

April 30, 2007

The Prince Edward County Board of Supervisors reconvened its budget work session in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Conference Room of the Courthouse Building, at 9:00 a.m., on Monday the 30<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2007.

Present were:

William G. Fore, Jr., Chairman

Howard F. Simpson, Vice-Chairman

Pattie Cooper-Jones

Sally W. Gilfillan

Charles W. McKay

James C. Moore

Lacy B. Ward

Also present: Sarah Elam Puckett, Acting County Administrator; Jonathan Pickett, Director of Planning and Community Development; and Dr. Patricia Watkins, Superintendent of Prince Edward County Schools.

Chairman Fore called the meeting to order.

In Re: Meeting Schedule Changes

Chairman Fore asked the Board to consider a change in the meeting agenda, and requested the school budget be addressed as the first order of business. He also asked that the personnel work session originally scheduled for 1:30 p.m. be rescheduled. Discussion followed; the personnel work session was rescheduled for Thursday, May 3, 2007, at 12:00 noon.

In Re: Approval of FY 07-08 School Budget

Acting County Administrator Sarah Puckett presented the revised FY 07-08 school budget summary, and reviewed the revised revenues and expenditures of the County budget. She stated the revision showed all departments' funding had been reduced by 5% as recommended, and all were able to

achieve the reduction with a few exceptions. Mrs. Puckett added the donation requests had also been reduced 5%.

Robert M. Jones entered the meeting at this time.

Supervisor Gilfillan stated she spoke with Lieutenant Governor Bolling and said his staff will look into the lottery funding amount allocated to Prince Edward County Schools. She also asked the Board to consider a review of the cost sharing policy with the Town of Farmville.

Supervisor Ward asked on the status of the budget committee. Chairman Fore said committees will be established with half the Board members serving on the Expenditure Committee and the other four on the Revenue Committee.

Mrs. Puckett said on the revenue side of the budget, all revisions were made as previously discussed, with the only change being the removal of the \$50,000 of local revenue from the School Cafeteria Fund. All other changes, including proposed increases in taxes and other fees, would give a balance of \$2.6 million as of July 30, 2008.

Supervisor Gilfillan stated she is in favor of the school budget, as revised.

Chairman Fore said during the joint meeting with the School Board, he had asked the School Board to look at and cut their budget, and they cut \$670,000. He said at the same meeting, the proposed salary increase of 4% had been discussed, with the request to adjust the rate to 3.2%, equal to the county employees increase. Chairman Fore said he read in THE FARMVILLE HERALD that the salary increase would remain at the 4% rate, and had asked Mrs. Puckett to check with the schools, and had been told if it had been decreased it would mean a difference of \$160,000. He asked for clarification from Dr. Patricia Watkins.

Dr. Watkins, Superintendent of Schools, stated that the School Board did not understand they had been requested to change to a 3.2% increase for the salaries. She added to remain competitive with other local schools, they must remain with the 4% increase. She said Prince Edward County Schools are not the highest paid schools and offering the lower increase would be detrimental to the morale, and it was difficult to recruit and retain good teachers.

Supervisor Jones asked for clarification of the buy-back policy for accumulated sick leave and vacation leave.

Dr. Watkins stated that teachers earn 10 days sick leave per year, which is standard across the state. She said the retirement payout can be from an accumulated amount, with a cap depending on the number of years in service. She said the teachers can take the leave or sell it. She said she could call and get clarification if it would please the Board.

Chairman Fore called a brief recess.

Chairman Fore called the meeting back to order.

Dr. Watkins stated there is no cap on accumulation of sick leave and vacation leave and there are different standards dependent upon the number of years served at the school; employees having served 15-24 years would receive 30% per diem, and employees having served 25+ years would receive 100% per diem. She added while the reduction from a 4% to 3.2% salary increase would reduce the school budget approximately \$160,000, it would not be a true reduction of that amount due to some fixed fringe benefit costs. Dr. Watkins also said she wanted the Board to realize the importance of the increases to keep competitive with other schools and the cost of living increases.

A brief discussion regarding the budget followed.

Chairman Fore stated the requested 16% budget increase from the schools has caused the Board to take a serious look at raising tax rates, and cut every agency the Board supports by 5%, adding “the 16% increase is a tremendous increase.” He said that at the public hearing, there were 23 people speaking in favor of the budget as it had been presented, and due to media coverage since then, he has received many more unfavorable calls than there were speakers at that meeting.

Supervisor Ward said the Board’s obligation is to fund education, not private, regional projects. He added the Board gave funding and land to the YMCA, and the Board “can find money when we want, can give it away when we want to, we can require hard answers when we want to, and we can push it through with little or no answers when we want to .”

On motion by Supervisor Moore and seconded by Supervisor Cooper-Jones, the Board of Supervisors approved the FY 07-08 Prince Edward County Public School Budget as follows:

- School Fund: The total for the School Fund is \$28,137,304, of which \$7,895,412 is local revenue as a transfer from the County General Fund.
- Cafeteria Fund: The total for the School Cafeteria Fund is \$1,079,467 of which \$0 is local revenue as a transfer from the County General Fund.
- Construction Fund: The total for the School Construction Fund is \$985,000, of which \$0 is local revenue.

This provides for an overall FY 07-08 Prince Edward County School Budget in the amount of \$30,201,771.

The motion carried:

Aye: Pattie Cooper-Jones  
Sally W. Gilfillan  
Charles W. McKay  
James C. Moore  
Howard F. Simpson  
Lacy B. Ward

Nay: William G. Fore, Jr.  
Robert M. Jones

Supervisor McKay stated now that the school budget has passed, he would like to see all of the schools accredited. Dr. Watkins said that she will make it her top priority.

Chairman Fore called a brief recess in order to allow the Commonwealth Regional Council (CRC) to set up for the planning session.

Chairman William G. Fore, Jr. and Supervisor Robert M. Jones left at this time.

In Re: Commonwealth Regional Council Economic Development Planning Work Session

Vice-Chairman Simpson called the meeting back to order for the Regional CRC Economic Development Planning work session.

Danny Fore, President of the Commonwealth Regional Council, introduced the Regional Economic Development Planning process and discussed an overview of the economic development process.

Supervisor Gilfillan left the meeting at this time.

Greg Brittingham, with Virginia Commonwealth University, facilitated a planning session that included a discussion of the advantages Prince Edward County has to offer.

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

Aye:	Pattie Cooper-Jones	Nay: None
	Charles W. McKay	
	James C. Moore	
	Howard F. Simpson	
	Lacy B. Ward	

the meeting was recessed at 11:55 a.m. and will reconvene on Thursday, May 3, 2007, at 12:00 noon in the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor Conference Room.