

At a regular meeting of the Board of Supervisors, Alleghany County, Virginia held on Tuesday, May 5, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. in the Alleghany County Governmental Complex, Covington, Virginia, thereof:

PRESENT: G. Matt Garten, Chairman  
Stephen A. Bennett, Vice-Chairman  
Shannon P. Cox  
James M. Griffith (electronic)  
Cletus W. Nicely  
Richard Lee Shull  
M. Joan Vannorsdall (electronic)

and Jonathan A. Lanford, County Administrator  
Ryan D. Muterspaugh, Director of Public Safety  
Suzanne T. Adcock, Director of Finance (electronic)  
Jim Guynn, County Attorney (electronic)  
Melissa A. Munsey, Deputy Clerk to the Board

CALL TO ORDER:

The Chairman called the regular meeting to order. Mrs. Cox gave the invocation and the audience remained standing for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. Garten stated that this meeting is being held pursuant to and in compliance with ordinance O-20-2 which was adopted on April 3, 2020. The following Board members are physically present: Matt Garten, Steve Bennett, Shannon Cox, Cletus Nicely, and Richard Shull. The following Board members are electronically present: James Griffith and Joan Vannorsdall. He commented that public comment for this meeting was received by Melissa Munsey by 5:00 p.m. today and will be read during that section of the agenda. Notice of the opportunity for the public to access this electronic meeting was provided to the Virginian Review, the Alleghany Journal, local radio stations, and posted on the County's Facebook page. He asked that each Board member participating wait until their name is called before commenting on each agenda topic.

MINUTES:

Hearing no corrections or deletions, the Chairman declared the following minutes approved as submitted: (1) a special call meeting held on April 3, 2020; and (2) a regular meeting of April 7, 2020.

Mr. Garten stated that Item 9D (bonus for Social Services employees) is being removed from the agenda.

PUBLIC HEARING AND APPROVAL - AMENDMENT TO THE COUNTY OPERATING BUDGET FOR FY 19-20 (SCHOOL CAPITAL FUND):

Public Hearing was held to consider an amendment to the County Operating Budget for Fiscal Year 2019-20 in the amount of \$1,141,788. The amendment is needed for funds accumulated in the School Capital fund which will be expended in this fiscal year on capital projects.

The Chairman announced that this public hearing was advertised in the Virginian Review on Tuesday, April 28, 2020 in accordance with the Code of Virginia. He then called the public hearing to order.

Mr. Keven Rice, Director of Finance for the school system, reviewed a memo which was included in the agenda packet. The memo is as follows:

*This correspondence serves as a request for supplemental appropriation for the 2019-2020 fiscal year in the following particulars:*

*Fund 10 - School Capital supplemental appropriation in the amount of \$1,141,788.00. A total of \$947,891.00 was appropriated for FY2020. A number of capital expenditures that were to occur in FY2019 were delayed and have been paid, or will be paid, in FY2020. In addition, it is anticipated that the full roof replacement cost at Callaghan Elementary School will be paid in FY2020. As a result, a supplemental appropriation in the amount of \$1,141,788.00 is needed for Fund 10 - School Capital.*

*Given the unique circumstances that COVID-19 has presented for conducting public meetings, please advise me if I need to be present in person or virtually, and the date of such, related to this request for a supplemental appropriation. Thank you.*

Mr. Rice added that some of the purchases that did not occur in FY19 included school buses, roof at Sharon, AC replacement at Sharon, New Tech renovations, restroom upgrades at AHS, carpet at CMS, roof at Callaghan, etc. He commented that the funds for the supplemental appropriation are part of their fund balance.

Mr. Nicely asked how much money is in the fund balance. Mr. Rice replied that there is currently approximately \$1.7 million in the fund balance. He mentioned that they also have other pending capital projects (i.e., HVAC controls, cafeteria AC unit, security grant match, etc.).

The Board commented on maintenance of the buildings being important and a roof is needed at Callaghan.

There being no one else who wished to speak, the Chairman declared the public hearing closed.

On motion of Mr. Bennett, seconded by Mr. Shull, that the Board waive its policy of not acting on a public hearing on the same night.

Unanimously adopted by the following roll call vote:

Shannon P. Cox	Yes
James M. Griffith	Yes
Cletus W. Nicely	Yes
Richard Lee Shull	Yes
M. Joan Vannorsdall	Yes
Stephen A. Bennett	Yes
G. Matt Garten	Yes

On motion of Mr. Bennett, seconded by Mrs. Cox, that the following resolution be adopted:

BE IT RESOLVED that the Alleghany County Board of Supervisors, after holding a public hearing on May 5, 2020 to amend the FY 19-20 budget in the amount of \$1,141,788, hereby budget and approve the following supplemental appropriation due to funds accumulated in the School Capital fund which will be expended in this fiscal year on capital projects:

<u>Fund Balance</u>	
Fund 214 - Fund Equity (214-33001)	(\$1,141,788)
<u>Expenditure Account</u>	
Fund 214 - School Capital Improvements (6166-57009)	\$1,141,788

Unanimously adopted by the following roll call vote:

Shannon P. Cox	Yes
James M. Griffith	Yes
Cletus W. Nicely	Yes
Richard Lee Shull	Yes
M. Joan Vannorsdall	Yes
Stephen A. Bennett	Yes
G. Matt Garten	Yes

PUBLIC COMMENT (5 MINUTE TIME LIMIT):

Mr. Lanford stated that an email has been received from Ms. Gayle Hillert regarding the proposed CDBG application. He will read her comments during that part of the agenda.

MS. SUSAN HAMMOND, VDOT RESIDENT ENGINEER - VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION UPDATE:

Mr. Lanford stated that a report has been received from Ms. Susan Hammond, VDOT Resident Engineer, on the following VDOT activities:

Maintenance

- *Finished spreading stone on all of our dirt roads. We are still taking the tractor and rake around to dress up.*
- *Installed new pipe on Rt. 619 Hayes Gap Rd.*
- *Replacement pipes on Rt. 600 Indian Draft Rd. and Rt. 610 Bennetown Rd.*
- *Placed plant mix patches in various locations to prepare for the upcoming slurry seal contractor.*
- *Storm cleanup/repairs (trees, debris, leaf dams, Rt. 639 pipe replacement).*
- *Boom axe brush cutting on Rt. 610 Bennetown Rd. and Rt. 608 Wolfe Rd.*

Construction

- *Currently excavating the slope adjacent to Rt. 696. New waterline and sanitary sewer installation is 75% complete. Temporary traffic signals are nearly operational. Once signals are operational, then we will have soldier pile installation, sheeting, more excavating, and bridge demo on Rt. 1308.*

Mr. Lanford asked the Board to contact him or Ms. Hammond with any comments or issues.

APPROVE AMENDMENT TO THE LEASE AGREEMENT WITH CROWN CASTLE TOWER COMPANY FOR THE CLIFTON FORGE TOWER SITE:

Mr. Muterspaugh reviewed a memo from him to the Board which is included in the agenda packet. The memo is as follows:

*The County's site lease with Crown Castle GT Company, LLC for the Clifton Forge tower site (tower on Iron Gate Hill above the gap) requires an amendment for the inclusion of ice shields to protect the microwave dishes. These are two large metal covers that keep the ice that builds up on the tower in the winter months from falling on the dishes. We have successfully negotiated with Crown Castle to bring the cost down significantly for this change. The original proposed cost was an additional \$875 per month lease payment beginning immediately; however, we were able to bring the cost down to \$200 per month and delay the first payment until FY21 after several conversations with Crown Castle. The current monthly lease payment for the Clifton Forge tower site is \$2,266. The additional \$200 per month will take effect after July 1, 2020 and will be planned for in the upcoming budget year.*

*County staff is requesting the Board to give authorization to the County Administrator to sign and execute the amendment with Crown Castle GT Company, LLC on behalf of the County. The document has been reviewed by the County Attorney's Office. Please let me know if you have any questions. Thank you.*

Mr. Muterspaugh added that the other towers have shields and this is an omission that was caught.

Mr. Lanford stated that this was an oversight in the initial design and Harris is paying for the actual purchase and installation of the ice shields. He commented that the amendment is for tower space, which would have been more originally, had Crown Castle been aware the ice shields were to be installed. He stated that Mr. Muterspaugh negotiated with Crown Castle from an additional \$875 per month down to the current \$200 per month.

Mrs. Cox commented that the ice shields will help with potential maintenance/damage to the tower.

Ms. Vannorsdall stated that she appreciates greatly that Mr. Muterspaugh was able to negotiate the additional lease amount down.

Mr. Bennett commented that with a project this size if this is the only thing missed then you are doing a great job. He mentioned that if not for the mistake the lease would have cost more in the beginning.

On motion of Mr. Shull, seconded by Mrs. Cox, that the following resolution be adopted:

BE IT RESOLVED that the Allegheny County Board of Supervisors authorize Mr. Jonathan A. Lanford, County Administrator, to execute an amendment to the lease agreement with Crown Castle Tower Company at the Clifton Forge tower site, in form approved by the County Attorney.

Adopted by the following roll call vote:

Shannon P. Cox	Yes
James M. Griffith	Yes
Cletus W. Nicely	No
Richard Lee Shull	Yes
M. Joan Vannorsdall	Yes
Stephen A. Bennett	Yes
G. Matt Garten	Yes

APPROVE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE CITY OF COVINGTON AND THE COUNTY FOR A SHARED EMERGENCY RADIO TECHNICIAN POSITION:

Mr. Muterspaugh stated that we are getting close to the end of the radio project. He commented that, with some delays dealing with the pandemic, final acceptance should be in the fall of this year. He mentioned that radio installations are in progress. He stated that there is a draft Memorandum of Understanding and job description in the agenda packet in relation to the hiring of a shared Radio Technician position with Covington. He commented that we have gone from two tower sites to nine with approximately 1,000 users on the system and the capability to expand. He stated that this position is needed to oversee and maintain the system (i.e. programming and installing new radios, system updates, each radio has individual identity to keep up with for safety reasons, etc.). He mentioned that Rockbridge County has a similar position. He commented that training will begin this summer on the system.

There was some discussion on who the person would answer to (would answer to Mr. Muterspaugh and Chief of Police Chris Smith); if this is part of the money for maintenance (it is not); if this is a new position (it is); what is the salary for the

position (\$82,000 plus benefits to be split 50/50 with Covington); if the County would be the fiscal agent (yes); the hiring of this position is contingent upon Board and City Council approval of the MOU which gives framework of the position, as well as funding approved during the budget process; this position should have been part of the discussion of the overall tower project; there should be a savings by not using an outside contractor as well as consistency and accountability; initial training would be with Harris and then on-line training needed to keep current; etc.

On motion of Mrs. Cox, seconded by Ms. Vannorsdall, that the following resolution be adopted:

BE IT RESOLVED that the Alleghany County Board of Supervisors approve the “Memorandum of Understanding Between the City of Covington, Virginia and Alleghany County, Virginia for a Shared Emergency Radio Technician Position.”

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board authorize Mr. Jonathan A. Lanford, County Administrator, to sign the abovementioned memorandum of understanding on behalf of the County.

Unanimously adopted by the following roll call vote:

Shannon P. Cox	Yes
James M. Griffith	Yes
Cletus W. Nicely	Yes
Richard Lee Shull	Yes
M. Joan Vannorsdall	Yes
Stephen A. Bennett	Yes
G. Matt Garten	Yes

DISCUSS POSSIBLE CDBG APPLICATION FOR THE ALLEGHANY HIGHLANDS TO ASSIST WITH COVID-19 PANDEMIC:

Mr. Lanford stated that there is information in the agenda packet regarding information on the CDBG program on Virginia Funding Opportunities for COVID-19 Response. He commented that he and others (Chamber of Commerce, AHEDC, other local governments) have spoken with Mr. Matt Weaver of DHCD regarding the program and plan to do an application for the community as a whole. He mentioned that initial funds are being rolled out for local small businesses that apply (20 businesses at \$1,500 each) and we could apply for additional funds to support the program although DHCD is not sure at this time. He reviewed examples of possible projects from the information sheet (i.e. stimulating economic business to transition a building to make PPE, etc.). He read the three goals listed on the information sheet which are:

- *Assist units of local government and communities respond to the health and economic impact of COVID-19 by supporting Urgent Need recovery activities.*
- *Collect best practices and create a network of resource sharing.*
- *Provide up to \$6,550,000 in Planning and Open Submission (including urgent need) Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding during the 2020 funding cycle to address issues created or worsened by COVID-19.*

He commented that this is the first required meeting and the next public meeting would need to be a more concrete proposal. He read the email received from Ms. Gayle Hillert, President of the Masonic Theatre Preservation Association, on the subject. The email is as follows and is a part of the records:

*On the COVID-19 section of the CDBG website, under community development, the overview includes the statements that Community Development activities build stronger and more resilient communities. These activities address economic development projects, public facilities, community centers, and public services among others. It also states that this requires systematic action by state and local government. The implication is that offering assistance to these types of organizations, non-profits in addition to local businesses, is a duty and responsibility of local governments.*

*Our world, our country, and our community is undergoing a human and health crisis which has led to an economic crisis for our residents, our non-profits and businesses, and our local governments.*

*CDBG Community Development Grants provide flexible grants to help cities, counties and states recover from declared federal disasters. The grants focus on low-income areas. We are in a low income area, a national disaster was declared on March 13, and I can guarantee you that Alleghany Highlands' non-profits and small businesses desperately need assistance to recover.*

*In a region like ours, the fabric of the community is stitched together by non-profits as well as small businesses. Since March, although I've applied for over a dozen grants and financial assistance programs, because The Historic Masonic Theatre is a non-profit, we often do not qualify for what is currently available.*

*Forty-five percent of our revenue is unearned revenue—donations, pledges and grants have been and will be severely affected by the economic ramifications of COVID-19. Our earned revenue is determined by rentals and ticket sales—we have had no revenue since March 14, yet the bills continue to arrive right on time.*

*Non-profits experience a double disaster, the loss of both unearned and earned revenue, and as a result non-profit discussions have gone from sustainability to survivability. Yet in the case of the Theatre, our existence goes beyond our own survival to the survival of our community. Thirty-five percent of our programs are community programs, offered free of charge.*

*Our economic impact on the Alleghany Highlands is 2.3 million dollars—huge. Because our losses during this crisis are also huge, the ability to contribute to the region is significant. We are not asking for a handout, we are asking for a partnership where we also provide significant economic, social, and educational impact to the community.*

*In your CDBG discussions and decision-making regarding offering grants to the region, please include non-profits as well as small businesses. If possible, the grants should offer easily obtained cash flow solutions to non-profits. Our intangible contributions to our region include resiliency, strength, comfort, familiarity, a place to celebrate, a place to gather, a place to heal. Our community is going to need all these things once we are out in the open again.*

Ms. Vannorsdall asked if CDBG is open to non-profits. Mr. Lanford replied that they are, but may not mean eligibility for this particular program as DHCD is working through logistics.

Mr. Lanford commented that no action is being requested at this time.

#### COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT:

Mr. Lanford gave a report on the following items and mentioned to the Board that it is Mrs. Munsey's birthday.

#### Budget Update

Staff is working through the budget process. He commented that this has been an unusual year and Ms. Adcock is doing her best to guess on revenues. He mentioned that the budget work group will be meeting this Thursday at 10:00 a.m. for final review. He suggested a budget work session with the full Board on Thursday, May 14<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m. The Board was agreeable with this date/time.

#### COVID-19

There have been operational changes due to COVID-19 which include:

- The building was closed to the public on March 18<sup>th</sup> with mechanisms put in place to accommodate daily business (i.e. mailboxes installed).
- Teleworking capabilities were increased and staff is utilizing as much as possible, as well as staggering schedules.
- Keeping social distancing while in the building or out performing duties.
- Trash is being collected, the transfer station has remained open, and water/sewer services continue. He asked everyone to thank those individuals when they see them.
- Plans are to keep these operational changes in place until the June 10<sup>th</sup> "stay-at-home" and public gathering restrictions are potentially lifted as things are going smoothly. Hopefully, then the County can go back to normal operations.

#### Public Works Director MOU

Mr. Ricky Bourne started work as the Public Works Director for the County and Clifton Forge in the beginning of the COVID-19 situation and has hit the ground running. He commented that the MOU with Clifton Forge is a perfect example of working together. He mentioned that he and Ms. Darlene Burcham, Town Manager, meet with Mr. Bourne via conference call every other week with staff meetings in the alternate week.

#### Social Services Bonus

Social Services employees are working extremely hard and have a large volume of work. At some point in time, the bonus will be revisited, but now is not the time.

#### BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS (INQUIRIES/REPORTS):

##### Letter to Governor Northam on Reopening Rural Areas

Mr. Griffith commented that he would like the Board to consider passing a resolution to give Mr. Lanford permission to write to Governor Northam requesting that he consider reopening rural areas in Virginia faster than other more populated areas.

Mr. Garten stated that there is a significant difference in COVID-19 numbers in Southwest Virginia versus Northern Virginia. He mentioned that areas around us have done this and he understands Covington is looking at sending a letter too.

Ms. Vannorsdall commented that the Governor is looking at phased openings beginning on Friday, May 18<sup>th</sup>. She stated that she would vote no to sending the letter and wait to see what happens.

There was some discussion regarding small businesses being stifled by not being open; the letter would make a statement; due to testing increases there may be no plateau for some time and businesses are struggling now; the current phasing being proposed by the Governor would take us into June; we are a community neighboring West Virginia and held to different standards; etc.

On motion of Mr. Griffith, seconded by Mr. Bennett, that the following resolution be adopted:

BE IT RESOLVED that the Allegheny County Board of Supervisors authorize Mr. Jonathan A. Lanford, County Administrator, to send a letter to Governor Ralph Northam requesting that he consider reopening rural areas in Virginia faster than other more populated areas that have had a greater outbreak of COVID-19.

Adopted by the following roll call vote:

Shannon P. Cox	Yes
James M. Griffith	Yes
Cletus W. Nicely	Yes
Richard Lee Shull	Yes
M. Joan Vannorsdall	No
Stephen A. Bennett	Yes
G. Matt Garten	Yes

#### Miscellaneous

The Board wished Mrs. Munsey a happy birthday.

Mr. Shull thanked Mr. Muterspaugh for catching the glitch with the ice shields and negotiations on the lease amount. He commented that the area needs to get up and going quickly. He stated that Mr. Tom O'Meara passed away and he was a big force in Clifton Forge. He mentioned working with him in the press box for 25 years and that he was a heck of a guy.

Mr. Nicely stated that he appreciates Mr. Griffith's comments about sending a letter to the Governor. He commented that the County spent money tonight and it is hitting at a bad time. He mentioned that it will be a tough budget year.

Mrs. Cox commented that when it comes to fire and rescue and law enforcement it is a passion for her as you can not put a price on a life. She mentioned that Social Services is overloaded and we definitely should praise them for the work they are doing.

Ms. Vannorsdall stated that County staff has been working hard and it is great to have cooperative work going on in the region. She commented that she hopes we can all work with DHCD to filter money down to localities where it is needed. She mentioned that she would be glad to write letters and make phone calls if needed. She expressed gratitude for all of the essential workers and commented that it has not been an easy time for any of us.

Mr. Bennett stated that the way to be safe is to be smart.

Mr. Garten commented that he hopes we can safely get the State open with everyone continuing to sanitize, social distance, etc.

#### ADJOURNMENT:

On motion of Mr. Bennett, seconded by Mr. Nicely, that the meeting be adjourned at 8:20 p.m. to Thursday, May 14, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. in the Board Room of the County Governmental Complex. Motion carried.

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G. Matt Garten  
Chairman