

At a regular meeting of the Board of Supervisors, Alleghany County, Virginia held on Tuesday, May 2, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. in the Alleghany County Governmental Complex, Covington, Virginia, thereof:

PRESENT: G. Matt Garten, Chairman
James M. Griffith, Vice-Chairman
Stephen A. Bennett
Gregory A. Dodd
Ronald S. Goings
Cletus W. Nicely

and Reid Walters, County Administrator
Suzanne Adcock-Nicely, Director of Finance
Jonathan Fitch, Director of Public Safety
Jim Guynn, County Attorney
Melissa A. Munsey, Deputy Clerk to the Board

ABSENT: Shannon P. Cox

CALL TO ORDER:

The Chairman called the regular meeting to order. Rev. Linda Kagarise gave the invocation and the audience remained standing for the Pledge of Allegiance.

MINUTES:

Hearing no corrections or deletions, the Chairman declared the following minutes approved as submitted: (1) a regular meeting held on April 4, 2023.

JOINT PUBLIC HEARING WITH VDOT AND APPROVAL - PROPOSED SIX YEAR PLAN AND SECONDARY CONSTRUCTION BUDGET:

Public Hearing was held with the Virginia Department of Transportation to consider the proposed Six Year Plan for FY 2024 through 2029.

The Chairman announced that this public hearing was advertised in the Virginian Review on Friday, April 21, 2023 and Friday, April 28, 2023 in accordance with the Code of Virginia. He then called the public hearing to order.

Ms. Susan Hammond, VDOT Resident Engineer, stated that the Board has a revised copy of the draft budget and plan at its seat. The revised budget and plan are a part of the records of this meeting. She commented that the VDOT Secondary Improvement Budget allocation through 2029 is \$326,741 and for FY 2024 the total is \$76,791 for improvements on secondary highway systems (route number 600 and above) in the County from two funding sources (TeleFee and District Grant Unpaved funds). She mentioned that there are a number of Rural Rustic Roads in the plan which can be done at a lower cost. She then gave a brief overview of projects contained in the draft Secondary Six Year Improvements Program:

- Route 637** (Sycamore Bend Road) Rural Rustic Road Project. Completed.
- F-208** (Turner Road) Rural Rustic Road Project. Under construction now. To do tar/gravel this summer.
- Route 600** (Rumsey Road) Rural Rustic Road Project. Funding in October 2028.

She stated that the rest of the items listed are for County-wide traffic services for safety, preliminary engineering/minor surveying, and fertilization/seeding. She commented that the other document contains the budget information on each road with each funding source listed in more detail.

Mr. Griffith asked about adding additional roads into the secondary system and if it is the format for rural rustic roads. Ms. Hammond replied that adding roads falls under rural additions and that 5% total can be allocated for roads that qualify. She commented that the accrual of funds is different and is hard to keep up with inflation which is the reason the County decided to not utilize those funds.

Mr. Griffith asked if Appalachian Regional Commission funding could be used. Ms. Hammond replied that she will look into this on eligibility.

Mr. Griffith commented that a few years ago an \$0.08 gas tax was added to areas along the I-81 corridor and approximately \$3.8 million has gone in from the County. He stated that a lot of money is going out into the road system and

little is coming back in to this area.

Ms. Hammond commented that the gas tax is for interstate and primary road work and not for roads in the secondary system.

Mr. Griffith stated that he would like to have Hallies Road added to the secondary system tonight and Mr. Stanley Cook is present with a handout.

Mr. Stanley Cooke, 111 Hallies Road, handed out the VDOT "Rural Rustic Road Program Manual" which is a part of the records of this meeting. He commented that they are asking for help with Hallies Road. He stated that the citizens of that area have spent \$30,000 to have the road paved to the bridge. He mentioned that page 3 of the handout shows the "Planning and Approval Process" and one of the bullets mentions a resolution by the Board of Supervisors to designate a road as a Rural Rustic Road. He commented that there is a sample resolution in the manual.

Ms. Hammond stated that in order for a road to be included in the Six Year Plan it requires a route number and there is another process to follow as the Rural Rustic Road Program is for roads currently in the Secondary System. She mentioned that there is also language in the plat for that area regarding no public funds being expended on the road(s). She commented that Hallies Road can not be resolved tonight.

Mr. Garten mentioned that the previous developer also had deed restrictions for recreational tracts.

Mr. Griffith asked if he can meet with Ms. Hammond to discuss this road further. Ms. Hammond agreed.

Mr. Cooke commented that he has a petition signed and all are willing to give up property for any easement needed. He mentioned that there are three options on the last page of the manual (traditional unpaved road, pave-in-place, and rural rustic road) and residents would be happy with anything done.

Mr. Bennett commented that VDOT would have to have ownership of the road before anything could be done.

Mr. Nicely mentioned that this road has been looked at periodically over the last thirty years or more.

Mr. Garten commented that any further discussion on Hallies Road can occur in public comment as this public hearing is on the VDOT Six Year Plan which is for roads currently in the Secondary System.

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

On motion of Mr. Nicely, seconded by Mr. Dodd, 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:

Stephen A. Bennett	Yes
Shannon P. Cox	Absent
Gregory A. Dodd	Yes
Ronald S. Goings	Yes
Cletus W. Nicely	Yes
James M. Griffith	Yes
G. Matt Garten	Yes

On motion of Mr. Nicely, seconded by Mr. Dodd, that the following resolution be adopted:

WHEREAS, the Alleghany County Board of Supervisors held a public hearing on Tuesday, May 2, 2022 regarding the Virginia Department of Transportation Secondary Improvement Budget for 2024 and revisions to the Secondary Improvement Program for FY 2024 through 2029 and comments were received;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Alleghany County Board of Supervisors approve the Virginia

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board accept the Secondary Improvement Plan for FY 2024 through 2029 as presented.

Unanimously adopted by the following roll call vote:

Stephen A. Bennett	Yes
Shannon P. Cox	Absent
Gregory A. Dodd	Yes
Ronald S. Goings	Yes
Cletus W. Nicely	Yes
James M. Griffith	Yes
G. Matt Garten	Yes

PUBLIC COMMENT (5 MINUTE TIME LIMIT):

Mr. David Andrews, 140 Hallies Road, spoke regarding Hallies Road and the need to look for an alternate plan (paving in sections or graveling the road) due to the big potholes in the road.

Ms. Lorri Saville, 5813 Rich Patch Road, spoke regarding concerns regarding the middle school being moved into CHS. The concerns included: CHS has 32 classrooms and 16 teachers will have to share a classroom; teachers would have to keep equipment on a cart to go from room to room; no teacher bathrooms on the second or third floors; only one small work room; only a chalkboard in the class with no white boards or Promethean Boards; concerns regarding safety (will only have one school resource officer, visitor procedure different); four individuals (students and a teacher) in a wheelchair and the elevator requires a key; etc. She added the building is beautiful, but not for a middle school and we need to look out for the children.

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

Ms. Susan Hammond, VDOT Resident Engineer, gave an update on the following VDOT activities:

Maintenance

- *Finished grading gravel roads and in process of spreading stone.*
- *Swept primary and high volume secondary bridges, curbs, wall and high volume intersections.*
- *County-wide cleared brush, debris, and cleaned culverts from rain events.*
- *Collected trash bags from citizen trash pickups.*
- *Completed asphalt patches on Rts. 687 and 640.*
- *Cold mix patched various secondary routes.*
- *Rt. 159 slope repair should be complete this week.*

Construction

- *Placed stone on the Turner Road Rural Rustic Project. Surface treatment will be placed later this year.*

Mr. Bennett stated that there is still some concern regarding the new three-way stop at the Rich Patch Union Church intersection. He mentioned that most of the concern is coming from the quarry as the trucks have to stop and then try to pull off at the one uphill sign fully loaded. He asked if just that one stop sign could be removed. Ms. Hammond replied that she will look into this.

Mr. Garten mentioned that material/debris is filling up at the Rt. 220 highwall behind the barricades and asked if it is on a clean-up schedule. Ms. Hammond replied that it is on the schedule.

Mr. Dodd stated that coming into Clifftondale Park (on same side as the wall) there is a big tree leaning and about to come down.

APPROVE SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS IN FY23 (ARPA-COVID FUNDS AND HUMANE SOCIETY DONATION BY WESTROCK):

Ms. Adcock-Nicely stated that ARPA-Covid funds were received for the Virginia Tourism grant and also a donation was received from WestRock for the Alleghany Humane Society. She commented that the funds need to be appropriated and this is a housekeeping item.

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

BE IT RESOLVED that the Allegheny County Board of Supervisors budget and approve the following supplemental appropriations in FY 23:

1. **ARPA - Covid Funds - Virginia Tourism Corporation grant:**
Revenue Account
ARPA-VTC (190-419120) \$20,000.00

Expenditure Account
Cont'b- Chamber of Commerce (1910-5560498) \$20,000.00
2. **Animal Protection - WestRock donation to the Allegheny Humane Society:**
Revenue Account
Animal Protection (110-4160601) \$2,500.00

Expenditure Account
Animal Protection - Contributions (3501-55604) \$2,500.00

Unanimously adopted by the following roll call vote:

Stephen A. Bennett	Yes
Shannon P. Cox	Absent
Gregory A. Dodd	Yes
Ronald S. Goings	Yes
Cletus W. Nicely	Yes
James M. Griffith	Yes
G. Matt Garten	Yes

COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT:

Mr. Walters handed out and gave a report on the following items which is a part of the records of this meeting:

Commerce Center Pad Site: Virginia Business Ready Site Program

Members of the Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP) were in Allegheny County on April 6th to tour the Allegheny Commerce Center Pad Site and tour the Green Thumb Industries facility. The Covington-Allegheny Industrial Development Authority released the contract to Branch Civil for the construction of the pad site. All easements needed for the relocation of Timber Lane have been processed and recorded.

Exploring a Water and Sewer Authority

Allegheny County, Clifton Forge, and Iron Gate conducted a series of meetings this past month to begin the process of exploring a water and sewer authority. AECOM is in the process of conducting a preliminary engineering report (PER) on the Allegheny County water and wastewater system as well as a utility assessment for the future needs at Innovation Park. In tandem with this PER, AECOM will additionally assess relevant data and information regarding the Clifton Forge and Iron Gate water and wastewater systems. The final report will give a full overview of the system in its entirety and assist in creating an Asset Management Plan (AMP).

Wrightsville

The Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development issued Allegheny County a contract extension for the Wrightsville community development project through October 31, 2023.

Jackson River Scenic Trail

Retaining walls are still under construction. After the recent heavy rainfall our engineer has made some drainage pipe additions to some of the walls to control the wet weather springs that have become evident. Once all the walls are completed, they will bring the trail to final grade and then culverts and ditches will be installed. Restrooms are still slated to be set the week of May 22nd. Completion is anticipated in early summer.

Local Election Security Standards (LESS)

County Administrator Walters met with the Allegheny County Board of Elections to review and sign off on the Local Election Security Standards this past month. This is a requirement by the Code of Virginia.

Piccalo Fondo

Alleghany Highlands Chamber of Commerce & Tourism's first event of the year kicks off on Saturday, May 13th with the Agony in the Alleghenies Grand Fondo bike race. It includes a piccalo fondo which is 30 miles, two medio fondo options one is 64 miles and the other is 69 miles, and the 103 mile grand fondo. The Chamber is always looking for volunteers to help with their events.

"Stand up for Children"

Social Services held their "Stand up for Children" event at Rose Dale Park this past Saturday. The weather held out and kids and families got to enjoy vendors, pony rides and they even had a cow on site. This was a great event to bring awareness to the unfortunate circumstance the most vulnerable may face.

Alleghany Highlands Triathlon

The Alleghany Highlands Triathlon will take place on Saturday, May 20th. The event is spearheaded by Clifton Forge Main Street with many local sponsors. It includes a fun 5K run, 5-mile paddle on the Cowpasture and 10-mile bike into Clifton Forge. The race kicks off at the Sharon Community Center at 9 a.m.

Budget Work Session

The budget committee met twice this past month and have made progress formulating the next fiscal budget. We need to establish a couple of dates in the coming weeks for the Board of Supervisors to meet and discuss the committee's proposals.

Mr. Walters suggested Tuesday, May 16th at 6:00 p.m. to hold the budget work session. The Board agreed.

Other

Mr. Walters added that Dominion Energy invited managers to tour Back Creek last month and he was very impressed with the operation.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS (INQUIRIES/REPORTS):

Miscellaneous

Mr. Dodd thanked everyone for coming to the meeting and he appreciates Ms. Saville's concern. He mentioned that he was not on the Board when school consolidation started and he has concerns with safety. He commented that he is not sure they have finalized School Resources Officers for the school(s).

Mr. Nicely stated that he is glad that the Superintendent's (Ms. Halterman and Ms. Johnson) are here to hear the points made by Ms. Saville. He mentioned that Hallies Road has been an issue for over 30 years. He thanked everyone for coming to the meeting.

Mr. Bennett stated that Ms. Saville making a presentation using facts versus emotions makes a difference. He thanked the Superintendent's for coming to the meeting.

Dr. Goings thanked everyone for coming to the meeting. He stated that MayFaire will be held in Clifton Forge on May 6th. He commented that he is concerned with the teachers having to share classrooms. He mentioned that he is anxious to begin work on the budget. He asked what the time-frame would be to have a water authority. Mr. Walters replied that it could take 18 months.

Mr. Griffith thanked everyone who came regarding Hallies Road and commented that he will keep working on this. He also thanked the Superintendent's for coming to the meeting. He commented that he would like for him and Mr. Garten to meet with the Superintendent's and the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the School Board on the concerns brought up tonight. He mentioned that the County needs to get back into the Rural Additions program and also look at obtaining Appalachian Regional Commission funding. He suggested that Mr. Walters look into this.

Mr. Garten thanked everyone for coming to the meeting and commented that he hopes everyone has a wonderful May.

CLOSED MEETING:

Mr. Garten turned the meeting over to Mr. Griffith and left the meeting due to a conflict of interest with the Closed Meeting topic.

On motion of Mr. Nicely, seconded by Mr. Bennett, that the Board go into a Closed Meeting under Code of Virginia Section 2.2-3711(A)(3) for the purpose of: (1) property acquisition. Unanimously adopted.

On motion of Mr. Nicely, seconded by Dr. Goings, that the Board come out of the Closed Meeting with the following certification:

CERTIFICATION
SECTION 2.2-3712

To the best of our knowledge (i) only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements under this chapter, and (ii) only such public business matters as were identified in the motion by which the Closed Meeting was convened were heard, discussed or considered in the session.

/s/Ronald S. Goings	Yes
/s/James M. Griffith	Yes
/s/Stephen A. Bennett	Yes
/s/Cletus W. Nicely	Yes
/s/Gregory A. Dodd	Yes
Shannon P. Cox	Absent
G. Matt Garten	Absent

After the Closed Meeting, the following action was taken:

RATIFY ACTION TAKEN REGARDING THE PURCHASE OF THE FORMER WELLS FARGO BUILDING:

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

BE IT RESOLVED that the Alleghany County Board of Supervisors ratify the action taken at the April 4, 2023 regular meeting in relation to the purchase of the former Wells Fargo Building. The motion was as follows:

BE IT RESOLVED that the Alleghany County Board of Supervisors authorize Mr. Reid Walters, County Administrator, to enter into a contract once approved by the County Attorney for the purchase of the former Wells Fargo building located at 239 W. Main Street, Covington, VA 24426 for \$700,000.00 (\$25,000 earnest money and \$675,000 balance of purchase price).

Unanimously adopted by the following roll call vote:

Stephen A. Bennett	Yes
Shannon P. Cox	Absent
Gregory A. Dodd	Yes
Ronald S. Goings	Yes
Cletus W. Nicely	Yes
James M. Griffith	Yes
G. Matt Garten	Absent

ADJOURNMENT:

On motion of Mr. Dodd, seconded by Dr. Goings, that the meeting be adjourned at 8:15 p.m. to Tuesday, May 16, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. in the Board Room of the County Governmental Complex. Motion carried.

G. Matt Garten
Chairman