September 14, 2021

At the regular meeting of the Board of Supervisors of Prince Edward County, held at the Court House, thereof, on Tuesday, the 14th day of September, 2021; at 7:00 p.m., there were present:

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

Also present: Douglas P. Stanley, County Administrator; Sarah E. Puckett, Assistant County Administrator; Trey Pyle, Deputy Emergency Management Coordinator; Randall Cook, Building & Grounds Supervisor; Jeff Jones, Solid Waste General Manager; Terri Atkins Wilson, County Attorney; Melody Foster, Commonwealth Regional Council; and Scott Frederick, P.E., VDOT Resident Engineer.

Chairman Emert called the September meeting to order.

Chairman Emert stated:

Due to the COVID-19 Emergency, the Prince Edward County Board of Supervisors is operating pursuant to and in compliance with its "EMERGENCY CONTINUITY OF OPERATIONS ORDINANCE." Effective August 1, 2021, the Board has re-opened meetings to in-person participation by the public; however, there could still be limited available seating. Citizens are strongly encouraged to participate in meetings through in-person participation, written comments, and/or remote participation by calling: 1-844-890-7777, Access Code: 390313 (If busy, please call again.) Additionally, citizens may view the Board meeting live in its entirely at the County's YouTube Channel, the link to which is provided on the County's website.

The Prince Edward County Board of Supervisors strongly encourages citizen input and engagement in our County government. Due to COVID-19, the Board of Supervisors, Planning Commission, and other County committees, boards, etc. are operating pursuant to the following protocols for public input and public participation.

Public Participation and Public Hearing comments and information regarding the limited number of seats for in-person participation at County meetings are coordinated through Karin Everhart, Deputy Clerk to the Board of Supervisors, as follows:

1. <u>In-Person Participation</u>: While county meetings have re-opened to the public, there could still be limited seating, if social distancing is needed. To enter the Prince Edward County Courthouse, unvaccinated and vaccinated individuals are required to wear a mask at all times

<u>and socially distance.</u> Based on the uncertainty of social distancing requirements, the exact number of seats available in the Board/Planning Commission meeting room is uncertain. The County appreciates the public's patience as staff continues to adapt to the public safety recommendations and guidelines of the Virginia Department of Health and the CDC.

- **2.** Written Comments: Please limit word count to no more than 500 words. Comments must be received by 2:00 p.m. the day of the meeting.
- a. <u>Mailed</u>: Board of Supervisors (or Planning Commission) P.O. Box 382, Farmville, VA 23901.
- b. <u>E-Mailed</u>: Board of Supervisors: <u>board@co.prince-edward.va.us</u>
 Planning Commission: <u>info@co.prince-edward.va.us</u>
- 3. Remote Participation: Citizens may participate remotely during the meeting. To call in to the meeting, please dial: 1-844-890-7777. When prompted for an Access Number: 390313. Citizens may provide comments during Public Participation and/or for a specific Public Hearing on the agenda. Citizens are encouraged to pre-register with the County Administrator's Office at 434-392-8837 by 2:00 p.m. the day of the meeting. Callers must be on the line and ready to speak when called upon by the Chair. Please state your name and district of residence. Based upon the # of speakers, the Chair will determine the time allotted to each speaker.
- **4.** <u>County YouTube Channel</u>: Citizen may also view the monthly Board of Supervisors meeting live at the County's YouTube Channel: (link is also on County website under Meetings & Public Notices.)

 https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCyfpsa5HEjIWejBSc5XwplA/featured.

Supervisor Townsend offered the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

In Re: Board Comments

Chairman Emert, Supervisor Pride, Supervisor Booth, and Supervisor Gilliam welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Supervisor Cooper-Jones and Supervisor Townsend welcomed all and asked that everyone stay safe and be careful.

Supervisor Wilck said he looks forward to the meeting with the School Board later in the month.

Supervisor Jones joined the meeting remotely at this time.

In Re: Consent Agenda

Mr. Stanley noted that in the Treasurer's Report, under Farmers Bank, under Certificates of Deposit, there is an amount of \$2,223,892.88, which is the first half of the American Rescue Plan funds and has been set aside in a separate account.

On motion of Supervisor Wilck, seconded by Supervisor Cooper-Jones, and carried:

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 Board accepted the July 2021 Treasurer's Report; the minutes of the meeting held August 10, 2021; Accounts and Claims, Board Mileage Sheets; and Salaries.

Prince Edward Treasurer's Report - July 2021

Time Edward Treasurer's Report - July 2021						
Name of Bank	Bank Balance	Available Balance				
Benchmark Pooled Fund Account	\$14,133,051.23	\$14,133,051.23				
Benchmark Social Services	\$245,448.94	\$245,448.94				
Benchmark School Fund	\$1,580,382.87	\$1,580,382.87				
Benchmark Food Service	\$236,746.99	\$236,746.99				
TOTAL		\$16,195,630.03				
Certificates of Deposit						
Benchmark		\$646,066.52				
Farmers Bank		\$2,223,892.88				
Benchmark 5yr CD-letter of credit		\$653,227.28				
TOTAL		\$3,423,186.68				
GRAND TOTAL		\$19,718,816.71				

In Re: FY22 Appropriations – Sheriff's Department

The Sheriff's Department received a bill in the amount of \$28,904.12 dated August 20, 2021 from CAS Severn covering the remaining costs of the Mobile Data Terminals (MDT). The MDTs were previously appropriated within the CRF Funding; however, the CARES Fund is now closed.

Supervisor Townsend made a motion, seconded by Supervisor Wilck, to approve the FY22 Budget Amendment and appropriate the same funds as presented:

Rev/Exp	Fund	Dept	Object	Description	Debit	Credit
3 (Rev)	100	41050	0100	General Fund Balance		\$28,904.12
4 (Exp)	100	94000	0002	Capital Project – Computer	\$28,904.12	

The motion carried:

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

<u>In Re: FY22 Appropriations – Solid Waste</u>

Mr. Jeff Jones, Solid Waste Manager, requested the re-appropriation of funds in the amount of \$157,281 for the Landfill. These funds were previously appropriated within the FY21 Budget and time did not allow the completion of the necessary Compact Track Loader purchase, roller and track repairs, and construction of the Landfill Maintenance Repair Shop. Mr. Jones also requested the re-appropriation of the remaining \$23,069 from the FY21 Collections budget for dumpster repair and maintenance.

Supervisor Cooper-Jones made a motion, seconded by Supervisor Townsend, to approve the FY22 Budget Amendment and appropriate the same as follows:

Rev/Exp	Fund	Dept	Object	Description	Debit	Credit
3 (Rev)	520	41050	0100	General Fund Balance		\$180,350
4 (Exp)	520	42400	8207	Landfill Ops Physical Plant	\$65,000	
4 (Exp)	520	42400	8206	Construction Vehicles	\$70,000	
4 (Exp)	520	42400	3311	Equipment Repair	\$22,281	
4 (Exp)	520	42300	8301	Collection Bins	\$23,069	

The motion carried:

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

In Re: Public Participation

Public Participation is a time set aside for citizens to share their thoughts, ideas and concerns. An official record is made of each person's contribution tonight and will be directed to the County Administrator for follow-up; any necessary follow-up will be noted and tracked. Follow-up may consist of an immediate response, or planned action by the County Administrator or Board, or by placement on a future Board agenda. Tonight's agenda cannot be changed, because the public needs advance knowledge of and the opportunity to review related materials regarding items addressed by the Board. To further assist public information, the Board requests the Administrator, Attorney or county staff to immediately correct any factual error that might occur.

Rick Ewing, Central Virginia Regional Library Director, stated the library has partnered with Hampden-Sydney College to share their catalogs. He said the two collections are very different; someone in the County can now find a book at the Hampden-Sydney campus, which has over 200,000 items, pick it up and return it to the library in town. He said this service will begin September 22, 2021.

In Re: Virginia Department of Forestry

Mr. Kirby Woolfolk, Forest Management Specialist, Virginia Department of Forestry, reviewed good management practices at the State Forest and several agency changes. He said activities include timber cutting and reforestation of the State Forest. He then presented a check to the Board for the County's share of the proceeds of timber sales in the Prince Edward Galleon State Forest, in the amount of \$52,951.47.

Supervisor Gilliam questioned why he has noticed red oak trees dying suddenly. Mr. Woolfolk stated the gypsy moth and "sudden oak death" have been seen lately, the latter is due to the increased rainfall and fungus in the soil.

In Re: Highway Matters

Mr. Scott D. Frederick, P.E., stated the Safety project on Abilene Road, to widen the shoulders, has been completed. He said that one and a half miles of Abilene Road have been widened two feet and have had surface treatment put down; there is still some loose gravel along the road. He said more of the road will be widened as funding becomes available. He reported crews are boom-axing and cutting brush throughout the County; the primary roadways will be mowed again soon as mowing on the secondary roadways are now complete. Mr. Frederick said crews have been "daylighting" and clearing around signage. He said the

gathering of litter bags is being done, thanks to the cooperation with the Corrections Officers with Piedmont Regional Jail.

Mr. Frederick then stated resurfacing should begin next week on Route 133, and environmental work will begin on Route 651.

Supervisor Wilck asked if VDOT is putting funding to the engineering for the River Walk. Mr. Frederick said he did not have time to fact-check but will look into it.

Supervisor Pride said complaints are coming in regarding the gravel on Abilene Road. She then asked why the work began at the Charlotte County line and worked northward instead of starting at Hampden-Sydney and moving southward toward Charlotte Court House. Mr. Frederick said logistics and the amount of traffic were considered; he said the road crews now can manage widening the next section more easily.

Mr. Frederick said the shoulders were widened two feet, asphalt was put down first, then three feet of surface treatment was put down over top which seals the work. He said the surface treatment on top is to seal everything; the loose gravel will be pushed off in a short time.

Supervisor Townsend asked for an update on the status of Corner Road near Twin Bridges, and if it meets the criteria for Rural Rustic.

Supervisor Jones asked for the schedule for surface treatment of Copper Hill Road. Mr. Frederick said he will check and get back to him.

Supervisor Booth thanked VDOT for the trimming of overgrowth at Commerce Road.

Chairman Emert asked for a status update for Hidden Lake Road; Mr. Frederick said drainage work will begin next week.

In Re: Commonwealth Regional Council Update

Ms. Melody Foster, Executive Director of the Commonwealth Regional Council (CRC) presented an update to the Board. She reported they have been working on 14 local and regional projects totaling \$140,834; and three state contracts totaling \$206,771, and local member investments \$133,000. She said that for FY21, CRC is projecting a net income of \$99,126. She reported that in spite of staff illness and changes, they were able to meet all application requirements. She thanked her staff and especially Todd Fortune for all their hard work.

Ms. Foster stated 29 successful grants over the past year provided over \$2 million to the region, to include emergency response equipment, COVID funds, broadband expansion, historic preservation and economic development. She said that locally, assistance was provided for the access road project, Yak Attack, and COVID items. She added assistance was provided for Hampden Sydney to apply for some Homeland Security grant funds and CRC assisted to provide administration to the Town of Farmville for their Homeland Security grant funds. She said other projects in the region include assisting Nottoway County to update their Comprehensive Plan, and providing grant administration on several projects. She said they are also working on the CRC Regional Hazard Mitigation Grant Update, and has received funding from the Department of Environmental Quality to work on the implementation of the Chesapeake Bay Water Plan for this region. She said CRC is assisting the Town of Farmville in submitting a grant application for the Farmville River Walk. Ms. Foster said Mr. Todd Fortune submitted a grant application to the Department for Housing and Community Development for broadband expansion that includes Prince Edward County, Cumberland, Lunenburg, and Kinex. She said CRC will again offer free redistricting services to do mapping; she said they are waiting for the final 2020 population. Some discussion followed regarding the need to avoid split districts.

In Re: Public Hearing – Approving Separate Tangible Personal Property Tax Rate for Computer Equipment and Peripherals Used in Data Centers

Chairman Emert announced that this was the date and time scheduled for a public hearing regarding the establishment of a separate category Tangible Personal Property Tax Rate for Computer Equipment and Peripherals Used in Data Centers. Notice of this hearing was advertised according to law in the Wednesday, September 1, 2021, and Wednesday, September 8, 2021 editions of THE FARMVILLE HERALD, a newspaper published in the County of Prince Edward.

Mr. Stanley stated that in March 2020, the Board of Supervisors appropriated funding to the IDA that ultimately led to the purchase of the Lockwood property for use and marketing as a data center site.

One of the largest cost centers for such a project is payment of personal property taxes due to the large investment and the high tax rates for personal property. As such, most localities that are competing for such projects offer a reduced Personal Property tax rate to make their communities more competitive. Some

communities have waited to adjust the rate once they have a prospect while others have lowered the rates to make themselves more competitive in marketing their communities. In talking with representatives with Dominion Energy, they have suggested proceeding with adopting a lower rate to make the community more competitive in marketing the site.

At this time, staff is requesting that the Board of Supervisors consider a lower tax rate for computer equipment and peripherals used in a data center. In accordance with Section 58.1-3506(A)(43) of the Code of Virginia, computer equipment and peripherals used in a data center are considered a separate classification for local taxation. Accordingly, many localities have adopted a lower tax rate for such equipment to attract data centers to the locality. Mr. Stanley presented a comparison chart for reference. Prince William County, Stafford County and Spotsylvania County all have a tax rate of \$1.25 per \$100. Fauquier County has a rate of \$2.30 per \$100. Staff proposes that Prince Edward County adopt a rate of \$1.00 per \$100. Currently, the County taxes such equipment at the personal property rate of \$4.50 per \$100.

Furthermore, staff requests that the County adopt a depreciation schedule similar to the other counties mentioned. Section 58.1-3503(A)(17) states that computer equipment and peripherals used in a data center shall be valued by a means of a percentage or percentages of original cost or by such other method as may be reasonably expected to determine the fair market value. Such proposed depreciation schedule would be 50% of assessed value in year one, 40% in year two, 30% in year three, 20% in year four, and 10% in year five and each year following. Data centers typically replace their equipment every four to five years. Currently in the County, equipment/furniture and fixtures are assessed by percentage of original costs (20%).

Mr. Stanley reviewed specific comparisons; he said it is important to not only look at the rate but also at the depreciation. Prince Edward County Personal Property is currently assessed at 20% of the value while many other localities start at a much higher percentage.

Chairman Emert opened the public hearing.

Supervisor Jones asked what revenues the County has currently from that category; Mr. Stanley said there are none.

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

Supervisor Townsend made a motion, seconded by Supervisor Cooper-Jones, to approve the Resolution to Adopt a Separate Tangible Personal Property Category for Computer Equipment and

Peripherals Used in Data Centers and to Set a Tax Rate for Said Category of \$1.00 Per \$100.00 of Assessed Value Becoming Effective October 1, 2021; and to set a separate depreciation schedule for computer equipment and peripherals used in a data center; and to adopt the revised Tax Levy Resolution for Calendar Year 2021; the motion carried:

Nay:

None

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

RESOLUTION

OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF PRINCE EDWARD COUNTY
TO ADOPT A SEPARATE TANGIBLE PERSONAL PROPERTY CATEGORY FOR
COMPUTER EQUIPMENT AND PERIPHERALS USED IN DATA CENTERS AND TO
SET A TAX RATE FOR SAID CATEGORY OF \$1.00 PER \$100.00 OF ASSESSED
VALUE BECOMING EFFECTIVE OCTOBER 1, 2021

WHEREAS, the Prince Edward County Board of Supervisors may establish certain classes of tangible personal property for the purposes of LOCAL taxation pursuant to Va. Code Ann. §58.1-3506; and

WHEREAS, Va. Code Ann. § 58.1-3506 provides that certain items enumerated therein shall be a separate class of property and shall constitute a classification for local taxation separate from the other classifications set forth in Chapter 35 of Title 48.1 of the Code of Virginia, 1960, as amended; and

WHEREAS, Va. Code Ann. § 58.1 -3503(A)(17) requires that tangible personal property that has been classified as computer equipment and peripherals used in data centers be valued by means of a percentage or percentages of the original cost, or by some other method that may reasonably be expected to determine the actual fair market value; and

WHEREAS, the Prince Edward County Board of Supervisors has determined that it should adopt a separate category of tangible personal property for computer equipment and peripherals used in data centers to encourage economic development consistent with the County's Comprehensive Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Prince Edward County Board of Supervisors has determined that it should adopt a depreciation schedule to assess the value of tangible personal property classified as computer equipment and peripherals used in data centers;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Supervisors of Prince Edward County, Virginia, in accordance with the Virginia Code Ann. § 58.1-3506, approves the adoption of the tangible personal property category for computer equipment and peripherals used in data centers, and sets a tax rate for said category at \$1.00 per \$100.00 of assessed value beginning October 1, 2021.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of Supervisors of Prince Edward County, Virginia, in accordance with Virginia Code Ann. § 58.1-3503, approves the adoption of the following depreciation schedule for computer equipment and peripherals used in data centers: 50% of assessed value for year one, 40% of assessed value for year two, 30% of assessed value for year three, 20% of assessed value for year four, and 10% of assessed value for year five beginning October 1, 2021.

In Re: Buildings & Grounds Update

Mr. Randall L. Cook, Building & Grounds Supervisor, presented an update on the work and projects in his department:

- Fogging public areas on Tuesdays and Thursdays
- Chiller has been cleaned; replaced relays, transformer, motors, and will change filters in October
- Met with two architectural/engineering firms for replacement of Chiller & pumps; will go
 to bid
- Repaired generator (voltage regulator)
- Replaced carpeting and flooring in offices and break rooms
- Front entrance hallway and part of Health Department cleaned, waxed and buffed
- Signage for inside and outside of the Courthouse
- Fire extinguishers inspected/replaced
- Replacement of phones
- Internet upgraded to 1GB; replacing old network switches
- Flooding issues being resolved at the Shred It Building (cleaned ditch line for better drainage, repaired wall, fixed sewer issues)
- Cleaned PEFYA building after each COVID clinic
- Convenience sheds are in and will be set up at Tuggle, Virso and Green Bay, expect to be installed by end of this year
- SCOPE Building cleaned, landscaped; evaluated, issues detected
- Repair motor on corn cutter at the Cannery; installed valves; reskinned boiler; insulated and repaired pipes
- Daily repairs at Courthouse, mowing at County sites, bush hogging as needed; road signs and 911 markers repaired and replaced as requested

Mr. Stanley commended Randy and his staff for their efforts over the last two months.

In Re: Solid Waste Update

Mr. Jeff Jones, Solid Waste General Manager, presented an update on the work and projects in his department. He reported:

May	2,877 tons of debris	920 vehicles
June	3,717 tons of debris	1,059 vehicles
July	4,413 tons of debris	993 vehicles
August	3,038 tons of debris	964 vehicles

In addition, the front entrance gates have been replaced, a board fence will be installed and will plant shrubbery and flowers along the fence; decking boards in the scale house have been replaced; the office trailer is open and in use; compactor pads will receive a second wash; tractor has been repaired; equipment is running well.

In Re: Solar Energy Revenue Sharing

Mr. Stanley stated the County is receiving a large amount of interest from various companies seeking to locate Utility Scale Solar Energy facilities. To date, there have been pre-development meetings for three projects with a combined total acreage of approximately 2,500 acres. These types of projects require a large amount of staff time and resources to process and review applications, perform site inspections and provide oversight during construction.

These large-scale projects are permitted by Special Use Permits only and if approved, could represent a significant source of revenue to the County. Currently, the State allows for two different ways to tax large-scale, over five-megawatt (MW) solar facilities. The traditional way was to tax them using machinery and tools tax assessments. In 2020, the Code of Virginia was amended to allow Revenue Sharing. Per the Code of Virginia, a Revenue Sharing Ordinance first has to be advertised and adopted by the locality. Currently, the Revenue Share Code (§ 58.1-2636) imposes a limit of \$1,400 per MW per year. The most significant benefits of Revenue Share versus utilizing a Machinery and Tools (M&T) taxation is that M&T revenues fluctuate based on depreciation and they would negatively impact the Local Composite Index formula for State school funding.

Pollution control equipment and facilities are a separate class of property and are exempt from taxation based on the following criteria, as specified in § 58.1-3660, which specifies that a locality may elect to pass an ordinance to assess a revenue share of up to \$1,400 per megawatt of the nameplate capacity on projects for which an initial interconnection request form was filed with a Regional Transmission Operator (RTO) on or after January 1, 2019. As noted, this only applies to projects greater than 5 MW. If a locality adopts the Revenue Share, then 100% of all projects greater than 5 MW are 100% exempt from taxation. This exemption does not apply to the land on which solar equipment or facilities are located. If the solar project is greater than 25 MW and the land is in the solar project's name as stated in the interconnection

agreement, then the land will be assessed by the SCC at 100% of FMV. All leased land will be assessed locally.

If the County elects to remain with taxation of the facilities with the M&T tax valuation, solar equipment would go on the books at 90% of value and after eight years, start depreciating downward to approximately 50% after 25 years and 30% after 30 years. In addition, projects greater than 5 MW and less than 150 MW for which an initial interconnection request form was filed with an electric utility or RTO on or after January 1, 2019, are 80% exempt in years 1-5, 70% exempt in years 6-10, and 60% exempt for all remaining years. One other danger is that the General Assembly could adjust the percentages or exemptions in future years.

In addition to a Revenue Share, the Code of Virginia allows for the voluntary siting agreements between the County and applicants for solar energy facilities pursuant to Virginia Code § 15.2-2316.7(B) that specifies: "The siting agreement may include terms and conditions, including (i) mitigation of any impacts of such solar facility; (ii) financial compensation to the host locality to address capital needs set out in the (a) capital improvement plan adopted by the host locality, (b) current fiscal budget of the host locality, or (c) fiscal fund balance policy adopted by the host locality; or (iii) assistance by the applicant in the deployment of broadband, as defined in § 56-585.1:9, in such locality."

Charlotte County is one of the neighboring counties that has adopted revenue sharing for solar facilities, and Cumberland County will be considering revenue sharing at its September 14, 2021 meeting, while Buckingham County will be considering this matter at their October regular meeting. Staff has used the Charlotte ordinance (and others) as a basis for the proposed ordinance. A spreadsheet showing comparisons from other solar facilities in other jurisdictions and revenue estimates was reviewed.

Supervisor Jones said a meeting was held in Charlotte County where there was much discussion regarding solar farms. He said the Board needs to stay on top of decommissioning of these solar farms to prevent issues in the future, and a bond should be required to protect the land. Discussion followed.

Mr. Stanley stated because of the Special Use Permit requirement, that can be included.

Chairman Emert stated if the company leases the land, the landowner would still be responsible for the taxes. Discussion followed.

Supervisor Jones made a motion, seconded by Supervisor Wilck, to authorize advertisement of a Public Hearing on the proposed ordinance for the October 12, 2021 Board of Supervisors meeting; the motion

Nay:

None

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

In Re: Cigarette Tax

Mr. Stanley stated the General Assembly in 2020 adopted legislation allowing counties for the first time to adopt a cigarette tax. The maximum rate is 40 cents per pack. The county tax does not apply to cigarette sales in a town where the town imposes its own tax, either now or in the future, unless the town agrees that both the town and county tax should apply.

Fading this was the Council Assembly among

Earlier this year the General Assembly amended the legislation to allow at least six localities to create a Regional Cigarette Tax Board for the purpose of jointly administering cigarette taxes in a region. The regional tax board would be responsible for cigarette stamping in the localities who are members, collecting the tax for each locality and distributing it, and enforcing the cigarette tax ordinances to make sure

that retailers and wholesalers were following the local ordinances.

There has been a Regional Cigarette Tax Board in Northern Virginia since 1970, which is comprised of Fairfax County, the City of Alexandria, the City of Fredericksburg, and several other small cities and towns in the region. There are currently 19 members. They have five employees, and it seems to have worked well.

Other areas of the state are considering establishing regional cigarette tax boards as well. Members

of the Mount Rogers Planning District Commission, the Northern Neck/Middle Peninsula Planning District

Commission, the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission, the Northern Shenandoah Planning

District Commission, and the Rappahannock-Rapidan Planning District Commission. Other counties are

considering adopting a cigarette tax without forming a regional cigarette tax board, which is the other option.

Several key points/questions:

- Some advantages of a regional cigarette tax board are that each locality would not have to administer and enforce its own program, there would be uniform enforcement across the region, and if all of the localities had a cigarette tax it would be harder for a consumer to go across jurisdictional lines to buy cigarettes to avoid the tax, to the extent that would occur.
- 2. How much revenue would be generated for each locality if the governing body adopted a cigarette tax? There is no study that shows the amount for each locality, and it obviously will differ depending on the population and number of cigarettes sold in each locality. Colonial Heights adopted a cigarette tax in 2019 and collects about \$800,000 a year in tax. A study for the Middle Peninsula Planning District Commission estimated that a county with 11,000 population with a tax of 30 cents per pack would collect approximately \$60,000 (using an average of 20 packs sold per capita per year) and a county of 17,000 would collect approximately \$100,000. In urban areas, where there are more convenience stores, the amount may be higher than for rural counties.
- 3. How much would it cost each locality to participate in a regional board? It is anticipated that it would require two or three employees depending on the number of localities that were members of the Board. One would be an office employee in charge of collecting and distributing the tax, and one or two would be in the field visiting retailers to enforce the tax. One or two vehicles would be required, as well as office space. If there were three employees, the annual operating budget for the Board could be approximately \$200,000. The expenses would be divided based on the percentage of packs of cigarettes sold in the region (not on tax collected), so a county selling 1% of the cigarettes would pay 1% of the expenses.
- 4. It takes six localities to form a regional cigarette tax board. Once there are six localities that have adopted a cigarette tax ordinance, the Board can begin operation. As long as the ordinance has been adopted, the Board can be formed even if the effective date of the ordinance is sometime in the future.
- 5. Once the Board is formed, the Board would decide how many employees it would need, whether they would be housed in locality office space or rental space, whether one of the localities would be the fiscal agent, and when the Board would actually start operations. There would be initial startup costs that would have to be funded before the tax was actually collected, which could be reimbursed to the localities from tax proceeds.
- 6. There is a question of timing. It would seem preferable that localities that have not adopted a cigarette tax do so beginning July 1, 2022 to coincide with a fiscal year. In order to form the Board and get it operational by that date, however, it would be important for localities that want to have a cigarette tax and to join the Board do so sometime prior to January 1, 2022 so that everyone knows who will be members.
- 7. One caveat for counties is that a county cigarette tax applies to sales in towns within the county unless the town adopts its own tax. Since many convenience stores are in towns, that might be a large percentage of the sales within a county. If the town adopts a cigarette tax, they collect the revenue, and the county does not. If the residents will pay the same tax regardless of

whether the county or town imposes it, there is little incentive for a town not to adopt a tax if

the county does.

3. One question is whether each locality needs to adopt the same rate on cigarette tax sales. The

answer is no.

Amelia and Dinwiddie counties have indicated that they wish to participate.

The Town of Farmville currently has a tax rate of \$0.27 per pack. The proposed ordinance would

not impact businesses that sell cigarettes that are located within the Town of Farmville unless the Town

Council takes action to allow it to apply within Town limits.

During the FY 2021-2022 budget process, the Board asked that staff look at other revenue sources,

other than real estate to help address capital improvement needs. Bill Hefty, attorney for Hefty Wiley and

Gore, who is assisting in the development of the Board, has indicated an estimated \$114,848 in revenue for

Prince Edward County based on an average of 20 packs per person (for the 14,356 persons living outside

town limits). We feel that this estimate would be lower since many will purchase in the town limits and would

be perhaps around \$50,000 per year. The regional tax would only apply to cigarettes, not other tobacco

products.

Supervisor Jones made a motion, seconded by Supervisor Wilck, to authorize the County

Nay:

None

Administrator to notify the other Counties in the Southside region of Prince Edward County's intent to

participate in the proposed Southside Regional Cigarette Tax Board concept; 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

<u>In Re: Marketing Assistant – Economic Development and Tourism</u>

Mr. Stanley stated the Department of Economic Development and Tourism would like to advertise

and fill a part-time, Marketing Assistant position. This position previously existed as late as 2012 classified

as a Secretary-Administrative Assistant with Grade 7/9. The position description has since been updated.

Supervisor Cooper-Jones made a motion, seconded by Supervisor Booth, to authorize the County Administrator to post and fill the Marketing Assistant position as defined; the motion carried:

Nay:

None

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

In Re: Virginia Telecommunications Initiative

Mr. Stanley stated that Jim Garrett, with Kinex Telecom, has won a contract through RDOF auction to provide broadband to rural census blocks that do not currently have broadband with at least 25 Mbps download speeds. This project will complete a broadband fiber buildout in unserved areas of Prince Edward County, and parts of Cumberland, and Lunenburg Counties. This project will provide broadband to over 9,000 eligible service locations. The total estimated project budget is \$25,292,385.00. The funding includes the following:

- \$9,975,490 in FCC grants, which have already been awarded to Kinex
- \$6,000,000 SBA 15-year loan, which has been approved
- \$6,316,895 in project funding from Kinex which would be paid

A grant application is being proposed by Prince Edward County and Kinex Telecom, Inc. to the Virginia Telecommunication Initiative (VATI) for \$15,000,000 by September 14, 2021. Technical assistance for this grant application is being provided by Commonwealth Regional Council (CRC). The minimum match requirement for this grant is 20%. At least 10% is required from private sources such as Kinex. Kinex has committed over \$6 million to the overall project as mentioned above. There is also the pending request to the Tobacco Commission for \$4 million. The county administrators for Prince Edward, Lunenburg, and Cumberland discussed the following match contribution per county for the VATI grant:

Match Contribution per County:

Prince Edward \$2,153,500.00 Lunenburg \$1,651,500.00 Cumberland \$1,195,000.00 The Finance Committee discussed the project and County match at its meeting on August 31st. The

use of Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (CLFRF) from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) as

the County match for the VATI grant will be included in the ultimate budget after public input. Since the

meeting, staff has been notified that the County needs to provide a letter of support for Kinex's VATI

application through the Commonwealth Regional Council. With the due date being the date of the Board

meeting, staff has provided the letter and asks for formal Board action to retroactively approve the request to

support the project.

Staff is currently working with VACO and CRC to address a question about procurement. Some

localities have treated these partnerships with the private sector as needing a procurement process, and some

do not. Given that Kinex has received almost \$10 million in FCC grants, it does not appear that any other

vendor would be able to compete with the project. As the County is currently under a declaration of

emergency, Prince Edward County is exempt from the procurement requirement through 12/31/2021.

Kinex has indicated that they can complete the Prince Edward project in four years with the funding

from VATI.

Mr. Jim Garrett spoke briefly on the project requirements and costs; he said to date, 150 miles of

fiber have been built so far. He added a requirement is that 30% of the project must be completed by the end

of Year 2, 40% complete in Year 3, and 100% in Year 6. Mr. Garrett said he wants to have the project

complete in four years. He stated that he wants to put multiple crews in each county to get the work done.

Supervisor Jones made a motion, seconded by Supervisor Townsend, for the Board of Supervisors

to commit up to \$2,153,500 of its Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (CLFRF) from the American

Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) as a match for a Virginia Telecommunication Initiative (VATI) grant match for the

provision of broadband service to Prince Edward County; the motion carried:

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

In Re: Posting County Property

Mrs. Sarah Elam Puckett, Assistant County Administrator, stated that annually, the Board takes action to direct County Animal Control to post the following County-owned property for "NO HUNTING" as follows:

- 1) County-owned property at the Prince Edward County Landfill;
- 2) County-owned property at the Prince Edward County Industrial Park;
- 3) County-owned land along Granite Falls Boulevard; and
- 4) County-owned property adjoining the Piedmont Regional Jail.

She stated the exception to this posting is for duck hunting at the Sandy River Reservoir. No Sunday hunting is permitted at Sandy River Reservoir.

Supervisor Townsend made a motion, seconded by Supervisor Cooper-Jones, to authorize posting of certain County-owned property for "NO HUNTING"; the motion carried:

Nay:

None

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

In Re: Emergency Management Update

Trey Pyle presented the Board Briefing #25; the UVA model is predicting a case spike around the week of October 17 for Prince Edward County.

Mr. Pyle reported there are currently 9,766 first vaccines and 8,698 fully vaccinated in Prince Edward County. He said the student bodies of both Longwood University and Hampden-Sydney College are included in the County population but because the students primarily used their home addresses for vaccination purposes, their vaccinations are not included in our county vaccination totals. He said if included, that would increase the County's vaccination percentage to 58% as opposed to the 38/% reported by VDH.

On September 10, the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) conducted free COVID testing event at PEFYA Gym with 44 tests administered. VDH will start weekly free testing events on Wednesdays from 11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. for the next five weeks at the PEFYA Gym. VDH will also be hosting a vaccination clinic at PEFYA Gym on September 24, 2021; all three vaccines will be available for first and second shots.

Mr. Pyle reported an increase in EMS Agency calls from the same time last year; in July 2020, there were 304 calls, and in July 2021, there were 336. In August 2020, there were 298 calls, and in August 2021, there were 384 calls.

Mr. Pyle said efforts continue to inform the public of vaccine information with updates to the website, Facebook and message boards. A second county-wide mailer related to COVID boosters is under development, pending final actions by the CDC, FDA and VDH.

Emergency Management will continue to support VDH clinics at the PEFYA Gym with building operations and public information, and by maintaining situational awareness as the Delta variant impacts Prince Edward County with outbreaks and increases in case counts.

Supervisor Gilliam asked if there were any accidents after the portable sign was placed at Routes 460 and 307; Sheriff Epps said there were two or three last week. Mrs. Puckett added that the pavement markers and signage for that intersection are running behind but should be here soon.

In Re: County Attorney's Report

Mrs. Terri Atkins Wilson, County Attorney, stated she has been working on IDA business and projects. She said there is no pending litigation.

Supervisor Townsend questioned the issue of fencing. Mr. Stanley said in looking at the adjacent counties, there is a nearly-even split between fencing-in and fencing-out; he said staff will take direction from the Board.

Mrs. Puckett said the impetus for the "fence-in" was a cow situation in the western end of the county with Supervisor Fore prior to his becoming chairman. Discussion followed.

Supervisor Jones presented an example of the fence-in, adding that if the neighbor has bison and he has no animals, should he have to install fencing to keep the bison off his farm. Mr. Stanley said if the County was "fence-out," then yes, the farmer with no animals would need to install fencing. Discussion followed.

Chairman Emert stated the State Code requires owners to be responsible for any damages, regardless of "fence-in" or "fence-out" but does not absolve the owner to not pay for half of the fencing of the neighbor if you decide not to have them fenced in or out. He added the only way to change that is if the neighbor

decides to "allow their land to lie open" meaning they would never plan to use that land for anything requiring a fence.

Supervisor Jones said that applies to any animal, that the owner should be required to contain their animals on their own property.

Mr. Stanley said the ordinance was updated on December 8, 2015. Some discussion followed.

In Re: County Administrator's Report

Mr. Stanley presented the following reports:

- The County has received its first half of the American Rescue Plan funding and has been placed in a CD
- Congratulations to Planning Director Mr. Robert Love on passing his ENS & Stormwater Inspector certification exams and his Program Administrator exam
- Employee evaluation cover memo has been sent out to department heads and Constitutional Officers; all will follow the same cycle to have employees evaluated
- Sandy River Reservoir permit was submitted on time, last week; discussions will continue
- Congratulations to Mrs. Cheryl Stimpson on her promotion to Finance Director; he said she has stepped up in the past year and has been tasked to obtain more education. He thanked those that served on the Interview Committee.
- Congratulations also go to Mrs. Crystal Baker on her promotion to Finance Manager.
- Solar: Commonwealth Energy Partners will be hosting a community meeting on Monday, September 20 from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Hampden-Sydney Volunteer Fire Department, one of the proposed facilities with 208 acres of panels on Rice Creek Road in the Leigh District.
- Landfill RFP: The County received four responses, interviews will be held to select an engineer for the landfill. The next few years will be important due to the closing of a cell and opening the next cell
- Joint Board and School Board meeting regarding the elementary school renovations or replacement
 of the elementary school, on Wednesday, September 29, 2021 at 6:30 p.m. Location to be
 determined.
- A public hearing will be held on the proposed Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) during the Planning Commission meeting, Tuesday, September 21, 2021 at 7:00 p.m.

<u>In Re: Finance Committee Report – Additional 1% Sales Tax</u>

Mr. Stanley said that during the FY21-FY22 budget discussions, Supervisor Jones requested that staff look at alternative revenue options for the County, including the potential to have Prince Edward County added to the list of qualified counties that are allowed to collect up to 1% in additional sales tax revenue for the construction or renovation of schools within the locality. Currently the list of qualified localities include

Charlotte, Gloucester, Halifax, Henry, Mecklenburg, Northampton, Patrick, Pittsylvania, and the City of

Danville. If the State Code is amended to include Prince Edward County, the Board of Supervisors would

have to request a referendum to ask the question if the County should be authorized to levy an additional

local General Sales Retail Sales Tax of a rate not to exceed 1%, provided the revenues from the sales tax

shall be used solely for capital projects for the construction or renovation of schools in the County, including

bond and loan financing costs related to such construction or renovation. The tax will only be allowed to be

leveled for a period of 20-30 years until the debt is paid off the school construction. He said Delegate

Edmunds carried a similar bill, HB 1631 in 2020 for Charlotte [County]; the referendum passed in Charlotte

in November 2020, 52.23% to 47.77%. Mr. Stanley estimated that this would generate between \$3 - \$3.5

million annually. He said requesting Delegate Edmunds only is requesting him to put it before the General

Assembly to consider if they will include Prince Edward County; the Board will still have to have a public

hearing. He said an equivalent tax increase to raise that much funding would mean a 15-cent increase on the

real estate tax.

Supervisor Townsend made a motion, seconded by Chairman Emert, to authorize the County

Nay:

None

Administrator to approach Delegate Edmunds regarding a referendum on a proposed sales tax of up to 1%;

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

<u>In Re: Finance Committee Report – Director of Finance</u>

Mr. Stanley said staff has recently completed interviewing candidates for the position of Finance

Director. As part of the process, we interviewed several internal candidates. At this point in time, it is the

unanimous decision of the interview committee to offer the position of Finance Director to HR Office

Associate Cheryl Stimpson. Mrs. Stimpson's background/educational background and experience, and her

performance over the past year had her stand out over the other candidates.

As part of the organization of the Department, staff is proposing to merge the HR/CSA functions

including HR, CSA, payroll, risk management, landfill billing management, meeting IT, and the

insurance/benefits functions under the direction of the Finance Director. As such, we have proposed

modifications to the Finance Director position description to incorporate those duties.

In addition, we are proposing to create a position of Finance Manager and appoint Accounts Payable

Clerk Crystal Baker to that position. The position would be established at a Grade 17. The expectation is that

Mrs. Baker will have the opportunity to grow into the position and seek outside educational opportunities

with the understanding that the position could be upgraded at a later date.

Once these changes are made, we would immediately work to backfill the Accounts Payable position

with added support responsibilities for human resources. The Human Resources Office Associate would not

be backfilled but we would anticipate some duties to be taken over by the Accounts Payable position, front

office receptionist, and/or combined into one of the other positions.

Supervisor Cooper-Jones made a motion, seconded by Supervisor Wilck, to approve the request to

merge the HR/CSA and Finance Director functions into a new Department of Finance and Human Services,

to create a Finance Manager position and job description at a Grade 17, effective September 1, 2021, and

adopt a revised job description for the Office Associate – HR/Accounts Payable position; the motion carried:

Nay:

None

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

In Re: Properties Committee Report

Chairman Emert stated the Committee discussed a Residential Use sticker to be placed on vehicles

for at the landfill, possibly next year. He said two would be free, with up to 10 which would be \$5 each.

After five years, it would be a flat \$5 each for the stickers. Discussion followed.

Mr. Stanley said discussion was held on the Rice compactor convenience site and re-doing that site;

he said discussion was also held regarding the front of the Courthouse and getting that project out to bid. He

said discussion then was held on the SCOPE Building; a recommendation will be presented to the Board at a later date. Mr. Stanley stated an engineering evaluation was done on the building which is in poor shape. He then stated discussion was held regarding the removal of three recycling bins at the Tractor Supply location due to bags of trash being placed in the bins. Trash is left on the ground beside the bins; trash in the recycling bins causes them to be returned from STEPS.

<u>In Re: FY22 Appropriations – Prince Edward County School Board Grants</u>

Mr. Stanley stated the County received a request from Prince Edward County Public Schools requesting an appropriation in the amount of \$353,545.98 to the FY22 school operating budget. These funds are a combination of state and federal reimbursement grants. There is no County match required.

Supervisor Townsend made a motion, seconded by Supervisor Cooper-Jones, to approve the FY22 Budget Amendments and appropriate the same funds, as follows:

Rev/Exp	Fund	Dept	Object	Description	Debit	Credit
3 (Rev)	250	33020	0002	Title I		\$165,760.49
3 (Rev)	250	33020	0078	Title III		\$1,022.67
3 (Rev)	250	33020	0014	Title IV		\$63,348.13
3 (Rev)	250	33929	9915	Title V		\$10,230.89
3 (Rev)	250	33020	0027	IDEA 611 Flow		\$29,041.44
3 (Rev)	250	24020	0115	Det Cntr – Title I Part D		\$5,504.42
3 (Rev)	250	33020	0030	Perkins CTE – Fed Title I		\$385.53
3 (Rev)	250	24020	0054	Stem H CTE Prog Support		\$1,671.95
3 (Rev)	250	24020	0052	Career & Tech Equipment		\$10,804.49
3 (Rev)	250	33020	0025	CEIS/CCEIS 611 Flow		\$43,791.58
3 (Rev)	250	33020	0024	611 Instruction Support Tech Assistance		\$7,500.00
3 (Rev)	250	24020	0057	SB Prof Development		\$1,500.00
3 (Rev)	250	24020	0091	Excel Co-Teaching Initiative		\$7,500.00
3 (Rev)	250	24020	0053	Career & Tech Certifications		\$4,452.28
3 (Rev)	250	24020	0053	Career & Tech Workplace Readiness		\$1,032.11
4 (Exp)	250	61000	0001	Instruction	\$352,045.98	
4 (Exp)	250	62000	0001	Administration	\$1,500.00	

The motion carried:

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

In Re: Four-For-Life

The Virginia Office of EMS receives funding allocated from the Four-For-Life program annually. The funding is legislated by the *Code of Virginia* 42.2-694 which stipulates that an additional \$4 per year is charged and collected at the time of vehicle registration and set aside as a special fund to be used only for EMS purposes. Staff has been working with Prince Edward Volunteer Rescue Squad (PEVRS) to get the funding caught up. This appropriation is for the FY19 Four-For-Life funds. Once the FY19 expenditures are reported, staff will apply for the FY20 funds. This process will take a few months to work through with the reporting requirements but should be up to date in the coming months.

These funds go to PEVERS for medical services only.

Supervisor Townsend made a motion, seconded by Supervisor Cooper-Jones, to approve the FY22

Budget Amendment and appropriate the same funds, as follows:

Rev/Exp	Fund	Dept	Object	Description	Debit	Credit
3 (Rev)	100	24040	0015	EMS Four For Life		\$17,998.24
4 (Exp)	100	32300	7014	Four For Life	\$17,998.24	

Nay: None

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

In Re: Animal Warden's Report

Mr. Chris Riviere, Deputy Animal Control Officer, submitted a report for the month of August 2021, which was reviewed and ordered to be filed with the Board papers.

In Re: Building Official's Report

Mr. Coy Leatherwood, Building Inspector, submitted a report for the month of August 2021, which was reviewed and ordered to be filed with the Board papers.

<u>In Re: Cannery – Home</u>

Ms. Patty Gulick, Cannery Manager, submitted a report for the month of August 2021, which was

reviewed and ordered to be filed with the Board papers.

In Re: Cannery - Commercial

Ms. Hannah Evans, Food Works Director, submitted a report for August 2021, which was reviewed

and ordered to be filed with the Board papers.

In Re: Commonwealth Regional Council Items of Interest

Ms. Melody Foster, Executive Director, submitted a report for the month of August 2021, which

was reviewed and ordered to be filed with the Board papers.

In Re: Prince Edward County Public Schools

Dr. Barbara Johnson, Superintendent, submitted a summary financial report for the month of August

2021 which were reviewed and ordered to be filed with the Board papers.

In Re: Tourism/Visitor Center Report

Ms. Chelsey White, Director of Economic Development and Tourism, submitted a report for the

month of August 2021, which was reviewed and ordered to be filed with the Board papers.

On motion of Supervisor Cooper-Jones, seconded by Chairman 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 adjourned at 9:19 p.m.