

May 23, 2023

At the special meeting of the Board of Supervisors of Prince Edward County, held at the Town of Farmville Emergency Operations Center, Town Hall, 116 North Main Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Farmville, Virginia, thereof, on Tuesday, the 23<sup>rd</sup> day of May, 2023, at 5:30 p.m., there were present:

Board of Supervisors

Pattie Cooper-Jones  
J. David Emert  
Llew W. Gilliam, Jr.  
Victor "Bill" Jenkins  
E. Harrison Jones  
Odessa H. Pride  
Jerry R. Townsend  
Cannon Watson

Farmville Town Council

Sallie O. Amos  
Daniel E. Dwyer  
John Hardy  
Donald L. Hunter  
Thomas M. Pairet  
A.D. "Chuckie" Reid  
Adam Yoelin

Also present: Douglas P. Stanley, County Administrator; Sarah Elam Puckett, Assistant County Administrator, Trey Pyle, Deputy Emergency Management Coordinator; Brian R. Vincent, Farmville Mayor; Dr. C. Scott Davis, Town Manager.

Chairman Gilliam called the special meeting to order as the Joint Meeting with the Farmville Town Council.

Supervisor Townsend presented the invocation and Councilman Reid led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Vincent stated that at the Council retreats, there was discussion on how to meet with the Board of Supervisors to nurture and cultivate relationships between Prince Edward County and the Town of Farmville, as both bodies endeavor to do good for all in the area.

Chairman Gilliam stated he is glad to see all members in attendance; he said all [Board members] are available by phone, but not all use email.

Mr. Stanley said both he and Dr. Davis entered their respective positions at about the same time, and have committed to working collaboratively on items of mutual interest for the Town and the County. He said they worked together on the Emergency Response Planning, doing a great job not only through the pandemic but also the ice storm. He said the Development Review Committee with the Planning Departments, Building Offices, Public Works and County utilities, have done a good job of being able to meet with respective development clients that have come to the community. He said he and Dr. Davis look for ways to work together that will mutually benefit both the Town and County.

In Re: 2025 County Reassessment

Mr. Stanley reported that last year, the Board switched to a four-year reassessment cycle, because the reassessment process will provide equalization of property values so the amount of the tax levy is fair and equitable to all. Over time, the values increase and decrease, but the shorter cycle will help with less severe increases to our constituents. As part of the process, the County has partnered with the Commonwealth Regional Council (CRC) in the counties of Amelia, Buckingham, Cumberland, Charlotte, Nottoway and Lunenburg to procure reassessment services together. He said the County received three proposals, and the Board has hired Wampler Eanes Appraisal Group, who will complete a walk-around of each property and update digital photographs. They will begin July 1, 2023 and complete by December 31, 2024. The new assessment will go into effect January 1, 2025; both bodies will be required to advertise the equalized rate at the end of the process. Any increase in the real estate rate above that would have to be advertised as a tax increase. He said notices will be sent out about field staff.

In Re: Joint Building Inspection Concept

Dr. Scott Davis, Town Manager, said questions were raised regarding a shared building inspector. He stated with Phillip Moore transferring from the Town to the County staff, he has a good perspective on the inspection load. He said currently, two days a week are ample for Town inspections. He said what is not covered are things that a building official did not train to do, such as local code enforcement and are not in the Building Inspection purview. He said the Town could budgetarily hire a part-time code enforcement officer to do those things.

Mr. Stanley stated that since Mr. Moore came to the County, he has performed inspections for the Town on Tuesdays and Thursdays. He said this is an advantage with consistency; he said contractors and developers don't always know where the County/Town lines are. He said this presents a great opportunity for the County and Town to work together and given the current permit load, Mr. Moore can handle this. Mr. Stanley said the County may need to add some resources, but the idea of dropping the non-building official duties is sound. He said the Town and County will work on a formal Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on the shared Building Inspector.

Mr. Stanley said they are both looking at a new software package for building inspections which is more user-friendly and will allow citizens and contractors to apply for and pay for permits online; Mr. Moore can use an iPad in the field and upload an inspection approval to the permit holder. This will also alleviate the use of paper and decrease the time that it takes to report approved inspections.

Dr. Davis said the Town and County systems would be separate but could be linked and can be [accessed by] both County and Town [building departments].

Mr. Moore stated the opportunity to improve our technology through software would be a lot more efficient; he said there is some redundancy with handling paper. He said this would also provide an opportunity to build on what is in place. Mr. Moore said there is mention of property maintenance in the Building Code for unsafe housing; this would need to be addressed. Mr. Moore added there have been no substantial complaints [regarding his split time]. He said he will continue to do what he can to accommodate emergency situations.

Dr. Davis stated they will look into a part-time position to do local code enforcement.

Mayor Vincent stated he appreciates Mr. Moore's willingness to bridge the gap with the shared position.

In Re: Sandy River Water Project Update

Mr. Stanley stated the County has been looking at the Sandy River Reservoir as a potential water source for the community for the past 50 years. He said in May 2022, the Department of General Services and Prince Edward County executed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to work collaboratively towards providing a solution for adequate water supply for the design and engineering for the Sandy River Project to provide water to the State facilities in Nottoway County, including the Nottoway Correctional Center, the Piedmont Geriatric Hospital, and the Virginia Center for Behavioral Rehabilitation. He said that in August of 2022, the Board entered into an interim PPEA Agreement with Prince Edward County Infrastructure for construction of the facility and a pipeline to the Prince Edward County/Nottoway County line. Once the facility is constructed, it would provide a water source for the County to develop our Data Center Park, provide a water supply to The Manor, Hampden Sydney College, provide a drought-resistant back-up water supply for the Towns of Farmville and Crewe, and provide a long-term source to meet the

needs of the County for the next 50+ years. Mr. Stanley said most localities would love to have potentially an eight-million-gallon per day water source for economic development; as proposed, the project will require a substantial lift from taxpayers of Prince Edward County, but just as in the 1970s when the County issued a few bonds with the development and construction of the Reservoir, we look at it as a critical investment in the County's future. Mr. Stanley said the County has the opportunity to fund a significant portion of the project with revenue from that sales contract and subsidize part of the rest. He said the County will work through this process in the next few months, and the 15-year permit is being renewed for the facility. He said this is a "use it or lose it" situation to someone downstream. He added that this is the County's best option to utilize the water source, build the plant, have a customer base in Nottoway which will provide the area with a significant water source to drive economic development and also hedge against a future drought scenario which would put the Town and citizens in jeopardy. This would provide the ability to interconnect the systems to use as back-up source for the Town.

Mr. Hardy asked for clarification on the "eight million gallon per day" terminology; Mr. Stanley said that is a safe yield to pull out and not affect the downstream flow.

In Re: Emergency Communications System Project/Joint Dispatch Concept

Trey Pyle, Deputy Emergency Management Coordinator, presented information regarding the Emergency Radio System project which kicked off last year. He gave an overview of the system that is now 30-32 years old. There are about 20 Public Safety partners using various systems in Prince Edward County and the Town of Farmville, and said the system coverage was at about 50% in some areas, some less. Five other systems include the schools, Public Works, the bus system, Farmville Police Department, Hampden Sydney College, and Longwood University all have their own systems; there is a lot of money being spent to keep multiple systems running without connectivity between them.

Mr. Pyle said there is also a lack of redundancy; he said if Fire/Rescue goes down as it did recently, there is nothing else. He discussed signal strength, operability and inter-operability, and service issues. Mr. Pyle said he worked with a consultant, CTA (Lynchburg), who stated the best option is to put everyone on one regional system. Their recommendation is to go to a UHF P25 Phase 2 Trunked Simulcast System. This would use three tower sites in the County and provide 95% coverage, there would be inter-operability with

every agency within the County and the Town, as well as outside the County. He added the long-term costs would likely be less than to maintain [the current] seven independent systems. He listed the benefits of the new system, highlighting that channels can be added if needed.

Mr. Stanley said the County received a grant to complete the study; Phase 2 will be complete by the end of this year. He said the County is budgeting to push a few fiscal years ahead, assuming that we will do a 12-to-15-year lease/purchase. He said the Town already has radios which can be used.

Mr. Pyle said the equipment and radios currently owned can be used. He said several of our neighbors recently went through the same process - Amelia and Lunenburg will both be using 700mhz systems. This will enable us to talk with those areas also. Some discussion followed.

Mr. Hardy asked about an implementation date. Mr. Pyle said he expects it to be 18-24 months.

Mr. Pyle led a discussion on how the trunked system works.

Discussion then turned to a Regional Emergency Communications Center; he said this would be a joint effort between the County and Town. Currently, all 911 calls come into Town Dispatch first. The dispatcher then will transfer to the appropriate responder. Discussion followed on how quickly the Communications Center could be implemented and where it would be located.

Mr. Reid questioned which project would be best as the starting point. Mr. Pyle said both are necessary but the Dispatch Center should be done first. Discussion followed.

The Board of Supervisors and Town Council were in consensus to continue moving forward with this project.

In Re: Prince Edward County Landfill – Permitting and Upgrades

Mr. Stanley stated the County has been bumping up against the 175-ton per day limit; that is a hard limit set by DEQ of how many tons of trash can come across the scale on a particular day. There have been several instances that the County had to [close the landfill for the day]. Starting this year, the County has applied to the DEQ for an increase to 300 tons; he said it was increased from 100 tons to 175 tons just two years ago. Mr. Stanley said the County has requested, in the last week, for temporary approval to cover the current issues. He added the County is preparing to start on the next cell which is an 18-month process to

apply for, submit construction plans, go to bid, get the bids, start and complete construction to accept trash; he said that process is starting this summer.

Mr. Stanley then stated the Properties Committee is looking at the future expansion of the landfill even beyond this cell.

In Re: Fire and EMS Funding

Mr. Stanley asked the cost of a new fire engine. Chairman Gilliam stated a new engine close to \$750,000-\$800,000. Mr. Hardy said the Town recently paid \$935,000 for a new engine; Dr. Davis said it will be delivered in three years. Mr. Stanley noted the additional pressure on the Town and County to support the Volunteer Fire Departments in purchasing new equipment.

Supervisor Jones left the meeting at this time.

Discussion followed regarding the disbursement of funding to the fire departments. Mr. Pyle stated the County funds the departments with donations; he discussed the EMS Tax Levy, fire programs and EMS. He added that the Town covers the insurance and fuel costs for the Farmville Fire Department. Mr. Pyle said that the Four For Life program provides funding; it is derived from vehicle registrations. He said the Tax Levy, which is placed on all personal or real estate property, can only be used by a licensed EMS agency.

Dr. Davis stated the Town also covers the Farmville Fire Department insurance; he added that the Town also covers the Prince Edward Rescue Squad's fuel, maintains around the building and up to a certain level, maintains the vehicles. Discussion followed.

Supervisor Emert said that as a member of the [Public Safety] Committee, he thanked the Town Council has done; it's been a godsend and it is done timely and they do appreciate it.

Mayor Vincent stated that when running for office, he was asked about affordable housing, green space, trails, tourism, and the school system. He said there has been a lot of good press lately.

Mr. Stanley said the Schools just finished the track project at the High School; he said the Board is committed to renovating the Elementary School and is working through the process. The goal is to have the construction documents out to bid this fall. He said the Board continues to try to work with the General Assembly on the sales tax option as a way to help fund that [project]. He said the Board is showing their commitment to move forward on the project. He said a lot of what goes on at the school is under the purview

of the School Board, but the Board of Supervisors does control the purse-strings as far as the investment. Last year, a significant investment was made in the staff and salaries to make it competitive, and this year with the investment in the Capital Improvement Projects.

Mayor Vincent commended the Board on making those efforts; he said he also was on the Hill to advocate for and support the 1% sales tax.

Supervisor Emert stated the citizens hold the Board of Supervisors responsible [for issues at the schools], but clearly in this county, it is up to the School Board. He asked each Council member to go to their member with their issues. Supervisor Emert said it is reported in the newspaper that it is the Board of Supervisor's responsibility and it is not. When they held the community meeting, only seven people showed up for the last Elementary School Design meeting and four of those were Board members, one was Mr. Stanley; he advised everyone to go to their School Board member and get the community involved. He added that if the parents and the School Board are not willing to do their part, nothing will change.

Supervisor Watson said the School Board meetings need to be held in a large enough space and at a time that people can attend.

Mr. Reid asked for the status of the meat packing plant near Germantown Road. Mr. Stanley reported the plant is on Dominion Drive; he said they are working on the final plat and the County Attorney is working on the sales contract. The IDA Board has already approved the sale of land; Mr. Abdus-Sabur has his site plan approved, and is now working on the transfer. Mr. Stanley said Mr. Abdus-Sabur wishes to have it open towards the end of this year. The animals will be brought in alive, do the slaughter but also have a front counter [for retail sales]; it is a USDA Certified facility so they can sell directly to the public. He added the Wawa is going in on the corner, and the IDA is working on the parcel next to the Wawa site; in addition, the Dollar General is coming at Kingsville, and the meat processing facility. He added the parcel in front of Lowe's is under contract. By summer and fall, all of those sites will be under construction. He said the County has contracted with the Berkeley Group for work on the County's Comprehensive Plan.

Mayor Vincent stated opportunity abounds; he said this Board and this Council have to take advantage of the rising tides for the collective better good for the community and the County. He said that can be tourism initiatives or economic initiatives, there is opportunity. He reported construction on the Splash

Park has started and will be ready next summer; summer camp begins next week. Mayor Vincent said the Town Council and Board should hold these meetings more often.

Chairman Gilliam stated as elected officials, we [are tasked with] looking after our community, the people in the community; we talk about it, create a good plan. Discussion followed regarding the next joint meeting date.

Mayor Vincent stated the old Greek word “Sympatheia” means “we are made for each other,” which is a kind of guiding light for him; he said we are all in this endeavor together. He said that too often these roles brandish brash verbiage and it’s not often enough that we sit together and have nice discussions about the future of our locality; he said he appreciates everyone being here and taking the time to do so.

Mr. Reid asked for a status update on the Mary E. Branch Center. Dr. Davis said they applied for an IFR Grant which did not get funded, and that the CRC is seeking other opportunities currently. He said the total cost [for renovation of the Center] is approximately \$5 million; he said the grant was up to \$1 million but they had to come up with a match. Mr. Stanley said that the good news is that we have the updated planning study that tells us the condition of the building. He said he has also asked the CRC to continue looking for grant opportunities. Mr. Stanley said the Board has earmarked a portion of the County’s ARPA funds potentially for the project; these have not yet been used.

There being no further business before the body, Mayor Vincent declared the Town Council meeting adjourned.

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

Aye:	Pattie Cooper-Jones	Nay: None
	J. David Emert	
	Llew W. Gilliam, Jr.	
	Victor “Bill” Jenkins	
	Odessa H. Pride	
	Jerry R. Townsend	
	Cannon Watson	
Absent:	E. Harrison Jones	

the meeting was adjourned at 7:08 p.m.