

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
STAFFORD, VIRGINIA  
DRAFT MINUTES  
American Rescue Plan (ARPA) Work Session  
July 6, 2021

Call to Order – A work session of the Stafford County Board of Supervisors was called to order by Crystal Vanuch, Chairman, at 1:30 p.m. on Tuesday, July 6, 2021 in the Board Chambers, George L. Gordon, Jr. Government Center, 1300 Courthouse Road, Stafford VA.

Roll Call – The following members were present: Crystal Vanuch, Chairman; Cindy C. Shelton, Vice Chairman, Tinesha O. Allen; Meg Bohmke; Thomas C. Coen; L. Mark Dudenhefer; and Gary F. Snellings.

Also in attendance were: Frederick J. Presley, County Administrator; Michael Smith, Deputy County Administrator; Donna Krauss, Deputy County Administrator ; Rysheda McClendon, County Attorney; Cheryl Giles, Deputy Clerk; Julia Homes, Assistant Deputy Clerk; Andrea Light, Budget Director, various staff members; and other interested parties.

Ms. Vanuch began with a welcome to the Board of Supervisors ARPA work session. She said the group would go through the ARPA funding with Ms. Andrea Light, Budget Director, who would guide the group through the day.

Ms. Light thanked Ms. Vanuch and asked for her PowerPoint to be presented. She said the purpose of the work session today is to provide the Board with an overall spending strategy for the ARPA funds. Ms. Light said that on June 15, an initial strategy was presented to the Finance, Audit, and Budget Committee, which provided staff direction. She said she is presenting that information and some of the time-sensitive projects.

Ms. Light said that overall, Stafford County is going to receive about \$29.7M in two different tranches. She said the Board has only taken one action with appropriating the funds up to now, which is to provide consulting services to help as the County goes through the funds. Ms. Light said the Department of Treasury is the federal authority issuing the acceptable use guidance for ARPA funds. She said the ARPA funds are to be used to support COVID-19 responses, replace public sector revenues, support economic stabilization for households and businesses, and address systemic public health and economic changes to balance an equal impact for certain populations.

Ms. Light said staff is providing a two-tier funding strategy. She said the first is to set aside funding for very specific purposes, and the second is to support Board priorities and department requests. Ms. Light said that the first part of the strategy to set aside funds for specific purposes; the first item is revenue replacement. She said that through December of 2020, she and her staff have identified about \$9.5M of revenue replacement. She said this must be used for government services, which are very broad, and she recommends using these funds, in part, to support department requests and fund future CIP projects and reliance on debt.

Ms. Light said the second item is for staff funding and the majority is for PRCF for those furloughed employees through December 2024. She said ARPA funding can be used to replace that, which would free up the budgeted funds that are in the 2022 and forward budget to be used for other items. Ms. Light said her team has identified those items. She said that for administration of this grant over the next four years, there is an estimate of about \$100,000 that would include salary and all applicable benefits, used for anyone administering this grant. She said this is primarily the Finance Department, budget management, and each of the department directors or the person in charge of those programs.

Ms. Light said the third item is to set aside 20% for citizen and economic development needs, or overall about \$5.9M. She said that United Way contributions fall into this third category and are considered a time-sensitive project. She said this would be reviewed further in the presentation, and members of United Way would be joining in that conversation to help answer any questions.

Ms. Vanuch asked Ms. Light to return to the last slide and said that in the FAB Committee meeting, they were calculating the total number that could be reallocated into the general fund, much like what was done with the public safety salaries. She asked if the \$9.5M is what was able to be calculated.

Ms. Light said the \$9.5M is pure revenue replacement that can go back to the general fund as part of the strategy for funding some of the projects, and there is \$5.1M for PRCF. She said she would walk through the spreadsheet of what staff recommends on how to use those funds to help cover costs of some projects. She said that really frees up from now until 2024 what that budget would be.

Ms. Vanuch asked for confirmation that this would equal about \$14.6M.

Ms. Light confirmed that is correct.

Ms. Bohmke asked Ms. Light, referring to the first bullet of the staff funding \$5.1M text box that references PRCF furloughed employees and \$5M to be used to fund CIP projects. Ms. Bohmke continued stating that CIP projects and operational expenses are completely different and asked for clarification on the direction just given.

Ms. Light responded by saying that she would anticipate that the Board would use it for that between now and 2024, continue PRCF support, and cover gymnastics and rec center staff who had been furloughed before. She said instead of paying them through the operating budget, the County would set that portion of money aside to use for the CIP, up through December 2024. This would allow the County to fund what would have been debt service projects.

Ms. Bohmke asked how many of the furloughed employees in Park & Rec have actually been brought back and how many are still furloughed.

Michael Morris, Parks, Recreation & Community Facilities Director said that all employees have gone back.

Ms. Bohmke said that's what she thought.

Ms. Light continued, referring back to her slide presentation. She said that as part of the FY22 budget adoption, so the Board could keep the tax rate at \$0.97, they directed staff to look at different ways to keep the real estate tax rate at that level. She said the proposed budget had included \$629K of debt service savings from the prior year that would be used as a one-time source. She said the County would carry the debt service balance and would keep that level in the budget.

Ms. Light said that her staff used future dollars to support some CIP projects. She said the future dollars would come from revenue replacement or the PRCF staff, which can be used to replace debt service. She said her staff identified in 2023 as part of the budget that there is \$3.3M being issued for Aquia and another \$4-6M for the school's 2022 3R project. Ms. Light said that in this plan, there remains \$6.8M that is not accounted for as a cost. She said walking through the spreadsheet would explain in further detail.

Ms. Light said that the second tier of the strategy is to support Board priorities and departments. She said each department was asked to provide a submission of projects, included in the background report given to each Board member—which is about 116 pages of projects. She said all of those projects were reviewed by the consultant to ensure they were eligible under the ARPA requirements. She said that a staff member reviewed each of those projects and scored it according to the CIP large-scale criteria, and also added that it aligns with the strategic plan and creates operating efficiencies. She noted that it is the scored project list.

Ms. Light said after completing that, her staff met again with all of the departments in a stakeholder group to make sure that there was a clear understanding of each project, it was scored appropriately, nothing was missed, and to get the stakeholders take on how the projects should be moved forward. She said that process is what created the presented spending strategy sheet for all departments.

Ms. Light, referring to the spending strategy worksheet, said that when looking at the two tranches, revenue replacement is about the \$9.5M, economic development set-asides is about \$1.5M, and citizen set-asides is \$1.5 out of each tranche. She said furloughed employees is about \$5M, and staff funding is about \$100K. She said that looking down the sheet, there is assigned funding based on the available amounts in tranche 1 and tranche 2 revenue replacement, furloughed employees, citizen set-aside, and economic development.

Ms. Light pointed out the scoring on each project and said there are certain projects without scores, like the consultant work and workforce training, as it is an economic development initiative that is separate from other requests her department received that were withdrawn, and United Way human services. She said those were not scored and fall under an alternative set-aside. She said that the department directors are present to answer any questions that may arise regarding any of the listed projects.

Ms. Light said it was not her intention to go through each one of the projects with the Board today unless there are any questions. She said they would all be more than happy to answer those, but

what she really wanted to accomplish was to look at the time-sensitive projects, which scored above what the funding line was.

Ms. Light said her team was able to fund, under this plan, down to IT firewalls, which is tied to the fiber. She said from tranche 1, her team used all available funding, and from tranche 2, they also used all funding. She said there is still \$1.7M from revenue replacement that could be allocated in the future if the Board chooses to go with this plan. She continued that there is \$5.1M in furloughed employees and staff funding, making up the \$6.8M. She said with citizen set-aside, the only request is the United Way request, which overall for 2022 is about \$1.2M, and under economic development, there is about \$500K for the training to help citizens get back to work. She said there are a number of other initiatives being looked at to help citizens get through the end of this COVID pandemic and come out economically viable.

Mr. Dudenhefer said that one of the largest items on the list is countywide fiber, and he asked her to define what that means.

Ms. Light answered that countywide fiber is a project that would tie all public buildings to fiber internet. This would include all fire stations, parks, and everything would have fiber internet.

Ms. Vanuch asked how that would be done.

Mr. Dudenhefer said he is not sure what that would accomplish. He said the way it's advertised, it's going to be deceiving from the public view.

Mr. Presley said he believes Mike Cannon can provide a good overview of the approach. He said the goal initially is to connect all of the County facilities, which is currently not the case. He said many of the outlying facilities have no connection whatsoever. He said that is problematic for many reasons. He said this provides that connection but also provides a trunk line that can then be utilized to provide to third-party providers, to then extend to hard-to-reach communities to get them to the last mile area to make it viable.

Mr. Cannon said as Mr. Presley just mentioned, this would connect all of the remaining facilities that are not currently connected via fiber. He said there are fire stations and rescue stations that currently rely on a cable modem. He said schools are all connected except for one, and Jay Cook, who manages the fiber network that's shared with the schools, is present to answer any questions. Mr. Cannon said his team had gone through an exercise looking at all facilities and how to connect them all, and this is the plan that was developed. He said that additionally, economic development has some needs where some of the fiber may be able to be leveraged for commercial purposes. One, he said, is to utilize some of the fiber for broadband connectivity. Another, he said, is for economic development purposes.

Mr. Dudenhefer said he received a call this morning from someone from Cox Store who has concerns about the County overlaying the countywide fiber over what this person/group already has. He said he asked that individual if they are working with the County to coordinate where the fiber lines are. He said he does not even know if Cox Store has fiber lines or where they are, and

he's not trying to promote them but is concerned if the County is coordinating their efforts with the other cable and internet providers in town.

Mr. Cannon said this is essentially a privately owned network currently, and by that he means it's the County's network with schools. He said it could be coordinated with some of the providers, but they have for-profit motivation that may or may not be in the County's best interest for connecting to.

Mr. Dudenhefer interjected and asked what the feasibility is on the cost and if the County can feed into it and not have to pay for the installation.

Mr. Cannon said those companies would usually not share that line without charging for it. He said there are opportunities to work with them, one of which is whether or not the County chooses to apply for a Virginia Telecommunications Initiative (VATI) grant to utilize some of the fiber as a match to leverage what providers might be able to offer to get connectivity to the unserved residents. He said there is about \$50M available through the VATI grant process, but the state is having a special session of the General Assembly in August to determine where they're going to spend their \$4.3B in ARPA money that would be reallocated. He said some of that would likely be made available for broadband and might be added to the VATI grant pot of money that's available. He said if the County chooses, they could utilize some of this as a match to get more money through the VATI process, which would ultimately lower some of the costs.

Mr. Dudenhefer asked if that was a valid use of the funds.

Mr. Cannon said yes, they did look at the grant guidelines and said this type of creative approach is encouraged.

Ms. Allen said that one of her questions was answered in that wouldn't closing the loops gain the County leverage for that fiber, to be able to get more federal or state funding because they are more competitive than the last round.

Mr. Cannon said yes, that by building loops across the County, it creates swaths of areas where there is no connectivity for residents. He said for those areas in particular, they are able to make the fiber available through a partnership with a Cox, or Comcast, or any other provider of choice. He referred to the map on the presentation and said they could take the bundle of fiber from closing the loops and make it available for commercial purposes. Mr. Cannon said they are proposing to put in a 280-count bundle. He said the rest of the network is the existing network, and the other areas are single runs to various parts of the County.

Ms. Allen said that for now for some of the western part or the Widewater region, connectivity is an issue, so this would provide an opportunity for the County to be more competitive or have an advantage with some of the for-profit providers. She said for her, she's encountered where these providers would not budge, even when there's an agreement in place with them.

Mr. Cannon referred to the green line on the map and said that is the line that would be running fiber to the Widewater Fire Station, and at the same point, it could also hit the park as well as be available for commercial use.

Ms. Allen asked Mr. Cannon to speak about the impacts on public safety and what would have to happen for the County to be able to have this type of network for them.

Mr. Cannon said that currently, a lot of facilities rely on cable modem services, and that creates major bandwidth and reliability issues. He said that much like services at home, with any storm that comes through, service can get knocked out, and that happens routinely for the public safety workers. He said this is a chance to improve that and provide a much more reliable service.

Ms. Allen asked if that also impacts the ability for calls to be received into certain stations that are not closer to better internet than some.

Mr. Cook said that when the alerting system is out, there are backup systems—but they would want those to always work, and this would help with that.

Ms. Allen asked how this would impact the schools, since they already have their own fiber, and whether this provides better access from the home environment.

Mr. Cannon said that the challenge with the home is that if there is no monetary value for Cox or Comcast to go to the last mile, they won't do it. He said this strategy provides that last mile of coverage for access. He said that while it would not directly give access to those homes, it would make it possible for fiber to be an option for those citizens through a third party like COX.

Ms. Allen asked if the County would receive financial benefit of renting their fiber space to a third-party provider.

Mr. Cannon said he does not believe the County is that far along in the decision-making, but anything is possible.

Mr. Cook said also there are loops to provide the direct benefit to the schools and the County because if there's a fiber cut, it provides a way to reroute the signal and the connectivity without having a complete outage of the network in those areas.

Ms. Vanuch said that while this is something very important to the entire group, as they all have constituents that talk about broadband and fiber, she wants to know what is needed from the Board today. She said that the next slide is asking the Board for a commitment about time sensitivity, and from her perspective, she needs more information about what stations are coming on at what time, and how would constituents go about access this fiber—because that is going to be the question that they ask their representatives. She asked if a line is running in front of a citizen's house how they could get access to it.

Ms. Bohmke said this is a pretty big project, and she would think it would be breaking it down into phases, but she would also think the fire stations would be first. She asked if there was a plan that could be shared with the Board on this process.

Mr. Cannon said that based on previous guidance from the Board, public safety has been the priority in the past, and his department is assuming that is the same now. He said that each segment can be a small project on its own, and his staff would look through to choose the ones that can be done most expediently within the first year.

Mr. Cook said the project was broken down by individual fire house and rescue squad and assigned them numbers. He said once his staff are given the go-ahead, they would complete the engineering study to be able to determine which stations are most ready. He said they would go with the approach of getting the lowest-hanging fruit, with the priority on public safety.

Ms. Bohmke said that Mr. Cook just mentioned some information and she asked if it was in the presentation.

Mr. Cook said the engineering study has not been done but said that there is a detailed list of cost estimates and that sort of thing.

Ms. Bohmke asked if the Board could see that list.

Ms. Vanuch asked if this needed to be voted on today or would be covered again in August.

Mr. Edwards said that they were looking for direction to apply for the VATI grant and designate a match from the Board.

Ms. Vanuch asked how much that match amount is.

Mr. Cannon said they have not been able to determine what the amount is, but the initial ask was \$3M for 2021, which would allow the County to construct that part of the whole project in the next 12 months, and also to serve as a match where there would be additional state and federal money through the VATI process.

Ms. Allen asked what the timeline is, with year one being the \$3M.

Mr. Cannon said he believes the project can be completed in two to two and a half years, which is within the ARPA timeframe. He said the VATI application process started about two weeks ago, and the due date is September 14 so there would need to be a determination soon as to whether they should move forward. He said this would require an R5 process, which would be issued this week or early next week; they would run it by the telecommunications commission and then issue a R5 to gauge the level of interest. He said the VATI process requires a partner, so the County would need to find a third-party provider to work with the County and pursue the grant.

Ms. Allen asked if this impacts the broadband master plan previously discussed.

Mr. Cannon said not really. He said that was separate, but it can certainly go to the consultant.

Ms. Vanuch said that the request today is for the Board to say they would match \$3M to get this process off the ground so the grant application can begin, and that vote is needed today.

Mr. Cannon said that it is to complete a detailed study to complete the process.

Ms. Vanuch asked if there is a consensus for the Board to bring this to the 3:00 p.m. meeting and move this forward today.

Board members expressed their approval.

Mr. Coen asked to clarify that the \$3M is from the federal money.

Mr. Cannon said yes. It was from the first tranche.

Ms. Vanuch said she is curious about the costs.

Mr. Cannon said there is a detailed spreadsheet with all of the specific color realms.

Ms. Vanuch asked that it be shared with the Board as an informational. She then confirmed with Mr. Presley that everything would be ready for the Board at 3:00 p.m.

Ms. Light said all of those items were included in the packet of the 116 pages provided to the Board.

Mr. Cannon said he wanted to call out utilities. He said the plan is to utilize some of the fiber to connect utilities and provide a dedicated connection, which is essential at this point.

Ms. Vanuch confirmed this.

Ms. Light said she does want to clarify what the funding would provide. She said there are two different investment levels in this project. She said \$10.1M does the entire project with the loops, and \$6.2M does not include the loops. She said what staff is recommending in this strategy is to provide \$6.2M of ARPA money and what was budgeted and appropriated for fiber in prior CIPs to get to \$6.2M. She said if the Board wanted to go to the \$10.1M, it would certainly be a direction that can be looked at—but it is her anticipation that there would be additional state money or a VATI grant match.

Ms. Vanuch asked if that changed anyone's mind. There was no response.

Ms. Light continued to the next time-sensitive item with the Cedar Lane improvement. She said the piece that is really time sensitive is the commercial section. She said the design and construction of the gravity line needs to begin now to meet the developer's expected timeline for their project.

Ms. Light said there are two phases for this project if the Board chooses to move forward. She said the first part is the commercial at \$1.65M, and the second is residential future improvement of \$1.5M. She said that staff did not recommend funding the residential piece as part of the spending strategy but did recommend moving forward with the commercial piece.

Ms. Vanuch asked if there were questions regarding this time-sensitive item.

Mr. Snellings asked why the staff didn't recommend the residential piece.

Ms. Light said there are a number of residential places that don't have the proper sewer and water, and this would be looking at just one subdivision but not all of them. She said other subdivisions have come forward, and her staff has asked them to look at doing service area projects.

Mr. Snellings said this is poor water quality. He said he knows Ms. Light is not part of utilities, but the report says there are 14 houses with poor water quality and failing drain fields.

Mr. Edwards said there are two portions, and the time-sensitive area would take sewer only to the commercial area. He said this would put the County in a better position to serve the sewer along Cedar Lane, but looking at it, there are a number of similar subdivisions that they would not be able to drive water to—so it was thought best for the ARPA funding to provide sewer for the area and then complete a service district project if they wanted to move forward with that.

Mr. Smith said they think it's a good project and the Board may consider it in the future for ARPA funding, but it was not included with the time-sensitive projects. He said it was thought that the commercial portion was more time sensitive for now, which would give the Board more time to consider the entire portion at this time or later.

Mr. Snellings asked where the commercial project is in relation to Cedar Lane. He said he knows where Cedar Lane is but asked if the commercial is directly adjacent.

Mr. Edwards said the County referenced about 300 acres, and the area in yellow on the presentation is the area that can access the green sewer line and goes to one of the existing service pump stations. He said Cedar Lane and those houses are in pink, and those are the 14 houses. He said what is trying to be done with that portion of sewer line is to sewer all 300 acres of the commercial property, and then in the future with the \$1.5M, run a water line down and connect to existing sewer.

Mr. Snellings said he has a hard time taking money from the federal government to be used for the citizens, and the County is providing sewer and water to a commercial development yet there are residents butting right up to it. He said that concerns him and he would have a hard time voting for it.

Mr. Dudenhefer said that according to Google Maps, there are homes all over in that purple area of the map in the slide presentation. He asked what that property is zoned.

Mr. Edwards said that the pink area is zoned residential and contain the 14 houses that are part of the phase two or residential portion of the project, and that is not being recommended for completion right now. He said that would fall under future improvement.

Mr. Dudenhefer then asked what the yellow portion represents.

Mr. Edwards said that part of the yellow land is already zoned commercial as part of the George Washington Village, and they are slated to redevelop the whole area as commercial/industrial, with up to two million square feet of commercial—so the County would want to be prepared and to carry a sewer line for that area down to the one pump station there.

Mr. Dudenhefer said he does not remember approving the George Washington's building project and the County spending a lot more money on that. He said to him, a developer is going to commercially come in to do that work, and he feels this is their job.

Mr. Snellings agreed.

Mr. Dudenhefer said he does not understand why this is being singled out.

Mr. Smith said a commercial property, Merritt Industries, is coming in and their real estate payments to the County would have an ROI of about two years to pay off this amount. He said they have run sewer lines in anticipation of expanding commercial services before; for instance, at Centerport Parkway, the County ran a 15-inch sewer line and that did expand, and now there is a lot happening in Centerport Parkway. He said this is another area right by the new interchange that is expected to move rather quickly once sewer is provided.

He said that Merritt Industries came to the County staff at one point and asked how it could be done, as they could not afford the \$1.65M to make it work, and this project would die unless there can be some sort of pumping station into the existing force main, which would be very problematic because that is not allowed. He said that the way to do it properly is to have a gravity line that goes to the pump station, which was offered, but Merritt said that value was too high and would probably kill the project.

Mr. Smith said they are aware there is other property there that are waiting to have commercial development and one that would give Merritt an easement to put the sewer line in so that it could then be opened up for additional commercial development. He said even if only the one commercial development comes in, it would have about a two-year return on investment in taxes paid to the County. He said this is just being brought forward as an economic development proposal if the Board would like to move forward with it.

Ms. Allen said she had the same question as Mr. Dudenhefer as to the significance of this. She asked if there was some way to be able to offer this to the citizens because Mr. Snellings' concern is that we should not be funding commercial companies that can do this themselves, and somehow they bypass the residents in the community or is there some way they can isolate the separate parts in the amount staff is recommending.

Mr. Presley said that what staff proposed was both initially. He said this commercial piece is the time-sensitive piece, and they are asking the Board to consider the second piece, being the residential, because it makes sense to do it since this line is being run out and it would serve those people who are in a troubled situation. He said it's not something that staff feels is as time sensitive as the timing of the economic development project.

Ms. Allen asked what the timeline and the funding for that second half to be able to hook the residents up.

Mr. Presley said that would be determined by the Board's decision to fund it or not, moving forward.

Mr. Edwards said it would take probably a year and a half to complete the commercial portion, and they would likely be able to build the rest within a year and a half after that. He said that the area to the south of the green line would need to be built up first.

Ms. Allen asked if the funding for the residents' project would fall under non-ARPA money.

Mr. Edwards said that the request today is for the ARPA money to fund the whole project, with the first \$1.65M going to the commercial project first and the remaining \$1.5M going to the residential project upon completion of the commercial.

Ms. Bohmke said this does not need to get into the weeds on this now, but regarding the 14 houses with poor water quality and failing drain fields, she said there are other similar issues like that all over the County. She said at some point in time, she would need to understand what "poor water quality" is, how is it defined, and what is a failing drain field—as those are all around the County as well. She said that if ARPA money is going to be used for that, the Board would need a lot more information.

Mr. Snellings said that she is correct, but other areas around the County are not abutted by that commercial property.

Mr. Edwards said all of those houses are on well and septic, but they aren't within the urban surfaces area. He confirmed that they are abutted to 300 acres of commercial to have access to water and sewer.

Ms. Bohmke asked if those families would pay any hook-up fees or is all of that paid for them.

Mr. Edwards said they would probably have to pay connection fees to the utility, but as far as the main water and sewer lines, that would come from the ARPA funding.

Mr. Dudenhefer said no one has answered his question about what the property is currently zoned. He said that the group keeps talking about commercial, but in his memory, he does not recall going through a rezoning in that area or property, and as far as he knows, it's all zoned R1.

Mr. Edwards said he would go back and double check.

Mr. Holden said he would confirm that, but Merritt is only developing in a portion of the yellow area, and he would confirm their property zoning after the meeting.

Mr. Dudenhefer said that it is closer to the interchange. It looks like it was identified as commercial without actually having the discussion or the voting on it.

Mr. Holden said again that he could confirm the zoning of the Merritt properties in the Board meeting later that afternoon.

Ms. Vanuch asked if any of that portion is residential, what guarantee the County has if this deal backs out from the commercial side and the other properties are zoned residential. She said that water and sewer has just been extended, which makes it ripe for high-density development, and she asked what assurances there are to ensure that scenario won't happen.

Ms. Vanuch also said that staff is also identifying this item as time sensitive, but she wanted to poll the Board to determine if it should come to them for vote. She said it is up for a vote with a draft resolution on the agenda coming forward the Board for a vote that afternoon either with the \$1.65M, the full \$3M, or none of it.

Mr. Dudenhefer said he needs to be able to have more information and to be able to get answers to questions. He said it bothers him that he has so little memory for what this is and what the plan is. He said George Washington Village is very controversial and said the commercial part for Merritt sounds like a really good deal, but he does not remember it being that parcel of land. He asked if there were overlays associated with the yellow area.

Ms. Vanuch asked if that would be available by the 3:00 p.m. meeting, or if Mr. Edwards prefer it come back at the 7:00 p.m. meeting.

Mr. Edwards confirmed that areas for which there are questions over zoning.

Mr. Smith said the Merritt property is B-2, the property to the south is A-1, which is agricultural. Referring to the map, he pointed out a property and said it was B-2. He said the line has to go through that section to get to the current pump station, which is the only reason the line goes through that section. He said he does agree that it opens the potential for people to hook up to it, which is something to consider, and it allows the commercial property to be developed. Ms. Vanuch said that to clarify from staff that the information can be available for the 3:00 p.m. meeting during new business.

This was confirmed.

Ms. Vanuch asked again the Board again if they were okay with the topic coming back at the 3:00 p.m. meeting.

Ms. Allen said she wants to know more about the return on investment, and she would like to see if that could get fleshed out.

Mr. Coen said that is only concern was that at some point, somebody would be paying back the full amount and he would like more information on that.

Ms. Allen said that some other return on investment.

Mr. Smith said that was the tax revenue from the two million square foot commercial, not that the developer was actually paying the County back anything.

Mr. Edwards said it was his understanding that the \$650K per year was based on the 390K square feet with Mary Washington.

Ms. Bohmke asked how many linear feet the green line on the slide represents.

Mr. Edwards said it represents about 3,000 linear feet of sewer line.

Ms. Bohmke asked what 3,000 linear feet is equal to in miles.

Mr. Edwards said it is about 0.6 miles.

Ms. Light said the next item that is considered time sensitive is the Duff McDuff Green Memorial Park and Patowomeck and Tribe infrastructure projects. She said these are two separate projects at Duff McDuff. She said the first would be a gravel access drive and parking area that would provide 40 spaces for the current and future museum of the Tribal Center operations to provide for increased cultural economic development and tourism opportunities. She said it is time sensitive and the Tribe plans to move forward with their drive and parking lot improvements to be ready for the larger crowds that they are anticipating next year.

Ms. Light said the second part is for water and wastewater infrastructure, which is \$1.5 M and would provide for improved water quality, alternatives for a septic system, and to support what is now the inadequate fire flows. She said this would accommodate the future Duff McDuff master plan and expansion. She said staff recommends funding this project in the amount of \$1.5M.

Mr. Coen said he has already reached out to several Board members that he is going to move for the roadway travel parking lot to be time sensitive, but not the other part.

Ms. Bohmke said that she agrees with everything Mr. Coen said. She said the Tribe has already spent over \$1M of their own blood, sweat, and tears and volunteer services for everything they have done out there. She thinks there would be a nice return on the investment.

Mr. Coen said that through conversation with the Tribe, they are comfortable with their blood, sweat, and tears, that they put in for the sewer and water system now and feel it would meet their needs for quite a while. He said that's why he doesn't think it is time sensitive, because the people using it now do not feel it is time sensitive.

Ms. Shelton said she has a question about the inadequate fire flow. She asked what the problem is with the fire flows and is that one of the reasons why this was made to be time sensitive. She asked if there is a serious issue there.

Paul Santay, Development Services Director said that the time-sensitive issue is the access drive and the parking area; however, in mentioning the fire flows, he said that Duff House is currently operating on a well. He said going back to poor water quality, there is a struggle at Duff House to make sure the water is usable for their guests and the people who are coming to the park. However, he said, it may be very difficult, and he would refer to the fire marshal but based on previous conversations when discussing a site plan submittal, having adequate fire flows for whatever expansion is being looked at may seem difficult.

He said the water line off of Route 3 is nearby, and having some sort of water infrastructure satisfies many different concerns at the Duff House—whether it's restroom facilities, drinking water, or even fire flow. He said it does mimic the master plan that's associated with the Duff Park as well. He said that while the time-sensitive factor in this is the access drive and parking area, the importance of the infrastructure for water and wastewater should not be ignored. He said he's sure some things could be accomplished for the home itself, and maybe there are some larger events for which they use different types of facilities for water and port-a-john type facilities too, but it may make sense to have water and infrastructure built into the design as well.

Ms. Bohmke said her colleague to the right said, "Where is Duff Green?" so she wants the public to know in case they are watching this meeting. She said it makes sense because she didn't know where the park was until she drove by it. She said Ms. Allen is in the Griffis-Widewater area, which is very north, so it was a fair question. Ms. Bohmke said Duff Green is just to the east of Duff Green Park, which is out on Route 3 going east toward King George, about one mile past the Wal-Mart on Route 3.

Mr. Smith stated that Mr. Cannon said it's almost to the wastewater treatment plant where everyone goes.

Ms. Bohmke said nobody knows where that is.

Ms. Vanuch said she has not heard any significant pushback, so this topic would come back at 3:00 p.m. She said Mr. Coen would like to see it come back with the \$450K for the road and not the \$1.05M. She asked if everyone was okay with that. No arguments presented.

Ms. Light said the final project for staff to consider as time sensitive is support for the United Way to provide support for Stafford residents. She said that during the four-month period that the United Way received CARES Act funding from the County, they provided citizens over \$540K in support. She said that the citizens of Stafford are still continuing to experience some financial hardship as a result of the pandemic. She said they are considering this time sensitive because there are already citizens seeking this assistance. She said staff does recommend setting aside an allocation to be distributed to the United Way in the amount of \$1.2M to support Stafford residents, but they also recommend that this be appropriated by quarters, with the first quarter being \$300K. Ms. Light said United Way is onsite to do a presentation as soon as she is done with her own presentation.

Ms. Vanuch asked if everyone was okay with the \$300K.

Mr. Dudenhefer asked where the number came from, and what the context is of giving United Way \$1.2M.

Ms. Krauss said the United Way staff would break down that request based on what they've seen through the pandemic and how they came up with that number as far as the average cost that the County supported with them with CARES funding and what they see on the wait list.

Mr. Dudenhefer asked if the United Way went through all of the people they support and asked them what they needed, and this is the total amount they came back with.

Ms. Krauss reiterated that the United Way staff would be covering that in their presentation.

Mr. Dudenhefer spoke about funds going Board supported organizations.

Ms. Light inquired about next steps.

Ms. Vanuch asked if anyone had questions and stated she is sure the Board would need to do another ARPA session in August or September, as there is much more to go through. She asked if anybody has a preference to do so in August on the next Board meeting or save it for the first meeting in September.

Mr. Smith said that the Infrastructure Committee and Economic Development Committee would probably take up a lot of the time. And that the second meeting in September would be better as much of the August meeting would already be booked.

Ms. Vanuch confirmed that the group was okay with the second meeting in September. Donna introduced and turned over to the United Way staff, Janel Donohue (President) and Sarah Walsh (Chief Impact Officer).

Ms. Donohue began the presentation saying Rappahannock United Way has been in the community over 80 years, and they have had a long-standing relationship with Stafford County government. She said that typically people know United Way as a fund-raising organization. She said they used to be known for the thermometer, they have evolved, still raise money for the community and Stafford is certainly within their region. She said they really work to make sure that the communities they serve are hopeful, resilient, and self-sufficient. She said she wanted to thank the group for how hard they campaign and recognized how often Stafford has earned the "Top Dog Award" as well.

Ms. Donohue said United Way focuses on financial stability. She said they have a focus on ALICE, which is Asset Limited Income Constrained Employed households in the community. She said in a four month stretch from September to December, United Way helped over 102 households to the tune of about \$500K in the midst of COVID.

Ms. Donohue said when considering a time of disaster, a lot of the time, the agencies first thought to help is places like the Red Cross and the Salvation Army. She said those organizations would come in and help during the disaster and then move on to the next disaster to help. She said United Way is around during the disaster and are there for the aftermath. She said the impacts following a disaster tend to be long term, and United way is looking for long term partners.

Ms. Donohue said that United Way helped an additional 95 households with other forms of pandemic help during the pandemic time. She said that United Way is poised and ready to continue to support Stafford residents, and applaud the Board for the way residents are placed at the forefront of decisions.

Ms. Donohue said that just today she approved the funding for a single mother who was impacted, had hours reduced, and could not keep up with rent, childcare, and said the young lady doesn't even have a car, but United Way was able to provide that help to bring her current with her childcare and rent. Ms. Donohue explained that without that assistance, the young mother would lose her childcare, which would impact her ability to go to work, which impacts employers and Social Services, and so Rappahannock United Way is helping people to keep from falling behind when there is no one else to help in areas where they are not eligible for help from Social Services. Ms. Donohue again said that they are poised and ready to continue supporting Stafford County.

Ms. Donohue introduced Sarah Walsh, who leads the program in this area. Ms. Walsh said she's been with United Way over 17 years, and they have been providing rent and mortgage and other types of financial assistance. During that time, she said, Janel mentioned the ALICE population and individuals and families who work in the community, which is who United Way has really focused in on. She said more recently due to the pandemic, the focus has shifted to those who were financially impacted by COVID.

Ms. Walsh said they used the funds from Stafford County, along with state funds and other local government funds, to assist families. She said the goal is to help families stay in their homes, to not become homeless, and that they are able to continue to support themselves long term. She said Janel mentioned the long road of recovery, which has been the focus of United Way during this time.

Ms. Walsh said one of the benefits to supporting United Way in this work is that they do manage several different funding streams from the state, local, and federal sources. She said another benefit is through strong partnerships. She said they as part of the continuum of care in Fredericksburg, the coalition of organizations that work together to provide housing and homeless services. Locally, the United Way partners with landlords and property managers, works with legal aide, deals with evictions and the court side of things. She said they also have a team of staff in-house that are trained and certified to help with social service and financial issues. Ms. Walsh said that there is a financial coach and intake coordinator on staff. She said that team was boosted during COVID with temporary staff so the high demand could be managed.

Ms. Walsh said that during the period that the United Way managed the Stafford funds last year, they were also managing the state dollars, and those now are in a centralized system for the whole state, and that millions of dollars have been allocated to the state rental assistance program. She

said that while this is a great change, she still feels there is a local need and approach to managing that need. She said individuals need to apply online for state assistance, and United Way has a similar online service in addition to dealing with people who don't have access to the technology and transportation to complete the process online. She said United Way has the ability to meet with people in-person to help them navigate the system, based on whatever their needs are. She said working in this manner allows United Way to be flexible and facilitate avoiding eviction, losing transportation, losing jobs, and so on.

Ms. Walsh referred to the slide presentation showing the numbers of the people helped from September to December of 2020, and she said that need is continued. She said Janel talked about the long-term impact of the pandemic, and said it is well known how many people lost their jobs, were furloughed, or had hours reduced. She said that while the economy is starting to recover and people are going back to work, they are seeing many individuals who are now back to work but have experienced long periods of time without steady income that have fallen far behind on rent and other bills, and they also have blown through their own personal resources and savings—so this has been a long-term buildup of issues.

She said they are still receiving about 200 requests per week from the region for assistance. Of those, some were able to be referred to the state, but there are many the United Way is still providing direct assistance for. She said, referring to the slide presentation, United Way is not duplicating services in the community, and they are also not seeing repeat requests from the same household, and that the one-time help is enough to assist people in getting back on their feet.

Ms. Walsh said one of the things many people have questions about, is the unemployment rate. She said the data is out there, with people returning to work, school, and businesses are reopening. She said the majority of the people the United Way has helped in Stafford County are employed, but may have had a break in employment, or had a reduction in hours. She said they do have earned income, but it may have been reduced because of the pandemic, which impacted their ability to cover their costs. She said that while they do see some businesses that are struggling to hire on and fill positions, many of those are hourly jobs without benefits, and on the lower pay end of the scale, which can still cause challenges for people to cover the high cost of living in Stafford and the whole region.

Ms. Walsh said one of the questions mentioned was about how United Way came up with the number of what they are asking the Board to approve. She said her team requires a lot of information from those individuals who are asking for help. She said proof of income and rent is needed, United Way coordinates with the requestors employers to make sure there was either a break in employment or a reduction of hours, bank statements and pay slips are needed, and United Way verifies if the individual is receiving unemployment benefits. She said they really do their due diligence to ensure the need is genuine and real, and all of that information is tracked.

Ms. Walsh said the number that was established for the request to the Board was looking at what was provided in the past by individual, how much was received, and how far behind in rent. She said that figure was the average cost of what they have provided, and the continuing requests from households.

Ms. Walsh said she does not believe anyone thought the pandemic would carry on as long as it has, and that has caused a long-term strain. She said the ALICE report showed that in Stafford County alone, 29%, or almost one third of households were already struggling to make ends meet before the pandemic. She said there is a moratorium on evictions that was just recently extended, but that does not mean that evictions have not been happening. She said they have been happening and they have worked with many households that have been evicted, and United Way is working with legal aid workers to try and inform tenants. She said the moratorium is not automatic, and the tenant needs to declare a written declaration to the landlord and provide that to the courts to qualify for the moratorium, which many tenants are not aware of, the landlords aren't aware, and sometimes the judges are not fully informed, making evictions ongoing. She said United Way wants to prevent that from happening and keep people in their homes.

Ms. Vanuch said doing a time check, there are only nineteen minutes before the next meeting, and would like to keep it brief.

Ms. Shelton asked if the other surrounding localities contribute into United Way in this way.

Ms. Walsh said the United Way has received funding from the city of Fredericksburg and they have re-committed to providing funding this year.

Ms. Shelton then asked if the United Way is covering all of planning district 16.

Ms. Walsh confirmed this.

Ms. Shelton confirmed that there is funding then coming in from only one other locality.

Ms. Shelton then asked if the amount that the Board provides for their Stafford residents actually provide funding for other counties.

Ms. Walsh said no, that would only be used for Stafford County residents.

Ms. Shelton asked if that would free up funding for other counties.

Ms. Vanuch said \$300K is what the staff proposed as a phased approach, and the group agreed.

Ms. Bohmke asked if the Board could get a report based on who has been served, were they served in the past, and maybe information on employment, and have they been able to reengage with their old jobs, gain new employment, or any kind of information.

Ms. Walsh said any information the Board would like in reports is fully available.

Adjournment At 2:44 p.m., Chairman Vanuch adjourned the July 6, 2021 Stafford County Board of Supervisors American Rescue Plan Act session.

---

Frederick J. Presley  
County Administrator

---

Crystal L. Vanuch  
Chairman