

Regular Meeting, Wednesday, July 26, 2017, 7:00 p.m. Government Center, Verona, VA.

PRESENT: Tracy C. Pyles, Jr., Chairman  
Carolyn S. Bragg  
Gerald W. Garber  
Wendell L. Coleman  
Michael L. Shull  
Leslie Tate, Planner  
Timmy Fitzgerald, County Administrator  
Jennifer M. Whetzel, Deputy County Administrator  
James Benkahla, County Attorney

ABSENT: Terry Lee Kelley, Jr., Vice-Chairman  
Marshall W. Pattie

VIRGINIA: At a regular meeting of the Augusta County Board of Supervisors held on Wednesday, July 26, 2017, at 7:00 p.m., at the Government Center, Verona, Virginia, and in the 242<sup>nd</sup> year of the Commonwealth....

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Chairman Pyles welcomed the citizens present.

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The Board of Supervisors led us with the Pledge of Allegiance:

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Chairman Pyles, Supervisor for the Pastures District, delivered invocation.

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VDOT 6-YEAR PLAN

This being the day and time advertised to consider and receive input in regards to the proposed Secondary Road Construction Improvement Program for the State Secondary System of Highways in accordance with Section 33.1-70.01, Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended; the program covers the six-year period from July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2023. The Board will also receive input on the Secondary Road Construction Improvement Budget for Fiscal Year 2017-18. The Budget covers the period from July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2018.

Donald Komara, Residency Administrator, reviewed with the public the purpose for conducting the public hearing:

“It’s good to see everyone this evening. The 6-Year Plan is for secondary roads, which are routes 600 and above. Route 11 is a primary road and there is a different hearing for that type of improvement or issues. We are VDOT and in the highway business so I will listen to whatever highway concerns there may be, but this specific public hearing is concerning secondary roads. We’ve been doing this for a while and I remember about 10 years ago there was \$6 million a year and that was great. We did a lot of rebuilding of our secondary highways that were already hard surfaced. We did a lot of bridge work and gravel roads. Then the money went way down. One year \$500,000 was all that was given for road improvements. This year the money is starting to go up a little. We are not back at the \$6 million range, but we have made it to \$1 million per year. Predominantly, this money is for gravel roads. We could also do other improvements on the secondary hard surface or bridge work. Some ask where the other money went. There was an added emphasis on bridges and we also have a process where they rate all of the projects state wide. There is a scale that weighs the following; economic development, safety, congestion mitigation, accessibility, and environment effects to determine where the projects rates. Augusta County has done well in the first two years of the process. On

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#### VDOT 6-YEAR PLAN (CONT'D)

this plan the first part has a couple of the projects that have received funding. The first project was a bridge on Route 685 near the Craigsville prison. In Weyers Cave from Route 11 to I81, the area will be widened to help with traffic flow. There is work being done to the turning lanes on Route 612 going into the Mill Place Commerce Park. There is a round-a-bout going in at Woodrow Wilson. A study is also being done on getting traffic in and out of the school. Hopefully the round-a-bout will help improve the flow. The study is also looking for an alternative access point for Woodrow Wilson. Widening of shoulders, additional right of way and pulling ditches out on Dam Town Road. Howardsville Turnpike (Route 610) project has been awarded to A R Coffey for \$2.4 million. There will be a Pardon the Dust meeting with the contractors and the families prior to the projects getting started. Route 612 at the Razor Plant has been completed. The following gravel roadways have been started or will be started; Sinking Springs (Route 693), Tinkling Springs Road (Route 610), Wayne Avenue, Leaport, Willow Spout, Barren Ridge, Mt. Hermon Road, Craigshop Road, Nash Road, Barnhart Road, Jericho Road, Pine Bluff, and Broadhead School Road. We do what is called a Rural Rustic Program. We get the 30 foot right-of-way and try to improve the road within the right-of-way. Continuing with the project list; Fountain Cave is split into two different projects. The first piece of the project is very achievable. The second part will take some more thought. Water issues on Horseshoe Circle will be looked into. Wilda Road will be broke into two sections. Mill Lane and Greenhill Road, Wampler Lane, Boy Scout Road, Old Parkersburg Turnpike, Drainage Divide, and Slade Hill will also be approved. There is approximately 197 miles of gravel road in Augusta County. This is an aggressive plan by improving 25 miles. This is a tall order, but we are up to it. A lot of the jobs we will try to do internally. Some are easier than others and some will require cooperation from the residents. Nothing will be started without a letter and someone will go out and talk to the residents.

Mr. Pyles stated that the money has gone down significantly, but we are getting more out of the dollars than in the past. Use of the VDOT crew is very beneficial. The County has been willing to use local dollars to get things done. VDOT money comes from gas, sales tax, insurance tax and unfortunately now it will also come from the Real Estate and Personal Property tax.

The Chairman declared the public hearing to be open.

Brett Hayes of 1889 Sangers Lane, Staunton would like to see Sangers Lane (Route 794) added back to the 6 Year Plan. It was on the plan 18 years ago and he's not sure why it was removed. There is concern about the safety due to blind turns and the condition of the road. Mr. Hayes is willing to give an easement on his property to allow VDOT to straighten out the sharp turn.

Patsy Perry of 17 Fruit Tree Lane and has lived there for 25 years. At first there was not much traffic. Over the years the amount of traffic has grown and it's a dust bowl. The lane was on the 6 Year Plan and she was unaware that it had been pushed back. Ms. Perry wasn't aware that they needed to check on it and reissue the request. She wants to make sure the lane stays on the list.

Mr. Pyles stated that when the funding was cut several years ago, the Six Year Plan meeting stopped because there wasn't money to do any projects. The prior list should have been followed once the meetings resumed.

Jeff Henderson of 96 Fruit Tree Lane also stated concern for the lane. He understands the funding issues and is glad to be back on the plan. Fruit Tree Lane is one mile long with 22 houses, 1 business and an Augusta County Service Authority pump house on it. There are drainage issues and potholes complaints. Mr. Henderson would appreciate being moved forward if money becomes available.

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VDOT 6-YEAR PLAN (CONT'D)

Jason Quick of 49 Fruit Tree Lane, Stuarts Draft, reiterated what Mr. Henderson said and requested for it to be moved up in the system.

Bill Ledbetter of 1369 Sangers Lane reiterated what Mr. Hayes stated about Sangers Lane getting added to the Six Year Plan. It's a 2.4 mile section of gravel road. There are 25 residents on that stretch. Mr. Coleman sent out a questionnaire asking intentions of the residents.

Bridget Ragan of 1340 Sangers Lane stated that she has questions related the Rustic Rural Road Paving Program. She received a list from John Wilkinson called the VDOT 2017 Citizens List, however, was informed that Sangers Lane was not on the list because it did not make the cut for this year. Ms. Ragan would like an explanation for the discrepancy.

Mr. Fitzgerald stated that the Citizen List was something kept internally and we refer back to the list when the Six Year Plan is being developed. VDOT then evaluates the list and determines what will go on the Six Year Plan.

Ms. Ragan also asked about the intention to pave Sangers Lane being removed from the County's Comprehensive Plan. There were several citizens present at that time to oppose paving and no one present to speak in favor of it. Why would the County bring this issue up again and consider it?

Mr. Fitzgerald stated that the area of the County in which Sangers Lane is located was taken out of the development area. At one time it was in the plan to a major road improvement. Much more than a rural rustic standard to allow for more development.

Ms. Ragan stated that she was informed by the County Administrative staff that one owners vote per property is counted to determine whether a road will be considered for the Rural Rustic Road Paving Program. This criteria should be expanded to include Land Use. Who decides what the criteria would be?

Mr. Fitzgerald stated that in regards to Sangers Lane, Mr. Coleman asked Staff to get an idea of what residents wanted on Sangers Lane. VDOT does not consider Land Use.

Eric Oberg of 351 Swisher Road, Staunton, would like to see Swisher Road placed on the list to be paved. Safety is impacted greatly due to poor road conditions and blind hills and curves.

Becky Benson lives on Sangers Lane and is against paving of the road. Paving of Sangers Lane will not make it safer because with a paved road people will speed more. She pointed out that the cost of paving is higher verses keeping it gravel. Everyone chose to live there with the road gravel.

Mike Rose of 1623 Sangers Lane, stated that he is in favor of paving the road. There are severe safety concerns with the road. Augusta County sent out a survey and took a vote. The votes count per household and eleven voted yes with six voting no. Since that survey was done more have come forward. Votes count. Votes are not measured by how much road frontage you have. A comment was made in the minutes from last year that it was the new people causing the trouble on Sangers Lane wanting the road paved. He is a new person. He has lived there for six years. The people voted in favor of paving, on average, have lived on that road for 21 years according to the tax records. The average time of those who voted against was 20 years. Only two people that voted yes have moved to Sangers Lane in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. It's hard to hear that the new people are the

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VDOT 6-YEAR PLAN (CONT'D)

only ones that want it paved because it's not the truth. If the vote is per household then there is a super majority in favor of paving it.

Mr. Komara stated there is a lot of maintenance work out there. The second mowing is ready to get started. The Johnson grass has been sprayed and can't be mowed for twenty days.

RELOCATING POLLING PLACE FOR THE DOOMS AND CRIMORA PRECINCT

This being the day and time advertised to consider a request to amend Section 8-32 of the Augusta County code to move the polling place for the Doods Precinct (Wayne District) and Crimora Precinct (Middle River District) from the old Hugh K. Cassell Elementary School to the new Hugh K. Cassell Elementary School, which is located adjacent to the old elementary school.

Ruth Talmage of the Electoral Board stated that Hugh K. Cassell has two precincts voting there. The Electoral Board met with Dr. Bond and Dr. Garber and everyone agrees to moving the precinct. She checked with engineering about the parking lot being in compliance.

Ms. Talmage wants the Board to know that the school system has been very supportive of the voting system.

The Chairman declared the public hearing to be open.

There being no speakers, the Chairman declared the public hearing closed.

Mr. Garber moved, seconded by Mr. Coleman, that the Board accept the amendment to the following ordinance to relocate the polling place:

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND SECTION 8-32  
OF THE AUGUSTA COUNTY CODE

WHEREAS, Beverley Manor Elementary School is no longer available to be used as a polling place; and

WHEREAS, the Augusta County Electoral Board, after conducting a diligent search for a new polling place to serve the voters of the Beverley Manor precinct; and

WHEREAS, no other suitable location could be found within the boundary of the precinct; and

WHEREAS, there is sufficient room to relocate the polling place to the building that currently serves as the Beverley Manor polling place; and

WHEREAS, the location of the Beverley Manor Precinct polling place in the Beverley Manor Middle School is in compliance with §24.2-310 of the Code of Virginia.

NOW THEREFORE be it resolved that Section 8-32 of the Augusta County Code is amended to read as follows:

§ 8-32. Location of polling places are:

<u>Precinct Name</u>	<u>Location of Polling Place</u>
Buffalo Gap	Buffalo Gap High School
Cedar Green	Beverley Manor Middle School
Churchville Elementary	Churchville Elementary School
Churchville Fire Station	Churchville Fire Station
Craigsville	Craigsville Community Center
Crimora	<del>Hugh K. Cassell Elementary School</del> <b>New Hugh K. Cassell Elementary School</b>
Deerfield	Deerfield Fire Station

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**RELOCATING POLLING PLACE FOR THE DOOMS AND CRIMORA PRECINCT (CONT'D)**

Dooms	<del>Hugh K. Cassell Elementary School</del> <b>New Hugh K. Cassell Elementary School</b>
Stuarts Draft Elementary	Stuarts Draft Elementary School
Fishersville	Yancey Fire Station
Fort Defiance	Edward G. Clymore Elementary School
Greenville	Riverheads High School
Jolivue	Victory Worship Center
Lyndhurst	Wilson Fire Station
Middlebrook	Middlebrook Fire Station
Mount Solon	Sangerville-Towers Ruritan Hall
New Hope	New Hope United Methodist Church
North River	North River Elementary School
Sherando	Sherando Community Center
Spottswood	Spottswood Community Center
Ridgeview	Ridgeview Christian School
Verona	Augusta County Government Center
Weyers Cave	Weyers Cave Community Center
White Hill	White Hill Church of the Brethren
Wilson	Valley Vocational Technical Center

Vote was as follows:        Yeas: Shull, Garber, Coleman, Bragg, and Pyles  
    Nays: None  
    Absent: Kelley and Pattie

Motion carried.

**REZONING REQUEST**

This being the day and time advertised to consider a request to rezone approximately 2.9 acres zoned Single Family Residential to General Business owned by Sean and Elizabeth Baber and William R. Oheim, Etal, located off Lee Highway (Rt 11) directly north of the intersection of Cedar Lane and Lee Highway (Rt 11) in Verona in the Beverley Manor District.

Leslie Tate, Planner, described the property and showed pictures in a PowerPoint. The applicant has submitted the following proffers that will serve as conditions of the rezoning. The permitted uses shall be limited to:

1. Professional offices, excluding medical and dental.
2. Financial institutions and offices, excluding banks.
3. Construction support businesses, excluding sales and outdoor storage of building materials.
4. Government facilities.
5. All uses including any kind of display and storage will be conducted entirely within an enclosed building, except for parking.
6. Prior to the approval of a site plan, access easement shall be granted to the two adjacent parcels that front on Route 11.
7. A buffer shall be installed or maintained for adjacent residential property until such time as the property changes to business as well.
8. The building height shall not exceed 50 feet.

The rezoning request is in compliance with Comprehensive Plan and the Planning Commission recommends approval with the proffers.

Mr. Garber stated that due to the potential conflict of interest he will not participate.

Jonathan Garber, applicant, owns the two southern properties. They are hoping to rezone

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**REZONING REQUEST (CONT'D)**

to General Business. Mr. Garber's plan is to move Lineage Architect onto the premises. He thanked County Staff and VDOT Staff for working with them on this process.

The Chairman declared the public hearing to be open.

There being no speakers, the Chairman declared the public hearing closed.

Ms. Bragg moved, seconded by Mr. Coleman, that the Board approve the following rezoning request:

**ORDINANCE**

A REQUEST TO REZONE APPROXIMATELY 2.9 ACRES ZONED SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL TO GENERAL BUSINESS OWNED BY SEAN AND ELIZABETH BABER AND WILLIAM R. OHEIM, ETAL LOCATED OFF LEE HIGHWAY (ROUTE 11) DIRECTLY NORTH OF THE INTERSECTION OF CEDAR LANE AND LEE HIGHWAY (ROUTE 11) IN VERONA IN THE BEVERLEY MANOR DISTRICT.

AN ORDINANCE to amend Chapter 25 "Zoning" of the Code of Augusta County, Virginia.

WHEREAS, application has been made to the Board of Supervisors to amend the Augusta County Zoning Maps,

WHEREAS, the Augusta County Planning Commission, after a public hearing, has made their recommendation to the Board of Supervisors,

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors has conducted a public hearing,

WHEREAS, both the Commission and Board public hearings have been properly advertised and all public notice as required by the Zoning Ordinance and the Code of Virginia properly completed,

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors has considered the application, the Planning Commission recommendation and the comments presented at the public hearing;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT ORDAINED, by the Board of Supervisors that the Augusta County Zoning Maps be amended as follows:

Parcel number **9** on tax map number **46A(1)** containing approximately 0.927 of an acre and Parcel numbers **10 & 11** on tax map number **46A(1)** containing approximately 1.970 acres are changed from Single Family Residential to General Business with the following proffers:

1. Permitted uses shall be limited to (1) professional offices, excluding medical and dental; (2) financial institutions and offices, excluding banks; (3) construction support businesses, excluding sales and outdoor storage of building materials; and (4) Government Facilities.
2. All uses, including display and storage, shall be conducted entirely within an enclosed building except for parking.
3. Prior to the approval of a site plan, access easements shall be granted to adjacent parcels 046A1-1-A and 046A-1-8.
4. If at the time of development of the site, any of the adjacent property (TM#'s 46A1-1-A, 46A-1-2, 46A-1-8) is still zoned residential, then a buffer meeting Alternative 1, 2 or 3 described below, shall be installed or maintained as depicted on the attached survey prepared by Ingram-Hagen a division of Lineage titled "Boundary Survey of Lots 9, 10 & 11 of the W.T. Weller Subdivision" and dated June 1, 2017. The buffer will be maintained until such time as the zoning of the adjacent property is changed to business. This condition shall apply to each individual adjacent property.

Alternative 1: A ten foot (10') wide strip of land with a six foot (6') opaque privacy fence, wall, berm or combination thereof. Opaque privacy fences shall be constructed of good quality materials such as vinyl, pressure treated lumber, brick, brick, stone or other similar materials approved by the Zoning Administrator. For the purposes of this proffer, tarps, car covers, tents, fabric, chain link fences with slats, or similar materials shall not be deemed to satisfy the requirements of opaque fencing.

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**REZONING REQUEST (CONT'D)**

Alternative 2: A twenty foot (20') wide strip of land with 2 evergreen trees, 2 canopy trees, 2 understory trees and 24 shrubs planted per one hundred linear feet (100') of buffer.

Alternative 3: Upon a finding by the Director of Community Development, the installation of an additional buffer shall not be required where there is existing vegetation either on the lot or the adjacent lot to provide the required buffer benefits.

5. Building height shall not exceed 50 feet.

Vote was as follows:       Yeas: Shull, Coleman, Bragg, and  
   Pyles  
   Nays: None  
   Absent: Kelley and Pattie  
   Abstain: Garber

Motion carried.

**ORDINANCE AMENDMENT**

This being the day and time advertised to consider an ordinance amendment to remove approximately 231 acres of land from the Middlebrook Agricultural and Forestal District owned by Kay G. Buchanan, located on both sides of Dutch Hollow Road (Rout 726) approximately 0.5 miles south of the intersection of Sinking Springs Road/Butter Road (Route 693) and Dutch Hollow Road (Route 726) in the Riverheads District. The withdraw request has been filed Pursuant to section 15.2-4314 (D) of the Code of Virginia.

Ms. Tate showed a PowerPoint of the property being removed from the Ag and Forestal District. She stated that this is a matter of right so therefore the applicant is not present. The matter before the Board is to revise the Ag Forestal District Ordinance to remove tax map parcel 81-11 and to amend the acreage included in district from approximately 2,662 acres to 2,431 acres. This is in section 3-22 of Augusta County Code. This removal will not affect the review period for the district and once removed from the Ag Forestal District, the property will be subject to the General Agriculture zoning ordinance.

The Chairman declared the public hearing to be open.

There being no speakers, the Chairman declared the public hearing closed.

Mr. Shull moved, seconded by Ms. Bragg, that the Board approve the following ordinance amendment:

**AN ORDINANCE TO REVISE THE  
 MIDDLEBROOK AGRICULTURAL AND FORESTAL DISTRICTS  
 IN AUGUSTA COUNTY**

WHEREAS, it is the public policy of the Commonwealth of Virginia, as set forth in the Agricultural and Forestal Districts Act (Title 15.2, Chapter 43, Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended), to conserve and protect agricultural and forestal lands as valued natural ecological resources;

WHEREAS, by ordinance adopted on December 9, 1998, the Middlebrook Agricultural and Forestal District was created;

WHEREAS, pursuant to § 15.2-4314(D) of the Code of Virginia, upon the death of a property owner, any heir at law, devisee, surviving cotenant or personal representative of a sole owner of any fee simple interest in land lying within a district shall, as a matter of right, be entitled to withdraw such land from such district upon the inheritance or descent of such land; and

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**ORDINANCE AMENDMENT (CONT'D)**

WHEREAS, upon the death of Lacy Dean Buchanan on January 23, 2016, Kay G. Buchanan, surviving cotenant, became the fee simple owner of Tax Map Parcel Nos. 81-11; and

WHEREAS, Kay G. Buchanan has filed written notice her property be withdrawn from the Middlebrook Agricultural and Forestal District pursuant to § 15.2-4314(D) with the local governing body and the local commission of the revenue within two years of the date of death of the owner; and

WHEREAS, such removal will not affect the review period for the District.

NOW, THEREFORE, be it ordained by the Board of Supervisors of Augusta County, Virginia, that the Code of Augusta County be, and hereby is, amended by the revision of Chapter 3, Article III, § 3-22 entitled “District described,” as follows:

**§ 3-22. District described.**

The Middlebrook Agricultural and Forestal District shall generally consist of the following territory:

Approximately ~~2431~~ ~~2662~~ acres of land lying on the south side of the intersection of Middlebrook Road (Route 252) and Dutch Hollow Road (Route 726) and as far south as the Rockbridge County line and including parcels shown on County Real Estate maps as of the effective date of this Article as parcels numbered 80-27, 80-30, 80-30B, 80-63, 80-63A, 80-64, 80-67, 81-1A, 81-2, 81-3, 81-3A, 81-4, ~~81-11~~, 81-15, 81-19, 87-3A, 87-5A, 87-7, 87-8C, 87-24, 87-24A, 87-26A, 87-29, 87-30, 87-30A, and 87-30B.

The specific boundaries of the Middlebrook Agricultural and Forestal District are established as shown on a map entitled “Middlebrook Agricultural & Forestal District,” and dated July 26, 2017. Such map, together with all explanatory matter thereon, is hereby adopted by reference and declared to be part of this article. A copy of the map, properly attested, shall be filed in the office of the Director of the Community Development Department and shall be available for inspection by the public.

Vote was as follows:        Yeas: Shull, Coleman, Bragg, and Pyles  
                                      Nays: None  
                                      Absent: Kelley, Pattie, and Garber

Motion carried.

\* \* \* \* \*  
**END OF PUBLIC HEARINGS**  
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**MATTERS TO BE PRESENTED BY THE PUBLIC**

Mr. Pyles commented to say that he will not engage in conversation, but will respond to comments under the Matters Presented by the Board agenda item.

Nancy Sorrels made the following statement:

I’m here to talk very briefly about Dominion, but not specifically about the pipeline. This time I want to address Dominion and powerline projects, both past and future. First the past, remember last year when Dominion replaced its aging transmission lines through Augusta and Rockbridge. As you know, that replacement was somewhat of a bait and switch. Dominion misrepresented the extent of the upgrade thus denying the public and this Board an opportunity for input. Overnight, the small brown towers were replaced with shiny lattice towers that were many feet higher and wider and scarred our beautiful landscape. You may also recall that in the process Dominion subcontractors allowed massive erosion and sediment controls which you all attempted to address. The blasting caused damage to foundations. Gravel and runoff were allowed to enter trout streams in the Shenandoah National Park and transmission line workers used resident’s fields and forests for their own private outdoor bathroom facilities. When residents and leaders of Rockbridge and Augusta pushed back, Dominion agreed before the State Corporation Commission to darken the towers with a product called Natina. Now we are learning that Dominion is not going to follow through on that promise in Augusta. They have followed through on it in Rockbridge. We, at Augusta County Alliance, have learned that SCC is meeting very soon to decide on whether or not they will require Dominion to follow through on its promise to darken the towers. We have urged people to send letters this week to the SCC on the subject and I think the Rockbridge County Attorney and the County Administrator have been in touch with you all. I wanted to keep you all in the loop of what Augusta Citizens are doing and I’m leaving you with a copy of the



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### MATTERS TO BE PRESENTED BY THE PUBLIC (CONT'D)

letter that was sent on behalf of the Augusta County Alliance.

The second letter that I am going to talk about tonight involves the proposed upgrade to the Doods Valley 500kw Upgrade Project that you have heard about. Dominion also sent a letter to the Augusta County Historical Society asking for input and participation in the development of that project in regard to impact on historic resources. It further ask us to forward the letter to other interested organizations, which we did, and invited us to attend the July 13<sup>th</sup> meeting on the project at Fort Defiance. We followed up with a letter that contained a lot of questions and we attended the meeting. I'm actually please to report that Dominion appears to be willing to learn from its past mistakes and make this a very much more open and inclusive process as they work to complete what is a very essential upgrade. They seem very willing to include the Historical Society and others who sign onto our letter like Valley Conservation Council, Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation, and Friends of the Middle River in the discussion. I've talked to John Wilkinson and I'm hopeful the County as well will be a part of this discussion. I'm leaving a copy of the letter sent by the Society with questions that we have raised. Again, this is simply to keep you all in the loop and to let you know that we at the historical society and the other organizations are willing to help with our resources as discussions on this project continue.

As the Society noted in the letter: "While we realize the valuable infrastructure and safety needs that figure into this important upgrade to the power grid, we have unfortunately already witnessed some very negative visual impacts to historic and cultural resources and landscapes that have occurred in earlier power line upgrades. By working together and carefully examining the questions that we have posed, we think that this project can be a win for all by providing safe and efficient energy and protecting our valuable agricultural, scenic and cultural resources.

Mr. Pyles requested that Ms. Tate research the painting of the towers with Natina and determine if Augusta County should be interested in this.

Misty Walker, President of Verona Volunteer Fire Department made the following statement:

On April 17 a letter was submitted to Chief Holloway to present to the Board of Supervisors. This letter was a request to partner with Augusta County Fire and Rescue. To place an ambulance in Verona Volunteer Fire Company. On June 12 the membership voted to place one ambulance with two career staff for the ambulance and keep our staff from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. A letter was sent to Chief Holloway regarding that vote. A few days later, we met with Chief Holloway and Supervisor Kelley. We were then advised that they wanted to place Squad 10 and two ambulances, along with five career staff at our station. We were then advised that if we chose not to go along with that, they would pull our County Staff that we currently have and leave us with no assistance. On June 25, membership voted and agreed to their demands. We were bullied and backed into a corner by Chief Holloway and Supervisor Kelley. However, in the Officer's Association meeting last night, Supervisor Pyles stated that the News Leader has conjured up the problem with Company 10 and EOC. When in fact, the problem stems from a lack of communication from the Board of Supervisors and Chief Holloway to every agency, volunteer and citizen in the County. At our August meeting we will have a discussion on where we are going to proceed from here due to the inconsistencies and lack of communication.

Pat Shipe read the following:

The reason for closing Co. 10 keeps changing. It is now because you say Co. 6-Verona has problems. That is equivalent to closing Wal-Mart because K-Mart is not doing well.

At first Mr. Pyles stated closure was due to a \$1.1 million shortfall created when the Safer Grant ran out. Why was there no Plan B to deal with this in place all along? There has been high turnover of the original 20 personnel hired, and it is currently not at that number. Do we really need 20?

Just before I retired with the County Fire-Rescue, of the 19 certifications I had, the one I was most proud of was Instructor IV with the Department of Fire Programs and was in the ranks of the top 40 instructors in the State. If the NFPA standards for Fire Department operations was used to evaluate a fire company, adequacies and inadequacies can be identified and addressed. This takes a long time. This would fall under the purview of the Fire Chief, Training Officer and perhaps outside consultants. Has this even been considered?

Mr. Kelley says "we have to do something". If this problem at Verona was from 2016, why wasn't this addressed with the company so a plan of correction could have been developed or assistance provided, such as helping to recruit more volunteers and provide support?

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### MATTERS TO BE PRESENTED BY THE PUBLIC (CONT'D)

The County has paid staff under Chief Holloway who are to train and recruit and this is where assistance should begin. This applies to industries as well. Augusta County has provided training to industrial response teams in order to maintain their education and response, as well as the volunteers throughout Augusta County and surrounding areas. A concern I have is why Stuarts Draft Fire Department had to travel to Buena Vista last month to train in their "burn building".

Closing Co. 10 and leaving that area more exposed is not the first step. Citizens in this area may not be aware their home owners insurance may increase as the ISO rating changes (based on availability of fire hydrants, water supply, mileage from fire department, number of responders, etc.). If the citizens of Verona are underserved, fix that, but don't jeopardize Co. 10's first due. It's as important for Co. 10 to serve Wal-Mart as it is for Staunton to serve the County Courthouse and other properties.

While Mr. Kelley has stated he contacted other volunteer fire departments regarding these plans, we have learned this was not accurate. So, has he actually worked with county staff to assure the closing of Co. 10 will actually "fix" all the problems with budget and Co. 6? I am not convinced that this is the case. Mr. Kelley also stated "we have not controlled the narrative as well as we could have." This is an understatement! He is implementing a plan and telling people it's affects after the fact-whether it will succeed or not!

In 2016 the County did run more calls into the city than SFD ran into the County! But take the "Spring Lakes-Heather Lane fire" a few weeks ago. SFD Engine 1 on location 5 minutes 4 seconds, Augusta County Engine 102, 6 minutes 16 seconds and Swoope Co. 14 Eng 145 on location in 10 minutes 51 seconds. Last week an automobile fire on Richmond Road, Co. 10 on location had people out and safe, started attacking the fire upon arrival of SFD. It is our commitment to serve and protect our citizens and visitors! How do you put a price on property and lives!

During my time with the County I saw several Comprehensive Plans implemented but would not be completed before a new updated plan was devised because things change. You are working on a plan started 17 years ago with some updates. Again, things have changed as with the addition of Co. 18-New hope and Co. 25-Riverheads. As Mr. Shull has stated, we do not know the cost or savings!

If your numbers are correct and 60% of the calls are EMS, why not build a few satellite EMS stations, equip with ambulances and personnel and you can have all the Revenue Recovery funds. Just keep in mind I understand Stuarts Draft Rescue responded to nearly 300 calls last year where there was NO insurance to recover funds. Revenue Recovery is not a sustainable resource.

In the last couple of editorials in our local paper Mr. Pyles has made comments such as "Kumbaya" and Verona FD "C-minus job" This has been embarrassing for all citizens and Emergency Services providers. These comments have been insulting and demeaning to those who willingly give their own time and money to serve their communities. Do you think this helps recruit more volunteers? I have not seen the morale of all emergency service personnel-paid and volunteer- as low as it is now.

I ask you to table these actions until you get a plan with real cost including savings!

Lt. George Thompson with the Verona Volunteer Fire Department made the following statement:

First of all, we are not a C minus company Sir. I have dedicated 21 years of my life to volunteering for Augusta County rescue squad and fire department. I have put people in body bags and I've seen things that you could never understand. If I'm doing a C minus job then you're doing a D minus job as Supervisors. This is my family and I love every one of them. I will never sit back and watch people degrade what they do, ever. Closing Company 10 is a safety hazard for everybody that lives in their first due. You cannot tell me that it's safer to shut down Company 10 and have Verona and Riverheads and anybody else come in and cover that first due faster. It is impossible. It cannot be done. All you need is a stopwatch to prove that what you are saying is wrong. And for an apology that was given for the C minus comment, I personally reject that apology. That apology was halfhearted and you blamed the newspaper more than you blamed yourself. First of all, take responsibility for your actions. You said it, you should be the one to stand up right now and apologize to these great folks that volunteer their time and let me reiterate that volunteers means donate services free of charge, that means I

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**MATTERS TO BE PRESENTED BY THE PUBLIC (CONT'D)**

don't want a dime of your money or the County's money to come in and save your life. I will do it free of charge because I love my community. You should stand up and apologize to every single one of these men and women here for the actions that you have done sir. It is detrimental to the community but they trust us and they know that they have qualified people coming to help them when they call 911. Not to call the newspaper and tell them that we are C minus. Twenty-one years and I have more certifications than I can count and I do it because I love my community and I love helping people. Please before you make comments to anybody, think about what you could hurt.

Steve Morris of 203 Hotchkiss Road made the following statement:

I want to thank all of you all for coming and thank you for all that you do. The County and its Citizens appreciate it. Don't take anything that I'm about to say to mean that I'm against any of the volunteers. Thanks to Supervisor Shull and Supervisor Bragg for listening when I talk to you. I appreciate it. Six years ago four people ran for the Board of Supervisors and I thought they wanted to take the Board over, but I think we are probably glad that it didn't happen. Public safety of all Citizens of Augusta County should always be number one. Money should not interfere with lives and property. I was in a fire school with Blue Ridge Community College taught by Fire Chief Chandler of Staunton in the early 70's. This was after Staunton-Augusta Rescue Squad had left the fire department. He told us that he would not see this, but some of you would. The rescue squads and fire departments would be coming back together due to a help situation. The fire codes would improve and you would need an ambulance at your house before a fire truck. I would like to make the following as a suggestion; if any station has problems answering calls after the career staff leaves at 6:00 p.m. and on weekends, add one career staff and a volunteer provide a driver. If you call 911 at 7:00 p.m. or at 2:00 a.m. you expect someone to come and have a quick response. Some years ago the volunteers in the County signed some type of agreement. I don't have a copy of the agreement and I don't know what was in it. If I'm correct, Title 27 of the Code of Virginia, gives the County authority over fire and ems agencies. Maybe all of the volunteer companies should hire one attorney and find out how to protect what they have worked so hard for along with the citizens within their communities so the same thing does not happen like it's happened at Craigsville, Augusta Springs Rescue Squad and Deerfield Rescue Squad for everyone has a lot of assets that the County should not be allowed to come in and take nor pull your license. Did Augusta County have a surplus this year? How many hidden account does the County have? All we hear is that it cost \$10 million per year for fire and ems. Tell us how much is in the recovery account. How much comes in each year and where does this money go? When the last grant was put in for the extra fire and ems staff you knew the day would come to pay up and in no way should the courthouse figure into this. You all have done very little if anything to keep the building up. ADA started in the 90's in no way is this up to code. It seemed a little bit like the promise in the western area about a cell tower and internet service. When it comes to all of this it was taken out of the grant. Augusta County needs the City to continue to answer calls in the western area. Many, many times the City has been on location first. Each and every one of you should stand up and thank all of the volunteers for what has been done over the years. Where would Augusta County be today without them? Most of these departments were built with no help from the County. If I'm correct, Deerfield Fire Department was the first to get \$10,000 for a new building. Most of the first equipment bought was with no help from the County. The Citizens within the communities work very hard doing fund raisers to pay for these vehicles. The first donation the County gave any of the departments was only \$500 in the 60's. This was to make sure that if there was insurance on the men. If you all knew of a short fall, why was Company 10 even remodeled if you were thinking about closing it down. Why was a ladder truck redone and a new \$1 million ladder truck bought? Augusta County does not need two of these trucks when Staunton and Waynesboro has similar trucks. Seems like Augusta County has a very big communication problem between the Board, the Fire Chief and the volunteers. If these departments continue to fold, it's not in your plans to keep 16 stations open or is this also a hidden plan. I hope in November a very loud clear message is sent to this Board in the Pastures District.

Frank Dull of 2979 Middlebrook Road made the following statement:

I want to apologize to the people in the back wearing white shirts. I love everybody in this room that wears the fire department logo symbol is involved in volunteering because we are brotherhood. Each and every one of us, we are brothers. With that being said, I know you guys face a big dilemma. You can't put a fire house in everyone's back yard. It's common

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### MATTERS TO BE PRESENTED BY THE PUBLIC (CONT'D)

sense. We can all read a map and Company 10's current location is central to most of the County with regard to maybe Deerfield. However, if you look at the major highways. Look at where it's sitting, it has good access to both interstates. It has good access to the roads to get to Deerfield, Middlebrook, Newport, Verona and Weyers Cave. The entire County, not just one section or the northern part of the County, which is where you want the County's paid fire service to be. In the center of the County so it can serve all residents equally. I think the Board has made a short sighted decision. There are gentlemen in the back in white shirts that are EMS Supervisors, there are people you guys have to pull that if Verona needs help you can send. I know you are daylight staff and I apologize for the inconvenience, but you are going to pick up part of the 30 day calendar. We need you to help out. That would have been the appropriate thing, in my mind, to say to these people. If I stand up here and tell you that I have the solution to help fund Company 10 for less than .10 a day you are going to say I sound like the guy from TV. My solution to you would be to add a \$12 fee to each vehicle registration in the County. That would go exclusively to fund Company 10. It would fund the central fire station in the County. With that money, it would allow you to move some of the positions currently in Company 10 to Verona. Not saying they don't do a good job, but we can acknowledge they need help. That's a helpful way to help them out. That's \$1 a month. That's less than .10 a day. Would you pay less than .10 a day to have response to the interstates if you were in a car crash? Would you pay less than .10 a day to have squad 10 right there where it can respond and clean up hazmat and cut you out of the car? Would you pay .10 a day to keep your children safe when they travel the interstate? I wanted to come here and offer that solution from my point of view. Keeping Company 10 in the middle of the County is most beneficial for all residents and not just the residents of Verona, but the residents of Middlebrook, Weyers Cave and Stuarts Draft. Company 10 is vital organization to the whole County not just parts of the County. I feel like offering you that solution will give you an option that would be something to consider.

Jim Gibson of 39 Orchard Road in Staunton made the following statement:

I'd like to thank every one of you for your service to the County. I'm here to speak on behalf of the Verona Volunteer Fire Department. I spent 24 years as a volunteer fire fighter and we were a family. I don't think anyone realizes what a fire fighter goes through. A lot of time, training and dedication goes into it. They love their communities. I travel through Verona and I look at their station as very professional. If I get in an accident, I know they will be there to help. A volunteer is most likely going to be there first to put your house fire out. I had the honor of being on the fund raising team for the Virginia Public Safety Memorial. There is about 900 names on that memorial and some are volunteers. These men and women put their life on the line to protect us. They come to our mercy and some don't go home. When I hear things or read things, I know that some of it isn't true, but it bothers me to hear about volunteers being bashed. It's total disrespect. We all need to step up and support our volunteers a little more. I don't know the politics involved in Company 10, but it hit a nerve when I heard about the volunteers being rated a C minus. Anybody that steps up and dedicates their time and effort and goes away from their families to help up is A+ in my book. I think anybody in the community would agree with me. This is the first Supervisors meeting I have ever attended and it took a lot for me to come out tonight, but I wanted to come and support these men and women.

Greg Frenger of Verona made the following statement:

It has been 30 years since I have stepped before a Board. I wish I could say it was a zoning issue that brings me here, but it is not. It's not an easy thing to do to come here and speak about this. I want to talk about Company 10, the busiest station in the County, and the decision to close it. It's been the busiest station for over 20 years because the number of call per month and year were recorded. A location that is so strategic, it's amazing that it sits where it sits. Immediate access to Fishersville, Waynesboro, Staunton, the Interstates and Route 11. That station's first due area. Several years ago it was nothing more than a thin crescent smuggled around the border of the City and now it's inside the City. It is an island of service and dedication. Yes it's in the City and yes it responds to Wal-Mart, but the people in Wal-Mart could be your relatives. I'm a past volunteer of 22 years. I could stand here and tell you all kinds of certification, but let's just say I've been there and done that. Past President, past Treasurer and past Line Officer. I understand this Board is responsible for the 985 square miles of Augusta County and over 1000 miles of roads, not just fire, ems and police. They are responsible for water, sewer, trash and public education. You have a full plate, but to close

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**MATTERS TO BE PRESENTED BY THE PUBLIC (CONT'D)**

that station is a hasty and arbitrary decision and I beg you to reconsider. I think there are other more equitable options to be pursued. I do not wish to stand here and chastise you or give you a hard time about it, but rather to admonish you and hope that you'll step back and take a pause and carefully consider how you go about serving and protecting your constituents. There's several reasons that have been in the paper about the need for closing, but ultimately everything circles back around to the cost and budget. There has been an interesting proposal put forward as to vehicle taxation. I'd like to put a different bug in your ear. Nearly 20 years ago when I ran into a Board member, I complimented him on taking a firm stand on some issues. At the same time I said the County is growing. The need for services grows and expands. Yet, our tax rate stays at .58 per \$100. I've been a homeowner for over 30 years. I don't know anything other than .58 per \$100. It's almost like it's carved in stone. I don't want to pay any more tax than the next guy, but how much revenue is generated out of one penny? It doesn't take many pennies to come up with a big number. I would say responsible judicial application of tax revenues. A small price to pay and people may grumble, but if you are honest, it's for the greater good. If we had incrementally increased it, we may not be here now.

Anne Lynch of 404 Norwood Road in Staunton made the following statement:

I am a member of the Verona Volunteer Fire Department and I'm also a member at Walkers Creek Volunteer Fire and EMS. I've been a volunteer in the County since 1999. I have driven countless miles in my personal vehicle. I've spent time and money away from my job and family to give back to this community. A community that I don't live in, but I love the people in this community and I have and always will volunteer. I have a sixteen year old daughter who is third generation volunteer in this County. I don't want her to have to go through the problems that we are currently going through. I don't want her to open up the paper and say, wow I'm doing a C minus job. I think a fire tax was proposed last night and Supervisor Pyles said that he was not in favor of that, but a fire tax would go to the needs of the fire and rescue community 100%. I think this something that strongly needs to be considered. I would also like to thank everyone that has ever volunteered a moment of their time to take care of others.

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**STREET ADDITION**

The Board considered Community Development & VDOT's recommendations to adopt resolution for acceptance of the following street into the secondary road system in accordance with VDOT requests in the Wayne District.

1. Windward Pointe, Section 5A

Mr. Fitzgerald stated this was discussed at the Staff Briefing on Monday. The street has constructed and inspected by VDOT. All approvals have been made and it is ready to be brought into the system.

Mr. Coleman moved, seconded by Mr. Shull, that the Board approve the following resolution to add Windward Pointe, Section 5A into the secondary road system with VDOT:

**RESOLUTION**

WHEREAS, the street described on the attached Additions Form AM-4.3, fully incorporated herein by reference, are shown on plats recorded in the Clerk's Office of the Circuit Court of Augusta County, and

WHEREAS, the Area Land Use Engineer for the Virginia Department of Transportation has advised this Board the streets meet the requirements established by the Subdivision Street Requirements of the Virginia Department of Transportation, and

WHEREAS, the County and the developer have entered into an agreement for comprehensive storm water detention as per the Stormwater Legal Agreement recorded in instrument #040015057 and amended again in instrument 060015674, which applies to this request for addition.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the county agrees that VDOT has no maintenance, upkeep and/or repair responsibility or liability for such storm water detention facilities except in case of physical damage resulting from road construction projects administered by VDOT. This agreement does not relieve the parties thereto of their rights and obligations pursuant to Storm water Management Regulations VR215-02-00

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**STREET ADDITION(CONT'D)**

et. seg. and related state regulations as amended or modified from time to time. Further, the County agrees not to hold VDOT liable for damages resulting from the County's failure to enforce County ordinances and regulations relating to storm water flow.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the County will not seek indemnification or contribution from VDOT to correct damages arising from improper maintenance or construction of storm water detention facilities.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, this Board requests the Virginia Department of Transportation to add the street(s) described on the attached Additions Form AM-4.3 to the secondary system of state highways, pursuant to §33.2-705, Code of Virginia, and the Department's Subdivision Street Requirements, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, this Board guarantees a clear and unrestricted right-of-way, as described, with necessary easements for cuts, fills and drainage as recorded in Plat Book 1, Page 8851, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Virginia Department of Transportation will only maintain those facilities located within the dedicated right-of-way. All other facilities outside of the right-of-way will be the responsibility of others.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a certified copy of this resolution be forwarded to the Area Land Use Engineer for the Virginia Department of Transportation.

Vote was as follows:       Yeas: Shull, Garber, Coleman, Bragg, and  
  Pyles  
  Nays: None  
  Absent: Kelley and Pattie

Motion carried.

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**AUDIT COMMITTEE**

Ms. Whetzel stated that Misty Cook, Finance Director, presented the revisions to the Finance Policy for the County on Monday. These provisions are primarily related to adding a section on grants. The Auditors require that information about the uniform cost guidelines be included in the policy. The guidelines that the Board has followed in the past have not changed, but we have added in where we can get guidance on Federal, State or local policies.

Mr. Coleman moved, seconded by Mr. Shull, that the Board approve the revisions to the Finance Policy for grants.

Vote was as follows:       Yeas: Shull, Garber, Coleman, Bragg, and  
  Pyles  
  Nays: None  
  Absent: Kelley and Pattie

Motion carried.

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**FLOOD CONTROL DAMS**

Ms. Whetzel stated that Doug Wolfe, Community Development Engineer, presented this project in great detail on Monday. Ms. Whetzel showed a picture on the screen of FLOOD

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CONTROL DAMS (CONT'D)

Hearthstone Dam. This is the sixth dam currently being worked on rehabilitation. The Headwaters Soil and Water Conservation and the County are working with the NRCS, which is a Federal agency to do the rehabilitation. Our consultant completed the 95% design and then when it was sent to the Federal agency, there were some issues that needed to be addressed. NRCS suggested that the County and Headwaters procure the services for completing the design. A chimney drain has been suggested to be installed and a portion of the dam will need to be removed. It will cost a substantial amount do so. The original budget was approximately \$3 million and the revised budget with the chimney drain is double that. The County moved forward with NRCS' request to look at the design. An RFP was issued and five proposals were received. A committee of Headwaters and County staff reviewed the proposals and conducted interviews. The number one ranked firm was negotiated with. NRCS confirmed that funds could be used towards this project. There is over \$2.4 million set aside and we can tap into the construction monies in order to do the design. This answers a question on Monday regarding funding. We have divided the contract into seven different tasks. The first two tasks will drive the cost of three and four and then the rest of the project. We will proceed with the sub-surface investigation, which is Geotech work and the review of the current NRCS design for approximately \$282,000. Once the information is received from that, the vender can go back and do a final design. Total design reimbursed by the Feds will be approximately \$419,000. If there is Federal and State money to move forward with the construction phase, then we would also move forward with that task. The Committee recommends Schnabel Engineering as the vendor that we would enter into a contract with. The contract has been divided into phases so if design ends and the funds aren't available for the construction phase then it would be terminated or delayed at that point and time.

Mr. Shull moved, seconded by Mr. Coleman, that the Board approve authorization to award the contract and move forward with the first phase.

Vote was as follows:           Yeas: Shull, Garber, Coleman, Bragg, and Pyles  
  Nays: None  
  Absent: Kelley and Pattie

Motion carried.

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WAIVERS/VARIANCES – NONE

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CONSENT AGENDA

Mr. Garber moved, seconded by Mr. Shull, that the Board approve the consent agenda as follows:

MINUTES

- Consider minutes of the following meetings:
- Special Meeting, Monday, May 22, 2017
  - Staff Briefing, Monday, June 26, 2017

CLAIMS

Considered claims paid since June 01, 2017

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CONSENT AGENDA (CONT'D)

Vote was as follows: Yeas: Shull, Garber, Coleman, Bragg, and Pyles  
Nays: None  
Absent: Kelley and Pattie

Motion carried.

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(END OF CONSENT AGENDA)

MATTERS TO BE PRESENTED BY THE BOARD

Mr. Shull:

Thanked each one for coming out tonight. Over the years he has had to call on 911 services. He hit a gas line, his mother-in-law has fallen several times and his mother's chimney caught on fire. Every time he has called 911, somebody showed up. The volunteers give a lot. There are a lot of people behind the scenes that help with fundraising and give up a lot as well. The public participate in the fund raisers and give money. They give it for the intention that you will come. It's like buying insurance of any kind. There is a series of companies in the County and taking one out delays the time. Somebody's life could be in danger. Could be mine, yours or one of your family members. The budget has grown over time. We are going to have to pay for services. Dave Beyeler said many years ago that there should be a fire tax. As time goes on with more expenditures in fire and rescue, he may have been right. The cost of business goes up and we have to fund it somehow. We need volunteer services. If we had to pay for all career staff the budget could possibly be up another \$15 or \$20 million. Most everybody has a caring heart and most everybody thinks that volunteers are true Americans. You give of yourself and he hopes the younger generation will step up and volunteer as well. If we don't have that, we are going to lose our Country. We see it in every aspect, the Kiwanis Club, the Ruritans and different organizations. Mr. Shull hopes to keep volunteers. It's not dead. Washington, Richmond, and Health Department regulations are not helping and we do not need to add to it. Put this on hold for a while and sit back and evaluate what changes need to be made. The Board needs to communicate with everyone. Sometimes calls will be missed, but there is a communication that needs to be built on. If there's vacation or something and you are not able to respond, it doesn't need to be held over heads as no response. Don't worry about it. You're not available, don't wait the six minutes and put second due. That's how volunteer companies work. You work together, your brotherhood. It's not to be critical to Verona. If you're not available, it's fine. The next company will take care of it. The person needing help will be helped. Communication has been lost along the line and it needs to be built back. We need the volunteers. Volunteers are commended for their service. People need to be trained when they come out of high school. The program needs to be built at the tech school. We need to enhance our tech school facility and enhance the people coming through high school. We need a better program to influence the kids to come there. The people going into nursing should be commended for taking advantage of it. He thanked everyone present for service and hopes for many years to come.

Mr. Garber:

Everyone that spoke conducted themselves in a very professional manner. Mr. Garber hopes that notice was taken on the road issue. It's not unusual to have opinions on both sides. He is well aware of the severe communication issues. If it's not talked about that does not mean it's not thought about. There is time in the next few weeks to discuss all of these issues. Mr. Garber showed pictures on the screen of large aircraft at the Weyers Cave Airport. The people on those planes are here because of jobs. People don't fly in



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MATTERS TO BE PRESENTED BY THE BOARD (CONT'D)

on \$20 million planes to visit parks. They are here because of jobs. Everybody that has a good job, has money to spend in the next business, and the next business and so on. A good rule of thumb, the higher dollar the aircraft, the more money someone came here to talk about.

Mr. Coleman:

Thanked everyone for being at the meeting. He also stated that he has experience working a volunteer fire company. A company that got to a point that it folded. Then was recreated with that company in attempting to try to create a model. A model that could possibly be replicated throughout the County and that's Preston L. Yancey. Some things heard tonight would suggest that it may be beneficial to share how Preston L. Yancey got to where they are. The discussion that comes up frequently is why all of a sudden we are talking about the courthouse. It wasn't all of a sudden. We've been talking about the courthouse for thirty years with seven or eight different Board of Supervisors. What does that have to do with Fire and Rescue? It has everything to do with Fire and Rescue. In 2000 a Fire and Rescue Emergency Services Regional Master Plan was developed by an outside consultant. This consultant talked to every volunteer company in Augusta County to evaluate and define the needs regarding public safety. The plan was again updated in 2005. In 2011 a fire study was conducted by the Department of Fire Programs with recommendations. Updates were submitted to the Board of Supervisors for review in 2012 and 2015. No action was taken at that time. The Augusta County Fire and Rescue Department continued to evaluate infrastructure, personnel, apparatus and equipment, and were directed by the Board to develop a strategic plan for 2017. The plan was shared with the Board of Supervisors and the Board put a motion on the floor that lead to where we are today. Augusta County covers 970 square miles. Staunton has 20 square miles to worry about. Augusta County has 74,881 residents to worry about. Career staff are currently stationed at 13 of the 17 fire and rescue agencies located in the County. Fire and Rescue agencies consist of approximately 760 volunteers. Volunteers have and continue to be vital. There is reason to believe that volunteers are valued. It is regretted comments that may be made that might call that into question as to whether volunteers are valued. Volunteers are very professional and are required to go through the same training that the career staff goes through. There are 105 full time Fire and Rescue career personnel and 30-40 part time personnel. Services continue to be provided by a combination of volunteer and career. Mr. Coleman personally saw that model shift at Preston Yancey. It started out a total volunteer fire company and then the County was asked to place paid staff there during the day. Most of the volunteers work and could not leave to run calls. At one time employers encouraged people to volunteer and would let them off to run calls, but today it's a rare exception that employers will embrace that. It wasn't long after placing the career staff at Preston Yancey that the needs for more career people arose. The model began to shift at that time. It started out that the career personnel were there to support the volunteers and now the volunteers are there to support the career personnel. There is a structure there now that whether you are volunteer or paid everyone reports through the same chain of command. We did away with the volunteer Chief within the company. This is the purpose of a model, to get experience of a different way of doing business that could be replicated someplace else. As a private citizen and president of Preston Yancey, my opinion at that time was we cannot continue going in the direction we are going. The direction we are going, the answer is to hire more career people. Then everybody will tell you about the problem throughout the world and our country with the decline of volunteers. Mr. Coleman applauds other parts of the country where volunteers are strong and it is obviously still strong in Verona. It's strong in South River and other parts of the County. He wants to do everything possible to keep it viable. In the fall of 2015 Augusta County was awarded a SAFER Grant. We have had two of those grants. Mr. Coleman has asked members of the Board how they will pay for it when the grant runs out. Not only how to pay for it, but what's not going to get done in terms of finding the money to keep everyone. The County

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MATTERS TO BE PRESENTED BY THE BOARD (CONT'D)

has seen 176% increase in career staff from 38 in 2006 to 105 in 2016. We have seen a need for a more strategic placement. Different people have a different opinion about strategic. When the dust settles, the Board has to decide because the Board is commissioned by State law and are responsible. The way the services have and continue to be provided through lots of well qualified volunteers, but if in fact, just like Preston Yancey, as far as ISO was concerned there was not fire company. There was very little fall out in Fishersville during that time. We have to be strategic and what will it look like? Mr. Coleman would like to see the Board take a time out and go back to the drawing board. Meet with the volunteers. Meet with Company 10. Meet with all of the stations. Early on, meet with the companies that will be most affected by what it is we are trying to do. Mr. Coleman reiterated the summary of Preston L. Yancey. He told the story of how it folded and funds were transferred to Augusta County Fire and Rescue Inc. in closing of the station. It is critical that we work together to provide efficient fire and rescue to all citizens and continue to support our neighbors through mutual aid and automatic aid. The Board needs to work diligently with Minday Craun and investigate new avenues for volunteers. The law is clear, the Board of Supervisors is responsible.

Ms. Bragg:

Thanked everyone for being present and appreciates all that they do. This is a complicated issue and doesn't want anyone to think the Board takes the volunteers for granted. Ms. Bragg reminded everyone of the Shenandoah Valley Partnership on Friday so please sign up.

Mr. Pyles:

I spent the previous night with the Chief's Association. The number one thing that came out of that was communication. His apology was not meant to be halfhearted. I did not call the paper and say anybody wasn't doing a good job. He stated to the paper that things are done strategically and for a reason. The Board wanted to sure up Verona just like they have done for other companies over the years. There are so many comments being made that if he just lets them go without addressing them, it appears that he agrees with the comments. The question on the county trying to push the volunteers out is exactly the opposite. We are asking for more from volunteers and we are asking to use volunteer stations more. We are closing a career station to put more people in a volunteer station and to ask more from the volunteers. There is a nineteen page report given to the Board every month of time on scene, calls made, no responses, etc. A report was put together that would hopefully help people understand what the Board looks at as to how stations have done since 2010. That is what got him in trouble because the total non-responses were listed in that report. Verona was at the top of the list and number two is Company 10. Last year there were 202 no responses. Verona and Company 10 were 95 of those 202. Nearly half of the no responses came from two agencies fairly close together. The problem with no response is it upsets the system. Someone else has to take the call and it goes later. The goal would be that the only non-response is the station is already out on a call. Good work would be considered 2% or below on non-response. Over a 5% non-response rate is a flag that it's time to start working with people to get the system improved. Deerfield for example in 2010 had 14 no responses then approximately 2 per year after that. For a company that gets a low number of calls 14% non-responses is quite a lot. Deerfield typically averages around 100 calls per year. The reason non-responses dropped from 14 to 2 is because a career person was placed at that station. Then it dropped from 2 to 0 because there were two career people at that station. Preston Yancey had 48 non-responses in 2010 which was the last year for all volunteer. Then the number of non-responses dropped drastically. In 2011 Augusta County started placing career people at Preston Yancey. Preston Yancey is not the highest fire call station, but when you put it with rescue they are the number one provider of services in the County. We could not have said that in 2010. They are in one of the fastest growing areas in the County. That growth overwhelmed the volunteers. The volunteers were fully on board with the County placing career staff in their station. Now there are 30 career people at Preston Yancey on a regular basis for fire and rescue. There are situations where

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stations can heal themselves without the county stepping in. Swoope for many years had challenges in leadership. Even with these challenges their non-response numbers dropped and this past year they were at 0. They had 316 calls and not one of them was turned over to second due. That kind of performance is why the Board went to them and asked if they could do more. Craigsville is only four above Swoope. They have a strong unit with no career people. Mount Solon saw a decrease in non-response numbers when career staff was placed there. These stations are good with good people, but can be overwhelmed so there is a need for the County to step in. The calls need to be answered. We will take what is given, but if we aren't doing what's right by the citizens we serve we have to step in and work with the station to help improve its performance. Mr. Coleman brought my role. As the Director of Emergency Management and I take it very seriously. Five years ago, the derecho hit the area. I was overwhelmed because the people that knew what they were doing were on vacation. It was up to me to make decisions. I vowed to know more the next time around. I provided standards to the Board at the beginning of this year so they could get a sense of what Fire and Rescue is doing and how much activity there is. The Board is trying to find a way to make it all work as well as possible. It was thought that the consolidation of the two close stations would bring synergy and a closer relationship of people and volunteers together. Stuarts Draft made significant changes in their no response numbers. They felt they couldn't do all of their calls as first response as well. They don't do first response so their calls went down and their performance went up. Other people had to pick up those calls. The Board had to evaluate how to address the responses more efficiently than they are being done now. Riverheads is taking much of those calls. There needs to be a way to take the load from Riverheads to free them up so they can be looked at for options with Company 10. Verona will be looked at for more. That's why career staff is being looked at for Verona. Volunteer hours are great, but together with career staff it can be even better. There has been discussion about career people trying to take over everything and that needs to be addressed very seriously. I have a meeting set up to discuss how to put into policy career verses volunteer. Career is supposed to be support for volunteers and together support the needs of the County as well as possible. My wife was a volunteer and I volunteered as well so I know firsthand what the volunteers and career goes through. I will be attending the Chief's organization dinners to help open up the communication line. A graph was shown on the screen to show the number of times Staunton goes into Augusta County and vice versa. Augusta County is responsible for approximately 1/3 of the City of Staunton. The call differential is only going to get larger. Call volume is going to continue to increase due to a larger amount of development. When new development is in the process in Augusta County, we contact the fire departments and make sure they can handle it. With all of the new developments taking place in the City of Staunton, they have never contacted the fire departments to see where they stand with everything. There is a proposal to Staunton to keep Company 10 open and they have not responded yet. It is a fair proposal where more of the cost will be on us than on them. If they agree to it then Company 10 will be settled. It's not fair to our tax payers in Augusta County to have missed calls and be fulfilling calls in the City of Staunton. The number of Augusta County homes protected by Company 10 is 1,779. That is 9<sup>th</sup> in terms of residents protected by a fire company. What we get is all of the calls done for Staunton that diminish what our resources can do. How do we make all of this work? The Board is happy to work everyone to keep Company 10 open. The tax rate has stayed at .58 per \$100 while spending on Fire and Rescue has grown to a little over \$10 million. How does that work? The assessed values go up which means more money. We have a very fortunate unemployment rate at 3.6%. We have been able to bring in better jobs. The kind of jobs that you make a decent living. We are in competition with the world to bring jobs here. We try to get the jobs that pay more and we want the jobs that require skilled people. Our tax rate helps Augusta County get more money. A tax rate increase would be less competitive to create jobs. Staunton has a .97 tax rate and they are going to raise it again. Even with this tax rate their school still isn't funded. They are behind Augusta

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County in average household income. Our tax rate makes us wealthier. Dollars have not been a barrier. If we need to do more we will do more. Our job is to figure out how to make it fit all together. If money can be saved in some areas then it can be applied in another area. The Board will continue to work on communication skills and will visit the agencies that would like to meet with them. We need to be more open and vigorous in the meetings. The Board will work on a plan that will consider concerns and opinions from the public. The main objective is how we can improve response rates so that when a call comes in it is answered promptly.

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MATTERS TO BE PRESENTED BY STAFF

Mr. Fitzgerald discussed the following issues:

1. Beginning September 1 the Circuit Court will no longer be processing passports. Staffing is an issue with the addition of the second court Judge, two courts running at the same time and an over whelming amount of people coming in to get a passport. A dialogue has been started with the Board of Elections to see if they have the interest and ability to do passports in their office.
2. A ribbon cutting has been set for August 23 for Hugh K. Cassell Elementary. The Board has the option to hold their meeting at the new school following the ribbon cutting ceremony.

Mr. Coleman moved, seconded by Ms. Bragg that the Board continue to have its meeting at the government center.

Vote was as follows:           Yeas: Shull, Garber, Coleman, Bragg, and Pyles  
                                       Nays: None  
                                       Absent: Kelley and Pattie

Motion carried.

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ADJOURNMENT

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

Vote was as follows:           Yeas: Shull, Garber, Coleman, Bragg, and Pyles  
                                       Nays: None  
                                       Absent: Kelley and Pattie

Motion carried.

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