

*POWHATAN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
SPECIAL MEETING
May 1st, 2023*



AT A SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS HELD IN THE VILLAGE BUILDING AUDITORIUM, AT 3910 OLD BUCKINGHAM ROAD IN POWHATAN COUNTY, VIRGINIA, AND REMOTELY BY ELECTRONIC MEANS ON MAY 1st, 2023, AT 6:30 PM.

Board of Supervisors Present: David T. Williams, District 1,
Steve W. McClung, District 2,
Mike W. Byerly, District 3, Chair
Bill L. Cox, District 4,
Karin M. Carmack, District 5, Vice-Chair

Board of Supervisors Absent: None

County Staff Present: Bret Schardein, County Administrator
Will Hagy, Deputy County Administrator
Charla Schubert, Director of Finance
Thomas Vo, Budget Manager
Phil Warner, Fire and Rescue Chief
Taylor Goodman, Fire and Rescue Deputy Chief
John Wood, Director of IT/GIS
Jeff Searfoss, Chief Deputy

Constitutional Officers Present: Becky Nunnally, Treasurer
Jamie Timberlake, Commissioner of the Revenue

Guests Present: None

1. Call to Order

Chairman Byerly called the meeting to order at approximately 6:30 PM.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Cox led the pledge of allegiance.

3. Invocation

Mr. McClung led the invocation.

4. Requests to Postpone Agenda Items and Additions, Deletions, or Changes in the Order of Presentation



None.

5. Formal Approval of Agenda

Ms. Carmack motioned to **approve** the agenda as presented.

Mr. McClung seconded the motion.

Chairman Byerly, Ms. Carmack, Mr. McClung, Mr. Cox, and Mr. Williams voted AYE.

VOTE 5-0

MOTION PASSED

6. County Administrator Updates

Mr. Schardein stated that the construction would be starting on Rte 60 to extend the Oak Bridge turn lane. He added that the Jude's Ferry project would be moving to the next right-of-way acquisition step. Lastly, he mentioned that the Powhatan County Fair will be held from May 12th through the 14th.

7. Public Comment (time limit 3 minutes per individual/5 minutes per group, 30 minutes total time limit that can be extended by the Board)

Chairman Byerly opened the public comment period.

[Carl Schwendeman, 1727 Teresa Lane](#), asked if the County could extend the turn lane at the intersection of Emanuel Church Road and Rte. 522.

Seeing no one else wishing to speak, Chairman Byerly closed the public comment period.

8. Old Business

a. Resolution R-2023-21 Adopting the Fiscal Year 2024 Operating and Capital Budgets

Mr. Schardein gave a brief overview.

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Ms. Carmack motioned to

- hold the schools and County staff at a 5% raise, not 7%,
- use the difference to fund equalizing school employee to county employee health insurance,
- Use \$379,000.00 from Richmond sewer capacity to fund the remaining balance,
- eliminate the public works director and replace the position with a grant writer,
- take \$5,000.00 off Senior Connections and put it towards Community Matters,
- take \$1 million off Carter Gallier Blvd. and put it back in the CVTA fund to complete projects that were voted on,
- take \$50,000.00 off the floor refinishing for Company 1 Fire Department,
- take \$50,000.00 off the audio and visual improvements for the Stave Mill Company 2 location,
- take \$200,000.00 off the emergency alerting system and put it into the high schools for cameras

Mr. McClung seconded the motion.

Mr. Cox requested that the Board vote on each part of the motion individually. Mr.

Williams noted that the Board does not know the systemic effect of these changes. Ms.

Carmack explained that most of the funds would return to the bank. Mr. Williams asked

about the Richmond sewer capacity funds. Mr. Schardein indicated that the County

would be contractually obligated to pay its portion of the money when Richmond decides

to do repairs. Ms. Carmack suggested taking the \$379,000.00 for Richmond sewer

capacity out of the \$1.1 million for Comp and Class. Mr. Williams pointed out that the

elected School Board had chosen to use their funds for other things. He said the Board

should not provide additional funds for expenses that the School Board has chosen not to

address using their initial budget.

The Board discussed holding the schools and County staff at a 5% raise and using the

offset to equalize the healthcare coverage with the additional \$369,000.00 from

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Richmond sewer repair funds. Mr. Cox expressed concerns about using contingent funds to fix the School Board's problem. Mr. Schardein expressed concerns about holding County staff at a 5% raise rather than 7%. He pointed out that this decision would have a negative impact on staff morale and retention. Ms. Carmack stated that the difference in County staff raises would be made up with the Comp and Class study, which should be finished in the next month. Mr. Cox expressed concerns about increasing the school's budget by about \$2.3 million while also reducing the revenue without seeing data on the implications. Mr. McClung said he believed it was the right time to equalize healthcare. Ms. Carmack pointed out that the modeling is based on a steady tax rate. Mr. Williams asked if the Board would be voting on the amended budget based on each subsequent change proposed by Ms. Carmack. Mr. Lacheney clarified that the Board must vote on the amended budget at some point after they vote on each change that Ms. Carmack has proposed. Mr. Williams requested to see the implications of Ms. Carmack's proposed changes in writing before voting. Chairman Byerly asked if he could still call a vote on the motion as being discussed. Mr. Lacheney confirmed saying that it would require four votes to end discussion. Chairman Byerly confirmed with Ms. Schubert and Mr. Vo that the proposed 2% from schools equals \$450,000 and that 2% from the county side would be \$341,000 and that \$379,000 is the amount coming out of water and sewer maintenance allocation; leaving \$72,000 after the \$998,842 spent on school insurance. Mr. Cox asked where the \$379,000.00 lives in the County's budget, and Ms. Schubert said it is kept in the utility fund. She added that the money would be coming from recurring funds that fluctuate. Mr. Cox asked about the implication of not having the money if the maintenance fee is charged. Mr. Cox requested a roll-called vote on the motion. Mr.



Schardein requested and the Board agreed to revisit the possibility of adding 2% to the raises if the State chooses to do so.

Ms. Carmack motioned to **hold** the school and County staff at a 5% raise and use the offset funds to equalize healthcare with the additional \$379,000.00 from the utility fund.

Chairman Byerly, Ms. Carmack, Mr. Cox, and Mr. McClung voted AYE. Mr.

Williams voted NAY.

VOTE 4-1

MOTION PASSED

Ms. Carmack motioned to **eliminate** the public works director position.

Mr. McClung seconded the motion.

Ms. Carmack explained that she believed the Deputy County Administrator could handle the duties of a public works director. Mr. Schardein stated that it would be more valuable to use the funds from the public works director position for an engineer position rather than a grant writer. He added that the engineer position would be under Mr. Mellis, where there is the most demand. Mr. Vo stated that the total cost of a public works director position would be \$158,544.00, the total cost of a grant writer would be \$83,244.00, and the total cost of an engineer position would be \$107,964.00. Mr. Schardein explained that if there was an engineer position, the Deputy County Administrator could handle more on the facilities side. Ms. Carmack pointed out that the County still had to contract engineers when Ms. Carter was there because a person cannot sign off on their own work. Mr. Williams expressed concerns about eliminating a public works position when the department desperately needs assistance. Mr. McClung stated that three of the Board members had recently spent the day with the Department of Public Works. He said he



would support adding an engineer position under Mr. Mellis. Mr. Williams explained that he was at important doctor's appointments during the event that Mr. McClung described. Ms. Carmack repeated her motion to **eliminate** the public works director position. Mr. McClung seconded the motion.

Chairman Byerly, Ms. Carmack, and Mr. McClung voted AYE. Mr. Cox noted NAY. Mr. Williams abstained from voting.

VOTE 3-1

MOTION PASSED

Ms. Carmack motioned to **add** a public utility engineer position.

Mr. McClung seconded the motion.

Mr. Williams asked Mr. Schardein about his position on the motion, and Mr. Schardein said that the department could accommodate it. Mr. Williams expressed concerns about not getting to speak to Mr. Mellis before voting, and he said he would be checking to see how the new position works moving forward. Mr. Cox expressed concerns about rearranging the positions that the County Administrator has requested at the last minute.

Ms. Carmack repeated her motion to **add** a public utility engineer position.

Mr. McClung seconded the motion.

Chairman Byerly, Ms. Carmack, Mr. McClung, and Mr. Williams voted AYE.

Mr. Cox voted NAY.

VOTE 4-1

MOTION PASSED

Ms. Carmack motioned to **add** a grant writer position.

Chairman Byerly seconded the motion.



Mr. Cox asked Mr. Schardein why he had previously eliminated the position from the budget. Mr. Schardein explained that he eliminated the position to help lower the tax rate.

Mr. Williams requested that Mr. Schardein quantify the potential revenue the position would bring. Mr. Cox noted that the County is already adding twelve new positions this year and that he would not support adding the grant writer position.

Mr. Byerly repeated the motion to **add** a grant writer position.

Chairman Byerly, Ms. Carmack, and Mr. McClung voted AYE. Mr. Cox and Mr. Williams voted NAY.

VOTE 3-2

MOTION PASSED

Ms. Carmack motioned to **take** \$5,000.00 off the donation to Senior Connections and give it to Community Matters.

Mr. McClung seconded the motion.

Mr. Cox asked if the County could give donations to anyone, and Mr. Lacheney said it must be a legal entity. Ms. Carmack stated that Community Matters was a subset of Social Services. Mr. Williams pointed out that Community Matters is not listed as a department or program under Social Services. He suggested that the County donate to the Parks and Recreation Department instead of Community Matters. Mr. Schardein explained that the Board could choose to donate to Community Matters at a later date because it does not require a public hearing, only an amendment to the budget.

Ms. Carmack withdrew her motion.

Ms. Carmack motioned to **take** \$5,000.00 off the donation to Senior Connections.

Mr. McClung seconded the motion.



Chairman Byerly, Ms. Carmack, Mr. McClung, and Mr. Cox voted AYE. Mr.

Williams voted NAY.

VOTE 4-1

MOTION PASSED

Ms. Carmack motioned to **take** \$1 million from the Carter Gallier Blvd. project in the CIP and put it back in the CVTA fund.

Chairman Byerly seconded the motion.

Mr. Cox stated that the funds could not be removed from the CIP. Mr. Schardein noted that taking \$1 million out of the project would not have a substantial impact. Chairman Byerly added that he did not recall voting to put the Carter Gallier project in the CIP. Mr. Schardein stated that the applicant for the Carter Gallier project would be providing a finalized proposal in two weeks.

Ms. Carmack repeated her motion to **take** \$1 million from the Carter Gallier Blvd. project in the CIP and put it back in the CVTA fund.

Chairman Byerly seconded the motion.

Chairman Byerly, Ms. Carmack, Mr. McClung, Mr. Cox, and Mr. Williams voted AYE.

VOTE 5-0

MOTION PASSED

Ms. Carmack motioned to **take** \$50,000.00 off the floor refinishing for Company 1 Fire Department.

Chairman Byerly seconded the motion.

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Ms. Carmack explained that she believed Company 1 could use some of their donations to refinish the floor. The Fire Chief stated that it would make his job very difficult if the Board tried to tell the volunteers and their Board how to spend their donations. He explained that they have already received 65% of the plans and will meet with the architect in the next two weeks, at which point they will have a better estimate of the cost. Mr. Williams supported working with the volunteers and showing appreciation for what they do for the County. Mr. Cox also spoke in support of helping to fund the project.

Ms. Carmack withdrew the motion.

Ms. Carmack withdrew the motion to take \$50,000.00 from audio and visual improvements at Stave Mill Company Two.

Ms. Carmack withdrew the motion to take \$200,000.00 from the emergency alerting system and put it towards cameras at the high school.

Ms. Schubert noted that the high school cameras might be funded with school construction money from the State.

Mr. Cox expressed concerns about the budget having a one-year CIP. He suggested that the Board revisit the fiber network expansion project in October when they could adequately weigh its importance against other needs.

Mr. Cox motioned to **remove** the \$350,000.00 for fiber network expansion from the FY24 CIP.

Ms. Carmack seconded the motion.



Mr. Woods clarified that the project would connect twenty-four County sites along Rte 60. Chairman Byerly asked whether the project could get assistance from e-rate if the County partnered with the school system. Mr. Schardein said it was a possibility.

Mr. Cox repeated his motion to **remove** the \$350,000.00 for fiber network expansion from the FY24 CIP.

Ms. Carmack seconded the motion.

Chairman Byerly, Ms. Carmack, Mr. McClung, Mr. Cox, and Mr. Williams voted
AYE.

VOTE 5-0

MOTION PASSED

Ms. Carmack motioned to **approve** Resolution R-2023-21 as amended.

Mr. McClung seconded the motion.

Mr. Cox expressed concerns about the planning process used to make changes tonight. He explained that the Board had ample time to discuss these changes throughout the budget. Mr. Williams mentioned that he was the only Board member to vote against a tax rate of 69 cents. He expressed concerns about voting on a capital improvement plan for only one year. He also expressed concerns about the lack of information given to the public and the way the budget has been done tonight. Chairman Byerly stated that the changes made to the budget tonight still reflect a 69-cent tax rate. He commended the Board for reaching a reasonable budget for the citizens of Powhatan County. He thanked Mr. Schardein for finding a way to retain employees despite the economic climate. Mr. Cox stated that he could not give an opinion on the budget because he did not know the ramifications.



Ms. Carmack repeated her motion to **approve** Resolution R-2023-21 as amended.

Mr. McClung seconded the motion.

Chairman Byerly, Ms. Carmack, Mr. McClung, and Mr. Cox voted AYE. Mr.

Williams voted NAY.

VOTE 4-1

MOTION PASSED

b. Resolution R-2023-22 Appropriating the Fiscal Year 2024 Operating and Capital

Budgets

Mr. Schardein gave a brief overview.

Ms. Carmack motioned to **appropriate** the budget as amended with the exception of the \$998,824.00 for the school transfer (the State granting a 2% raise will have no impact on this appropriation).

Mr. McClung seconded the motion.

Mr. Cox requested to withhold the entire amount for healthcare not appropriated tonight until the Board understood how the School Board would spend the money. Ms. Carmack asked how the Board could ensure that those funds were allocated toward equalizing healthcare. Mr. Lacheney suggested that the Board create a MoU to ensure that the School Board would spend the money accordingly.

Ms. Carmack repeated her motion to **appropriate** the budget as amended with the exception of the \$998,824.00 for the school transfer (the State granting a 2% raise will have no impact on this appropriation).

Mr. McClung seconded the motion.



Chairman Byerly, Ms. Carmack, Mr. McClung, and Mr. Cox voted AYE. Mr.

Williams voted NAY.

VOTE 4-1

MOTION PASSED

- 9. Public Comment** (time limit 3 minutes per individual/5 minutes per group, 30 minutes total time limit that can be extended by the Board)

Chairman Byerly opened the public comment period.

[Stephen Barham, 3492 Richard's Run](#), noted that the necessity for a Comp and Class study resulted from the previous County Administrator. He applauded the Board for keeping the School Board's money under control. He expressed concerns about the additional thirteen positions being added to the budget.

Seeing no one else wishing to speak, Chairman Byerly closed the public comment period.

- 10. County Attorney Comments**

None.

- 11. County Administrator Comments**

None.

- 12. Board Comments**

Chairman Byerly recognized that the school system and Sherriff's department had improved their relationship and are cooperating following the events that occurred last week. He noted that there is currently an ongoing investigation.

- 13. Adjournment**

Chairman Byerly adjourned the meeting.

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Bret Schardein

**Bret Schardein, County Administrator
Powhatan County Board of Supervisors**

Michael W. Byerly

**Mike W. Byerly, Chairman
Powhatan County Board of Supervisors**

Recorded Vote:

<i>David T. Williams</i>	<i>Aye</i>
<i>Steve W. McClung</i>	<i>Aye</i>
<i>Michael W. Byerly</i>	<i>Aye</i>
<i>Bill L. Cox</i>	<i>Aye</i>
<i>Karin M. Carmack</i>	<i>Aye</i>

**Bret Schardein, County Administrator
Powhatan County Board of Supervisors**