

Regular Meeting, Wednesday, October 9, 2024, 7:00 p.m., Government Center, Verona, VA.

PRESENT: Jeffrey Slaven, Chairman
Pam Carter, Vice-Chair
Michael Shull
Butch Wells
Gerald Garber
Carolyn Bragg
Scott Seaton
Timothy K. Fitzgerald, County Administrator
Jennifer M. Whetzel, Deputy County Administrator
Nicole Price, Assistant County Attorney
Angie Michael, Executive Assistant

VIRGINIA: At an adjourned meeting of the Augusta County Board of Supervisors held on Wednesday, October 9, 2024, at 7:00 p.m., at the Government Center, Verona, Virginia, and in the 249th year of the Commonwealth....

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Chairman Slaven welcomed those present at the meeting.

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The following students from Wilson Memorial High School FFA led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance:

Kole Bickling is in 11th grade and is the FFA Chapter President for Wilson Memorial High School. He plans to attend Blue Ridge Community College and then transfer to Virginia Tech for a business management degree.

Crew Harris is a sophomore and the chapter Parliamentarian. He plans to major in agriculture as well as political science and then to law school.
Claire Batman

Crimora Davis is in 10th grade and serves as the chapter Reporter. She plans to do something with animal rehabilitation.

Claire Batman is in 10th grade and serves as the chapter Secretary. She plans to attend Blue Ridge Community College for two years and then transfer out and major in equine sciences.

Kate Batman is in 10th grade and serves as the treasurer. She plans to attend Blue Ridge Community College and then transfer out and major in equine sciences.

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Scott Seaton, Wayne District, delivered the invocation.

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October 9, 2024, at 7:00 p.m.

LEGISLATIVE PACKAGE

The Board discussed a draft of the 2025 Legislative Package.

Jennifer Whetzel, Deputy County Administrator, stated that VACo has released their preliminary legislative program and part of that has been incorporated into the County's package. Last year, the General Assembly provided some funding for a Regional Crisis Stabilization and Detox Center, added regional programs to the School Construction Assistance Program, provided help with wording for notices that appear in the paper and with allowing sites of fifty contiguous acres to be part of the funding criteria for some of the state grants. Ms. Whetzel reviewed the priorities for 2025. The priorities are similar to those in the past. They include behavioral health, I81 corridor, the Electoral Board and the number of positions that can be requested, LEOS for Animal Control and the 911 Center, Sovereign immunity, utility scale solar, the school funding formula for land use, and the School Construction Assistance Program guidelines and the Line of Duty Act for private agencies such as Bridgewater and Wintergreen, and public notice requirements. There was one addition for the Virginia Business Ready Sites Program. This was to support the Virginia Economic Development Partnership recommended financial amount dedicated annually to the Virginia Business Ready Sites Program.

Ms. Bragg questioned if the length of early voting could be shortened due to the cost?

Mr. Fitzgerald stated that what is in the proposed package is a direct reflection of a bill that was in last year that spoke the number of registrars that an Electoral Board is required to have. A statement could be added regarding the length of time or the cost.

The Board agreed to have this reviewed and added to the package.

Ms. Whetzel pointed out that the remainder of the package speaks to keeping local authority for taxing and land use decisions and unfunded mandates. In addition, the library added something similar to the thought of keeping local policies; to not have the state overwrite local policies related to the freedom to read and what is in the library. Also, each year there is discussion of a Certificate of Public Need. Sometimes it is in and sometimes it is out. It is at the Board's discretion whether it is included in the package.

Ms. Carter stated that citizens deserve competition and should have the ability to pick and choose different types of care and different providers. If you only offer one, they are going to be inconvenienced and have to travel if they do not choose to support that organization. She would like to see the Board eliminate that.

Mr. Wells stated that he fully supports the request of Certificate of Public Need.

Dr. Seaton stated that a Certificate of Public Need is anti-competition and competition improves access to quality health care. Last year it was recommended that instead of wording it where nothing changes, word it that the General Assembly is encouraged to improve COPN for patient safety, accreditation, quality of care, patient access, and charity care. He is asking for an improvement in the COPN that would improve those aspects. There has been a lot of money spent on Life Core and it is still not built out. The County is losing a return on investment by keeping COPN. Right now, COPN is tied to access care yet there is no data that shows that COPN improves care. The local hospitals provide really good care. The competition would not interfere with what they provide in indigent care.

CONSENT AGENDA (CONT'D)

Motion carried.

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MATTERS TO BE PRESENTED BY THE PUBLIC -- NONE

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MATTERS TO BE PRESENTED BY STAFF

The following was discussed:

- 1) Reminder of the VACo Conference in November.

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MATTERS TO BE PRESENTED BY THE BOARD

Mr. Garber moved, seconded by Ms. Carter, that the Board approve a funding request for the Clymore Elementary School playground in the amount of \$50,000.00.

Funding Source:	Middle River Infrastructure	709105-480121	\$16,666.67
	North River Infrastructure	709105-480131	\$16,666.67
	Beverly Manor Infrastructure	709105-480111	\$16,666.66

Vote was as follows: Yeas: Slaven, Carter, Shull, Garber, Wells, Bragg
And Seaton
Nays: None

Motion carried.

Mr. Garber moved that the Board approve a funding request from Weyers Cave/New Hope Little League for a concession building in the amount of \$75,000.00.

Funding Source:	Middle River Infrastructure	709105-480121	\$60,000.00
	Beverly Manor P&R Infrastructure	709105-480217	\$15,000.00

Vote was as follows: Yeas: Slaven, Carter, Shull, Garber, Wells, Bragg
And Seaton
Nays: None

Motion carried.

Ms. Bragg showed a slide show of pictures of the flooding that occurred in South River and also of the relief efforts that took place at the Government Center. She thanked everyone for their dedication and support during this time.

Mr. Shull questions if the water level in dams can be lowered in order to have room for more water in a rain event.

Mr. Fitzgerald stated that to the best of his knowledge it has not been done. This is something that could be discussed with Headwaters.

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Mr. Garber, seconded by Dr. Seaton, moved that the Board adjourn the meeting.

Motion carried.

Chairman _____ County Administrator _____