BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
STAFFORD, VIRGINIA
MINUTES
BUDGET WORK SESSION - CIP AND PROJECT STATUS
MARCH 28, 2023

CALL TO ORDER – A work session of the Stafford County Board of Supervisors was called to order by Dr. Pamela Yeung, Chairman, at 4:00 p.m. on Tuesday, March 28, 2023, in Conference Room ABC, George L. Gordon, Jr. Government Center, 1300 Courthouse Road, Stafford VA.

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

The following members were absent: Crystal Vanuch.

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

Dr. Yeung called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

WORK SESSION

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM FY2024-33
Ms. Andrea Light, Chief Director of Financial Services, said that staff hoped for the Board to understand the timing of projects, the options for adjustments, and to provide direction to staff to finalize the CIP as outcomes of the work session. She said that at the April 4 work session, staff would present potential CIP and general fund decisions to the Board.

Ms. Light said that the timing of all SCPS projects were included in the Board's packet. She said that SCPS had requested an additional $5M in annual funding for Pay-Go, and the County Administrator's budget included $1M to reduce debt funding on large projects. She said that the Board could move the funding to be 3R cash funding which would mean an additional $10M in debt service over 10 years for the large projects. She said that if the Board provided additional funding to SCPS, it would help reduce the debt service and provide additional cash to the School Board.

Dr. Yeung asked what was currently proposed to be allocated to SCPS other than the recommended additional funding.

Ms. Light responded that there was $1.445M that was allocated to the School Board every year for 3R projects. She said that bond projects were also included, and those fluctuated between $6.5M to $8M per year over the 10-year period. She said that the $1M in the County Administrator's proposed budget was a cash infusion into the CIP to help reduce debt service. She said that if the Board wanted to direct the $1M to 3R projects, then it was at their discretion.

Dr. Yeung asked if the School Board identified what the $5M Pay-Go request would be used for.

Ms. Light said that they did not identify the uses in the presentation, but the Board had a list of the SCPS 3R projects. She said that some of those 3R projects were bond funded or cash funded. She said that unfunded projects were included in the list, and that could provide insight into how the funds would be used moving forward.

Dr. Yeung requested specific information about what the $5M in funding would be directed toward.

Ms. Bohmke asked if the Board had given the School Board the option to issue debt or provide cash funding.

Ms. Light said no. She said that the County had not asked the School Board to provide information about revenue sources. She said that the School Board typically provided what their needs were, and staff tried to fit the requests into the available cash, proffers, and finally, debt funding. She said that issuing debt allowed the cost of the infrastructure to be distributed over the lifetime of the infrastructure.

Ms. Bohmke said that communities had to utilize debt funding. She noted that they had issued debt at historical lows, and even though rates had increased, they were relatively low. She said that they would hamper the School Board's ability to conduct other business if they only permitted cash funding for projects.

Ms. Gary said that she agreed with Ms. Bohmke's comments.

Mr. English asked whether the recommended $1M allocation was in addition to the County Administrator's $1M recommendation.

Ms. Light said that it was the same $1M. She said that staff did not recommend providing additional funding, but if the Board wanted to provide additional funding, it would be in addition to the already programmed $1M.

Mr. Coen clarified that the School Board allocation was being increased to $1M from its typical allocation.

Ms. Light responded that last year, the School Board received $1.445M, and the additional $1M that was recommended would increase the allocation to $2.445M. She said that the funding was presently programmed into large-scale projects, and taxpayers saw a benefit because the debt service was reduced. She said that the proposed funding did not go into the School Board's Pay-Go capital.

Mr. Coen requested information about the times in the past five years when the School Board requested emergency funding.

Mr. Vosburg clarified that his budget proposed $1.445M, and the Board would have to make a change to increase the allocation to $2.445M. He said that staff suggested the Board could increase the allocation to $2.445M.

Ms. Light said that there was $1M programmed in the proposed budget to SCPS capital for large-scale projects.

Ms. Bohmke noted that the School Board and Board had excess revenues at year end. She said that historically, the SCPS excess revenue was at a minimum $3M, and the Board reallocated those funds. She clarified that the funding typically went to 3R projects.

Ms. Light responded that typically, the School Board requested funding for trailers, or "learning cottages," at the elementary schools. She said that they had requested funding for additional buses and a VoIP system in the past.

Mr. English asked what Pay-Go capital was.

Ms. Light responded that it was an accounting term to mean that cash was used to pay for the projects, and it was a portmanteau of "pay-as-we-go."

Ms. Allen noted that $1M would save funds for other projects. She said that she supported allocating the extra $1M.

Dr. Yeung said that she would support $3M.

Ms. Light said that debt service for SCPS increased over the 10-year period. She said that High School #6 and Elementary School #18 were underway and had funding allocated. She said that there were projects for the high school bus expansion lanes, public day school, High School #7, and Middle School #7 in the outyears.

Ms. Light said that the Route 624 widening, Mountain View Road, and Mountain View/Kellogg Mill Road roundabout projects were not included in the CIP. She said that those projects had an excessive amount of assumed state and federal funding. She said that the projects were on the list of the $69M of shortfall. She said that staff sought the Board's direction whether to reinclude the transportation projects in the CIP to get additional funding if approved.

Mr. English said that the issues would not go away, so they should include the transportation projects.

Dr. Yeung noted that Truslow Road was not included in the list.

Ms. Light responded that Truslow Road was not part of the CIP. She said that if the Board wanted to add the project to the CIP, then staff could bring the item before the Board.

Dr. Yeung said that the road was not ready for a high school. She said that they needed to be cautious because of the safety risks.

Ms. Bohmke noted that the Commission had discussed the safety of the proposed roundabout. She said that she added a discussion item on the topic to the agenda for the next Board meeting because it was important for the Board to discuss with the School Board. She noted that VDOT had done an efficiency study for a four-way stop compared to a roundabout.

Ms. Bohmke said that VDOT determined there was no efficiency difference, so they had to consider a safety report. She said that the County would have to address the project because the School Board did not take care of road projects. She noted that the cost may be high. She said that road improvements were outside the scope of the school project.

Dr. Yeung said that they should address it sooner rather than later.

Ms. Light said that the debt service for transportation projects increased to about $5M in 2030. She said that there were new projects in the CIP. She said that there was a public safety radio replacement project. She noted that the project would replace all of the public safety radio equipment over 10 years old. She said that $5.1M was programmed from ARPA funding for the project. She said that some of the apparatus they planned to use APRA funds for were not eligible. She said that the item would be brought back before the Board to maximize ARPA to finish the radio replacement project.

Ms. Light said that the government center lobby renovation project was a security upgrade to the front of the lobby. She said that citizen's assistants and volunteers would be behind secured walls. She said the Carl Lewis addition had a cost of $2.1M, and it was the replacement for the structure that burned down. She said that the $2.1M would cover the cost to rebuild the center in its original footprint.

Ms. Light said that there was a space needs implementation. She said that a space needs study was being completed, and it reviewed the space needs in the County for the employees. She said that the item would provide $250K in cash funding in FY 24, FY 25, and FY 26. She said that the Aquia Landing parking expansion would aid in removing street parking.

Ms. Light said that the Two Stones overlook project would create an accessible access to the Historic Port of Falmouth (HPOF). She said that Belmont Ferry Farm Trail was included along with a pickleball courts project. She said the pickleball courts were scheduled for FY 27 at Pratt Park and other various parks.

Ms. Gary suggested a parking fee be implemented for the Aquia Landing parking expansion similar to the HPOF fee.

Dr. Yeung suggested that the swim park by the Rouse be turned into a pickleball court for the northern area.

Ms. Bohmke clarified which pool.

Dr. Yeung said the pool at the Woodlands.

Ms. Bohmke clarified that it was a summer pool used by the community.

Dr. Yeung said that there were several complaints about the pool. She said that a pickleball court would be a new use for the site.

Ms. Bohmke said that she supported separate facilities for the northern and southern parts of the County. She said that courts had to be built in conjunction with another type of facility. She recommended that the pickleball courts at Pratt Park be expedited to FY 25. She said that the Belmont Ferry Farm Trail project would require federal funding and SMART Scale funding. She asked about the funding required for the Carl Lewis addition.

Ms. Light said that they would have to issue lease revenue bonds of $1M to fund the project.

Ms. Bohmke said that the budget breakdown for the project should be added.

Ms. Allen suggested a public survey on whether to take the park needs to bond referendum. She said that they would create traffic and access problems by only locating pickleball courts in the southern portion of the County. She suggested installing courts at Smith Lake Park.

Ms. Gary said that she supported considering bonds for the parks and recreation needs. She noted that they were reviewing a towing contract for Aquia Landing.

Dr. Yeung asked how the pickleball courts were included on the CIP.

Ms. Light said that the pickleball courts had been requested by Parks and Recreation for a number of years and had been in the 3R list. She said that they wanted to bring the project to the Board and community's attention.

Dr. Yeung said that they needed to perform a survey about what the parks and recreation needs were. She said that she wanted to increase walkability to parks. She asked for more information about the funding for the public safety radio replacement.

Ms. Light responded that there was $5.1M in remaining ARPA funds that could be used for the radio replacement. She said that it would be helpful for staff to use the remaining funds on one project to reduce the workload in the procurement department. She said that the entire project cost was about $6.9M.

Mr. Coen clarified that Ms. Gary was not proposing parking fees this year for Aquia Landing.

Ms. Gary said that she would support implementing parking fees and fixing the towing contract this year.

Mr. Coen said that including Two Stones and Belmont Ferry Farm in the CIP allowed the County to leverage extra funding and to receive donations. He said that Pratt Park was a good idea for pickleball courts.

Ms. Bohmke noted there was land at Smith Park that could be used for expansion. She asked if the land would be sufficient for pickleball courts.

Mr. Morris said that they would have to review the location. He noted that the available land was located below the dam.

Ms. Bohmke asked if the Board agreed staff should look into utilizing the land for pickleball. She noted that pickleball was an accessible sport. She said that they should begin by renovating the pickleball courts at Pratt Park, and they should offer free pickleball courts to the public.

Dr. Yeung said that they could implement a service district to fund improvements to Truslow Road.

Mr. English said that the item should be brought back before the Board. He suggested that staff consider Willowmere for pickleball courts. He noted that all of the fields at the Rouse Center were used.

Mr. Vosburg said that if the Board wanted to implement a service district, then staff would have to move quickly. He said that they could prepare an item for the April 4 meeting to be deemed time sensitive after which the Board could take action at the April 18 meeting. He noted that there was consensus from the Board to prepare an item for April 4.

Ms. McClendon said that service districts entailed more than setting a fee. She said that the Board would need to reassess the boundaries of the service district, and if Truslow Road was not within the boundaries of the Warrenton Road service district, it would have to be amended to add the road so that funds could be utilized for the project. She said that there were other considerations in regard to acquisition of property.

Ms. Allen suggested a bond referendum to support the Parks and Recreation requests.

Mr. English requested more information about the service district. He asked why they did not borrow more funds to address road improvements in the school project.

Ms. Bohmke asked for more information about potential improvements to Truslow Road.

Mr. Bryon Counsell responded that staff had been reviewing improvements and had calculated rough estimates to perform wedge widening from Poplar Road to Barea Church. He said that the cost estimate was about $4M. He said that a roundabout at the high school entrance and Truslow Road and one at Enon Road would cost another $8M.

Ms. McClendon said that those who were charged a service district levy should receive a benefit from the service district. She said that when the Board established the service district, it chose to levy the tax on commercial uses, not residential uses. She said that the Board could reconsider which uses would be charged the levy when it expanded the district. She said that if the boundaries of the district changed substantially, the Board could establish a new service district.

Dr. Yeung asked if there could be a service fee without including the Truslow Road project.

Ms. McClendon said that if there were no projects identified in the service district, or if the funds were never used for a project, then the County would potentially have to refund the collected revenue.

Mr. Coen clarified that they needed to determine if Truslow Road was able to be accomplished under existing parameters, the costs, and the timeline for improvements. He noted that there were no new fields proposed in the 10-year plan.

Ms. Light said that Mr. Coen was correct about the lack of fields. She noted that there were park expansions in the CIP, but only what proffers would allow. She said that master planning was underway for the parks projects.

Mr. Morris said that they performed a master plan in 2017, and in 2019, they decided to do individual master plans for the four parcels that were undeveloped at Duff Green, Mountain View, Patawomeck, and Musselman.

Ms. Bohmke suggested that the Board should not take action on Duff Green until after the master plan was complete. She asked when they anticipated to receive the results from the Duff Green master plan.

Mr. Morris said that the master plan would take six to eight months.

Ms. Bohmke asked if the master plan was under way for Duff Green.

Mr. Morris said that it was scheduled to begin in 2030 when the funding was available.

Ms. Gary asked what needed to happen to expedite the master planning for the parks. She suggested that the master plans be reprioritized.

Mr. Morris said that each master plan varied in cost between $90K to $100K. He said that all of the master plans were funded with proffers.

Ms. Light said that the plans were scheduled far out was because they used projected proffers. She said that if the Board wanted to expedite the master plans and use prior-year fund balance, then the option was available.

Ms. Gary asked if the Board was interested in expediting the master plans.

Dr. Yeung noted that they were looking at the County's land piecemeal, and they needed to have a better understanding of the County's land inventory to make decisions.

Ms. Bohmke noted that they were deficient in fields. She asked if the Parks and Recreation Commission had discussed the need for fields.

Mr. Morris said that in 2014, they did an analysis of ball fields and identified where the needs were. He said that in 2017, they did a master plan on all other types of amenities other than ball fields. He said that the Parks and Rec Commission had considered numerous times adding new amenities to all of the parks. He said that in 2019, they identified four undeveloped parks and the need to perform master plans to determine how to develop the land. He said that there was 124 acres at Patawomeck, 117 at Duff Green, 40 at Mountain View, and 40 at Musselman.

Ms. Gary suggested that the master plans be expedited in the schedule and be potentially put out for bond.

Dr. Yeung asked how old the park studies were.

Mr. Morris said that the most recent study was from 2017.

Dr. Yeung suggested increasing walkability and connectivity to the parks.

Ms. Light said that the increase in debt service was related to the courthouse project. She said that the courthouse project was in the proposed CIP, and design would begin in FY 25. She noted that construction would begin in FY 27. She said that all of the CIP projects were listed in the Board's materials.

Ms. Light said that the new Fire and Rescue stations were requested to replace the White Oak and the Brook station, and they requested to add the Embrey Mills station. She said that the Aquia station and Rock Hill station were currently being replaced and funding had been appropriated. She said that the proposed budget included a $0.03 Fire and Emergency Services levy.

Ms. Light said that the service levy funded the debt funding for the projects. She said that all of the apparatus were cash funded. She said that apparatus costs were about $1.1M to $2M per year and included the replacement of ladder truckers, tanker trucks, and other equipment. She said that the debt service was between $120K and $130K every year. She said that the cash funding would save the County interest payments.

Ms. Light said that if the Board did not approve the levy, Fire and Rescue projects would leverage the same debt capacity that schools, transportation, and other County projects leveraged. She said that the projects would have to be considered in the debt capacity, and the timing would become important to discuss.

Ms. Bohmke mentioned the White Oak, Embrey Mill, Rock Hill, and Aquia Harbor fire stations. She said that the Brooke station was the worst in terms of a rebuild. She asked whether the Board should consider rebuilding the Brooke station before the Embrey Mill station or rebuild Embrey Mill at the same time as the Brooke station.

Ms. Bohmke noted that improvements had been made to Rock Hill and asked why improvements to White Oak had been pushed to FY 30. She asked how the projects were prioritized and whether the Board could change the prioritization.

Mr. Joe Grainger, Assistant Fire Chief, said that the challenge in Embrey Mill was based on demand and anticipated demand as the area was built out in the adopted drive-time standards. He said that the project was prioritized over the Brooke fire station was because there was already a fire and EMS facility in the Brooke station. He noted that the Brooke station required significant work, but they anticipated taking a similar approach to the Rock Hill station. He said that each of the projects were prioritized within the fire administration and with the leadership of each station to develop a plan.

Ms. Bohmke clarified that Rock Hill was included in the budget with an allocation of $10.2M. She noted that the renovations had been completed two years ago.

Mr. Grainger noted that the improvements to the Rock Hill fire station were completed approximately two years ago. He said that there were collateral challenges in Rock Hill. He said that they were running separate fire and EMS station in the Rock Hill demand zone. He said that there was an engine squad and standalone rescue squad. He said that the plan for the new Rock Hill fire station project would take two stations and include them in one at a better location to serve the area. He said that the stations were currently located on Route 610, and the jurisdiction abutted the range-side of Marine base Quantico.

Ms. Bohmke asked how much was spent on the Rock Hill improvements.

Mr. Grainger responded that it was $350K.

Ms. Bohmke said that she was concerned the Brooke station was not being prioritized.

Mr. Grainger said that they had worked with the leadership from the Brooke Volunteer Fire Safety Association for a number of years to make improvements to the station. He said that the station was owned by the volunteers. He said that in Rock Hill, there was a volunteer fire department that went out of business.

Mr. Grainger said that the County stepped in to add a paramedic engine company to the station full time, and they entered into a lease agreement with the new owners of the fire station. He said that they did not have similar lease agreements with the Brooke Volunteer Fire Safety Association, but they continued to work toward an agreement.

Mr. Grainger said that the White Oak station was in a similar situation to Rock Hill with separate volunteer fire stations and rescue squads. He said that the fulltime staff were assigned to the White Oak rescue squad, and they staffed an ambulance out of the rescue building, and no fulltime staff were assigned to the White Oak Volunteer Fire Department. He said that the project was at the end of the list because of the projected future demand in the area. He noted that it was one of the most rural areas in the County. He said that the future location of the station depended on how the area was developed.

Ms. Gary asked what the status of finding land was for Brooke.

Mr. Grainger asked if Ms. Gary was referring to finding land for the capital construction project.

Ms. Gary said that she was referring to the replacement in Brooke.

Mr. Grainger said that there had been no progress on that. He said that they were still attempting to locate parcels for the Aquia and Rock Hill fire stations.

Mr. English asked for clarification about the ownership of the Rock Hill Fire Department land.

Mr. Grainger said that the Rock Hill Fire Department was a deed of gift when they dissolved to the Rock Hill Volunteer Rescue Squad, and there was a long-term lease in place between the County of Stafford and the Rock Hill Volunteer Rescue Squad that allowed them to continue to operate out of there.

Mr. English asked if the Rock Hill Volunteer Rescue Squad had ownership of their own separate parcel.

Mr. Grainger said yes.

Mr. English asked if the White Oak Fire Department was owned by their association.

Mr. Grainger said yes.

Mr. English asked if the White Oak Fire Department would be rebuilt in a different location or rebuilt in place.

Mr. Grainger said that it was too early for that decision to be made.

Mr. Coen said that there were several issues that required some straw polling to decide the direction of projects. He said that if there was not the propensity to do the fire levy, there would be impacts on other areas of the budget, including the funds put toward building new schools. He said that Ms. Vanuch had mentioned on Tuesday that there was potential for a bond for the schools, and they would have to see if there was a palette for that direction as well. He said that they would have to take some actions to come to a decision, because if there was no predilection for the 3-cent levy, the issue would be negated and impacts would be shifted.

Mr. Grainger said that Stafford County had done an excellent job in adding resources to the Fire Department since its inception in 2005, and when they operated as the Department of Emergency Services prior to that. He said that they continued to fund positions for emergency response as well as state-of-the-art equipment, which they acknowledged came at a cost. He said that one of the issues they would continue to have was the state of the building stock that they responded from.

Mr. Grainger said that specifically, in Aquia Harbor, the engine company was run out of a building that was built as a volunteer rescue squad, and in White Oak Volunteer Fire Department, the dormitories were in the cellar of that building, which had created concerns about fire code compliance for the building official in that building. He said that if they were able to have a dedicated and continued funding source specifically for capital projects, it would allow them to turn the corner within fire and emergency services to get the projects completed, which was why they felt it was a warranted discussion, and they would be able to make improvements in the Fire and Rescue Department now and in the future.

Dr. Yeung said that a straw poll could be taken without Ms. Vanuch being present.

Mr. Coen said that was true, but he would prefer not to.

Dr. Yeung said that if a majority was here, they could do so. She asked why there were penalties associated with the proffers.

Ms. Light said that the penalties were related to people paying their Fire and Emergency Services levy late, which was a revenue source from penalties and interest, similar to the penalties and interest in the general fund for late payments for personal property or real estate.

Ms. Katie Ess, Budget Analyst III, said that she would discuss the proffer process and the planned usage for the proposed CIP. She said that the proffers were collected at the beginning of the year, and throughout the fiscal year, proffer amounts were updated by department staff. She said that early in the capital planning process this year, a Proffer Committee meeting brought parks, public safety, school, and County staff together to discuss and collaborate on ways to combine projects for utilizing proffers in the best way to ensure they were used before the sunset.

Ms. Ess said that for High School 6, the $4.5M of development proffers and almost $2M in unspecified proffers from the Settler Circle Development. She said that for Elementary School 18, $9M in proffers equated to 17% of the project. She said that approximately $150,000 and $180,000 were programmed for the courthouse and Rock Hill Station. She said that projects programmed in with proffers included the joint training center and the Layhill and Route 1 intersection improvements.

Ms. Ess said that proffers funded most park projects. She said that proffers programmed into the proposed CIP included Musselman Park, Patawomeck, Duff Green, and Mountain View park projects. She said that also included was the Hampton Oaks Dog Park in FY24 and a Lake Mooney Pavilion project in FY26. She said that these projects had funding allocated, with the exception of the Carl Lewis Center having additional insurance and bond costs.

Ms. Allen asked if the proffered funding could be reallocated from one project to another.

Ms. McClendon said that ultimately, if proffers were designated for a specific school, they could not unilaterally move that proffer. She said that a state process allowed the Board to make changes with a public hearing and other requirements, but ultimately, if it were designated for a specific use and no other catch-all language, the proffer could not be repurposed.

Ms. Allen [inaudible].

Ms. Gary asked if there was information about how the proffers for the Town Center of Aquia ended up being used for Patawomeck Park.

Ms. Light said that as part of the Proffers Committee, Ms. Ess discussed with the County Attorney's Office, the Parks and Recreation Department, and Planning and Zoning to look at all available proffers and compare that to the CIP projects to find what matched. She said that the idea was to maximize the use of the proffers, but if the Board did not agree with how the proffers were allocated in the CIP, the staff could make those changes.

Ms. Gary said that she would like to revisit the conversation.

Dr. Yeung asked if staff could return with information about the proffers for the Garrisonville District. She said that she was perplexed that the new elementary school would not be located in Garrisonville where there was so much growth occurring. She said that there would be a school there in the future, and she would like to see connectivity in Garrisonville, which the proffers could be utilized for.

Ms. Allen asked if staff could provide all proffers for the districts, regardless of the projects. She said that if a certain project were proffered in an area where the community no longer had need for the project, the funds could be reallocated to more relevant projects. She said that they should analyze these proffers and then decide if a public hearing to change the current allocation was necessary.

Ms. McClendon clarified that there were several requirements for changing proffers in addition to having a public hearing. She said that it required working with the developer or applicant, public hearings, and there was a code of requirement for where things could move. She said that it was a process that could be pursued that must be started from the possibility of fulfilling the initial planned use for the proffer.

Ms. Gary asked for clarity on the history of the allocation of the Patawomeck Park proffers. She said that she had requested a list of her district's proffers and their allocations last year, and she wondered how this process occurred.

Ms. Light said that it was staff's intention to expand the use of proffers as much as possible to use them to rely on proffers and cash before they relied on debt. She said that what was provided to the Board provided the opportunity to use the proffers to the maximum ability based on the projects in the current CIP. She said that they could be changed, and different Supervisors and different Boards may have different ideals and policies for how they were used, and staff was open to that feedback and making those changes.

Ms. Gary asked if the former Supervisor of her district was aware of the history.

Ms. Light said that she would have to return with that information.

Ms. Ess said that it was an annual process that was reviewed each year. She said that the updated numbers were received at the start of the fiscal year, when they met with the departments, and the proffers committee met annually.

Ms. Gary said that keeping the Board aware of that process was important.

Dr. Yeung asked if a report could be given about those meetings so that the Board was aware of the process.

Mr. Coen asked if the sunset dates for each proffer could be provided, which may provide context for how things had shifted over time.

Dr. Yeung asked when changes to the proffers would be made, specifically because Elementary School 19 must have its location identified in order for the proffers to address the expansion of additional seats in Garrisonville.

Ms. Light said that the proffer information could be provided to the Board in anticipation of the April 4 work session.

Ms. Bohmke said that mentioned in the general government page and under the Falmouth Cranewood were renovations but no project was indicated. She asked what project that would be.

Ms. Ess said that she believed it was the renovations for a 3R project. She said that she would return with that information.

Ms. Bohmke said that Celebrate Virginia had a large amount of proffers under transportation, currently $1.8M. She asked if that money could be used for Truslow Road. She said that it referenced a Celebrate Virginia roundabout. She asked where that roundabout was located.

Mr. Coen said that it was located at Banksford, near the Giant.

Mr. English said that it was near Chick-fil-a.

Ms. Bohmke asked who was on the proffers committee.

Ms. Ess said that the group included herself, a member from the finance team, a member from the County Attorney’s Office, and department staff.

Ms. Bohmke asked if information about how metrics were used to make that analysis could be provided to the Board. She said that these proffers were only for projects in Stafford County that were on rezonings, where land had been rezoned from A-1 agricultural, to R-1 or R-2. She said that many citizens complained about the growth, but this Board had only rezoned one mainline project for that in eight years, and the rest of the growth was from by-right proffers. She said that the County did not receive proffers and only received a transportation impact fee.

Ms. Bohmke said that that growth came from the builders and developers who had a hold on their delegation in Richmond. She said that thousands of units had been built that way, and the information detailing this was available to the public on the Planning and Zoning website. She said that the Embrey Mill rezoning had sat vacant for years, and they had absolutely no control of that and those issues never came before the Board.

Ms. Gary noted that the mainline rezoning was in part due to the excess in additional proffers for schools there, and that covered what would have been generated for the students who would have been associated with the by-right development.

Dr. Yeung asked for clarification.

Ms. Gary clarified that the additional proffers for the schools covered the per-pupil expenditures and more for what would have been generated in students for the by-right portion of the development.

Dr. Yeung asked what development that Ms. Gary was referring to.

Ms. Gary said that she was speaking about the mainline rezoning.

Dr. Yeung said that in general, wherever it was rezoned, they had no control over it.

Mr. Vosburg said that if proffers were removed from a project, more debt must be incurred or the funds must be taken from somewhere else. He said that the ranking in the CIP did not have sufficient funding for each project from the base, so it had proffers programmed into it to accomplish the priority of the Board as a whole in the order of the adopted CIP. He said that the order of the CIP was attempted to be adhered to, and in order to accomplish that, proffers could be moved around, but if they were taken out, they had to replace the funding for the projects from debt or some other fund.

Ms. Light said that Board direction was requested on if there were large projects that needed to be moved up or additional 3R funds for schools. She said that for transportation, direction was needed on if remaining bond projects would be added and if there was additional funding proposed. She said that for the County projects and the fire levy, staff would like to know if any changes should be made. She said that when staff returned to the Board, all of these decisions would be in a format to make choices as a group.

Ms. Light said that there was $5.1M in ARPA, and she wanted to be clear that the funding was associated with the public safety radio system. She said that some pieces of apparatus were approved to be used with ARPA that did not appear to be able to go forward based on what the consultant had said. She said that they would return to the Board with a fund swapping process, where the ARPA funding would go to the radios, and the master lease that would have purchased those, and the remaining parts of that radio system would pay for the apparatus for Fire and Rescue.

Dr. Yeung asked if the ARPA funds were being used before to fund the radios or if that had been swapped from somewhere else.

Ms. Light said that during the ARPA work session last fall, the Board had asked staff to provide information on things that could fall off the CIP if the ARPA projects were used for this. She said that this was one of the items that staff applied and felt was crucial to public safety and had to be funded in some way.

Dr. Yeung asked if anything else was needed for the radios in order to get them to work.

Ms. Light said that not that she was aware of. She said that she could ask the Sheriff's Department and return with that information. She said that the replacements would replace the handheld Motorolas with new handheld Motorolas, connecting with the radio towers.

Dr. Yeung said that there was more technology that needed to be upgraded than simply replacing equipment.

Mr. Grainger said that what was built and adopted for the public safety radio network was considered state-of-the-art at the time and continued to be such. He said that the Sheriff's Office and Emergency Communications Center ensured that the radio system received upgrades to software, and the request for the replacement for the portable radios would essentially replace the aged equipment that required replacement. He said that the infrastructure of the system had been maintained over the years and upgraded as needed.

Dr. Yeung said that she wanted to be sure that no upgrades were needed.

Mr. Grainger said that the Sheriff's Office submitted an addition of some TDMA for one of the radio channels, which he was unsure if it was funded, but allowed a radio channel in a trunked radio system to communicate two ways. He said that to ensure that they had the capacity in the radio network, the Sheriff's Office proposed year after year to add additional TDMA capacity to radio channels.

Dr. Yeung asked what the plan for the older radios of the department.

Ms. Light said that the majority of the County that used radios was the school system.

Dr. Yeung said that the schools upgraded their radios last year.

Mr. Coen said that the school upgrade could work with those devices. He said that there was a discussion in the school division about upgrades for the buses and buildings to be able to communicate with the Sheriff's Department.

Ms. Light said that they would do more research for that information. She said that there were other departments such as Parks and Recreation and Utilities that could use the radios. She said that if they were determined to be surplus, they would go through the surplus sale process and be sold to a different County or person.

Dr. Yeung said that she wanted to ensure there was a process for those devices to be utilized.

Mr. Coen asked if the direction requested of the Board could be given today.

Ms. Ess said that she would gladly take those answers today.

Ms. Gary asked if the Board could consider the simultaneous construction of Elementary School 18 and Elementary School 19.

Dr. Yeung asked where Elementary School 19 would be located when the land had yet to be identified.

Ms. Gary said that she understood there were a couple of different options, but they were not publicly discussed. She asked if the projects could be moved up together.

Dr. Yeung said that she was fine with that.

Ms. Gary said that moving up the project would save a few million dollars.

Dr. Yeung said that she would be fine doing 18 and 19 and not High School 6.

Mr. Coen said that he approved of moving it up. He said that forthcoming information about land for Elementary School 19 would be available.

Ms. Bohmke asked what information Mr. Vosburg had for the land for Elementary School 19.

Mr. Morris said that the Land Acquisition Committee had been meeting and had two or three potential parcels. He said that they would be discussing it this evening, so the staff would be taking it to the School Board this evening to discuss which parcels the School Board would like to pursue.

Mr. Vosburg said that there was a closed session to discuss it.

Dr. Yeung asked where the general area of the subject parcels were located.

Ms. Bohmke asked if Mr. Vosburg could answer her question.

Mr. Vosburg said that he would defer to the School Board because he did not know the specifics of the location. He said that after the meetings tonight, there would be more information on an exact location of Elementary School 19.

Ms. Bohmke said that the school division was not in the business of building facilities. She said that her biggest concern was if the school division had the capacity inside the building division to build two elementary schools. She said that the expenses must be increased in order to make sure those projects were done properly.

Ms. Allen said that she understood Supervisor Bohmke's concern. She said that each Superintendent had their own opportunity to present something to them, and the model presented to her was a different way of constructing schools versus the old way which had led to issues. She said that while the new way would not be error-proof, if the schools were asking and had lobbied the Board effectively, they were aware of the personnel and infrastructure needs, so to question their capacity did not acknowledge that the insufficiencies must be remedied in order to move forward with the projects. She said that there was a project management review of the process of building schools, and until proven otherwise, she believed they had the infrastructure to achieve the requested projects.

Ms. Bohmke said that she would require additional information from the Superintendent to believe that this was achievable.

Ms. Gary said that she would also like to see additional information, but if there was an opportunity to support this initiative to save taxpayers $2M, she did not want to defer it.

Mr. English said that he was not supportive.

Dr. Yeung said that she needed to know where Elementary School 19 would be located due to the proffers from Garrisonville. She said that if they were building Elementary School 18 on Truslow Road, there would be two schools within two miles of each other in that area. She said that she approved of the savings associated with elementary schools 18 and 19, as more information would be available about it later today. She asked if there were any other large projects to move up. She asked Ms. Light what large projects she had in mind for this question.

Ms. Light said that she was specifically thinking about Elementary School 19, Drew Middle School and Hartwood were still in the outyears, and debt capacity did not afford to bring them all the way up to start in 2024, but if there was an appetite to pull those forward for planning purposes, staff could look at that.

Dr. Yeung said that Drew Middle School and the two elementary schools should be prioritized.

Ms. Bohmke said that she agreed that Drew Middle School should be moved up. She asked how that would be handled with the courthouse debt and other items when looking from a financial standpoint. She said that it was preferable for it to be moved up a year, but it was unclear if it was reasonable.

Ms. Light said that it was important for the Board to assess the affordability of the five-year plan. She said that it was important to analyze how moving Drew up impacted the debt service over time and what the tax rate to support that would be.

Ms. Gary said that the debt capacity changed with the tax rates set. She asked what the tax rate would need to be to move up Hartwood and Drew.

Ms. Light asked what time period they should be moved up to.

Ms. Gary asked Mr. English if he was interested in moving it up.

Mr. English said that he would prioritize Hartwood overall.

Ms. Allen said that she would defer to the School Board as to what was best for their needs and the list of projects that they had unanimously approved, which would leave the projects as they were.

Mr. Coen said that he was supportive of researching moving up the school projects.

Mr. Hartwood said that fleet services were very important to fund as well, and their funding had been delayed, and potentially should be moved up.

Ms. Light said that fleet services was not included in the CIP. She said that the school submitted the school's half of that building and not a full project cost.

Dr. Yeung asked for information about the 3R project question.

Ms. Light said that within the County Administrator's proposed budget, an additional $1M was recommended to provide funding for reduction of debt funding for other projects. She said that the $1M was cash and could be assigned to the schools' 3R projects rather than reducing debt on large projects. She said that it would go toward helping them get to their Pay-Go funding goals, and anything else would be recommended to be increase of cash and decrease of debt service.

Ms. Allen said that she agreed that they needed to reduce the debt capacity to allow them to borrow more money on projects.

Mr. Coen said that the $1M was currently in debt. He asked if Ms. Allen wanted the $1M to be in debt.

Ms. Allen said no.

Mr. Coen said that the school system wanted five, but Mr. Vosburg had $1M that was meant to be for debt.

Ms. Allen said that she wanted to put the extra $1M toward debt.

Mr. Coen asked if that would be instead of the $1.45M, the $0.45M would be left and the $1M would be taken over.

Ms. Allen said anything to reduce debt.

Mr. English said that he would go with Mr. Vosburg's recommendations.

Ms. Bohmke said that she would go with the County Administrator's recommendation.

Dr. Yeung asked if that was additional.

Mr. Coen said that it kept it as it was. He said that it kept $1M under debt and $1.45M in 3R.

Ms. Allen said that she is saying all of it should go to debt.

Ms. Gary said that she agreed with Supervisor Allen.

Mr. Coen said that he would go with the County Administrator's recommendation. He said that if they did not give a categorical fund, the $5M could be used in any way, which he was uncomfortable with. He said that it was possible to shift it as needed.

Ms. Bohmke said that categorical funding did not bind the school system in any way. She said that she was not in favor of categorical funding but asked that there be more accountability if there was categorical funding.

Mr. Coen said that he did not say he wanted categorical funding.

Ms. Allen said that she was not attaching any strings, and she would like the $5M to be put toward debt service.

Dr. Yeung said that she would like $3M to be allocated to fund large capital improvement projects of the schools. She said that she would not categorize it either, and she did not want any money to go missing. She said that the citizens' money must be used prudently. She asked if they could receive quarterly reports on what the schools' additional funding was being spent on during the year. She asked Ms. Light if she had received adequate direction.

Ms. Allen said that there was no direction as the Board was split 3-3.

Dr. Yeung asked for the information for the remaining bond projects.

Ms. Light said that these were the Route 624 Mountain View road widening from Choptank to Stefaniga, and Mountain View and Kellogg Mill Road roundabout. She said that these were all partially bond-funded projects that had assumed state and federal funding but nothing that was awarded. She said that they were a part of the $69M list of shortfalls. She said that the question was if the Board would like to include those back into the CIP so that transportation could go forward with asking for state money or if they wanted to leave transportation as it was.

Mr. Bryon Counsell said that the three projects had been applied for funding and had not received any, so they would be shown on the CIP as needing substantial amounts of money to stay on the CIP. He said that staff's recommendation was to leave these projects off, although they were a part of the comprehensive roadway study, because they had a master plan that should be finished enough to begin planning in the fall. He said that the master plan would create a lot more valuable projects. He said that if they went back through the effort of trying to fund them, they may lose sight of other projects that would be developed by the master plan.

Dr. Yeung said that she would agree with staff's recommendation. She asked the Supervisors if there were any concerns or comments. She asked about the additional funding.

Ms. Light said that the additional funding was for Warton Road or transportation if the Board identified anything else.

Dr. Yeung asked if they would be looking into it.

Mr. Counsell said that a question from the last work session was what the projection revenue was that would be needed to increase the revenue each year to offset the current deficits. He said that depending on the projects and how they scheduled them, it was anywhere between $7M and $11M additional dollars per year over the next ten-year period if they were to catch up on the current deficits. He said that three were eliminated, so it was closer to $8M per year. He said that these would be included in an amendment to what the Board had received today.

Ms. Allen said that she had raised the issue of $8M being inadequate funding, which Mr. Southall had confirmed. She said that she would like to see how one or two pennies on the tax rate could affect the completion of these transportation projects if given in additional funding.

Dr. Yeung asked what the tax rate for transportation currently was.

Ms. Light said that there was funding from the general fund from the positive results of operations with a fund balance of $1M, and it was proposed that just over $7M in personal property went to transportation, which was an increase in over $3M from last year.

Dr. Yeung asked if Mr. Southall had information about what projects could be completed versus toward putting money toward ones that could not be completed.

Mr. Southall said that that exercise was ongoing. He said that that information would be presented to the Board at the April 4 infrastructure committee meeting, but that schedule had been revised so that that agenda did not have the transportation prioritization on there.

Mr. Morris said that he did not have the information with him, but he understood they had to shorten the agenda.

Mr. Southall said that he could return with scenarios to the Board in an upcoming work session.

Dr. Yeung said that the information would bring clarity to the Board.

Mr. Southall confirmed it would be valuable information to the Board when making any changes they saw fit. He said that this was a very difficult and constraining process which would require organized navigation.

Mr. Morris said that this would take multiple conversations and would not be concluded during one meeting item.

Dr. Yeung asked if staff was able to bring forward the necessary information to the Board. She said that there were many complex parts of this process due to all of the different scenarios. She asked if the matrix Mr. Southall had previously presented would be that finalized product.

Mr. Counsell said yes.

Dr. Yeung asked if the question

Ms. Light said that the Board had provided feedback on the County projects that could be returned in a project.

Ms. Bohmke noticed on the Fire and Rescue proffer sheet, there was $1.9M set aside for the training center. She asked if that timeline should be moved up.

Ms. Gary said that she agreed that it should be moved up.

Ms. Bohmke said that the proffer dollars should be assigned to one of the other fire stations.

Dr. Yeung said that they could do so, but she would not use Garrisonville proffer dollars for the schools.

Ms. Bohmke said that it was not school money, it was Fire and Rescue money. She said that it could be allocated to one of the fire stations instead of the training center.

Dr. Yeung clarified that those proffers were not from the proffers for the schools.

Ms. Allen said that she would like to know the opinion of Mr. Grainger on the subject of the fire stations and the training center.

Mr. Grainger said that they would not be opposed to moving proffer funds from the training center project to the fire station projects because the training center was still in the outyears. He said that the only issue was that the proffers had to be used in the area where they were making the improvement, and that may be one of the reasons those had not been used. He said that they would likely have to research fire department proffers to make sure that the money was not what was set for the training center.

Ms. Bohmke said that most of these were in the Garrisonville District, with some in George Washington and Hartwood. She said that this would be an easy way to reduce debt.

Ms. Allen asked Ms. McClendon if proffers could be reassigned for Parks and Recreation projects.

Ms. McClendon said that the process initially would start at a staff level to look at the proffer requirements. She said that she looked at the code, which indicated that they had to notify the developer who was originally providing the proffer, waiting 30 days, then advertisement of a public hearing. She said that from that point, the Board had to make determinations as to where the proffers could be moved to. She said that she was unsure of how long these steps would take from a staff perspective, but it was likely two to three months with additional staff time on top of that.

Ms. Allen said that she would like to look into that for the fall session.

Mr. Vosburg said that there would be a time for public hearings about the fire levy, but any direction the Board would like to give at this point was appreciated. He said that the different scenarios for one, two, or three cents had been reviewed. He said that three cents was the current amount.

Mr. Coen said that he was in favor of the three cents.

Ms. Bohmke said that she did not know where the Board was looking to set the tax rate for the County, so she could not give an answer at this time. She said that she did not favor three cents when there was a 29-cent proposed advertised tax rate, so until more information was given, she did not feel that she could answer.

Mr. English said that he would not answer either. He said that he was shocked at the advertised tax rate voted on at the last meeting.

Ms. Allen said that she maintained that the Fire and Rescue Department should have their own levy to pay for their needs due to the magnitude of those needs. She said that it was also a matter of safety, and the amount of manpower required for some emergencies was exacerbated due to the lack of infrastructure. She said that funds must be put toward Fire and Rescue because it was a public safety issue.

Ms. Gary said that this was not a negotiable matter to her, but something necessary. She said that the levy itself provided transparency for where funds were going, which citizens consistently requested from the County.

Ms. Bohmke asked if it was possible for the County to issue whatever debt necessary in order to build the stations and provide the community's infrastructure even if the levy did not pass.

Ms. Light said yes, within the debt capacity limitations.

Dr. Yeung asked what Ms. Bohmke thought the appropriate rate would be in order to accommodate a three-cent levy.

Ms. Bohmke said that she would not answer that question right now.

Dr. Yeung asked what the fire levy rate was last year.

Mr. Vosburg answered that it was zero.

Dr. Yeung said that she approved of the three cents, which was recommended by the County Administrator. She said that there were CIP projects for the schools that required funding, and this three-cent fire levy appeared to be enough for them to do what was necessary in the County.

Mr. Coen asked if the Board would be meeting on Thursday.

Dr. Yeung said that a decision could not be made today because Ms. Vanuch was not present.

Mr. Coen said that was correct.

Mr. Vosburg said that there was an if-needed work session scheduled for Thursday that was a follow-up to the current work session.

Ms. Gary said that she would not be able to attend on Thursday.

Mr. English said that there was no need for a meeting on Thursday.

Mr. Vosburg said that staff would follow up with a Q&A update to this work session.

Dr. Yeung said that any other questions or comments from Supervisors could be emailed to staff to be incorporated in that update.

Dr. Yeung adjourned the meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

At 6:28 p.m., Chairman Yeung adjourned the March 28, 2023 Stafford County Board of Supervisors Budget Work Session.

Randy Vosburg

Randal E. Vosburg
County Administrator

Dr. R. Pamela Yeung
Chairman