

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
STAFFORD COUNTY, VIRGINIA
JOINT WORK SESSION WITH THE SCHOOL BOARD
MINUTES
OCTOBER 18, 2022

CALL TO ORDER – A joint work session of the Stafford County Board of Supervisors with the School Board was called to order by Patricia Healy, Chair of the School Board, at 5:15 p.m. on Tuesday, October 18, 2022, at Brooke Point High School.

ROLL CALL – The following members were present: Crystal Vanuch, Chairman; Pamela Yeung, Vice Chair; Tinesha Allen; Meg Bohmke; Thomas C. Coen; Darrell English; Monica Gary.

Absent: None.

Also in attendance were Randal E. Vosburg, County Administrator; Rysheda McClendon, County Attorney; Cheryl Giles, Deputy Clerk; Julia Homes, Assistant Deputy Clerk; various staff members; and other interested parties.

SCHOOL BOARD ROLL CALL – Patricia Healy, Chair; Susan Randall, Vice-Chair; Maya Guy; Sarah Chase; Maureen Siegmund; Elizabeth Warner. Ms. Randall motioned to allow Ms. Halstead to participate electronically, and the motion was seconded by Dr. Warner. The motion carried unanimously.

WORK SESSION

SCHOOL CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN PRESENTATION

Ms. Patricia Healy, Chair of the School Board, explained the work session was an opportunity to discuss the Stafford County Public Schools (SCPS) CIP. She noted that the School Board would take half the meeting for its presentation and leave the remainder of the time to the Board of Supervisors for presentations, questions, or comments.

Ms. Healy said the discussion would focus on the two capital projects unanimously identified as the second and third CIP priorities in September 2022. She explained the first priority was High School #6. She said the second and third priorities were Elementary Schools #18 and #19, respectively.

Ms. Healy stated that the School Board's following three priorities after the construction of Elementary School #18 and #19 were rebuilds of Hartwood Elementary School, Drew Middle School, and the Gari Melchers Rising Star Pre-school. She said the School Board would like to discuss the previously mentioned projects at a future meeting.

Ms. Healy mentioned the explosive growth in SCPS student population and the challenges associated with the space demands of new students. She said because the focus of the meeting was on the immediate and dire need for Elementary School #18 and #19, they would review the change

in the elementary school student population since the last elementary school, Anthony Burns, opened in 2006 and the projected student population increase for the next 10 years.

Ms. Healy explained in 2006, SCPS had 11,174 elementary students enrolled, and as of September 30, 2022, there were 12,992 elementary students enrolled. She noted that the increase was 1,818 elementary school students since 2006. She said the projected elementary school enrollment in 2026 was 13,759 students, an increase of 767 students from 2022. She explained the projected elementary school enrollment in 2031 was 15,586 students, an increase of 2,504 students from 2022.

Ms. Healy explained the elementary enrollment projections were performed by Mr. Lionel White whose student enrollment projections for 2022 were 99.98% accurate. She said the projections displayed a dramatic increase in anticipated elementary school students.

Ms. Healy stated that SCPS currently had two trailers operating as four classrooms at Rocky Run Elementary School and two trailers operating as four classrooms at Conway Elementary School because of the lack of elementary seats in the southern part of the County. She explained that when Elementary School #18 was opened, the School Board expected that the trailers at Rocky Run and Conway would no longer be necessary.

Ms. Healy explained that in addition to relieving overcrowding at Rocky Run and Conway, the School Board anticipated Elementary School #18 would relieve overcrowding at Hartwood, Falmouth, Grafton Village, and potentially Ferry Farm and Margaret Brent. She said it was anticipated that when Elementary School #19 opened, overcrowding would be relieved at Stafford Elementary, Anthony Burns, Hampton Oaks, Winding Creek, Grafton Village, and potentially Falmouth.

Ms. Healy stated the relief to those previously mentioned schools could potentially relieve overcrowding at Park Ridge, Garrisonville, and Moncure. She said without the timely opening of Elementary Schools #18 and #19, SCPS would suffer from overcrowding at nearly every elementary school in the County, and the only potential relief would be costly trailers.

Ms. Healy stated the School Board viewed trailers as a last, albeit necessary, resort. She stated trailers raised concerns regarding safety and security, costs with limited return on investment, negative impacts on instructional delivery and the infrastructure, and the inability to meet the needs of each and every student.

Ms. Healy explained in April 2022, the School Board learned the Board of Supervisors approved a rebuild of Hartwood Elementary School to begin in FY 23. She said the Board made the decision unilaterally without any rankings of the rebuild by the CIP Technical Review Committee or in communication with or input from the School Board.

Ms. Healy stated the School Board requested the Board of Supervisors reconsider the decision to fund the rebuild of Hartwood Elementary School in FY 23 based on the needs of SCPS and the priorities identified by the School Board for capital projects for the elementary schools. She noted

that Elementary School #18 and Elementary School #19 would collectively add 1,968 seats to the elementary school student capacity while the Hartwood rebuild would only add 393 seats.

Ms. Healy stated the School Board further requested the Board of Supervisors to replace the approval of Hartwood Elementary School Rebuild with approval for funding for Elementary School #18 and Elementary School #19, simultaneously, to begin FY 24 and to open August 2026. She said they would happily discuss funding alternatives for Elementary Schools #18 and #19 at a future forum.

Ms. Healy stated each School Board member would have the opportunity to present individual perspectives on the identification of Elementary School #18 and #19 as a second and third priority on the School Board's CIP after High School #6 and on the need to move forward expeditiously and without delay on funding the construction of Elementary School #18 and #19.

Dr. Warner stated that they were discussing the financial aspects of High School #6, so it was getting closer to being a reality. She said she was concerned because of the decision to place the Hartwood Elementary rebuild over Elementary Schools #18 and #19. She noted that Elementary School #18 had been on the School Board's CIP since she joined the School Board. She said at a local townhall, frustration was expressed by participants that the County was not building more schools.

Dr. Warner stated that the County needed three schools—High School #6, and Elementary School #18 and #19—because SCPS needed capacity and seats for students. She explained the alternatives for school construction meant increased spending on trailers. She said the trailers brought additional burdens for lighting, fencing, and security cameras, and they posed a safety risk because the trailers did not have the same hard infrastructure as the school buildings.

Dr. Warner stated that the addition of trailers did not add capacity to the libraries, cafeterias, or gymnasiums. She said SCPS was unable to meet the resources needed for any given school. She stated it was important that the Board of Supervisors worked with the School Board in land acquisition and school construction so that the community needs were met. She said it was critical that SCPS built the needed capacity.

Dr. Chase said she did not know how the boards got out of touch in terms of a new elementary school and she hoped to correct it moving forward. She stated that there was frustration because there was trouble communicating and staying on message. She said the number one priority should be the education of the students, which required classrooms.

Dr. Chase said spending more than \$2M on turf fields rather than classrooms or land for new school construction made her believe there was funding for the other projects. She stated that the enrollment projections were optimistic, and they did not take into account the growing number of early-childhood special education students.

Ms. Guy said she would welcome an understanding of how the decision was flipped. She said she did not understand but was making the best effort to follow the decision-making. She said it was

important for SCPS to have space. She stated that one of the elementary schools hosted a classroom in the library because there was no other space. She said she was worried as a parent for the future of the students. She said the County desperately needed Elementary Schools #18 and #19.

Ms. Siegmund acknowledged the Board of Supervisors was trying to provide enrollment seating through a Hartwood school rebuild. She stated that a Hartwood rebuild would only provide about 400 seats instead of the needed 800 or 900 seats. She said the Hartwood rebuild would not alleviate the need to finance trailers. She said Hartwood had to remain open, and Elementary Schools #18 and #19 had to be constructed.

Ms. Siegmund said in the northern part of the County, Stafford Elementary would be over capacity by 200 seats and Anthony Burns was 80% of students that were bused across I-95. She noted that about 50% of students at Hampton Oaks came from across I-95. She said there was nowhere to put the students. She said not building schools did not prevent people from enrolling their children in the schools. She stated that SCPS was required by law to educate every student in the County.

Ms. Siegmund said installing more trailers meant busing more students to fewer spaces. She explained the amount of busing was the reason for the hour offset in the start schedules. She noted the difficulties for parents to drop their children off at school. She explained it was difficult for SCPS to acquire buses and trailers even if the funding was available. She said the funds should be invested in infrastructure and creating learning environments that would not depreciate.

Ms. Randall stated that the previously displayed maps of the projected school capacity showed exactly where the growth was and where the schools were needed. She said they needed to pay attention to where the County's needs were so schools were built where the students were.

Ms. Randall noted the use of trailers at Ferry Farm during the ongoing renovation. She noted that there were safety issues along with the lockdown drills, fire drills, and tornado drills. She noted issues with the bathrooms and how bathroom breaks had to be scheduled.

Ms. Randall stated that it was a priority of the School Board to ensure each elementary school had dedicated music, art, library, STEM, and teach workrooms. She said that Elementary Schools #18 and #19 were considered a top priority by the School Board. She said she hoped the elementary schools would become a top priority of the Board of Supervisors after their discussion.

Ms. Halstead recognized the difficult decisions the Board of Supervisors had to make. She said if they did the Hartwood replacement as identified and shut the school down, then they would have shot themselves in the foot. She said they did not have enough school buildings to close Hartwood Elementary at all. She noted that the school needed renovations; however, decompressing student capacity would alleviate pressures on the infrastructure and provide an opportunity to keep the building functional for a few more years.

Ms. Halstead said that the overcrowding of elementary schools was likely the number one cause of many of the issues they were facing in the schools, such as fights. She said there were times when there were too many students in classes for the teachers to be productive. She noted that

there was no easy solution to manage growth. She said the County was lagging behind the growth and had to catch up. She said the disparity in the learning conditions of schools like Hartwood or Rocky Run compared to new schools like Moncure was stunning.

Ms. Halstead said if the County was going to approve a \$58M allocation, the taxpayer deserved more information on the ability to use fees for that money. She said this was an olive branch—build the schools. She said the Hartwood parents understood that if they could decompress Hartwood, then by the time of the construction of Elementary School #20, the County would be in a better place.

Ms. Halstead said it was important to show everyone, including the students, that the County was catching up. She said they had to make the learning environment better for the students. She stated she would meet independently to discuss her thoughts on Elementary Schools #18 and #19. She said a county was built around the schools because people moved to the County based on the education their children would get.

Ms. Healy asked Dr. Taylor to address some of the funding economies the County could have if it were to build Elementary School #18 and #19 simultaneously.

Dr. Taylor stated that new schools were needed to alleviate growth and some schools needed to be rebuilt. He said they had to consider how, when, and under what circumstances the schools would be built, and there were several projects to consider. He said it was an opportunity because SCPS needed two schools' worth of capacity immediately, and there were some economies stemming from building and scoping projects in quick succession or simultaneously.

Dr. Taylor said drafting a prototype design that could be replicated provided immediate cost savings. He said construction project bids for the same design but in different locations, if sequenced correctly, could be capitalized to reduce land costs and scheduling fees that there could be savings between 1% to 5% of the total cost of the project, and a large sum of contingency funds. He said over two projects, 1% to 5% was in the millions of dollars—\$1M to \$5M in project savings.

Dr. Taylor stated that the Board of Supervisors had smaller projects that it could fund with savings from constructing both elementary schools at the same time. He said there was an opportunity to take advantage of the savings and meet a community need. He said addressing the problem was about looking forward.

Ms. Healy stated that the School Board had finished with its presentation and the meeting was open for the Board of Supervisors to ask questions, make comments, or give a presentation.

Ms. Crystal Vanuch, Chair of the Board of Supervisors, noted since 2018, the Board of Supervisors had made significant adjustments to funding the schools via salary increases, bus driver salary increases of 22%, and expediting school projects on the CIP. She said the Board of Supervisors was committed to education and ensuring the County was a great place to live, work, and raise a

family. She stated that the Board of Supervisors had to make balances, and they looked forward to a good working relationship while ensuring they were communicating.

Mr. English stated that Hartwood had been a topic of discussion. He said he had been with the Sheriff's Office for 42 years, and he remembered when 9/11 happened. He said one of the major concerns after 9/11 was related to threats about poisoning the wells. He said at that time, Hartwood was the only school in the County on a well, so they had a 24/7 patrol around Hartwood to ensure the well was not poisoned.

Mr. English said the community in Hartwood was owed a new school. He noted that the building was over 40 years old, and no renovations had taken place. He asked if there was a plan if the Hartwood well ran dry. He said Hartwood Elementary had to be the second school built in the community. He stated Stafford was one of the wealthiest counties in Virginia and yet they still had a school on well and septic. He reiterated that Hartwood Elementary should be the second school built because it was owed to the residents of Hartwood.

Dr. Yeung stated that she was the only one to vote against the high school proposed in Hartwood. She said the School Board put a lot of work into Hartwood Elementary and into the well, and any water system could be poisoned along with the well. She said Hartwood was older than 50 years.

Dr. Yeung noted the need for many schools in the County. She stated the School Board was earnestly requesting two new elementary schools. She said the area across I-95 was also part of Stafford, and every child in the County deserved an education. She said she was committed to the School Board's request for two elementary schools. She said they knew the enrollment projections would increase, and they needed more than 400 seats.

Dr. Yeung stated she agreed with Ms. Halstead's statements—that if the community got two more elementary schools, then it would decompress enrollment at Hartwood. She said she supported Elementary School #18 and #19, Drew, and the wing of North Stafford.

Ms. Gary said she moved to the County about eight years ago from Springfield, Virginia. She said she grew up going to Fairfax County Public Schools. She noted the quality of her education and the number of services she had access to.

Ms. Gary stated that Springfield underwent similar growth compared to what Stafford was currently experiencing, and Springfield handled the growth better than Stafford was handling it. She said the County had to do better. She noted that the projections were dismal. She said she was having regular conversations in her community and discussing realistic outlooks for the tax rates. She said feedback from the community expressed opposition to increased taxes but understood the County had to afford certain costs.

Ms. Gary said fiscal responsibility required investment, and if the money was not spent, then it was being wasted. She said the County had to invest in its schools. She said they should consider items for a bond referendum and integrate them into the next budget. She noted that a music teacher

at one of the schools was constrained to a mobile cart, and students were losing out on the full benefits of the teacher's class.

Ms. Gary stated that she still was in touch with some of her teachers. She said they valued the teachers and educators in the County. She said the County needed to back up its support with funding. She explained prior to the approval of Hartwood, she believed the County was about to enter into a recession and she did not want to increase taxes on residents. She noted that the recession seemed to be leveling out, so the Board should do more in the coming year.

Ms. Gary noted the good working relationship she had with the School Board. She said it was a problem that they were one of the wealthiest counties but did not take care of their children. She said the money did not matter because she wanted her children to be cared for.

Ms. Allen said the meeting was emblematic of what had happened in the County. She stated that growth had gone unchecked for at least 20 years, and the County was faced with massive needs in transportation, schools, and revenue. She encouraged both boards to evaluate the issue holistically, not as individual districts, for the benefit of the County.

Ms. Allen said the situation in the County was similar to a situation she witnessed in the ICU, where a nurse was holding in her hands the brain matter of someone who experienced severe head trauma. She said the boards were holding pieces of the County in their hands. She said the Board of Supervisors should be able to defer decisions to the School Board because they were the most informed on certain topics.

Ms. Allen said there were core important topics and issues identified by the School Board, and the Board of Supervisors should defer to that expertise as to what is best for the County. She stated that the Board of Supervisors had not agreed unanimously on many topics, especially personal ones that may affect children. She noted that each district had issues that needed addressing.

Ms. Allen said they needed to ensure they were providing the School Board the funding that would allow them to address their priorities strategically so that they were not wasting money. She stated that the new high school was projected to cost \$183M-\$30M more than costs from three years ago. She asked what the projected costs would be for Elementary Schools #18 and #19 if the projects were deferred to rebuild Hartwood.

Dr. Taylor responded the cost could be about \$15M more per school.

Ms. Allen said that would be \$30M that could potentially be wasted by not taking a more strategic approach. She said she wanted to know how the lack of capacity impacted the curriculum. She asked what else could be offered to the community so they could develop new job skills for a changing market. She said it was the greatest failure to not put the students in a position to be effective residents.

Ms. Allen asked if the projected enrollment included potential development capacity that had not yet been platted. She said she wanted to see how the projected developments for the next seven

years impacted the school enrollment projections. She said she wanted to know how soon Hartwood could be rebuilt if Elementary Schools #18 and #19 were built first. She said as elected officials, they should be transparent and answer constituent questions, especially in regard to the schools. She said if they were not equipping the students to be their best, then they had failed that generation.

Mr. Coen said the accurate enrollment projections were helpful and that the projections used to be less accurate. He recalled conversations during the CIP process in the spring about the elementary school needs and how he suggested taking the Fire and Rescue projects off of the CIP to hold a separate bond referendum in order to expedite an elementary school project. He said a project was moved on the CIP based on School Board input.

Mr. Coen stated that Ms. Bohmke had raised the suggestion a separate bond referendum be held for schools. He said the Board of Supervisors was supportive of new school construction and acquiring land. He noted that the Abberly project provided the County with 25 acres in the northeast area of the County and commented on how the County needed a school in the northeast area of the County.

Mr. Coen said there were efforts by supervisors to help address the issues with the schools. He said he had come forward with ideas to Dr. Taylor numerous times, and Dr. Taylor had provided feedback as to whether they were feasible. He said the County had to move forward, and it had to be based on trust. He said they had to understand that there were competing interests, but the Board of Supervisors desired to move forward.

Ms. Bohmke stated that everyone in the room valued education. She said there was a difference with one-time funding. She noted that the turf field projects were related to equity for North Stafford and Colonial Forge, and the funding was designated and set aside because it was proffered.

Ms. Bohmke said the affirmative vote for the project did not affect CIP projects or impact the funding of other projects because it was supplied by one-time monies. She explained state law prevented the Board of Supervisors from using the money for CIP projects.

Ms. Bohmke stated the County had been dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic for 2.5 years, and many leaders had taken their eyes off the ball. She commented that people were surviving day by day. She said many jurisdictions did not have meetings similar to the present one, and they did not have good working relationships within their organizations.

Ms. Bohmke stated that the School Land Construction Committee, composed of staff from the Board of Supervisors and the School Board, worked for a year to identify land sites, which resulted in the site for High School #6. She said she did not know about other land sites on the report, but they could review it. She stated the Board of Supervisors was willing to work with the School Board.

Ms. Bohmke stated that there was a development on Route 17 the prior year that would add several students to the County enrollment numbers. She stated the development was approved on a split vote, and she voted against it because of the school impacts and traffic impacts on Route 17. She said it only took four votes for items to pass.

Ms. Bohmke stated that there were many by-right subdivisions in the County, and that was a contributing factor to growth. She said the current Board of Supervisors and the previous two Boards had not approved any major rezonings in the County. She noted that Embrey Mill was approved many years ago, and Leeland Station was approved in 1995. She said those 780 homes were just completed in the past two years, adding that Embrey Mill was approved in 1980.

Ms. Bohmke explained the previous March, the Board of Supervisors approved on a 4 to 3 vote to downzone parcels from one house per 3 acres to one house per 6 acres. She explained some supervisors wanted to move to one house per 10 acres, but they did not have the support. She stated they had to move forward.

Ms. Bohmke explained she was on a school infrastructure committee with the other superintendents from the state. She said the County was unlikely to see a significant amount of the funding provided by the state because they would not qualify. She said the County's schools looked brand new when compared to the old schools in some of the other jurisdictions in the Commonwealth. She said the needs throughout the Commonwealth were much greater than the needs in the County.

Ms. Bohmke said regardless of the order of the school construction projects, the County would have to do a bond issue. She said it was all about debt service capacity, and noted they were entering a recession—the question was whether it would continue or deepen. She said they were fortunate to be in an area with federal government employment because it insulated them from many aspects of recessions.

Ms. Bohmke said 5,000 units had been approved in the County but had not been platted. She said not all of the units would be built, but they would have an impact on the projected enrollment and make the numbers worse. She said they could solve the problem if they worked together and worked hard.

Ms. Vanuch stated that the community believed the Board of Supervisors approved subdivision after subdivision. She explained that for her time on the Board of Supervisors and the Planning Commission, she had never voted for a single rezoning, but sometimes they passed. She noted that since her time as a supervisor, only one major rezoning had passed. She said Downtown Stafford had been approved and would have an impact on school capacity, and she would like to see that project undone.

Ms. Vanuch stated that the VSBA had added to its policy priorities to amend General Assembly laws regarding proffers for education. She explained development did not pay for itself in terms of education. She explained the VSBA could lobby to amend the law. She said the County needed

SCPS support to be able to go to the General Assembly to change the legislation. She said the legislation currently negatively impacted growing regions in the state, like Stafford.

Ms. Vanuch said they were not able to drastically increase taxes to cover all of the costs. She said people could go from paying \$3,000 on their property taxes to paying \$9,000, and they could not do that to people. She said they had to come to a common-sense solution for accomplishing their goals and needs.

Ms. Vanuch stated that the Board of Supervisors updated its legislative priorities, and cost-to-compete had been included each year. She noted that the School Board had joined the Board of Supervisors in advocating for legislative change on cost-to-compete. She said the state government wanted to compare Stafford to Northern Virginia in everything except education. She said the County had to push back on that presumption, and that was where they would see the most beneficial changes to be able to build the new schools.

Ms. Vanuch said it was not logical to increase taxes by triple the current amount. She said they had to find areas where they could work together. She said they had to have options on the table and solid tactics and measures as to how they would complete those projects.

Ms. Gary stated that the Mainline rezoning had been mentioned. She clarified the developer had returned with an additional \$1M proffer for SCPS and had requested the funding not change with the school redistricting. She said the proffer put SCPS over the per-pupil expenditure for the rezoned and by-right portions. She said some adjustments had to be made to taxes because SCPS paid the per-pupil expenditure, and developers calculated proffers based on that figure.

Dr. Yeung stated that Ms. Bohmke mentioned by-right developments and how many there were. She said when they rebuilt Hartwood, they had to consider the developments that were already built and the ones that were in the pipeline. She said 400 seats would not address the problem, so they had to ensure the school would be larger.

Dr. Yeung said that a bond could be held for each area rather than a general bond. She said the constituents appreciated when the supervisors considered the individual districts, and referenda were more likely to pass when voters knew the local impacts of the legislation. She asked if that was a possible path.

Dr. Taylor explained there were lots of different ways to finance the projects. He said the public-private partnership option could be explored as a viable solution for some financing, or a general geo-bond could be issued as a viable option for a standalone bond. He said the County could participate as part of the VSPA pool bonds.

Dr. Taylor explained the County could go out to referendum for a much larger geo-bond. He said for a bond referendum, the supervisors would likely want to select projects with geographic diversity that touched many parts of the County to ensure the bond received enough attention and support.

Mr. English asked if year-round schooling had been considered as an option because it could help with capacity issues.

Dr. Taylor said year-round schooling had been considered, but it was not worth the costs. He said year-round schooling had an additional cost of about 20% more per site to operate a floating year-round school. He said the other issue related to child care because students would be off at different times of the year but would still need to go somewhere.

Mr. English asked whether other jurisdictions had year-round schooling. He stated that Prince William had implemented it and was enthusiastic about it. He said he had the conversation before with Dr. Taylor where the sentiment was initial pushback followed by support.

Dr. Taylor said some jurisdictions supported year-round schooling, however, there were parts of the marketplace that had to catch up to be able to support it, such as child care. He said if there was a bigger school system, it may be a viable option, but it would be a radical shift for many families, so it could not be an immediate switch. He said there was some cost efficiency with year-round schooling, but it cost more to implement.

Mr. English clarified year-round schooling was costing the jurisdictions implementing it more money.

Dr. Taylor answered it was costing those jurisdictions more money—about 20% more.

Mr. English asked why they did year-round schooling if it cost more money.

Dr. Taylor said there were some cost savings in terms of per-pupil costs, but it was not a net-cost savings. He said teachers were working different calendars and utilities were run at different times, and maintenance needs were different. He noted that it was an option albeit not the most attractive option.

Ms. Healy asked if the other jurisdictions implemented year-round schooling for learning loss or for capacity issues.

Dr. Taylor said year-round schooling was implemented for learning loss, and it was a different model. He explained they did not shift the schedule to fit more students in, rather they took the same students and scheduled the school year into 45-day periods with two weeks of intersessions in between. He said some students attended the intersessions while some did not.

Dr. Warner stated the subject had been brought up to parents at many of the townhalls, and there was adamant opposition to year-round schooling because it may put children in different grade levels on different schedules. She noted that parents were also opposed to expanding virtual learning options because they wanted their children to attend school. She said the townhalls were beneficial because of the feedback they received.

Mr. English said in terms of the townhalls, the supervisors were not invited until they learned about them.

Ms. Healy said she would provide some more time for supervisors to speak and then allow the School Board a brief opportunity to respond.

Ms. Allen stated there was a housing crisis in the County. She said they had to get ahead of growth, but it was also an affordability issue and housing crisis. She noted that the meeting was productive. She said she wanted to consider the next steps because parents and the community wanted to know. She acknowledged High School #6 was in the pipeline.

Ms. Allen asked what the School Board needed from the Board of Supervisors in terms of its CIP. She explained if the Board of Supervisors were to go to referendum, they had to provide staff enough time to review the referendum so it could be on the ballot for the next year's election. She said they had to have a next-steps approach leaving the meeting and come up with tangible objectives.

Dr. Taylor said the School Board recommended the Board of Supervisors consider Elementary School #18 and Elementary School #19 for financing in FY 24, the upcoming CIP cycle, so that the project could break ground in the summer and the schools could be opened in the summer of 2026. He said the School Board further recommended the Board of Supervisors consider the projects on the CIP provided to them in October for longer-term financing, such as a bond referendum.

Ms. Healy said the purpose of the meeting was to ask the Board of Supervisors to return to the drawing board for the CIP and consider the School Board's priorities and recommendations. She said they would have to move quickly if they were to start construction the following year. She said Dr. Taylor could provide more specifics to the Board of Supervisors if necessary.

Ms. Halstead stated that Ms. Allen identified the delicate balance between working for a district and working for the County. She said it was not an easy task. She said when the condition of the schools across the County were considered in total, Elementary School #18 and #19 would help the County spend smarter.

Ms. Healy thanked the members for participating and noted it was one of the best meetings held between the boards. She said they listened to each other and the different responsibilities. She acknowledged they had different scopes of responsibility—for the schools and the whole County. She said if there were further questions, Dr. Taylor would help provide information. She said supervisors should also communicate any further questions.

Ms. Healy said if the Board of Supervisors wanted the School Board to attend a future meeting to provide more information, then they were available. She said the request was clear—to build Elementary School #18 and #19 immediately, quickly followed by the rebuild of Hartwood, Drew, and Rising Star. She said those rebuilds would be discussed another day.

Ms. Bohmke asked if land for Elementary School #18 and #19 had been secured.

Dr. Taylor responded land had not been secured, but they had initiated the process to secure one piece of property, and they were contemplating another piece of property. He said they had initiated the process for requesting proposals from architects for a prototype design for an elementary school, and they should have a design in place by summer 2023 with the ability to break ground in the summer as well.

Ms. Gary stated that she was invited to the School Board townhalls and she attended.

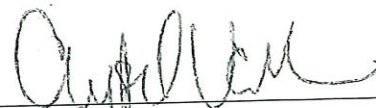
Ms. Vanuch said she appreciated the townhalls but noted that the language was a little strong and accusatory. She said she had attended her district's townhall, and future events would be more powerful for the community if they were held jointly. She pointed out that the School Board's request was clear. She said if any supervisors had questions to direct all communication to Mr. Vosburg. She said they needed to see cost estimates for the request to know the impacts on the tax rate.

ADJOURNMENT

At 6:35 p.m., Chairman Vanuch adjourned the joint Board of Supervisors and School Board Work Session.



Randal E. Vosburg
County Administrator



Crystal Vanuch
Board Chairman

