

An adjourned meeting of the Board of Supervisors of Albemarle County, Virginia, was held on February 24, 2014, at 6:00 p.m., Room 241, County Office Building, McIntire Road, Charlottesville, Virginia. The meeting was adjourned from February 21, 2014.

PRESENT: Mr. Kenneth C. Boyd, Ms. Jane D. Dittmar, Ms. Ann Mallek, Ms. Diantha H. McKeel, Ms. Liz A. Palmer and Mr. Brad L. Sheffield.

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. Dittmar.

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

Agenda Item No. 4. Adoption of Final Agenda.

Ms. McKeel **moved** to adopt the agenda as presented. Ms. Mallek **seconded** the motion.

Roll was called and the motion carried by the following recorded vote:

AYES: Ms. Dittmar, Ms. Mallek, Ms. McKeel, Ms. Palmer, Mr. Sheffield and Mr. Boyd.

NAYS: None.

Agenda Item 5. Brief Announcements by Board Members.

Ms. Dittmar welcomed everyone present at the meeting.

Mr. Sheffield reported that the MPO meeting originally scheduled for February 26, 2014 has been rescheduled to March 6, 2014 at 2:00 p.m.

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

There were none so the Chair moved to the next agenda item.

Agenda Item No. 7. **PUBLIC HEARING** to receive comments on the County Executive's FY 2014/2015 Recommended Budget. (*Advertised in the Daily Progress on February 21 and February 23, 2014*)

Mr. Foley presented the recommended FY15 combined capital and operating budget, recognizing the efforts of County staff, schools, agencies and the community in providing input into the process that leads to the development of the recommended budget. There are a number of processes that occur prior to the presentation of the budget to the Board. The process begins with the revenue projection team meeting starting in July through the proposed budget cycle. The CIP process involves financial and technical review teams, and a CIP Oversight Committee that includes School Board, Board of Supervisor, community and Planning Commission members, There is a multi-year expenditure review process that feeds into the five year financial planning which includes departments heads and their staff in putting together future projections. The County also reaches out to agencies and community members that provide vital services out in the community to get their input and thoughts on the proposed budget, and as part of the process that makes recommendations to the Board. He said that they have now started the process of the Board reviewing the County Executive's recommended budget and making their changes based on public input received from this point forward to the Board's adoption of the budget on April 15.

Mr. Foley provided a review of the County's position over the past five years, stating that they have been through a significant downturn in the economy. He presented information on the County budget in total expenditures, the number of positions in County government over time, and the tax bill for average homeowner. Mr. Foley reported that the County's budget in 2009 was \$333 million, and in the current fiscal year it is \$322 million; positions have been reduced from 655 to 647. The tax bill in 2009 for the average home was just over \$2,000, and it is now approximately \$1,875. He noted that both population and school enrollment have increased during this time, so the demands have not gone away. Mr. Foley said that in 2009, the average home had property tax of \$2,040; in the current year, the tax bill has dropped. He stated that 66 positions have been eliminated over the five-year period, and some positions have come back – all going to critical core services of public safety, and health and human services. All other areas of County government have either remained the same or declined in terms of the positions that are providing services to the community.

Mr. Foley said that during this period of time, the County has continued to scrutinize its spending and stay focused on repositioning streamlining its operations, including moving positions from the Department of Community Development to the Department of Social Services and retraining people to do

different jobs. He stated that they continue to take a collaborative and creative approach and develop partnerships to get through the difficult times. Mr. Foley said that they also remain committed to financial accountability and transparency. Albemarle County is one of only 39 counties in the nation to receive the highest financial rating from bond rating agencies – with all three of the major rating agencies giving the County a AAA-bond rating, which means their financial management and scrutiny of expenditures are at a very high level. He stated that they have also maintained one of the lowest tax rates among the top 20 counties in terms of population. Mr. Foley said that during this period, the County put itself through the scrutiny of an outside review of all programs and expenditures to help strategize ways to be more efficient – and continues to receive the Government Finance Officer Association's highest recognition for financial reporting and budget rewards.

Mr. Foley reported that some of the challenges the County faces in FY15 include demands from state and federal mandates – an enhanced stormwater program in response to requirements for improved water quality in streams and rivers to help clean up the Chesapeake Bay; and VRS rate increases for the school system. He stated that the County has opened a new library, with another one scheduled to open, and a new fire station has opened with another under renovation. Those were critical things that needed to get done and are now reflected in operating costs of the construction projects. Staff capacity continues to be a challenge that needs to be looked at. Another demand is rewarding employees with reasonable pay increases during these difficult times. Mr. Foley said that dealing with all of those challenges came with very modest revenue growth. There has been an increase in property values, which has helped pay for services for the first time in five years – but it was a very modest increase. He stated that the economy has improved, but it has not kept pace with the demands, obligations and mandates seen in the budget – and that has created a bit of an imbalance.

Mr. Foley said that in light of that imbalance, staff established four primary goals in development of the budget: to meet continually evolving challenges of mandates and obligations; to stabilize modest service advancements initiated in recent years; to build critical capacity that supports quality delivery service – particularly in police and human service areas; and to sustain an efficient and adaptable service organization. He presented a pie chart showing all County expenditures – schools, local government and capital program – with the budget totaling \$349,287,000, and 57% of it going to the School Division with 38% going to local government services. Mr. Foley said that other major expenditures include the payment to the City for revenue-sharing, as well as debt and capital expenditures. He presented a chart of revenues, noting that property taxes comprise about 43% with other local revenue at 21%; state revenue for schools and local government only equates to about 22% of the budget. Mr. Foley reported that the budget represents an 8.3% increase, or about \$26 million, and most of that increase is related to borrowing for capital projects such as for school projects and the fire stations.

He said that in terms of ongoing expenditures, those have only increased 2.6% in this budget. Mr. Foley stated that due to the modest revenue changes this year, the budget also proposes a 1.7 cent tax increase, with .7 of that dedicated entirely to water quality mandates and an additional penny going 60/40 to the school system to help them deal with the VRS mandate and the remaining .4 going to sure up critical capacity issues for essential government services such as police and DSS. He said that there are also some increases in their capital fund, but the state and federal government are not helping much with this budget, with a change of only about \$800,000 in state and federal revenues. Mr. Foley said that some of the major expenditures that the budget pays for include the stormwater management and water quality improvement mandates in both the capital and operating sides of the budget; the school system will receive \$4.5 million more – or 4.3% in local support; and the budget begins to address the need for some police officers and human services positions. In terms of the capital program, he said, the budget does not make a lot of major strides but does hit some of the most critical projects: improvement of E-911 technology for public safety, the opening of the Northside Library in October 2014, the regional firearms training range, and improvements to Henley Middle School gymnasium to address critical capacity issues.

Mr. Foley reported that the proposed tax increase is a big change from what they have done in the past, with the .7 cents dedicated to stormwater and water quality improvements making up about \$1.1 million of the increase in taxes; the one penny equates to about \$1.5 million, of which 60% goes to the school system to help with the VRS mandate and 40% goes to general government, equating to \$561,000 for general government and \$160,000 to the capital program. Mr. Foley emphasized that 1.3 cents of the 1.7 is totally dedicated to things they have no choice on – the VRS mandate and water quality mandate – and the remainder going to address critical capacity issues for police and human services.

Even with the proposed tax increase, the tax bill for the average homeowner on a single family dwelling will not get back to where it was in 2009 or 2010. He said that in looking at the top 20 populated counties in Virginia, 13 of them have higher tax rates than Albemarle and six have lower tax rates – and even with the proposed increase, 12 of those localities will continue to have a higher tax rate. He pointed out the localities that are most similar to Albemarle and used as “peers” most frequently, and of all those there is not a single one with a lower tax rate.

Mr. Foley said that in looking at expenditures in County government and the number of positions, even with the mandates that must be met and the new positions in this budget, Albemarle still remains at a staffing level per capita that is equivalent to the 2005 level.

Mr. Foley presented a breakdown of the major components of expenditures – the general fund, schools and capital program. He explained that the general fund is where most of local government services are provided – police, fire and rescue, human services – and the local revenues collected show that general property taxes including both real estate and personal property taxes make up about 63%, with other local taxes comprising about 21% and smaller amounts from state and federal revenues. He said that general fund revenues, which fund most of the services in the community, are up 46% overall,

with fairly modest increases in total. He said that the general property tax increase of 4.4% includes the tax increase. Mr. Foley said that other local revenues are increasing by 16%, with federal revenues up by 10% – but those sources comprise such a small percentage of the budget at 2% overall and they do not really generate much. In terms of expenditures in the general fund, he said, about 45% is support that goes to the school system, and after schools the largest expenditures are public safety, health and welfare, transfer to debt and capital, and revenue-sharing for the City of Charlottesville. He stated that the largest increase in expenditures are for education, public safety, and the water resources mandate – with \$4.5 million additional for schools, \$1.5 million for public safety, and a \$324,000 increase for the water resources program. Mr. Foley mentioned that there is also a library increase of about 10% or \$343,000, which is the cost to support the new libraries opened and the ones that will be opened in the year ahead. He said that regional jail costs and the revenue-sharing payment to the City have decreased from the current fiscal year.

Mr. Foley presented details on items funded in the general fund. The first goal is “meeting evolving mandates” and noting that in addition to mandates for water resources and VRS, there are mandates for the Comprehensive Services Act – a program that provides treatment for youth, and health insurance for employees. He said that the second goal is “stabilizing advancements,” which includes improvements to fire stations and the firing range for police, library operations, and all buildings and grounds operations. Mr. Foley stated that the budget includes the establishment of an Economic Development Office, which is one of the few things that might be considered something beyond the essentials – although staff feels that it is an important investment for future services and revenues that will pay for them, as growing jobs will pay off in the long run. He said that the County has totally revised its financial management systems, and the budget reflects the impacts of maintenance agreements and the staff necessary to run those systems.

Mr. Foley stated that the third goal of “building critical capacity” is addressed in the budget through inclusion of three new police officers, two of those to keep up with population growth and one to meet other critical needs in that department. He said that the County’s foster care caseload is up dramatically, and over the last several years they included a foster care eligibility worker in the budget. Mr. Foley stated that building inspection demands have increased as building activity has picked up, and this budget includes a building inspector in the Community Development Department. He said that there is also an emphasis on engaging the public to a greater degree in some of the major decisions underway in the County, including how to deal with solid waste in the future and a huge expansion to court facilities, and the budget includes a community engagement person needed to get out into the community to coordinate the efforts needed to solicit public input. Mr. Foley stated that the budget also includes a position to help generate more revenue through enhanced collection of monies that get charged for emergency transports.

Mr. Foley reported that to address the fourth goal of “sustaining an efficient organization,” the budget includes a 2% market pay increase for staff, jointly approved by the School Board and Board of Supervisors in October, and includes some funding for staff training and professional development. He said that there are also some programs included to make efficient use of current staff and to get the most of their ideas on efficiency measures, so there is an “Innovation Fund” as well as money for graduate fellows to come in and work on special projects. Mr. Foley stated that after five years of cutbacks, they have also included funding for increase in general operations items such as postage, electricity, etc.

Mr. Foley reported that there is a \$4.5 million or 4.3% increase in school funding, reflecting both the natural growth in revenue from the economic recovery and tax increases. He stated that the School Board budget proposal was for \$164.3 million and their original budget gap was \$6.6 million, so this brings it down to \$5.8 million.

Mr. Foley said that the capital program is primarily focused on mandates and maintaining infrastructure, as well as paying for core services. He stated that some exceptions to that include recommendations from the joint School Board, Board of Supervisors and community committee on capital improvements that the County put some money back into the ACE Program, used to purchase easements on rural properties to help prevent sprawling development, as well as some money to match State funds for transportation improvements. Mr. Foley said that the CIP will receive approximately \$20 million in annual revenue to pay for capital projects, which is up \$1.1 million in the proposed budget. In looking to the out years of the five-year CIP plan, there are other tax increases to help pay for the capital improvements for essential services such as the court expansion, which is required, and necessary public safety upgrades. He noted that the budget reflects about 60% of the capital improvement projects requested by staff and community groups involved in the process.

Mr. Foley reviewed how the budget addresses County goals, stating that the water resources and VRS funding will help meet evolving mandates; support for libraries and fire stations and their operating impacts is funded at an adequate level to help meet the goal of stabilizing advancements. Staff has created an Economic Development Office proposal in this budget as an investment in the future. The budget includes funding for three police officers and several human services positions to help meet the goal of building critical capacity; and there is a 2% pay increase along with some training money for personnel to help them provide the highest possible level of service and to meet the goal of sustaining an efficient organization. He stated that these are modest goals that help meet mandates, stabilize the organization and sustain it, and takes some positive steps forward in the year ahead. He said that the County will need to evaluate its vision statement over time, as it talks about being a “thriving county” in the year 2040, and the Board will need to grapple with how that is to be achieved.

Mr. Foley explained the budget review process, stating that he first presented the recommended budget to the Board on February 21, and later that day they had a community stakeholders’ budget overview for key organizations to help educate them about the proposed budget. He stated that the

budget has been posted on the County website, and the materials distributed at the meeting provide additional details. After this public hearing, he said, the Board will hold a series of work sessions beginning on February 26 with a general overview of the budget; and on February 28 they will hold another work session focusing on general government – those departments and agencies besides the schools. On March 3, he said, there will be a session focused on the school budget and any changes the Board feels are necessary. That is also the date on which the Board will make a decision about what tax rate to advertise for the second public hearing, scheduled for April 8 – which will be a hearing on the budget the Board develops after they have gone through the work session and identified priorities. Mr. Foley said that the Board will have a final adoption of the budget on April 15, which will complete the process, at which time they will also set the final tax rate. If necessary, the staff has identified another work session date of March 12. He stated that this information is available online and through printed materials.

Ms. Dittmar stated that it is important to realize that this is the first opportunity for most people including the Board to review the budget in its entirety. People who are not able to attend the meetings can listen to the archived versions available online. She thanked Mr. Foley, Ms. Lori Allshouse and other staff for putting the budget together.

Ms. Dittmar then introduced staff and opened the public hearing. Ms. Mallek reviewed the protocol for speakers.

Ms. McKeel called the speakers.

Ms. Angela Kavounas, a resident of 2136 Masseys Woods Road, Charlottesville, VA, of the Samuel Miller District and a Red Hill School parent, said that she was before the Board to express her support for fully funding the school budget and to express her concerns over cuts that may pose a potential increase to classroom sizes or teacher assistant positions, as proposed in the tiered budget reduction plan. She stated that research regarding classroom size and educational outcomes have been inconclusive across all ages, there is significant research suggesting that smaller classroom sizes have a large impact on early childhood education. Smaller classes in preschool and early elementary school have been shown to have lasting positive effects on a child's success both immediately and in years to come. Ms. Kavounas said that the impact to teachers and students will be detrimental to all students regardless of age. For example, increasing a classroom size of 20 by five students initially appears to equal a 20% increase in load – but budget cuts would also mean losing a teacher assistant, thereby increasing student teacher ration 1:25, which would increase the load to about 48%. She stated that this doesn't take into account the increased demand on teachers that will likely happen from losses in library, music and art resources. The number of students is low for Red Hill, so this is a true potential possibility. Ms. Kavounas reiterated her request to have the Board fully fund the school budget.

Ms. Marta Keane, a resident of 2040 Earlysville Road, Earlysville, VA, and CEO of the Jefferson Area Board for Aging, thanked the staff and Board for its ongoing support for seniors and their families and caregivers. JABA provides a continuum of caring in its programs to support the continuum of living. Ms. Keane said that this year's recommended budget represents a reallocation of some funds from Mountainside Senior Living in keeping with JABA's agreement for the facility to become self-sustaining, and moves it to the information and assistance and ombudsman programs. She stated that JABA tries to find efficiencies and other funding so that they can increase their overall services, and is projecting almost a 14% increase in the number of individuals served in the FY15 budget, with only a 2% increase in funding from the County. Ms. Keane said that combined with the fact that JABA leverages the funds so that Albemarle shares only 25% of the total required, excluding Mountainside, for the services delivered within the County of Albemarle. She stated that by 2014, one out of every four residents in the area will be over 65, and they need to continue to support and plan for these changing demographics. One of the most important aspects of healthy aging is support for education. Ms. Keane encouraged the Board to look at the whole fabric of the community when considering the proposed budget. As a resident of the County she supports the tax rate increase so as to provide the needed services to become a thriving community.

Ms. Robyn Bolling, a resident of 190 Lambs Lane, Charlottesville, VA, and Principal of Greer Elementary School, said that students in poverty comprise about 70% of their student population with English-language learners making up about 33%. In a class of 24 students, she said, 17 are students in poverty and at least 10 are learning to speak English in addition to learning the required Virginia grade-level content. Ms. Bolling stated that research shows that students from low-income families have a 30-million word vocabulary gap when they enter kindergarten compared to students from higher-income families. She said that time for intervention must be added within the school day and across content areas. When over half the students in a class require some kind of intervention, the teachers need increased knowledge and resources in order to ensure student learning continues to happen at very high levels. Ms. Bolling said that programs like Bright Stars and Head Start add a year of early intervention that begins to close those gaps, only one-half of the students that apply are served. She stated that in addition to demographics, student mobility is significant, with some students moving more than two or three times throughout the school year. She stated that Greer welcomed more than 100 new students this year and serves 56 refugee families. Greer embraces its diverse population and is proud of the instructional services that help them it student needs. Ms. Bolling said that they are able to do this because of funding dedicated by the Board and by the School Division to meet those unique needs. She stated that attracting, supporting and retaining high quality teachers and staff is one of the most important roles she has as principal. The added demands of student needs can be challenging for even the most experienced teachers – so she needs resources to create and offer differentiated professional development opportunities for teachers.

Ms. Jane Kulow, a resident of 3310 Rosewood Lane, Charlottesville, VA, said that she is a resident of the Samuel Miller District and urges the Board to fully fund the School Board's budget. Ms.

Kulow said that the major part of the funding deficit – unavoidable state mandates and enrollment growth – should not be allowed to cut into classrooms. As a trustee of the Jefferson-Madison Regional Library and speaking on behalf of the Library Board, she said that they very much appreciate Mr. Foley's support of library services and his approach to budgeting for FY15. Even with a tax rate increase the budget will be tight. Realizing the many demands on the Board, she said, they ask that they consider an extra \$34,000 for JMRL so they can expand the open hours at the new Crozet Library, as the western Albemarle community is using the library in unanticipated numbers – and they would appreciate greater access.

Mr. Stephen Layman, 2528 Brandermill Place, Charlottesville, VA, said that he was before the Board to represent the Charlottesville Municipal Band, a nonprofit organization of 80 volunteer members dedicated to excellence in the performance of high-quality band music. In continuous operation since 1922, he said, the band serves the communities of Charlottesville and Albemarle, providing enrichment through quality musical performance, entertainment and educational outreach year-round through free public concerts, and representing the City and County at civic and other special events. Mr. Layman said that during the 2013 budget year, the band and its ensembles performed more than 50 programs for more than 20,000 people in the Charlottesville/Albemarle community – including the June 14 Flag Day ceremony and U.S. Army birthday program, the 4th of July naturalization ceremony at Monticello, the Crozet Independence Day parade, the spring and fall concerts at Piedmont Virginia Community College, and multiple performances at Camp Holiday Trails, the Scottsville Arts Council, the Scottsville Farmer's Market, Fashion Square Mall, Mountainside Senior Living, Rosewood Village, Branchlands, Our Lady of Peace, and the Charlottesville Health & Rehabilitation Center. Each year, he said, their members provide more than 18,000 hours of volunteer service to the community through rehearsals and performances. For each of the past four years the band has collected more than 1,500 pounds of food for the Emergency Food Bank at their holiday concert. Mr. Layman stated that their administrative costs are less than 20% of their total budget, and they actively fundraise to provide more than 40% of funding requirements. He said that the cost of performance venues, transportation, instruments and music are not free, and they own and pay taxes on a building that they make available for use by local arts organizations. Mr. Layman stated that there are costs associated with what they do so well. They believe that they are doing an excellent job. He asked that the Board return the \$3,000 that was subtracted from the previous year's allocation.

Mr. Robert Gest, III, a resident of 306 Gloucester Road, Charlottesville, VA, Rio District, said he is passionate about the issue on which he is speaking: pay equity for public defenders – dedicated attorneys who provide a vital service to the community. Mr. Gest said that he will not repeat what he has already shared with the Board via email. It is his understanding that the City of Charlottesville put \$44,544 in their budget to take a small step toward ensuring pay parity for the public defenders – and Albemarle County voted to budget \$0 toward that inequity. He asked if the Board does not agree that equal justice is helped by having attorneys on both sides of the bar more equal in terms of compensation. He stated that he was born in the Deep South during the days of segregation and discrimination and saw innocent black Americans railroaded and jailed because they had inadequate or no legal representation. He also saw guilty parties receive unfair sentences for that reason. Mr. Gest said that the very least the Board can do is reconsider and put something in the budget, noting that their request was for \$74,000.

Dr. Ben Messinger, a resident of 766 Hammocks Gap Road, Charlottesville, VA, said that he is a physician and medical practice owner in the County and the father of four children at Stony Point Elementary. Dr. Messinger said that he and his wife had their children enrolled in private school in the City, but when they moved to the County they made the decision to put them in public school because of the strength of the schools and the opportunity they provided for the kids. Reading from a letter from members of the business community in support of public schools, he said that they agree with the position of 95% of residents who said in the County's most recent citizens' survey that devoting County resources to provide quality education was either very important or essential. Dr. Messinger said that 70% of all Virginians, across all demographics, said in the Commonwealth Poll earlier in the month that the amount of funding available to public schools affects the quality a great deal. He stated that they applaud the support the Board has provided to the schools during the recession years when state funding declined and mandates increased, and their leadership has been courageous in empowering schools and students to perform at highly competitive levels. Dr. Messinger said that they also value the initiative of the public schools in working more closely with businesses to align curriculum with skills and competencies that allow them to grow employment opportunities. He stated that while Albemarle County has done a tremendous job in protecting the quality of education, closing a deficit will not be painless, and they urge the School Board and Board of Supervisors to work together on a balanced approach that will protect the classrooms. Through carefully selected reductions in expenditures and a forward-thinking increase in revenues, he said, the County can continue to meet its strategic goal of providing a quality education for all residents and protecting its future prosperity.

Dr. Pearl Yu, a resident of 520 Millford Road, Earlysville, VA, said that she is a mother and pediatric physician who has chosen Albemarle County as the best place to live, practice medicine and raise a family. Dr. Yu said that she is the parent of two Broadus Wood Elementary students who were redistricted this year from Agnor-Hurt Elementary School. She stated that as a pediatrician, she has several opportunities to work with schools to optimize the learning environment for her patients. The schools in the County truly are world class. Dr. Yu thanked the Board for making that possible, and said that the quality and dedication of teachers and staff in public schools is impressive, as is the desire to meet students at the leading edge of their potential. She said that many Board candidates spoke of their commitment to education while campaigning, and she is grateful for that commitment. Dr. Yu noted the remarkable success of County students in science fairs, international programs, the MESA program, health and sciences academies, arts, athletics and nationally recognized classroom innovation. She stated that the School Division has done an amazing job of doing more with less, but said that it cannot

continue indefinitely – especially with the pressures of rising enrollment, increased free and reduced lunch population, and federal and state mandates. Dr. Yu said that since 2008, school enrollment has increased by 669 students and the number of economically disadvantaged students will have grown by 1,069. She said that state and local government funding to the schools on a cumulative basis since 2008 has declined by more than \$37 million, while payment to the Virginia Retirement System has increased by 58%. She stated that the schools need the Board's support if students are to benefit from programs that are standard in many other local school divisions, such as world languages at the elementary level, one to one technology, and the opportunity for teachers to design lessons and assessments for 21st Century skills and competencies.

Mr. Tom Olivier, a resident of 4632 Green Creek Road, Schuyler, VA, said that he was speaking on behalf of Advocates for a Sustainable Albemarle Population (ASAP). Mr. Olivier said that the recent economic recession led the previous Board of Supervisors to slash many essential County programs, and voters recently replaced those who championed the crippling cuts. He stated that now is the time to raise County revenues and restore funding to key programs that have suffered from budget cuts. Repeatedly citizen surveys have shown that residents assign the highest priorities to strong public education, public safety and environmental protection. He asked the Board to make restoring these programs their highest priority. Mr. Olivier said that in particular, the number of County rural areas planners should be restored from one to three, with quarter-time staff support by a rural area planner to the Natural Heritage Committee, and \$1 million in annual funding restored to the ACE program. He stated that these measures are essential to protection of open space resources that sustain the community and enrich the lives of residents. Mr. Olivier said that staff recently proposed that a new economic development program be created, and the proposal includes a request for one and one-half new economic development staff positions estimated to cost about \$160,000 per year. He stated that ASAP is concerned that the program emphasizes job creation and white collar industries, rather than better opportunities for unemployed and working poor residents. Attracting companies to move to the area will promote population growth, further increase school system costs. Mr. Olivier said that the economic development proposal is a radical break from past County policies, yet simultaneously is short on details. He stated that ASAP urges the Board to require a much more thorough examination of the proposal before deciding to fund it.

Ms. Laura Steenburgh, a resident of 2746 Owensfield Court, Charlottesville, VA, said that she is a parent of two students at Merriweather Lewis Elementary School and the co-PTO president there. She said that she has spent several hours examining the historic and requested County and School budgets. Ms. Steenburgh said that they are spending significantly less per student than they did even five years ago, and when compared with the 2008-09 spending in real dollars, they are spending \$1,146 less per student today than they did five years ago. She stated that when taking the VRS costs out, that amount is \$1,500 less per student. Ms. Steenburgh said that if the Board funds the budget as requested by Dr. Moran, they will still be spending \$934 less per student, and funding the budget based on the current proposal will still be almost \$1,500 less per student. The schools have functioned with less funding and have worked to find efficiencies and cut expenditures. In addition, the revenue in-take is significantly less, and now that the economy is recovering, they need to look at ways to increase revenue. She thinks that the taxes should be raised significantly more than the 1.7 cents.

Ms. Barbara Miller, a resident of 3105 District Avenue, Charlottesville, VA, said that she was representing the Monticello Area Community Action Agency (MACAA) and was speaking on two different MACAA programs. Ms. Miller said that she wanted to clarify a report published online, which had stated that they had provided \$81,000 in support to families who were in emergency situations – but they have actually provided \$275,000 in support, through AIM and Energy Share programs, with an additional \$20,000 in local MACAA funds. She explained that those emergency dollars help residents keep their electricity and heat on, but it takes a lot of processing when there is additional volume and all of those funds must be matched. Ms. Miller said that the Head Start program helps low-income children, and there was a 10% cut that will greatly affect their ability to match the federal dollars. She stated that Community Action is the only federally funded program mandated to address the issues of poverty in the area, adding that these are neighbors and family people who come to the agency for assistance. With evidence-based practices, MACAA has very good outcomes.

Ms. Lisa Jones, Principal of Cale Elementary School, thanked the Board for their dedicated service and thoughtful commitment to decisions. Ms. Jones stated that unfunded mandates are associated with the rising cost of the budget, and any cuts made would have a direct impact on the students they teach. She said that the proposed budget makes it possible to provide students with the best teachers, maintain small class size, support professional development, purchase instructional supplies needed to deliver high-quality instruction, and supports new initiatives. Ms. Jones stated that for the past two years, Cale has supported world languages in elementary school, and their work has transformed how teachers approach literacy instruction, and thereby has transformed learning for all students. She said that research supports some benefits to learning a second language in early childhood include: improved problem-solving and critical thinking, improved memory and attention, higher PSAT and SAT verbal scores, and opportunities for more AP coursework in high school. Ms. Jones said that if you can speak English and Spanish, you can communicate with approximately 80% of the people in the world – or about 5.7 billion people. She stated that bilingualism is the norm in other countries, and monolingualism is the “new illiteracy of the 21st Century.” Ms. Jones stated that world languages provide an opportunity to address an urgent need and provide instruction for students to excel in language, participate in a world class education, and thrive in a global world. She asked the Board to support the School Board's budget and the impact it has on all learners.

Mr. Robert Hogue addressed the Board, stating that he lives in the Samuel Miller District. He said that he is opposed to a tax increase. Both the school system and County government can and should make spending cuts. Mr. Hogue said that neighboring school systems would like their staff to be paid like

Albemarle's. School sports should be fully paid for by the parents, and this would be a good economic lesson for both the student and the parents. He stated that school busses should not be run on non-state maintained dead-end roads in subdivisions. Nationwide about 70% of people feel that funding school resource officers is the wrong way to spend tax dollars. Mr. Hogue said that funding for more police officers should be held back until they know the final outcome of the Valdez shooting, adding that it also depends on how they use those officers. He stated that money can also be saved by reducing the number of times entrance corridors are mowed. Mr. Hogue stated that all social programs are abused, and many people on welfare are hurt because they do not have to learn to take responsibility. He said that County taxpayers are ripped off by funding The Crossings, and amenities like dog parks, County parks, Christmas tree recycling and other amenities should be paid for by those who use them. He asked the Board to consider year-round entrance fees for the parks. Mr. Hogue said that some residents receive very little in return for the taxes they pay, and asked the Board not to raise the tax rate.

Ms. Charlotte Hogue, a resident of Dick Woods Road, asked the Board to be very careful when preparing the new budget. She stated that the economy has not fully recovered – with many still unemployed or working in low-paying jobs. Ms. Hogue stated that the increased assessments and proposed higher tax rate will create a hardship on many, especially those on fixed incomes. She asked if the County really need to send both fire and rescue vehicles when there are instant communications, and if the County needs to provide food stamps to people who can buy lottery tickets. Ms. Hogue said that she has been coming to these meetings for many years, only to hear that the School budget has a shortfall. As long as the schools get an increase every time they cry, they will have no incentive to balance the budget. She stated that parents should not expect taxpayers to keep funding non-essential programs, and costs for sports, after-school activities, music, programs, etc. are the responsibilities of the parents. Ms. Hogue also suggested that parks have user fees and be self-sufficient. She asked why the County does not close the landfill as there are several trash disposal companies in operation now. She asked why they need to continue to hire outside consultants when they were also paying big salaries for the most qualified employees. She asked the Board to not to raise the tax rate.

Mr. Ryan Weathers addressed the Board, stating that he is a senior at Monticello High School. He commented that if the arts program were cut out of the budget, it would be a huge injustice to the student body – and the thought of a school day without music is greatly saddening. Mr. Weathers said that having recently made it to state chorus, he has come a long way since he was first introduced to the music department at the school. He stated that thanks to a great staff – particularly Janet Whitmore and Madeline Michael – he is pursuing a career in vocal performance. Mr. Weathers said that the music and drama department gave him a place to flourish and develop his talents, and gave him free reign to grow and become his own person. He stated that the arts have allowed him to overcome his fears, reach out to diverse sets of people, represent the school in the best way he could, and become a well-rounded person. Mr. Weathers said that if music were cut out of the budget or reduced significantly, it would hurt all those both in and out of the department – because it is greatly enjoyed by teachers and students. He stated that the arts are the cement that form the academic foundation, and the rock on which they build upon. He asked the Board not to cut funding for the arts.

Ms. Maureen Graham, a resident of 625 Kearsarge Circle, Samuel Miller District, said she has lived in the County for the past ten years. She said that she is living proof that public education in Virginia can help a person attain their personal goals. Her education enabled her to fully participate as a citizen and to speak up. Ms. Graham asked the Board to fully fund the school budget. Her daughter is a kindergartener at Virginia L. Murray and she has 12 more years of being very conscious of what the school budget is. She said that raising taxes is a short term solution to a long term problem. She stated that the County needs to look at the stability of its financial model in protecting revenues, and look to UVA in their recent dealings with the state and federal government. She said that the County needs to go back to the state and fight them on unfunded mandates, as the Darden School did.

Mr. Peter Riejmars, a resident of Kinloch Farm, in Keswick, and a graduate of CATEC, where he pursued a culinary education. Mr. Riejmars urged the Board to support CATEC, stating that it has helped him a lot. The CATEC program supports all students of all academic abilities.

Ms. Elizabeth Haire, a resident of 1208 Kinloch Farm, in Keswick, asked the Board to continue its support CATEC. She said that she has benefited as a student of adult education classes there and as an employer and mother of culinary students. Ms. Haire said that CATEC personalizes its program to meet the needs of its students and does an extraordinary job of spanning the intellectual spectrum, from students with disabilities to those on an advanced diploma track to a four-year degree.

Mr. Adam Mulcahy, a resident of 41 Seamore Circle, Staunton, VA, said he is the director of the new environmental studies academy at Western Albemarle. Mr. Mulcahy said that he coaches varsity football, is the head wrestling coach, coaches track, and is the outdoor clubs sponsor. He stated that he and his wife have worked in Albemarle County for 10 years because of the wonderful, outstanding schools, amazing programs, and incredible young people. The students have opportunities that none of the surrounding students have. When his two small children are school-aged, he plans to bring them to Albemarle County. Mr. Mulcahy said that he feels strongly about how good the schools are here. He added that the budget reductions include the reduction of teachers and 40 FTEs and an increase in athletic funds. Children already pay \$75 to participate in sports; the increased fee will change that amount to \$100. They are also struggling to find the funds for the new academy to get the necessary materials and resources to make the academy outstanding and valuable. The biggest issue is being able to support schools to continue to move forward.

The next individual on the list, Mr. Juan Garza, was not present.

Mr. James Hingeley addressed the Board, stating that he is Albemarle County public defender and is before the Board to request pay equity funding in the proposed budget. Mr. Hingeley said that the County pays prosecutors local supplements – and noted that they deserve it – but the Board’s decision is wrong in condemning equally hard-working public defenders to second class status. He asked if the reason is because they people they represent are often black, always poor and often guilty. Mr. Hingeley said that the Board’s budget decision appears to reflect a belief that these clients deserve second class treatment, and their lawyers deserve second class pay – and it makes him think of Michelle Alexander’s book, *The New Jim Crow*. He stated that public defenders fight for equal justice, and everyone benefits from the work they do. Mr. Hingeley said that the Board still has time to make this right, and taking the easy way out means disconnecting their moral compass. Equal justice is at stake here. He asked the Board to fund the pay equity proposal.

Ms. Jennifer McCune, 1465 Birchcrest Lane, and a resident of the Rivanna District, said she has a petition already submitted to the Board with over 270 signatures from Albemarle County Citizens for Excellence in Education, a group that supports schools to provide the highest quality education for the continued growth and enrichment of the community. She stated that they believe that their children’s future and the prosperity of the County are best served by a school division that expands the opportunity of all students to reach their highest potential, and one that helps the business community to be competitive. Ms. McCune said that they urge the Board of Supervisors to provide the financial resources needed to achieve these goals. Next year’s budget has a deficit of over \$5 million largely due to spending requirements that are beyond the school division’s control. If multi-million dollar reductions in programs and services and become necessary, they will put at serious risk the County’s long term quality of life. She stated that the group agrees that the following things are vital: devoting County resources to provide high-quality education and not simply to meet state averages; assuring continued support of athletics, music, arts and new programs such as world languages; continuing to financially support teachers and staff; ensuring that disadvantaged students receive adequate support and opportunities for learning; and providing safe transportation services at the current level. Ms. McCune said that without full budget funding, the County’s goal for excellence in education cannot continue, and students will be underprepared for college and careers.

Ms. Carrie Taylor, 3227 Healthcote Lane, Keswick, said that she is a physics teacher at Western Albemarle High School. Ms. Taylor said that she is a member of the Superintendent’s Teacher Advisory Committee and a director of Destination Imagination Virginia. She stated that she is also the parent of two Albemarle County graduates, who are both regularly on the dean’s list at their respective colleges because of that education – and she wants that to continue for future students. Ms. Taylor said that a few years ago, when the School Board was forced to add an average of one child to every classroom, her class went up an average of five students and she ended up with classes of 27 to 30 students. She stated that 27 is a very difficult number with which to do active labs. When those class sizes were raised, funding was cut for programs like Destination Imagination and robotics – which provide students with the opportunity to problem solve, work collaboratively, and think critically. Not all students excel in sports; some need room to explore and think outside of the box. Ms. Taylor said that since the reduction in support by the County, Albemarle has dropped 47% and Title I schools have dropped 55%, and at the same time Destination Imagination has grown 12% in the state. She stated that she would like for the Board to make sure everything is funded, think outside the box and use their imagination to fully fund the school system.

Mr. Michael Schafer addressed, 711 Rives Street, and a resident of the City, said he is a social studies teacher at Monticello High School. Mr. Schafer said that he left the private sector five years earlier with the strong conviction of influencing young people in his own community, and he willingly accepted a cut in pay, longer hours, and the stress that goes along with working with students who struggle academically. He stated that he will continue to make those sacrifices because he believes education is an investment in the community’s future and believes that residents of the County value education as well. Mr. Schafer said that residents must make decisions about where their values rest, and if education is a community value – as clearly stated in the vision statement – then they must be willing to partake in the shared sacrifice. He stated that the Board has the politically undesirable task of proposing a tax increase, and in the short run slashing budgets and squeezing more out of the County’s resource may balance the fiscal budget, but such decisions happen at the expense of making investments in the community. Mr. Schafer said that he hopes the Board will see that preserving Albemarle as a preeminent place to live and work would require continued investment in areas like education, and shared sacrifice.

Mr. Nathan Hipple addressed the Board, stating he is a resident of Crozet and teaches 4th and 5th grade language arts at Red Hill Elementary. Mr. Hipple said that a few years ago, he worked as a teacher’s assistant in another county as a way to test the waters before fully committing to graduate school and the teaching profession. After graduating, he intended to return to that county as a full-time teacher, but that county was in the middle of a budget shortfall and told applicants that they wouldn’t be able to announce vacancies until the end of summer. Neither he nor his peers could risk waiting that long, so that locality lost a lot of strong talent to other counties with stronger financial stability. Prior to him graduating, he said, Albemarle extended him an early hire contract – and this in addition to its reputation as a leader in educational excellence carried a lot of weight in his decision to teach here. Mr. Hipple said that as an educator here, he carries an expectation to teach at the cutting edge of educational trends to maintain that excellence. He stated that no one expects Albemarle to overspend for each incremental gain in quality, but it also should not think it doesn’t have to pay to compete. He hopes that the County will find the balance.

Ms. Debbie Rondeau, 1523 Westfield Court, Samuel Miller District, said that she is speaking as a County resident, parent and teacher. Ms. Rondeau said that she attended a private school and had an exceptional education, and was amazed at the educational opportunities here for students and for her as a teacher. She stated that her sons attended County schools and are now both successful, contributing

members of society. Ms. Rondeau said that she started teaching in the County in the early 1980s, and other counties have always come to Albemarle to learn as the County is at the forefront of education. She stated that they strive to meet each student no matter where they come from, what their home life is like, and teach them everything possible to get ready for life. Ms. Rondeau said that they need specialists in different aspects of education and small enough class sizes to aid in essential differentiation of instruction, and as a library teacher she builds relationships in this hub of the school. She stated that her library is old, outdated and tiny – and doesn't even meet the legal size and area for Red Hill's student population, and they have been put on a back burner. Ms. Rondeau said that the Red Hill community has no public library, so they try to open up resources for the community.

The next person, Angie Kavounas, was not present.

Mr. Art Stow, 1017 Wildmere Place, Rio District addressed the Board, stating that he is the parent of two children who have graduated from County schools and one who is a freshman in a County high school – as well as being principal at Red Hill Elementary School. Mr. Stow said that the demographics at Red Hill have changed dramatically, and they are currently up to 55% of students qualifying for free and reduced lunches. He stated that “free and reduced” defines two levels of need – with the overwhelming majority of those students qualifying for free, which is representative of the division not just his school. Mr. Stow said that when poverty increases, the needs of families increase, yet social services agencies are facing funding reductions that will limit their ability to help struggling families. He stated that in any community, when poverty levels rise so do crime rates, yet in Albemarle there are fewer law enforcement officers than needed in a community of this size. Mr. Stow said that in his role as a father and a principal, he wants the community to offer the quality of life that brought his family here 22 years ago – and without adequate funding, schools, community support agencies, police, fire services, libraries and other essentials, Albemarle ceases to be what they profess it to be. He stated that they cease to be worthy of their proud historical heritage, cease to have unlimited opportunities for those who choose to work hard. He asked the Board to make the decisions necessary so that citizens can maintain and protect the standards they define as Albemarle County.

Ms. Maria Teresa Jimenez, 1319 Bitternut Lane, Charlottesville, addressed the Board, speaking through a translator. She said that she was before the Board to express her concern for her children's school and worries that the programs will be cut. Ms. Jimenez said that her children are taking advantage of those programs, which continue to improve. She said that she hopes there will be more in the future so that her children will learn many things and be prepared for the future. She stated that she hopes the Board will resolve the issues as quickly as possible. She added that her children attend Cale Elementary. She thanked them for their work as Supervisors.

Ms. Chong Westberger, 4739 Bluejay Way, Charlottesville, said that she is a cosmetology graduate from CATEC. As an adult student it is a great benefit to her to have this license. She said that it is very hard to find and keep a job in this time. Cosmetology classes provide a great opportunity for young people and adults who cannot afford to attend college. Ms. Westberger asked the Board to continue their support of CATEC so that students will have the opportunities to learn skills for the future.

Ms. Laura Minger, 208 Little Church Lane, Madison, VA, addressed the Board, stating that she is a salon leader for the Hair Cuttery. She said that she would like to express the importance of CATEC, as her business actively recruits and hires students frequently for jobs and careers. Ms. Minger said that she graduated from a similar public technical program and has been in the business for 24 years. This career has allowed her to purchase a home and take care of her family. She asked that the Board continue supporting CATEC so that other students may have these same opportunities.

Ms. Karen Brown, 2959 Buck Island Woods, said that she graduated from Albemarle County schools and CATEC. She is also the parent of a graduate who is attending JMU and one who is a senior at Monticello High School. Ms. Brown said that she is a cosmetology teacher at CATEC and asked that the Board fully fund the school budget. She said that as a student in Albemarle there are many options available. She stated that she was pegged an academic student but chose cosmetology instead, and the background and education she received through County schools helped her to obtain her future. Ms. Brown said that she has become an educator within the system. She asked the Board to fund the budget so that CATEC can continue to provide options for students. She said that opportunities presented to children only expand their horizons and their career paths.

Mr. Jack McMillin, 83B Barclay Place Court, Charlottesville, VA, said that the points he wished to make have already been stated, but as a teacher he will speak from the heart. Mr. McMillin said that he read somewhere that a nation is only as great as it takes care of its elderly, its sick and its children. Albemarle County has done well to take care of its children, but to continue doing that it needs to fund the school budget. He stated that not all children will be affected with budget cuts, but some will, and those will be the unfortunate ones.

Mr. Tim Dodson, 3653 Morgantown Road, in Ivy, said he is a junior at Western Albemarle High School. Mr. Dodson said that he supports full funding of the Superintendent's budget, and also thinks they need more funding for the Crozet Library hours. He stated that extracurricular activities can help change people's lives, and he is a strong proponent of technology. Mr. Dodson said that technology can be very useful, but he urge the Board to be cautious of frivolous spending. He stated that students at Western Albemarle did some research and found that the school had purchased \$200 bean bag chairs and \$250 whiteboard paint, along with flat screen TVs in the cafeteria and lobby that are not always optimally used. Mr. Dodson said that one-to-one resources are great, but WiFi may be best provided by individuals. He stated that they need to find collaboration and comfort, but they also need to look at content and structure.

(Note: At 7:51 p.m., the Board recessed their meeting. At 8:02 p.m., the Board reconvened and continued the public hearing.)

Mr. Kirk Bowers, a resident of Key West in the Rivanna District, said that he is Conservation Chair of the Piedmont Group of the Sierra Club, representing 1,146 members. Mr. Bowers said that as they envision their future, quality of place and how that is achieved is an important consideration that should be given a high budget priority. He stated that natural resources are essential in maintaining quality of life. On the Albemarle County website there is a link of things to do in the area and a description that states the County has “diligently preserved vast swaths of undeveloped forest and fields around pockets of rural life. The resulting scenic drives are unlike anywhere else in the country, with miles of gentle roads winding over hills and low mountains.” Mr. Bowers said that in response to this, the Sierra Club requests that the following items be considered for funding: establishment of two staff positions – a rural area support planner and a natural resources planner. He stated that Community Development is the County’s steward for natural resources and the built environment. During the past six years staff in that Department has been reduced from 84 to 58 people. Mr. Bowers emphasized that they need to increase staffing in order to maintain the quality of life that makes the County so great, and that the website boasts about. The second item requested, he said, is continuing to increase ACE funding; the third item is establishment of a part-time position for assistance to the Natural Heritage Committee. He stated that they also have some reservations about the creation of an economic development office. The Sierra Club does not support wholesale growth and feels that such an office should endeavor to strengthen existing businesses in our community and attract new businesses that are compatible with the unique character of Albemarle County and its beautiful environment. Mr. Bowers said that the Sierra Club feels the office should be focus on job training and placement of local job seekers. He thanked the Board for the opportunity to speak.

Ms. Sara Beckham-Henry, 1493 Shadow Oaks Place, Rio District, said that she supports full funding of the Superintendent’s proposed budget without any of the proposed cuts. She stated that she has two children at Woodbrook Elementary and a third child who will start there in 2016, and said that her family moved to Albemarle for the schools. Ms. Beckham-Henry said that her children are thriving at the school, which has far exceeded their expectations. She stated that they chose a house in Albemarle when they moved here from Sacramento, California, and decided to buy a smaller house here rather than a bigger home in a different county. Ms. Beckham said that she and other parents feel there is a tacit agreement with the district to fund the schools that they moved here for, and hopes the Board will continue to do so.

The next two speakers, Carleton Ray and Jerry McCormick-Ray, were no longer present.

Ms. Tracy Higginbottom, 1941 Riverend Lane, Charlottesville, said that she has five children, all of whom will be attending Albemarle County public schools this fall – from a senior to a kindergartener. Ms. Higginbottom said that she is the current PTO president at Woodbrook Elementary and fully supports the Superintendent’s budget. She stated that nine years ago, when her husband was relocated to Virginia from Canada, her real estate agent insisted that Albemarle County was the best place to raise a family based on the excellent school system. Ms. Higginbottom said that they took her word for it, and quickly realized what she meant. She stated that they have loved living here and agree that this is an excellent school system. If cuts are made, the Board will be hurting the whole community – not just the children. She asked for the Board’s support to fully fund the budget. Education equals excellence.

Ms. Christiana Linebrink, 6478 Jefferson Mill Road, Scottsville, said she is a freshman at Monticello High School. Ms. Linebrink said that the \$5.8 million shortfall in the school’s budget will likely lead to program cuts. She said that she is before the Board to speak for the music and arts program. She stated that she has been involved with chorus for most of her life. The chorus room has been her solace. Ms. Linebrink said that since joining the Monticello chorus, she has had the opportunity to sing the National Anthem at home football games, audition for and participate in District XIII chorus, participate in All-City/County Chorus, travel to JMU for their annual Choral Fest, and participate in dozens of outreach programs. She stated that she is currently in three choruses and assists the chorus director every other day, and if it is taken away she will have a hard time filling it back up. Ms. Linebrink said that if budget cuts are made, she requests that they are not focused on one area but are spread across all areas where funds are allocated. She stated that many of the Supervisors ran on the platform of funding education, and now is the opportunity for them to live up to their campaign promises.

Ms. Hayley Parrish, 2948 Green Meadows Lane, Charlottesville, said that she grew up in Albemarle County and it has been her home for 25 years. Ms. Parrish urged the Board to reconsider the budget amount for the Municipal Band of Charlottesville. She has participated with the band for 12 out of their 92 years – and it has been the most rewarding community service she has ever experienced. She said that this organization of 80 community volunteers of all ages performs 50 events per year, all for free, and they have played for over 20,000 people – with at least one-half from Albemarle County. Ms. Parrish said that in addition to the high-profile patriotic events such as the Monticello naturalization ceremony, they also play at senior residences around the County and brings the music to them for no charge. She stated that over the years, funding from local governments has decreased, but they work hard to make up the shortfall through other sources and still manage to increase efforts to get free music out to the community. Ms. Parrish said that the volunteer band is in rehearsal and performing 48 weeks of the year, and given their service to County residents she doesn’t think it is unreasonable to ask that the Board fund the band at the same level they have for the last few years.

Ms. Kristin Sancken, 2484 Thomas Jefferson Parkway, Scottsville District, said she and her husband bought a house in Albemarle County nine months ago because of Albemarle County schools. Ms. Sancken said that she and her family moved from Fluvanna County, where she worked as an education reporter for the last three years – so she is aware of state, national and local trends in funding

education and knows that it is difficult to choose where limited funds will go. She stated that school divisions are only as strong as their most struggling students, and cuts the School Board will have to make will affect those students the most. Ms. Sancken said that Stone Robinson, where her daughter will go to kindergarten, is struggling to meet annual measurable objectives, with many students in the gap group of economically disadvantaged students, students with disabilities, and English language learners. She stated that funding cuts will make meeting those objectives even more difficult. In addition, the grant funding has expired for "Safe Schools Health Students," which has greatly reduced discipline issues and has allowed teachers and students to focus on learning rather than poor behavior – and has reduced bullying by 33% in County schools. Ms. Sancken said that it is going to be a tough decision, but she believes these things should be funded.

The next person, Ann Messina, was no longer present.

Ms. Monica Pawinski, 404 Eastbrook Drive, Rio District resident, said she is lived in the County for 25 years. She is also a substitute teacher, which gives her an inside view of the hard work and dedication of teachers and staff. Ms. Pawinski said that she taught an 8th grade geometry class earlier that day – and there were 33 kids in the class, with four of the 33 having limited English proficiency. She stated that she also has the viewpoint of a parent, as she has had children in public schools since 1996, and continues to be a supporter of programs such as AP, dual enrollment, performing arts, visual arts, gifted education, distance learning, etc. Ms. Pawinski said that she is also the Albemarle High School PTSO president. She asked the Board to keep funding levels to fully support the Superintendent's budget.

Ms. Amy Gore, 8462 Brooksville Road, Greenwood, VA, said she is President of the Western Albemarle High School PTO and asking the Board to fully fund their budget. Ms. Gore said that she is also asking them to provide financial support for the Crozet Library. She said that she disagrees with the assertion that prior cuts and reorganization have kept the pain out of the classrooms. She is the mother of high schooler. She stated that before they adopted the eight-period day, the core classes – language arts, math, history and science – represented two-thirds of the time spent in the classroom. Now with eight periods, she said, it's one-half of that. Ms. Gore said that she also disagrees with the assertion that not fully funding the budget will just mean one additional student in every classroom. They will not be eliminating electives; they will be cutting core classes, and putting three or five additional students in every core classroom. She stated that it is also irresponsible to foist the fiscal irresponsibility of state government onto the backs of teachers and students. She also disagrees with the School Boards budget; she thinks the \$164 million budget should be more like \$225 million. Ms. Gore said that she wants the eight-period day eliminated, the high school classes capped at 20 students, and the world languages program at Cale expanded to every elementary school.

Ms. Diane Lohrer, 1460 Villaverde Lane, Charlottesville, said that she is the parent of a former County student. Her daughter attended County schools K-12 and was a graduate of Murray High School. Ms. Lohrer said that this is her 31st year of teaching, and she has been a teacher at Stone Robinson for the past 16 years. She stated that she and her family moved here from Montana at that time, and were looking to relocate to a place that had excellent schools and offered a great quality of life. Ms. Lohrer said that her daughter got a great education, with extremely competent and dedicated teachers, but asked how they can maintain that quality by cutting programs and increasing class sizes. She stated that they have cut staff, instructional money, funds for professional development, and much more. She said that they have not decreased high expectations for schools, but the funding has decreased and the workload for teachers and support staff has increased – with staff working harder with fewer resources. Ms. Lohrer said that the proposed real estate tax increase will be helpful, but will not fully fund the budget without further cuts, and for people who are concerned about the impact of increased taxes there is a Tax Relief Program in the County for qualifying seniors 65 years and older, and for those that are permanently disabled. She stated that they want to attract and retain the best quality teachers, but this cannot happen when the message sent to educators is that they like the idea of a quality education but are not willing to fund it. Ms. Lohrer asked the Board to fully fund the proposed school budget without further cuts, by increasing the real estate tax rate to close the funding gap.

Mr. John Baran, 1400 Independence Way, Charlottesville, said that he is the Social Studies Department Chair and the gifted resources teacher at Monticello High School. He stated that he is a doctoral student at the Curry School of Education at UVA, and his area of concentration is social studies and gifted education, and part of his responsibility is to work with pre-service teachers. Ms. Baran said that when he was finishing at the Curry School, many people gave him the same advice: if you get a job offer in Albemarle County, take it. He stated that at the education expo at Curry earlier that day, many school divisions were there including Albemarle, and some students have already gotten jobs – several in Loudoun County. Mr. Baran said that Albemarle does not always get the best candidates because their hiring timeline is so much later than other districts. Students want to stay here but the hiring timetable is perpetually pushed back due to the annual budget crisis, and they lose great teachers. He stated that in a seemingly rebounding economy, he wishes he could honestly tell pre-service teachers the same advice that was given to him, but what he tells them is more blunt and direct: don't wait on Albemarle County.

Ms. Amy Barbour, 312 Parkwood Place, Charlottesville, said that she has been a County resident for over 30 years and attended public school here, as well as attending PVCC and graduating from UVA. Ms. Barbour said that she is a parent of a first grader and will have a kindergartner in two years. She fully supports full funding of the budget. She stated that she is an active participant of the community and the PTO, is a small business owner, and a concerned voter. Ms. Barbour said that she participated in the arts when she was in school, and she sees her son really opening up since going to Woodbrook Elementary. She asked that the Board continue its funding of the School system.

Ms. Lisa Coldren, 1974 Via Florence Road, Charlottesville, said that she is PTO President at Stony Point Elementary, and the children deserve a world class education. She said that they have a very supportive community. Ms. Coldren said that the children deserve a world-class education, and it is the community's collective responsibility to provide it – with the Board having the power to make it happen. She stated that the average household in Albemarle would have to pay a tax increase of \$56, and asked the Board at the very least to fully fund the proposed school budget.

Mr. Keith Nicoletti, 6721 Welbourne Lane, Crozet, asked the Board to not raise County taxes for FY15. Mr. Nicoletti said that over the last several years, citizens of the County and statewide have been continuously hammered with tax increases at an enormous ratio – with payroll and Social Security tax increases, and a state tax increase up to 5.3%. He stated that during this time, median incomes have correspondingly declined. A recent article in the Washington Post reported that median incomes in Virginia had dropped by over \$1,400 in 2012 – with some people still losing their jobs. Mr. Nicoletti said that given these circumstances, he encourages the Board to look elsewhere within the budget to offset the spending request increases. He stated that the Board should work on all County residents' behalf to find currently available dollars and match the needs to what's being requested, then prioritize accordingly – as all citizens deserve no less.

The next speaker, Heather Peppard, was not present.

Mr. Ray Roberts, 2040 Via Florence Road, Charlottesville, said that children are the present, not just the future. He said that he is a graduate of U.Va. and the University of Washington, as well as a 10-year veteran of the NFL and a parent. Mr. Roberts said that he has three children, two of whom are at Monticello High School. Before relocating from Seattle to Charlottesville it was important for him and his wife to research the area and determine that his kids would have access to same quality education as what they were leaving. He stated that he and his wife visited the area two or three times with the sole purpose of touring all the schools in the area – and ended up choosing Monticello High School because of its "student first" approach. Mr. Roberts said that they must honor the sacrifices of teachers and administrators so they can continue to provide world class education, guidance and resources to students.

Ms. Anne Geraty addressed the Board, stating that she is President of the Albemarle Education Association and a teacher at Meriweather Lewis. Ms. Geraty said that growth is not free, and with growth comes the responsibility of paying for it and maintaining the quality of life that attracts people to live here. One of the primary things that attracts people here is the quality of schools. She stated that the schools must somehow figure out how to absorb almost 700 more students over 2008 levels, with a doubling in the number of economically disadvantaged students, along with inflation and unfunded mandates. Ms. Geraty emphasized that the County is spending about \$1,000 less per pupil than they were in 2008-09, not adjusted for inflation. She stated that not funding education is not an option, and of paramount importance is keeping teachers and small class sizes. She said that three years ago, budget cuts added one pupil per class at the elementary level, and many classes went up to nearly 30 students – and small theoretical increases in class sizes result in huge increases in reality. Ms. Geraty said that she spends the time to know her students and to learn what inspires them, and what it all boils down to is relationships. She stated that child by child, teachers are building those relationships, and that is simply not possible with large class sizes. Those are not the memories she wants to make for her students. She urged the Board to think outside the box and keep in mind the teachers on the frontline who are forming relationships and making memories. Without the teachers, the rest is rather pointless.

Ms. Erika Herz, 105 Vicar Court, Charlottesville, addressed the Board, stating that she has two children at Greer Elementary School and she co-leads its PTO. Ms. Herz said that she is a strong supporter of their business community and economic development for the region. She is also before the Board to express support for fully funding public schools rather than implementing budget cuts. She stated that offering a world-class, well-funded education system is necessary to attract and keep the best and brightest in the County; and trimming away at school budgets works against this goal. Ms. Herz said that they have had a wonderful experience at Greer because children get to be in reading and math levels that are appropriate for their levels, thanks to the school being staffed accordingly. She said that they are also thankful there are support teachers on hand to provide extra attention for students who need it, and to even cut one of those professionals out of the budget is a mistake – especially since students who receive special support at Greer may not have the option of getting it privately. Ms. Herz stated that even a small loss of resources can start a downward spiral, and as it stands now teachers pay out of their own pockets for some of their professional development activities. She said that fundraising through the Greer PTO is necessary to support field trips, book purchases and other activities that children should have but which the budget doesn't cover. Ms. Herz asked that the Board fully fund schools in the upcoming budget cycle and consider creating a task force to help strategize how to create a sustainable funding plan for the next decade, given changing demographics, so that they are not in the same position against next year. This task force could benchmark other counties in the U.S. with similar demographics.

Ms. Anna Emery, 942 Old Lynchburg Road, Charlottesville, said that she is present to voice her support for full funding of the Superintendent's budget and to reiterate support for the world languages program at Cale Elementary. Ms. Emery emphasized that speaking just one language is the new illiteracy, and the U.S. is behind in teaching multiple languages and needs to reverse that trend. She stated that this is the type of program that takes good or average schools and turns them into excellent schools, and they owe it to the students to provide this opportunity.

Ms. Charlotte Sudol, 703 Rockland Avenue, Charlottesville, said that she is an advanced diploma graduate of Monticello High School and a licensed cosmetologist through CATEC. Ms. Sudol said that CATEC gave her the capabilities, drive and skill to do what she loves to do. She said that it is a disservice to CATEC to even think about budget cuts. The students at CATEC leave the school with a skill or trade

that affords them immediate employment and respect in the workforce. The faculty at CATEC are highly skilled professionals committed to ensuring the longevity of their trade. A recent article in Forbes magazine stated that there is a shortage of skilled workers in the hardest hit segments – skilled trades – and high schools have shifted their focus to four-year colleges rather than vocational education. She stated that it is wonderful that the County schools have forward thinking programs, like MESA and health sciences, but said that they also need to be forward thinking with vocational programs to train skilled workers to meet future employment needs. Ms. Sudol emphasized that CATEC needs to be viewed as a valuable educational asset for the County.

Ms. Diane Espinosa, 3281 Gateway Circle, said that she is a world languages teacher. Four years ago, schools were thrown a fastball; they were told that within a few months, teachers would be forced to daily teach six classes instead of five. Ms. Espinosa said the decision came out of left field, with neither teachers nor parents consulted and the only bone they were thrown to quiet their protests was to promise them that class sizes would not be raised. She stated that with 130 to 150 students per secondary teacher, they are already overworked, but she teachers because she loves her students. Ms. Espinosa emphasized that they must support teachers and listen to what they need to do their jobs to educate the community's children. She said that she is stretching herself as much as she can, and wants the County to keep class sizes where they are so she can interact with each student personally on a daily basis. Ms. Espinosa stated that whenever she runs into her students out in the community, they speak comfortably in French because they have been able to practice it in a classroom where they get the attention they need. She said that every year more demands are placed on teachers, but they can't keep adding to it. She asked the Board to fund the teachers and the budget.

Mr. Robert Tai, 2110 Lonicera Way, Charlottesville, addressed the Board, stating that he is a faculty member of the Curry School of Education and the parent of two children in County elementary schools. Mr. Tai expressed his support of the Superintendent's budget. When you cut back on teachers, you are cutting an actual person – and the numbers do not grow evenly by one student, they grow by subject five or six students per class, and thus it is not an even distribution. He stated that it is important to put back into the County what they take from it, and he does not have a problem with paying more in taxes, because it's an investment in the County's future and its prosperity.

Ms. Nancy Carpenter, 727 Denali Way, Scottsville District, asked the Board to fully fund the school budget. Ms. Carpenter said that in the movie *Monuments Men*, many of the film's heroes found their love of arts when in school. She stated that their parents supported funding for arts programs in those schools, and no less should be done now in the 21st Century.

Mr. Rex Linville addressed the Board, stating that he is a County resident and a staff member of the Piedmont Environmental Council. Mr. Linville said that he is supportive of the tax increase because good schools, environmental protection and quality recreation are economic development tools for the County. They need to invest in the County. He thanked the Board for the restoration of some ACE funding, with approximately 90,000 acres protected in Albemarle through conservation easements – and about 7,000 of those acres are protected through a County program that purchases easements. He emphasized that having that funding available was critical to those landowners' decision making, and they likely wouldn't have been able to keep their land in easement otherwise. Mr. Linville mentioned that Sean Tubbs had reported in the *Daily Progress* through Charlottesville Tomorrow that the City has invested \$1.8 million since 2009 for the protection of 147 acres in the urban area, and he would like to see the County make a similar investment for urban recreation, urban trails, urban corridors, urban bike lanes, safe routes to school, etc. He said that those are other amenities people will come to the community for, and one-half of the County's population currently lives in the urban area.

Ms. Chas Biediger, 1052 Blackburn Bluff, Rio District, said she is PTO President of Agnor Hurt Elementary. Ms. Biediger said that she has three children there and will have two more there in the future. She asked the Board to fully fund the Superintendent's budget. She stated that her husband was recruited to come to the area, and she toured seven schools prior to deciding where to locate. Ms. Biediger said that there is some disparity in the schools in terms of PTO fundraising, as that extra money allows for funding of positions like nurses, language teachers and after-school programs. They should be striving for excellence in education.

Mr. Steve Koleszar, 142 Scarborough Place, Charlottesville, commented that they are at a watershed moment here. Mr. Koleszar said that 19 years ago, he was in the first class of elected school boards in the County; they had four new Board members and a very similar situation. He stated that that was the first time the School Board sent an "unbalanced budget" to the Board of Supervisors, and while they have good schools the County demands and expects great schools. Over that time, he said, he has seen the schools go from good to great. Mr. Koleszar stated that excellence and greatness come from leadership and resources, and they have great leadership but if they continue to skimp on resources and cut back on programs, they won't be delivering as good an education as what resident's desire.

Ms. Dittmar recognized Mr. Koleszar as the Scottsville representative of the School Board. She also recognized the presence of School Board Chair, Ned Galloway and Superintendent, Pam Moran.

Ms. Barb Rosen, 630 Crumpet Court, Charlottesville, said that not one teacher has come before the Board and asked for more money for themselves – only for the students and classrooms. Ms. Rosen said that she technically got a cut in pay this year, and with a 5% increase many teachers had tax increases because their salaries are more. She stated that she is still grateful for the increase, and many teachers have said "take it away," as it is not the most important thing to them.

Ms. Dittmar thanked the citizens for attending the meeting. She asked if there were any comments or reflections from Board members.

Ms. Palmer thanked citizens for coming to the meeting, and all the emails she received. She stated that one of the things the Board needs to talk about is that the bill for property taxes for the average household is approximately \$165 less per year than it was in 2009. She added that every year there is always a focus on the tax rate, but the Boards need to focus on the actual bill. Ms. Palmer asked what the tax rate would need to be if the Board was increasing it to that average payment in 2009.

Mr. Foley said that the tax rate would need to increase to 82.3 cents per \$100 of assessed value.

Mr. Davis clarified that the increase would be 6.1 cents total.

At this time, Ms. Dittmar closed the public hearing.

Ms. Palmer encouraged citizens to attend the next budget public hearing.

Agenda Item No. 8. From the Board: Matters Not Listed on the Agenda

There were none.

Agenda Item No. 9. Adjourn to February 26, 2014, 9:00 a.m., Room 241

At 8:55 p.m., Mr. Boyd **moved** to adjourn the meeting to February 26, 2014 at 9:00 a.m. in Room 241. Ms. McKeel **seconded** the motion. Roll was called and the motion carried by the following recorded vote:

AYES: Ms. Dittmar, Ms. Mallek, Ms. McKeel, Ms. Palmer, Mr. Sheffield and Mr. Boyd.

NAYS: None.

Chairman

Approved by Board
Date: 11/05/2014
Initials: EWJ