

VIRGINA: At a recessed meeting of the Tazewell County Board of Supervisors held
May 18, 2009 at 6:00 p.m. in the Tazewell County Administration Building,
108 East Main Street, Tazewell, VA 24651

PRESENT: David R. Anderson, Chairman
Bill Wimmer, Vice-Chairman
D. Michael Hymes, Member
Seth R. White, Member
Dr. Thomas Brewster, Member
James H. Spencer, III – County Administrator
C. Eric Young, County Attorney
Patricia Green, Assistant County Administrator
Arlene Matney, Director of Finance & Budget
Ruth Groseclose, Administrative Assistant
Members of the Press

OTHERS

PRESENT: Dr. Brenda Lawson, Superintendent, Tazewell County Public Schools
Mike Dennis, Chairman, Tazewell County Public Schools
David Woodard, Member
Steve Davis, Member
Cookie Johnson, Member
Randy Conn, Member
Jammie Lester, Clerk/Finance Director
D. Able, Audio/IT Technician

ABSENT: None

The Chairman, David R. Anderson, called the recessed meeting to order and presided. The opening prayer was given by Supervisor Wimmer with Supervisor Hymes leading those present in the Pledge of Allegiance to the US Flag.

The Chairman then welcomed members of the Tazewell County School Board and Dr. Brenda Lawson, Division Superintendent, as well as school board personnel in attendance. Chairman Anderson stated that a joint meeting with the school board had been a topic of the Board of Supervisors for some time and said that he would like to see the joint meetings continue, at least on a quarterly basis.

At this time the Chairman gave the school board the opportunity to call their meeting to order. The school board meeting held this date was a Special Called Meeting given that their last meeting was adjourned.

Then, Chairman Anderson called for a motion to approve the agenda format as presented.

Now, Supervisor Hymes called for a motion to modify the agenda to include citizen comments. Supervisor Wimmer seconded the motion for discussion. Supervisor Wimmer stated that if a comment period was held the citizens should be given a time limit – similar to the 2 or 3 minute limit allowed during other public meetings.

Discussion ensued with regard to adding a Citizen Comment period to the agenda format. School Board member Woodard reiterated Supervisor Hymes request to hear concerns from school personnel in attendance on the subject of salary/step increases. He said that he thought it would be irresponsible for the two bodies to meet and not allow school personnel to speak and give their ideas and opinions on this subject when the subject matter was a focus of discussion on the agenda.

Now, Chairman Anderson called a vote to include the citizen comment period on the agenda, the motion failed by a vote of 1 to 4, with Supervisor Hymes voting aye and with Supervisor Anderson, White, Brewster and Wimmer voting nay.

And then, upon motion of Supervisor Wimmer seconded by Supervisor Brewster and adopted by a vote of 5 to 0, with all members present voting in favor thereof and none against the same, the Tazewell County Board of Supervisors hereby approves the May 18, 2009 agenda format as presented.

FOCUS ITEMS – TAZEWELL COUNTY SCHOOL BUDGET

1. SCHOOL BUDGET, INCLUDING FORMAT

Supervisor Brewster stated that Virginia Code allows the Board of Supervisors to make suggestions with regard to how school budget information is organized and disseminated. He stated that he would recommend that the Board make an assessment of the format and make a recommendation on how the school budget information/format is presented to the Board of Supervisors in the future.

School Board Chairman, Mike Dennis said that the budget committee met and discussed the school budget format and said that the School Board would be happy to change their format; however the budget format had to be presented pursuant to statutory guidelines. Supervisor White said that he thought that budget eliminations should be shown. Mr. Dennis said that the School Board would be happy to work with the Board of Supervisors in this endeavor. It was suggested that Ms. Jamie Lester and County staff, Arlene Matney and Patricia Green work with both boards in this endeavor. Both entities agreed that the format should be changed for easier understanding. It was also suggested that the County's Comprehensive Plan be meshed with the School Budget's narrative section, e.g. long term plans vs. funding objectives.

2. SHARED SERVICES

Discussion ensued with regard to possible opportunities for shared services between the School System & County. School Board member Woodard mentioned on-going discussion with regard to centralizing County/School garage services and mentioned the possible utilization of career-tech students for general servicing/maintenance of county vehicles. He said the career-tech center changes oil and performs other general maintenance in citizen vehicles for free everyday and he doesn't understand why the county pays someone to change the oil and perform general maintenance on county vehicles when this services is available for free.

The County Administrator stated that he recently met with Chris Stacey, Career & Technical Center Principal and discussed the on-going need for skilled laborers in the work-place. He discussed the need of skilled laborers/demand occupations and used as an example, the need for knowledge in the field of CAD-technicians and engineering technicians as well as waste-water plant operators. He said that demand occupations were still strong in the region. School member Woodard stated that it takes time to develop these types of programs and recommended that a committee be established to work out the various challenges regarding shared services. School Board member Steve Davis mentioned the need to involve Southwest Virginia Community College and possibly other higher education institutions in this endeavor. The idea of internships with businesses and colleges were discussed, as well as holding summer camp/certification programs in the County.

Other potential shared services included information technology, and a general payroll system. Some of these services possibly could not be combined on the basis of confidentiality.

Chairman Anderson suggested that the implementation of a Shared Services Committee for the County & School System be placed on the June 2, 2009 Board of Supervisors agenda for discussion.

3. CONSTRUCTION UPDATE – SCHOOL RENOVATIONS

Charlie Simpson provided a school renovations/construction progress report:

- Windows, Springville Elementary: 100% complete with the other schools 80 to 90% complete
- Electrical, All schools: 50% to 60% complete pending cooperation from AEP with regard transformer installation, etc.
- HVAC , All schools: 70% to 80%

- Bathrooms, All schools: the bathrooms will be completed during summer recess. Stall doors for bathrooms in other schools will need to be upgraded in the future.

According to Mr. Simpson the renovations projects costs are right on budget – no huge adjustments or change orders will be necessary. Stimulus money can hopefully be used for needed projects that have been on the books for many years.

The subject of AEP – Appalachian Power’ potential 17% increase was addressed and how the increases would affect the school and county budget. The County Administrator and the County Attorney are investigating ways to be more energy efficient and hoped to have an RFP drafted for an energy consultant in the near future. The energy consultant would show the County ways to be more energy efficient.

4. STEP INCREASES –

Dr. Brenda Lawson stated that through attrition, no school employee would be losing their jobs this fiscal year. She reiterated that it would a difficult budget year, and there would be a higher pupil-teacher ratio. With the exception of kindergarten through third grade, class size would be increased, but said that the best possible services would be provided to all county students. She however stated because of difficult economic times ahead, next year the school system might have to cut positions.

Supervisor Hymes questioned the number of teachers scheduled to receive the larger pay step increases in the upcoming year. Jammie Lester, Clerk/Budget Director stated that 11 teachers were scheduled to receive the \$6,000 + step and 9 teachers were scheduled to receive the \$8,000 + step. Supervisor Hymes stated that it wasn’t right to not give the scheduled step increases and requested that the boards find money in their budgets to fund the step increase. Jammie Lester said the school board placed funding in the medical/insurance costs increases instead of giving the step increases. School Board member Davis said the employees would be better off financially with the insurance benefit. Supervisor Hymes stated that he felt the School Board should allow the employees to pay the increase in insurance cost and give them the step increase. School Board Member Conn disagreed. He said that this would be a detrimental salary loss to classified employees earning only \$8.00 or \$9.00 per hour and he most certainly would not place additional insurance costs on those employees. Supervisor Wimmer stated that he would not mind to pay a meals tax in the County to help fund teacher raises. Supervisor White & Hymes disagreed with any new taxes in the County.

Members discussed the structure of the pay scale system and with Supervisor White recommending that the salary step system be revised in the future.

Both groups agreed to look at all areas of the budget where additional savings possibly could be made in order to give the step increase. Supervisor Brewster and Wimmer said that County employees should be considered as well for a pay increase.

School Board Chairman, Mike Dennis stated that more money would be needed in order for the School System to give the salary step increases. Chairman Anderson reaffirmed the County’s shortage of revenue in the upcoming budget.

5. PRE-K PROGRAM

Supervisor Hymes voiced concern with regard to the elimination of the Pre-K Program at Springville Elementary and Tazewell Elementary. He said that the Pre-K Program only cost the school system \$103,000.00 out of a \$62,000,000.00 budget. He said the he had received numerous concerns from parents regarding the elimination of the Pre-K program. Bonnie Cash, Elementary Education Specialist spoke and said that the second Pre-K Program at Tazewell Elementary was eliminated because it was established for “at-risk” children and the lack of participation was the reason for the programs omission. Mrs. Cash said that other funding, such as grants were being pursued for the Pre-K Program and said that Tazewell County was one of two school divisions in the state chosen to write a \$3, 000,000.00 pre-school grant. Supervisor Hymes said that middle income pre-school children were caught in the middle and the program should not be targeted for only at-risk youth. He requested that money be found to restore the Pre-K Programs in the County.

6. ETHICS HOTLINE

The County Attorney, Eric Young enlightened the School Board with regard to the intended use of a County Employee Ethics Hotline. He said that the "hotline" could be utilized 24 hours per day, seven days a week for County employees to report violations of the personnel policy as well as other violations of law. The School Board agreed to review the County's agreement entered into with Employee Relations in order to consider such a "hotline" for school employees. The Board requested that the County Attorney provide the school board with a copy of the contract. The County Attorney further said that he was drafting a hotline policy with regard to how claims are administered and governed.

7. QUARTERLY MEETINGS

The subject of holding quarterly meetings with the School Board was addressed. Supervisor Brewster said he thought the best time to hold the meetings would be in March (pre-budget type meeting) and October (middle of the school year). Chairman Anderson reiterated the need to keep an open dialog between the two boards. School Member Davis suggested that the two boards alternate meeting with each other.

OTHER SCHOOL BOARD CONCERNS

School Board member, Cookie Johnson requested that the Board of Supervisors consider lump sum funding for fiscal year 2009-10, with School Board member Steve Davis stating that lump sum appropriations would be more efficient to the School System. He further stated that the two boards must have confidence and trust among each other.

In closing, School Board Chairman, Mike Dennis thanked the Board of Supervisors for the invitation to meet with them. Supervisor Hymes requested once again that the School Board find the money for the step increases.

Now, the Chairman of the Board of Supervisors called for a five (5) minute recess to give the School Board time to conduct unfinished business, after which the meeting was duly reconvened.

LANDFILL GROUNDWATER MONITORING –
PROPOSALS FOR PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERING SERVICES

Upon motion of Supervisor Hymes, seconded by Supervisor Wimmer and adopted by a vote of 5 to 0, with all members present voting in favor thereof and no one against the same, the Tazewell County Board of Supervisors hereby ranks Marshall Miller & Associates as the top ranked proposal and authorizes the County Administrator to negotiate with them regarding completion of the groundwater monitoring services at the Tazewell County Landfill. Should negotiations not be successful with Marshall & Miller, Tazewell County will proceed to negotiate with firm number two, Draper & Aden. The County Administrator, County Engineer and County Attorney are hereby authorized and directed to enter into negotiations in accordance with this action and to take such action as may be necessary and appropriate upon approval of the County Attorney. The Tazewell County Board of Supervisors reserves the right to retain the selected firm to provide design and completion of the groundwater monitoring services in the best interest of Tazewell County.

GRAHAM HIGH SCHOOL – PROJECT GRADUATION
\$2,000 RATIFIED FROM EASTERN DISTRICT FUNDS

Upon motion of Supervisor Anderson, seconded by Supervisor White and adopted by a vote of 5 to 0, with all members present and voting in favor thereof and no one against the same, the Tazewell County Board of Supervisors hereby ratifies the approval of \$2,000.00 from the Eastern District Funds, payable to Graham High School 2009 Project Graduation, C/O First Community Bank, Attn: Beverly Litz, 101 Sanders Lane, Bluefield, VA 24605. The County Administrator is hereby authorized and directed to issue said warrant in accordance with this action and which said warrant will be converted to negotiable check by the Treasurer of Tazewell County, Virginia (this check was previously issued – per request of David R. Anderson).

\$300.00 EASTERN DISTRICT FUNDS -
GRAHAM MIDDLE SCHOOL, FCCLA

Upon motion of Supervisor Anderson, seconded by Supervisor Wimmer and adopted by a vote of 5 to 0, with all members present voting in favor thereof and no one against the same, the Tazewell County Board of Supervisors hereby approves the amount of \$300.00 from the Eastern District Fund, contingent upon approval of the County Attorney, payable to Graham Middle School, Virginia FCCLA, State Leadership and Recognition Conference – category titled Chapter Showcase Manual – and will showcase Virginia in the national competition scheduled for July 11 – 16, 2009 in Nashville, TN. The \$300.00 will be used to complete registration expenses. Once approved by the County Attorney, the County Administrator is hereby authorized and directed to issue said warrant in accordance with this action and which said warrant will be converted to negotiable check by the Treasurer of Tazewell County, Virginia.

\$18,000 FROM FIRE DEPT. CAPITAL OUTLAY – 32010-8109
TO CLEARFORK VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT
REPAIRS TO PUMPER/TANKER

Upon motion of Supervisor Hymes, seconded by Supervisor Hymes, seconded by Supervisor Wimmer and adopted by a vote of 5 to 0, with all members present voting in favor thereof and no one against the same, the Tazewell County Board of Supervisors hereby approves the amount of \$18,000.00 from the Fire Department Capital Outlay Account # 32010-8109, payable to Clearfork Volunteer Fire Department, Attn: Russell Stowers, 7146 Clearfork Road, Bastian, VA 24314, for repairs to 81 Ford Pumper's tank, packing replacement and service of pump. The County Administrator is hereby authorized and directed to issue said warrant in accordance with this action and which said warrant will be converted to negotiable check by the Treasurer of Tazewell County, Virginia.

Member Brewster requested that the Falls Mills School property be discussed at the June 2, 2009 Board of Supervisors meeting.

The subject of recouping the lost sales tax money was addressed by Supervisor White. The County Attorney said that he was in the process of working with the Treasurer on a basis to recoup the money from the towns, but he could not disclose the ways publicly.

Member Hymes announced a Tannersville Broadband meeting at the Community Center on May 21 at 6:30 p.m.

Supervisor Wimmer stated that he would defer his Board Concerns to the June 2, 2009 regular meeting.

County Attorney stated that he circulated an email today with regard to a draft policy/guidelines for the Ethics Hotline as well as an update on the Sales Tax subject.

Chairman Anderson stated that the budget committee met with the Sheriff today with regard to 911 equipment issues. He said that the meeting went well.

ADJOURN

Now, there being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion of Supervisor Wimmer seconded by Supervisor White and adopted by a vote of 5 to 0, the meeting was adjourned.

The next regular meeting is scheduled for June 2, 2009 at 6:00 p.m.

David R. Anderson, Chairman

by: rg

Recess time 9:20 p.m.