

An adjourned meeting of the Board of Supervisors of Albemarle County, Virginia, was held on March 27, 2013, at 6:00 p.m., Lane Auditorium, County Office Building, McIntire Road, Charlottesville, Virginia. The meeting was adjourned from March 13, 2013.)

PRESENT: Mr. Kenneth C. Boyd, Mr. Christopher J. Dumler, Ms. Ann Mallek, Mr. Dennis S. Rooker, Mr. Duane E. Snow and Mr. Rodney S. Thomas.

ABSENT: None.

OFFICERS PRESENT: County Executive, Thomas C. Foley, County Attorney, Larry W. Davis, Clerk, Ella W. Jordan, and Senior Deputy Clerk, Travis O. Morris.

Agenda Item No. 1. The meeting was called to order at 6:03 p.m., by the Chair, Ms. Mallek.

Agenda Item No. 2. Pledge of Allegiance.
Agenda Item No. 3. Moment of Silence.

Agenda Item No. 4. Brief Announcements by Board Members.

There were none.

Agenda Item No. 5. **PUBLIC HEARING** to receive comments on Proposed Operating and Capital Budgets for FY 2013/2014 and the Proposed FY 2013 Tax Rates. (*Advertised in the Daily Progress on March 18, 2013.*)

Mr. Foley addressed the Board, stating that he would present the Board's proposed FY14 combined capital and operating budgets totaling \$322,000,389. He stated that the budget is balanced on the tax rate of 76.6 cents, resulting in a slight decrease in the tax bill for the average homeowner, and reflects direction provided by the Board of Supervisors during a series of work sessions held earlier in the month.

Mr. Foley stated that last year the Board had discussed "modest investments in the future" while keeping tax bills relatively flat for the average homeowner, and last year's theme was "progress and opportunity," but was presented in the context of recession. He said that the FY13 budget was more about catching up and recovery, although it did make some "important steps" on a few capital projects. The FY14 budget, he stated, reflects a "much more forward thinking approach" and focuses on strategic initiatives and investments that support the organization's sustainability and create capacity without increasing the tax bill for the average homeowner.

Mr. Foley said that this budget is about the future and where we're going, rather than the past and where we've been. It's not about catching up and recovery, but about building, investing and advancing.

He emphasized that the budget looks to the future and is more focused on the Board's vision of becoming a thriving County and on strategic goals – and it takes much more significant steps forward. Mr. Foley said that in doing so, it accomplishes three major goals: it builds resilience and support of the County's ability to respond to change while sustaining core operations; it invests in creating organizational capacity that yields a positive return, improving the County's ability to perform and produce over the long term and provide quality services; and it advances strategic priorities to position the County for the future. He stated that the County continues to be an organization focused on a commitment to excellence, and transformation of its budget and operations. As an example, he said, in this proposed budget expenditures are less than in the FY09 budget – despite growth in population and increasing mandates and obligations. Mr. Foley said that the numbers of general government positions on a per-capita basis is back to the FY03 levels, and the tax burden is less than the FY10 level for the average homeowner, making it the fifth year in a row for reductions. Mr. Foley stated that the County's commitment to excellence is "foundational" and continues to be reflected in this budget moving forward into the year ahead.

Mr. Foley reported that the pie chart presented reflects the \$322 million budget, and all of the funds for the County – school, local government, and capital, as well as special revenue funds for some operations. He said that about 45% of revenues come from property taxes; 23% come from state revenues; and 20% represent other local revenue. Mr. Foley said that 5% of revenues come from the federal government, bond proceeds, and the use of fund balance. Overall, he stated, revenues in this budget have increased by \$4.6 million, or 2.3%; state revenues have increased by \$2.9 million, or 4%; and federal revenues represent a 3% increase or about \$1/2 million. He reported that about 60% of total expenditures are school-related for operations, capital and debt service; and about 35% includes local government operations including public safety operations, human services, public works and general government. He stated that the next largest share is the City revenue-sharing obligation, totaling about 5% of the total \$322 million budget.

Mr. Foley stated that the budget reflects a 2.7% increase, or \$8.4 million from the current fiscal year, and revenues reflect a declining tax burden on the average homeowner because of a slight reduction in the existing real estate values – and that still exists despite a modest tax increase of .4 cents that's proposed in this budget. He said that the way the County has been able to overcome some of the declines in existing property values is through new construction, with commercial development adding to

revenues, and real estate from residential property. Mr. Foley said that they've been offset primarily through modest increases in the economy – such as sales tax and meals tax. He reported that on the expenditure side, local government expenditures – primarily as a result of shoring up and improving core services and investing in some future improvements – are up 3.8%. Mr. Foley stated that school operations are proposed to increase 3%, and there is a decline in capital expenditures of about 4.9%, which reflects the fluctuation in some major capital projects from the current year to the proposed year.

Mr. Foley stated that the budget addresses the three goals of building core services, investing to build capacity, and advancing priorities for the future. Regarding the goal of strengthening core operations, he said, the budget reflects the addition of four police officers and four social services workers, improves the maintenance for buildings and parks for some new facilities put in place, and adds a chief of volunteer services for Fire & Rescue operations. Mr. Foley emphasized that “a big story” in this budget is some improvement in EMS services. He said that this budget reflects the first full year of Pantops EMS service, daytime coverage on Route 29 South and the Ivy area, a full year of 24-hour EMS coverage on Route 29 North, and the first full year of operations for the Ivy fire station.

Mr. Foley presented a map showing the EMS service provided in the County in FY13, with most of the resources for response coming out of the middle of the City – as well as coverage from the Hollymead and Monticello stations. He said that off of the chart is the Scottsville Volunteer Rescue Squad, which has some daytime coverage from career staff. Mr. Foley stated that the FY14 budget reflects a full year of improvements at Pantops, but also some dramatic improvements that will lead to improved service – with response added in Ivy, Route 29 North and South, Pantops, and additional resources from volunteer stations, particularly in Earlysville.

He said that with the second goal of investing to create capacity to be better able to deal with future challenges, one of the improvements in the FY14 budget is to rely on some alternative revenue sources and invest in some long-term returns. Mr. Foley said that as an example, the County is instituting a new intersection that will have Photo Safe enforcement, which will generate revenues that will roll back into a traffic safety officer. He stated that the budget begins a standalone stormwater operation to deal with some state and federal mandates that the County faces, and it invests in an economic development program to try to spur some more job creation and capital investment – which will help fund services in the future. Mr. Foley said that the budget also starts the preparation for a potential bond referendum that the Board will be talking about to try to address capital needs in the long term, and starts a risk management program and a grants position to try to generate more revenue to pay for needed services without having to use existing tax revenues. He stated that it also establishes an innovative and an intern fund that will help pay for some improvements in services.

Mr. Foley stated that with the goal of advancing strategic priorities to position the County for the future, the focus on strategic priorities is critical because of a newly adopted strategic plan approved last summer. He said that the first goal regarding “excellence in educational opportunities” is addressed in the FY14 budget with a recommended school operating budget of \$155.3 million – and within that budget is an increase in local support of \$3.2 million, or a 3.2% increase, and that reflects an increase in .4 cents on the tax rate that will be solely dedicated to improvements in the school system. Mr. Foley stated that it also moves school bus replacement to the capital fund, which removes some obligation to the school funds and help them shore up its operations to a greater degree. He said there is support for facilities improvements in the budget, with renovations and additions planned for Agnor Hurt Elementary School and Murray High School. Mr. Foley said that the budget also adds a school resource officer to ensure security at schools. He added that the County is making a significant investment in the library system this year by opening the new Crozet Library, expanding some services there in terms of salary increases for staff and other operational changes.

Mr. Foley reported that the second goal regarding community facilities is addressed through an FY14 capital budget of \$21 million, primarily focused on maintaining current facilities along with a few school improvements – and an increased commitment to capital of about \$500,000 and use of year-end funds from school and local government savings in a “new approach” to try to sure up the capital program. He stated that the Board added expansion of some transit routes through the Charlottesville Transit System, which he would address later in his presentation.

With goal three regarding a “diverse and vibrant economy,” he said the budget funds some memberships in community organizations that support economic development and the creation of jobs, increases support to the Central Virginia Partnership for Economic Development – formerly TJPED – and the Small Business Development Center, which received some additional funding as part of this budget to support a diverse and vibrant economy. He said that it continues for the Economic Opportunity fund to provide some incentives to get jobs and capital investment into the County, and it also assigns some funding for items like the Municipal Band, to support some quality of life aspects of the economy.

Mr. Foley reported that goal four of “protecting natural, historic and scenic resources” is addressed through funding to study how the County will meet some new federal mandates regarding cleaning up the Chesapeake Bay, and provides funding for historic preservation initiatives that the Board felt were important to add to the FY14 budget. Regarding health and safety, he said that they have discussed the EMS improvements, the opening of a new fire station, and additional support for volunteer units and provision of services. He stated that the budget “makes a big step forward” with JAUNT services for the elderly and disabled, with a 13.5% or \$136,000 increase. Mr. Foley said that he mentioned the addition of social services workers and police officers that address public health and safety, and the Board adjustments in its work sessions will provide additional funding for JABA's operations and training funds for the Earlysville Volunteer Fire Department.

He stated that goal six, individual responsibility and citizen ownership, is addressed in the FY14 budget through support of reallocation to create a volunteer coordinator position, an initiative from current funds. Mr. Foley said that the budget continues to support the citizens' advisory councils throughout the development areas to provide advice as to how to proceed with strategic priorities. He stated that goal seven, related to a valued and responsive workforce, is addressed in the budget through a 2% merit salary increase for employees – the first time they have received an increase in four years; enhanced police and fire recruitment initiatives; and increases in health insurance coverage. Mr. Foley said that this budget also makes a big step in supporting professional development so the County can maintain high quality services and dedicated staff.

Mr. Foley reported on obligations in the budget that are also driving expenditures, including meeting commitments related to public safety agencies such as the regional jail and the ECC system, as well as increasing funds for the SPCA and the Visitors Bureau through contract obligations. He said that it also includes a \$16.9 million obligation to the City for revenue sharing, protects the AAA bond rating by ensuring there are adequate reserves, and maintains a reserve for contingencies in case unexpected emergencies arise during the fiscal year.

Mr. Foley stated that the budget builds and strengthens core operations by improving fire and EMS response, sustains core operations in the Police and Social Services departments, invests to create capacity by creating a centralized risk management program to save money in the long term, and establishes an economic development program to bring in jobs and investment. He said that the budget advances strategic priorities and positions the County for the future by increasing funding to the school system and the library system, and establishing the beginnings of a stormwater program.

Mr. Foley said that the budget moves in a positive direction, but recognizes that current and future challenges exist that are not addressed in this budget. He stated that the FY14 budget lays the groundwork for several major decisions that the Board will be making in the year ahead, such as direction on the stormwater utility district and how it will be paid for in order to address federal mandates regarding the quality of streams and rivers in the County. Mr. Foley stated that the Board would also set direction as to the County's currently unfunded, underfunded and growing capital needs, including consideration of a bond referendum to determine if the public supports additional tax revenues to address those capital needs. He said that the Board will also be working on setting direction for continued improvements in core services, including geo-policing and important quality of life issues – such as funding community agencies that have been hurt "fairly significantly in funding over the past few years" but provide a quality of life that citizens appreciate.

Mr. Foley emphasized that this budget moves the County forward more aggressively than in the past in achieving the County's vision of being a thriving county, by building core services, investing in capacity to address needs, and in advancing strategic priorities. He stated that the County held its first public hearing on the budget in February, as proposed by the County Executive – and through a number of work sessions over the past 3-4 weeks, the Board has made some adjustments that are reflected in this proposal presented for public comment. Mr. Foley said that the Board is scheduled next Wednesday to have final consideration of the budget, establish a budget and set the tax rate.

At this time, the Chair opened the public hearing.

Mr. Jeff Coleman, a resident of the Scottsville District addressed the Board, asking that it work to repeal the Revenue Sharing Agreement between the City of Charlottesville and the County of Albemarle. He said that the agreement was created in the 1980s to increase City revenue without annexation; however, since 1987, the Virginia General Assembly has maintained a moratorium on annexations, yet the City/County agreement remains. He said that in the upcoming year, the County will send nearly \$17 million to the City, while state funds for education have shrunk – straining school budgets and prompting the division to search for new revenue streams. Mr. Coleman said that the composite index that determines state funding for the County does not take the revenue-sharing agreement into account, and Albemarle is thus assumed in the state budget to have more local revenue than it actually does – and as a result, receives fewer revenues from the state in each budget. He stated that each year, County departments must look for new ways to fund its needs and teachers like him must stand before the Board and "plead for funding for the schools." Mr. Coleman said the revenue-sharing agreement has put undue burdens on the taxpayers of the County, yet the Board's solution is to propose another tax increase – albeit small. He stated that a tax increase is not acceptable when the County is handing over tens of millions to the City of Charlottesville, and School Board member Ned Michie has stated that the key to any funding issues Albemarle has with its schools or government services "lies in its own hands, not in its neighbors." Mr. Coleman said that the City has said it would look to hire a lobbyist to educate state legislators about "terrible state policy" and to convince them of the County's self-interested motives, which will block any attempts at revision or repeal of the agreement. He stated that "the time has come to end decades of one-way wealth redistribution at the expense of Albemarle County taxpayers" and County taxpayers deserve responsive and effective leadership. Mr. Coleman said that failing to consider repealing the agreement is a failure to represent the needs of County taxpayers.

Ms. Nancy Carpenter, a resident of the Scottsville District, said that she is a frequent transit rider. She said that she has been looking at the line items and in the prospective budget for the Charlottesville Area Transit and heard that the County is contributing \$45,000 that will be earmarked for the new bus route 11 that will end up serving CATEC. She stated that she thinks it is wonderful that the money will be earmarked to serve the educational needs of County residents as well as City residents – but it doesn't go far enough. Ms. Carpenter said that she is disappointed that the Board did not see fit to fund the \$200,000 increase in its entirety. She noted that CAT serves some of the most commercially intensive areas in the County. She stated that the Board has a chance to put some real teeth into the updated

Comprehensive Plan and the targeted growth areas by funding the public transit increase 100%, which will move more people around the County and take advantage of new jobs, shopping and business ventures. Ms. Carpenter said that the Board could be forward thinking twenty-first century visionaries and stewards of the environment by promoting expanding and funding multi-modalities of transit or could be seen as mid-twentieth century stuffy thinking in the box pave paradise and put in the parking lot Board of Supervisors. She asked the Board to fully fund the \$200,000 increase for CAT and make one of the strategic priorities people – County residents.

Ms. Tracy Aglio, an Earlysville resident, thanked the Board for its time, service and encouragement. Ms. Aglio said that she is a teacher at Albemarle High School but is here as a taxpayer, homeowner, and a parent. She encouraged the Board to approve the proposed tax rate so that the school budget can be funded, adding that she and her husband view the taxes they pay as an investment in its community. Ms. Aglio stated that the Board and the School Board have demonstrated good stewardship over the years protecting what makes Albemarle County such a great place to live and having the vision to plan for future needs. She said that as homeowners she and her husband appreciate that housing prices in the County have fared better than surrounding communities and that Charlottesville and Albemarle are consistently ranked as “wonderful places to live,” which in turn keeps the community economically stable. Ms. Aglio said that a big pull for the County is the schools, as people could buy the same home in neighboring communities but choose to move here. She stated that her three children have all gone through County schools, and have all had excellent teachers to guide them and plentiful opportunities to explore their academic passions. Ms. Aglio added that the experience has given them a solid foundation and the confidence to meet the challenges of life after high school. She said that their obligation as a community is to their children, as they are future teachers, doctors, business owners, and Board members. Ms. Aglio asked the Board to approve the proposed tax rate to ensure that schools can continue to provide the excellent education for which the County is known.

Ms. Carole Thorpe addressed the Board on behalf of the Jefferson Area Tea Party. She thanked the Board and staff for their hard work on the budget. Ms. Thorpe said that the financial strain on taxpayers “continues to increase” with piling personal and governmental debt, rising unemployment, shrinking home values, diminished savings, and stretched resources. Ms. Thorpe asked on behalf of the JATP that the Board keep the tax rate at current levels, as people are “taxed enough already.” She said that the collective toll of the last several years should be considered, not just the performance of any one year independently, and property assessments are down significantly. Ms. Thorpe said that the proposed tax increase is touted as “small,” but the taxpayers are “dying a slow death” by a thousand small increases in costs each and every day. She stated that it’s not a matter of what we want to do, it’s what can we afford to do, and asked what benefit is being given to a future generation by continuing to tax families and make sure they are not burdened by future debt. She said that the County cannot continue to fund and fund and fund and fund without a stronger effort to make difficult cuts in difficult financial times to balance these things. Tough choices must be made. Ms. Thorpe said that it would be nice to give teachers and staff raises, but many people are unemployed are underemployed and struggle each and every day to feed and house their families. She stated that the storm water utility tax program is coming up – so there will be more discussion on tax increases again very soon. Ms. Thorpe said that “improve, increase, invest, expand, enhance” are all of admirable, and if we lived in a financial nirvana, we’d all love to have them. But we must deal responsibly, particularly for the next generation. She asked the Board if they wanted to ransom the next generation’s future with giving them the ideal education now with possibly the expense to where later on they won’t have an economy or jobs or be burdened with the kind of debt that they won’t be able to have the same adult lives that we have all enjoyed.

Mr. Michael Gallagher addressed the Board, stating that he is a member of the Western Albemarle PTO and is also a Parent Council representative for Albemarle County schools. Mr. Gallagher said that he is here in support of approving the tax increase in support of the school budget request. So that the schools and continue to have the level of excellence in education that the people of Albemarle County have come to expect. He stated that the key priority is class size, and the School Board and administration have done a great job of keeping that in check and it allows them to maintain the standard of excellence. Mr. Gallagher asked the Board to consider approving the tax increase in order to continue to fund the schools at the level required.

Ms. Melissa Healy, representing the Cale Elementary PTO, said that she has twin sons that are now in the first grade. She stated that during their kindergarten year because on their class size and excellent teaching staff on her sons was recognized as needing extra assistance and was able to meet one on one with a reading intervention specialist. Ms. Healy said that the improvements they saw in him were “truly remarkable,” and would not have been possible without the specialist and the teacher he had. She emphasized that it may seem minor but it was not minor to him as a student or to them as his parent. She stated that Cale is also working to integrate a foreign language component into the curriculum, and the increase in funding would help support growth in the initiative. Ms. Healy stated that she fully believes Dr. Moran’s statement that “we need to meet children at the leading edge of their potential.” She said that she appreciates the Board of Supervisors working to fill the gap that existed and the tax increase is necessary and desirable.

Ms. Charlotte Hogue addressed the Board, stating that again this year the School Board is crying, “We have a shortfall, we need more money,” and then they make the usual claim that if the County doesn’t give it to them they’ll have to increase class size and cut personnel. She said that this is the same old song that she’s heard for years. She stated that many school systems across the nation are cutting expenses and asked why not here? Ms. Hogue said that everyone has had to cut budgets and scale back, and the School Board should do the same. She stated that one School Board member said that if school lunches went up \$.50 that would be a hardship. Well brown bag it – that would be much more economical and wouldn’t burden the taxpayer. She said that parents can afford cell phones for kids, but

not an increase in their lunch costs, and parents need to step up and take responsibility for the many things they want the schools to provide. Ms. Hogue asked if the items the School Board requests are all necessary, or for the constantly increasing “nice to have” wish list. She said that no matter how much you give the schools, they will want even more next year. Ms. Hogue stated that she is very tired of being taxed and taxed so the School Board can spend, spend, spend. Learn to say no...please do not raise the tax rate.

Mr. Robert Hogue addressed the Board, stating that across the U.S. about 70% of citizens feel the government is doing too much. Mr. Hogue said that this generates abuse of the system and lessens personal responsibility. He said that Albemarle should have year-round fees for parks and walking trails and the lost tax revenue for the elderly and disabled tax credit should be collected after they and their spouse are deceased. Mr. Hogue stated that one way to save money in the schools would be to quit running buses on non-state maintained roads and dead-end subdivisions, as it would be the parent's responsibility to get their child to the public road. He added that athletic and activity fees should be raised, and he questioned the need for school resource officers because more students are killed on the highway than in schools. He said that the federal deficit will be addressed, so local spending cuts should start now to prepare for lost revenue – the County government and school system can make spending cuts. Mr. Hogue asked the Board not to raise the tax rate.

Dr. Charles Battig addressed the Board, stating that “it's never enough” and no correlation has been shown between how much is spent on a child in school and their achievements. Dr. Battig stated that the National Education Association resolutions in the current year expressed concern about safety from electro-magnetic fields. He said that upgrading WiFi in Albemarle Schools will cost \$700,000 in the current budget. He said that he has challenged the School Board on this, and they have yet to give an answer. Dr. Battig stated that a three-minute video is the same radiation level of 10,000 emails, and concerns include autism and learning disorders. He added that the Los Angeles teachers union, representing 45,000 teachers, wants wireless and microwave radiation removed from schools. He said that a Harvard University study concluded that “WiFi should not be in schools,” and the English Catholic Teachers Association in Canada states that “schools should be hardwired,” and routers should be turned off when not in use. Dr. Battig stated that Columbia University has urged schools not to install WiFi; and from Sweden, a panel has advised against exposure to children of any age. He said that a simple solution in the classrooms would be to use a shielded cable instead of a microwave WiFi in every classroom.

Dr. Pearl Yu said that she is the parent of a first and second grader both attending Agnor Hurt this year. She said that next year they will be redistricted to Broadus Wood, and she agrees that both schools are excellent. Dr. Yu stated that the Board members' visits to the schools have meant a great deal to the teachers and students there, who need their support and advice. She said that as a Physician who specializes in the care of children she has had the opportunity to “optimize the learning environments” for her patients, and the quality and dedication of the teachers and staff in the division is truly impressive. Dr. Yu stated that the children have made Albemarle County among the top-performing divisions in the state, and have had remarkable success in recent competitions such as the regional science fair, destination imagination, and the health and sciences academy. She said that the schools have a rising enrollment, a rising free and reduced lunch population, federal and state mandates – all putting pressure on students. Dr. Yu said that Albemarle already spends 30% less per pupil than Charlottesville City Schools, and in real dollars the investment is now \$1,000 less than it was in 2008. She stated that the drop has a “probable cost,” and the division has not had the money to bring in initiatives that are needed to keep pace with the demands of the current competitive environment, including world languages at the elementary school level, one-to-one technology, and opportunities for teachers to design lessons and assessments consistent with 21st Century skills and competencies. Dr. Yu said that these are steps forward, and if they cannot continue to innovate, the education of children will be at risk. She stated that nothing they do as parents or citizens, or what the Board does as guardians of the public trust, is more important than the education of the next generation. Dr. Yu stated that she strongly supports approval of the new tax rate to fund the school division, which will not increase the actual amount of property tax that residents will pay compared to last year.

Ms. Diantha McKeel addressed the Board, thanking them for their leadership through difficult economic times. She stated that many divisions have closed schools, laid off teachers, eliminated the arts, and significantly increased classed size – but those things have not happened in Albemarle County, thanks to the Board's commitment to and investment in education. Ms. McKeel said that their investment in education has been money well spent, as Albemarle students placed second in Virginia on college SAT scores, and the County's number of advanced studies diplomas is 30% better than the state average. She noted that the County's 2012 advanced placement program was among the top 3% of all programs in the U.S., with Jack Jouett's Avid program for college preparation possibly among the top 3% of 5,000 such programs in the world. She emphasized that “good enough” will not be good enough tomorrow, and this is the fourth consecutive year of only “maintenance of effort,” and they have not moved forward with the quality and breadth of programs necessary for tomorrow. Ms. McKeel stated that the County is “falling behind” with a K-12 world languages program and a digital divide that discriminates against many families who lack adequate internet access. Becoming more globally connected by way of language or the internet is not an optional path to success. Attracting high-quality companies and the jobs they provide is the path to prosperity. She said that the Boards can and should do both. The County's place demands it. Ms. McKeel stated that she looks forward to the Board of Supervisors and the School Board working together. She said that together they can do great things for Albemarle County.

Ms. Tracy Higginbottom said that she is the parent of five children, four of whom attend Albemarle County Public Schools, and she is the current Woodbrook Elementary PTO President. Ms. Higginbottom encouraged the Board to completely fund Dr. Moran's “fiscally responsible budget,” as for the past several years the Superintendent has presented to the Board a “maintenance of effort” budget. She stated that

her focus is on today, but her hopes and concerns are on tomorrow, and she wonders how many more years of “maintenance” budgets can be afforded without surrendering the future of children. Ms. Higginbottom noted that many other school divisions are putting additional resources behind students, and eventually they will find students “at a serious disadvantage.” She said that per-pupil revenues in this funding request are projected to be \$11,694, which is \$1,000 below per-pupil revenues in 2008 – or about 30% less per pupil compared to Charlottesville City. Ms. Higginbottom said that a tax rate increase of .4 cents per \$100 of assessed value is a modest increase, which she strongly supports, and if adopted taxpayers will still pay less in property taxes next year as a rate of 76.6 cents will be below an equalized rate of 78 cents. She emphasized that one of the main reasons people move to the area is because of the quality of schools. Ms. Higginbottom said that adequate funding will always be a challenge – but what they cannot afford is fewer ideas, less energy, and lower skills in preparing children to meet the sweeping global challenges they will face upon graduation.

Ms. Linda McCraven addressed the Board, stating that they serve as Supervisors because the community entrusts them to make very important decisions on a daily basis. She said that they are expected to make expense decisions with the criteria of judging wisely and respecting the citizens, have sound judgment, know the difference between right and wrong, respect property rights, and protect the little people who really feel helpless before the Board. Ms. McCraven stated that the increase in the budget would be devoted to the schools and having had five children in the schools and having run for the School Board at-large, she has spoken to hundreds of people about those needs. She stated that not one teacher she spoke to during her campaign said, “give me a better salary,” or “I really would appreciate another assistant principal in my school.” Ms. McCraven said that every single one of them said, “let me do my job.” She asked that the County not threaten to reduce the number of teachers, or increase the class size. Just let them do their jobs, she stated, adding that she thinks that administration is way too heavy on every level. Ms. McCraven said that the County emblem has two rural aspects to it – but there is no quadrant for a healthy economy or business sector. She added that she also hoped the courts would make the right decision and remove the member of the Board, and replace him with someone who will make decisions the citizens can trust.

Mr. Jim Stern, Chairman of the Albemarle Truth in Taxation Alliance, addressed the Board. He commended Mr. Foley for the budget and noted that grants are not free money from the government, as they come from citizens – with a portion taken away and then returned to communities in a lesser amount. He said that the local government side of the budget is pretty solid, but it’s the Board’s duty to look at the other side of the budget. Mr. Stern stated that last year, the schools spent over \$114,860 on food for meetings, and wondered if any of the Board members were asking hard questions of the School Board. He said that last year the schools claimed that they needed support for over 300 homeless students – yet they couldn’t show where one of them was – and the entire region had less than 250 homeless people. He stated that the School Board couldn’t tell citizens where they were, what schools they were in, how many were in the schools – they knew nothing. But they wanted money for those students. Mr. Stern said that last year the schools had an overage at the end of the year, yet they’re coming back asking for more money. He stated that every year, there are overages in the school budget, but there’s a parade in front of the Board saying “more money, more money.” Do you subtract that amount? Do you say, “School Board, let’s get your act together.” Mr. Stern said that there is enough money, but the School Board has to stop wasting it, “they have to stop lying to you, and they have to get their budget in order so that they have a number that is as solid as Mr. Foley’s that you can look at and approve.” He added that right now the School Board doesn’t have a budget, “it’s just a false piece of paper.”

There being no further comments, the Chair closed the public hearing.

Agenda Item No. 6. From the Public: Matters Not Listed for Public Hearing on the Agenda.

Mr. Earl Smith addressed the Board, stating that he has submitted the petition to the court to remove Mr. Dumler from office, and they should be hearing about it soon. Mr. Smith said that he is sad because he feels he has not done enough, he is sad because the county he has lived in most of his 49 years is hurting and in pain, due to one selfish person who refuses or accepts that they are the cause of this hurt and pain. He stated that he is also sad for “that one selfish person” because they lack the moral fiber needed to fulfill the promises to the people, and regain what was lost due to their selfish actions. Mr. Smith said that he is sad for the people, because they gave their trust and their energy to this one selfish person to hold and use as fuel for the people’s thoughts and dreams. He stated that he is sad for his community because the community will forever bear another scar because of one selfish person not accepting they are the cause of the wound or the rumors that fill the ears of all the community people. Rumors of homemade sex videos, swinger parties at riding clubs, cocaine, public drunkenness, gunshots during spring gobbler seasons, death threats by sexuality, rumors, rumors, rumors and more rumors. Mr. Smith said that mostly he is sad for the victims, as they have been cast aside and allowed to drown in a pool of silence created by that one they trusted – that same selfish person.

Mr. Keith Morris said that he had not planned to be come before the Board but a group in the community – and the whole area – feels that it is necessary to keep a presence here so that no one thinks this issue would just go away. He commended Mr. Smith for collecting the petition signatures, and offered to the judge handling the case that the women of the Scottsville District – 50% of the population – cannot possibly meet privately with Mr. Dumler without endangering their wellbeing, and thus cannot receive adequate representation from him. Mr. Morris said that because of that, Mr. Dumler’s situation meets the conditions for removal. He cannot perform his duties, he cannot effectively represent 50% of his district, and he should be removed. Mr. Morris stated that while he hoped Mr. Dumler would take steps to supersede that process, he does not think Mr. Dumler has any other interests other than self-interests.

He encouraged the Board to look up “anti-social personality disorder” for a better understanding of why that is.

Ms. Nancy Carpenter addressed the Board, stating that despite the claims by Truth in Taxation homeless children do exist, and are “a marginalized group that’s bearing the brunt of bad news.” Ms. Carpenter said that these children are staying in hotels, living with other relatives so they can stay in their school district, and a survey her group did in January showed that they do exist. She stated that if the County wanted to cut expenses out of the school budget they should not do it on the backs of homeless children. She said that if you’re young and you experience homelessness your availability for a good outcome in your life is seriously affected and there are statistics that show it. Ms. Carpenter said that she is upset that someone would want to pick on children when it comes to the school budget – get rid of the books, get rid of the paper, go digital. Perhaps that’s where expenses can be cut, but don’t do it on the backs of children.

Mr. Jim Stern addressed the Board, stating that the federal government and state can both provide numbers and methodology for the homeless students they have – but the School Board could not provide anything. He stated that the federal and state numbers are fairly close, but way off from what the School Board claims. Mr. Stern said that for years he has volunteered at Yancey Elementary, Walton Middle School and Monticello High School – 20 to 30 hours per week – and encouraged the Board to visit other facilities and see if there is really equality in the dollars going out into the community.

Ms. Tracy Aglio said that she teaches at Albemarle High School and would like for all of the Board members to come visit the classroom. She stated that the school is the largest and most diverse in the County, and she is proud at how equitably services are divided – and “sort of shocked” that the sentiment is not shared by the population.

Agenda Item No. From the Board: Committee Reports and Matters Not Listed on the Agenda.

At this time the Board began its discussion on the budget.

Mr. Rooker commented that the Board would have time on its agenda on Wednesday for a discussion, and hopefully a vote on the tax rate and budget.

Regarding the comments made about revenue sharing, Mr. Rooker emphasized that the County and the Board do not have the power to repeal the revenue-sharing agreement, and it has been discussed for the entire 11 years he has been on the Board. He stated that even amending it would require a referendum, and like any agreement it has two parties, and one party does not have the power to repeal the agreement. Mr. Rooker said that the City would like to increase the revenues, while the County would like to decrease them, but you can’t change an agreement without both parties agreeing to the change. He stated that there has been some confusion about the issue brought to legislators a few times – giving credit to the County for the revenue-sharing payments made to Charlottesville under the composite index. He said if that were done, it would improve the County’s composite index circumstance and result in more money being given to schools and cause a decrease to the City.

Mr. Rooker stated that he read the entire school budget before the Board meeting with the School Board, and he focused on administration – and the school administrative expense is less than 4% of the budget. He said that for a school system of the size and diversity the County has he thinks that compares extremely favorably to administrative expense that you see on school systems around the country. He added that the expenditure per pupil is “clearly in line with expenditures around the state,” and certainly much less than the systems that have student test scores anywhere near Albemarle’s. Mr. Rooker said that County schools do a very good job of getting quality results on a reasonably lean budget.

He also noted that a speaker had mentioned the “overages” at the end of the year, meaning the cumulative surpluses that the schools held in a fund, and the Board has changed the policy so that any overage above 2% for contingencies will go to the capital fund at the end of the year. Mr. Rooker said that’s what the Board of Supervisors does every year, and there is a substantially underfunded capital program, with demands coming from the court system for example at \$30-\$50 million, and new school facility enhancements to accommodate the increased student population. He stated that this could include another high school on the northern end of the County, which could be as much as \$70-\$80 million expense. He said that it is important to shore up the capital fund to make certain that the needs of the future can be met without raising taxes all of the sudden. Mr. Rooker mentioned other localities around the state that have been in the position of suddenly having to build a school, and almost immediately raising taxes. He said that the County, through its effective leadership at the County Executive and Board level, has done a good job of looking at the future and anticipating the needs so that they don’t have shocks to the tax rates from year to year.

Mr. Boyd stated that there are different ways of looking at numbers, and he went back and looked at actual expenditures from 2002-03 up to 2011-12, and during that time the County has actually increased school spending by 38%. The enrollment for that same time period, he said, only went up 4% - and during that same time, in looking at all expenditures, the schools are really only putting 50% of that spending in the classroom as far as salaries. Mr. Boyd said that the first thing the Board hears when they don’t put a certain amount of money into the schools is that they will have to “reduce teachers and increase class sizes.”

Mr. Rooker asked if Mr. Boyd was counting benefits in that number.

Mr. Boyd responded that he was, and stated that just last year enrollment went down by 1%, yet they increased the amount of money in the classroom by 9%. He said that he thinks that the Board has been doing a good job, and the results indicate it, of funding County schools. Yet every year the Board gets sort of demonized because it won't give the schools all the money that they want to have. He stated that he thinks that this glass is half-full, and thinks that the Board has been doing a good job of funding the schools. Mr. Boyd stated that during that same time period, the Board has increased the compensation for the people in the schools by 50% – or a little over 5% per year – and the Board can continue to do a good job of funding schools even without the .4 cent increase. He said that it is all a matter of how you look at it. He also said that the term “maintenance of effort budget” really increases the size of some schools, while expanding emergency services, adding to the Police Department, and considering a firing range. He said that the Board is not just maintaining its effort; it is planning things and moving forward with this budget, and doing it by growing the economy. Mr. Boyd said that is what he thinks the Board needs to do in the future, rather than raise the taxes on the individuals.

Mr. Rooker said that if there was a 50% increase in the budget, that's a cumulative figure, so the reality is more like a 3.75% increase per year. Mr. Boyd agreed, but said it is all how you look at it.

Mr. Rooker also commented that he didn't hear a lot of people demonizing the Board for its efforts in education. The Board has done a good job of funding schools – especially during a bad period of time for the economy. Mr. Boyd agreed, stating that his intent was just to take a different look at how the Board is funding schools.

Mr. Foley stated that the Board is scheduled to take action on the budget the following week, and asked if staff should prepare any information for consideration then on expenditures, etc. He said that staff has looked at the state budget numbers and there is some very modest good news, and there's enough new revenue to push the reserve for contingencies back up to the \$250,000 to replace the \$68,000 they took out.

Mr. Boyd asked if there was enough additional revenue coming in to fund the “bubble items” the Board had not included. Mr. Foley responded that his recommendation would be to put the additional \$61,000 – which is coming from Comp Board revenues, etc. – into the contingency reserves.

Ms. Mallek commented that staff had already provided lots of good information, and she did not have any questions or requests for more material.

Mr. Thomas asked if the Board in the past has ever funded the Rivanna River Basin Commission, as they are having a hard time right now. Mr. Rooker said that they have never come before the Board or City Council to ask for funding, and to do so they would need to make an agency application.

Mr. Foley said there was some discussion at the last RWSA meeting, and when that commission had formed there was a commitment that they not go for local dollars – but had requested that Rivanna provide some funding, and made a presentation to the RWSA Board.

Mr. Davis stated that there was private funding to create that commission, and the message at that time was that they would not require public funding of that agency, but that may change over time.

Mr. Thomas said that they were getting to the point that they will probably make application.

Ms. Mallek noted that the RRBC has a skill set of information that Rivanna could contract for, rather than hire another consultant.

Mr. Boyd said that was his comment at the RWSA meeting, because they could certainly be hired to provide necessary information rather than hiring a consultant. That would be a way I could reconcile the financing.

Mr. Thomas said that would justify it.

Mr. Rooker agreed.

Mr. Foley emphasized that things are clearly evolving in this area with the new mandates, so Rivanna may need to reach out to the RRBC for some of those services.

Ms. Mallek commented that the RRBC has been working closely with state and federal agencies for the last five years, so there's no reason why Rivanna would look elsewhere.

Mr. Thomas said that Ms. Leslie Middleton and the RRBC know a lot about TMDLs and know what's necessary to move forward.

Mr. Foley said that the County has been partnering with them throughout this whole process.

Agenda Item No. 9. Adjourn.

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned at 7:28 p.m.

Chairman

Approved by Board

Date: 05/01/2013

Initials: EWJ
