

An adjourned meeting of the Board of Supervisors of Albemarle County, Virginia, was held on August 26, 2014, at 4:00 p.m., Room 241, County Office Building, McIntire Road, Charlottesville, Virginia. The meeting was adjourned from August 13, 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 4:04 p.m., by Chair Ms. Dittmar.

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Agenda Item No. 2. Discussion/Action: Proposed Route 29 Solutions Package Resolution.

Ms. Dittmar said that at its last Board meeting, held on August 13, Mr. Boyd brought forth a resolution at the end of the meeting which chronicled the history of the Route 29 solutions project and recommended several items to VDOT. She stated that several Board members made red-line modifications and brought drafts, but none of those were shared prior to the Board meeting – and since the hour was late and they had already been through a long public hearing, they decided not to approve Mr. Boyd's resolution, but work on changes, so they deferred the matter until this meeting. Ms. Dittmar said that what is before the Board now is a revised version with edits collaborated on by Mr. Sheffield and Ms. McKeel. She then asked Board members if there was any further discussion.

Mr. Sheffield said that the sixth clause, which talks about the fact that design-build procurement process permits VDOT to begin construction prior to completion of final design, should be clear that it is "preliminary design," because they will not be able to begin construction until they have the final design.

Ms. McKeel read the revised resolution.

Ms. Dittmar said that she had suggested the word "preliminary" be inserted in the seventh "Whereas" before the word "construction", to read "preliminary construction".

Mr. Sheffield said that would be acceptable to him.

Ms. McKeel agreed with the change.

Ms. Mallek said that in the tenth paragraph the word "the" is needed before "Charlottesville region."

Ms. McKeel then **moved** to adopt the proposed resolution with the two changes as discussed. Ms. Mallek **seconded** the motion.

Mr. Boyd said that he will not vote for the revised resolution, because while he wants to support more involvement from the Board, the new version implies that they are just "cheerleading" for the State's version of the plan. He does not support the proposal and does not think it is a solution to the Route 29 traffic.

Roll was called, and the motion passed by the following recorded vote:

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

Ms. Dittmar thanked Mr. Boyd for bringing the original version of the resolution that served as the foundation for this one. She added that there will be an item on the Board's September 3 agenda to look at the philosophy and protocols for external submission of proclamations, and the flow of how to work through resolutions in the future. Mr. Dittmar said that this originated with a poll that Ms. Jordan had taken of the Board in January in which they gave her feedback. She added that she wanted more information about how proclamations come to the County.

Ms. Palmer said that she would like to understand how many groups there really are requesting this, because she has only seen a few in her time on the Board.

Ms. McKeel said there are some that come to the Board every year.

Ms. Mallek stated that there is only about one per month.

Ms. Dittmar said that staff could comprise a list of proclamations requested over the last 12 months.

**(Note: The resolution as adopted is set out in full below.)**

## **RESOLUTION**

**WHEREAS**, on February 18, 2014, the Federal Highway Administration notified the Virginia Department of Transportation that a reassessment of the purpose and need for the US 29 Bypass proposal was expected to find that it is “no longer adequate to support the investment in the corridor” and that other alternatives must be considered; and

**WHEREAS**, the Albemarle County Board of Supervisors reinstated its opposition to the US 29 Bypass proposal in February 2014 and requested that funding for the bypass be reallocated to alternatives; and

**WHEREAS**, the Virginia Department of Transportation convened a working group to consider alternatives to the proposed bypass which considered several proposals to address traffic concerns in the corridor; and

**WHEREAS**, the Commonwealth Transportation Board, the Albemarle County Board of Supervisors, the Charlottesville City Council and the Charlottesville-Albemarle Metropolitan Planning Organization have all endorsed the Route 29 Solutions, a multi-faceted package of projects in Albemarle County and the City of Charlottesville to improve mobility, address the worst congested areas and the highest crash locations, minimize environmental impacts, and produce a reasonable return on taxpayer dollars; and

**WHEREAS**, our community looks forward to working cooperatively with VDOT to facilitate the planning and construction of the Route 29 Solutions and realizing the significant benefits from the \$230 million worth of investments in the corridor; and

**WHEREAS**, the Virginia Department of Transportation has decided to utilize the design-build method of procurement to implement the widening of Route 29, the development of a grade separated interchange at Route 29 and Rio Road, and to extend Berkmar Drive; and

**WHEREAS**, the design-build procurement process permits the Virginia Department of Transportation to begin preliminary construction prior to the completion of final design drawings and engineering for a project; and

**WHEREAS**, because of the importance of Route 29 to this community, it is important that citizens of the community and stakeholders along the corridor, both commercial and residential, are actively engaged during the design and development of this project; and

**WHEREAS**, this corridor has been master planned by the community; and

**WHEREAS**, Route 29 serves as a gateway to the Charlottesville region and is an Albemarle County entrance corridor, and its appearance is important to the community.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that

1. the Albemarle County Board of Supervisors reaffirms its support for the Route 29 Solutions and their expeditious and careful construction; and
  2. the Albemarle County Board of Supervisors hereby requests the Virginia Department of Transportation, the Federal Highway Administration, the Charlottesville-Albemarle Metropolitan Planning Organization and any other state or federal agencies to work to ensure the following with regard to the development of the Route 29 Solutions projects:
    - A. that every reasonable effort be undertaken to share with the public and provide for their comment on proposed designs for the improvements prior to finalizing the designs and beginning construction of the projects; and
    - B. the design process consider opportunities for bicycle and pedestrian access along the corridor; and
    - C. the design be context sensitive and reasonably reflect the aesthetics of the area; and
    - D. particular provisions be incorporated into the Request for Proposals to achieve the stated goals of preserving an acceptable flow of traffic on Route 29 during construction and minimizing the impact to existing businesses and neighborhoods in the corridor, as the Virginia Department of Transportation and Virginia Transportation Secretary Aubrey Layne have indicated will be the case.
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Agenda Item No. 3. Closed Meeting.

At 4:17 p.m., Mr. Sheffield **moved** that the Board go into a closed meeting pursuant to Section 2.2-3.711(A) of the Code of Virginia under subsection (1) to consider appointments to boards, committees and commissions in which there are pending vacancies or requests for reappointments. Mr. Boyd **seconded** the motion.

Roll was called, and the motion passed by the following recorded vote:

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

NAYS: None.

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Agenda Item No. 4. Certify Closed Meeting.

At 4:59 p.m., Mr. Sheffield **moved** that the Board certify by a recorded vote that to the best of each Board member's knowledge, only public business matters lawfully exempted from the open meeting requirements of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act and identified in the motion authorizing the closed meeting were heard, discussed, or considered in the closed meeting. Ms. McKeel **seconded** the motion.

Roll was called, and the motion passed by the following recorded vote:

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

NAYS: None.

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Agenda Item No. 5. Appointments.

There were none.

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Agenda Item No. 6. The Board recessed their meeting at 5:00 p.m., and reconvened at 5:31 p.m.

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Agenda Item No. 7. Joint Meeting with School Board.

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Ms. Kate Acuff, Mr. Jason Buyaki, Mr. Ned Gallaway, Mr. Stephen Koleszar, Ms. Barbara Massie Mouly, Ms. Pamela Moynihan, and Mr. Eric Strucko.

SCHOOL STAFF PRESENT: Dr. Pam Moran, Superintendent; Dr. Billy Haun, Assistant Superintendent for Student Learning; Dr. Matt Haas, Assistant Superintendent for Organizational and Human Resource Leadership; Mr. Dean Tistadt, Chief Operating Officer; Mr. John Blair, Senior Assistant County Attorney; and Ms. Jennifer Johnston, Clerk of the School Board.

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**Welcome and Opening Remarks.**  
**Statement of Commitment.**

In addition to staff present, Ms. Dittmar welcomed facilitator, Mr. Craig Honick. Ms. Dittmar said it is the desire of her and Mr. Gallaway that the combination of the two Boards together will allow them to reflect on the past year together.

Mr. Gallaway commented on the need for collaboration and the School Board's desire to improve the budget process, communications and mutual trust. He said that he is very optimistic about the outcomes of today's meeting. This is the beginning of a lot of joint work the two Boards will be doing. He thinks that the outcomes are going to be good for the citizens.

Mr. Foley stated that he and Dr. Pam Moran have been working together closely in preparation for this meeting and the overall process. They are looking forward to tonight's conversation that will give them additional direction on how they can make things work more effectively going forward.

Dr. Moran said that she and Mr. Foley have agreed they will really have to intensify the process and go after things that show a higher level of commitment to having the two staffs work together in support of the two boards.

Dr. Moran then introduced Craig Honick, founder of Sector Intelligence – a company that works with a variety of entities, both for-profit and nonprofit, to help them achieve a higher level of performance. Mr. Honick has worked with the American Heart Association, the Society of Public Administrators, an association of public works and a number of companies from Coca-Cola to Mercedes-Benz, as well as small and large businesses. Mr. Honick began his career working with a longitudinal study that was

designed to help the Los Angeles Police Department become more effective in its work both at the top of the ladder and with rank-and-file, and with the communities.

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**Phase 1 – Assessing Last Budget Cycle.**

*(What worked well last year? Where are there areas for improvement?)*

Mr. Honick addressed the Board and the School Board, stating that he is a County resident and is pleased to be a part of this process as they work towards improving their collaboration. He stated that his objective for the meeting is not to solve the issues that may have been detrimental to the process, but to develop a narrative on what happened – identifying where the process faltered, and then finding commonality on which to build the basis of a productive future. Mr. Honick said that the first step in the process involves having each Board member to write down responses to prompts, in order to reflect what they think happened. During the next phase, they will look for is common, what can be done and come up with a shared interpretation of what happened, and look for commonality for the future. The third phase is prioritizing, and if time, assign working groups on the tasks.

The Board members then engaged in a writing exercise of what they felt happened during the last budget process. Mr. Honick then asked Board members to summarize their thoughts about what they wrote.

Mr. Koleszar stated that the primary issue with the School Board was that it faced a tremendous funding shortfall that was caused by the state's continued underfunding of education – with that portion of the budget dropping from 33% to 27.5%, exacerbated with the fact that the schools had been patching its funding gaps with one-time money that expired and all of those factors created a perfect storm. He said that when it went to the Board of Supervisors, there was a huge hole in the budget, but the "good story" is that the Board of Supervisors responsibly provided additional funding for the school system to make the cuts tolerable. Mr. Koleszar said that the biggest problem he saw in the process was that they set a preliminary salaries number in November, and it became obvious they were going to have to adjust the raise in order to make the School Board budget come close to working, and there was no process for the boards to jointly make that decision. He stated that the Board of Supervisors asked the School Board to make the decision, so they did, but it should be built into the process in the January timeframe so the boards meet to review any salary increases, if there is a significant shortfall. Mr. Koleszar said that there were four new members on the Board of Supervisors, and the budget process was somewhat confusing.

Ms. Palmer said that her biggest problem was how stunned she was with the discrepancy between the two budgets when it was presented to the Board of Supervisors, as it revealed a very large deficit. She stated that it seemed strange to her that the staffs of both the schools and the local government had not worked it out better beforehand, adding that it came as a big surprise to the public. She understands both sides positions, but the process was not to work together beforehand to get to a reasonable place. As a new Board member, it was a big surprise given these are two staffs located in the same building.

Mr. Buyaki stated that one of the processes they have used in the past was for the School Board to put forward a series of tiers of potential cuts, ranked in order of priority – but this year, based on the cuts they were faced with, the schools chose not do that. He explained that this was because they did not know what the final allocated amount would be and thus did not want to force a decision, and while it was a departure from the usual protocol, he felt strongly that it was the School Board's decision to make. Mr. Buyaki said that he also concurs with Mr. Koleszar's assessment of the need to make a salary decision. It would have been a lot more helpful to everyone to have some additional budget discussions during the process.

Mr. Boyd said that he was not all that surprised at what happened this year because he has seen it happen before, and there always seems to be a big discussion between the School Board and the Board of Supervisors on the budget. He said that it is true it was a perfect storm, but there is more to it than what Mr. Koleszar described, specifically the difficult economy and County revenue picture. He stated that more communication would have been helpful, and he was taken aback by the 1% salary increase proposal because the County had already worked out its budget with that in there. There are a lot of things that could have been communicated and done better, but again, it was not a big surprise to him.

Mr. Strucko stated that it was "a big ask," with the schools submitting a large budget request to the County Executive to be forwarded to the Board. He said that for years, the schools have been spending down its savings account to fund operations, and there were no more savings to cover the costs. Mr. Strucko said that there were also new mandates from the state to cover the pension plan, and it was a large ask all at once – with the School Board not fully understanding the implications for the Board of Supervisors that in order to fund that ask they would have to increase the tax rate to an unprecedented high level. He noted that that's what caused some of the friction. He said that a lot of the messaging related to support of the school budget put the Supervisors in a corner: either fund this, or you do not support public education. Mr. Strucko said that is a false dichotomy, and the tactic should never have emerged. He stated that he agrees with Mr. Buyaki that it might have been easier if they had prioritized their cuts, but there was not unanimity on the School Board as to what those would be – so

they felt they could wrestle with those issues when the budget comes back to them to balance it. He said that the uncertainty year in and year out is a source of anxiety, so perhaps if they laid out a multi-year three or four-year plan with direction for public education in the County and the estimated resource needs for that, and a plan as to how to get there it may improve communication between the elected bodies.

Mr. Gallaway said that the reason he sees for the breakdown in process is lack of trust – not that one board didn't trust the other, but that throughout the process there were different times they were questioning their understanding of information, the sourcing of that information, or the clarity of it. He said that from the state mandates coming down and having an understanding of that impact, alignment of strategic planning and where money is being spent, those things can all undermine the process. Mr. Gallaway said that the School Board submitted its budget to the Board of Supervisors on a Friday, did its presentation on a Monday morning, and did not really allow sufficient time for questions – so there is a general lack of trust and understanding, due in part to lack of communication, and in part to different Board members at the table. He stated that the inability to trust “fact” as fact is the source of some of the problems.

Ms. Dittmar stated that what struck her the hardest is the lack of understanding of the Boards' roles and responsibilities among citizens, and the Boards' joint responsibility to communicate and live up to what they are. She said that they received scores of emails from parents that thought that the Board of Supervisors was making decisions about classroom sizes, coaches, etc. – when in reality the School Division makes those priority choices. Ms. Dittmar said that 60% of all funding continues to go to schools, and the Board is trying to add to that – but the message that the public interpreted was the Board not fully funding or even cutting the schools' budget. She stated that they did a lot more than they would have under the usual funding formula, but the information did not get out to the public that way. Four of the Board of Supervisors' members were not present for the joint commonality meeting in the fall, and that did cause some problems. There was probably more than normal creative tension between the two boards.

Ms. McKeel said that one of the pieces missing is that the schools and local government have really never established a vision for what public education should look like – for example, are we going to have pre-K education, are we going to have a strong CATEC workforce development program, or small classes. She stated that they have not established what community priorities are, and are certainly not operating on the same set of facts – where monies come from, where the splits are happening, how much money one group is getting versus another, etc. Ms. McKeel said that the staffs are operating off of different sets of facts, the communication is not good, there is a failure in the communication – and it is not purposeful. She stated that sometimes remarks are made that are inappropriate or hurtful, and it leads the public to think that leadership does not understand or is confused. Ms. McKeel said that the community was very supportive of what the boards were trying to do, but it was as divisive a process as she's ever seen. It is not healthy for the schools to be pitted against everyone else. She stated that the two boards need to figure out what their expectations are, what their vision for school is, and how it will be funded. Ms. McKeel said that anytime the funding is very limited, it exacerbates all of the other problems, and the School Division has a sense of urgency when the funding is not available – because there is only one opportunity for a child to be in a certain grade at a certain time, whereas the Board of Supervisors can delay initiatives without an immediate effect. Those arenas sometimes crash. She stated that she would really like them to come together on their vision for education, how to come together as a team, and how to be kinder to each other in the process. Ms. McKeel said that while the community will not like everything the boards do, they will at least understand the process and the mutual goals.

Ms. Acuff stated that she was new this year and came in January after some of the preliminary budget process had occurred. She said that she did not feel they did a good job in articulating to the community that they are funding public education and policy, what the policy priorities were, what the historical context was of budget cuts. Ms. Acuff stated that the way the school budget was presented seemed to deemphasize the importance of it and make it seem that it was just another program that did not have enough funding – and that's all the press reported, not the context of why the ask was so big, or what had contributed to the gap, or how to solve it in the long term.

Ms. Massie Mouly said that the communication between the two staffs should happen earlier in the process, as both Boards depend heavily on what their staffs tell them about needs – so if they are getting two messages, they will have two messages for constituents. Ms. Mouly said that the sooner that communication can happen the better. Sometimes the School Board ends up speculating about what the Board of Supervisors might think about the schools' priorities. She stated that she can understand why the absence of the tiered cuts loomed large in the minds of the Supervisors this year, but the School Board did not understand what a big impact not revealing them would have in the Supervisors' deliberations. Ms. Mouly said that the School Board has revised the format of its budget book over the past several years, but heard from the Board that some things were still not clear – so they have formed a committee to work on turning those numbers into a clearer narrative.

Ms. Moynihan stated that she agree that it was a perfect storm of a very bad budget year with new Board members who were grappling with many other issues besides schools funding, and challenges with communications and relationships. The School Board is only concerned with K-12 education and their schools during that timeframe. Ms. Moynihan said that since she has been on the School Board, there have not been good procedures in place for the two boards to relate to each other and talk to each other – and they need to have a better mutual partnership relationship, as well as a shared perspective as to what one another is dealing with. She stated that she perceived a lack of trust

on the part of the Board of Supervisors as to the School Board's ability, even though they were also elected by constituents. Ms. Moynihan said that she felt Supervisors were trying to get into the weeds of the budget and did not grant the School Board respect in dealing with its own processes and budgeting of K-12 education. She stated that they need to respect and trust each other in the process, and while she would have liked to have a tiered set of priorities, but there were reasons why the School Board could not do that. Ms. Moynihan said that her hope for this year is that they can develop some procedures early on to work as equals in the process, with a new set of priorities.

Mr. Honick asked if it would be fair to assess that much of this is due to lack of communication. Ms. Moynihan agreed that it would be, and said that they should start from the beginning as a partnership and trust that the School Board will do what they need to for the schools, and to have some better procedures for discussion. She said that perhaps it may be better to have more meetings during budget season while the budget is being developed, rather than just handing off a budget when it is time to decide on funding allocation. Ms. Moynihan said that she is looking for a partnership, not one board higher than the other.

Ms. Mallek stated that this is her seventh budget process, and she did not anticipate it to be the most difficult she'd ever seen. She said that it came out on a Friday, they were snowed in on Saturday and Sunday – and she read the whole thing. Ms. Mallek stated that she found the budget to be extremely confusing, and it elevated her hostility level – especially since there was not much detail other than across the board percentages. She said that if the Board of Supervisors is expected to understand it, then it needs to be presented in a way they can understand it – and it seemed the schools did not want to share the information with the Board and wanted to retain their territory. Ms. Mallek mentioned that even though the Board came up with \$125,000 additional on the last day of the budget, the schools did not want to share what it was for. In the past, the tiers provided a much better understanding for both the Board and the citizens. She added that she worked as a teacher for a very long time and feels this is a very important effort, and it is upsetting her – especially for new Board members – to see the very well-organized “hate mail” campaign directed at them. Ms. Mallek said that on the morning the budget was issued, a reporter called her and asked why the Board was underfunding the School budget by \$9 million – yet the Board had received no information from the schools on this.

Mr. Sheffield stated that this is not his first budget process, as he has spent his career in the public sector and has dealt with bigger budgets than the County's – but what he was surprised by is the lack of advocacy by the School Board for the school budget. He said that by the end of the process, he felt that he was spending all of his resources to get the public on board for the school budget, and did not have the attention span of the public to talk about the other issues. Mr. Sheffield stated that it left him exhausted having to defend the school budget. In other settings he has seen school boards be far more active than general government boards in terms of being out in the community and advocating for their budgets. He said that the County has started a five-year planning approach to budgeting, and he feels the school system needs to be active in doing that also – which would help reduce surprises like this year's. Mr. Sheffield noted that there were a lot of school emails, far more than for general government items.

Mr. Honick stated that almost all of the comments pertain in some way to communication – either a lack of communication, or lack of clarity in communication, and perhaps even manipulation via email campaigns, calls, etc. He said that he would like to get to the point now that they are “telling the same story,” even though they may disagree on some points. Mr. Honick said that the two boards are coming together to try to communicate with one another, understand what happened, and try to take some steps forward in a more productive way. He stated that the phase they are looking at now is to try to evaluate what's been said and transfer commonalities to the story about what happened; suggestions for the future will be transferring those to the narrative for what needs to happen going forward. He then presented prompts to help identify priorities for both the Board of Supervisors and the School Board.

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**Phase 2 – Working from a Foundation of Trust/Finding Common Ground.**

*(What aspirations do Board members share for our community? Where do Board members' interests intersect?)*

Mr. Honick reviewed the priorities identified by both boards for the Board of Supervisors: allocation of tax revenues, fair allocation of resources, fund core services, fairness to taxpayers, adequately funding government, ensure money is spent wisely and set tax rate.

Mr. Koleszar said that his identified priorities include balancing the needs of schools and County government, and taxpayers.

Mr. Honick said that there's similar agreement between the two groups in terms of identifying the priorities of the Board of Supervisors.

Mr. Honick reviewed the priorities identified by the Board of Supervisors for the School Board: determine use of resources, capture as much resources as possible regardless of the needs of the County, define and advocate for funding mechanisms, properly fund schools and support quality in

accordance with taxpayers' desires, establish budget that reflects the needs of the schools for the upcoming year with tiered priorities.

He stated that the priorities identified by the School Board for themselves include: develop a budget, prepare a needs-based funding request, prepare a funding request designed to meet needs identified in the school division's strategic plan, and request funds for public education and allocate in appropriate amounts.

Mr. Honick asked if they understood what the process was.

Ms. Palmer said that the Board is supposed to fund the schools, but the School Board figures out what the schools need – and that is not compatible unless the Board agree on what the schools need. She stated that it has been mentioned that the Boards fully funded the schools, but they did not fully fund the schools at all – and she wants to know what it means to do that.

Ms. Mallek stated that it means meeting the formula.

Ms. Palmer said that if the Board defines it as meeting the formula, and the School Board defines it as giving them what they need based on what they believe is necessary to give an excellent education, those are two totally different things.

Mr. Honick suggested parking that momentarily as an item where there is some disparity. He said that there seems to be agreement on what the role of the School Board is, but there is disagreement as to whether that should also be a role for the Board of Supervisors.

Ms. Acuff stated that there seems to be a desire by some to have the School Board "cede its authority" and give the Board of Supervisors a list of priority items – which is the Board of Supervisors micro-managing education policy. She said that is the statutory responsibility of the School Board to make those educational decisions, and not have it tied to specific funding allocations. Ms. Acuff emphasized that there needs to be a better dialogue about it, but ultimately the buck has to stop with the School Board in terms of priorities.

Mr. Honick asked if it is fair to say that the conflict about micro-management comes in when it exceeds 60%. Ms. Mallek said there is no question about it.

Mr. Strucko asked what the 60% represents. Ms. Mallek said that it is for new revenue.

Mr. Strucko said that the School Board does not know what the tax rate is going to be until after it submits its budget, so the dilemma is whether to submit a spending plan based upon the existing tax rate and estimates for it or to do their budget after the Board of Supervisors advertises a tax so they know what their 60% allocation is.

Ms. Dittmar said that they know what the split is prior to budgeting.

Ms. Mallek said that the schools are given an estimated allocation.

Mr. Strucko said that the Board advertises the tax rate after the School Board submits its budget to them.

Ms. Mallek said that it would have to be based on the existing rate.

Ms. Dittmar said that general government is faced with the same thing.

Mr. Strucko noted that the Board increased the tax rate this year.

Ms. Dittmar said that there is a gap in the understanding of "fully funding," because the schools are getting its 60% allocation – but then the Board is asked to go beyond that to help satisfy additional priorities that have been identified. She stated that if the Board is the group that must bear the responsibility of moving the tax rate up – and citizens ask why – the Board must be able to answer for it once they go beyond the funding formula.

Mr. Strucko said that he understands that, and what he is trying to do is objectively describe the process. He stated that the School Board votes to instruct the Superintendent to develop a needs-based budget and spending request. The Superintendent presents it to the School Board, and they assess it and agree on what they will submit, see what the resource allocation is, and then make the necessary adjustments.

Mr. Koleszar stated that that's built into the process. The School Board's state constitutional responsibility is to submit a funding request based on the needs of the system – not on available revenue – so there can be an inherent conflict.

Ms. Moynihan said that the schools need to figure out what the Board feels is part of the 60%.

Ms. Dittmar commented that it is a math formula.

Ms. Moynihan said that the question is whether the new revenue covers K-12, teachers, preschool, etc.

Mr. Honick stated that this seems to be a source of conflict, and when the Board of Supervisors needs to answer to constituents they do not have enough information to explain it – yet the School Board is saying it is their responsibility to present it and fund the schools as they see fit.

Mr. Strucko said that after the School Board submits its needs-based budget, the County Executive takes it in with the other government needs and presents it to the Board of Supervisors. The responsibility of the Board of Supervisors is to look at an appropriate tax burden on the citizens of the County; prioritize public education versus public safety and other things, and dedicate funding accordingly; and if there is a difference between those, the budget comes back to the School Board to be reconciled. He stated that laced in between all that is “a lot of the gamesmanship, a lot of the politics, a lot of the lobbying,” and a lot of the interchange that characterizes budget processes – which just happened to be very contentious this year. Mr. Strucko noted that is the same fundamental process every year.

Mr. Sheffield said that for all the other departments the County is funding, he does not want to know the details of their budgets – and he does trust the schools, but the public wants to know what the school budget covers, so if the Board is the only body out there giving details and it is very challenging. He stated that if the public wants to know why they want to increase the police officers, for example, he has those details and can answer constituents with that information. Mr. Sheffield said that he brings up this point because that is the difference – and when they are being pressed for reasons they are funding certain things as a priority, citizens do not really want to hear, “Because that is what the schools really want.”

Ms. Mallek said that’s the telling phrase: “Everything they want” and how to answer that.

Ms. Acuff stated that the School Board has a statutory responsibility for education policy, and they cannot just say it is the budget; they have to advocate and make the case to the community as to why it is needed. She said that the Board got a lot of emails, but so did the School Board – and they are supposed to be getting them, and providing the Board with the information necessary to make the case when they are asked.

Mr. Koleszar said that Ms. Dittmar will respond to constituents that this is a question for a School Board representative, and she passes it onto him – so it is not necessarily the responsibility of the Supervisors to explain the school budget, as they can forward them to their School Board rep.

Ms. Mallek stated that many constituents have tried to get those answers from their School Board members and have failed, so they come to the Supervisors angry.

Mr. Strucko said that he and Ms. Palmer shared numerous community meetings.

Ms. Palmer [jokingly] said that at those meetings, constituents commented that he “dominated the meetings” and ended up wanting her to come back.

Ms. Mouly stated that she has been to numerous meetings, but a lot of the constituents ask school questions so it ends up not being a Board of Supervisors’ town hall.

Ms. Mallek said that is fine, because if that is where most of the questions are, that is what they should be talking about. Ms. Moynihan responded that is why it would be better for the two boards to sit together during School Division budget meetings so that the Supervisors could understand what is going on in their process.

Mr. Honick asked the Supervisors to explain the advertised rate versus the current rate.

Mr. Boyd explained that when the rate is advertised, they cannot exceed it. The Board put a lot of money on the table due to a large increase, so numerous departments and organizations came in asking for a piece of it.

Mr. Honick said that by doing that, they raise expectations. Mr. Boyd agreed.

Mr. Honick said that Board of Supervisors’ comment included “budget presented to public with large school deficit without communication ahead of time,” “confusion among citizens of boards’ different roles and responsibilities,” “poor communication on how funding works,” and “increased demand on funds due to state shortage.”

Mr. Honick stated that School Board comments included “state funding shrinkage and cost-shifting created by large funding gaps,” “new Board of Supervisors,” and “coming in late in the process.”

Ms. Mallek commented that she was horrified at the way the new Board members were treated in the process, specifically in the emails from the public – and that information came from somewhere, treating them like they were new and thus not smart enough to figure things out.

Mr. Honick said that another issue that arose was that the School Board did not rank tiered priority items, as apparently has been done in the past.

Ms. Mallek stated that it has been done the previous six years, and the reason she finds it helpful is that it is information on the School Board's priorities that helps her understand it – and it helps them to advocate for that extra funding, whereas the schools saw it as the Board trying to meddle.

Mr. Buyaki said when the Supervisors asked for the ranks, knowing the large shortfall, he asked if that would have guided their decision on the tax rate and allocation of revenue to the School Division.

Ms. Moynihan said that the School Board felt they knew where the money needed to be, and when the Board asked for that information it sounded as if they were trying to dictate where it will go. She stated that by the end of the process it became a test of wills, and they just did not want to have the Board tell them how they should tier their expenditures.

Mr. Strucko stated that the School Board provided a list of areas that they were going to cut, and that information was passed on – it just wasn't ranked. He said that when they balanced their budget, they were debating up until the very last vote what they would cut.

Ms. Moynihan stated that they did not want to have the Board of Supervisors tell them how they would rank order, because they felt the buck should stop at their Board.

Mr. Sheffield said that not all of the Supervisors agreed they wanted the details either.

Ms. Moynihan said she did not know what Supervisor wanted to do what because at that point they were not talking.

Mr. Koleszar said that one of the things that was different this year is that when they put together a funding request, in the past it was a baseline of what they have had with a list of what they needed to add. This year, they just sent a baseline budget – so anything that was going to be reduced would be a cut of what they already had.

Ms. Mallek asked how asking for \$9 million more is a cut, and that is where the Board got nailed in the press.

Mr. Koleszar said that the budget submitted was a baseline budget, and there were no additions or new initiatives.

Ms. Mallek said that it was a higher amount than the previous year, so that is what they mean by baseline.

Mr. Koleszar said there was some growth, but they maintain baseline programs.

Ms. Palmer stated that that's how she took it, and that's why she said it was amazing to her how the two staffs and the two boards did not know what was going on – which is why it seemed to her they were not fully funding schools. It was a tremendous amount of confusion for her.

Mr. Buyaki said that he does not agree with Mr. Koleszar; he did not view it as a baseline budget, because there were increases in the priorities they wanted to do, and mandate increases, along with a 2% staff raise.

Ms. Mallek commented that there were increases in every single category.

Ms. Palmer said that the way it was presented to the Board was as a "needs-based budget," and if they did anything less than that, the schools and children were going to suffer.

Mr. Honick asked if the term "needs-based" is viewed differently.

School Board and Board of Supervisors members agreed that it was.

Ms. Palmer suggested that they needed a set of definitions.

Ms. McKeel said that the formula seems to be straightforward, clean and easy – but the reality is, it does not really work that way. She explained that if the Board raises the tax rate in order to fund certain things, in June a larger amount of money comes in and that is not shared with the schools; it rolls into the CIP.

Ms. Mallek and Mr. Boyd said that it is shared by both entities in the CIP.

Ms. McKeel said that her point is that the formula does not play out exactly as one would assume.

Mr. Sheffield noted that this year there were unforeseen circumstances that the formula could never compensate for, because of the state.

Mr. Buyaki said that at the end of their budget process before it is passed off to the Board, the budget often has to reflect last-minute VRS changes.

Mr. Sheffield stated that the 60/40 formula was put to the test this year, as was the philosophy of how to handle shortages.

Mr. Strucko said that they were attempting to fund existing operations and all the changes to existing operations that came about – funding VRS to a higher dollar amount, accommodating student growth in existing buildings with existing teachers and programming, change in compensation for all the employees that they agreed on ahead of time – and perhaps the definition of needs should be what it is going to cost next year to continue existing operations. He stated that they could present that as a baseline, plus inform the Board of additional initiatives they are requesting; but what the School Board did not do in the past year's process was prioritize new initiatives among existing operations that may not be as desirable. Mr. Strucko said that does not happen in the beginning; it happens toward the end after there is feedback from the Board of Supervisors as to allotted budget amount.

Ms. Mallek said that all the key performance indicator work is done in local government in the fall, and a determination is made about things that need to be stopped, expanded or reduced. She then asked how that would work at the School Board level.

Mr. Koleszar said that school staff goes that process too. Ms. Mallek said that it was not in their budget book.

Mr. Strucko said that if the School Board is forced to pick one thing over another because of resource limitations, that piece does not happen until after they get their resource amount.

Mr. Honick said that it seems there is expectation of formulas, but perhaps that is a barrier because it is a dynamic situation and each year it might change a bit, so they may need to establish something like a workgroup to anticipate what the current context will mean to these definitions, and "cross-train" each other as to what they mean.

Ms. McKeel stated that 16 years ago when she joined the School Board, there was a big discussion at the school level about the 60/40 split, and the School County Attorney at that time said there was no way to establish a fixed formula because it is in the Code of Virginia that the schools will present a needs-based budget.

Mr. Strucko said that the origin of the 60/40 split is a policy intended to add some stability.

Mr. Foley said that it is a budget planning tool, and the Board of Supervisors has directed staff to use it as a tool.

Ms. McKeel said that it is not an absolute.

Mr. Sheffield stated that he appreciates the schools budgeting from a needs-based approach because they can define the expectations of their budget much earlier, whereas the County is prioritizing things before they know if they can be funded or not.

Ms. Acuff said that the parent constituent groups that follow this closely use the term "fully funding" a lot, and what they mean by it is the needs put forth by the Superintendent's budget.

Ms. Mallek agreed, stating that this essentially means whatever the Superintendent wants to include in it.

Ms. Acuff said she does not know if there is a way to predict these things and lessen the blow.

Ms. Palmer said that she would like to see the schools have public hearings. School Board members commented that they do; although not as many as the Board of Supervisors.

Mr. Honick asked if they felt the lack of trust has been there all along, or if it arose after things started become contentious.

Mr. Sheffield said that he totally trusts the School Board as fellow elected officials.

Ms. Palmer stated that she did not feel a lack of trust, but she felt forced into finding out some specifics to advocate for the schools and to answer the questions – and delving into the school budget was the last thing she really wanted to do.

Mr. Gallaway said that it was not lack of trust in other individuals; it was the reframing of factual information that was framed a different way – which can lead to uneven ground or shaky footing. He stated that his concern is that two different framings of the same factual information creates tension between the two bodies. He stated that they could agree before they go into the process what the factual information is so that the framing can occur.

Mr. Honick said that they are trying to reach a shared narrative, and that culture must be built so that it is presented in a unified way to the public. Currently it sounds as if they are putting each other in the hot seat.

Mr. Sheffield said that people who are opposed to a tax increase will find a way to drive a wedge between anything.

Mr. Honick asked if there is anything they could do as boards to combat that.

Ms. Palmer said she would like a set of definitions.

Mr. Honick stated that other comments from the School Board included, “state mandates and policies create additional costs,” “additional resources provided to public education by the Board of Supervisors.” He said that both sides saw the need for sustainable solutions. Mr. Honick said that on the Board of Supervisors’ side, it was noted that was better communication between the School Board and students’ families, along with both boards persisting to a working decision.

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### **Phase 3 – Moving Forward.**

*(What are priority areas to address? How do these priority areas get translated into short-term action? What is the expected timeline for next steps given upcoming deadlines regarding the Five Year Financial Plan?)*

Mr. Honick said the next stage is to agree upon and prioritize some things that need to get done. There needs to be a focus on some of the areas of conflict. He stated that in his assessment, most of the issues were related to communication and pre-communication – an acknowledgement that there may be concerns over specific items, so it is best that both bodies are operating from the same set of definitions.

Mr. Honick said that the Board of Supervisors identified a primary need as being “clear, concise budget document with key performance indicators.” He stated that some Board members felt the School Board’s book budget document could have been put in a format or language that would have made their job easier. He said that the Board also identified “prioritization of budget additions rather than all or nothing,” because it possibly ended up being a test of will at the end of the budget process. Mr. Honick stated that the Board identified “willingness of the School Board to accept additional program funds emphasized by Board of Supervisors.”

Ms. Moynihan said that it kind of goes back to the micro-managing/test of wills issue.

Mr. Strucko said that this is a source of contention, because if the Board of Supervisors attempts to look at every detail and line item in the schools’ budget, then the School Board might be tempted to look at the general government budget and inquire about specific items like police cars instead of adding teachers. They need to respect their own areas of responsibility.

Mr. Buyaki commented that the majority of the School Board decided they did not want to pursue an item as a priority, but wanted to do something else instead.

Ms. Moynihan said that they then could not come to an agreement because they were not given the funds.

Mr. Strucko said that if the Board gives them strings attached with funding, the School Board may not agree with the string.

Ms. Mallek commented that even though it was the top of the priority list, there was no guarantee the schools were going to fund it.

Ms. Moynihan said they didn’t have a #1 on their priority list.

Ms. Mallek said that the School Board had presented a greenhouse and some other initiatives, in the event the Board of Supervisors had additional funding available.

Mr. Honick continued with additional items identified as needs: “early presentations, set expectations, more advocacy of School Board members’ town hall meetings.

Mr. Sheffield said that when they are presenting the budget as a County budget, it is really muddling the school budget, general government, etc. – so the public focuses on the biggest piece. He

stated that if it is rolled out in pieces, the public might have a better opportunity to understand the pieces themselves versus the whole picture.

Mr. Honick asked if that was more directed at the public, or between boards. Mr. Sheffield said that it is really directed at the public.

Ms. Palmer said that one of the most helpful tools to communicate to the public was a chart that showed the impact of a tax rate increase on their property taxes, and perhaps a similar tool for the school – including how much it would take to make the schools better – would be helpful. She said that the Board communicates with everyone, and she is not sure if there is a way for the School Board to reach out to everyone also to try to get some buy-in.

Ms. Acuff asked if the Board felt that would be the School Board treading on their territory.

Board members said that they had no problem at all with that kind of direct contact. Ms. Mallek indicated that there is information that goes home with the students in their backpacks.

Ms. Dittmar said that the Board is responsible for some of the confusion, as they came up with the spreadsheet at one of their town hall meetings – and began communicating that they owned a piece of the tax increase. She said that the County Executive came out and owned part of the school budget tax increase, and the School Division should be able to say how much more they need at a certain tax level.

Mr. Strucko stated that if the School Board passes this budget onto the Board of Supervisors, they are basically advocating for a tax increase – but they never came out and said it in that way.

Ms. McKeel commented that this speaks to the issue of working together as a team and sharing responsibilities.

Mr. Honick revisited some of the goals identified earlier in their discussion: early presentations, set expectations, establish trust, operate with the same set of facts – both definitions, and how things are framed, and merge budget departments. He said that he is not sure what the last item means.

Mr. Boyd explained that it means merging the school budget process with the County budget process so there is a single report, rather than having two budget offices create separate reports.

Mr. Strucko said that the two budget documents are very different. The schools organize its budget document around the categories the state requires them to report – and that does not necessarily translate neatly into the categories that the Board sees from other departments and divisions.

Ms. Dittmar stated that she attended a meeting recently with Supervisors from other counties, and they had used a joint budget document so that it was the same. The document was also very user friendly for citizens.

Mr. Honick reviewed other items identified in their conversation: “establish trust, merge budget documents, work together on jointly issued communication, pre-planning for communication, work together on any request above funding formula, regular communication between County and school staffs and boards, and more public involvement with School budget process.” He asked if the last item means that members of the public should sit on any kind of committee, or if it referred just to communication.

Board members said that it referred to the need for public hearings.

Ms. Palmer stated that one of the things that was suggested by some teachers was that they felt they were left out of the budget process and they wanted to have a committee that would involve conversations with staff and parents. She said that Board members received a lot of feedback from teachers.

Ms. Mallek said teachers feel very vulnerable, and cannot complain to the School Board because everything is determined by the hierarchy.

Mr. Honick identified School Board suggestions for improvements, including “schools adopt a multi-year resource needs plan with associated funds,” and asked if that is done now.

Mr. Koleszar said that they participate in the County’s five-year financial plan, but do not have a multi-year plan of their own.

Mr. Honick continued with the list of identified priorities, including “boards jointly reconsider salary increases and other joint decisions before School Board presents funding request,” “Board of Supervisors allows School Board to make final judgment on cuts,” “work together early, communicate, understand each other’s roles,” “understand both are elected officials with a constituency,” “trust each other and agree on facts,” “find alternative funding sources,” “establish School Board as K-12 experts,” “better advocacy by School Board,” and “clearer explanation of County budget.”

Mr. Honick noted that points of conflict are also opportunities for working on some of the underlying issues creating the tension. He asked if they agree that one of their priorities is working on the definitions, and agreeing on what they mean by certain terms so they can better respond when issues arise.

Ms. Palmer said that it helps them communicate with each other and the public in the same way and with each other.

Mr. Boyd said that the biggest area of need for coming up with a definition is what a “needs-based budget” is, and it sounds to him as the School Board cannot even decide among themselves what that is. He stated that they hear terms like “21<sup>st</sup> Century schools” or “world-class schools,” and he is not sure how any of that could be defined.

Ms. McKeel stated that until they can agree on what public education in Albemarle County should look like – with a common set of goals such as inclusion of foreign languages, etc. – and what it will offer students, she is not sure how they can define those terms. She said that perhaps this is where a five-year plan will come in, with identification of these goals followed by establishing objectives to get there.

Mr. Honick asked if she was considering a joint vision document. Ms. McKeel said that she thinks they have to agree on what education is.

Mr. Sheffield said that it is a bit of a slippery slope because it gets into the Board of Supervisors telling the School Board what their goals are.

Ms. Mouly stated that they already have specific goals, and 86% of their budget was teacher salaries, personnel-related expenses such as retirement, and an increase in enrollment. She said that there was a small amount that was intended to either continue year three of the pilot world languages program at one school or building the science lab at Western Albemarle.

Mr. Sheffield said that those are details that the public wants to know.

Ms. McKeel agreed that it is necessary for them to know that in order to understand it.

Ms. Mallek said that those specifics are what get people to support the budget.

Mr. Strucko said that they should not be focused on a needs-based budget; they should be defining the cost of current operations carried into the following year, and the cost of new initiatives. He said that they can argue as to what “need is,” but the clear definition is current operations versus new initiatives, or restoring previous cuts.

Ms. Palmer said that when she asked what the base budget was and what increases were, she got two different definitions: one that was related to inflation, and one that referenced an across the board 10%-15% increase.

Ms. Moynihan said that the information was in the book, but they obviously did not do a good job communicating it.

Mr. Honick asked if they were in agreement that they need to identify certain critical definitions that are pivotal.

Ms. Palmer said that they need to agree on something so that terms such as “fully-funded” and “baseline,” etc. mean the same thing.

Mr. Sheffield stated that this kind of understanding comes from conversations – either between them or with the public – and they cannot just use a dictionary and expect them to be on the same page, with clarification as to the real intent behind the words used.

Mr. Honick asked if this is an important action step.

Ms. Moynihan commented that there needs to be an understanding that sometimes they are going to come up with a needs-based budget that just will not meet the revenues that are established – and that is the difference between needs-based budget and full funding. She said that what they came up with last year is several million dollars short of actual available revenues, so when people are asking the schools to “fully fund the budget,” they are asking the Board to make an appropriation that would fully meet that needs-based budget. She stated that the School Board will ask staff to prepare a needs-based budget, so they prepare a budget that they feel will meet the needs of the School Division that year – and that includes the operational budget of the previous year, a percentage for new students and teachers to cover them, and one or two initiatives that they feel meet the needs-based budget, per their strategic plan. Ms. Moynihan said that if the strategic plan calls for foreign languages in schools, then it will cause an increase because of that program’s needs – so all of it becomes part of what they consider to be a needs-based budget. Sometimes when they present that budget, it is a million dollars over the revenues they have.

Mr. Strucko said that perhaps if they adopt a common format on the reporting of the budget, they will see the costs separated into the categories in a way that makes sense.

Mr. Honick asked if they should shift to a common format.

Mr. Koleszar agreed that a common format is very important.

Ms. Moynihan said that they have that information in the front of the book.

Ms. Mallek asked Mr. Foley if some synchronizing of information is already underway. Mr. Foley confirmed that it is.

Mr. Gallaway said that Ms. Mallek had told him before he joined the School Board that they were trying to create a document that was clearer for the Board, and at their meeting she told him that the Board should just tell them how they want it.

Ms. Mallek responded that the comment came from a parent.

Mr. Gallaway said that if they are going to have a working group, it cannot be comprised of staff – it must also include Board members – and definitions are part of that.

Mr. Honick again asked if this should be on the list. Board members responded “yes”. Mr. Honick said that members of both boards are going to get together and figure it out.

Mr. Honick asked if there is a way to address the “surprise” element of information presented at meetings.

Mr. Gallaway stated that given the budget timeline, if they are working together with a clearer document, so much more is happening before the School Board submits the funding request to the Board of Supervisors – and then they do their presentation – if they hold a true work session, it eventually addresses all of that.

Mr. Boyd said that the County prepares a five-year projection of budgets, which has built-in tax increases into it, and asked why the Board cannot just submit that to the School Board and have them build their own five-year plan. He emphasized that the schools need to own it, because if their budget requires a tax increase, they need to own that too. Mr. Boyd said that the reason things in the CIP are out of whack is because of the cost of the court project.

Mr. Strucko and Ms. Palmer agreed with the five-year planning tool.

Mr. Koleszar said that they also need to work on their budget timeline, because they set a projected salary increase in November – and if that is out of kilter, that needs to be addressed.

Mr. Gallaway said that a working group for this particular piece is probably something the schools would need to do on their own and then come back to the Board with, as part of the conversation.

Mr. Strucko stated that he would like to consider it.

Mr. Honick said that it seems the timeline helps solve a communication problem.

Ms. Dittmar stated that both general government and schools should work together on their communications, sending out joint press releases on the budget process, so that she can respond to questions in the same way that the schools are communicating.

Mr. Honick asked if joint public communication is being done now. Mr. Koleszar said that it is not.

Board members agreed on that idea.

Ms. Mallek said that would also solve the notification issue of having the Supervisors know information before it hits the press.

Mr. Honick clarified that a common format might help alleviate some of the spin and some of the confusion related to the budget and the timeline, and a joint public communication process would help them develop a shared narrative for the public.

Ms. Dittmar asked fellow board members if there were any other issues they wished to discuss with the General Assembly in the coming session.

Mr. Sheffield stated that if they are going to do that, they should have a clearer picture of where revenues and budgets are headed, so the legislature understands the impact of their decisions locally.

Mr. Honick asked if they wanted to have a working group for possible new funding sources.

Ms. McKeel said that the idea is more to merge their legislative packet.

Ms. Mallek said that it is more about having a joint Board discussion on the legislative items, so one does not go off and do something without the other knowing.

Ms. McKeel said that the goal is to more closely connect their agendas, because they share many of the same objectives and needs.

Mr. Sheffield suggested finding the areas in which they overlap, while still focusing on their legislative agendas separately, as that would help them to appear unified to their representatives.

Mr. Koleszar said the School Board has been so focused on their problem of their assessments that they have put less emphasis on revenue.

Mr. Gallaway mentioned that the Board of Supervisors took a specific vote on pre-K initiatives at an earlier meeting, and part of the motion was to have a future conversation on who owns pre-K. It seems to him that items crossing the line between schools and local government, there should be a working group to address it. He stated that they have shared educational philosophies beyond K-12, and they must figure out who is going to own them and how they will be funded.

Ms. Moynihan commented that it is shared responsibilities, but the question is who is responsible to pay for it in their budget. She said that the schools are already responsible for K-12 with the 60% of the revenue they get, and assuming pre-K would be an additional cost – and it really comes down to who should be paying for it. She asked if they are Social Services or are they School Division.

Ms. Mallek commented that the packet of information prepared for this meeting had a good discussion about strategic planning, but it also had information in relation to the 60/40 split that talked about the many different items that are totally paid for by local government but are services provided to the schools. She said that before they get wound up over inequity and who is paying for what, they need to acknowledge those facts and perhaps talk about them.

Mr. Koleszar said that the packet also highlighted how well schools and local government in this County work together, so despite the differences they have had, they really work well together.

Mr. Buyaki said that under “shared education,” once they bring it together it should be incorporated into new member orientation materials as a foundation on which to move forward.

Mr. Honick asked if five working groups were manageable.

Mr. Sheffield asked if the schools knew their tipping points for enrollment at each school.

Mr. Koleszar said that they are working on that, and have projected to have 100-200 extra elementary school students over the next few years – and being such a big County, they will have to add elementary seats. He said that they will be over-capacity at the high school level, and they need a lot of modernization and improvement overall. For example, there are 60-80 classrooms that have no natural light. He stated that they are anticipating being 125 students over projections this year.

Mr. Strucko said that they have a fairly good process and set of numbers for existing school capacities, the projections for where new students will be, etc. – and they will be facing some difficult decisions regarding capital projects and/or redistricting of students in the coming years.

Mr. Sheffield said that needs to be better articulated to the public given all the things the County is facing, i.e., courts. There are CIP projects that have operational impacts, and new schools is one of them whereas modernizing schools won't have that kind of impact and may actually save money.

Mr. Koleszar said that it is not just the increase in enrollment, it is the dramatic change in student population, having gone from 20% to 30% free and reduced lunch, increasing enrollment in ESOL population, etc. – which have more impact on staffing than just the growth.

Mr. Strucko noted that the schools have a long-range planning committee that considers existing facilities, enrollment patterns, upgrading facilities, new additions, and potential redistricting – so that group is very actively involved in those details, and they are very involved in the schools' budgeting process.

Ms. McKeel said that a discussion between the two boards on CIP challenges would be very helpful, and would inform that process.

Mr. Honick stated that even though there was some tension in the budget process, there is some agreement among them as to what happened. He said that the timeline imposed a lot of pressure, especially on new members, but also on the whole process – so part of the budget timeline should include built-in communication meetings about what is going to happen. Mr. Honick said that the time pressure and the outside budget pressures seemed to create a situation where everyone was not at their

best in the process, but they decided to have this meeting and have come up with some solutions to help alleviate some of the miscommunication and help support each other when it comes to the public.

Mr. Koleszar commented that staff is starting to work together better now, and that also goes directly to the joint public communication process.

Mr. Honick asked how the working groups are going to work. He asked if they need to prioritize the work and assign people to the groups: common format for budget book; budget timeline revised; joint public communication process; connecting or coordinating legislative agendas; and shared education philosophies.

Mr. Gallaway said that he is not envisioning a situation in which the working groups go away and all of this falls on staff. He wants Board members to own these groups and report back to their respective boards.

Ms. Dittmar said that she and Mr. Gallaway have agreed to bring this back to their next meetings.

Mr. Honick asked if these are new ideas and initiatives that have been identified in this meeting that may be productive solutions.

Mr. Strucko said that some of their activities meet the spirit of what is intended, but as far as a formal process, they have not done that before.

Mr. Gallaway said that the definitions were the most interesting part to him, and some of those "aha" moments will inform their future work.

Mr. Honick asked if the process was helpful. Board members responded, "yes".

Ms. Mallek said that there is no question that they all want to succeed and do a much better job for their kids and the community.

Board members thanked Mr. Honick for attending.

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Agenda Item No. 8. Adjourn.

Mr. Gallaway announced that the School Board needs to have a brief closed meeting.

With no further business to come before the Board of Supervisors, the meeting was adjourned at 8:03 p.m.

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Chairman

Approved by Board
Date: 04/01/2015
Initials EWJ