
Regular Meeting, Wednesday, January 14, 2009, 7:00 p.m. Government Center, Verona, VA.

PRESENT: Larry C. Howdyshell, Chairman
Gerald W. Garber, Vice-Chairman
David R. Beyeler
Wendell L. Coleman
Tracy C. Pyles, Jr.
Jeremy L. Shifflett
Nancy Taylor Sorrells
Patrick J. Morgan, County Attorney
Dale L. Cobb, Director of Community Development
Jennifer M. Whetzel, Director of Finance
John C. McGehee, Assistant County Administrator
Patrick J. Coffield, County Administrator
Rita R. Austin, CMC, Executive Secretary

VIRGINIA: At a regular meeting of the Augusta County Board of Supervisors held on Wednesday, January 14, 2009, at 7:00 p.m., at the Government Center, Verona, Virginia, and in the 233rd year of the Commonwealth....

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Chairman Howdyshell welcomed the citizens present and reminded them to remove their hats and turn off their cell phones.

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Dylan Bozic, an eighth grader at Stuarts Draft Middle School, led us with the Pledge of Allegiance. Dylan enjoys art and has participated in several art contests. He would like to become a political cartoonist.

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Tracy C. Pyles, Jr., Supervisor for the Pastures District, delivered invocation.

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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC PLAN

The Board received a presentation of Consultant's report to Board of Supervisors, Industrial Development Authority and Planning Commission.

Tom Byerly, Chairman of the Planning Commission, introduced the Commission. Joe Williams, Chairman of the Industrial Development Authority, introduced his board.

Dale L. Cobb, Director of Community Development, introduced John Rhodes, from Moran, Stahl & Boyer, to present a report to the Board of Supervisors, Industrial Development Authority and Planning Commission. Handouts were distributed. It was noted that the final report will be available on the website.

Chairman Howdyshell suggested that a committee be appointed to review the Executive Summary and prioritize recommendations and provide cost for each scenario. He appointed Messrs. Beyeler and Coleman to serve on the committee and asked that Joe Williams appoint someone from the IDA to serve.

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COMMITTEES & COMMISSIONS FOR 2009 APPOINTED BY THE BOARD

On motion of Mr. Beyeler, seconded by Ms. Sorrells, the Board made the following appointments:

LOCAL EMERGENCY PLANNING COMMISSION

Reappointed John C. McGehee and Tracy C. Pyles, Jr., to the Local Emergency Planning Commission for a one-year period.

January 14, 2009, at 7:00 p.m.

COMMITTEES FOR 2009 - APPOINTED BY THE CHAIRMAN (cont'd)

Governmental Opportunities Committee with
Cities of Staunton and Waynesboro Liaisons: Larry C. Howdysshell and
David R. Beyeler

Rockingham/Augusta Liaisons: Larry C. Howdysshell and
Gerald W. Garber

Reassessment Liaisons: Wendell L. Coleman and
Tracy C. Pyles, Jr.

Chairman Howdysshell suggested that the working committees that had been appointed by Mr. Beyeler would remain the same.

Vote was as follows: Yeas: Sorrells, Garber, Beyeler, Howdysshell, Shifflett,
Coleman and Pyles

Nays: None

Motion carried.

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MATTERS TO BE PRESENTED BY THE PUBLIC

David Gordon asked the Board to lower the tax rate to match the reassessment increase because of the economy.

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MATTERS TO BE PRESENTED BY THE BOARD

The Board discussed the following issues:

Mr. Pyles: Commonwealth Center for Children and Adolescents Closing –
Asked that a letter be submitted to the Governor referring to the
quality of services and mandated local costs.

Mr. Pyles moved, seconded by Mr. Coleman, that the Board authorize that a
letter be submitted to the Governor asking that he confirm that if there is a
closing that the quality of services for these children will not be diminished and
that the costs will not be borne by localities. Patrick J. Coffield, County
Administrator, added that a copy will be provided to the local legislators.

Mr. Beyeler asked for numbers of local people using the facility and what the alternative
would be. Mr. Pyles added that when he contacted VACo staff, he was informed that
they did not know what the services would be or where they would come from.

Ms. Sorrells stated that she had spoken with Delegate Saxman who stated that this
facility provides “acute psychiatric care and with no such safety net there wasn’t
anything in the private sector that could pick up all the slack.”

Mr. Coleman referred to the deinstitutionalism of Western State a few years ago that
caused a homeless situation and to a similar incident with the Virginia School for the
Deaf and Blind where the Hampton facility was closed and those students being placed
in Staunton.

January 14, 2009, at 7:00 p.m.

MATTERS TO BE PRESENTED BY THE BOARD (cont'd)

Chairman Howdyshell mentioned that a handout had been distributed to the Board.

Vote was as follows: Yeas: Howdyshell, Sorrells, Garber, Beyeler, Shifflett, Pyles and Coleman

Nays: None

Motion carried.

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MATTERS TO BE PRESENTED BY THE BOARD (cont'd)

Mr. Garber: Reassessment Questions: Information from the VACo Board of Supervisors Handbook distributed to the Board. He noted that it was the County's responsibility, under state law, to have a reassessment and that the process should not be delayed any longer.

Mr. Pyles noted that there are several things that the County is not 100% in compliance with the state, such as E&S where all the people were not hired that was suggested. Waynesboro is out of compliance with water and sewer where there were financial conditions that did not allow them to correct the problem immediately; therefore, they operated out of compliance. He added that, when this occurs, a penalty would possibly be assessed. "We are in unprecedented times. Things are not as they have been. It took 48 months to go from 0 assessment to 54% increase. In six months, it has fallen back 27%--half of that is gone. That means we are going to have assessments that are falling below where they are now, let alone where we are going to set them in a matter of time." Mr. Pyles suggested that the Board set a revenue-neutral real estate tax rate in order to compensate for the higher reassessments that will be mailed out next week. Supervisors Shifflett and Garber said they would support some kind of decrease in the tax rate if necessary.

Ms. Sorrells:

- 1. Dr. James Perkins, President of Blue Ridge Community College, retirement – Asked that a draft resolution be presented at the next Staff Briefing.
- 2. Special Use Permits (SUP) request – Currently the County does not allow SUPs on private lanes. Suggested that the consultants look at the creation of another category of low impact businesses with certain standards.

Mr. Beyeler: Boys and Girls Club request – to be discussed at next Staff Briefing.

Chairman Howdyshell:

- 1. Rules of Order form – Board members need to sign and submit to Rita Austin to be placed in file.
- 2. Budget process – It will be a difficult budget session and we will need to closely monitor revenues and expenses.

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January 14, 2009, at 7:00 p.m.

2009 REASSESSMENT

The Board considered hearing schedule as recommended by Board of Assessors.

Mr. Coffield advised that a ninety-day extension was granted by The Honorable Victor V. Ludwig. The Board of Assessors, at its January 8th meeting, set a date for the mailing of reassessment notices and the scheduling of hearings. Notices will be mailed on January 22nd. Appeals hearings for the 2009 reassessments will be conducted from January 26th to February 27th. Information will be placed on VamaNet. He added that Blue Ridge Mass Appraisal had provided a summary of assessment to the Board of Supervisors. Mr. Coffield also distributed a letter from the Commissioner of Revenue regarding Land Use Values for 2009-2012, noting that a committee had been working on an alternate valuation method since August, 2008 and have not finalized their results; therefore, she has decided to make no change in the land use values currently effective for land receiving assistance under the agricultural/horticultural classifications. The values that were adopted in 2005 will continue through 2012 with the exception of forest lands.

Ms. Sorrells asked if the last assessment and new assessment will be available on VamaNet. Mr. Pyles said that it had been indicated that both would be available.

Mr. Beyeler stated the following:

We want a good assessment. The assessment does not, necessarily, say what the tax rate is going to be. We set the rate. We want them to do a good job on the assessment. Yes, there will be some changes. But until we know what we are doing, we need to act like good business people and just sit and wait and then make the decision.

Mr. Shifflett made the following comment:

There has been a lot of talk in the recent months and especially tonight regarding the reassessments final outcome and I have to say that a 28% increase is a very tough swallow. The sales data, tax records and property information from Blue Ridge Mass Appraisal may support an increase, but, in my opinion, cold hard reality does not.

As we all know, this is certainly not good economic times and an increase during these times could ultimately "result in breaking one's bank". When you factor in the current economic situation, coupled with state budget shortfalls and this reassessment, I think that we owe it to the citizens of Augusta County to spend their tax dollars prudent and efficiently. This Board must go through the upcoming budget with a fine-tooth comb "line-by-line" questioning each and every expenditure like it never has before. We must ensure that our citizens are paying for "their needs" and not "our wants". I hope that the rest of this Board shares the same opinion in doing the right thing for the sake of our citizens and work in due diligence in easing this burden this may cause by taking a long hard look at the tax rate and lower it.

I have received several calls from citizens of Beverley Manor. When you receive that notice next week, and you do not think your assessment is accurate, call the number, schedule your appeal with the Board of Assessors and the representative from Blue Ridge Mass Appraisal. If mistakes were made, I am sure they can be brought up and changes can be made.

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MT. SIDNEY ALLEY REPAIRS

The Board considered allocation of infrastructure funding for alley repairs.

Funding Source: North River Infrastructure Account #80000-8013-01 \$12,450

January 14, 2009, at 7:00 p.m.

HEALTH DEPARTMENT – MUTUAL AID AGREEMENT

The Board considered agreement with Health Department to cooperate and collaborate in the event of a public health disaster.

John C. McGehee, Assistant County Administrator, advised that this is a Memorandum of Understanding made and entered into by the Central Shenandoah Health District (CSHD) and Augusta County to allow coordination of inoculations/vaccines during a public health emergency that affects the Augusta County area communities. Augusta County would receive medications during public health emergencies to give to staff and family members. It is hoped that all county employees, including public schools and law enforcement, would be covered under the agreement including their family members.

During a public health emergency requiring inoculations/vaccinations within the community, the CSHD will assume the primary responsibility for the coordination of providing the medications to an authorized Augusta County representative. CSHD is responsible for storage of vaccines. To date, Harrisonburg and Rockingham have executed the agreement and it is pending with Rockbridge and Waynesboro.

Mr. Coleman moved, seconded by Mr. Shifflett, that the Board approve the agreement.

It was the consensus of the Board that the following changes be made:

On Page 7, 1) Donna Good, EOC Director, replace Bruce W. Crow, Fire Chief; 2) Add Anthony Ramsey, Dispatcher Supervisor; 3) Add cell numbers to Patrick J. Coffield and John C. McGehee

Vote was as follows: Yeas: Howdysshell, Sorrells, Garber, Beyeler, Shifflett, Pyles and Coleman

Nays: None

Motion carried.

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FIRE REVOLVING LOAN FUND APPLICATION

The Board considered revolving loan for Verona Volunteer Fire Company to purchase an E-One Tradition Series Rescue Pumper in the amount of \$200,000.

Mr. McGehee advised that the Revolving Loan Committee, consisting of Larry Howdysshell, Jeremy Shifflett, Bruce Crow, Mike Fisher, Doug Morris, and Minday Craun, has made a recommendation for the Board of Supervisors to approve the request for \$200,000 from Verona Volunteer Fire Company to purchase an E-one Tradition Series Rescue Pumper.

Mr. Shifflett moved, seconded by Mr. Howdysshell, that the Board approve the request.

Vote was as follows: Yeas: Howdysshell, Sorrells, Garber, Beyeler, Shifflett, Pyles and Coleman

Nays: None

Motion carried.

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January 14, 2009, at 7:00 p.m.

REVENUE RECOVERY

The Board considered authorization to develop an RFP with other regional entities and to authorize County Attorney to draft appropriate ordinance.

Mr. McGehee stated that Minday Craun and Carson Holloway were available to answer questions. He noted that Ms. Craun had developed the Business Plan and ideas for funding Volunteer agencies.

For the proposed budgeting (Operation) of the Volunteer agencies, if Revenue Recovery is implemented, a primary concern of the Volunteer agencies was fundraising. In talking with a number of jurisdictions using Revenue Recovery, most went through a process whereby the County would pay for the Volunteer agency's expenditures that they incurred during the year. If county-wide Revenue Recovery is approved, it will not begin until the 2011 budget. Basically, the process would start by the Volunteer agencies submitting a budget to the County by December 15th of any year and then it would be reviewed by staff and a committee made up of peers in the Volunteer service to review these budgets and to make recommendations. There would be an estimate of what would be received through Revenue Recovery and, hopefully, most of their requests would be funded. On the Capital side, decisions of replacement of vehicles will be considered. An inventory of the current vehicles in the county will be noted and what vehicles would be placed in the depreciating schedule. It would also have to be noted what special equipment would be needed in the stations. Audits (spreadsheets) for 2007 had been enclosed in the Agenda package. These audits indicated expenditures and depreciation schedule. Mr. McGehee pointed out that funds that have already been set aside for these type of replacements will need to be utilized. Currently, there is good equipment; therefore, the process of replacement will not occur all at one time.

Chairman Howdyshell added "This is a bold step for Augusta County. It has taken a lot of thought, a lot of man-hours, a lot of reading, and there are still questions to be answered. It has been quite a challenge. Our main concern is, when they get that 911 call, that we have someone to respond."

Mr. McGehee added that a Business Plan has also been provided outlining different aspects of the proposed Revenue Recovery. He asked the Board to give permission to begin developing an RFP for billing services and ask the County Attorney to draft an ordinance to be reviewed by the Board and then advertised for public hearing. He also asked how the Board would feel about a joint RFP with Rockingham County and the City of Harrisonburg.

Mr. Coleman moved, seconded by Mr. Shifflett, that the Board approve the request.

Vote was as follows: Yeas: Howdyshell, Sorrells, Garber, Beyeler, Shifflett, Pyles and Coleman

Nays: None

Motion carried.

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January 14, 2009, at 7:00 p.m.

FIRE AND RESCUE – CHURCHVILLE

The Board considered daylight staffing for Churchville Fire and Rescue.

Mr. McGehee advised that Churchville Volunteer Fire Department has made a request for career staff be placed in the budget. He stated that the original study in 2000 indicated that Churchville was one of the first places that recommended career people because of the central location. The request was to consider either 5 persons or 3. Mr. McGehee felt that 3 persons were more realistic for the current year beginning March 15th.

Carson Holloway, Deputy Chief, said that Churchville and Augusta County were willing to work together in a joint effort.

Because of its central location on the western side of the County, career staff would be able to assist other agencies in the western part of the County, i.e., Deerfield and Mt. Solon.

Chris Shaver, President, of the Churchville Volunteer Fire Department, was available to answer questions. He stated that this was not needed in 2000. It was needed now because of a decrease in daylight staffing; primarily, drivers.

Mr. Coleman asked who was the backup for Churchville Volunteer Fire Department. Mr. Shaver said that Staunton Augusta Rescue Squad (SARS) was the backup.

Mr. Coffield advised that the PDR funds had been placed in the Contingency Account and could be used for this funding request. Mr. Beyeler suggested that the funding should be handled the same way as Grottoes, part of it being taken out of the Infrastructure Account and remaining portion taken out of the Contingency Account. Mr. Pyles said that he was amenable to whatever the Board desired.

Mr. Pyles moved, seconded by Mr. Coleman, that the Board approve the request of hiring 3 career people for 3 months.

Funding Source:	County Contingency Account #92040-999	\$34,673
	Pastures Infrastructure Account #80000-8014-53	<u>22,500</u>
		\$57,173

Vote was as follows: Yeas: Howdysshell, Sorrells, Garber, Beyeler, Shifflett, Pyles and Coleman

Nays: None

Motion carried.

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The Chairman called for a 5-minute break at 9:25 p.m.

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AUDIT RFP

The Board considered draft review of RFP for audit services.

Jennifer M. Whetzel, Director of Finance, advised that the County's five year audit contract with Robinson, Farmer, Cox Associates was up after the June 30, 2008 audit. The scope of work for an audit Request for Proposal was included in the agenda packet. The Chairman established committees earlier, of which one was the audit

January 14, 2009, at 7:00 p.m.

MATTERS TO BE PRESENTED BY STAFF (cont'd)

- 2. Courtroom for Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court and General District Court update – draft floor plan distributed to the Board.
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- 3. Homeland Security – National Incident Management System (NIMS) – Staff has requested that Emergency Operations Center be renamed to Emergency Communication Center consistent with NIMS terminology and that an ordinance be drafted.

Mr. Beyeler moved, seconded by Ms. Sorrells, that the Board authorize the County Attorney to draft an ordinance and that it be discussed at the next Staff Briefing.

Vote was as follows: Yeas: Howdyshell, Sorrells, Garber, Beyeler, Shifflett, Pyles and Coleman

Nays: None

Motion carried.

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- 4. Economic Stimulus Legislation – met with Senator Webb’s staff and it appears that federal funds will flow from Washington to Governor.
- 5. VDOT Six-Year Improvement Program – Attended meeting at Culpepper and local projects significantly reduced.
- 6. FY2010 state cuts – information distributed to Board.
- 7. Coyote update distributed to Board. 2006 - 256; 2007- 201; 2008 - 269.
- 8. Surplus Vehicles – SWAT Truck donation to Waynesboro

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ADJOURNMENT

There being no other business to come before the Board, Mr. Beyeler moved, seconded by Mr. Coleman, the Board adjourned subject to call of the Chairman.

Vote was as follows: Yeas: Howdyshell, Sorrells, Garber, Beyeler, Shifflett, Pyles and Coleman

Nays: None

Motion carried.

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Chairman

County Administrator