

Regular Meeting, Wednesday, April 9, 2025, 7:00 PM Government Center Main Board Room

1. **ROLE CALL:**

Gerald Garber  
Butch Wells  
Jeffrey Slaven  
Pam Carter  
Michael Shull  
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, April 9, 2025, at 7:00 PM at the Government Center Main Board Room, and in the 249<sup>th</sup> year of the Commonwealth...

Chairman Garber welcomed those present at the meeting.

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Jennifer Whetzel, Deputy County Administrator, led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

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Scott Seaton, Wayne District, delivered the invocation.

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2. **Consent Agenda**

Mr. Wells moved, seconded by Mr. Shull, that the Board approve the consent agenda as follows:

**MINUTES:**

Consider minutes from the following meetings:

- Staff Briefing, Monday, February 24, 2025

- Staff Briefing, Monday, March 24, 2025

CLAIMS:

Consider claims paid since March 1, 2025.

Vote was as follows:            Yeas: Garber, Wells, Slaven, Bragg, Shull, Seaton and Carter

Nays: None

Motion carried.

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(END OF CONSENT AGENDA)

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a. Consider minutes from the following meetings:

- Staff Briefing, Monday, February 24, 2025
- Staff Briefing, Monday, March 24, 2025

b. Consider claims paid since March 1, 2025.

**\*\* (END OF CONSENT AGENDA) \*\***

**3. Matters to Be Presented by the Public**

Steve Grepps spoke on behalf of the Office on Youth and their budget requests.

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**4. Matters to Be Presented by Staff**

NONE

**5. Matters to Be Presented by the Board**

Dr. Seaton questioned the status of broadband in the County.

Ms. Whetzel stated that the next step is extending line from the cabinet to the houses for service.

Dr. Seaton questioned a Facebook post regarding the animal Shelter holding a dog until the fines are paid.

Mr. Fitzgerald will look into it.

Dr. Seaton asked for an update on the Bunny Lu ordinance changes. He also suggests re-evaluating the solar ordinance.

Nicole Price, Assistant County Attorney, stated that they are working on the ordinance changes for Bunny Lu.

Ms. Carter thanked Staff on working diligently on the Troxel Gap tower outage. She also stated that she was a part of a meeting regarding the hub station being in Churchville.

Ms. Carter moved, seconded by Dr. Seaton, that the Board approve the hub model station be located in Churchville.

Ms. Bragg brought up concerns of this being premature and should be discussed further with all Board members. She recommends postponing the discussion to the Monday, April 21, 2025 worksession to allow the Board time to gather more information.

After Board discussion, it was agreed that the this would be brought back to the Board for discussion at the Staff Briefing on April 21, 2025.

Ms. Carter amended the motion, seconded by Dr. Seaton that the Board approve postponing discussion to the April 21, 2025 worksession.

Vote was as follows:           Yeas: Garber, Wells, Slaven, Bragg, Shull, Seaton and Carter

Nays: None

Motion carried.

Ms. Carter asked for clarification on the radio project and whether it was a one for one switch out.

Ms. Whetzel stated that this was never intended to be a one for one for all apparatus.

There is certain apparatus that would get radios replaced and a certain number of portables for upper leadership and extras to give out at the stations. The email went out to the volunteers in 2023 when the project started. Not every person will get a radio in career or volunteer.

Mr. Fitzgerald stated that based on the procedure for previous radio projects, the County will provide a certain number of radios. If there is a need over and beyond that amount, the volunteer stations will be required to purchase those radios.

Ms. Bragg asked that the Board consider using the \$120,000.00 from cigarette tax increase for pickle ball courts at Stuarts Draft Park. Previously, the Board approved that

staff begin looking into the project. It is projected that two courts would range approximately \$300,000.00. There is widespread community support for the courts. The Ruritan club as an organization has been fundraising for the project.

Mr. Garber suggested adding it to the worksession agenda for further discussion.

Mr. Shull reminded everyone of the Market Animal Show coming up in May.

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## 6. **Closed Session**

On motion of Mr. Wells, seconded by Mr. Shull, the Board went into closed session pursuant to:

### **(1) the personnel exemption under Virginia Code § 2.2-3711(A)(1)**

[discussion, consideration, or interviews of prospective candidates for employment; assignment, appointment, promotion, performance, demotion, salaries, disciplining, or resignation of specific public officers, appointees, or employees of any public body]:

- a. Boards & Commissions: Economic Development Authority
- b. County Attorney

### **(2) the real property exemption under Virginia Code § 2.2-3711(A)(3)**

[discussion or consideration of the acquisition of real property for a public purpose, or of the disposition of publicly held real property, where discussion in an open meeting would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the public body]:

- 1. Potential acquisition of a parcel of real estate in Augusta County for a public purpose.
- 2. Augusta County Circuit Court in Downtown Staunton

Dr. Seaton questioned why the public was not a part of the debate on options for the Circuit Court building.

Mr. Fitzgerald stated that the nature of the discussion would fall under a negotiating strategy that could adversely affect the County's position going forward if held publicly.

Nicole Price, Assistant County Attorney, stated that it is a Board determination if the discussion should be had publicly. The closed sessions provisions are there to protect, whether it is the strategy, pricing or length of a lease or a purchase.

Dr. Seaton asked that during closed session, he would like to learn what position would be adversely be affected.

Vote was as follows: Yeas: Garber, Wells, Slaven, Bragg, Shull, Seaton and Carter

Nays: None

Motion carried.

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On motion of Mr. Shull, seconded by Mr. Wells, the Board came out of Closed Session.

Vote was as follows: Yeas: Garber, Wells, Slaven, Bragg, Shull, Seaton and Carter

Nays: None

Motion carried.

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The Chairman advised that each member is required to certify that to the best of their knowledge during the closed session only the following was discussed:

1. Public business matters lawfully exempted from statutory open meeting requirements, and

2. Only such public business matters identified in the motion to convene the executive session.

The Chairman asked if there is any Board member who cannot so certify.

Hearing none, the Chairman called upon the County Administrator/ Clerk of the Board to call the roll noting members of the Board who approve the certification shall answer AYE and those who cannot shall answer NAY.

Roll Call Vote was as follows:

Yeas: Garber, Wells, Slaven, Bragg, Shull, Seaton and

Carter

Nays: None

Motion carried.

The Chairman authorized the County Administrator/Clerk of the Board to record this certification in the minutes.

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#### DISCUSSION AFTER CLOSED SESSION

Mr. Garber stated that the Board has accepted the resignation of James Benkahla, County Attorney, and have appointed Nicole Price as the Interim County Attorney.

Mr. Shull moved, seconded by Ms. Bragg, that the Board approve the appointment of Nicole Price as the Interim County Attorney.

Vote was as follows: Yeas: Garber, Wells, Slaven, Bragg, Shull, Seaton and Carter

Nays: None

Motion carried.

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#### 7. Adjournment

Dr. Seaton moved, seconded by Ms. Carter, that the Board adjourn the meeting.

Vote was as follows: Yeas: Garber, Wells, Slaven, Bragg, Shull, Seaton and Carter

Nays: None

Motion carried.

Minutes approved by the Board on Wednesday, May 14, 2025. The signed minutes can be reviewed in the County Administrator's Office.

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Chairman

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County Administrator

