

Budget Hearing, Wednesday, April 20, 2011, at 7:00 p.m. Government Center, Verona, VA.

PRESENT: Jeremy L. Shifflett, Chairman
Wendell L. Coleman, Vice-Chairman
David R. Beyeler
Gerald W. Garber
Larry C. Howdyshell
Tracy C. Pyles, Jr.
Nancy Taylor Sorrells
Sheri Hiter, Extern, for the County Attorney
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 Budget Hearing meeting of the Augusta County Board of Supervisors held on Wednesday, April 20, 2011, at 7:00 p.m., at the Government Center, Verona, Virginia, and in the 235th year of the Commonwealth....

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Heidi Salatin, led us with the Pledge of Allegiance. Heidi is from Swoope, Virginia, and is a recent home-schooled graduate. She will be attending a small Christian college in Florida and major in Music.

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Larry C. Howdyshell, Supervisor for the North River District, delivered invocation.

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LOCAL EMERGENCY DECLARATION

Chairman Shifflett reported that the storm that came through Saturday, April 16th, did a lot of damage. On Sunday, April 17th, at 1:00 p.m., after consulting with staff and Emergency Services, he declared a local emergency.

John C. McGehee, Assistant County Administrator, added that, as the Director of Emergency Services for Augusta County, Chairman Shifflett can declare a local emergency. By State Code, the Board of Supervisors has to confirm the Chairman's declaration at its next regular meeting due to a tornado touching down in a portion of the County of Augusta and high winds and torrential rains affecting the entire County. A resolution for termination of the local emergency declaration will be considered at the next regular Board meeting.

Ms. Sorrells moved, seconded by Mr. Howdyshell, that the Board adopt the following resolution:

DECLARATION OF LOCAL EMERGENCY

WHEREAS, due to a tornado touching down in a portion of the County of Augusta, Virginia (the County) and high winds and torrential rains affecting the entire County, it is facing dangerous conditions of sufficient severity and magnitude to warrant coordinated local government action to prevent or alleviate the damage, loss, hardship or suffering threatened or caused thereby; and

WHEREAS, the conditions of extreme peril to life and property necessitate the proclamation of the existence of a local emergency; and

WHEREAS, circumstances do not permit the Board of Supervisors of the County of Augusta, Virginia to convene to consent to the declaration of a local emergency;

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LOCAL EMERGENCY DECLARATION (cont'd)

NOW, THEREFORE, pursuant to Virginia Code § 44-146.21 and, as provided therein, subject to confirmation by the Board of Supervisors at its next regularly scheduled meeting or at a special meeting within fourteen (14) days of this declaration, whichever occurs first, Jeremy L. Shifflett, Chairman of the Board of Supervisors of the County of Augusta, Virginia and Emergency Services Director of the County of Augusta, Virginia declares and proclaims the existence of a local emergency in the County of Augusta; and

It is further proclaimed and ordered that during the existence of said emergency the powers, functions, and duties of the Director of Emergency Services and the Emergency Services Department of the County of Augusta shall be those prescribed by state law and the ordinances, resolutions, and approved plans of the County of Augusta in order to mitigate the effects of said emergency.

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

Nays: None

Motion carried.

Mr. McGehee reported the damages to Augusta County. Saturday, April 16th, a number of weather conditions occurred in the County: A lot of rain throughout the County, high winds in various places, and, confirmed by the National Weather Services, an EF1 tornado went through south of Stuarts Draft, which was approximately 4 miles long and 400 yards wide, with about 95 mph of wind. All Emergency crews in that area responded and the Sheriff's Department responded. A command bus was set up; all utilities companies worked well to repair lines. A county-wide assessment of damage has been done – over \$2.5 million. The majority of the damage occurred in the area of the tornado; however, there were other damages in other parts of the County due to flooding and lightning. The Governor declared a State emergency throughout the State because there were numerous tornados in the Commonwealth Saturday. It is unsure of the County has reached the eligibility of federal designation, but the process will be done. He thanked the Fire and Rescue agencies who were out in the field working on the flooding conditions in and around Sherando, KOA in Verona and other places. "Basically, the list of agencies who helped are all the Fire and Rescue agencies of the County; the ECC staff, including Donna Good, Emergency Services Coordinator; Sheriff's office; Virginia State Police; Building Inspectors; Red Cross; National Weather Services; and utility companies.

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The Chairman welcomed those present for the public hearings.

Chairman Shifflett announced that there would be two public hearings combined and those who have signed up to speak may speak on both items. One hearing is on the proposed tax rate and the second hearing is on the proposed budget for 2011-2012.

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PUBLIC HEARINGS – Director of Finance Presentation

Jennifer M. Whetzel, Director of Finance, made a PowerPoint presentation with the following highlights:

Ms. Whetzel stated that the Code of Virginia does the following:

- Sets the fiscal year for localities (July through June)
- Sets deadline for presentation of budget to Board of Supervisors (April 1 – work session March 28th)
- Sets public hearing notice requirements (seven days before the public hearing)

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PUBLIC HEARINGS – Director of Finance Presentation (cont'd)

- Sets minimum period before budget approval (public hearing has to be at least seven days before budget approval) It can be approved at the next Board meeting on April 27th, if the Board desires
- Sets deadline for State agencies to provide information to localities after General Assembly session (within 15 days)

Components involved with putting a budget together:

- Departments of the County
- Schools
- Shenandoah Valley Social Services
- Regional Agencies

All information is submitted to County Administrator and Finance Department. Information is reviewed and then presented to the Board of Supervisors for discussion.

The proposed tax rates for 2011 are:

	Rate per \$100
Real Estate	\$0.48
Personal Property:	
Vehicles:	\$2.25
Other	\$1.90

The budget that has been advertised includes these rates and are the same rates that were proposed in 2010. They have not changed since the last tax Year.

Total revenue:	\$165 million
Personal Property and Real Estate Taxes:	\$43 million
Local Revenue:	<u>\$33</u> million \$76 million
State Revenues:	\$64 million
Federal Revenues:	\$10 million
Borrowing:	\$15 million (Elementary project that will be funded out of bond proceeds)
Expenditures:	\$158 million
Schools:	\$ 97 million (70%)
Public Safety:	\$ 16 million (10%)
Health and Welfare:	\$ 14.5 million (9%)

Areas of revenue reductions:

Investment income; Revenue Recovery; State recordation; Federal school revenues.

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PUBLIC HEARINGS – Director of Finance Presentation (cont'd)

Offsetting expenditure reductions:

- Continue to freeze open positions
- Reduced capital funding
- Continued tightening of departmental budgets (office supplies, travel, shared services, etc.)

As Chairman Shifflett advised, if there were no objection, both hearings would be held simultaneously.

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PROPOSED TAX RATES

This being the day and time to receive public input on the real and personal tax rate for 2011.

PROPOSED BUDGET FOR 2011-2012

This being the day and time to receive public input on the revised budget for Fiscal Year 2010-2011 and the proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2011-2012.

The Chairman declared the public hearings on tax rates and the proposed budget to be open.

There were several people who spoke concerning the dismissal of an Extension Agent position. They were disappointed in the removal of the Extension Agent who had been involved with encouragement and planning of such groups as “4 The Love of Horses”, “WHEP Nationals Team”, “Honor Club”, “County Council”, FFA Market Animal Show”, “Willing Workers Club”, and “Health and Fitness 4-H Club”. They commended Ms. Mercer on her “tireless and endless” work for 12-14 hours a day. “It takes someone with an education and personal skills to lead our youth to help them realize they can reach the goals that they set for themselves. We have that with the Augusta County Extension Agent that we have now. Jennifer Mercer is top of the line.” Ms. Crummett stated that it “takes a leader to produce a leader. The youth you see here tonight are our future leaders.” Art Salatin read an excerpt of a letter written by Josh Salatin who was unable to be here tonight expressing disappointment of Ms. Mercer’s dismissal. Ms. Persinger said that Ms. Mercer had helped her children to “know and understand their role as stewards of the environment, particularly in the realm of wildlife.” She also stated, “A good leader will let programs run themselves; however, an exceptional leader will encourage our youth to not only step out of the batting box and up to the plate, but she will encourage them to eye the fence and go for the home-run every single time! That is the type of leader Jennifer Mercer has been for the Augusta County 4-H youth.” Ms. Short felt that the public should have been allowed to give their input before a decision was made regarding Ms. Mercer’s dismissal. Ms. Murray asked that the 4-H Agent and Secretary position be restored to the budget. “The Agent and Secretary are always busy helping the leaders and the kids.” Nate Salatin commented “by cutting this program, you’re cutting long-term investment. You’re cutting long-term investment in the youth of Augusta County.” Ms. Fisher expressed concerns of funding being cut for 21 extension programs.

Speakers were as follows:

Debbie Crummett, Art Salatin, Heidi Salatin, Sam Cupp, Deanna Persinger, Grace Short, Ann Murray, Martha Shumate, Nate Salatin, Lois Fisher

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PUBLIC HEARING (cont'd)

Larry Swisher, President of Preston Yancey Fire Company, thanked the Board for its support. He requested for additional manpower and asked that the Board adopt and implementing the report that has been submitted by the Virginia Fire Services Board.

Steve Morris, of the North River District, felt that the 4-H program was a good program for the youth. He said that he has spoken with many North River constituents, who have expressed the following: are happy with not having a tax increase; would like to freeze the school budget in the County budget – ‘no more use and/or lose money’; bus routes – some are very short, not full, going from Churchville to Beverley Manor, Churchville to Buffalo Gap; make sure that the new Wilson Elementary School is big enough that the same thing doesn’t happen that happened in Stuarts Draft Elementary when it opened at capacity; little league programs – starting too early for kids—too cold; too many County vehicles driven to and from work; ambulances in Churchville should be moved to Preston Yancey instead of SARS; ambulances should be placed at other paid career staff to help fun calls and make a better EMS coverage; Mount Solon should have additional career staff; retired school teachers not having sufficient retirement funding. Mr. Morris also asked that the Churchville area be added to Mr. McGehee’s damage list.

Danny Link and Barbara Franklin asked that the Board of Supervisors support SPCA. They felt that the County could not provide the current level of service that SPCA provides because of economic restraints.

Patrick J. Coffield, County Administrator, reported that he had attached letters and e-mails that he had received from the following:

Sue Overton (supporting SPCA); and Debbie Bourgeois and Scott Shomo (regarding 4-H Extension Agent).

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

Mr. Coffield informed the public of the budget process. This process began in December when the agencies put together their budget proposals. The Board met on Monday, March 28th to review the budget and to give direction for advertisement. Tonight’s public hearing was advertised twice in the newspaper. The Board can not take action tonight. It is required to have the budget sit on the table for seven days. The earliest that the Board can consider action is April 27th. The Board had penciled in at the beginning of the year May 4th to adopt the budget. He added that Redistricting will be discussed at the May 4th meeting.

Chairman Shifflett thanked those present tonight and the speakers. He felt that the youth, especially, were well thought out and well planned.

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END OF PUBLIC HEARINGS
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April 20, 2011, at 7:00 p.m.

CLOSED SESSION

On motion of Mr. Coleman, seconded by Mr. Howdysshell, the Board went into closed session pursuant to:

- (1) **the legal counsel exemption under Virginia Code § 2.2-3711(A)(7)**
 [consultation with legal counsel and briefings by staff members or consultants pertaining to actual or probable litigation, and consultation with legal counsel regarding specific legal matters requiring the provision of legal advice by such counsel, as permitted under subsection (A) (7)]:

A) Animal Control

On motion of Mr. Beyeler, seconded by Ms. Sorrells, the Board came out of closed Session.

Vote was as follows: Yeas: Howdysshell, Garber, Beyeler, Sorrells, Shifflett, Pyles and Coleman
Nays: None

Motion carried.

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The Chairman advised that each member is required to certify that to the best of their knowledge during the closed session only the following was discussed:

- 1. Public business matters lawfully exempted from statutory open meeting requirements, and
- 2. Only such public business matters identified in the motion to convene the executive session.

The Chairman asked if there is any Board member who cannot so certify.

Hearing none, the Chairman called upon the County Administrator/ Clerk of the Board to call the roll noting members of the Board who approve the certification shall answer AYE and those who cannot shall answer NAY.

Roll Call Vote was as follows:

AYE: Coleman, Garber, Howdysshell, Shifflett, Sorrells, Pyles and Beyeler
NAY: None

The Chairman authorized the County Administrator/Clerk of the Board to record this certification in the minutes.

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SPCA

Mr. Coffield presented the SPCA proposal as follows:

**SPCA
Proposal**

- A) Augusta County, Waynesboro and Staunton \$300,000
- B) Three years Fixed
- C) Additional seven years with CPI escalation clause (overall CPI)
- D) Base \$300,000 (not to go lower)
- E) An elected official may be an SPCA Board member (if locality so desires)

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SPCA (cont'd)

	<u>Regional Shelter</u>	<u>SPCA</u>	<u>Proposal</u>
Augusta County	\$187,330	248,946 (62%)	186,000 (62%)
Waynesboro	49,437	72,144 (18%)	54,000 (18%)
Staunton	58,922	80,166 (20%)	60,000 (20%)
	<u>\$295,689</u>	<u>\$401,256</u> (100%)	<u>\$300,000</u> (100%)

Mr. Beyeler moved, seconded by Ms. Sorrells, that the Board approve the proposal.

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

Nays: None

Motion carried.

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ADJOURNMENT

There being no other business to come before the Board, Mr. Howdyshell moved, seconded by Mr. Beyeler, that the Board adjourn 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