest in our community and get it done while we have the chance.

Ms. Darrah Downing was a student at Northumberland and expressed that the JROTC program has allowed her to do so many things. Ms. Downing expressed that JROTC had no priority over other sports so many practices were lost and with this new building, this would not be an issue.

Mrs. Suzanne Smart believes that there are other things in the community that deserve the same amount of passion as this new school building. Mrs. Smart mentioned that the SOL scores are not good, and the County needs to go back to focusing on main education such as reading, math, and public speaking. Mrs. Smart stated that this new building is not in the best interest of the residents or the taxpayers of Northumberland County.

Ms. Sabrina Conley believes that new building is a wonderful idea for the children in the school system. Ms. Conley stated that the building will help improve the kid's health, fitness, and their ability to learn.

Mr. Richard Saxer stated that the money is federal funding, and another district somewhere is going to get that money if we don't use it. Mr. Saxer expressed that we should use it here in Northumberland County to better the education.

Dr. Crockett believes that the Board needs to listen to the voices of the children because they are our future educators.

Ms. Meredith Withers asked questions related to the budget for fiscal year 23 and its approval date.

Vice Chairman Jett explained to Ms. Withers that the current comment period is on the budget amendment and not the upcoming budget for fiscal year 23.

Ms. Pierson emphasized the school's need for space, giving JROTC the ability to perform and improve.

Mrs. Croxton found it concerning that because questions were being asked about the building, individuals were implying that those people were against the children of the school or the programs. Mrs. Croxton believes that the people shouldn't get offended on the questions being asked.

Mr. Carl Perez stated that a lot of the questions asked have already been answered or made available for public view. Mr. Perez believes that the County needs things to continue to educate and move forward.

Public Hearing Closed.

Supervisor Long asked County Administrator Tadlock how soon the Board could take action on this matter.

County Administrator Tadlock informed the Board that this public hearing is not like the hearing for FY 23 budget, so the Board could take action at any time now that the hearing is closed.

Supervisor Tomlin brought up the fact that the Board was missing one member, so the worst-case scenario is the vote come out 2 – 2 which is a dead vote, meaning no Board member could reconsider in the future.

4. Closing of Meeting

Action: A. Carry Over

Motion to carry-over to the next Board of Supervisors meeting on June 2, 2022, at 5:30 p.m.

Motion by: Thomas H. Tomlin, second by: James M. Long.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Aye: Ronald L. Jett, James M. Long, Thomas H. Tomlin, James W. Brann