

Regular Meeting, Wednesday, August 14, 2019, 7:00 p.m. Government Center, Verona, VA.

PRESENT: Gerald W. Garber, Chairman
Carolyn S. Bragg-Vice Chairman
G.L. "Butch" Wells
Michael L. Shull
Wendell L. Coleman
Pam L. Carter
Marshall W. Pattie
Timothy K. Fitzgerald, County Administrator
Jennifer M. Whetzel, Deputy County Administrator
John Wilkinson, Director of Community Development
Leslie Tate, Planner
James R. Benkahla, County Attorney
Angie Michael, Executive Assistant

VIRGINIA: At a regular meeting of the Augusta County Board of Supervisors held on Wednesday, August 14, 2019, at 7:00 p.m., at the Government Center, Verona, Virginia, and in the 244th year of the Commonwealth....

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Chairman Garber welcomed the citizens present.

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The following student from Buffalo Gap High School led the Board of Supervisors in the Pledge of Allegiance:

Kaley Kiracofe is a senior and is President of the Executive Board.

Chloe Mills is a senior and is Vice-President of the Executive Board-SCA.

Katherine Redifer is a junior and is the FFA Historian. She plans to attend college after high school.

MaKayla Talley is a junior and the Secretary of the FFA Chapter. She plans to attend college and study to be an Ag teacher.

Samual Hadacek is a senior and the FFA President for the Buffalo Gap Chapter. He plans to attend a university and study Aeronautics.

Madison Wheeler is a sophomore and the Reporter for FFA. She plans to attend college and study to be an Ag teacher.

Troy Payne is a junior and the Vice-President for FFA. He plans to build poultry houses.

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Pam Carter, Supervisor for the Pastures District, delivered the invocation.

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August 14, 2019, at 7:00 p.m.

MATTERS TO BE PRESENTED BY THE PUBLIC

Robin Hawks of Mount Sidney has concerns regarding Sandra Bunch. Sandra Bunch has failed the citizens of Augusta County and generations to come by her failure to execute her position with regard to the needs of the citizens. Water and transportation safety are crucial to the well-being of this community and Ms. Bunch's zoning decision demonstrates disregard for the well-being of the community. A zoning determination letter was written in December 2018 based on a letter from 1996 written to an entity that had no investment in the community or in the spring. A letter was written without regard to the interest of the citizens surrounding the property. Ms. Bunch failed to consider the impact of the letter on the citizens of Augusta County. By right water means forever. This is profound as a decision. By writing this letter, she placed the citizens of Augusta County on a destructive collision path that resulted in legal action. She purposefully withheld the December 2018 letter. Her actions have caused the taxpayers of Augusta County thousands of dollars in legal fees to defend her position. A letter was written knowing the appeal would not be possible according to the law given the thirty day appeal period had expired. While Augusta County has attempted to blame the State for these decisions, the State has made it clear that all zoning determinations are made at the local level and that leaves Ms. Bunch responsible for her actions. The public trust has been eroded. Deceit has been the name of the game and that cannot be fixed with the same faces in the same roles. During the BZA Sandra Bunch gave examples showing support for water bottling by citing articles from the 1980's and 1990's and a Special Use Permit from 2004. Think about what this means. The County and the Officials are governing the County based on fifteen to thirty year old information. That reflects a failure to appreciate the changing characteristics of the County and failure to recognize any community changes. Due to Ms. Bunch's failure to execute the duties of her position in a thoughtful and effective manner, the Friends of Seawright Springs ask that she be removed from the position of Zoning Administrator. She has demonstrated disregard for the citizens of the County. The Board is to provide oversight and remedies to the County problems. The trucks from Flow are dumping water in the pond at Mill Place Park. The dumping is likely occurring because the water doesn't meet quality standards. Every tank of water has to be tested to make sure it meets quality standards. If the water fails then it has to be discarded. A significant amount of water has been discarded into the pond. While thousands of gallons of water are being dumped, the house next to the Seawright Springs has little to no water because their spring has gone dry. This is one of the catastrophes of the County's decision to allow Flow to mine the spring. Tankers have been observed driving by the school during school transportation hours. It's clear that Flow has broken their agreement. Mr. Fitzgerald stated in an earlier meeting that Flow agreed to not transport water during school operation hours. Flow cannot be counted on to uphold their agreements. With Amanda Glover's resignation, it is requested that a search be conducted for outside individuals. Someone that does not come with the baggage of the Seawright Springs issues. The search for this individual should be focused on identifying someone who will focus on the vision of the County and considers the needs of the community and the characteristics of the community. Someone who has the ability to go out and interact with the residents of the area to consider the implications of development.

Robert Spiegel of 632 Salem Church Road in Mount Sidney. He has lived in two different houses near Seawright Springs. Both houses had cisterns and he has drilled wells for both houses. Both wells have been successful. The Board does a good job and he appreciates what they do.

Don Horn has a farm in the North River District. There is an old farm house that would make a great Bed and Breakfast. The current ordinance regarding Bed and Breakfast requires him as the owner to live on the property. He currently lives in Cleveland, OH so it would not work for him to live on the premises. Mr. Horn urges the Board to consider changing the ordinance.

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PROJECT GROWS (CONT'D)

access to healthy food. Project Grows leases ten acres from the County. The lease is \$1.00 per year. It is matched with grant funding and community funding throughout the years. Recently they received a \$250,000.00 grant from the USDA. This allowed Project Grows to pull in school partners, the Health Department and funding from Virginia for the SNAP Matching Program for Farmer's Markets. Ms. Piersol summarized activities that take place at the farm. Project Grows offers paid positions for high school students during the summer. Approximately 1,500 youth visit Project Grows each year with field trips and other activities. 445 volunteers contributed to Project Grows last year donating over 2,300 hours. A brand new website has been developed and the annual report is also available. Ms. Piersol stated they have outgrown their space. There is plenty of land, but in terms of the facilities. They would like to build a barn that would provide restroom space, a pack out station, office space and a community room. The money would be raised through donations and a grant match. A commitment is needed from the County for a longer term lease. Right now it is a five year to five year lease and will be up for renewal in the spring. They would like to extend the lease and work towards a 25-30 year lease.

The Board will visit Project Grows on August 26 following the Staff Briefing.

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SOLAR-COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENT

The Board heard a presentation of the solar Comprehensive Plan Amendment process/timeline.

Leslie Tate, Planner, highlighted each step in the process and timeline. The Board can establish a working group or subcommittee that would be the advisory committee that would guide the potential amendments. The draft timeline gives from August 14, 2019 to August 28, 2019 to put together individuals that would be well suited for the committee. There will be a public input survey/questionnaire both online and in paper form. Staff will compile the results of the survey and have a working group meeting with subcommittee that will be established. Once the working group has formulated the specific potential drafts and recommendations, there would be a Board of Supervisors and Planning Commission joint worksession. After the revisions and recommendations are completed, the request will be for the Board to release the amendment for public hearing.

Mr. Coleman stated that it is critical that the entire Board be prepared to work through the process and make a decision in the end.

The Board placed this item on the August 28, 2019 regular meeting agenda.

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AMBULANCE/MEDIC UNIT FUNDING REQUEST

The Board considered funding for an ambulance/medic unit.

Funding Source: Capital 70-8000-8057 \$128,693.50

David Nichols, Fire Chief, showed pictures of the new ambulance. The unit should be delivered next week. An application was submitted for the Rescue Squad Assistance Fund. Eight ambulances were awarded statewide and the funding is limited. Therefore, Augusta County was not successful. In the scoring process, a number of things are considered. Two areas that were scored low is economic stress index and access to healthcare. Those numbers are not going to

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MATTERS TO BE PRESENTED BY THE BOARD

Mr. Shull requests the GPS routing be reviewed for any changes. He is concerned that the Fire and Rescue Strategic Plan committees are set up with more career people verses volunteers. Volunteers companies should have more input.

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MATTERS TO BE PRESENTED BY STAFF

1) Jennifer Whetzel, Deputy County Administrator, stated that over the last fifteen years the County has participated with the State and Federal Government to rehabilitate many of the flood control dams. Waynesboro Nursery is one that is on the list for rehabilitation. At the Federal level, an application was submitted in 2010 to get planning money and it was denied. Todd Lake and Hearthstone scored higher on the Federal scoring chart so plans moved forward for those two dams. On the State level, the Waynesboro Nursery structure scored very high. That was in part due to the amount of rain last year. The State put out an RFP for design on this dam. 100% funding is approved for the design portion. They are requesting 100% of the construction funding for the actual rehabilitation. The State met with Headwaters, the landowners, the County, and NRCS. It will take a few years for the project to be completed.

2) Ms. Whetzel stated that the Board of Equalization has completed their hearings. There were 126 appeals received and 80 changes were made to assessments. The total net change was approximately \$62,000.00 less in tax dollars than originally assessed.

3) Ms. Whetzel stated that annually the County applies for an award for the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report through the Government Finance Officers Association. Misty Cook, Finance Director, and her staff have received the 2018 Audit Award.

4) Ms. Whetzel stated that there is another State grant offer, VATI 2020 through the Department of Housing and Community Development. The Broadband Committee put out a request for information and received a proposal from MGW Networks for four projects in the County. Two projects in the Deerfield area, one in Middlebrook and one in the Morris Mill area. The committee and staff are working with MGW to figure out which ones a grant will be written for. The application is due September 3, 2019. Dominion Energy has put out an RFI related to expanding broadband access in rural Virginia. This would be in the Dominion Energy footprint of the County which is approximately 1/3 of the County. The County will respond and answer some of the locality questions.

5) Mr. Fitzgerald stated that during the first Census presentation a Complete Count Committee was brought to the Board's attention. This is a citizen committee that would support the census and get education out to citizens. The PDC has had conversations with the Census representatives and is now willing to put together a Complete Count Committee that would work regionally for Staunton, Waynesboro and Augusta County. With Board approval, it is recommended to work regionally with Staunton and Waynesboro to create the one committee. The Board agrees.

6) VACo Summit meeting is tomorrow.

7) VACo Region 9 meeting September 19th at 5:30 p.m. at the airport.

8) Mia Kivlighan the new Communications Manager will be starting August 16, 2019.

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