Regular Meeting, Wednesday, August 11, 2021, 7:00 p.m. Government Center, Verona, VA.

PRESENT: Butch Wells, Vice-Chair
Pam Carter
Michael Shull
Scott Seaton
Jeffrey Slaven
Steven Morelli
Timothy K. Fitzgerald, County Administrator
Jennifer M. Whetzel, Deputy County Administrator
John Wilkinson, Director of Community Development
James Benkahla, County Attorney
Angie Michael, Executive Assistant

ABSENT: Gerald Garber, Chairman

VIRGINIA: At a regular meeting of the Augusta County Board of Supervisors held on Wednesday, August 11, 2021, at 7:00 p.m., at the Government Center, Verona, Virginia, and in the 246th year of the Commonwealth....

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Chairman Garber welcomed those present for the meeting.

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The following students from Buffalo Gap High School led the Pledge of Allegiance:

Ian Marshall, Principle
Elizabeth Click, Teacher and Student Council Association Advisor

Blaine Atkins is the Senior Executive Vice President and plans to attend college after graduating.
Amber Earhart is the Junior class President and plans to attend a local college to obtain a degree in teaching.
Chloe Emurian is the Sophomore class President and plans to attend Liberty University and study interior design.
Trinity Cline is the Sophomore class Public Relations Coordinator and plans to attend Washington University.

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Mr. Shull, Supervisor for the Riverheads District, delivered the invocation.

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PERSONAL PROPERTY TAX RELIEF PROGRAM -- RESOLUTION
The Board considered resolution establishing the rate of tax relief of qualifying vehicles for purposes of the Personal Property Tax Relief Act.

Jean Shrewsbury, Commissioner of the Revenue, stated that this is performed each year to determine how to allocate the personal property relief money. The new percentage is 32%, which is 4% less than last year. Multiple issues came up while

PERSONAL PROPERTY TAX RELIEF PROGRAM -- RESOLUTION
reviewing this process. The used vehicle prices have gone up and that has caused suv's and large trucks values to rise.

RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF AUGUSTA COUNTY, VIRGINIA

WHEREAS, the Personal Property Tax Relief Act of 1998, Va. Code §§ 58.1-3523 et seq. ("PPTRA"), has been substantially modified by the enactment of Chapter 1 of the Acts of Assembly, 2004 Special Session I (Senate Bill 5005), and the provisions of Item 503 of Chapter 951 of the 2005 Acts of Assembly (the 2005 revisions to the 2004-06 Appropriations Act).

WHEREAS, by its enactment of an ordinance on December 14, 2005 ("Ordinance"), the Board of Supervisors of Augusta County, Virginia (the "Board of Supervisors") has previously implemented such modifications of the PPTRA.

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors now desires to set the rate of tax relief for tax year 2021 for purposes of the Ordinance.

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF AUGUSTA COUNTY, VIRGINIA:

1. For purposes of § 3(c) of the Ordinance, the rate of tax relief with respect to qualifying vehicles with assessed values of more than $1,000, and applied to the first $20,000 in value of each such qualifying vehicle, shall be thirty-two (32%).

2. All other provisions of the Ordinance shall be implemented by the Commissioner of the Revenue or the County Treasurer, as applicable, including, without limitation, those set forth in § 3(b) of the Ordinance, pertaining to the elimination of personal property taxation of each qualifying vehicle with an assessed value of $1,000 or less, and in § 4, pertaining to liability of taxpayers whose taxes with respect to a qualifying vehicle for tax year 2005 or any prior tax year remain unpaid.

3. This Resolution shall take effect immediately upon its adoption.

Mr. Slaven moved, seconded by Mr. Shull, that the Board approve the resolution.

Vote was as follows: Yeas: Carter, Wells, Shull, and Slaven
Nays: Morelli and Seaton
Absent: Garber

Motion carried.

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COMMISSIONER OF THE REVENUE STAFFING REQUEST
The Board considered a request to change part-time staff position to a full-time.

Ms. Shrewsbury stated that this is a request for a staffing change in her office. The budget for 2021-2022 for the Commissioner's office included funding for two part-time positions. It is requested that the budget be amended in order to change this from two part-time positions to one full-time position. In September 2020 the Commissioner's office signed a contract to change real estate software. The software contractor mapped all of the real estate data and their office received the new system March of 2021. Since the conversion took place, they have been working with the data in the new system.

COMMISSIONER OF THE REVENUE STAFFING REQUEST (CONT'D)
Progress has been hampered for the lack of an individual with computer data analyst skills. Their office has had an intern working for them for the past six weeks. It is evident that in order for this software conversion to be successful there needs to be a staff person working on it full time. In addition, next spring there will be a need to issue RFB for the next general reassessment, which will start in July 2022. It is critical that we continue the software validation process and have the system ready to do the general reassessment next year. Ms. Shrewsbury proposes that funding for this request come from repurposing the current two part-time positions in this year's budget and utilize capital from the ERP process to fund the remainder for this year. Additional funding needed would be $35,431.00.

Ms. Carter questioned the figures requested from the budget.

Mr. Slaven reiterated how important it is to have someone with the skills to understand the software.

Mr. Shull asked how soon the position would be needed.

Ms. Carter asked why this was not included in the budget process for this year.

It is hard to predict when going through a transition. Once the transition took place, there was a lot of data to filter through. This type of person has to be incorporated in a countywide computer system.

Dr. Seaton moved, seconded by Mr. Slaven, that the Board approve the staffing request.

Vote was as follows:	Yeas:	Carter, Wells, Shull, Slaven, Seaton, and Morelli
	Nays:	None
	Absent:	Garber

Motion carried.

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EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS/EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT
The Board considered a staffing proposal.

Jennifer Whetzel, Deputy County Administrator, stated that this is a position request for the 911 Center. Emergency Management has grown over the years and that growth was emphasized with COVID. Duties related to emergency management are housed with ECC due to the department being the core of any emergency. Emergency duties are no longer just to manage a weather event and file the appropriate paperwork, they have expanded to assisting the greater community with planning for emergencies. The request is to create an Emergency Management Coordinator position that would report directly to Mr. Fitzgerald. Annual estimated cost would be $59,180.00, utilizing LEMPG grant funds of $14,882.00. FY22 budget would also include start-up costs for the office of $32,500.00.
The next position is a training position. Currently training is done as new hires are put in place. This is a position that would finalize training policies and new hires would train in a classroom setting. This will alleviate the Shift Supervisors and Senior Staff from training new hires on the floor and taking time from their dispatch duties. The goal would be to hire a Training Specialist and have a training program in place prior to hiring additional call taker staff. Annual estimated cost would be $63,495.

EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS/EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT (CONT'D)
The idea of call-taker positions is to take the volume of admin/business line off the dispatcher. New hires have the potential to succeed in one function vs not meeting the requirements of a dispatcher and therefore leaving employment. These positions will be considered during the regular budget process.

Mr. Morelli questioned if it was a good idea to hold off on hiring the call-taker positions.

Ms. Whetzel stated that any new staff that is hired is in training for months before new staff can be released and ready to cover shifts. Having the Training Specialist on board would allow the volume of work to fall back on the Training Specialist and allow dispatch to focus on their current position. Adding additional positions would only add additional people that need to be trained.

Ms. Carter would like to wait until the Directors position is filled and let that person be involved in the hiring process for the Training Specialist and the Emergency Management Coordinator.

Mr. Fitzgerald stated that for the training position, the Director would have input because the trainer would work with the Director within ECC. The Emergency Management Coordinator will be pulled out of ECC and report to the Administrator. They will work with the Emergency Coordinator, but have less input into the emergency management system as a whole.

Dr. Seaton stated the staffing is an issue across the state and country. The Training Specialist would be helpful for ECC to get closer to full staff.

Mr. Shull stated that it is more important to have the call-taker positions and the training position hired first. The Emergency Manager position could be hired later.

Mr. Fitzgerald stated that emergency management has become a full-time job that the Director has been doing up to this point. If the Emergency Management Coordinator position is not filled, the work will have to be evaluated to see who would assume those duties. Non-emergency calls are important, but emergency management is an ongoing activity now.

Dr. Seaton moved, seconded by Ms. Carter, that the Board approve hiring the Training Specialist and postpone hiring the Emergency Management Coordinator to allow for further discussion at the next Board meeting.

Mr. Shull stated that the Emergency Manager is going to coordinate with volunteer companies and there should be someone from the volunteer side sit in on the hiring process to provide their input. Key roles involve a number of people and they should be involved in whom is hired.

Mr. Wells stated that he has been responsible for overseeing a 911 Center in the past. There is a staffing issue in ECC and it needs to be addressed before it gets out of hand.

Vote was as follows: Yeas: Carter, Shull, and Seaton
Nays: Wells, Slaven and Morelli
Absent: Garber

Motion failed.

EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS/EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT (CONT'D)
Dr. Seaton moved, seconded by Mr. Slaven, that the Board approve hiring the Emergency Management Coordinator and the Training Specialist.

Mr. Shull amended the motion to add authorizing volunteers to give input during the hiring process.

Dr. Seaton and Mr. Slaven agree to the amendment.

Vote was as follows: Yeas: Wells, Shull, Slaven, Seaton, and Morelli
Nays: Carter
Absent: Garber

Motion carried.

Ms. Carter stated that she is opposed to hiring the Emergency Management Coordinator. It is the timing, not that she does not want to hire someone for this position. She would like to wait on hiring this position after the Director is in place.

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TAX REFUND REQUEST
The Board considered a refund request from the Commissioner of the Revenue for Anesthesia Associates of Augusta, PLC in the amount of $8,280.55.

James Benkahla, County Attorney, stated that Anesthesia Associates of Augusta, PLC purchased a business license on February 8, 2021 in the amount of $16,561.10. The partnership dissolved effective June 30, 2021. Therefore, the requested refund amount is credit for the remainder of 2021. Material and facts have been researched and everything is in order.

Dr. Seaton moved, seconded by Mr. Shull, that the Board approve the refund request.

Vote was as follows: Yeas: Carter, Wells, Shull, Slaven, Seaton, and Morelli
Nays: None
Absent: Garber

Motion carried.

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WAIVERS --NONE

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CONSENT AGENDA
Ms. Carter moved, seconded by Mr. Shull, that the Board approve the consent agenda as follows:

CONSENT AGENDA (CONT'D)
MINUTES
Consider minutes from the following meetings:
- Staff Briefing Meeting, Monday, May 24, 2021
- Regular Meeting, Wednesday, May 26, 2021
- Regular Meeting, Wednesday, June 9, 2021
- Staff Briefing Meeting, Monday, June 21, 2021

CLAIMS
Consider Claims paid since July 1, 2021

Vote was as follows:	Yeas:	Carter, Wells, Shull, Slaven, Seaton, and Morelli
	Nays:	None
	Absent:	Garber

Motion carried.

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MATTERS TO BE PRESENTED BY THE PUBLIC
Joel Snively, 180 Old Parkersburg Turnpike, Swoope, is concerned with the amount of delinquent taxes within the County.

Cory Miller submitted the following statement:
My name is Cory Miller from Staunton. In 2019, the Augusta County was made a second amendment sanctuary to protect our rights. I am here today to ask the county to become an established First Amendment and Medical Freedom sanctuary. Both the federal and state governments continue to over step their boundaries intruding on the rights of we the people. This is why one of the founding principles of this great republic is to not centralize government. At some point that power will be abused and we have begun to see the destruction of our constitution for decades, but even more significantly in the past few years. Under the disguise of safety and health, our rights are being withered away into a tyrannical rule moving closer and closer to communism. We have health care workers who worked unvaccinated through the pandemic now being threatened to lose their jobs if not taking a vaccine. State employees are being mandated a vaccine or go through mandatory testing. Vaccines take six to nine years at a minimum to determine they are safe for humans. These vaccines are authorized under Emergency Authorization Use and are therefore considered experimental. We do not know the long-term side effects of these vaccines so they should be voluntary, but the federal and state governments are mandating them. That is in violation of the Nuremburg Code itself. The PCR tests are proven to be unreliable and have falsely padded the number of COVID cases, and that is even stated by the CDC. The health acts imposed by this pandemic have destroyed families and small businesses across the nation. The wealth of the world's top billionaires has skyrocketed, and created nine new billionaires in Big Pharma alone, while our working class suffers from unjust mandates and lockdowns. Free speech is now suppressed entirely online. Soon there is going to only be a super elite class and a peasant class. To continue to preserve our constitution and republic ask for Augusta County to be declared a First Amendment and Medical Freedom Sanctuary to set an example for others in the Commonwealth. Thank You.

David Zimmerman, 120 Lee Highway, Verona, encourages the Board to take legal action against the protesting that has been happening due to the overtime required by the Sheriff's office.

August 11, 2021, at 7:00 p.m.

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MATTERS TO BE PRESENTED BY THE BOARD
Mr. Slaven is concerned with the fact that the News Leader article regarding the Letter of Support for Augusta Health did not mention Augusta County as being a supporter.

Mr. Shull is pleased with the success of the fair. He thanked law enforcement and emergency personnel for all of their help.

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MATTERS TO BE PRESENTED BY STAFF
Mr. Fitzgerald discussed the following:

1) Reminder of the Hazardous Material Waste Day on September 18, 2021.
2) VACo County Officials Summit is next Thursday in Richmond.
3) A 9-11 event will be held on the Veranda at the Government Center to recognize the twenty year anniversary.

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CLOSED SESSION
On motion of Mr. Shull, seconded by Dr. Seaton, the Board went into closed session pursuant to:

(1) the real property exemption under Virginia Code § 2.2-3711(A)(3) [discussion of the acquisition for a public purpose, or disposition, of real property]:

A. Augusta County Courthouse

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

Vote was as follows: Yeas: Carter, Wells, Shull, Slaven, Seaton, and Morelli
Nays: None
Absent: Garber

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.

CLOSED SESSION (CONT'D)
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.

Vote was as follows: Yeas: Carter, Wells, Shull, Slaven, Seaton, and Morelli
Nays: None
Absent: Garber

Motion carried.

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

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ADJOURNMENT
There being no other business to come before the Board, Mr. Shull moved, seconded by Mr. Slaven that the Board adjourn subject to call of the Chairman.

Vote was as follows: Yeas: Carter, Wells, Shull, Slaven, Seaton, and Morelli
Nays: None
Absent: Garber

Motion carried.

Gerald W Garber
Chairman

County Administrator

h:8-11min.2021