

April 20, 2010

At the regular meeting of the Board of Supervisors of Prince Edward County, held at the Court House, thereof, on Tuesday the 20th day of April, 2010; at 7:00 p.m., there were present:

Howard M. Campbell

William G. Fore, Jr.

Don C. Gantt, Jr.

Robert M. Jones

Charles W. McKay

Howard F. Simpson

Jim R. Wilck

Mattie P. Wiley

Also present: Wade Bartlett, County Administrator; Sarah Puckett, Assistant County Administrator; Jonathan Pickett, Director of Planning and Community Development; Beverly Booth, Commissioner of Revenue; and Mabel Shanaberger, Treasurer.

Chairman Fore called the reconvened meeting to order and said the purpose of the meeting was to hold a public hearing on the Fiscal Year 2011 County Budget and the Prince Edward County School Budget for 2010-2011.

In Re: Public Hearing – FY 11 County Budget

Chairman Fore announced this was the date and time scheduled for a public hearing on the Fiscal Year 2011 County Budget. Notice of this hearing was advertised according to law in the April 9, 2010 issue of THE FARMVILLE HERALD, a newspaper published in the County of Prince Edward.

Chairman Fore said:

This is the date and time that has been advertised for the public hearing on the overall Prince Edward County Budget, to include the Prince Edward County Public Schools, for the fiscal year commencing July 1, 2010 and ending June 30, 2011.

The Board has taken this opportunity to conduct a combined public hearing on both the overall county budget and tax rates, and the school budget. We believe this consolidated public hearing is a good idea for the citizens, so that you, the citizens, can correlate the funding for the schools with the overall county budget and the setting of the tax rates.

The proposed budget, as advertised, includes the following highlights:

- *A decrease of \$1,371,000 in revenues in the County General Fund, mainly attributed to an anticipated decrease of approximately \$700,000 in state revenue.*
- *Decreased funding in the operating budgets of most County departments and Constitutional Offices;*
- *No pay raises for County employees; and*
- *Minimal capital expenditures.*

It is unfortunate, but in order to continue to fund our schools, and our fire, rescue and public safety at their current levels, and continue to provide essential services to our citizens, a 4 cent increase in county real estate tax has been advertised. This will bring our real estate tax to 44 cents, which is still the 3rd lowest in the surrounding 16-county region.

The budget, as advertised, is balanced. If the citizens of Prince Edward County ask the Board to increase expenditures in this proposed budget, that will require additional resources, which means either an additional increase in taxes, a further draw down of the county fund balances or cuts to other existing programs and services.

I will now open the floor for public comment. Let me start with the names that are on the sign-in sheet. To give everyone an opportunity to speak, I ask that you limit your comments to three minutes.

If someone speaking before you has voiced your opinion, you may simply state that you agree with the previous speaker. Please come forward and state your name and the district in which you reside.

Henry Shelton, Prospect District, said he was against a 10% increase in property taxes on top of the recent property reassessment, and said it is difficult for those such as himself that must live on a fixed income. He also expressed his concern that county taxes are funding the [Granite Falls] CDA and asked why the YMCA would get increased funding from the County, as it is a “religious type entity.” He asked the Board to reconsider the four-cent increase in property taxes.

Barb Arietti, Hampden Sydney, said she does not object to the proposed four-cent increase because of the services available to the citizens. She spoke about her travels abroad and the higher rate of taxes others pay in other countries; she said the infrastructure in this country is wonderful and well worth the four-cent increase.

Heather Edwards, Farmville District, expressed her support of the schools and level funding; she said parents are concerned about the possibility the art and music programs may be cut from the school budget. She added that Prince Edward County offers opportunities at a low cost of living, and asked that the school budget and its programs be considered when figuring the county budget.

Robert Davis, Farmville District, expressed his concern about having to sell his home if property taxes are increased a third time in the past six years. He asked the Board to consider the current economy when figuring the budget.

There being no one further wishing to speak, Chairman Fore closed the public hearing.

Chairman Fore said:

It is important for all of the citizens of Prince Edward County to realize that this Board annually faces the difficult task of approving a budget that will meet the needs of our County and also maintain our financial stability. We spend countless hours scrutinizing every line item in this budget and I can assure you that the Board and staff can and will account for every dollar collected and spent.

On behalf of the Board, I wish to thank all of you for coming out tonight to show your interest in the County's budget process. I assure you that your comments will be given serious consideration.

The Board will not take action tonight and will consider the adoption of the School Budget and County Budget at its meeting on April 27th, which begins at 4:00 in the afternoon.

Thank you, again.

Supervisor Simpson made a motion to advertise a public hearing for amendments to the Prince Edward County Motor Vehicle License Tax Ordinance to be held Tuesday, May 11, 2010 at 7:30 p.m.; the motion carried:

Aye: Howard M. Campbell
William G. Fore, Jr.
Don C. Gantt, Jr.
Robert M. Jones
Charles W. McKay
Howard F. Simpson
Jim R. Wilck
Mattie P. Wiley

Nay: None

On motion of Supervisor McKay and adopted by the following vote:

Aye: Howard M. Campbell
William G. Fore, Jr.
Don C. Gantt, Jr.
Robert M. Jones
Charles W. McKay
Howard F. Simpson
Jim R. Wilck
Mattie P. Wiley

Nay: None

the meeting was recessed at 7:29 p.m. until Tuesday, April 27, 2010 at 4:00 p.m..