

April 28, 2020

At a special meeting of the Board of Supervisors of Prince Edward County, held at the Court House, thereof, on Tuesday, the 28<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2020; at 7:00 p.m., there were present:

Beverly M. Booth

J. David Emert

Pattie Cooper-Jones

Llew W. Gilliam, Jr.

Robert M. Jones

Odessa H. Pride

Jerry R. Townsend

James R. Wilck

Also present: Wade Bartlett, County Administrator; Sarah Elam Puckett, Assistant County Administrator; and Terri Atkins Wilson, County Attorney.

Chairman Townsend called the special meeting to order.

Chairman Townsend stated:

*Due to the COVID-19 Emergency, the Board of Supervisors is operating pursuant to and in compliance with its "EMERGENCY ORDINANCE TO EFFECTUATE TEMPORARY CHANGES IN CERTAIN DEADLINES AND TO MODIFY PUBLIC MEETING AND PUBLIC HEARING PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES TO ADDRESS CONTINUITY OF OPERATIONS ASSOCIATED WITH PANDEMIC DISASTER." This meeting is closed to in-person participation by the General Public, but citizens may listen to the meeting by calling 1-425-436-6394, Access Code: 876576#.*

Supervisor Booth gave the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

In Re: Public Hearing – FY 21 County & School Budget and CY 20 Tax Levies

Mr. Bartlett said the FY 21 budget contains no tax increases and is a fairly level budget except for the [Piedmont Regional] Jail. There was some increase in debt service from the debt payments associated

with the Social Services building and the renovations to the Courthouse. The Schools requested a \$58,000 increase for local funding, which is contained in the budget as it exists. There are no major new items.

Chairman Townsend opened the public hearing.

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

The Board will meet Tuesday, May 5, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. for the adoption of the County and School Budgets and Tax Rates.

In Re: Emergency Management Update

Mrs. Sarah Elam Puckett, Assistant County Administrator, presented a public health update. She stated the case count and data about COVID-19 that is being compiled by the Virginia Department of Health is updated daily by 10:00 a.m. and can be found at [www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/](http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/)

Mrs. Puckett said that as of today, Prince Edward County was recorded as having 41 cases; a week ago there were 19 cases. She stated that there is community spread in Prince Edward County, and while the numbers can be meaningful, the change from day to day is less important than the trend-lines due to outbreaks in Prince Edward County. She said currently there are five outbreaks in the Piedmont Health District, four of which are in correctional facilities and one is in a long-term care facility. The data also represents the increases of those individuals in those facilities. She said the cases are increasing and become difficult to track because the data is compiled for the outbreak and assigned to that locality; everyone affiliated with the Piedmont Regional Jail outbreak, even employees that don't live in Prince Edward County, will be assigned to the Prince Edward County outbreak.

Mrs. Puckett said that Governor Northam has announced his "Forward Virginia Blueprint" and some of the metrics that we will be watching are downward trends over a course of 14 days in terms of tests; a downward course of hospitalizations over 14 days; increased testing and tracing; enough hospital beds and intensive care capacity; and increasing a sustainable supply of PPE. She said once that benchmark is reached, some businesses would still remain closed and others would be able to open with restrictions to guarantee safety.

Mrs. Puckett said UVA has announced that it appears conclusive that the flattening of the curve and pushing it out further into the future will allow the med-surge to take place in Virginia without overwhelming the health care system. She said the UVA model also seems to show that if we maintain the substantial social

distancing and the compliance through June 10, there would be a “lowered peak” and it may not come until July or August. She said if we don’t overwhelm the health care system, that means better health care of everyone and a safer working environment for the health care workers.

Mrs. Puckett then stated Prince Edward County now has a complete month of PPE burn rates for Prince Edward County Fire and EMS agencies; she said the agencies will likely come to the Board at the regular May meeting and ask the Board’s thoughts on building an inventory of the appropriate items that will protect our front-line first responders in the coming months and possibly through the winter. She said if we see a repair in the supply chain later this summer, that would be the ideal opportunity to do some forward-looking.

Mrs. Puckett said they are working with the Commonwealth Regional Council (CRC) regarding the possibility of federal grant programs, some through Fire Fighters and some through Emergency Management. She said Melody Foster at the CRC will reach out to those programs to see what would make Prince Edward County most competitive in terms of submitting applications locally, regionally, and County-wide.

Mrs. Puckett then stated the Town election is now scheduled for May 19, the June primaries will be held June 23, and the Presidential election is still scheduled for November 3 [2020].

Mrs. Puckett said Centra has reported there are now five patients in Centra’s COVID-19 unit; one is positive, four have pending test results and to date, they have done 393 tests, 41 positive and 22 are still pending.

Mrs. Puckett said that last week, there were 61 EMS calls in Prince Edward County, which is an increase of 20 from the previous week.

Mrs. Puckett then stated the Farmville Area Chamber of Commerce is hosting a “Coffee and COVID-19” webinar on Wednesday, April 29, 2020 at 11:30 a.m.; Dr. Nash is the guest speaker. She asked that if the Board members wanted to join the webinar, they would need to register.

In Re: Closed Session

Chairman Townsend made a motion, seconded by Supervisor Cooper-Jones, that the Board convene in Closed Session for discussion of the contract of the County Administrator, pursuant to the exemption provided for in Section 2.2-3711(A)(1) of the *Code of Virginia*; the motion carried:

Aye: Beverly M. Booth  
Pattie Cooper-Jones  
J. David Emert  
Llew W. Gilliam, Jr.  
Robert M. Jones  
Odessa H. Pride  
Jerry R. Townsend  
James R. Wilck

Nay: None

The Board returned to regular session by motion of Supervisor Cooper-Jones, seconded by Supervisor Jones and adopted as follows:

Aye: Beverly M. Booth  
Pattie Cooper-Jones  
J. David Emert  
Llew W. Gilliam, Jr.  
Robert M. Jones  
Odessa H. Pride  
Jerry R. Townsend  
James R. Wilck

Nay: None

On motion of Supervisor Emert, and seconded by Supervisor Jones, and carried by the following roll call vote:

Aye: Beverly M. Booth  
Pattie Cooper-Jones  
J. David Emert  
Llew W. Gilliam, Jr.  
Robert M. Jones  
Odessa H. Pride  
Jerry R. Townsend  
James R. Wilck

Nay: None

the following Certification of Closed Meeting was adopted in accordance with the Virginia Freedom of Information Act:

WHEREAS, the Prince Edward County Board of Supervisors convened a closed meeting on this date pursuant to an affirmative recorded vote and in accordance with the provisions of The Virginia Freedom of Information Act; and

WHEREAS, Section 2.2-3712 of the *Code of Virginia* requires a certification by this Board of Supervisors that such closed meeting was conducted in conformity with Virginia law;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Prince Edward County Board of Supervisors hereby certifies that to the best of each member's knowledge, (i) only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements by Virginia law were discussed in the closed meeting to which this certification resolution applies, and (ii) only such public business matters as were identified in the motion convening the closed meeting were heard, discussed, or considered by the Prince Edward County Board of Supervisors.

Supervisor Wilck stated he would like to see the Board delete the \$2,000 donation to Longwood Small Business [Association] and to leave the Piedmont Senior Resources (PSR) donation level-funded as

they just received an extra \$170,000. He said the news reports are showing food pantries with long lines of cars and the people at the end of the lines [get nothing because] the food is gone. He said both FACES and Meals on Wheels can buy food cheaper, let PSR do all the other things they do and just not do food in Prince Edward County, and let FACES and Meals on Wheels do it because they can do it cheaper.

Chairman Townsend said they discussed putting capital projects on suspension and base them on approval by the Supervisors; he said due to the pandemic, it is unknown how long the monetary impact will be on the whole County. He said with getting ready to hire a new county administrator, another thing that was discussed was hiring a finance officer. He said he doesn't think Mr. Bartlett has that factored into the budget; they need to consider where that funding will come from. He said the schools, with the pandemic, may not be able to go back at "full speed" at the beginning of the school year, and that may be pushed back. He said the County could absorb some funding from that to help with the Finance Officer position. He said if the Board looks in that direction, it may be a good time to initiate that.

Supervisor Wilck said the economic portion will be worse than the medical portion of it. He said [the County] will not have extra dollars and every dollar that can be squeezed out, the better.

Chairman Townsend said the new county administrator may not have a financial background, but as leaders and managers, the Board needs to prepare for the worst-case scenario.

Supervisor Jones said the best thing would be to fill the position of the Administrator and find out his qualifications and capabilities and then decide what to do.

Chairman Townsend said that the County still needs to have that money; Supervisor Jones said the County Planning position is open so we have that salary. Discussion followed.

On motion of Supervisor Cooper-Jones, seconded by Supervisor Emert, and adopted by the following vote:

Aye:	Beverly M. Booth	Nay:	None
	Pattie Cooper-Jones		
	J. David Emert		
	Llew W. Gilliam, Jr.		
	Robert M. Jones		
	Odessa H. Pride		
	Jerry R. Townsend		
	James R. Wilck		

the meeting was recessed at 6:55 p.m. until Tuesday, April 28, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. in the Board of Supervisors Room.