Regular Meeting, Wednesday, December 10, 2025, 7:00 PM Government Center Main Board Room

ROLE CALL:

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

VIRGINIA: At an adjourned meeting of the Augusta County Board of Supervisors held on Wednesday, December 10, 2025, at 7:00 PM at the Government Center Main Board Room, and in the 250th year of the Commonwealth...

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Chairman Garber welcomed those present at the meeting.

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Angie Michael led the Board of Supervisors in the Pledge of Allegiance.

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Gerald Garber, Middle River District, delivered the invocation.

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1. **Audit Update**

Misty Cook, Director of Finance, stated that typically in December the Auditors give a presentation on the results of annual audit for the County. However, the audit for 2025 is not completed at this time. There have been challenges within the Finance Department with a long tenured employee retiring and the new financial software. The idea of delaying the audit to prevent potential misstatements was presented to the Audit Committee prior to the meeting. It is anticipated to have a February presentation of the audit to the Board of Supervisors. Ms. Cook will put a statement on the County's website informing the public that the audit deadline was not met and the reason for it, which is in accordance with the state code requirements.

Mr. Wells stated that in the Audit Committee meeting the Auditors commented to say that this came as no surprise to them. It is understandable with implementing a new financial software and having significant turnover within the department. There is no indication of a financial problem with Augusta County.

Ms. Carter asked what the consequences would be for missing the audit deadline. Ms. Cook stated that to her knowledge there are no consequences per state code. The only requirement is to inform the Board of Supervisors and post it on the website until the audit complete and posted.

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2. Entrance Sign to Government Center Complex

The Board considered a proposal from Moseley to develop construction bid documents for the new entrance sign to the Government Center. This project will be bid after construction of the courthouse and Dick Huff Lane improvements. Proposal is for $15,943.00 and will be funded from the courthouse project budget.

Candy Hensley, Assistant County Administrator, stated that this is an amendment to the Mosley's contract for the courthouse to develop the construction plans that would be for the sign that will be at the entrance of Route 11. In April the Board approved an amendment to create a new sign that would be part of the courthouse project and the sign would be constructed as part of the Branch Builds contract. Due to timing with Dick Huff Lane improvements, this will need to be a separate project and not a part of the courthouse project contract. This amendment will allow the entrance sign to be a stand-alone project. Once Dick Huff Lane is complete the project will be put out for bid. The amendment is in the amount of $15,943.00.

Dr. Seaton questioned if the money that was previously approved for this project has been spent.

Ms. Hensley stated that eighty percent of the money has been spent. What was previously approved was simply a submittal to Branch Builds to get a price to do a change order for their contract. Now the County is switching to doing a full set of design build plans with specifications. The courthouse will be completed before the improvements to Dick Huff Lane are complete.

Dr. Seaton is uncertain why the County would have to pay Moseley an additional $15,000.00

Ms. Hensley pointed out that it is a completely separate set of bid plans. It was originally being presented as a change order to Branch Builds for the current courthouse contract. Now it is switching to a full set of construction plans with specifications to allow it to be bid out as a separate project. The issue with the completion of Dick Huff Lane was not determined until after the amendment was already in place.

Dr. Seaton would like more details on what Moseley has completed and the hours spent on this currently. It seems like money is being spent and then it is being spent again on the same thing.
Mr. Shull moved, seconded by Ms. Carter, that the Board postpone until the January 26, 2026 worksession.

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

Nays: None

Motion carried.

3. **<u>Circuit Court Statue</u>**

The Board considered a proposal from Moseley to develop construction bid documents in order to move Lady Justice to the new courthouse in Verona. Proposal includes design to physically move the statue, establishing it on a pedestal in a landscaped area near the new courthouse, and capping the current circuit courthouse. Included are services for a preliminary construction estimate, submittal reviews, and assistance with construction administration. They have included supporting services for the application to the Staunton Historical Committee.

Ms. Hensley stated that this is a proposal from Moseley Architects to develop construction bid documents to move the statue from the 1901 Circuit Courthouse to the new courthouse in Verona. The statue will be established in a landscaped area on a footing and a pedestal and a cap will be placed where the statue is currently. Included in the proposal is a full package of bid plans and a preliminary cost estimate will be prepared using a subcontractor. Moseley will assist with the Staunton Historical Preservation Committee to go through the approval process with the City of Staunton. Also included is bid assistance and construction administrative services, respond to bidder questions, issue addendums and assist with preconstruction conference and review submittals. The total estimate is $63,107.00. This includes $24,196.00 for design, $4,163.00 for estimating services, $9,984.00 to assist with the Staunton Historical Committee process, and $24,764.00 for bid assistance and construction administration.

Ms. Bragg questioned why we would pay for design when it is uncertain if it can be moved.

Ms. Hensley stated that the City of Staunton will request the details of what will be done and what will be put in its place. It is written in the contract that the project can be stopped at any time and only be billed for the work that has been completed.

Mr. Slaven stated that he and Mr. Wells have agreed to fund the cost from their infrastructure accounts.

Dr. Seaton would like to postpone this until after January 1, 2026 when the two new Board members are in place. He has not had an overwhelming input from citizens that would like to move the statue. Spending the money is reckless and moving the statue is determined by the Staunton Historical Preservation Committee. The County has not had a positive record with the committee.

Mr. Slaven stated that the historical committee is only one piece of the equation.

Ms. Carter moved, seconded by Dr. Seaton, that the Board postpone consideration until after the new Board members are in place and bring it to the January worksession for discussion.

Ms. Bragg stated that the current Board members are in place until the end of the year and have the ability to make decisions, which should not be taken from them just because their term is ending.

Mr. Slaven pointed out that this involved a one hundred twenty-five-year-old piece of history for the County. This is a one-time investment.

Dr. Seaton stated that the cost would be well over $63,000.00 to move the statue. How would moving the statue improve the quality of life of citizens in the County?
The Board voted on the motion by Ms. Carter to delay to the January worksession.

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

Motion failed.

Mr. Slaven moved, seconded by Ms. Bragg, that the Board approve funding from the North River and Beverley Manor Infrastructure accounts in the amount of $31,553.00 each.

Dr. Seaton amended the motion to not allow Moseley to work on this project until after the January Worksession.

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

Motion failed.

The Board voted on the motion made by Mr. Slaven to approve the funding from the North River and Beverley Manor infrastructure accounts.

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

Motion carried.

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4. **<u>Consent Agenda</u>**

Mr. Wells moved, seconded by Mr. Shull, that the Board approve the Consent Agenda as follows:

<u>CLAIMS:</u>
Consider claims paid since November 1, 2025

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

Motion carried.
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(END OF CONSENT AGENDA)

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5. **<u>Matters to Be Presented by the Public</u>**

Eric Bond, Augusta County Schools Superintendent, thanked the Board for their support during his time as School Superintendent. He also recognized the two outgoing Board members and thanked them for their leadership.

Tracy Martin, Craigsville Volunteer Fire Department, thanked Ms. Carter and Mr. Wells for their support.
Mary Ellen Whitehouse, Waynesboro, is the owner of Bunny Lu Adoptions. She expressed her disappointment with the Board of Supervisors and their decision to not allow the Bunny Lu business to continue operation in the current location. She also stated that the way the County Attorney portrayed the situation about the property in Prince William County without the proper details and resolution had a very negative impact on the Board's opinion of Bunny Lu before the vote was taken.

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

Mr. Fitzgerald thanked Ms. Carter and Mr. Wells for their service to Augusta County.

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

Mr. Shull showed his appreciation to Ms. Carter and Mr. Wells. He also wished the staff a Merry Christmas.

Mr. Fitzgerald presented a request from the Riverheads Elementary PTA for their playground project. He stated that the current estimate on the playground is $150,000.00. The PTA has worked hard at fundraising and has raised $80,000.00. The PTA is requesting $70,000.00 to be able to complete the project.

Mr. Shull moved, seconded by Mr. Slaven, that the Board approve a funding request for the Riverheads Elementary School playground equipment.

Funding Source:	Riverheads P&R Infrastructure	$30,000.00
	Pastures P&R Infrastructure	$20,000.00
	Beverley Manor P&R Infrastructure	$10,000.00
	South River P&R Infrastructure	$10,000.00

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

Motion carried.

Ms. Bragg stated that Augusta County is the second largest ag county in Virginia. Ag labs are developed to assist students with their training and leadership and responsibility and are considered an extension of the 4H and FFA programs. Stuarts Draft High School has property for a new ag lab and is in the process of raising funds for this project. There has been a fencing donation and their next step is the entrance and road portion. They had a goal for the end of the year that has not been met and have asked for assistance with meeting that goal.

Ms. Bragg moved, seconded by Ms. Carter, that the Board approve a funding request for the Stuarts Draft High School Ag Project.

Funding Source: South River Infrastructure $20,000.00
Vote was as follows: Yeas: Garber, Wells, Slaven, Bragg, Seaton, Shull,

and Carter

Nays: None

Motion carried.

Mr. Wells moved that the Board give a half day on Christmas Eve to employees.

Ms. Carter moved, seconded by Ms. Bragg, to amend the motion to give employees a full day off for Christmas Eve.

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

Motion carried.

Mr. Wells stated that Stuarts Draft Elementary has been working on improving the playground. The PTA has raised over $100,000.00 and they are asking for assistance from the Board of Supervisors to assist with the cost in purchasing three pieces of playground equipment.

Mr. Wells moved, seconded by Ms. Bragg, that the Board approve a funding request for the playground at Stuarts Draft Elementary School.

Funding Source:	Beverley Manor P&R Infrastructure	$24,232.00
	Pastures P&R Infrastructure	$10,000.00

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

Motion carried.

Ms. Carter stated that she had planned to accumulate funds to help with the Churchville
Fire Department project, however the Board has voted to put that project on hold. So she would like to share funding to some of the other fire departments.

Ms. Carter moved, seconded by Dr. Seaton, that the Board approve a funding request from Craigsville Volunteer Fire Department for equipment and payoff squad 85.

Funding Source: Pastures Infrastructure $25,000.00

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

Motion carried.

Ms. Carter moved, seconded by Mr. Wells, that the Board approve a funding request from Swoope Volunteer Fire Department for paving at the station, not to exceed $70,000.00.

Funding Source: Pastures Infrastructure $40,000.00
Beverley Manor Infrastructure $30,000.00
Vote was as follows: Yeas: Garber, Wells, Slaven, Bragg, Seaton, Shull, and Carter
Nays: None

Motion carried.

Ms. Carter moved, seconded by Mr. Shull, that the Board approve a funding request from the Churchville Volunteer Fire Department in the amount of $144,000.00.

Funding Source: Pastures Infrastructure Ambulance $104,000.00
Pastures Infrastructure Building Improvements $ 40,000.00

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

Motion carried.
Dr. Seaton asked if the owner of the Staunton Mall property had a timeline on completion.

Mr. Wolfe stated that he would reach out to them.

Dr. Seaton asked for the status of Celebrity Lane and 1906 Jefferson Highway.

Mr. Wolfe stated that both properties remain in violation.

Dr. Seaton asked for the status on the design and estimates on the playground at Fishersville Library.

Ms. Whetzel stated that staff met to review the current footprint of the playground as well as the setbacks, the parking and the accessibility to the ball fields. The next step is to talk with the library about which patrons are using the playground to attempt to scope the new playground for the age group that uses it the most.

Mr. Slaven stated that he attended a State FFA event and Dr. Bond was recognized for his contribution and commitment to vocational agriculture for Augusta County. He also thanked Ms. Carter and Mr. Wells for their service to the County.

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8. **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: Library Board, Planning Commission, Youth Commission, Valley Community Services Board

(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]:

a. Potential acquisition of a parcel of real estate in Augusta County for a public purpose.

3. **the legal counsel exemption under Virginia Code § 2.23711(A)(8)**
[consultation with legal counsel employed or retained by a public body regarding specific legal matters requiring the provision of legal advice by such counsel. Nothing in this subdivision shall be construed to permit the closure of a meeting merely because an attorney representing the public body is in attendance or is consulted on a matter]:

a. Potential acquisition of a parcel of real estate in Augusta County for a public purpose.

b. Augusta County's new courthouse construction
c. Relocation of the County's Lady Justice statue

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 Ms. Carter, the Board came out of Closed Session.

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

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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BOARD AND COMMISSIONS

Dr. Seaton moved, seconded by Ms. Carter, that the Board appoint Mark LaRosa to serve a term on the Valley Community Services Board.

Vote was as follows: Yeas: Garber, Wells, Slaven, Shull, Bragg, Seaton and Carter
Nays: None
Motion carried.

Ms. Carter moved, seconded by Dr. Seaton, that the Board appoint Steven Rae to serve on the Youth Commission.

Vote was as follows: Yeas: Garber, Wells, Slaven, Shull, Bragg, Seaton and Carter
Nays: None
Motion carried.

Mr. Shull moved, seconded by Ms. Bragg, that the Board re-appoint Kyle Leonard to serve a term on the Planning Commission.

Vote was as follows: Yeas: Garber, Wells, Slaven, Shull, Bragg, Seaton and Carter
Nays: None
Motion carried.

Mr. Shull moved, seconded by Ms. Bragg, that the Board appoint Catherine Schleider to serve a term on the Library Board.

Vote was as follows: Yeas: Garber, Wells, Slaven, Shull, Bragg, Seaton and Carter
Nays: None
Motion carried.

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Ms. Price stated that the Chair may want to entertain a motion for the County to proceed after review and amendment by the County Attorney to sign a contract for the purchase of two parcels of land adjacent to Riverheads School consisting of approximately twenty-eight acres (TMP 82-64 and 73-60A) for the amount of $550,000.00.

Mr. Shull moved, seconded by Dr. Seaton, that the Board approve moving forward with the properties mentioned above by Ms. Price in the amount of $550,000.00.

Mr. Fitzgerald pointed out that this a part of a grant program and Mr. Shull would be funding the portion not covered by the grant from the Riverheads Infrastructure account.

Vote was as follows: Yeas: Garber, Wells, Slaven, Shull, Bragg, Seaton and Carter
Nays: None
Motion carried.
Ms. Price stated that the Chair may want to also entertain a motion for an appropriation or transfer of funds from the Riverheads Infrastructure account in the amount, not to exceed, $21,000.00 for costs related to this purchase such as appraisal, survey and closing costs.

Mr. Shull moved, seconded by Dr. Seaton, that the Board approve funding from the Riverheads Infrastructure account for costs related to this purchase, not to exceed $21,000.00.

Vote was as follows: Yeas: Garber, Wells, Slaven, Shull, Bragg, Seaton and Carter
Nays: None
Motion carried.

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9. **Adjournment**

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

Vote was as follows: Yeas: Garber, Wells, Slaven, Bragg, Seaton, Shull, and Carter
Nays: None
Motion carried.

Minutes approved by the Board on Wednesday, February 11, 2026 The signed minutes can be reviewed in the County Administrator's Office.

Chairman County Administrator