

May 31, 2022

At the special meeting of the Board of Supervisors of Prince Edward County, held at the Court House, thereof, on Tuesday, the 31<sup>st</sup> day of May, 2022; at 7:00 p.m., there were present:

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

Also present: Douglas P. Stanley, County Administrator; Sarah Elam Puckett, Assistant County Administrator; Crystal Baker, Finance Manager; and Terri Atkins Wilson, County Attorney.

Chairman Pride called the special meeting to order.

Chairman Pride 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 entirety at the County's YouTube Channel, the link to which is provided on the County's website.*

Chair Pride offered the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Supervisor Booth made the following statement:

*As a member of the Prince Edward County Board of Supervisors, I, Beverly M. Booth, am disclosing that I have an interest in the adoption of the FY 23 Prince Edward County Budget, as my husband is an employee of the Prince Edward County Sheriff's Office, which means he is a member of a group affected by the Board's decision. I am able to participate in the adoption of the county budget fairly, objectively and in the public interest.*

*I have filed a declaration of disclosure with the Office of the Prince Edward County Administrator, a copy of which is available for public review.*

In Re: FY 2022-2023 Budget and FY 2022 Tax Rate Public Hearing

Chair Pride announced that this was the date and time scheduled for a public hearing on the proposed 2022-2023 Budget and FY 2022 Tax Rate. Notice of this hearing was advertised according to law in the May 18, 2022 edition of THE FARMVILLE HERALD, a newspaper published in the County of Prince Edward.

Chair Pride opened the public hearing.

Mr. Stanley reviewed the FY 23 budget. As the state code dictates, the advertisement is for informational purposes. A full copy of the budget and a comparison of the FY22 and FY23 budgets were available for public inspection and review on the County's website and was published in the May 18, 2022 edition of the Farmville Herald. Mr. Stanley stated that on June 7, 2022, the Board will formally consider the budget; pursuant to Section 15.2-2506, the Code of the Virginia, the Board must wait at least seven days following the public hearing to consider the adoption of the budget. He said a meeting is scheduled to, at the regular Board meeting, consider the Appropriations Resolution, which authorizes the expenditure of funds and allows the County and Schools to spend those funds on July 1, 2022. That will complete the budget process.

Mr. Stanley said the Board of Supervisors and staff have been working diligently on the proposed budget since January; the Board has held nine meetings or work sessions specifically on the budget. The proposed budget has been advertised in detail in the Farmville Herald, has been made available for public inspection on the County's website and in the County Administration office. He said the goals that the Board adopted in the initial planning meeting included maintaining or improving our current levels of service to our constituents; to stay competitive with staff salaries and address salary compression; continue financial planning for our capital improvement projects that are either underway or proposed; to promote economic development by investing in our community; and to maintain a low real estate tax rate.

Mr. Stanley listed some of the issues or budget-drivers, discussed the Regional Economic Development Initiative, and working with the Commonwealth Regional Council (CRC). He stated the Virginia Retirement System (VRS) employer-share rates are increasing from 8.56% to 9.72%; the employee also pays a 5% share.

The total budget shows an increase of 7.23%; the FY 22 Budget is \$62,634,751, the proposed budget is \$67,161,030, which is an increase of \$4,526,279 or 7.23%. The local revenue increased from \$21,039,237 to \$23,165,930, or \$2,126,693. A significant portion of that increase is due to anticipated personal property revenue increase. He said the County's General Fund revenue, which supports our operations, is only increasing about \$257,488.

Mr. Stanley reviewed final budget notes:

1. Budget includes an across-the-board 3.00% Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) for ALL employees and a 2.5% Step increase for eligible employees. The State budget includes a 5.00% COLA for Compensation Board funded positions. In addition, four employees have been identified for a 1-4 step merit increase.
2. The proposed budget is balanced at the current real estate rate of \$0.47 and personal property rate of \$4.50.
3. We have included an 8% increase for the Health Insurance costs. While we saw a 1.3% increase in rates, we are hoping to be able to make additional adjustments to dependent and family coverage to make the County competitive with our benefits package.
4. Outside agency budgets have been included as recommended by the Board at the May 3, 2022 work session.
5. Prince Edward Sheriff's Office:
  - a. Overtime increase from \$85,000 to \$120,000
  - b. Equipment maintenance from \$60,000 to \$85,000
  - c. Vehicle maintenance from \$40,000 to \$54,000
  - d. Vehicle purchase line from \$165,000 to \$180,000
6. Fire and Rescue:
  - a. Picking up fuel cost for VFDs & Meherrin EMS
  - b. Added Meherrin EMS to insurance payments
  - c. Bumped EMS contributions up:
    - i. PEVRS from \$86,000 to \$98,000
    - ii. Meherrin from \$13,000 to \$25,000
7. IT Department – Six Months of Funding (\$52,940)
8. Planning – Professional Services (\$50,000) to begin Comp Plan update
9. Reassessment Increase to go to a 4-Year Cycle – (\$50,000 to \$75,000)
10. Legal Services (\$25,000 to \$50,000)
11. Building Inspections – Funding for lease of new vehicle (\$15,000)
12. Regional Economic Development Initiative (\$25,000)
13. School CIP Funding (\$250,000)
14. Solid Waste:
  - a. Paving (\$45,000)
  - b. New scale house (\$20,000)
  - c. Equipment (\$95,000)
15. CIP (\$608,708)
16. Sandy River
  - a. Engineering (\$185,000)
  - b. Legal (\$17,500)
  - c. Debt Service (\$200,000)
17. Contingency Funding (Increase from \$60,265 to \$75,000)

As noted above, the Board authorized a real estate tax rate advertisement of \$0.47 and a personal property (PP) rate of \$4.50 based on 100% of the 2022 NADA Clean Loan value assessment. Once advertised, a tax rate cannot be increased unless it is re-advertised and a new public hearing held. There is no such requirement if the Board would like to decrease that rate. As discussed at the budget work session on May 3, the PP assessment percentage can be re-evaluated based on the total value of assessments and the final approved budget from the General Assembly.

Chair Pride said the Elementary School needs work; she stated the students cannot go back in the fall without something being done. She said there are concerns from many constituents in the County. Chair Pride said she would

like to know the approximate cost and asked if the County can use any of the construction for the upcoming work at the School.

Dr. Barbara Johnson thanked the Board for its support at graduation. She said she expects it will cost a little more than \$50,000 at this point; she said they intend to use the money that was asked to be returned from last year's budget. She said Building G, which is one of the buildings that had minor leaks in comparison to some others, has been repaired. She said that cost about \$9,000 - \$10,000. The unfortunate piece is that they must wait until after another torrential rain as happened last weekend, and learned that the water traveled to another place. She said that was the building that required the least amount of repair. She said Building E is next on the list and will cost approximately \$20,000. Dr. Johnson said that overall, temporary repairs are expected to cost about \$50,000; they are aware that as they fix one leak, there may be additional leaks. She said the report on air quality has been completed, with only one room exhibiting mold in the air but none on the surfaces; that room has been closed off all year. She said the cost will escalate as they go along and find more leaks.

Chair Pride said that when she toured the buildings, another leak was evident near the office area.

Dr. Johnson said that has not yet been addressed by the contractors this first round; only building G was repaired this first round.

Supervisor Gilliam asked what type of roof is proposed. Dr. Johnson said she is not sure; she said Mr. Goode would know and will provide that information at the School Board meeting to report back to the Board of Supervisors.

Dr. Johnson thanked the Board for their support. She said this is her sixth year and truly feels that this is a collaborative effort to make the Schools and County better, and to work in partnership. She stated her appreciation for all the Board's efforts and support and looks forward to working together on the Capital Improvements.

Supervisor Gilliam stated Rustburg is building a new high school facility; he said the elementary school was built two to three years ago.

Robin Smith, At-Large Member with the Central Virginia Regional Library Board, expressed her appreciation for the support of the Board of Supervisors. She said Mr. Ewing wished to convey a message stating how wonderful it is working with Mr. Stanley. She said the Library Board thanked the Board of Supervisors for their work with the vaccination clinics, upcoming First Responder Day at Wilck's Lake, and hope to continue those things.

There being no one further wishing to speak, Chair Pride closed the public hearing.

Chair Pride said the Board will consider the adoption of the Budget on June 7 [2022].

Supervisor Emert asked for clarification on the disbursement to the fire departments; he asked if Pamplin receives the same amount as the rest of the fire departments.

Mrs. Crystal Baker answered in the affirmative.

Supervisor Emert questioned why they receive the same as they also serve Appomattox.

Mr. Stanley said the Board can look into that, and said Meherrin also provides dual county service. He said the accidents and response don't follow political borders. Mr. Stanley said Prince Edward County is blessed to have agencies that are sitting on the border in some of those locations. He added the call load and volume would need to be checked. He said Meherrin is about 60% service to Prince Edward County and 40% to Lunenburg; Mr. Pyle said for EMS/Fire is about 70% / 30%.

Supervisor Emert then asked if the Board now picks up insurance for Meherrin; Mr. Stanley said it will be based on a percentage split. He said if the County is picking up 60% of their EMS call volume, then we would pay 60% of their insurance as well as fuel. Mr. Stanley said PEVRS insurance is covered by the County, which is a flat \$10,000, and their fuel and maintenance come from the Town [of Farmville].

Supervisor Emert asked the cost of insurance for Meherrin; Mr. Trey Pyle stated it is a percentage of the \$10,000.

Chair Pride asked if there are paid firefighters in Meherrin. Mr. Pyle responded that there are two on during the day, one at night; there are a total of 12 total paid staff. Discussion followed.

Chair Pride said the Board will meet Tuesday, June 7, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. for the consideration of adoption of the County and School Budgets and Tax Rates.

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

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

the meeting was recessed at 7:52 p.m. until Tuesday, June 7, 2022 at 7:00 p.m. in the Board of Supervisors Room.