

September 23, 2008

County of Greene, Virginia

THE CONTINUED MEETING OF THE GREENE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS WAS HELD ON TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 2008 AT 5:30 P.M. IN THE COUNTY MEETING ROOM.

Present were: Steve Catalano, Chairman
Clarence Peyton, Vice Chairman
Jeri Allen, Member
Carl Schmitt, Member
Mike Skeens, Member
Ray Clarke, County Attorney
Barry Clark, County Administrator
Patti Vogt, Deputy Clerk
Tracy Morris, Finance Director

RE: EXECUTIVE SESSION

Upon motion by Carl Schmitt and unanimous vote, the Board entered into Executive Session to discuss legal and personnel matters pursuant to Section 2.2-3711 Subsection (a, 1-7) of the Code of Virginia.

Contract Matters:

- Dental Clinic
- Water and Sewer
- Telephones

Legal:

- CSA

Personnel:

- Administration

Recorded vote:	Steve Catalano	-	Yes
	Clarence Peyton	-	Yes
	Jeri Allen	-	Yes
	Carl Schmitt	-	Yes
	Mike Skeens	-	Yes

Motion carried.

Upon motion by Clarence Peyton and unanimous vote, the Board returned to Open Session.

Recorded vote:	Steve Catalano	-	Yes
	Clarence Peyton	-	Yes
	Jeri Allen	-	Yes
	Carl Schmitt	-	Yes
	Mike Skeens	-	Yes

Motion carried.

By unanimous vote, all members certified that only public business matters lawfully exempted from the Open Meeting requirement and only such matters as identified by the motion to enter into Executive Session were discussed.

Recorded vote:	Steve Catalano	-	Yes
	Clarence Peyton	-	Yes
	Jeri Allen	-	Yes
	Carl Schmitt	-	Yes
	Mike Skeens	-	Yes

Motion carried.

RE: CERTIFICATES OF APPRECIATION

The Chairman presented certificates of appreciation to Mr. David Lam and Mr. Christopher Bork, students at the Vo Tech Center, for their work on the construction of a new podium for the meeting room.

RE: DISCUSSION WITH DELEGATE BELL AND SENATOR HANGER

The Chairman introduced Mrs. Marie Durrer, Clerk of Court; Mr. Scott Haas, Sheriff; Mrs. Gail Berry, Treasurer; Mr. Troy Harlow, School Board Member; Mr. David Jeck, Superintendent of Schools; and Mr. Graydon Lamb, School Board Member.

Delegate Robert Bell and Senator Hanger were present to discuss the status of State revenue reductions to localities.

Senator Hanger and Delegate Bell both made opening remarks and said they were glad to attend the meeting to hear comments and concerns.

The Chairman opened the floor for public comments.

Mr. Randy Corpening, Director of Special Services for School system, spoke on the Comprehensive Services Act (CSA) program. The schools are under tremendous pressure to provide educational services to students with disabilities and most funding comes from Federal and State sources. The CSA Program is accessed when there is a child who has needs beyond the ability of the school system. Currently, three students, two who moved to Greene County specifically to access CSA funding, are in the CSA Program.

Mr. Sonny Clay, Tax Payers Association, spoke on unfunded mandates. The Board of Supervisors has no choice but to raise real estate taxes. He suggested the State fully fund mandates or terminate programs.

Mr. Jerry Gore spoke on the State's recent demand for a "refund" in addition to unfunded mandates. The very essence of leadership is composed of authority, responsibility, and accountability. The imposition of mandates equals abuse. He suggested the State look inward when additional tax money is needed.

Mrs. Andrea Wilkinson, Ruckersville Citizen Council, also spoke on unfunded mandates. The biggest problem is small counties like Greene have very few options regarding tax revenue sources and no options at all to reduce mandated spending from State and Federal programs. She suggested the State use its more flexible taxing authority to take short term steps to temporarily raise taxes.

Mr. Frank Demco spoke on disposable income and noted the average family in Greene County pays approximately 31% in taxes. When costs for transportation, food, mortgage etc. are added in, the disposable income actually is 15%. He suggested spending be reduced as much as possible.

Ms. Judy Dietzel expressed concern about the dependence of the County on real estate taxes. She said she would like serious consideration of impact fees this year. The process needs to be simple. Also, consider ways for localities to raise money other than real estate taxes. She suggested keeping the proffer system until impact fees can be phased in.

Mr. Alan Laudermilch spoke on the CSA program and felt the responsibility should not fall back on the locality. He suggested regional programs be established to handle and fund the program. It is an inefficient use of resources to have local government handle CSA cases.

Mrs. Pat Morris asked Senator Hanger and Delegate Bell what they have done for Greene County since they have been in office.

Mr. John Gress, Director of the Blue Ridge Conservative Coalition, said they are dedicated to promoting and advancing fundamental principles found in the Constitution. He suggested the implementation of the proposals made by the 2002 Commission on Efficiency and Effectiveness that were submitted to the General Assembly that would lower VA spending by approx \$1.5 billion every biannual budget cycle. The problem is not the lack of funds but rather the lack of responsible, sound money management on part of the administration.

Mr. David Jeck, Superintendent of Schools, asked the legislators to please remember Greene County. The No Child Left Behind program is the ultimate unfunded mandate for schools.

Sheriff Scott Haas acknowledged support from Delegate Rob Bell in sponsoring four bills this past term. He spoke on funding issues for the Regional Jail and requested assistance in keeping exemptions that, if eliminated, would cost the County approximately \$153,000.

Mrs. Marie Durrer, Clerk of Circuit Court, suggested the Legislature consider assessing each criminal a fee to offset costs.

Sheriff Haas also spoke on mandates regarding courthouse security. One deputy is not a safe ratio.

As there were no further comments, the public portion of the meeting was closed.

Delegate Rob Bell said it is a truism and his observation that every level of government likes their programs paid for by someone else. The majority of the County's education budget comes from the State. It is clear from comments that the consensus is unfunded mandates are not fair. Mr. Bell agreed to work to identify some unfunded mandates that could be eliminated. It is not eliminating unfunded mandates to simply shift the costs in another direction. CSA is a burden on the County and State and will require a fundamental change. He said he looks forward to a laundry list of programs that the County does not want the State to mandate which he will take to Richmond and hopefully find ways to eliminate the programs.

Senator Emmett Hanger said Virginia is the best of the best. He felt Virginia should drop out of the No Child Left Behind program. He also agreed CSA is a huge problem.

Board member Carl Schmitt complimented members of the public on their very thoughtful comments. He said this is a bad revenue time and asked that the legislators use pressure that has been created to make some fundamental changes to mandates.

Mr. Schmitt asked Senator Hanger and Delegate Bell to both review, and possibly sponsor, legislation regarding unfunded mandates. (i.e. if you can't fund it, you can't mandate it) This could be a ground rule for future programs and activities.

Board member Mike Skeens agreed that the No Child Left Behind program is hurting the school system and asked for assistance in alleviating the burden.

Board member Jeri Allen said the CSA program is getting bigger and scarier all the time and something has to be done. She noted the Board has worked very hard to get infrastructure and expand the tax base. Now she worries that the composite index will negate all that effort. She questioned what the County will lose because of what it has gained. It is getting harder to help ourselves. Mrs. Allen asked if the legislators are using the same discipline in looking at the Commonwealth's budget as the Board uses for the County budget.

Vice Chairman Clarence Peyton noted the County borrows on a temporary basis and is in better financial condition than it was 5 years ago. He said future proposed cuts from the State of approximately 15% could very well come close to bankrupting the County. The Board has allowed residential growth in an effort to attract commercial growth and cannot afford to raise taxes. He felt it is time for the Board to notify the public and agencies that funding cuts will have to be considered.

Mr. Peyton spoke on a fine levied against the County by DEQ. The County Administrator did everything in his control to meet the imposed deadline. It also seems every approach in regards to water impoundment meets with roadblocks from DEQ.

The Chairman expressed his appreciation for support by both Delegate Bell and Senator Hanger. He said the County has come a long way and currently borrows in a healthy way. Mr. Catalano said the County needs more tools to generate revenue. The Board has worked hard to diversify the tax base and feels the gains will be negated by State cuts. He said the Board will have to start cutting services. He asked the Legislators to "help us help ourselves" and said the County will compile a list of mandates for consideration.

Mr. Peyton said farm land preservation, using tax dollars, doesn't seem to be a very fair policy. Senator Hanger said the VA Land Conservation Easement Program is valuable for the preservation of farmland and open space. The program has been capped at \$100 million in credits plus inflation.

Senator Hanger asked if the CSA cases are out-of-state placements. Mr. Corpening said two of the three are out-of-state because the services are not offered in Virginia. Senator Hanger said work needs to be done to offer those services in Virginia.

Delegate Bell said there is no way Greene County can avoid being hit if the State makes significant cuts. He said he would like to work with County on these issues.

The Chairman thanked Senator Hanger and Delegate Bell for attending the meeting.

RE: RECESS

The Chairman called a five minute recess.

RE: MATTERS FROM PUBLIC

EROSION CONTROL

Mr. Lee Estes questioned the erosion control measures on disturbed land in Ruckersville. County policy requires the seeding of lots to control erosion.

DENTAL CLINIC

Mrs. Sharon Breeden, Office Manager of the Dental Clinic, asked the Board to reconsider their options in closing the Dental Clinic. The Clinic currently serves 1,941 patients and closing will tremendously impact County residents. The Clinic has the potential to be a source of income for the County. Appointments are booked into 2009 and the Clinic is one of the few Medicaid providers in the area.

The Chairman said the Board is looking at alternatives in regards to the Dental Clinic.

In response to a question from Ms. Jo Ann Woods, the Chairman said the County does not want to pursue hiring another dentist and wants to privatize the clinic.

Ms. Jo Ann Woods spoke in support of the Dental Clinic and described the care and services a young child received there. She asked the Board to reconsider their decision regarding the Dental Clinic.

RE: CONSENT AGENDA

Upon motion by Jeri Allen and unanimous vote, the Board approved the following items on the consent agenda:

- a. Minutes of September 9, 2008.
- b. Approval of revised Substance Abuse Policy for Greene County Transit, Inc.
- c. Authorization to apply for grant funding on behalf of the local Fire Departments.

Recorded vote:	Steve Catalano	-	Yes
	Clarence Peyton	-	Yes
	Jeri Allen	-	Yes
	Carl Schmitt	-	Yes
	Mike Skeens	-	Yes

Motion carried.

RE: OTHER MATTERS FROM THE BOARD

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Mrs. Allen said the Planning Commission meeting was the official kickoff of the revisions of the Comprehensive Plan and Multi-Modal Study.

MAYORS AND CHAIRS MEETING

Mrs. Allen said the recent Mayors and Chairs Meeting was held at State Farm where employees met with representatives of their locality.

CIVIL WAR RE-ENACTMENT

Mrs. Allen said the Civil War Re-enactment was very successful.

CONFERENCE ON ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Mr. Schmitt said he recently attended the Governor's Conference on Energy and Climate Change in Richmond. He said there were some dire predictions and the climate change is being fueled by the use of fossil fuels. Mr. Schmitt said he was pleased by the formation of an ad hoc committee to work on energy efficiency for our buildings. Forty percent of the energy carbon footprint in the country is due to buildings. We have a real chance to do something useful.

EMERGENCY SERVICES

The Chairman said the County needs to apply for a Medicare/Medicaid number for emergency services for use in regards to revenue recovery.

Upon motion by Jeri Allen and unanimous vote, the Board authorized the application for a Medicaid/Medicare number for the County for use by emergency services for revenue recovery.

Recorded vote:	Steve Catalano	-	Yes
	Clarence Peyton	-	Yes
	Jeri Allen	-	Yes
	Carl Schmitt	-	Yes
	Mike Skeens	-	Yes

Motion carried.

RE: ADJOURN MEETING

As there was no further business, the meeting was adjourned.



Steve Catalano, Chairman
Greene County Board of Supervisors