BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
STAFFORD COUNTY, VIRGINIA
MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
November 7, 2024

**CALL TO ORDER** – A regular meeting of the Stafford County Board of Supervisors was called to order by Meg Bohmke, Chairman, at 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, November 7, 2024 in Board Chambers, George L. Gordon, Jr. Government Center, 1300 Courthouse Road, Stafford VA.

**ROLL CALL** – The following members were present: Meg Bohmke, Chairman; Tinesha O. Allen, Vice-Chair (arrived 6:06 p.m.); Deuntay Diggs; Darrell E. English; Monica L. Gary; Crystal L. Vanuch; Dr. Pamela Yeung

Also in attendance were William Ashton, County Administrator; Rysheda McClendon, County Attorney; Julia Holmes, Deputy Clerk; various staff members; and other interested parties.

**INVOCATION**

Mr. English led the invocation.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Ms. Gary led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

**CHAIR REMARKS**

Ms. Bohmke said that she would like to extend her gratitude to Anna Hash, their voter registrar, and her staff for their exceptional handling of this year's elections, particularly given the challenges of their office's relocation between the first and second elections. She said that they worked with Community Engagement to inform the public about the changes, and their efforts were evident in the record number of early voters.

Ms. Bohmke said that this year, Stafford County was participating in Operation Green Light, an initiative of NACo aimed at raising awareness for veterans' issues and showing appreciation by lighting buildings in green. She said that there were two ways the community can support this initiative: they can light their homes or businesses in green, or they can post appreciations on social media using the hashtag #StaffordVets, which will be displayed on their special veterans' appreciation social media wall.

Ms. Bohmke said that tomorrow, they will unveil a new webpage dedicated to veterans' services in Stafford County, accessible at www.staffordcountyva.gov/veteransupport. She said that she would like to thank veterans and their families for their service. She said that as a reminder, the County will be closed on November 11 for Veterans Day.

Ms. Bohmke said that recently, the top two credit rating agencies, Standard Poor's and Moody's Investor Service, reaffirmed Stafford's AAA bond rating, which they will use to support school construction. She said that they were currently building three schools simultaneously, demonstrating the Board's commitment to managing school growth. She said that Stafford County had a AAA rating, the highest possible rating, from all three major agencies, which highlighted their strong financial health and debt management. She said that this rating will help reduce their borrowing costs, which they hoped will translate to not increasing taxes.

Ms. Bohmke said that the DMV Express, located in the Treasurer's Office, would be closed for renovations until the end of the year. She said that however, the Treasurer's Office would continue to perform all its other functions and would remain open.

**ADDITIONS – DELETIONS AND APPROVAL OF THE REGULAR AGENDA**

Ms. Vanuch motioned, seconded by Mr. Diggs, to adopt the agenda as presented.

The Voting Board tally was:
Yea: (6) Bohmke, Diggs, English, Gary, Vanuch, Yeung
No: (0)
Absent: (1) Allen

**CONSENT AGENDA**

Dr. Yeung requested to pull Items #4 and #6.

Dr. Yeung motioned, seconded by Mr. Diggs, to adopt the Consent Agenda as amended.

The Voting Board tally was:
Yea: (6) Bohmke, Diggs, English, Gary, Vanuch, Yeung
No: (0)
Absent: (1) Allen

Ms. Bohmke asked Dr. Yeung if she would like to address Item #4.

Dr. Yeung said that she was unclear about the four hours before and after the proposed holiday hours, which would effectively close the County. She said that as she understood it, this plan would provide four hours before and after both Thanksgiving and Christmas. She said that in her opinion, it would be better to maintain a skeleton crew on these days to allow citizens to conduct necessary business.

Dr. Yeung said that she recalled a situation from her past experience when she had a half-day off and had to travel to Stafford County to pay a bill. She said that she did not want to see citizens face a similar situation, where they were unable to access the office due to closure. She said that she would like clarification on the holiday hours.

Donna Krauss, Deputy County Administrator, said that in addition to the state holiday, which typically provided a half-day off on the day before Thanksgiving and a half-day off before Christmas, the proposed resolution would also provide a full day off on both of those days. She said that historically, this Board had provided an additional four hours off on those days, making it a full day closure.

Dr. Yeung asked what would happen to the days that people had off which they could use. She asked why they were providing additional time off. She said that she did not have a problem with it, but she said that it was difficult for people to use their accumulated time off when they were provided additional time off. She said that employees could use their banked time off if they wanted an entire day off.

Ms. Vanuch said that the issue at hand was that they were exceeding state requirements by providing additional days off, as many localities did not offer the same amount of time off as they did. She said that when she inquired about this with the County, she received support from the majority of the Board at the time, but the constituents were ultimately upset about the total cost and the impact on the budget.

Ms. Vanuch said that adding the four hours for each of these days would result in a total cost of approximately $100,000 to the budget. She said that these funds could help offset the cost of hearing aids on the healthcare plan. She said that given that they had already raised taxes by 30% in the last couple of years, she thought it was essential that they start addressing this issue.

Mr. English said that the cost was comparable to the $32,000 they provided to staff members, which amounted to $260,000 in budgeted expenses. He said that he supported this resolution, as they had done it in the past. He said that he did not see it as a significant issue, and he believed they should continue to do so.

Mr. Diggs said that they have had this conversation before, and he thought they needed to revisit the importance of supporting their staff. He said that they needed to consider the impact on morale. He said that they wanted to attract people to Stafford County and encourage them to work there. He said that recognizing the hard work their staff did throughout the year was crucial. He said that he intended to support this resolution, and he thought they were having a conversation that was centered around a relatively minor issue compared to other decisions they had made.

Ms. Gary said that she intended to support the resolution as well. She said that she was thankful for Mr. Diggs' statements regarding their staff. She said that she did not see any issue with the proposal. She said that she was happy to support it and, in her mind, they were primarily focusing on taking care of their staff at this time. She said that she believed they could explore other cost-saving measures in the future, but for now, she was in favor of the proposal.

Ms. Bohmke said that as the longest serving supervisor, this had been a tradition over the last 10 years, and on multiple occasions, the additional four hours were granted at the prior Board meeting. She said that she believed the staff's intention was to allow individuals to plan and make arrangements with their families during holidays like Thanksgiving and Christmas, as the proposed calendar would be approved tonight, enabling people to plan accordingly.

Ms. Bohmke said that she appreciated the perspectives of her colleagues, particularly those suggesting that staff could use their time off for these additional hours. She said that she appreciated Dr. Yeung's point about the inconvenience of being unable to pay bills during County office hours. She said that these concerns weighed heavily on their minds when making decisions like this. She said that in years past, she had voted in favor of granting these days off at the meeting before the breaks. She said that she would support the resolution.

Mr. Diggs motioned, seconded by Mr. English, to adopt Resolution R24-41.

Ms. Vanuch said that she believed that they should maintain the current approach because, as part of the reason for its previous approval, it was intended to also track revenue numbers and She said that it served as a way for the Board to stay informed about budget projections. She said that she thought it should remain unchanged from that. She said that they had not been consulted on this change, and she did not support altering their current approach.

Ms. Bohmke said that she believed it was worth mentioning that having two deputies on their Board may create a conflict of interest, as they were voting on matters that directly impacted their own department. She said that ultimately, it was up to each individual to navigate their conscience.

Mr. English said that Ms. Bohmke may view this as a conflict of interest, but he had been with the County for 43 years and was familiar with this practice, and this was not an unusual occurrence. He said that giving half days was not new, and he did not see it as a conflict of interest, and he took offense at the suggestion. He said that as a part-time employee, he would not even be affected by it. He said that he agreed with Ms. Gary that it was stated as a benefit for employees, and he believed they should continue to show their appreciation for them by offering this benefit. He said that he did not think it would be detrimental to the County, so he was in favor of continuing this practice.

Mr. Diggs said that he was also offended by the comment, as it was the second time it had been brought up. He said that it was first mentioned by Dr. Yeung during their previous discussion. He said that as elected officials, they were chosen by the citizens to serve in this position, and they were aware of their previous roles as law enforcement officers in the County. He said that he and Mr. English operated with integrity.

Mr. Diggs said that their work was also informed by their experience working for the County, where they had seen firsthand the dedication and hard work of their employees. He said that he disagreed with the notion that they would use their position to benefit themselves. He said that he did not consider personal gain when serving in this role; rather, he was committed to working on behalf of the citizens, employees, and staff who worked tirelessly to support their community. He said that this issue was raised during their campaign and shortly after their victory, and he believed they could put it to rest.

Ms. Gary said that she would like to reiterate a point that she believed was essential to make, albeit in a slightly different context. She said that she strongly believed that it was completely unacceptable to imply that Mr. English and Mr. Diggs should not vote on any matters related to public safety or their employment with the County. She said that she thought this was a misguided and inappropriate suggestion. She said that she believed that they were serving with integrity.

Dr. Yeung said that she did not bring this up to indicate that the employees were not working hard. She said that what she was concerned about was the way they approached their compensation and benefits. She said that as a Christian, she participated in holidays like Christmas and Thanksgiving, but she recognized that not everyone shared the same faith or traditions. She said that she believed it was essential to strike a balance between acknowledging these holidays and respecting the needs of their employees, who often wanted to get work done when the offices were closed.

Dr. Yeung said that her perspective on this issue was not a reflection of her feelings towards their employees, whom she respected and loved. She said that they had banked time off so that it could be used in these situations. She said that she was concerned about the effect of adding more time off to their schedule. She said that the emphasis on Christian holidays and making everyone participate in them was not necessary. She said she was concerned about what the overtime cost impact was for the employees who still had to work when the offices were closed.

Ms. Vanuch said that she wanted to clarify her position on this matter. She said that she was not expecting this decision to be contentious today, so she wanted to clarify that her concerns were solely focused on changing the process. She said that she held the staff in high regard and respected the hard work they did, but she was concerned about the $100,000 cost to the taxpayer. She said that in the normal course of their process, they typically took this vote at the Board meeting prior to the holiday season.

Ms. Vanuch said that she was not supportive of changing this to a calendar expectation, as it would create an unwarranted expectation rather than an action taken by the Board when they met their revenue numbers every year. She said that in the past, they had dutifully thanked their staff and provided them with the extra four hours off during the holidays through an email from the Chair. She said that she would prefer it to remain that way, rather than building it into the calendar as an expectation. She said that this was the reason she was opposed to the change.

Mr. Diggs said that his intention was not to challenge any supervisor’s support for staff or their opinions on the staff's performance. He said that rather, he was specifically addressing the concern that this was the second time it had been brought up that they had two deputies on the Board of Supervisors and questions surrounding their votes on certain issues.

Ms. Gary said that it seemed that they had multiple concerns at play, which had made the conversation a bit convoluted. She said that to summarize, she believed that they all had different concerns, and she would like to conclude by stating that they would vote as they saw fit, based on their individual reasons. She said that she understood the concern about changing processes, and she agreed that it was a financial issue. She said that their annual communications budget for each supervisor was $10,000, and when added up, it was not far from $100,000. She said that if they were looking to cut costs, she thought they should consider other areas that benefited their staff.

Ms. Bohmke said that if she had mentioned that the proposed changes would benefit individuals on the Board, she did not intend that to be the case. She said that what she meant to convey was that the changes were having an impact on the department that the deputies were a part of. She said that she will reiterate this for the record.

Ms. Bohmke called the vote on Resolution R24-41.

The Voting Board tally was:

Yea: (3) Diggs, English, Gary
No: (3) Bohmke, Vanuch, Yeung
Absent: (1) Allen

Ms. Vanuch said that she wanted to make a point of clarification regarding the proposed timeline. She said that she believed that this should still be brought forward the meeting before Thanksgiving and Christmas. She said that she did not think that their position was changing. She said that she thought it would be beneficial to revisit to ensure that it was not built into the calendar.

Ms. McClendon said that according to the bylaws, when there was a tied vote and a supervisor was absent, the matter was brought back at the next meeting to allow the full Board to vote on it. She said that this matter would be brought back at the next meeting as an action item.

Ms. Bohmke asked Dr. Yeung if she would like to address Item #6.

Dr. Yeung said that she wanted to thank Ms. Hash and her staff for their hard work. She said that she was hoping to obtain some clarification on the funding needs that had become apparent.

Anna Hash, Registrar, said that they became aware over the summer that the company that managed the poll books would no longer support them, and they were nearing the end of their life cycle. She said that as a result, they needed to implement these changes prior to the end of the current budget cycle.

Dr. Yeung asked if there were any other aspects or logistical considerations that they should be aware of. She asked if it would also be beneficial for them to have some kind of assistance to conduct a needs analysis, which would help identify any additional requirements that they could include in the budget for next year.

Ms. Hash said yes. She said that once the election was resolved, she planned to send the Board a letter outlining the needs they required to help their processes run more smoothly, including the new early voting location. She said that she would be reaching out to the Board within the next couple of weeks to inform them of these requirements, and they would be included in the budget as well.

Dr. Yeung motioned, seconded by Ms. Vanuch, to adopt Resolution R24-346.

The Voting Board tally was:

Yea: (6) Bohmke, Diggs, English, Gary, Vanuch, Yeung
No: (0)
Absent: (1) Allen

ITEM 1. COUNTY ADMINISTRATION; APPROVE SEPTEMBER 24, 2024 BOARD OF SUPERVISORS WORK SESSION MINUTES

ITEM 2. COUNTY ADMINISTRATION; APPROVE OCTOBER 1, 2024 BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING MINUTES

ITEM 3. COUNTY ADMINISTRATION; APPROVE OCTOBER 15, 2024 BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING MINUTES

ITEM 4. COUNTY ADMINISTRATION; DESIGNATE ADDITIONAL HOLIDAYS FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2025 FOR COUNTY EMPLOYEES

ITEM 5. COUNTY ADMINISTRATION; R24-353; RECOMMEND TO THE CIRCUIT COURT THE APPOINTMENT OF MR. STEVEN GORSKI AS A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS FILLING THE ROCK HILL SEAT

ITEM 6. BUDGET AND MANAGEMENT; R24-346; A RESOLUTION TO BUDGET AND APPROPRIATE PRIOR YEAR FUND BALANCE FOR POLL BOOKS FOR THE ELECTORAL BOARD AND REGISTRAR

ITEM 7. CAPITAL PROJECTS; R24-332; A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR TO EXECUTE A CONTRACT WITH PATTERSON CONSTRUCTION COMPANY, INC., FOR REPLACEMENT OF TERTIARY FILTERS AT THE LITTLE FALLS RUN WASTEWATER TREATMENT FACILITY

ITEM 8. CAPITAL PROJECTS; R24-341; A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR TO EXECUTE A TASK ORDER WITH SULLIVAN, DONAHOE, &

INGALLS, PC. FOR DESIGN ENGINEERING SERVICES FOR THE FALLS RUN SEWER FORCE MAIN IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

ITEM 9. CAPITAL PROJECTS; R24-342; A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR TO EXECUTE A TASK ORDER WITH GANNETT FLEMING, INC. TO COMPLETE AN ARC FLASH STUDY INCLUDING ALL FACILITIES AT THE AQUIA WASTEWATER TREATMENT FACILITY

ITEM 10. CAPITAL PROJECTS PUBLIC CONSTRUCTION; R24-318; AUTHORIZE THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR TO EXECUTE A TASK ORDER WITH SAMAHA ASSOCIATES, P.C. FOR DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION ADMINISTRATION SERVICES FOR FIRE AND RESCUE STATION 15 AT EMBREY MILL AND BUDGET AND APPROPRIATE ADDITIONAL FUNDS

ITEM 11. CAPITAL PROJECTS TRANSPORTATION; R24-331; AUTHORIZING THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR TO EXECUTE A TASK ORDER WITH A. MORTON THOMAS AND ASSOCIATES, INC FOR CONSTRUCTION AND ENGINEERING INSPECTION (CEI) SERVICES FOR THE STAFFORDBORO SIDEWALK PROJECT

ITEM 12. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT; P24-19; PROCLAMATION TO RECOGNIZE THE EFFORTS OF THE COMMUNITY AND THE SHERIFF'S OFFICE IN HOSTING NATIONAL NIGHT OUT

ITEM 13. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT; P24-22; PROCLAMATION RECOGNIZING NOVEMBER AS NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH IN STAFFORD COUNTY

ITEM 14. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT; P24-31; PROCLAMATION RECOGNIZING STAFFORD'S SUPPORT OF OPERATION GREEN LIGHT FOR VETERANS

ITEM 15. DEVELOPMENT SERVICES; R24-349; PETITION VDOT TO INCLUDE CAMP GEARY LANE AND RUNNING BROOK COURT WITHIN THE POPLAR HILLS SECTION 5 & 5A SUBDIVISION INTO THE SECONDARY SYSTEM OF STATE HIGHWAYS

ITEM 16. DEVELOPMENT SERVICES; R24-282(R); PETITION VDOT TO MAKE CHANGES TO COURTHOUSE ROAD, WYCHE ROAD, FLORIDA ROCK DRIVE, OLD COURTHOUSE ROAD, AND HOSPITAL CENTER BOULEVARD WITHIN THE SECONDARY SYSTEM OF STATE HIGHWAYS

ITEM 17. FIRE AND RESCUE; R24-330; AUTHORIZE THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR TO EXECUTE A CONTRACT FOR THE PURCHASE OF A FIRE ENGINE

ITEM 18. PARKS, RECREATION, FACILITIES AND TOURISM; R24-336; RATIFY THE CONTRACT EXECUTED WITH COMMERCIAL CARPETS OF AMERICA, INC. FOR THE SUPPLY AND INSTALLATION OF CARPET AND FLOOR COVERINGS AT VARIOUS COUNTY FACILITIES

ITEM 19. PARKS, RECREATION, FACILITIES, AND TOURISM; R24-337, R24-338; AUTHORIZE THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR TO EXECUTE AGREEMENTS TO OPERATE THE YOUTH RECREATIONAL SWIM TEAM PROGRAMS AT WOODLANDS POOL AND CURTIS MEMORIAL PARK

ITEM 20. UTILITIES; R24-249; A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR TO AUTHORIZE ADDITIONAL EXPENDITURES FOR WATER AND WASTEWATER CHEMICALS

ITEM 21. UTILITIES; R24-334; A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR TO APPROVE ADDITIONAL EXPENDITURES TO CARTER MACHINERY COMPANY INCORPORATED TO FURNISH AND DELIVER GENERATORS, RELATED PARTS, EQUIPMENT, AND SERVICES

ITEM 22. SHERIFF; R24-335; A RESOLUTION TO BUDGET AND APPROPRIATE FUNDS FOR THE 2024 FY24 COPS TECHNOLOGY AND EQUIPMENT PROGRAM GRANT AWARD "EMERGENCY POLICE DISPATCH" FOR THE PURPOSES OF PURCHASING THE EMERGENCY POLICE DISPATCH SYSTEM

**PRESENTATIONS**

PRESENTATION OF A PROCLAMATION RECOGNIZING NOVEMBER AS NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH IN STAFFORD COUNTY

Ms. Bohmke presented the proclamation to Patawomeck Tribal Councilmember Paul Milstead.

Mr. Milstead accepted the proclamation. He said that he would like to provide a brief update on their progress since they had been operating in Stafford. He said that over the past three to four years, they had made significant strides. He said that they were working closely with the Stafford Tourism department and had successfully hosted several large events, including those on the

Fourth of July, in collaboration with the George Washington Boyhood Home. He said that they were looking forward to continuing to work with them on future events.

Mr. Milstead said that a notable highlight was their partnership with Stafford County Public Schools. He said that they had been offering tours to elementary students, with approximately two to three tours per week, which had been well-received by the children and their families. He said that this initiative was beneficial for the County, as it provided a convenient and accessible alternative to visiting facilities in other locations, such as Williamsburg.

Mr. Milstead said that he was proud of the progress they had made and the hard work that had gone into building their programs. He said that they were planning to expand their events calendar for the upcoming year. He said that he encouraged anyone who could visit to come by and experience it for themselves. He said that they were open Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 12 to 5, and the first and third Saturdays of every month.

PRESENTATION OF A PROCLAMATION TO RECOGNIZE THE EFFORTS OF THE COMMUNITY AND THE SHERIFF'S OFFICE IN HOSTING NATIONAL NIGHT OUT

Ms. Bohmke presented the proclamation to First Sergeant Major James Mangin, Sergeant Stephen Curtis, and Master Deputy Frank Shannon.

Mr. Curtis accepted the proclamation. He said that while they would love to take pride in their accomplishments, it counted for nothing if the community did not come together to support them. He said that if no one showed up, they would not have a reason to celebrate. He said that he wanted to express his gratitude to the community for their support, not just from their agency, but also from their first responders, such as Fire Rescue, and the schools that were part of this effort. He said that many people attending National Night Out did not realize the extent of the work involved; it was not just their agency, but the community coming together that made it happen.

Mr. Curtis said that the joy was in seeing National Night Out grow and expand each year, and even with the challenges posed by the weather this year, it ended up being one of the most beautiful nights they have had, with an amazing turnout and all issues resolved without any issues. He said that the fact that people were willing to brave the weather and participate was a testament to the power of community coming together. He said that for Stafford County, he was heartened by the growth they had seen in their neighbors and residents who came together for National Night Out.

## PRESENTATIONS BY THE PUBLIC

1. Peter Stencavage, Garrisonville District, said that he came across a poem called "The Touch of the Master's Hand". He said that the poem told the story of a battered old violin that was about to be sold at auction for a few dollars, but a violinist stepped up and played the instrument, revealing its true beauty and value. He said that the violin then sold for $3,000 instead of three. He said that the poem concluded by comparing the violin to the life of a sinner touched by the hand of God.

   Mr. Stencavage said that this poem made him think of the County's land use policies. He said that like the old violin, the County's land and natural resources were battered. He said that the Board would soon be considering whether to allow Buc-ee's to install 120 gas pumps at the corner of Courthouse Road and Austin Ridge Drive. He said that the project made no sense. He said that the County already had abandoned gas stations, and in 10 to 15 years, he questioned what it would be used for. He said that he did not think electric vehicles were going away.

   Mr. Stencavage said that in the poem, the phrase "mess of pottage" was used, referring to Esau's sale of his birthright for a meal of lentils in Genesis 25:29-34. He said that this phrase illustrated short-sightedness and misplaced priorities. He said that as community leaders, the supervisors did not have to be short-sighted. He said that he had heard many of them discuss traffic concerns and building community. He said that they had the power to make Stafford County better and more beautiful. He read the last lines of the poem, "O Faith". He asked the Board to deny the Buc-ee's project.

2. Molly Denham, Hartwood District, said that she was there to discuss the upcoming vote to adopt the amended bylaws and rules of procedures. She said that according to the red-lined version provided to the public, changes now included eliminating all standing committees. She said that this would result in the removal of the Workforce and Affordable Housing Committee, the Legislative Committee, and the Bylaws Committee. She said that she strongly believed that they desperately needed a standing committee dedicated to the evaluation and improvement of their workforce housing.

   Ms. Denham said that in her own experience, she had seen firsthand how difficult it could be to find affordable housing. She said that her son, who had returned to Stafford County after being away for about 10 years, was unable to afford a place to live. She said that this was an anecdotal example, but it highlighted the need for action. She said that the average rent of a one-bedroom apartment in Stafford County was $1,803. She said that after including utilities, parking, trash, and other amenities, the rent was nearly $2,000 for a one-bedroom apartment.

Ms. Denham said that according to government standards, housing should not exceed 30% of a person's gross income. She said that this meant that anyone wishing to rent a one-bedroom apartment in Stafford County should make a minimum annual income of $80,000. She said that the average income for a person living in Stafford County was $79,478. She said that the average income for a male was $82,992, and the average income for a female was $64,439.

Ms. Denham said that given that 43% of their population was single and had only one income, this meant that almost half of their population could not afford a one-bedroom apartment in Stafford County. She said that they should consider the average person who physically worked in the County, rather than someone who commuted to a higher-paying job. She said that according to the County's comprehensive plan, a teacher with a degree and 10 years of experience earned approximately $52,900. She said that a mid-range fire and rescue technician made $68,806, and a mid-range deputy sheriff made around $64,292. She said that these County workers did not even come close to the $80,000 threshold and had no chance of finding affordable housing in the County that they served.

Ms. Denham said that this Board planned to make a vote tonight to disband a committee tasked with finding solutions for affordable housing. She said that by voting tonight, the Board will effectively state that there was not enough of a problem to justify the time and resources needed to make Stafford County affordable for workers. She asked the Board to vote no on approving the amended bylaws and procedures as currently written. She said that the Board should use the standing committee to address this issue moving forward.

3. Lee Cheney, Aquia, said that she was the Executive Director for SERV, Stafford County's largest and oldest food pantry, located directly across the street. She said that she was there to express her gratitude for this opportunity to share information about SERV. She said that as she arrived in this area about two years ago to lead SERV, she was informed that this platform would be a great way to share their story, as they do not often get to meet with the Board and share their work. She said that she wanted to take a moment to thank the Board for its support, as Stafford County's funding had been instrumental in their efforts.

   Ms. Cheney said that SERV was a standalone 501(c)(3) food pantry, distinct from many other food pantries in the area. She said that they were not affiliated with any faith organization or church, and they were a member of Feeding America, adhering to all guidelines and compliance requirements. She said that this means their operations were unique compared to some church-based food pantries or smaller nonprofit organizations. She said that their numbers had grown significantly in the area.

Ms. Cheney said that with nearly 20 years of experience in the fight against hunger under the Feeding America umbrella, she had seen remarkable growth in her career. She said that when she started at SERV 18 months ago, they were serving approximately 750 individuals, roughly 458 families, per month. She said that consistently, their numbers have shown a remarkable increase, and as of October, they were now serving 4,800 individuals per month, representing a 600% increase of people in need in this area.

Ms. Cheney said that the resources were extremely limited, as many organizations were competing for the same resources. She said that this presented a significant challenge. She said that she was able to secure funding through the Department of Agriculture, and now, as a food pantry, they must begin procuring food to serve the community. She said that this was essential for their sustainability, as they would not have been able to continue without the funding. She said that the dollars were restricted, and they must purchase only from minority farmers.

Ms. Cheney said that this had been a game-changer, as it has provided significant growth and revenue streams for those farmers and veteran farmers. She said that the funding had allowed them to expand and grow, which was crucial. She said that the funding did not cover operational costs, such as staffing, drivers, or utilities. She said that based on the trend analysis they were examining, the need would continue to grow.

4. Kristin Maxson, Falmouth District, said that she was concerned about the scheduling of special meetings, particularly when they were called with little to no notice to the public and sometimes without notice to staff. She said that this raised questions about the impact on staff preparation, specifically regarding the four-hour workday or a day off, and how it may affect their bylaws.

   Ms. Maxson said that on December 24, 1776, Advancement crossed the Delaware River, and that in December 2023, they encountered another Delaware visit as an emergency directive. She said that she would like to acknowledge the staff's efforts during the holidays, particularly. She said that she appreciated the consideration given to their overworked hours. She said that she hoped all was good with the civil rights of the people who worked so hard in 1776, as well as the Thanksgiving holiday.

   Ms. Maxson said that she would like to thank the speaker who presented earlier, the third speaker, and she wanted to thank SERVE. She said that for a point, she would like to bring to the attention of the Board that the categories "planning commission" and "planning and commissioners" on the agendas were confusing to the public. She said that she would also like to bring to the attention of the Board regarding the Wetlands Board agenda and minutes.

She said that the online calendar page was not accessible, and the last public posting was dated June 15, 2020, over four years ago. She said that she would also like to point out that the November 4 ARB packet had a duplicate of page 11, and page 16 and 17 of the packet appeared to be a duplicate. She said that page 2 of the October 22, 2024 transportation impact study was blank.

5. Daniel Cortez, Aquia District, said that they had recently had an election on Tuesday, and the people had spoken. He said that as an independent voter, he evaluated both sides of the aisle, looking for responsible economic reform. He said that in the end, he voted for President Trump. He said that he respected the efforts of Vice President Harris, and he saluted her work. He said that he could not vote for her because she did not provide him with a responsible economic plan.

   Mr. Cortez said that they had seen individuals demonstrating great emotional distress over the election, and that was understandable. He said that as a responsible leader, members of the Board and the media he represented should wish the new president well and stand beside him in his efforts, just as they had stood beside President Biden. He said that this is was what a responsible individual did. He said that during the congressional elections, he did not support either member of the 7th District, and he voted for his old congressman, Rob Whitman.

   Mr. Cortez said that this was primarily a problem with their organizational groups of politicians, who vetted their people poorly. He said that they must do a better job vetting their candidates and providing economic resources. He said that they could not rely solely on the Musk Commission to cut excessive waste from administrations. He said that they should emulate their approach and provide more economic basis, focusing on businesses, commerce, and industry. He said that was why they needed businesses like Buc-ee's. He said that they should be responsible individuals and not act like children.

**REPORTS BY BOARD MEMBERS**

Mr. English – reported that he would be attending Hartwood Elementary School in the morning, as they were hosting a veterans salute. He said that on Monday, Post 290 would be hosting a ceremony for veterans, which was scheduled to begin at 9 a.m. at the American Legion, located off Mountain View Road. He said that he also wanted to share some personal news: Coach G.G. Snellings, who was the gym coach at Stafford High School and Stafford Middle School for many years, had recently passed away. He said that his thoughts and prayers were with Coach Snellings' family during this difficult time.

Ms. Gary – noted that the poem Mr. Stencavage referenced was a poem that a family friend of hers used to recite often. She said that as she was thinking on her way here, she wanted to find a way to address the challenges their community was facing. She said that she believed people expected them to acknowledge, in some capacity, the difficulties that at least half of their population was experiencing. She said that it was a sentiment that would have been inevitable, regardless of the outcome of the election.

Ms. Gary said that Mr. Stencavage's reference was so fitting. She said that as a Christian, this poem brought to mind the inherent value of every single person in this world. She said that she thought it was a timely reminder that they all had inherent value and should respect and love one another to the best of their abilities. She said that they all had the capacity to choose how they behaved, and they could do so with kindness and compassion on any given day, in any circumstance. She said that she encouraged their community to be kind and love one another. She said that everyone was going through something, and they did need each other.

Ms. Vanuch – wished a happy 249th birthday to all of the Marine Corps service members in Stafford County and across the nation. She said that their birthday would be celebrated on November 10. She said that the following day, November 11, would be Veterans Day, a day to honor and thank all of the veterans who have served. She said that she would like to extend her congratulations to President-Elect Trump on his historic election victory, as well as to Senator Kaine, who had been reelected to his third term in the United States Senate. She said that she also wanted to offer her congratulations to Congressman-Elect Vindman, who will be representing their community in Congress.

Dr. Yeung – inquired about the current status of the vaping shop regulations. She said that she believed there was an upcoming update. She said that she also had a question regarding street parking and blocking driveways and mailboxes. She said that she was informed that this information would be presented on December 17.

Dr. Yeung said that she would like to bring to the Board's attention an email received from Officer Carol Burgess, which requested that loaded firearms be prohibited in public parks to promote community safety. She said that she believed adopting an ordinance under Virginia Code 15.2-915E would enable them to align with neighboring counties and establish a more secure, family-friendly atmosphere in their public spaces. She asked if the Board could address this matter at a work session.

Ms. Vanuch said that any time they addressed restricting firearm carry permits, it became a significant event. She said that she had reviewed the regulation, which was guided by state code. She said that she was satisfied with their current ordinance and would not support any changes that would infringe upon the rights of law-abiding citizens to carry firearms, either openly or concealed, with a valid permit.

Ms. Vanuch said that she did not wish to take on this issue with this Board. She said that they had numerous pressing concerns, including transportation, schools, and budget initiatives, which would be severely impacted by this proposal. She said that it would likely draw a large community response attempting to block the regulation from moving forward.

Mr. English said that he agreed with Ms. Vanuch.

Dr. Yeung said that her concern was that if they stated they were protecting children in parks, it seemed counterintuitive to allow firearms in parks where children played. She said that it was a matter of common sense to her. She said that she did not know why it would be contentious to move it forward, especially considering it came from a retired sheriff.

Ms. Gary said that at this time, she was not ready to make a decision as she had several questions that needed to be addressed.

Mr. Diggs said that he would not support this proposal. He said that he understood the reasoning behind it, and he was aware of both sides of the issue. He said that in some cases, conflicts could arise at parks due to emotional factors, potentially leading to gunplay. He said that there were also concerns about people being assaulted or robbed. He said that in his view, the primary responsibility of individuals was to protect themselves, as long as they were carrying firearms legally and were trained to do so. He said that without law enforcement present, their first priority should be to protect themselves until help arrived. He said that he did not want to take that responsibility away, and therefore, he would not support this proposal.

Ms. Bohmke said that she would not support the matter, so there was not enough support from the Board to move the item forward.

Dr. Yeung continued with her report. She said that on October 16, she attended the Rappahannock Roundtable with organizations dedicated to the river's well-being, where discussions focused on mission-driven goals and recent accomplishments. She said that on October 18, she participated in the Office of the Budget meeting to review budget allocations and address staff concerns. She said that on October 21, she attended the Fredericksburg Regional Alliance Meeting, and on October 30, they held the annual meeting, and the Board was invited to attend.

Dr. Yeung said that the event included a networking reception with a panel of national site selectors who shared their insights on the region. She said that on October 23 and 24, she attended the Governor's Transportation Leadership Conference, where key transportation issues were discussed. She said that she attended the Regional Housing Summit, where they held a debriefing celebration to reflect on summit outcomes. She said that she was honored to attend the Fire and Rescue Station 14 open house on October 26, as well as the Fire and Rescue Halloween potluck on October 31 at the Public Safety Building.

Mr. Diggs – suggested that the Board consider the potential need for a campground ordinance. He said that currently, his understanding was that campgrounds were permitted in the A1 Agricultural Zoning District, but they were facing some challenges with a current project. He said that the current ordinance lacked clarity on what could and could not be included in a campground. He said that he would like staff to consider revising and revamping their ordinance, as well as examining the campground ordinance as a whole to provide greater clarity and definition.

Mr. Diggs said that he would be attending the Veterans Day Parade and Breakfast at Ferry Farm Elementary School, and he was excited to participate as a veteran and a supervisor supporting their schools and families. He said that on November 27, he would be meeting with constituents and staff to discuss the Kennedy Dam, a dam in the south end of the County that had the potential to fail and impact their infrastructure. He said that they aimed to ensure they were all on the same page and exploring available grants to address this issue.

Mr. Diggs said that he also had the opportunity to attend the opening of the Silver Diner in Central Park with Supervisor Yeung. He said that although it was in Central Park, they discussed the possibility of bringing them to Stafford. He said that the experience was phenomenal, with excellent food and a unique dining experience. He said that this aligned with the Board's goal of providing more family-friendly activities and restaurants.

Mr. Diggs said that he would be hosting his final town hall of the year on December 19 at 6 p.m. at Stafford High School. He said that at the George Washington Regional Commission meeting, he had a productive conversation with other regional officials about the homeless population. He said that it was the first time in recent memory that they had a comprehensive discussion about the issue, including the causes, demographics, and available support services such as domestic violence and housing assistance.

Mr. Diggs said that when a constituent shared their struggles of not being able to afford living in Stafford, it resonated deeply. He said that they also discussed McKinney-Vento, focusing on the children living in hotels and similar situations. He said that he shared with that group that many of those workers were dealing with trauma due to the emotional demands of their job and the stretched resources. He said that as someone who was homeless as a child and struggled with food insecurity, he emphasized that when helping people in need, you never know how you would guide them in the right direction.

Mr. Diggs said that during the holiday season, people were under a lot of stress, and the election had brought out a lot of stress. He said that depression and suicide were significant issues during this time, particularly for those without family support. He asked everyone to be kind and take a moment to check in on people to ensure they were okay. He said that for law enforcement and Fire and Rescue, the number one killer was suicide, a fact that many were not aware of. He said that to those struggling with depression, suicidal ideations, or feelings of hopelessness, he wanted to say that it got better, and he did not want them to give up.

Ms. Bohmke said that she would like to poll the Board. She said that Mr. Diggs had requested that the Board provide staff direction on whether to develop a new ordinance for campgrounds. She said that as many of the Board members were aware, campgrounds had undergone significant changes over the years.

Mr. Diggs said that he was requesting that staff review their current ordinance and refine it. He said that what he was seeing, and this could potentially happen in any district, was a lack of clarity regarding what constituted a campground, what could be included in a campground, and how these developments would be regulated. He said that he wanted to ensure that they had an ordinance in place that addressed these concerns, and possibly consider revising the by-right status for campgrounds.

Ms. Gary said that she would support an approach that involved establishing clear parameters and guidelines. She said that providing the Board with a few alternative options for review would also be beneficial. She said that this would allow them to refine their ideas as they moved forward with the discussions.

Ms. Vanuch asked if campgrounds were only allowed by-right in the A1 zoning.

Mr. Diggs said that he did not have all of the details.

Mike Zuraf, Director of Planning and Zoning, said that he was aware that campgrounds were permitted by-right in the A1 zoning district. He said that he was not certain about the regulations in other zoning districts. He said that their focus had primarily been on the A1 district.

Ms. Vanuch suggested that the Board should review the A1 ordinance to determine if a campground should be allowed by-right, and if not, whether it should be brought before the

Board under a Conditional Use Permit or Special Exception. She said that staff should review to see if campgrounds were listed as a by-right use in any other district.

Mr. Diggs said that he accepted the changes proposed by Ms. Vanuch.

Mr. Zuraf said that he would also recommend that the Board consider a review of RV parks, as they were an important consideration.

Ms. Gary said that she supported staff bringing back options for the Board to consider.

Ms. Allen said that she supported it.

Ms. Vanuch said that she supported it.

Dr. Yeung asked what had brought up the need for this review.

Dr. Yeung said that she did not have enough information to decide.

Mr. English said that he was supportive of it.

Ms. Bohmke said that she supported it. She said that staff had direction from the Board to move forward with a review of the A1 ordinance regarding campgrounds and RV parks.

Mr. Diggs said that Band Together took place on Monday. He said that the community came together, and all five high schools participated, performing during their halftime shows. He said that the event was a success, and the band community did a great job of collecting canned goods and food for organizations like SERV, which helped feed the homeless population.

Ms. Allen – reported that she had been stuck in stand-still traffic for two hours. She said that VDOT needed to consider the issue. She said that although they were limited in Stafford County in terms of major arteries, she thought that VDOT could take steps to alleviate the problem. She said that for example, adjusting signal timing and improving flow could make a substantial difference

Ms. Bohmke – reported that the minutes for the Joint Schools Working Committee meeting that they had with the three school board members had been shared with the Board. She said that they contained a significant amount of information. She said that it would be relevant to their upcoming meeting with the schools at the end of the year. She said that she wanted to update the Board on her recent participation in the VRE ribbon cutting ceremony at Quantico. She said that this was a significant project, as the previous arrangement required individuals to walk across the tracks to access the base. She said that the new skyway had greatly improved safety.

Ms. Bohmke said that she attended the Empower House event at Stafford Hospital, where a domestic violence victim shared her story of overcoming domestic violence and achieving a teaching degree. She said that it was heartening to see the positive impact of Empower House's support. She said that she would like to extend a shout-out to the victim witness personnel from the Commonwealth Attorney's Office and the Sheriff's Department, who work together to provide essential support to victims in the courthouse.

Ms. Bohmke said that she was aware of the Registrar's comments regarding the challenges with early voting. She said that the Board was aware of these issues and planned to discuss them with the Registrar's office within the next three to six months.

Dr. Yeung asked if the Joint Working Committee discussed the transportation issue in the audit that they had requested.

Ms. Bohmke said that they did not discuss it, and it was not included. She said that she could request it again.

**REPORT OF THE COUNTY ATTORNEY**

There was no report.

**REPORT OF THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR**

Mr. Ashton said that he wanted to take a moment to acknowledge Mike Morris' dedication to the Board. He said that this was his last meeting, as he had accepted an assistant deputy city manager position in Prescott, Arizona. He said that Mr. Morris had served the County for eight years, with the past three years as Deputy County Administrator. He said that he regretted not having the opportunity to work with him more extensively, as Mr. Morris had been an invaluable resource and teacher, sharing his extensive knowledge of the County with him over the past couple of months. He said that his behind-the-scenes contributions had been remarkable, and he wanted to express his sincere gratitude for Mr. Morris' service to the County. He wished him the very best in his new role in Prescott, Arizona.

**PRESENTATIONS AND REPORTS BY AGENCIES**

ITEM 23. GERMANNA COMMUNITY COLLEGE UPDATE, PRESENTED DR. CHERI MAEA

Dr. Cheri Maea, Dean of Academic and Workforce Operations at Germanna Community College, said that Dr. Golickson was at her sister's memorial service today, so she was here on her behalf. She said that she was not directly involved in all the conversations at Germanna, so she may have to defer on some questions. She said that she will be the site supervisor for the new Stafford location.

Dr. Maea said that they had recently opened two new locations, located at 10 and 25 Center Street, and they were strategically situated to serve all students in Stafford County and support Quantico as well. She said that this was a significant improvement from their previous challenges in finding ways to assist Marines in Stafford County and encourage them to stay.

Dr. Maea said that the two buildings were part of their larger effort to provide a wide range of programs, with over 70 options available. She said that she was particularly excited to share that they were now the largest nursing program in the VCCS, and this had doubled since they added the new building in Stafford County. She said that without it, they would not have been able to increase the number of nurses they trained. She said that they were also the largest producer of workforce credentials in the VCCS, which meant their students earned credentials that made them immediately employable in their communities.

Dr. Maea said that they were also addressing the salary gap issue they had discussed earlier. She said that they served over 13,000 students annually, a significant increase from the 8,000 students they had eight years ago. She said that one of their greatest accomplishments was being a two-time Aspen Institute top 150 community college in the nation. She said that they were committed to providing anytime, anywhere education and training, and their new buildings in Stafford County would make this a viable option.

Dr. Maea said that their graduates tended to stay in the community. She said that 70% of their students attended part-time, as they balanced work and family responsibilities. She said that additionally, 78% of their students were under the age of 25, and 63% were female, with 37% male. She said that if someone wanted to pursue education, they belonged at Germanna. She said that they had open admission, welcoming everyone and providing opportunities for individuals to improve their lives.

Dr. Maea said that Germanna Community College was also very affordable. She said that the average tuition and mandatory fee cost per credit hour for an in-state student was $175.20, which was significantly lower than at other four-year institutions in Virginia. She said that this lower cost allowed their students to pursue a two-year associate's degree and transfer it to any four-year college in the state.

Dr. Maea said that she would like to highlight some specific updates about Stafford County and their commitment to the community. She said that as a Stafford County resident, she was proud to say that her children attended school there, and she was part of the Career and Technical Advisory Council. She said that she was not alone in this commitment; many of their employees lived in Stafford County. She said that they were particularly eager to serve the military community in Quantico and support local high school students exploring early college options.

Dr. Maea said that they also focused on adult learners seeking career advancement, as well as individuals pursuing short-term credentials. She said that in Stafford County, they will be emphasizing health sciences at 25 Center Street and IT and cybersecurity at 10 Center Street. She said that they will maintain their general education programs, but prioritize community needs and deliver programs that align with the workforce requirements identified for Stafford County.

Dr. Maea said that their commitment was reinforced by the fact that over 150 of their employees resided in Stafford County. She said that regarding the Center Street project, which had raised some questions, the cost was approximately $21 million, funded through a shared mission. She said that the Community College Education Foundation, the college itself, and public and private donations all contributed to this effort. She said that they had a mortgage on the new buildings.

Mr. English asked if Spotsylvania had contributed any support.

Dr. Maea said that they had in other locations. She said that they had partnered with Mary Washington in this location because they were based in Stafford County. She said that they had very generous donors, and they had used donations to build other locations. She said that this project was specifically focused in the County. She said that one of their major donors in this area was Kevin Dillard, who worked locally and had been instrumental in making this health science building a reality. She said that the Stafford EDA provided a significant donation to support economic development, but a substantial portion of the funding came from the foundation.

Dr. Maea said that the transfer programs would be available to students at all four-year universities in the state, with the exception of VMI, which was a unique circumstance. She said that their top transfer partners were UMW and GMU, and they also sent students to JMU, UVA, VCA, Virginia Tech, and others. She said that at the Stafford location, they would offer a range of associate degrees.

Dr. Maea said that she was particularly proud of their skilled trades credentials, which they believed were key to helping individuals bridge the income gap. She said that they started their students with core craft skills, including basic safety, and then built on those skills to provide employable, skilled workers.

Dr. Maea said that they also offered healthcare credentials, recognizing that the community needed a wide range of healthcare professionals, including technicians and support staff. She said that their center would focus heavily on that initiative, and they would even have a wellness clinic within the center where the community could receive wellness guidance and support. She said that in turn, students would have the opportunity to practice those skills under supervision and guidance.

Dr. Maea said that she was currently in talks about building a new classroom for surgical technology and pharmacy technology, which would introduce two new skills to the community. She said that their emphasis on short-term IT credentials, workforce credentials, and transportation credentials would help students gain employable skills quickly and be able to pass the necessary tests at Germanna College. She said that they would also provide Class A and B, CDL, and heavy equipment certifications, essential for moving and maintaining logistics.

Dr. Maea said that they were the largest asphalt certifier in the state of Virginia, serving as the state's primary certifier. She said that the Stafford County enrollment had been steadily growing over the past five years, necessitating the need for new buildings to support students. She said that she was proud of this growth and its significance to the advancement of Stafford County. She said that she was also proud of their partnership with the Stafford County Public Schools, which was building specialty centers. She said that they were working closely with them to create pathways from those centers to college, helping students to stop out with credentials and apply them to further education.

Dr. Maea said that she believed they were making significant strides in building pathways, and it was impressive that 1,036 of their high school students were simultaneously pursuing college. She said that she thought Stafford County should be proud of this achievement. She said that they hoped that they would continue to support dual enrollment, specialty centers, and their ability to work closely with schools.

Dr. Maea said that enhancing dual enrollment and their partnerships, particularly in health science and cybersecurity, will help high school students prepare for an evolving workforce. She said that the Barbara J. Fried building will provide all the student support services a student needs, and they will have a dedicated space for business, IT, and cybersecurity training. She said that this will include business classrooms, computer labs, a state-of-the-art testing center for completing high-stakes tests and earning certifications.

Dr. Maea said that the welcome center will be located here, and this was where they can direct them to the resources they needed. She said that the adjacent building, located across the street, was the Kevin L. Dillard Health Sciences Building, which will serve as the hub for health sciences and general science. She said that this was where all the labs will be housed, and they will have conference rooms available. She said that they were particularly excited about the observation area. She said that there was also a testing center in the building.

Dr. Yeung said that she would like to address two questions she had regarding the proposed locations. She said that she noticed on page 12 that the projected student increase by 2024 was 1,036. She asked if the proposed locations at 10 Center Street and 25 Center Street were sufficient to accommodate the anticipated growth and if they were able to sustain that growth. She asked if the figures also represented adults in addition to high school students.

Dr. Maea said that the figures referred to the dual-enrollment high school population.

Dr. Yeung asked if they anticipated older students who were not living at home would be part of the expanded programs, such as cybersecurity.

Dr. Maea said that they were. She said that they already served a significant number of those students at all of the locations. She said that regarding the capacity of the buildings, they had made a concerted effort to implement strategic scheduling, a higher education buzzword referring to the optimal placement of classes based on student needs. She said that their goal was to maximize every classroom for as many hours as possible, while also being mindful of growth. She said that she would love to see the student population grow rapidly and necessitate the construction of another state-of-the-art center, but she did not anticipate it in the near future.

Dr. Maea said that she could not comment on those conversations as she was not involved, but she liked the direction Dr. Yeung was going with that idea.

Ms. Allen said that she had actually mentored the young man in one of the pictures during his clinical and found it rewarding to contribute to their community. She said that she had a question regarding Germanna's role as the largest supplier of nurses in the state. She said that with the growing agenda for nursing students, she would like to know what their objective was to meet the faculty need. She said that considering the VA's opening in the spring of next year, which would require nurses at all ancillary sites, including Stafford Hospital and Mary Washington, how did they plan to continue producing excellent nurses to stay here and serve their community, and how would they address this workforce challenge?

Dr. Maea said that it was a challenging question, but their educators were highly qualified nurses and doctors, making them difficult to replace. She said that they had implemented the "earn while you learn" program, which allowed students to learn and build skills while earning. She said that it also brought some of the health care workers who were currently in their system as part of their clinical program to serve as teachers and mentors for their four-year partners and others. She said that they were also working on increasing the BSN and MSN opportunities to attract more quality candidates. She said that although she did not know the details, she understood that there was a differential paid for their health care faculty to attract more quality candidates. She said that they were trying to meet this challenge head-on by securing the necessary space and working on clinical sites.

Ms. Allen said that regarding their goal of achieving a certain enrollment, it seemed difficult because hospitals were also having difficulties in maintaining staff. She said that although the community college likely aimed to be competitive, it was doubtful that they came close to the hospital salaries. She said that also, there were different certifications between clinical nurses and teaching nurses, so that seemed to be a challenge. She asked if there were things the local government could support these efforts, because it was their duty to ensure that citizens had access to necessary staff at hospitals and local doctors' offices. She said that Dr. Maea's staff should discuss this with County staff so they could begin planning during budget season. She said that they must fill those gaps, because if they did not attract more educators, they would not have students, either.

Dr. Maea said that she truly appreciated that and would convey this to Dr. Golickson; she knew it was heavy on her mind.

Mr. Diggs said that Nelson Mandela stated that education is the most powerful tool to change the world. He said that he and his colleagues participated in the tour and he fully supported the college. He said that he wanted to highlight that numerous scholarships and options were available for individuals facing financial challenges, making it a wonderful opportunity. He said that he hoped a lot of people in the community would take advantage of that.

Dr. Maea said that many health care credentials and short-term credentials could be earned virtually for free for students through the G3 funding and the Fast Forward funding that the state of Virginia offers. She said that she did not want anyone to think that they could not afford college because they could, and she had a team dedicated to helping students achieve that.

Ms. Bohmke thanked Dr. Maea for coming to the meeting. She said that they were all supporters of Germanna, as she had been for many years. She said that she found their new facility to be excellent. She said that for colleagues who missed the opportunity to visit, she recommended they reach out to Dr. Maea to arrange a tour and learn more about it. She said that additionally, they extended their condolences to Dr. Golickson on her loss

ITEM 24. CAPITAL PROJECTS PUBLIC CONSTRUCTION; PRESENTATION TO THE BOARD OF A CONCEPTUAL PLAN FOR A NEW COURTHOUSE FACILITY ON COUNTY PROPERTY PREVIOUSLY DESIGNATED AS DESTINATION STAFFORD

Bryon Counsell, Chief Director of Infrastructure, said that he would provide context for the public and the Board regarding their current situation and the upcoming presentation. He said that a few months ago, they had presented a couple of scenarios for the new courthouse, one adjacent to the existing courthouse and another across the street. He said that the Board then requested staff to analyze these options further. He said that their consultant, Dewberry, had performed the study and cost analysis, and Mr. Mike Overton would present the findings.

Mr. Counsell said that however, he wanted to clarify that the estimates presented tonight were order of magnitude numbers. He said that they were based on assumptions and data from similar projects, both nearby and far away, and were calculated based on square footage. He said that it was important to note that the scope and budget for the project had not yet been set by the Board. He said that therefore, these numbers were just a starting point for discussion. He said that he hoped this provided some clarity before they proceeded with the presentation.

Mike Overton, Public Construction Program Manager, said that they had presented a proposal in June for several options for a courthouse based on prior studies conducted over the past 15 years. He said that the current need, identified from the Circuit Court, was for additional court space. He said that they were not meeting the expected hearing times from the State Supreme Court, which precipitated the study they were reviewing that evening. He said that the project was programmed to start design for this fiscal year and construction was scheduled for FY27 in the Capital Improvement Program (CIP).

Mr. Overton said that they discussed conceptual priorities for the courts, which included alleviating space issues within the existing courthouse, increasing parking capacity, improving accessibility, and creating a civic space beacon. He said that the evaluation factors they considered through the study were accommodating space needs for current and future growth, public accessibility, security, vehicular parking, displacement of existing use, availability of utilities, and relative cost.

Mr. Overton said that previously, they had considered the addition of space across the street. He said that this addition would include a new courtroom connected on multiple floors, creating a primary court entrance, and would also provide additional parking on the north end of the existing parking area for government use. He said that these were some of the considerations they had in mind.

Ms. Bohmke asked if Mr. Overton could clarify what he meant by placing this facility across the street.

Mr. Overton said that an option considered by the Board had proposed relocating the entire court facility to the other side of Courthouse Road, placing it directly adjacent or opposite to the Public Safety Building.

Ms. Bohmke said that this area across the street was still part of their existing campus.

Mr. Overton said that yes, it was on County-owned property. He said that as a clarification on option 1A, which proposed a two-courtroom per floor addition, was that it would meet the County's needs without necessitating a parking garage. He said that this option did not encroach upon existing parking spaces, maintained a connection to the existing courthouse, and aimed to alleviate way finding and accessibility issues. He said that it also provided a central entry focus point for the courts. He said that the massing of the building was appropriate to the other facilities on the campus. He said that however, the drawbacks included the County's need to acquire two private properties, with one requiring demolition for the new facility's construction.

Mr. Overton said that the Sallyport and Judges’ parking area would still face spatial constraints, similar to current conditions with direct access off Courthouse Road. He said that additionally, renovations in the existing courthouse room would remain limited due to the building’s existing structure.

Ms. Gary asked if Mr. Overton could elaborate on the parking issue.

Mr. Overton said that a couple of the other options staff previously presented were within the existing parking areas of the government center and courthouse. He said that to compensate for the lost parking, it would necessitate constructing a parking garage on the government campus on other parking areas they currently have. He said that this would be a significant additional cost to construct a parking garage if they did not consider the option which simply expanded the existing parking lot to the north.

Mr. Overton said that the new facility across the street for all courts would require approximately 196,000 square feet of space. He said that this design allows for growth, enabling the construction of four future courtrooms as they become necessary. He said that the parking requirements are based on courthouse standards, and there is an additional requirement for providing 275 public parking spaces for the developer of the Fountain Park project. He said that these spaces have been incorporated into the design on the public side of the parking for the courthouse. He said that additionally, there will be some stormwater management update requirements met by a pond on site.

Mr. Overton said that separated parking areas for judges and secure parking for detention vehicles will be provided. He said that connectivity will be maintained between the existing government center entrances and Jason Mooney Drive in front of Fire Station 2, which is a signalized intersection. He said that the design features include a five-story structure, totaling 196,000 square feet, with adequate parking and secure areas for judges and detention vehicles. He said that the building would serve as a civic anchor for downtown Stafford or Destination Stafford, potentially spurring future development. He said that the entry point would be clearly visible to the public.

Mr. Overton said that if one was going to the courthouse, they would easily locate it. He said that they will not disrupt any existing operations by constructing a new building off-campus. He said that however, if they opt to build on the existing campus, it will impact the daily operations of the government and courts. He said that this project would fully address all accessibility needs, security, and at least 12-year growth projections that they currently have from the courts. He said that the negative aspect of this project would be the cost.

Mr. Overton stated that it would be significantly more expensive upfront to facilitate new construction compared to simply providing new circuit court space and then renovations for Circuit Courts and Juvenile and Domestic Relations (JDR) Courts. He said that next, he would provide the significant figures. He said that this was a rough order of magnitude in cost estimates, rounded figures based on square foot costs for comparable facilities. He said that they examined projects completed within the last five years in other jurisdictions around the state and consulted professional cost estimators. He said that neither of these amounts were currently included in the CIP.

Mr. Overton said that as of now, the CIP was funded for an $83 million project. He said that some good news was that there was some potential offsetting cost. He said that this would only apply if they were to consider option five, the latest presented with building a new facility on the other side of Courthouse Road. He said that the 2022 General Government Space Needs Study identified a shortage of existing space in this building. He said that several departments had moved off-campus and were leasing space. He said that to accommodate bringing everyone back onto this campus, they needed approximately 20,000 square feet of additional space.

Mr. Overton said that the recommendation from that study was to build an expansion of this existing government center on this campus. He said that to do so, and renovate the government center itself, they were looking at almost $74 million. He said that however, the space that would be potentially vacated by the courts would accommodate all of that growth. He said that as a result, they would only be looking at renovating the existing space, and the order of magnitude for that was just under $40 million. He said that this would result in a long-range potential savings of about $34 million.

Ms. Gary said that if they did that, with the potential savings, it would only be an increase of about $36.9 million.

Mr. Overton said that was correct. He said that he had previously noted that the building was currently designed and estimated for the potential growth into four new courtrooms, which could save approximately $9 million from the upfront construction costs if they chose to leave them vacant and construct them in the future as required.

Mr. Overton said that they had discussed most of the next points in his presentation. He said that the preliminary cost for the expansion option was $139 million. He said that a brand new facility would cost $209 million. He said that unfortunately, both options exceeded the current Capital Improvement Plan funding. He said that as a result, Capital Projects was seeking the Board's direction on the preferred option to move forward, as they were currently in the inception of the design phase.

Ms. Vanuch said that she had a quick question regarding the space needs for the County. She asked if, when staff conducted the assessment, they utilizing open space design principles. She asked if all employees were expected to have an office, or if they would have alternative work arrangements, such as hoteling offices. She said that many large corporations had adopted more efficient space planning strategies, incorporating open planning concepts that reduced the need for individual offices and cubicles. She said that this approach could significantly decrease the required floor area. She said that she was wondering if this consideration was taken into account in the plan, and she found it puzzling that they planned to hire so many employees to occupy such a large amount of space in the coming years.

Mr. Overton said that he understood, and there were a variety of options considered.

Jim Beight, Dewberry Consultants, said that this was a preliminary assessment, and he wanted to clarify that the level of detail in Ms. Vanuch's question was not yet answerable. He said that what they had done was conduct a survey of the square footage per litigation space in various courthouses throughout Virginia to establish a comparative average for a circuit court, including judges' chambers, clerk support space, and all associated functions. He said that they had also applied similar numbers to the JDR court and district court, using these aggregates to estimate the required square footage. He said that to determine the specific room-by-room requirements, a detailed program would be necessary.

Mr. Beight said that most judicial court clerk functions today were primarily open space, with limited offices. He said that the clerk typically would have an office, and the assistant clerk may also have one. He said that the remaining space was often occupied by workstations. He said that most courts had transitioned to digital record storage, significantly reducing the need for physical storage space. He said that at this stage, they were reviewing broad budget numbers to inform the Board's decision-making process. He said that the current estimates provided a general gauge of the two options' costs. He said that further detail on how each space was delineated would be part of the next step.

Ms. Vanuch said that her question was specific to the point brought up about saving money on staff space. She said that she was speaking more relative to County staff and how they were coming up with that much more floor area. She said that she would like to see more of an open space option where there were very limited offices. She said that she was cautious about making assumptions about the cost savings of building a $200 million courthouse, as it may not be entirely accurate. She said that she would like to know the algorithm used to determine the necessary space for County staff.

Mr. Beight said that according to the actual County study, they reached a level of detail in understanding the specifics, including the sizes of workstations, who required an office, and they downsized the space per square foot for individuals. He said that they reduced the amount of office space and standardized workstations to 6 by 8 feet, a 48 square foot area, whereas in the past, one would typically see 8 by 8 feet or larger square footage. He said that the County Administrator's Office had a well-defined program that examined how to be more efficient in using the square footage for County administrative functions.

Ms. Bohmke said that the 20,000 square foot number was pretty good.

Mr. Beight said that yes, it was a hard number.

Ms. Vanuch asked if they had that information in a PowerPoint presentation. She said that she found the report to be helpful, but it was challenging to visualize the layout and distinguish between the current staff configuration and the potential for open space.

Mr. Overton said that they could share that information with the Board.

Ms. Allen said that she agreed with Ms. Vanuch on the open floor concept. She said that she believed it was a better utilization of space. She said that adding a few more windows could make a significant difference in how people perceived the need for office space. She said that her main concern was ensuring that the courthouse was designed to accommodate the maximum population of Stafford County, particularly in terms of court size.

Ms. Allen said that she did not want them to invest in this courthouse design only to discover that they needed an additional building due to insufficient space for civil cases. She said that what she had been told was that the majority of court time was spent on civil matters, which were often tied to population growth and the needs of families and individuals. She said that to accurately plan for this, it was essential to extrapolate the maximum potential caseload based on the County's population.

Mr. Beight said that was a great question. He said that they worked closely with the Virginia Supreme Court, which maintained the court records, including the number of cases flowing through the County. He said that there were parameters in place regarding the number of cases a particular judge could handle within a reasonable timeframe. He said that as a result, they collaborated with both the courts and the Virginia Supreme Court to establish benchmark numbers for the number of cases a judge could handle, which informed their determination on the number of judges the County would need in the future.

Ms. Allen asked if this took the population size into account.

Mr. Beight said that it does. He said that there was not a direct correlation between population and court growth. He said that various factors contributed to this relationship, and population growth did factor into it. He said that they tracked caseload growth over a 20-year period and also considered population growth. He said that caseload growth could diverge from population growth, particularly during economic downturns such as the 2008 recession and the recent four- year recession. He said that financial difficulties could lead to an increase in court cases. He said that while criminal cases tended to remain relatively stable, civil cases were more prone to fluctuations. He said that as a result, they considered caseload growth more than they did population growth when projecting reasonable growth.

Dr. Yeung said that her question pertained to transportation and Route 1, Courthouse Road, and Wyche Road. She said that this work was only about the building, so she wondered if they were collaborating with VDOT and the Transportation Department to include their transportation studies and impact studies. She said that she wanted to make sure this was incorporated to account for their projected growth by 2034.

Mr. Overton said that this study did not explicitly examine traffic patterns, which are typically part of a traffic impact analysis and are considered in the development of the facility's design.

Mr. Counsell said that the anticipated traffic was already accounted for in the County's growth projections. He said that the traffic was either coming to this current campus with the expansion of the new courts or to the building across the street. He said that the population growth and additional traffic for the courts were included in the traffic modeling for the courthouse area study that they had previously presented.

Dr. Yeung asked if the study presented in the past accounted for all of the design options, or just one of them.

Mr. Counsell said that the study only included the traffic, not the locations.

Dr. Yeung asked if the traffic would change based on the location.

Mr. Counsell said that no, it would not.

Ms. Bohmke said that she was concerned about their ability to pay for this project, especially in light of their tax relief concerns. She asked if staff had performed a financial analysis of their CIP and this potential debt issuance over the next 20 to 30 years.

Mr. Counsell said that he could not answer that question tonight, and he would yield to Ms. Light to provide a more detailed response. He said that what they did know was that Mr. Overton had previously stated that neither of these costs exceeded $80 million and was not currently anticipated in the Capital Improvement Plan. He said that while they were seeking direction on the scope of work, location, and budget, they understood that the Board was currently facing budget season and the challenges that came with it.

Mr. Counsell said that staff were responding to the Board's request and providing this status update. He said that staff acknowledged that the Board may not be able to make a decision tonight, and that there was additional information regarding the development of the budget and potential revenue. He said that until the Board provided direction to staff, the project would not move forward; however, the project's design phase was currently slated to begin this fiscal year.

Ms. Bohmke said that she appreciated staff for bringing this matter forward. She said that it was a significant undertaking, and it was a lot to address at a single Board meeting. She said that she appreciated the effort and the quality of the information presented.

Ms. Allen said that budget season was starting, and they had no idea where their budget stood. She said that in light of this, she recommended that when they created the Capital Improvement Plan section of the budget, they revisit the conversation about the courthouse project. She said that it did not have to be as detailed as their current discussion, but perhaps Ms. Light could include a note stating that if the courthouse were to be added, certain budgetary applications would apply for this year.

Ms. Allen said that she would prefer to see it come back during the CIP discussion of the budget, as this would provide a holistic view of all their CIP projects. She said that by doing so, they could weigh the courthouse project against other pressing projects in their CIP and make a more informed decision, as she was uncertain about the current financial landscape.

Mr. Counsell said that they worked diligently to bring this information to the Board, preparing them for potential developments, as they were aware of the Board's strong interest in building a new courthouse. He said that as budget season approached, they thought it was crucial to present this information to them, so they could form their thoughts and opinions on the matter and shape his decisions.

Dr. Yeung thanked staff for bringing this to their attention. She said that she had been inquiring about this issue since their last meeting, and she had also been considering it prior to that. She said that given that this was a matter that needed to be addressed sooner rather than later, she would like to propose putting it in the Capital Improvement Plan at some point in time, whichever was higher, and then calculate the costs from that point forward, which would likely decrease from there.

Ms. Bohmke said that they appreciated the time and effort staff had invested in this matter, and they were grateful for the information they had provided. She said that they would incorporate this into their budget discussions as they moved forward.

ITEM 25. CAPITAL PROJECTS; R24-339; AUTHORIZE THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR TO EXECUTE A LETTER OF NO PREJUDICE WITH VIRGINIA PUBLIC RAIL

AUTHORITY TO START DESIGN TASKS TO RECTIFY WATER/SEWER CONFLICTS WITHIN THE POTOMAC CREEK THIRD TRACK SOUTH (SIDING A) PROJECT

Bryon Counsell, Chief Director of Infrastructure, said that this may come as a surprise to most of the Supervisors, as nothing of this nature had been presented to the Board before. He said that in late 2023, the County was approached by CSX, the large railway operator, in conjunction with the Virginia Public Rail Authority (VPRA). He said that they had partnered to begin the third track design and construction along the East Coast. He said that the VPRA was specifically focused on Virginia.

Mr. Counsell said that during the initial phases of the project, they would undertake three siding projects. He said that this involved installing sections of third rail to allow existing trains to move to the side, allowing prevailing trains to pass through and begin the process of adding a full third lane. He said that over the years, since the 1950s, Stafford County Utilities had installed infrastructure underneath these tracks in various locations.

Mr. Counsell said that as the new corridor was widened, all those utilities must be expanded. He said that in every permit they had submitted and acquired from CSX over the years, it had required them to relocate their infrastructure, should CSX request it, at the County's own expense. He said that this was a requirement of all their permits, as CSX owned the railway and had the authority to make such requests.

Mr. Counsell said that CSX had approached them and identified everything that needed to be moved. He said that they had worked closely with them while they worked on an agreement, which was required by CSX to relocate this infrastructure. He said that they believed they would have to enter into an agreement with CSX to pay for the work, as they could not meet CSX's cost and schedule requirements.

Mr. Counsell said that to facilitate this process, CSX had created a letter of no prejudice. He said that this letter was a request from the County to CSX to begin the project and complete certain work for the County, in exchange for an upfront payment of approximately $500,000, with the acknowledgement that a more detailed agreement would be presented to the Board in the spring and summer, with a revised cost estimate and schedule that the County would be responsible for paying for the relocation of their utilities.

Dr. Yeung asked what the total accurate amount would be outside of the $500,000 payment.

Mr. Counsell said that they estimated the design cost to be between $500,000 and $750,000, possibly up to $800,000. He said that the construction cost, which involved relocating the infrastructure, was expected to be between $5 million and $8 million. He said that this was what he had been referring to, as they did not currently have the funds allocated for this in the Utilities CIP. He said that the proposed agreement would outline the final cost and establish a repayment schedule from the Utilities Fund.

Dr. Yeung asked if that would be presented to the Board again.

Mr. Counsell said that was correct.

Mr. English asked if staff knew when CSX planned on starting this.

Mr. Counsell said that they had already begun design work and preliminary engineering.

Mr. English asked if construction would begin within the next year.

Mr. Counsell said yes.

Ms. Vanuch asked if they received federal funding to expand the rail line.

Mr. Counsell said that was correct.

Ms. Vanuch said that they failed to consider the localities that had easements with their utilities, leaving the bill for the local residents to pay a potential $5 million to $8 million dollars for the rail that may or may not be utilized by the County. She said that it could just be passing through the County.

Mr. Counsell said that he was not sure he understood her point.

Ms. Vanuch said that she believed that the question was whether, when federal funding became available, it would be allocated to CSX to expand this rail line, but there was no consideration for the locality's costs or burden in relocating utilities.

Mr. Counsell said that was correct.

Ms. Vanuch said that as a result, the local taxpayer would ultimately bear the cost.

Mr. Counsell said that it would be the local ratepayer.

Ms. Gary asked if these were agreements made far in the past.

Mr. Counsell said that each permit they acquired over the last 50 to 70 years to install the infrastructure came with an agreement to relocate this at CSX's demand. He said that this agreement did not include the expectation to relocate it all at the same time, so they were currently working with the County attorneys to address this issue.

Ms. Gary said that no one had anticipated adding a third rail 50 years ago, and now they were facing the consequences.

Mr. Counsell said that was right. He said that they would work with the County Attorney's Office to fully understand their obligations and any challenges that may arise, and they would be advised by, and the Board would be advised by, the County Attorney's Office.

Ms. Gary asked if it had been accounted for previously since it was already included in the agreements from previous years.

Mr. Counsell said that he did not know that for sure.

Ms. Vanuch said that she was not finished with her questioning because she had a point to make regarding the federal government's involvement in expanding the third rail. She said that it was the federal government that was pushing for this rail infrastructure expansion. She said that before she could advocate for taking on this cost, she would like to have their options discussed in a closed session, so they could determine what they were legally required to do and what they could actually fight.

Ms. Vanuch said that she would like to send a representative to write letters to Congress about the implications this had on local taxpayers in Stafford, specifically, to explore the possibility of securing funding to relocate those utilities, thereby avoiding the financial burden on their locality. She said that she was aware that funding was available, and it would be beneficial to investigate this option instead of automatically agreeing to the $5 to $8 million cost. She said that therefore, she did not want to move forward with this tonight or in the near future until they had completed these two steps.

Ms. Bohmke said that to clarify, this was not a CSX project; CSX owned the land and the rail, but this was a Virginia Public Rail Authority project expanding the third rail along the entire corridor. She said that this further supported the point that it was a state issue, but CSX had all the control.

Dr. Yeung asked if, once they relocated it, could they relocate it to a new location where they would not have to relocate it again.

Mr. Counsell said that would be part of the preliminary engineering process, where they needed to consider the potential for future expansions, such as a fourth or fifth rail. He said that during the more detailed engineering phase, they would work out the specifics of how to accommodate these potential changes. He said that the ideas and thoughts shared by both parties recognized that they needed to identify where this infrastructure should be located to minimize conflicts in the future, if possible.

Ms. Bohmke said that she liked Ms. Vanuch's idea of discussing this in a closed session and potentially contacting their state and federal legislators to seek assistance to pay some of the costs associated with the project.

Ms. Gary said that she agreed they could discuss this in closed session; however, it seemed premature to draft a letter to legislators.

Ms. Vanuch said that she wanted to make a quick note regarding the letter. She said that one potential option was to consider placing it in the community projects fund, as this would need to be submitted to Congress before January. She said that this was why she had suggested they begin reviewing the letter and make it a priority to secure community project grant funding before the new Congress convened, allowing it to be included in the budget appropriations process. She said that the letter was not a threatening one, like how dare they expand the rails and not pay; it would be more of a statement of the problem and how the state's support of the project impacted local ratepayers.

Ms. Gary said that made sense.

Mr. Diggs said that he supported that. He said that he had a question regarding the timeline. He said that he had heard that in the next year, they planned to implement this, and that they had already begun designing it. He said that he was trying to understand how sending a letter would fit into the overall timeline, considering its time sensitivity. He said that he supported sending the letter, but he was trying to understand how this would factor into the broader context.

Mr. Counsell said that they were not in control of the project, which was being led by the VPRA and CSX. He said that they had stated their intention to move forward with the project, but they had not yet defined what that entailed. He said that he was unsure if they had the authority to relocate the County's facilities without their permission or prior consultation with them. He said that this was the mechanism they had provided for them to seek relief, and that was why they were there tonight.

Ms. Bohmke said that it was likely worth calling Mike McLaughlin at VPRA.

Dr. Yeung said that staff had been notified by CSX in October 2023, and they were currently in November 2024. She asked if this had been addressed at any point prior to today.

Ms. Bohmke said that this entire project with CSX had been evolving over that time period. She said that until the last 60 to 90 days, there was not much concrete information available, so Mr. Counsell did not have anything substantial to present to the Board.

Ms. Gary said that she would be in favor of holding these discussions in closed session, as they needed to address the legal questions and options available to them regarding their obligations. She said that seeking additional funding and considering the timeline that Ms. Vanuch had mentioned made sense. She said that she supported that approach.

Ms. Allen said that she was not in support of the letter, primarily because she believed it would be more efficient to contact VPRA directly. She said that if their congressional process took a significant amount of time, but VPRA operated on a different schedule, it seemed unlikely that they could coordinate their efforts. She said that she did not want to waste time pursuing that option if it would not yield results in the next few months. She said that the two timelines may not align, so she would prefer to wait until they had a conversation with VPRA before making a decision.

Ms. Allen said that at the next November meeting, she would like to hear back from them with more clarification on their options. She said that this would give them a better understanding of their choices and allow them to reassess their situation. She said that if they did not receive funding from their congressional representative or the state, the Board would be aware of the time constraints they faced. She said that, however, sending the letter now without an alternative plan or a clear understanding of the timeline was not beneficial.

Ms. Gary said that she believed Ms. Vanuch was referencing the community block grants, and there needed to be existing support for what they were asking for. She said that this was why they would send the letter. She said that she recalled speaking with Abigail Spanberger previously about this topic, and she assumed that what Ms. Vanuch was referring to.

Ms. Vanuch said that was correct; it required Board support, which would be explicitly stated in the letter. She said that following that, they would vote on a resolution. She said that this process was similar to the federal funding they had applied for the previous year, which they had received for two of their projects, including Brook Road. She said that since Brook Road was already included in their budget, they could still sign the agreement after the closed session, but it was essential to have this framework in place. She said that the federal funding offset the costs, providing a necessary financial component.

Mr. Counsell said that those comments were very good, and he would like to offer some consideration while they continued to debate. He said that the $500,000 commitment and the letter was a firm commitment, but it still allowed them to go through the agreement process over several months to gather information, express their concerns about federal funding, and potentially negotiate for the $500,000.

Mr. Counsell said that this agreement also included repayment from the federal government, so he did not believe that committing to this letter tonight or in the near future would be a hard and fast deadline for repayment. He said that instead, he believed that there was an opportunity to make the case for all of this to be covered, even if an agreement was not reached tonight or in the next meeting. He said that if an agreement could be reached based on their points of defense and ideas, the opportunity to be compensated for the $500,000 would still be available through the agreement process.

Ms. Vanuch said that she did not disagree with him, but she would prefer to discuss this item in closed session to gain a better understanding of the situation before making a decision. She said that before they signed any agreements, she would like to hear from Ms. McClendon about any potential legal obligations that the Board may face.

Dr. Yeung asked if there were any other final agreements other than the $500,000.

Mr. Counsell said that this was a preliminary agreement that outlined their understanding that they would spend money on their behalf to complete a certain amount of work, and in return, they were agreeing to the terms.

Dr. Yeung said that even if CSX did not do it, the work still had to get done, and the County would have to do it.

Mr. Counsell said that was correct.

Ms. Bohmke asked if Dr. Yeung would be supportive of discussing this item during closed session at their next meeting.

Dr. Yeung said that she agreed, but it would not change the result.

Mr. English said that he was in agreeance.

Ms. Bohmke confirmed that there was Board consensus to refrain from signing the agreement and voting on it today; they would wait and go into closed session with the County Attorney at the next Board meeting to receive further information and review options, after which they would take action on the letter.

Ms. Gary asked if, before the next meeting, they could reach out to Mr. McLaughlin to discuss the issue.

Ms. Bohmke said that yes, they would.

ITEM 26. CAPITAL PROJECTS TRANSPORTATION; TRANSPORTATION PROJECT FUNDING STATUS

Matthew Lehane, Transportation Planning and Funding Manager, said that he would like to briefly summarize their discussions from previous Board meetings. He said that two projects currently had shortfalls: Stefaniga Road and Mountain View Road Roundabout, and Onville Road widening. He said that to address these, they were exploring congressional earmarks for Stefaniga and Mountain View, as well as the Revenue Assurance Program for Onville Road through VDOT next year. He said that they were also working on their CIP process.

Mr. Lehane said that upcoming construction projects included Route 1 Telegraph Woodstock, with expected bids in December, and Route 1 Courthouse Road and Staffordboro Boulevard, both scheduled for January-February, pending no issues. He said that he would like to bring to their attention that several significant decisions were approaching early next year, including Smart Scale and the start of their budget season. He said that the bottom section provided an update on their Transportation Master Plan, including Phase 1, which addressed existing projects with shortfalls; Phase 2, which focused on Smart Scale applications; and Phase 3, which included long-term, major projects aimed at addressing congestion, such as those on I-95.

ITEM 27. PLANNING AND ZONING; DISCUSSION OF THE COUNTY'S NOISE ORDINANCE

Kathy Baker, Assistant Director of Planning and Zoning, said that she was present to provide an update on an item that was initially discussed by Ms. Bohmke at the May 15 work session, regarding noise regulations. She said that staff was seeking direction from the Board and would like to build upon the information they provided at that time, specifically on how sound is measured, the technical requirements necessary for measuring sound, and who is qualified to conduct or review sound studies.

Ms. Baker said that County Code Chapter 16 outlines measures and standards related to noise, including maximum levels of noise during daytime and nighttime hours, and is based on zoning district classifications. She said that the Sheriff's Department was responsible for enforcing these provisions and responding to noise-related calls. She said that currently, the noise provisions did not apply to specific uses, except for shooting ranges. She said that the Sheriff's Office had not recommended any changes to the ordinance at this time.

Ms. Baker said that they may also recall that in October of last year, the Board adopted zoning ordinance amendments related to data centers, which included special regulations. She said that these regulations generally required a series of sound studies, prepared by a professional and submitted to the County during the application process. She said that the studies would undergo various steps, including field verifications and monitoring.

Ms. Baker said that the County had on-call consultants who were qualified to perform noise studies and could review submitted studies. She said that however, no specific budget had been identified by the Board for these services. She said that if the Board were to opt for these services, they would need to consider the costs, which could cost $2,700 per study, depending on the scope of work and whether applicants would be required to pay for the services. She said that currently, they had placed the responsibility on applicants who came through the rezoning process and proffers.

Ms. Baker said that based on the information provided, including general upfront information from their on-call consultant, the Berkley Group, it was noted that they were not specifically a sound study or sound consultant. She said that however, if the Board wished to conduct a more in-depth study on noise requirements, they could consider hiring on-call consultants to perform these studies. She said that this process would take approximately six months and cost between $15,000 and $20,000. She said that staff was seeking guidance from the Board on how to proceed with any additional recommendations at this time.

Ms. Vanuch asked if the data center updates would overhaul the entire noise ordinance, or if it would fall under the existing data center ordinance.

Ms. Baker said that the data center noise ordinance was addressed in a special regulation section of the Zoning Ordinance’s Chapter 28. She said that the noise ordinance itself, which was overseen by the Sheriff, was not recommended to be applied to data centers. She said that they had limitations on their ability to assess noise, which could not be based on types of use, but rather on zoning categories. She said that therefore, they could not include parameters in the noise ordinance related to data centers or other industrial uses or other uses at this time.

Ms. Bohmke said that she found the Berkeley group report staff provided as background to be very informative. She said that her question for Ms. Baker was, as the expert in planning and zoning, if there were any specific points related to Prince William or other localities that stood out to her that Stafford could potentially consider.

Ms. Baker said that she was not a noise expert, and no staff in her office was either. She said that they had provided some recommendations on how to better drill down into specific requirements for sound studies, including providing more definition and identifying who was qualified to conduct such studies. She said that one of their suggestions was to consider the distance from buildings. She said that other localities had established a distance range of approximately 1,000 feet to 0.5 miles between a building location and residential developments.

Ms. Bohmke said that she wondered if they were adequately covered for this specific situation, based on what was included in their data center ordinance. She said that she had asked for clarification because she wanted to ensure that they were properly protected from a noise perspective, so that their constituents were safeguarded in the event of potential noise issues. She said that as they had a number of applications coming forward, she wanted to make sure they were prepared to address any noise concerns. She said that the humming and vibrations from a data center could be particularly bothersome, and she believed it was reasonable to expect that their constituents would want to avoid living nearby.

Ms. Baker said that she believed some of those questions went beyond what staff was trained in, so they could not answer. She said that the consultant could come back and provide more definitive recommendations to the Board.

Ms. Bohmke asked what the cost of that would be.

Ms. Baker said that a study would likely cost between $15,000 and $20,000, which would include recommendations and a thorough analysis. She said that the Berkley Group had conducted preliminary research and comparisons thus far.

Ms. Bohmke said that the Board could consider this as part of the budget process.

<u>ITEM 28. PLANNING AND ZONING; R24-351; DISCUSS THE COUNTY'S REQUIREMENTS RELATED TO TOBACCO AND VAPE SHOPS AND REQUEST THE</u>

PLANNING COMMISSION TO DEVELOP AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE ZONING ORDINANCE REGARDING THE SAME

Mike Zuraf, Director of Planning and Zoning, said that he had a brief presentation. He said that to refresh everyone's memory, the issue of tobacco and vape shops was discussed a year ago by the Board, with concerns raised about students and minors having access to these establishments. He said that staff was asked to research and provide recommendations on the placement of tobacco and vape shops and how to apply these through their zoning regulations.

Mr. Zuraf said that today, he would go over some initial staff recommendations and seek the Board's direction on how to proceed. He said that currently, there were approximately 25 tobacco and vape shops located around the County, primarily along Garrisonville Road, the Warrenton Road corridor, and to a lesser extent along Richmond Highway. He said that these were the main corridors where these shops were located. He said that in their zoning ordinance, the use was currently considered a low-intensity commercial retail use, permitted by right in several commercial zoning districts and a few mixed-use planned development zoning districts.

Mr. Zuraf said that currently, there were no specific zoning ordinance restrictions for tobacco and vape shops. He said that as part of staff's research, they reviewed regulations from several surrounding localities, which all classified tobacco and vape shops as a retail use. He said that however, three other Virginia jurisdictions to the south had adopted regulations specific to this use. He said that additionally, as part of their research, staff found that the state's industrial hemp program permitted the sale of hemp and CBD products in tobacco and vape shops, subject to a limitation on the amount of THC allowed in the products, which was enforced by the state.

Mr. Zuraf said that staff was providing several recommendations on this issue. He said that first, they recommended adding specific definitions to their zoning ordinance for tobacco and vape shop use, tobacco products, vape products, and tobacco and vape paraphernalia. He said that they also recommended proposed special regulations, including a 1,000-foot setback for a tobacco vape shop to be located away from a child care center, public, or private school, with details on how that distance was measured. He said that additionally, regulations would require a 1,000- foot separation between each shop to prevent overcrowding along a corridor.

Mr. Zuraf said that existing shops already in operation would be exempt from these regulations, as they would be grandfathered in. He said that the regulations they were considering were in compliance with state code. He said that the final recommendation was that the use be permitted only in the B-1 convenience commercial zoning district with a conditional use permit, whereas in the B-2 zoning district, it would be allowed by right. He said that draft Resolution R24-351 requested that the Planning Commission develop an ordinance amendment and return it to the Board prior to initiating a public hearing.

Ms. Vanuch said that under tobacco products, it would include cigarettes. She said that this raised questions about the impact on businesses like 7-Eleven, which sold cigarettes, or Walmart and grocery stores that also sold cigarettes. She asked if this regulation would potentially hinder their ability to attract new, high-end grocery stores that also sold cigarettes.

Mr. Zuraf said that it would not apply to a gas station or grocery because it was not their primary use.

Ms. Vanuch said that her other question was regarding staff's recommendations. She asked if they were suggesting that they create both definitions: establish the 1,000-foot setback, and also limit the use to B2 by right only.

Mr. Zuraf said that was correct.

Ms. Allen said that she wanted to emphasize the importance of addressing this issue. She said that over the past two years, their schools had faced a significant challenge with students experiencing overdoses related to vaping products, which had become a serious public health concern. She said that as it turned out, this issue was already being addressed in public health initiatives, and Stafford County had experienced the issue locally. She said that given this, she strongly believed that they must ensure that this ordinance effectively prevented their children from accessing these products, as it posed a significant health risk to them.

Ms. Allen motioned, seconded by Ms. Gary, to request the Planning Commission to develop an ordinance to amend the Zoning Ordinance regarding the County's requirements related to tobacco and vape shops.

Dr. Yeung said that as Ms. Allen mentioned, this issue was particularly close to her heart. She said that her child had been a high school freshman when he had been affected by this, and it had been a couple of years since they had been trying to rehabilitate some of these students, but it had proven to be very difficult. She said that the situation had become increasingly dire, and she was concerned that the problem was escalating.

Dr. Yeung said that for those already existing, she was not sure what they could do. She said that it seemed like they could not turn back the clock. She said that however, for those who were coming online, because they continued to appear, especially in Garrisonville, it was alarming. She said that every time she turned around, she saw another new store. She said that she would like to ensure that the language ensured they were distanced adequately from childcare centers, as mentioned earlier.

Ms. Gary said that she would like to echo everyone's comments here. She said that they were all very concerned about this issue, and she was glad it had been brought back to them. She said that she appreciated the recommendations. She said that her only question was regarding the 1,000 feet. She asked if they were set on that specific length, or if there was flexibility to make adjustments and consider increasing the distance.

Mr. Zuraf said that the distance as recommended was approximately a 10 to 15 minute walk. He said that in Chesterfield County, the distance was 2,000 feet.

Ms. Gary said that she would support making it as inconvenient as possible for children to access the shops.

Ms. Vanuch asked if the resolution granted the Planning Commission the authority to make changes as recommended by them, or if it was a straightforward up or down vote.

Mr. Zuraf said that it allowed the Planning Commission to develop the regulations.

Ms. Vanuch said that they could give the Planning Commission the authority to make the distance longer.

Ms. McClendon said that she would like to offer her input on the matter. She said that as the Planning Commission will be drafting the ordinance, it would be beneficial for the Board to provide direction, which will then be reviewed by them before they submit it to the Board for review prior to the public hearing. She said that this process will ensure that they are satisfied with the numbers and can make any necessary adjustments before the ordinance is presented to the public.

Mr. English asked if they could add a requirement so that only those 18 or older could enter the vape shops.

Mr. Zuraf said that they could not achieve that through zoning.

Mr. Diggs said that as they discussed the youth and their addiction to vape and tobacco products, he wanted to bring to their attention that the General Assembly had recently made it legal for juveniles to possess tobacco. He said that currently, he was working with Senator Durant and Delegate Cole on this issue. He said that the approach had changed in the last round, and as a result, something that was previously a valuable resource for their school resource officers to work with students and provide them with help had been removed. He said that this was another part of the problem.

Ms. Bohmke called the vote on requesting the Planning Commission to develop an ordinance to amend the Zoning Ordinance regarding the County's requirements related to tobacco and vape shops.

The Voting Board tally was:
Yea: (7) Allen, Bohmke, Diggs, English, Gary, Vanuch, Yeung
No: (0)

**ACTION ITEMS**

ITEM 29. CAPITAL PROJECTS TRANSPORTATION; R24-327(R); DISCUSS ADDITIONAL FY26 WEDGE-WIDENING PROJECT(S) AND A MODIFICATION TO ADOPTED RESOLUTION R24-327 IF NECESSARY

Matthew Lehane, Transportation Planning and Funding Manager, said that they had previously discussed and approved Truslow Road and Woodstock Lane. He said that approximately $1.4 million was available in the Secondary Six-Year Plan (SSYP), which had been previously assigned to an unsuccessful Safe Streets for All grant award. He said that the Board also discussed Poplar Road, and he stated that he would return with more information, which was presented on this slide. He said that what they had discussed was the sections that were recently repaved, as well as those that could be wedge-widened.

Mr. Lehane said that on the provided map, the dark red sections represented those that were not repaved this year, while the blue sections indicated those that had been repaved this year. He said that these sections were part of their wedge-widening program on Poplar Road in the County. He said that on the left, they could see a general cost estimate for each of the three sections. He said that staff's initial recommendation at the last meeting was to not assign the SSYP funding at this time and to bring it back forward during the next SSYP process.

Ms. Bohmke asked if Mr. Lehane could elaborate on this area in the northern part of the County. She said that she would assume this area experienced heavy traffic, which was why it was recommended for wedge-widening.

Mr. Lehane said that yes, Poplar Road was a notoriously dangerous road in the County, with a higher rate of crashes compared to other rural roads.

Ms. Vanuch said that to provide context, the new high school was located at Route 17 and Route 652, and the new fire station would be situated at Route 644, which was located north of number two.

Ms. Vanuch said that this location was where the new fire station would be, and it was being strategically placed there due to its proximity to Poplar Road and the ease of access to the north and south on those roads, which would require wedge widening. She said that she would like to revisit the funding for this project, as they had $1.4 million available, but they also had a deficit on other projects, which was problematic. She said that it was likely why Mr. Lehane had asked them not to assign that funding just yet, suggesting that they may want to reassess their priorities in January and February. She said that it struck her as odd that they would pave one part of the area but not the other.

Mr. Lehane said that Section 3 had received a surface treatment two years ago, and Section 2 had been repaved just this year.

Ms. Vanuch said that the major section that was repaved was the section that received the majority of traffic.

Ms. Allen asked if Mr. Lehane could explain the rationale for not including the $1.4 million at this time.

Mr. Lehane said that to Ms. Vanuch's point, one reason for this decision was due to other considerations within their larger transportation program, including that they had several shortfalls on projects, and this funding could be assigned to either of those projects at the Board's direction. He said that they would prefer to follow the staff's recommendation to wait until they had further clarification on the availability of this funding, approximately a few months from now. He said that this was a significant amount of funding, and they did not typically see it available in the SSYP. He said that it would be up to them to reassess and potentially reassign that funding next year during the SSYP and budget process.

Ms. Vanuch said that her recommendation would be to wait a couple of months because they were not likely to wedge-widen the road during that time.

Mr. Lehane said that to clarify, any decisions regarding the FY26 wedge-widening were due to VDOT now. He said that if they did not make a decision tonight, the projects for FY26 would be Truslow and Woodstock, and any future decisions would be made for FY27, potentially summer of 2027.

Dr. Yeung asked what other SSYP or CIP projects would be covered by this funding.

Mr. Lehane said that the funding could be applied to any secondary road projects within the county, except for Chatham Heights Road, Butler Road, Route 1, Warrenton Road, or Route 3. He said that it could be used for any other road projects in the County.

Dr. Yeung asked if there were any other SSYP projects they had not covered yet.

Mr. Lehane said that the Board had previously discussed several SSYP projects last year, and they had allocated approximately $3 million to $4 million dollars, which had funded the majority of the projects they had discussed at that time. He said that over the next few months, staff would develop a potential new list of projects based on Board discussions, citizen input, and VDOT feedback, and would bring it back to the Board for consideration. He said that they were actively listening to the Board's input and were developing a list of potential projects and needs. He said that these projects typically involved smaller expenditures, such as $150,000 for crosswalk improvements or funding for Holly Corner Road.

Mr. Lehane said that the item on the CIP was for potential larger projects that could help address deficits. He said that this was one potential option they could consider, although they did not have a clear answer at this time because the specifics were still uncertain. He said that the earmarks for Stefaniga and Mountain View could be impacted if they did not secure those. He said that, additionally, if the bids for federal funding or other state grants came back too high, or if they did not secure those grants, they may need to explore alternative funding sources.

Ms. Allen said that her recommendation would be to hold off. She said that when they came back to addressing the two portions of Poplar Road, it would likely coincide with the high school opening, so it would not significantly delay the process of addressing concerns related to the schools. She said that she thought it would be wise to wait until they had completed their assessment and had a clear understanding of their funding and potential future projects. She said that if it was determined that they were not necessary, they could then reassess and potentially pivot back to addressing the roads, ensuring they were prepared for the school and fire station.

Mr. Lehane said that he would like to add one additional item to their discussion, which they had not thoroughly addressed in a significant length of time, likely over the past one to two years. He said that from the time when he first joined the County two years ago, the costs of their wedge-widening program were significantly higher. He said that the initial estimate was $20 million to complete all 30 projects, but the total cost is now approximately $40 million.

Mr. Lehane said that as a result, what was initially envisioned as a 10-year program is now being implemented at a rate of $1 million per year, stretching it out to 20 years instead of 10. He said that although progress was slow, they were still managing to complete one to two projects per year as they continued with the program. He said that one of the issues was with project number two, which costs $1.6 million, but they only had $1 million available per year. He said that he wanted to bring this to their attention as it had been a topic they had not thoroughly discussed in recent presentations.

Ms. Bohmke confirmed there was Board consensus to refrain from taking action at this time, and they would take up this matter at a later date.

ITEM 30. BOARD OF SUPERVISORS; R24-267; CONSIDER ADOPTING AMENDED BY-LAWS AND RULES OF PROCEDURE

Ms. Bohmke said that there had been significant Board conversations about this item. She said that Dr. Yeung was not present at their last meeting on this topic, so she may have some questions.

Mr. Diggs motioned, seconded by Ms. Vanuch, to adopt Resolution R24-367, adopting the amended By-Laws and Rules of Procedure.

Ms. Vanuch said that she would like to make a recommendation regarding the ad hoc committees. She said that currently, it stated that there would be no minutes or recordings. She said that she believed it was essential that they have some form of documentation, as it currently only stated that the chair of the committee would report to the Board with a summary. She said that she thought it would be beneficial to have recordings, as it would be similar to what they did at their off-site meetings. She said that it would not be a significant burden on staff to have a tape recording. She asked if anyone would have an issue with adding a section to the committee part that included the option for recordings, but not necessarily requiring minutes.

Dr. Yeung said that the Bylaws Committee spent several hours meeting over the summer, and she would like to extend her gratitude to staff and their attorney, who contributed significantly to their work. She said that she would also like to thank Ms. Gary for her work. She said that she had invested over 20 hours in researching and replicating the Board's standards, similar to those in Loudoun, Spotsylvania, and Prince William Counties, although their efforts were not even considered.

Dr. Yeung said that given that the committees were no longer part of their current structure, she would not be voting in favor of these bylaws changes. She said that she would like to request that the Board reconsider and reestablish an ad hoc committee focused on affordable workforce housing, ideally starting in the 2025 calendar year, as the current work was not yet complete.

Mr. English said that he wanted to reiterate the point they had discussed regarding committees and work sessions. He said that he believed that by bringing these discussions to work sessions, they could ensure that all members had an opportunity to contribute, rather than just two people repeating what they had already said. He said that this way, they could avoid regurgitating the same ideas and have a more productive conversation. He said that he thought this was an important aspect of their agreement, and he would like to see it implemented by bringing these discussions to a work session, where they could all share their thoughts and ideas.

Dr. Yeung said that for the Board to receive information in a work session, it usually required four votes. She said that what she did not think they had at this point was a comprehensive plan that outlined a whole year's worth of work for the Affordable Workforce Housing Committee, only to not discuss it for an entire year. She said that she believed this was a waste of their time, and she thought they needed to reestablish the Affordable Housing Committee because there were numerous issues that had arisen this year. She said that she had attended the Affordable Housing Advisory (AHA) meetings, and she had heard about the pressing needs they faced. She said that she did not think it was something that could be simply introduced at a work session and expected to be implemented without further discussion.

Mr. English said that he begged to differ. He said that he believed she had not brought any new ideas to the table, but he would support her in coming in for a work session to present what she had. He said that this was the reason they were trying to eliminate this committee, as she often reiterated existing information, and they also had the GWRC that they sat on. He said that he was not opposed to her, but if she brought her ideas to a work session, he would be more than happy to support her on that.

Dr. Yeung said that she wondered how many Board members read the report written by the Affordable and Workforce Housing Committee.

Ms. Gary said that she did have concerns about removing it, simply because it was a major issue that would continue to be an issue. She said that Ms. Denham was still present, awaiting their decision, and had made some excellent points earlier. She said that she thought they should consider this option. She said that there were many projects that the Board wanted to review, such as the Buc-ee's development, for instance.

Ms. Gary said that it was well-known that people struggled to afford living and working there, and balancing these competing interests was challenging. She said that she would propose that if the Board did not want to establish a standing committee, they could at least have an advisory committee comprised of community members. She said that this would ensure that the work remained ongoing and that someone was keeping an eye on it. She said that the Board could bring it back in work sessions as well to work on as a whole Board.

Mr. Diggs said that he appreciated Mr. English's perspective, as they had discussed this topic previously. He said that he preferred when all stakeholders were present and received the information together. He said that he was concerned that the committee structure was sometimes filtering the information, which could lead to issues. He said that despite the format change, he believed they would all support bringing these issues forward, and there would be at least four votes in favor. He said that they were well aware that this was a pressing issue, particularly in the context of economic development.

Mr. Diggs said that he would support eliminating the committees while also advocating for bringing these issues to the work sessions, ensuring they were doing the necessary work. He said that as they continued to sit on various committees and commissions, including the GWRC, this issue remained pertinent. He said that the average house price in Stafford was around $600,000 to $700,000, making it unaffordable for many residents. He said that he acknowledged their commitment to addressing this issue, and he believed it would require a different approach, but one that was still effective.

Ms. Bohmke said that she was grateful for a new structure for the Board, because a majority of them wanted to move forward on things, and polling the supervisors was how they made decisions on how staff would invest their time. She said that all the committees they had to serve on resulted in extremely long days of work. She said that in addition to the bylaws, as the Chair of the three-on-three committee, those who did not attend the joint schools meetings were always given copies of the presentations given at those meetings.

Ms. Bohmke said that she had asked Ms. McClendon to draft language that would require the Chair of the three-on-three committee to share any working papers with the rest of the Board. She said that these were all CIP-related items and were very important for supporting the schools. She said that she wanted to add this to their bylaws, specifically Section 2.1-7(g).

Ms. Gary asked if it only affected that committee.

Ms. Bohmke said yes.

Ms. McClendon said that she had language that could be added to Section 2.1(B)7(G). She said it would read "the Chairman shall ensure that Board Members receive copies of all documents and information provided at the three-on-three committee meetings, either via email or in hard copy."

Ms. Gary said that if the Board was interested in establishing an Advisory Committee for Housing in the community to advise the Board, she would be comfortable voting for the bylaws and eliminating the Board standing committee. She said that she simply wanted to gauge the Board's interest in this matter before making a decision.

Ms. Vanuch said that was unrelated to the bylaws.

Ms. Gary said that this pertained to her decision regarding the bylaws, and she had received some positive feedback. She said that there was no reason they could not move forward. She asked if Ms. Bohmke could please pull the board and gauge interest in this matter, so she could make an informed decision.

Ms. Bohmke said that they had no other similar advisory committees in the community.

Ms. Allen said that they had the public safety advisory committee.

Mr. English said that staff should assess the work involved to establish such a committee.

Ms. Gary said that she wanted to gauge the Board's interest in exploring the possibility so she could make a decision regarding eliminating the standing committee.

Mr. English said that he was not opposed to the idea but would like to hear staff's perspective before proceeding.

Ms. Bohmke said that she appreciated Ms. Gary's request, but was not in a position to move forward with that at this time.

Ms. Gary asked if she could poll the Board on the issue.

Ms. Bohmke said that she did not see it as an item that she could poll the Board on; they could take it up in 2025.

Ms. Gary asked if there was anything procedural that would prevent her from polling the Board on that item so that it could better inform her decision.

Ms. McClendon said that it was within the discretion of the Board members to choose to engage in the discussion or not.

Ms. Vanuch said that in her opinion, the topic had nothing to do with creating bylaws for the Board. She said that creating an advisory committee was not relevant to the current agenda. She said that it should be added as an agenda item for the Board to take up.

Ms. Gary said that it was relevant to her vote and she was simply asking the Chair to poll the Board.

Ms. Bohmke said that she would not poll the Board.

Dr. Yeung said that in the bylaws, they did discuss ad hoc reporting. She asked if the Chair could poll the Board on their interest in an advisory ad hoc committee for affordable and workforce housing. She said that they could not just bring topics of housing to a work session. She said that it had been a long time coming and they needed something concrete if they did not want a regular committee. She said that they should at least have an ad hoc committee so they could continue to have discussions on affordable and workforce housing.

Ms. Bohmke said that she appreciated Dr. Yeung's perspective, but she would not poll the Board. She said that one of the reasons they made this decision to move forward with taking up such items during their work sessions on the last Tuesday of the month was because the Board had not been hearing all of the information at the same time from the ad hoc committees. She said that she did not stay informed nor had the time to attend all those meetings. She said that she believed the Board should do this altogether on behalf of the community.

Ms. Vanuch said that to clarify, under Section 6.5(B), this provision would eliminate the requirement that the committee Chairman kept the Board informed about ad hoc committee work. She said that instead, the ad hoc committee would be audio recorded. She said that she wanted to confirm this for the record.

Ms. Bohmke called the vote on Proposed Resolution R24-367 as amended.

The Voting Board tally was:

Yea: (5) Allen, Bohmke, Diggs, English, Vanuch
No: (1) Yeung
Absent: (1) Gary

**CLOSED MEETING**

At 8:16 p.m., Ms. Allen motioned, seconded by Ms. Vanuch, to adopt Resolution CM24-29 to authorize closed session.

The Voting Board tally was:

Yea: (6) Allen, Bohmke, Diggs, English, Vanuch, Yeung
No: (0)
Absent: (1) Gary

Resolution CM24-29 reads as follows:

A RESOLUTION TO AUTHORIZE CLOSED MEETING

WHEREAS, the Board desires to hold a Closed Meeting for (1) consultation with legal counsel and briefings by staff members pertaining to *Stafford v. Manassas Ice and Fuel Company, Inc.,* case number CL22-1009 where such consultation or briefings in an open meeting would adversely affect the litigating posture of the Board; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Virginia Code § 2.2-3711 (A)(7)) such discussions may occur in Closed Meeting;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Stafford County Board of Supervisors on this the 7th day of November, 2024, that it be and hereby does authorize discussion of the above matters in Closed Meeting

**CERTIFY CLOSED MEETING - SEC. 2.2-3711 (A)**

At 8:31 p.m., Ms. Allen motioned, seconded by Ms. Vanuch, to adopt Resolution CM24-24(C) to certify the closed meeting.

The Voting Board tally was:

Yea: (7) Allen, Bohmke, Diggs, English, Gary, Vanuch, Yeung
No: (0)

Resolution CM24-29 (C) reads as follows:

A RESOLUTION TO CERTIFY THE ACTIONS OF THE STAFFORD COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS IN A CLOSED MEETING ON NOVEMBER 7, 2024

WHEREAS, the Board has, on this the 7th day of November, 2024, adjourned into a Closed Meeting in accordance with a formal vote of the Board and in accordance with the provisions of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia Freedom of Information Act provides for certification that such Closed Meeting was conducted in conformity with the law;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Stafford County Board of Supervisors does hereby certify, on this the 7th day of November, 2024, that to the best of each member's knowledge (1) only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements under the Virginia Freedom of Information Act, and (2) only such public business matters as were identified in the Motion by which the Closed Meeting was convened, were heard, discussed, or considered by the Board.

Ms. Allen motioned, seconded by Ms. Gary, to approve Resolution R24-356, authorizing the County Administrator and the County Attorney to execute any and all documents necessary to settle the case of *Stafford County Board of Supervisors v. Manassas Ice and Fuel Company*, case number CL22-109.

The Voting Board tally was:
Yea: (7) Allen, Bohmke, Diggs, English, Gary, Vanuch, Yeung
No: (0)

**ADJOURNMENT**

At 8:55 p.m., Chairman Bohmke adjourned the November 7, 2024 Stafford County Board of Supervisor's meeting.

| | |
|---|---|
| William Ashton, II | Meg Bohmke |
| County Administrator | Chairman |