

At a regular meeting of the Board of Supervisors, Alleghany County, Virginia held on Wednesday, January 3, 2024 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
Shannon P. Cox
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

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.

ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN:

Mr. Walters, acting as Chairman *Pro Tem*, called for nominations for Chairman of the Board.

Mr. Bennett nominated Mr. G. Matt Garten for Chairman.

On motion of Dr. Goings, seconded by Mr. Nicely, that nominations for Chairman of the Board be closed.

Unanimously adopted by the following roll call vote:

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

On motion of Mr. Bennett, seconded by Mr. Dodd, that Mr. G. Matt Garten be elected Chairman of the Board.

Unanimously adopted by the following roll call vote:

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

ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN:

Mr. Garten, the elected Chairman, took over the meeting. He asked for nominations for Vice-Chairman of the Board.

Mr. Bennett nominated Mr. James M. Griffith for Vice-Chairman.

On motion of Mr. Nicely, seconded by Mr. Dodd, that nominations for Vice-Chairman of the Board be closed.

Unanimously adopted by the following roll call vote:

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

On motion of Mr. Bennett, seconded by Dr. Goings, that Mr. James M. Griffith be elected Vice-Chairman of the Board.

Unanimously adopted by the following roll call vote:

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

ADOPTION OF CODE OF ETHICS:

Mr. Garten commented that the Board has a draft resolution of the Code of Ethics in the agenda packet which is the same as last year.

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

BE IT RESOLVED by the Alleghany County Board of Supervisors that the Board and County officials will be guided by the following Code of Ethics:

The ethical elected and non-elected County official should:

- * Properly administer the affairs of the County.
- * Promote decisions which only benefit the public interest.
- * Actively promote public confidence in County government.
- * Keep safe all funds and other properties of the County.
- * Conduct and perform the duties of the office diligently and promptly dispose of the business of the County.
- * Maintain a positive image to pass constant public scrutiny.
- * Evaluate all decisions so that the best service or product is obtained at a minimal cost without sacrificing quality and fiscal responsibility.
- * Inject the prestige of the office into every day dealings with public employees and associates.
- * Maintain a respectful attitude toward employees, other public officials, colleagues, and associates.
- * Effectively and efficiently work with governmental agencies, political subdivisions, and other organizations in order to further the interest of the County.
- * Faithfully comply with all laws and regulations applicable to the County and impartially apply them to everyone.

The ethical elected and non-elected County official should not:

- * Engage in interests that are not compatible with the impartial and objective performance of his or her duties.
- * Improperly influence or attempt to influence other officials to act in his or her own benefit.
- * Accept anything of value from any source which is offered to influence his or her action as a public official.

The ethical elected and non-elected County official accepts the responsibility that his or her mission is that of servant and steward to the public.

Unanimously adopted by the following roll call vote:

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

ADOPTION OF BOARD BY-LAWS:

Mr. Garten stated that the Board has a draft resolution in the agenda packet to adopt the Board's By-Laws which are the same as last year.

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

BE IT RESOLVED that the By-Laws of the Alleghany County Board of Supervisors be amended in Section (1) Regular Meetings, subsection (A)(3) to change the day the agenda is finalized to noon on the Tuesday prior to any Board meeting.

Unanimously adopted by the following roll call vote:

Stephen A. Bennett	Yes
Shannon P. Cox	Yes

Gregory A. Dodd	Yes
Ronald S. Goings	Yes
Cletus W. Nicely	Yes
James M. Griffith	Yes
G. Matt Garten	Yes

The adopted Board By-Laws and Public Comment Guidelines are as follows:

**BY-LAWS
ALLEGHANY COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

These by-laws are for the purpose of promoting properly conducted meaningful and orderly meetings of the County Board of Supervisors in the transaction of County business, and to maintain decorum at all times. The by-laws are designed to allow the Board and its Chairman to conduct the meetings efficiently, allowing all necessary and appropriate opportunities for any person to address the Board on matters under consideration.

SECTION (1) REGULAR MEETINGS:

(A) *The Alleghany County Board of Supervisors shall meet in one (1) Regular Meeting a month on the first Tuesday at 7:00 P.M. in the Board Room of the County Governmental Complex for the purpose of conducting the business of Alleghany County. Any Regular Meeting that falls on Election Day in November shall be held on the following day (Wednesday).*

(1) *The Agenda for the Regular Meeting shall be prepared by noon on the Thursday prior to the first Tuesday in each month. The Agenda shall be placed on the County web site on the Friday prior to the first Tuesday of each month. The agenda shall be as follows:*

- Call to Order*
- Invocation*
- Pledge of Allegiance*
- Minutes*
- Public Hearing*
- Public Comment*
- Unfinished Business*
- New Business*
- County Administrator's Report*
- Board Member Comments (Inquiries/Reports)*
- Closed Meeting (as needed)*
- Adjournment*

(2) *The following is an explanation of various agenda headings:*

Public Hearings are conducted in accordance with the Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, for the purpose of receiving public input on the topic of the public hearing. The Board has a policy to not act on a public hearing on the same night, but may waive this policy and take action with unanimous approval of members present.

Public Comment gives the public an opportunity to address the Board on matters appropriate to the responsibilities of the Board. There shall be a maximum time limit of five (5) minutes for comments from each speaker with a maximum time limit of 30 minutes allocated to Public Comment in any one meeting. A sign-up sheet will be provided at a table near the meeting room for Public Comment. Adopted Public Comment Guidelines for speakers will also be provided on the table. If the number of individuals on the sign-up sheet would exceed the allotted 30-minute time-frame, the Chairman has the latitude to place a shorter limit on individuals. After the Board has heard comments from those who signed up, others in the audience who have not had an opportunity to speak and desire to do so will be invited to speak, time permitting. If speakers have copies of comments available, they should be provided to the Deputy Clerk to the Board for inclusion in the minutes. If this section is amended at any time, then the adopted Public Comment Guidelines will automatically be amended.

Unfinished Business consists of items that have been presented and discussed at a previous meeting, but more discussion was necessary for clarification prior to a vote or the item was tabled. Items under Unfinished Business can be voted on at any time.

New Business consists of items that have not been presented or discussed or is something new in relation to an item that has previously been presented or discussed. Items under New Business can be voted on at any time.

(3) *The agenda shall be finalized by noon on the Tuesday prior to any Board meeting. The agenda shall not thereafter be changed except by Board action taken at the meeting.*

Persons wanting a topic placed on the agenda shall make the request to the County Administrator or Deputy Clerk to the Board. The County Administrator will then report to the Chairman on the request.

(4) *Matters not on the agenda for the Regular Meeting may be considered by the Board when requested by the Administrator, or his/her representative, the County Attorney, or a member of the Board. The item will be added to the New Business or Unfinished Business section of the agenda.*

(5) *All meetings of the Board of Supervisors shall be governed by the Code of Virginia, Roberts Rules of Order, as revised, and these by-laws.*

- (6) *The County Attorney or his Assistant shall be the parliamentarian and the legal advisor to the Board of Supervisors at all meetings.*
- (7) *A roll call vote shall be held for all motions except to go into a Closed Meeting, come out of a Closed Meeting, and to adjourn.*

SECTION (2) SPECIAL MEETINGS/PUBLIC HEARINGS/WORK SESSIONS/ADJOURNED MEETINGS:

- (A) *Special meetings, public hearings, work sessions, and adjourned meetings shall be held when necessary in accordance with provisions in the Code of Virginia pertaining thereto.*

SECTION (3) ADHERENCE TO POLICY:

- (A) *Policy matters of the Board shall be followed and adhered to and no action should be taken by the Board of Supervisors if such action would actually be in conflict or at cross purposes with the intent of an established policy. The Board may, where circumstances warrant, waive a given policy for a particular situation and action as the Board deems desirable, with unanimous approval of members present.*

SECTION (4) PRECEDENCE OF LAWS:

- (A) *These by-laws shall govern in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with the federal, state, or local law.*
- (B) *Any provision of any part of these by-laws which are found to be in conflict with the Code of Virginia or the Constitution shall be null and void and the remaining provisions shall continue to apply.*

SECTION (5) CHANGES OR AMENDMENTS:

- (A) *These by-laws may be changed or amended by action of the Board of Supervisors at any regular meeting, provided that each Board member is given proper notice of any proposed change or amendment.*

Deputy Clerk to the Board

PUBLIC COMMENT GUIDELINES

- *A sign-in sheet will be placed near the Board Room door for citizens who wish to speak during the Public Comment. Citizens should list their name, address, and topic to be addressed. After all speakers who signed up have spoken, anyone else interested in speaking will be given the opportunity.*
- *Speakers are limited to five minutes. There is a maximum time limit of 30 minutes allocated to Public Comment in any one meeting. If the number of individuals on the sign-up sheet would exceed the allotted 30-minute time-frame, the Chairman has the latitude to place a shorter limit on individuals.*
- *Speakers are to provide a copy of remarks to the Deputy Clerk, if in writing.*
- *The Board of Supervisors encourages and values citizen input on all topics or issues of relevance to the Board's responsibilities.*
- *Speakers shall direct all comments to the Board (not individual members or employees of the Board).*
- *Profane or vulgar language, partisan political statements, or comments related to the conduct or performance of Board members or staff are not appropriate in this setting.*
- *Board members are not expected to respond to questions or comments unless the Chairman deems such response appropriate. Board members may seek clarification or additional information from speakers through the Chair.*

MINUTES:

Hearing no corrections or deletions, the Chairman declared the following minutes approved as submitted: (1) a regular meeting held on December 5, 2023.

PUBLIC COMMENT (5 MINUTE TIME LIMIT):

Ms. Deloris Quarles, 701A Wrightstown Avenue, commented regarding the Wrightsville project being almost complete with the final home to be finished in the next couple weeks; the grant deadline is January 31, 2024; that the project has been a journey that has been challenging and rewarding; she is excited about the improvements made and invited everyone to drive through to see the improvements; etc.

Sheriff Kyle Moore handed out to the Board a proposal from Lexipol which is a part of the records of this meeting. He reviewed the services which include state accreditation subscription services, up-to-date policy manual, daily training bulletins, policy updates, etc. He mentioned he obtained a 50% discount for the implementation fee and annual subscription. He asked the Board to review the information for possible discussion at a later date if action is needed.

There was some discussion regarding also running the proposal by Covington as they pay a part of joint service costs; the Sheriff's office is accredited with DCJS standards, but not with policies and procedures; etc.

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

- Boom axed Rts. 687, 642, and the entrance to Dressler Drive where the trail crosses.
- Cold mixed various routes in the County including Rt. 18 from the last Board meeting.
- Cleaned tree debris County-wide.
- Grading Rts. 770, 613, and 602.
- Hand brush cutting on Rts. 635 and 269.
- Repaired shoulders on Rt. 1013 in Selma.
- Removed trees on Rts. 159 and 42. Rt. 60 will be next.
- Prepping for winter weather event on Saturday.

MS. NAOMI QUANTZ - DISCUSS CONTINUATION OF PROBLEMS ON THE WESTERN END OF THE COUNTY AND CONTINUATION OF TOPICS BROUGHT UP AT THE RECENT COMMUNITY MEETING:

Ms. Naomi Quantz read the following prepared statement that was included in the agenda packet and also handed out additional information. The information is a part of the records of this meeting:

My name is Naomie and I reside in western Alleghany County. First off as usual, my statement of appreciation and thanks to be able to come before the County/Board members and to speak, so thank you for that. I come before the Board tonight to speak on a variety of topics concerning the western end of the County. As the Board knows, the western end of the County has been a hot topic as of late. When we had our special meeting December 6th, Mr. Griffith asked that I re-present several questions from that night in front of the Board in its entirety. So, I have copies for each of you of the questions I will be asking as well as documentation and references to back up anything said in the statements I will read below.

1. *The County received ARPA funds in the sum of \$2,886,381 (see minutes from June 7, 2022). Of this amount only \$396,161.10 was allocated for the western end's broadband as of last year. The reason I am questioning the amount is because the quote for the Rosedale Park bathroom was \$319,799 used also from ARPA funds and an additional \$39,200 of funds were used making the total FOR THE BATHROOM \$358,999. The County does realize according to the Alleghany Highlands Economic Development Corp. the median home cost is \$99,200 in Alleghany County. Why was this dollar amount approved and why is issues of safety, jobs, livelihoods, etc. being valued in the SAME DOLLAR AMOUNT AS A TOILET? I have been given the reason previously that because children use that park for practices. (There are a total of 28 parks throughout Alleghany, Covington, Iron Gate, Clifton Forge). I understand the need for a bathroom but again not for the amount that the County allowed when other pressing issues are at hand.*

** I have also created a large infographic so the public can see the breakdown of expenses and what the funds could have gotten for the western ends crisis at the rate of \$8,701 per household. Board you have a small version of the infographic.*

2. *What made the Board essentially decide to kick Ms. Cox out as the point of contact for the western end? Instead, a random citizen who is newer to the area was chosen unofficially by two members of the County/Board. Ms. Cox is our elected official for our area and it is her duty and job to represent us, be the point of contact, and attend any meetings dealing with our end the County may attend.*
3. *Multiple sites in connection with the County advertise "Alleghany Highlands Broadband Gig Fiber Ready." Does the County not believe that this type of advertising is misleading for those who may want to relocate here? Also, on the County's infrastructure profile it lists 2 communication providers Lumos and Shentel. Yet again the western end is left out as existing with Frontier Communications. The County launched a campaign titled "Work Remotely Live Uniquely" which may be true for the rest of the County, but yet again not the western portion. There is even a promotional video talking about broadband in the Alleghany Highlands.*
4. *The County has allocated an increase of \$3,839.10 for the western ends broadband project grant. So instead of \$396,160.90 it is now \$400,000, yet the County is only doing a 10% match of \$333,193 which is \$62,967.90 LESS than last year. Wouldn't you want to use the full cost to continue to drive the cost per household lower to increase the chances of the grant since that was one of the areas that didn't land us the grant?*

Ms. Quantz also read additional comments that she had prepared and a copy is part of the records of this meeting:

The County of Alleghany, Virginia has been documenting communication issues since the late 1990's within the western portion of the County with no real significant action taken to resolve these issues. In the County's plan of emergency operation, it states in short "whereas, the Alleghany County Board of Supervisors is greatly concerned with the health, safety, and well being of its citizens and desires that the best possible emergency services be available to them." As mentioned previously, is the County greatly concerned with health, safety, and well being while documenting issues since the late 1990's? This leaves its citizens and EMS personnel to basically fend for themselves. As taxpayers everyone deserves equal opportunities and services afforded to them. Alleghany County states they are committed to creating a community where social justice is applied equally to all.

Our first responder's radio systems are not adequate to do the job they are required to do within the western portion. While responding in many parts of the County multiple dead spots are encountered. Our emergency services serve as a vital hub to the community. Lacking proper communication tools could be the matter of life and death scenarios. The western end has a variety of terrain making it necessary for radios to work due to the lack of cellular

services. How are EMS supposed to fulfill services if they are lacking crucial tools to do the job at hand? These responders risk their lives to save ours. How is it right at the end of the day for them to lay their heads on pillows at night and think how this situation could have been different if given ample communication tools to help this person or group of people.

Our public school bus drivers are not only drivers that carry precious cargo every day to and from school they are also in the face of a medical emergency a first responder. All buses are equipped with radios so that given an incident whether it be disciplinary, weather, or emergency situations they can radio out for help and to give information. The western portion of Alleghany County's bus route much of the way the radios do not work. Not only is this a hazard for the bus driver but depending on the level of the bus be it elementary or high school you could have upwards of 40 children on the bus. According to the Virginia Department of Education "Every school day, nearly one million Virginia students are transported to and from school, field trips, athletic events, and other school-related activities on the more than 16,000 school buses operated by the commonwealth's school divisions. The safety of these students is a responsibility shared by school bus drivers, school divisions, VDOE and parents. VDOE has primary responsibility for the development and implementation of state laws and regulations, standards, practices, and procedures to promote the safe transportation of public-school pupils to and from school and school-related events. Leadership and guidance are provided to school divisions in accordance with applicable statutory requirements, Board of Education regulations, federal regulations, and administrative policies. VDOE conducts on-site assessments and evaluates pupil transportation in each school division to ensure the safety pupils and compliance with all requirements."

Services in the western portion of Alleghany County are complex. Frontier Communications out of West Virginia sporadically services homes for both landline and internet services. Picking and choosing whom receives these services. For those who do not receive services the only option that remains is satellite. Satellite typically operates at a much slower speed due to the length of travel for the signal and may not be as reliable as wire internet connection types. With this, citizens are met with higher prices and data caps. This limits communication with loved ones, employers, healthcare providers, and social interactions.

The landlines for those provided with services receive frequent outages and inadequate lines of communication. Lines are moisture plagued, outdated, and lines are often crossed with neighbors enabling others to hear private conversations. The Communications Act of 1934 which later joined with the Telecommunication Act of 1996 stated that "all people in the United States shall have access to rapid, efficient, nationwide communications service with adequate facilities at reasonable charges." The Telecommunication Act of 1996 also states that "let anyone enter any communication business, to let any communications business compete in any market against any other." There is room for competition - if not a monopolistic firm is created. Having these issues in many homes only means of communication for emergency services is unacceptable. Alleghany County receives \$2.35 per phone line. This is allocated for paying the initial capital, installation and maintenance costs, recurring maintenance costs of its E-911 system.

The First Amendment of the Constitution of The United States says, "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances." Note prohibit the free exercise thereof. In Christian groups like the Methodist Church, it states "In the United Methodist Church, only pastors are authorized to consecrate the elements and preside at the celebration of communion. Laypeople can assist the pastor. Communion is not an individual, private sacrament, rather it is celebrated by the whole gathered congregation (This Holy Mystery)." Alleghany County United Methodist Church has a lay minister and to follow rules for Communion if a pastor cannot be present to consecrate the elements of Communion a phone call or video call must be done for the bread and juice to properly be blessed. The County is not taking proper steps with landline issues and broadband and this inhibits restrictions on freedom of religion and freedom of exercise of religion.

Another area that suffers due to lack of services is businesses. There are several business owners who are not able to take advantage of tools afforded to the rest of the County. This hinders growth, profit margins, and viability of the businesses located here. This in whole effects Alleghany County's revenue. It also may be the difference between a tourist stopping at a business or not.

If you look up a definition of the digital divide it is defined as "the unequal access to digital technology, including smartphones, tablets, laptops, and the internet. The digital divide creates a division and inequality around access to information and resources." The western end is the only area that failed to receive the buildout of fiber. A round about number of 400 homes, several area churches, the fire department, and businesses have been neglected to be serviced properly. The western end truly epitomizes the digital divide.

Lacking modern day necessities proper landline, EMS communications, and internet creates a domino effect. Lack of services affect real estate which possibly means less families moving in which affects the school systems. Not having internet services affects school age children who rely upon the internet for schoolwork and projects. This in turn affects the workforce, colleges, and technical schools. Workers/students not having information to real time data, and it also limits digital literacy putting those behind in the modern world. These are just a few examples of the harm and disservice that is occurring within our County.

Lastly I want to make a more personal statement. I am here tonight to not only fight for the citizens of the western end, but most importantly I'm here as a mother, to fight and defend for her children. I stand here tonight with three young children in tow and another on the way. I'm not sure how many here tonight are parents or a parent figure to someone? Our God given role as parents or parent figures is to set a good example, provide, love, care for, and protect our children. My duty as a mother is to provide the best environment and protection I can for my children. I am here for them tonight to fight for their future to be better and brighter. For them to have access to what is required in today's modern world. To show them to stand and fight for what you believe in regardless of comments made about you. Because if I don't fight for them then who will?

Imagine being in my shoes living rurally and not having adequate phone/internet services. What am I to do if heaven forbid an accident would occur and we couldn't drive out to service and we were to rely upon inadequate spotty services? How would you feel looking into the face of your child and saying I'm sorry we can't get help. As a parent our children look to us as problem solvers, boo boo fixers, and many other things. This scenario runs through

my head quite frequently and while we prepare the best we can and pray there are some situations where you need life saving medical care. So I beg you to look at what you are putting at stake each second, each minute, each day that initiative isn't taken and problems aren't seriously resolved. Will you be able to look into the eyes of a family, a friend, a child when something tragic happens and feel confident that you have done everything within your title/power to help? I hope this brief speech really hits home the seriousness and urgency of this issue.

Mr. Garten commented to Ms. Quantz that she presented a lot of information tonight and no answers can be given at this time. He suggested that she meet with staff (Mr. Walters, Ms. Adcock-Nicely, Mr. Fitch, etc.) on what has been done, laws/rules on how funds can be spent, etc. He mentioned that the Board would not know the ins and outs of those items and a lot of things are beyond our control as the County does not own poles/lines, etc.

Ms. Quantz agreed and stated that she just wants to see results.

Mrs. Cox suggested that some answers be given at the meeting like the first question regarding the bathroom allocation and if that included the purchase of land and the second question on how someone was chosen as a point of contact. She mentioned that the other question(s) can be looked at to discuss with her later.

Mr. Garten stated that the first question regarding the bathrooms and funding would be best discussed with staff, as well as questions 3 and 4. He commented that in regards to the point of contact question (#2) that the initial community meeting was set up by Mr. Griffith on behalf of Mrs. Cox as she was out of town and she was then unable to attend the meeting due to a death in her family. Mrs. Cox added that the citizen was the point of contact as he initiated discussions with the County in the beginning. Mr. Walters commented that the citizen also volunteered to help with contacts.

Mrs. Cox also suggested that someone from Parks & Recreation be included in the meeting with Ms. Quantz.

APPROVE SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS IN FY24 (PARKS & RECREATION, PUBLIC WORKS, AND SHERIFF'S OFFICE):

Ms. Adcock-Nicely stated that funds were received for the Parks and Recreation Department and the Public Works Department due to the sale of vehicles on GovDeals. She commented that the Sheriff's Office also received additional ARPA funds for the purchase of vehicles. She stated that these funds need to be appropriated to revenue and expenditure line items.

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

BE IT RESOLVED that the Alleghany County Board of Supervisors budget and approve the following supplemental appropriations in FY24:

1. Parks and Recreation/Public Works - Proceeds from sale of vehicles:		
<u>Revenue Account</u>		
Sale of Vehicles (11000000-415205)		\$10,536.00
<u>Expenditure Account</u>		
Purchase of Vehicles (11012210-570005)		\$ 700.00
Purchase of Vehicles (11071100-570005)		\$9,836.00
2. ARPA-COVID Funds - Sheriff's Department:		
<u>Revenue Account</u>		
Federal CARES Act/ARPA (19000000-419915)		\$48,000.00
<u>Expenditure Account</u>		
Purchase of Vehicles (19019020-570005)		\$48,000.00

Unanimously adopted by the following roll call vote:

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

REAPPOINTMENT OF MR. JIMMY FRIDLEY TO THE BOARD OF BUILDING CODE APPEALS:

Mr. Garten stated that the term of Mr. Jimmy Fridley (Jackson River District) on the Board of Building Code Appeals

expires January 20, 2024. Terms are for 5 years and Mr. Fridley is eligible for reappointment.

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

BE IT RESOLVED by the Alleghany County Board of Supervisors that Mr. Jimmy Fridley (Jackson River District), 142 Rose Hill Lane, Covington, VA 24426 be reappointed to the Board of Building Code Appeals for a term of five years beginning January 21, 2024 and ending January 20, 2029.

Unanimously adopted by the following roll call vote:

Stephen A. Bennett	Yes
Shannon P. Cox	Yes
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 are a part of the records of this meeting:

River Retreat Apartments

Buildings 1, 2 and 3 are fully leased, though not all of the tenants have moved into the units. That equates to 48 units rented. R. Fralin has just begun marketing buildings 4 and 5 which are still under construction. Everything is going well with renting the units. The performance agreement has been met and paid out.

Commerce Center Pad Site

Branch Construction is currently at 35% completion of the development of the Commerce Center Pad Site.

Housing Summit

The Alleghany Highlands Economic Development Corporation is working on the details of the Housing Summit that is going to be conducted on April 25th.

Broadband Meeting and Virginia Telecommunication Initiative

On December 7th, the County conducted a public meeting at the Covington Library to update the residents of the western portion of Alleghany County on the progress being made with Frontier regarding the communication issues as well as an update on the 2024 Virginia Telecommunication Initiative application. Supervisor Shannon Cox, Supervisor James Griffith, County Administrator Reid Walters, and Public Safety Director Jonathan Fitch were all in attendance. The turn-out for this meeting was not as strong as the first meeting that was conducted in a question-and-answer format.

Through reengineering the proposed project, Craig Botetourt Electric Cooperative was able to create a number of cost saving measures and bring down the total request for funding that is considerably less than last year’s request.

County Administrator Walters would like to send his appreciation to resident Kevin Mangum for volunteering his time to help with some of the communication needed with residents. He would also like to send an appreciation to Supervisor Cox and Supervisor Griffith for their help and support for the VATI application and with working with Frontier. The application was submitted on December 19th.

Some highlights from this past year:

Alleghany County, the City of Covington, and the Covington-Alleghany County Industrial Development Authority secured \$3,290,000 from the Virginia Economic Development Partnership for the construction of the pad ready site. The Commonwealth of Virginia is now a third partner in the project.

We are near the completion of the construction of Phase 5 of the Jackson River Trail. An official opening will occur once the weather breaks.

We conducted the first strategic planning session in a number of years to help guide the Board of Supervisors with their short-range and long-range goals and objectives. This will help County staff as we move forward with the County's comprehensive plan.

Worked with regional workforce entities to ensure that the workforce needs for Green Thumb Industries were met.

Allegheny County and the City of Covington entered the second year of school consolidation, with the students returning to school under the new school system.

Allegheny County was awarded the Virginia Association of Counties (VACo) Best Achievement Award, the top annual award in the Commonwealth, for the Allegheny-Covington school consolidation.

Conducted a preliminary engineering report for the water and sewer system and began the process of looking into potential regional utility options. This analysis will help guide the potential development of the County acreage off Highway 42.

Completed a regional jail study and purchased the former Wells Fargo building in Covington to create needed space for the Sheriff's Department and the courthouse. A space needs study was completed in tandem with the purchase of the building.

We are in the final stage of the Wrightsville project. The project is scheduled to be completed by January 31st. This project has taken 7 years to complete.

Worked with CBEC on a VATI application to help create the last mile of internet for Allegheny County.

Public Safety is creating a Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) Program for our fire services volunteers and secured \$276,800 in funding from the Allegheny Foundation to start this program.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS (INQUIRIES/REPORTS):

Miscellaneous

Mr. Dodd thanked everyone for coming to the meeting and welcomed Sheriff Moore. He commented that he hopes everyone had a good holiday season and mentioned that the County has a lot going on.

Mr. Nicely commented that he appreciates all that were here tonight. He congratulated Sheriff Moore and wished everyone a Happy New Year.

Mr. Bennett welcomed Sheriff Moore. He mentioned that the Rich Patch area also has issues with cell service and even satellite will not work at times. He stated that Mr. Fralin is finishing the apartments and it was suggested to him that he build more in the area. He commented that there is an issue with housing for students and he has previously spoken with S. Patz & Associates. He suggested that Mr. Walters be given an opportunity to work with him on a study with Mountain Gateway Community College for student housing. He mentioned utilizing the land at the interstate interchange near the college. He commented that he has a lot of previous information that he can turn over to Mr. Walters to utilize.

The Board agreed by consensus for Mr. Walters to discuss with S. Patz & Associates putting together a specific feasibility study in regards to college student housing.

Mrs. Cox congratulated Sheriff Moore and thanked him for the information in regards to being compliant. She thanked Ms. Quarles for coming to the meeting and mentioned that she did drive through the project area and it looks very nice. She also thanked Ms. Quantz who attended this meeting as was suggested to her at the December 7th community meeting. She mentioned that student housing and the issues on the western end of the County have nothing to do with each other and she wants to see them get broadband. She stated that she was disappointed with the excitement expressed in regards to housing.

Dr. Goings thanked everyone for coming to the meeting. He mentioned that he spoke with Mr. Walters regarding

workforce for EZPass in Clifton Forge and asked if he had been able to get with them yet. Mr. Walters replied that he has not gotten with them yet.

Dr. Goings asked if the Board will be given a copy of the water and sewer study on Rt. 42. Mr. Walters replied that the report was just received before Christmas and is currently being reviewed by him and Public Works at this time.

Dr. Goings commented that Ms. Quantz mentioned the County spending \$300,000 for the bathroom. He asked why this was done.

Ms. Quantz read a section from the April 5, 2022 minutes which stated:

Restrooms

- *Public Restroom Company through Sourcewell Account*
- *Same as the restrooms at the Intervale trailhead and future Cedar Creek trailhead with the addition of integrated water fountains, baby changing stations, and small storage area. The restrooms at Intervale were installed five years ago, are heavily used, and have proven to be maintenance free to this point.*
- *Restrooms are highly vandal resistant with all stainless steel fixtures.*
- *The current quote for the restrooms and installation is \$319,799. All funding has been allocated through ARPA.*
- *Asking for the Board to authorize moving forward with the purchase and installation of the restrooms at Rose Dale Park.*

On motion of Mr. Griffith, seconded by Mr. Nicely, that the following resolution be approved:

BE IT RESOLVED that the Alleghany County Board of Supervisors authorize the Parks and Recreation Department to proceed with the purchase and installation of restrooms at Rose Dale Park through the use of ARPA funds which have already been appropriated.

Unanimously adopted by the following roll call vote:

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

Mr. Garten commented that ARPA funds were utilized for the bathrooms and those funds have to be spent a certain way.

Mr. Griffith stated that all of the bathroom facilities in the County have the same design, and are pre-engineered with no maintenance. He welcomed Sheriff Moore to the meeting. He thanked Ms. Quarles for her comments and mentioned that we are almost at the finish line with the project.

Mr. Garten thanked everyone for coming to the meeting and for the appointment as Chairman. He commented that a lot has been done and the County is still seeing successes even if things do not move quickly. He stated that the Board works together for the citizens and for the betterment of the area with a goal for the County to be prosperous. He thanked Ms. Quarles for her comments and commented that the project is coming to fruition. He thanked Ms. Quantz for her comments, emotion, and dedication. He stated that the County wants to make the project successful. He congratulated Sheriff Moore on his election and wished everyone a safe new year.

CLOSED MEETING:

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

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

After the Closed Meeting, the following action was taken:

APPROVE ANNUAL SUPPLEMENT FOR THE SHERIFF (MANAGEMENT OF ANIMAL CONTROL AND LITTER CONTROL):

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

BE IT RESOLVED that the Alleghany County Board of Supervisors approve an annual supplement of \$12,000 for the Alleghany County Sheriff effective January 1, 2024 for continued management of animal control and for the initiation of litter control investigation and enforcement to be reviewed in six months.

Unanimously adopted by the following roll call vote:

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

ADJOURNMENT:

On motion of Mr. Nicely, seconded by Mr. Griffith, that the meeting be adjourned at 8:40 p.m. Motion carried.

G. Matt Garten
Chairman