

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
STAFFORD COUNTY, VIRGINIA
MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
JULY 1, 2025

CALL TO ORDER – A regular meeting of the Stafford County Board of Supervisors was called to order by Deuntay Diggs, Chairman, at 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, July 1, 2025 in the Board Chambers, George L. Gordon, Jr. Government Center, 1300 Courthouse Road, Stafford VA.

ROLL CALL – The following members were present: Deuntay Diggs, Chairman; Tinesha O. Allen, Vice Chairman; Meg Bohmke (virtual); Pamela Yeung; Darrell English; Monica Gary; Crystal Vanuch.

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

Ms. Vanuch motioned, seconded by Dr. Yeung, to allow Supervisor Bohmke to participate in the meeting remotely.

The Voting Board tally was:

Yea: (7) Allen, Bohmke, Diggs, English, Gary, Vanuch, Yeung

Nay: (0)

Absent: (0)

INVOCATION

Ms. Vanuch led the invocation.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mr. English led the Board in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

CHAIR REMARKS

Mr. Diggs said ... County employees mentor students through hands-on training tailor to their strengths. He said that now in its second year, the program had already led to successful employment for a student at Stafford's animal shelter. He said that additionally, the R-Board had collaborated with the schools on a litter education and recycled art contest, which won an award. He said that this demonstrated their employee value of "stronger together," as these partnerships showcased the achievements that could be accomplished when they worked together.

Mr. Diggs said that he wanted to inform the public that July 4th was a holiday, and County offices, departments, courts, and the regional landfill and Belman recycling would be closed. He said that he wanted to invite everyone to join them for Stafford's 4th of July Spectacular at Pratt Park, where

gates would open at 6:00 p.m. He said that the first 3,000 guests would receive goodie bags. He said that the fireworks display would begin at 9:15 p.m. and that more information could be found at www.tourstaffordvirginia.com.

Mr. Diggs said that the Fire and Rescue Department wanted to remind everyone to exercise caution when using permissible fireworks. He said that they asked everyone to please keep a water bucket or hose nearby, follow the manufacturer's instructions, and to not point fireworks at another person. He said that additionally, never use fireworks under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

ADDITIONS – DELETIONS AND APPROVAL OF THE REGULAR AGENDA

ADD ON TO PRESENTATIONS: PRESENTATION OF A PROCLAMATION DESIGNATING JULY 26, 2025 AS NATIONAL DISABILITY INDEPENDENCE DAY IN STAFFORD, VIRGINIA

ADD ON TO CONSENT AGENDA; COUNTY ADMINISTRATION; APPROVE THE MAY 20, 2025 BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MINUTES

ADD ON TO ACTION ITEMS; ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND MATERIALS FOR ITEM #17, AUTHORIZE THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR TO APPROVE AN AGREEMENT WITH VIRGINIA PASSENGER RAIL AUTHORITY (VPRA) FOR REIMBURSEMENT OF COSTS TO RECTIFY WATER/SEWER CONFLICTS WITHIN THE POTOMAC CREEK THIRD TRACK SOUTH (SIDING A) PROJECT; PROPOSED RESOLUTION R25-179]

William Ashton, County Administrator, said that earlier today, the Supervisors all received an email that included an updated proclamation designating July 26th as National Disability Independence Day in Stafford County. He said that they had also added the approval of the May 20, 2025 Board of Supervisors meeting minutes to the consent agenda.

Mr. Ashton said that they had also added extra information related to Item 17, Capital Projects, related to the Virginia Passenger Rail Authority's reimbursement costs for rectifying water and sewer conflicts with the Potomac Creek third rail track and south siding project.

Ms. Gary motioned, seconded by Ms. Allen, to approve the agenda as amended.

The Voting Board tally was:

Yea: (7) Allen, Bohmke, Diggs, English, Gary, Vanuch, Yeung

No: (0)

CONSENT AGENDA

ITEM 1. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT; PROCLAMATION HONORING AND RECOGNIZING FIRST RESPONDERS ON THE OCCASION OF THE NINTH ANNUAL FIRST RESPONDERS BREAKFAST; PROPOSED PROCLAMATION P25-10

ITEM 2. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT; PROCLAMATION DESIGNATING JULY 26, 2025 AS NATIONAL DISABILITY INDEPENDENCE DAY IN STAFFORD, VIRGINIA; PROPOSED PROCLAMATION P25-26

ITEM 3. CAPITAL PROJECTS; AUTHORIZE THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR TO EXECUTE A CONTRACT WITH AMERICAN CONTRACTING & ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES, INCORPORATED, FOR AQUIA AND LITTLE FALLS RUN BIOREACTOR STRUCTURAL REHABILITATIONS; PROPOSED RESOLUTION R25-151

ITEM 4. CAPITAL PROJECTS; ACTING AS THE GOVERNING BODY FOR THE LAKE ARROWHEAD SERVICE DISTRICT AUTHORIZE THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR TO EXECUTE A CONTRACT WITH TRIANGLE CONTRACTING, LLC FOR THE RENOVATIONS TO LAKE ARROWHEAD DAM PROJECT; PROPOSED RESOLUTION R25-170

ITEM 5. COUNTY ADMINISTRATION; APPROVE THE MAY 27, 2025 BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING MINUTES

ITEM 6. COUNTY ADMINISTRATION; APPROVE THE JUNE 3, 2025 BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING MINUTES

ITEM 7. COUNTY ADMINISTRATION; ADOPT STAFFORD COUNTY'S OVERALL LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM FOR THE 2026 SESSION OF THE VIRGINIA GENERAL ASSEMBLY; PROPOSED RESOLUTION R25-137

ITEM 8. COUNTY ADMINISTRATION; RECOMMEND APPOINTMENT OF MR. CHARLES CAUSEY TO THE STAFFORD COUNTY BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS FOR THE GRIFFIS-WIDEWATER SEAT FOR THE TERM ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2025; PROPOSED RESOLUTION R25-182

ITEM 9. COUNTY ADMINISTRATION; RECOMMEND SUPERVISOR R. PAMELA YEUNG BE APPOINTED AS THE ALTERNATE MEMBER REPRESENTING STAFFORD COUNTY ON THE VIRGINIA RAILWAY EXPRESS (VRE) OPERATIONS BOARD FOR THE TERM ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2025; PROPOSED RESOLUTION R25-182

ITEM 10. FIRE AND RESCUE; AUTHORIZING THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR TO ADVERTISE A PUBLIC HEARING TO CONSIDER A PROPOSED ORDINANCE TO AMEND AND REORDAIN STAFFORD COUNTY CODE CHAPTER 10 "EMERGENCY SERVICES" TO UPDATE TERMINOLOGY AND PROVISIONS TO ALIGN WITH THE VIRGINIA CODE AND TO CLARIFY THE EMERGENCY DIRECTOR LINE OF SUCCESSION; PROPOSED RESOLUTION R25-174

ITEM 11. FIRE AND RESCUE; RATIFY A CONTRACT AMENDMENT WITH BOUND TREE MEDICAL, LLC FOR MEDICAL AND FIRST AID SUPPLIES; PROPOSED RESOLUTION R25-171

ITEM 12. SHERIFF; AUTHORIZE THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR TO EXECUTE A CONTRACT AMENDMENT WITH MEDICAL PRIORITY CONSULTANTS, INC. DBA PRIORITY DISPATCH CORP. FOR QUALITY ASSURANCE SERVICES AND EMERGENCY POLICE DISPATCHING SOFTWARE; PROPOSED RESOLUTION R25-113

ITEM 13. SHERIFF; AUTHORIZE THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR TO ACCEPT THE VIRGINIA RULES CAMP 2025 GRANT FROM THE OFFICE OF THE VIRGINIA ATTORNEY GENERAL AND TO BUDGET AND APPROPRIATE THE FUNDS; PROPOSED RESOLUTION R25-176

ITEM 14. UTILITIES; AUTHORIZE THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR TO SUBMIT A GRANT PRE-APPLICATION AND APPLICATION FOR THE DEFENSE COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAM (DCIP) FOR IMPROVEMENT AND REHABILITATION PROJECTS AT THE SMITH LAKE WATER TREATMENT FACILITY; PROPOSED RESOLUTION R25-173

Mr. Diggs asked if there were any items the Supervisors wished to pull from the Consent Agenda.

Mr. English said that he would like to pull Item 6.

Ms. Allen motioned, seconded by Ms. Gary, to approve Consent Agenda without Item 6.

The Voting Board tally was:

Yea: (7) Allen, Bohmke, Diggs, English, Gary, Vanuch, Yeung

No: (0)

Mr. Diggs asked if Mr. English would like to address Item 6.

Mr. English said that on page 67 of the June 3, 2025 minutes, there needed to be a correction made to the 19th public speaker, whose name should be “Jerry Land” not “Sherry Land.” He said that this was the only change that needed to be made.

Ms. Gary motioned, seconded by Dr. Yeung, to approve the June 3, 2025 Board of Supervisors meeting minutes with the recommended change.

The Voting Board tally was:

Yea: (7) Allen, Bohmke, Diggs, English, Gary, Vanuch, Yeung

No: (0)

PRESENTATIONS

PRESENTATION OF A PROCLAMATION DESIGNATING JULY 26, 2025 AS NATIONAL DISABILITY INDEPENDENCE DAY IN STAFFORD, VIRGINIA

Mr. Diggs said that he wanted to invite Ms. Deborah Lately to the dais. He said that Ms. Lately served as the Director of Advocacy for the Disability Resource Center, and she was present to accept the proclamation declaring July 26th as National Disability Independence Day on behalf of

those with disabilities. He said that for those unfamiliar with the Disability Resource Center, it WAS a center for independent living that served their area, assisting people with disabilities meet their own individualized independent living goals. He said that he welcomed Ms. Lately, thanked her for joining them today, and thanked her for her outstanding work.

Mr. Diggs presented the Proclamation Designating July 26, 2025 as National Disability Independence Day in Stafford, Virginia.

Deborah Lately, Advocacy Director for the Disability Resource Center, accepted the proclamation. She said that it was an honor for her to be here today, and she would like to extend her gratitude to the Board of Supervisors for recognizing National Disability Independence Day. She said that they did not take this recognition lightly, as they strove to serve the entire PD16 area, including Stafford, Fredericksburg, King George, Caroline, and Spotsylvania Counties. She said that their goal was to help people with disabilities live independently. She said that she would like to thank the County again for acknowledging their efforts.

PRESENTATIONS BY THE PUBLIC

1. Ken Sallinger, George Washington District, said that he lived in the Celebrate Del Webb senior living community. He said that in their community, they had experienced a series of three dog attacks, which had occurred since October of last year. He said that the reason he brought this issue to the Board was because, while as a community and as individuals they were pursuing the correct legal recourse, they had found a gap they were struggling with that they would like the County to help with. He said that while these three attacks had been vicious, they had not reached a level of bodily harm to other humans or animals that would allow law enforcement to take direct action, such as removal of the animal from the home.

Mr. Sallinger said that they did have a court date for hearing this issue in two weeks. He said that in their discussions with law enforcement, they were told it was more of a Homeowners Association (HOA) problem to address, which they had already done. He said that as they worked with their community board of directors and HOA, they were told it was more of a County law enforcement issue. He said that in their covenants and their board, it said that nothing in this provision addressed animals and pets, nothing in this provision shall prevent the association from requiring removal of any animal that presents an actual threat to the health or safety of the residents.

Mr. Sallinger said that even with that, their board had said it sounded like a County problem. He said that when they talked with the County and the victim witness program at court, they were told it was more of a board problem. He said that this particular animal of concern was rescued from a dog-fighting ring and introduced to the residents. He said that due to the age of their community's residents, they were concerned that any stressful situations with this dog could threaten the safety of their community.

Mr. Sallinger said that he was personally attacked by this dog, and although they had tried to work with the owners of the dog, they refused to do anything. He said that the only thing that kept him from being seriously attacked was the fact that he was agile enough; however, others

in the community were less mobile and could not fend off a dangerous dog. He said that they did not want the dog to be euthanized, but needed some kind of enforcement to prevent future harm to residents.

2. Barbara Cannon, Falmouth District, said that she would like to discuss data centers, as they were of immediate importance to all citizens. She said that the future of the County depended on the decisions the Board made regarding these facilities. She said that speaking as a concerned citizen, she was asking the Board to follow the new regulations that had been set forth, and not to grandfather in any old applications. She said that the old ideas they were working with were not very good and led to unsuccessful outcomes for the County.

Ms. Cannon said that additionally, she would like to discuss a few things she was particularly interested in. She said that first, she would like the County to work very hard to protect Stafford's native ecosystems and provide ample area around these massive structures, where animals, trees, bees, birds, and people could thrive. She said that she was very worried that they would cut down trees and get rid of areas of native flora and fauna. She said that she was also concerned there would be structures placed too close to homes.

Ms. Cannon said that one oak tree could supply a home for 500 types of caterpillars, which birds used to feed their young. She said that when they got rid of oak trees, they would get rid of habitat for birds and other wildlife. She said that she also wanted them to preserve enough space around schools so that children could prosper and not be disturbed by noises emitted by data centers. She said that children with autism were particularly sensitive to noise, and it was important to closely analyze where to put the data centers in relation to schools.

Ms. Cannon said that third, she wanted to note that there were four data centers built in the County. She asked if that was enough, considering there were other places that could hold them as well. She said that the 15 proposed were too many for their area, which had already been heavily commercialized and whose habitats had been destroyed so Amazon could have a home here. She said that she sincerely believed their natural environment should be preserved.

3. Julia Lewis, Falmouth District, said that she would like to thank Chairman Diggs for hosting the town hall on data centers last week and Supervisor Gary for attending as well. She said that she appreciated the effort he put into bringing in the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission (JLARC) study experts, the Dominion experts, the water experts, and their own tax expert, Scott Mayausky, to answer questions and provide insight into the data center situation. She said that the event was amazingly informative, with both the guest speakers and the public's questions and concerns being thoughtfully addressed.

Ms. Lewis said that most of all, she would like to thank Supervisor Meg Bohmke for suggesting the Planning Commission develop new guidelines and for the Board's collective efforts in making that happen. She said that she has been attending the subcommittee meetings, and she was impressed by the thoughtful consideration given to the public's input. She said that staff had been remarkable in their work on this project.

Ms. Lewis said that she asked the Board to approach the proposed new rules by the Planning Commission with an open mind, putting aside any personal biases and focusing on finding guidelines that allow for peaceful coexistence with data centers. She said that she firmly believed that data centers could be good neighbors and that citizens could be good neighbors with them. She said that she was not suggesting that any neighborhood should sacrifice its interests for the sake of data centers; rather, she believed that they could work together to find guidelines that allow them to coexist peacefully.

Ms. Lewis said that she was confident that they could find common ground. She said that public hearings would be held, but those were one-sided communication, and she would like for there to be more town halls and opportunities for citizens to engage in dialogue. She said that the citizens group protecting Stafford County had raised important questions, and she hoped that the experts would be able to provide clear and concise answers. She said that transparency was essential, and she believed that it was crucial for the community to feel heard and included.

Ms. Lewis said that only the Board had the power to facilitate transparency, which would ultimately benefit the community at large. She said that it was natural for humans to want to be seen, heard, and included. She said that she would like to know what data centers had to say in response to their concerns. She said that finally, she would like to thank the Planning Commission subcommittee, particularly Chairwoman Kristen Barnes, for her thoughtful consideration and dedication to studying surrounding jurisdictions' rules and incorporating their best ideas into Stafford County's guidelines. She asked the Supervisors to please do their homework and respect the public's homework, too.

4. Carolyn Whittaker, George Washington District, said that her remarks would focus on the data centers, as they were a huge concern for the entire County. She said that she and her husband were present tonight to reiterate their concerns about the proposed data center at the Simms Farm property on Route 3 East, as well as other properties in the area. She said that the first time she had spoken at the Supervisor School Board meeting, she had expressed the same concerns that she still had today.

Ms. Whittaker said that as a community and within the Chairman's district, they had conducted thorough research and presented factual information that proved that locating data centers in a wrong location was disastrous for the area and its residents. She said that these data centers should be situated on commercial property, not agricultural land nor adjacent to residential. She said that the fact that the Board was considering rezoning this land, which had been A-1 property for over 20 years, as well as next to the Rappahannock, was a crime and should raise a huge red flag to the Board of Supervisors. She said that this was wrong.

Ms. Whittaker said that the pristine farm land located on the Rappahannock River should never be considered for a data center, nor should any property on Route 3 East near the Rappahannock River. She said that her primary concern remained the same. She said that the expertise and understanding of the presenters, who had provided factual, researched information from residents in her district, had been amazing. She said that she failed to see any

indications that the Board of Supervisors had listened to these facts and understood the significant concern and impact this would have on Stafford County residents.

Ms. Whittaker said that speakers here tonight would highlight the risks presented to the County and its residents if these data centers were built in the wrong locations. She said that the Board had already approved several and they were under construction. She said that more applications were being received for other locations. She asked when they would stop and limit data center growth. She said that the Board needed to present written dollar numbers to County residents that demonstrated the expected gain from these data centers, not speculation.

Ms. Whittaker said that they needed to present the total cost to the County, not just the contractors, but County residents, that they would endure increased expenses and taxes due to these data centers. She said that the Board of Supervisors was elected by their district residents and was expected to make sound, thoroughly researched decisions that protected residents and heard their desires. She said that she prayed that their Board of Supervisors would protect their residents.

5. Jeff Eastland, Rock Hill District, said that governments derived their authority to govern from the consent of the governed. He said that as of this Friday, 249 years had passed since July 4th, 1776. He said that what that meant was that the power came from the people, not the top down, in a democracy. He said that he had made his points and positions well known, and he would continue to press them on data centers.

Mr. Eastland said that for tonight, he simply wanted to remind and implore the Board to fulfill their obligations not to the companies, not to the wealthy corporations, not to outside special interests, but to their constituents, to the residents, citizens, and people of Stafford County. He said that he urged the Board to listen to the people and not let them down.

6. Jackie Arthur, Falmouth District, said that she was a concerned citizen like many others here tonight. She said that she wanted the Board to understand that they should not dilute the revised performance standards that were forthcoming, and they should not grandfather in any applications that were not fully approved before May 20, 2025. She said that lightning struck a transformer near her residence on Ridge Pointe Lane, and she noticed the noise from all the diesel generators that came on to power homes so they did not lose power. She said that she decided to investigate whether generators were turning on to cool the data centers during the hot weather.

Ms. Arthur said that she read some comments about data center generators in Ashburn, as well as about the expectation that residents should be reducing their loads on the grid, which she thought was ironic considering they were all paying higher electric bills. She said that there was much discussion about data center providers switching to backup generators when the grid was reaching overload, often during heat waves. She said that backup generators were reducing the need for Dominion to have faster start reserves to help with peak demands.

Ms. Arthur said that there were other reasons to not like data centers. She said that although they were good for tax revenue, outside of construction, most of them were operated by very

few people, other than when hardware was replaced. She said that all of the jobs were scattered globally. She said that Sierra Club issued an evaluation of data centers with a section devoted to air quality, with some related comments. She said that 8,920 generators had been approved for Virginia, with high-polluting Tier II models. She said that with regards to global warming, generators contributed to noise and poor air quality, as well as fossil fuel dependence.

Ms. Arthur said that she would request that any application submitted to Stafford County for data centers have sanctions in place as requirements for licenses, such as monitoring emissions from data centers. She said that regulatory compliance, environmental sustainability, and operational efficiency were all important reasons to monitor emissions. She said that she also wanted to see more transparency.

7. Kristen Maxson, Falmouth District, said that the Board of Supervisors requested the number of data centers in the pipeline, and the response was 100 possibilities. She said that this was because one study indicated that 26 data centers were tentatively planned. She said that the Commission minutes, May 14, 2025, were available for review. She said that add-ons to the agenda, which may not be included in the packet, did not allow for public review. She said that they had heard some add-ons recently, and the hearing may be incomplete for proper public review.

Ms. Maxson said that the pages of today's agenda totaled 184, and June 17th's add-on non-disclosure information may have been added to Items 2 and 4, but it was not contained in the redline trail. She said that this concern was regarding Resolution 25-154. She said that Resolution 25-179, Exhibit ABC, was missing from the public hearing page 163 of 184 of today's packet. She said that the public hearing may be incomplete. She said that according to the 2026 Stafford General Assembly legislative program, the Stafford population had doubled every 20 years since 1960. She said that however, she pointed out that there was no mention of growth prior to 1960, which suggested no growth since the 1800s.

Ms. Maxson said that this was because Stafford was controlled by the food supply, and the population did not grow. She said that this could be seen on page 91 of 184 in the packet today. She said that Stafford County reported one student per five people in 2025, which was not indicative of a growing community. She said that this was equivalent to one child per parent and double parents and grandparents for K -12. She asked that they please note that there were three occurrences of the word "test" in the packet, which may exclude information from public hearings and affect signature processing. She said that they could see this on pages 104, 110, and 128 in the packet today. She said that Senate Bill 923 concerning withdrawal versus discharge of a user getting County water with a septic system may require it to be on the return system. She said that this was on page 100 of 184 of today's packet.

8. Nancy Rueter, Garrisonville District, said that she thanked the Board for hearing the alarm bells concerning data centers by tasking the Planning Commission to study the issues. She said that the subcommittee listened to the citizens, thoroughly researched the subject, and worked to make solid recommendations. She said that as these were brought forward, she hoped that they would grow in their understanding, as she had, about the real impacts of data centers.

Ms. Rueter said that it was important that they not grandfather in applications that were not fully approved before May 20, 2025. She said that this would give them time to understand and have control over how the community would be impacted by this rapidly changing industry. She said that they should also protect adjoining properties and citizens by requiring a 1,000-foot setback with no equipment for the first 500 feet, including a 300 feet of preserved natural forest.

Ms. Rueter said that according to Friends of the Rappahannock, converting prime agricultural land, wetlands, forests, and floodplains, especially adjacent to major rivers or wetland areas, to industrial-scale facilities was not in the public interest and presented a risk to water resources and downstream landowners. She said that the need to build transmission lines and substations to power the data centers would impact surrounding land.

Ms. Rueter said that data centers consistently emitted noise that could disrupt daily life, sleep, and air quality, with diesel generators having a significant impact. She said that medical and scientific studies linked low-frequency noise to sleep disturbance, stress hormone spikes, headaches, and elevated blood pressure. She said that children and sensitive groups were especially vulnerable. She said that she recommended a 2.5-mile buffer between data centers and schools and other locations with sensitive groups.

Ms. Rueter said that data centers should be kept in industrial zones, and she strongly advised against rezoning agricultural and residential to M-2. She said that light industrial could support the community by providing recreational venues like indoor soccer and basketball, and housing was needed. She said that promised tax revenue from data centers was still questionable to her. She said that the final warning bell was what they wanted Stafford to be. She said that she requested the Board to not dilute their standards and keep Stafford a wonderful place to live, not a sea of data centers.

9. Sherry Doerfler, Griffis-Widewater District, said that she was also there to discuss data centers and their impact on the community. She said that she was asking them to consider the following regarding data center development in Stafford. She said that she did not want the County to dilute the revised performance standards, and she did not want them to grandfather in any pending applications. She said that her fellow previous speakers had noted that data centers placed a heavy burden on residents, affecting quality of life, utility costs, and environmental impacts.

Ms. Doerfler said that the environmental impacts of data centers could not be underestimated. She said that she urged the Board to be good stewards of their most precious resource, their environment, and by extension, their quality of life. She said that she implored the Board to be mindful of their decisions so that, under their watch, they could protect Stafford, her home, and theirs as well.

10. Stan Schroeder, George Washington District, said that it was clear that any proposal or consideration to rezone A-1 Agricultural land to heavy industrial would have a significant impact on those whose housing was near the currently zoned agricultural land. He said that the presence of behemoth buildings, lights, security fences, water and sanitation infrastructure, and

the constant 24/7 noise could not be ignored. He said that it was undeniable that a rezoning of this magnitude would negatively affect local residents closely adjoining this agricultural land, even with environmental mitigation steps, which could only go so far.

Mr. Schroeder asked if the sole reason for this proposed rezoning was to benefit the data centers, or if there was another factor at play. He said that the JLARC representative cautioned at the town hall meeting that data centers were incompatible with residential uses, and he wholeheartedly agreed. He said that it was essential to recognize that heavy industrial zoning did not belong near residential areas. He said that he urged the Supervisors to visit the proposed sites before approval to see the homes and residents that would be impacted by such a decision.

Mr. Schroeder said that heavy industrial users should remain in heavy industrial zoned areas. He said that he joined the growing chorus of voices that had expressed concerns in previous meetings. He said that current applicants should not be exempt from new standards, as it was evident that the community's sentiment was overwhelmingly against any grandfathering. He said that as the Board of Supervisors and the public became more familiar with the impact of data centers, he recommended learning from other counties in Virginia and codifying stronger standards to preserve the quality of life that Stafford County currently enjoyed.

11. Kenneth Burns said that he was a resident of the River Creek area. He said that he was a resident of River Creek, along with his family, and he was here to support the recommendations not to have data centers in their area. He said that he had totally enjoyed the area since he had moved there. He said that they had learned that the data center proposed in their area would be very disruptive to the current environment, so he wanted to express that his family was completely against having it there. He said that he wanted to state that for the record and appreciated the Board's consideration of whether they should have them or not.
12. Elena Prokos, Rock Hill District, said that she had attended all of the Planning Commission subcommittee meetings and she wanted to comment on the efforts of the Planning Commission. She said that she felt like they were very aware of residents' concerns and had thoroughly reviewed the standards and they empathized with the concerns about the effects on the quality of life in Stafford. She said that additionally, they had demonstrated that they valued preserving and supporting wildlife, forests, and waterways in Stafford. She said that she gave kudos to them on these efforts.

Ms. Prokos said that a few parts of the performance standards did need to be tweaked. She said that first, water usage needed to be addressed. She said that the Planning Commission proposed that no water would be taken from the Rappahannock or Potomac and their tributaries, but she would like to see more specific language that named Accokeek Creek, Potomac Creek, and Aquia Creek. She said that furthermore, they should specifically prohibit wastewater from being dumped into those waterways. She said that at some point, the water used by the data centers would need to be disposed of, and she was unsure if that had been addressed by the Planning Commission or not.

Ms. Prokos said that performance standards on noise should include low-frequency noise; she believed they had missed that part. She said that the Planning Commission had only addressed

high-frequency noise. She said that regarding forestation, the Commission had made a good effort to preserve mature forests, which was seen as a good specification because “mature forests” were old trees that could not be replaced by small plantings. She said that however, if a developer razed a mature forest before submitting an application, their application should be refused.

Ms. Prokos said that regarding well protection, she did not think that was addressed at all in the performance standards, but they should ensure that residents did not have to obtain city water because an aquifer was depleted. She said that she was not sure how that could technically be addressed. She said that regarding transmission lines, with all the energy needed, she wondered if they would go through properties by eminent domain. She said that what was not the job of the Planning Commission was to address the issue of rezoning from residential or agricultural to industrial. She said that this was the job of the Board of Supervisors. She said that if developers were allowed that luxury, residents and their children would be negatively impacted.

Ms. Prokos said that the Planning Commission was also not tasked with the issue of grandfathering. She said that again, that was the job of the Board of Supervisors. She said that with a large number of applicants, grandfathering must not be available to those that were currently in the application process. She said that she acknowledged the County needed revenue, but if data centers were kept solely on industrial zoning, they would certainly get revenue. She said that she asked the Board to prioritize the needs of the County in a balanced way. She said that she requested the Board to say no to data centers that were proposed to be located near residences and schools.

13. Donald Squires, Hartwood District, said that he urged the Board to take low-frequency noise seriously in their data center location decisions. He said that it was hard for him to believe that the Board was taking low-frequency noise seriously when they continued to discuss it in a way that suggested it was not a concern. He said that one of them had stated that they recently visited a data center in Richmond and it was not loud, and the neighbors also said that it was not loud. He said that he wished to clarify that low-frequency noise did not make loud sounds; it still caused significant problems with human body systems.

Mr. Squires said that low-frequency noise was distinct from regular sound, often manifesting as a deep hum or rumble that could be felt more than heard. He said that this was particularly dangerous because even when it was inaudible, the body could still be negatively affected. He said that he had previously provided the Board with a list of 21 negative health conditions that were brought on by low-frequency noise. He said that equipment at data centers, cooling towers, HVAC units, generators, transformers, substations, and all produced low-frequency noise constantly, 24/7.

Mr. Squires said that standard noise meters, like those used to enforce the County's existing sound ordinances, did not detect low-frequency noise at all, so he questioned why they would use that. He said that a facility could be in full compliance and still be causing people to become gravely ill. He said that low-frequency noise traveled further than any other type of noise, up to three miles, depending on conditions. He said that it penetrated walls, windows, and even

the human body. When the sources were elevated, like rooftop systems, it became even harder to block and could reach second-story bedrooms and homes nearby.

Mr. Squires said that a former National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) engineer who studied this issue recommended a minimum one-and-a-half-mile buffer between data centers and homes or schools. He said that he agreed that they could not allow continuous industrial noise this close to where people lived, slept, or learned. He said that children were especially vulnerable, as their nervous systems were still developing and they relied on uninterrupted sleep. He said that low-frequency noise had been shown to disturb sleep even when it could not be heard, leading to fatigue, stress, and long-term health risks.

Mr. Squires said that daytime and nighttime limits of Stafford's current noise ordinance were created before data centers were even being considered. He said that they were designed to handle short-term intermittent sounds, not the continuous low-frequency emissions from data center equipment that hummed and vibrated through homes 24/7. He said that comparing these two types of noise was unreasonable. He said that he urged the Board to strengthen Stafford's zoning protections and to not allow data centers near schools and homes without addressing low-frequency noise.

14. Abby Carter, Falmouth District, said that she was here tonight to ask the Supervisors all to protect the citizens of Stafford County. She said that she had been present for the Planning and Zoning subcommittee meetings regarding data center regulations. She said that to safeguard their community, these new regulations must be approved in their entirety. She said that she, along with many others, had conducted extensive research, and the potential effects of data centers on communities and the environment were very concerning, even though it was a new industry, and they did not yet fully understand the long-term effects.

Ms. Carter more she learned, the more she became concerned. She said that if she had known about these issues three years ago, she would have been before the Board with serious concerns about the Stafford Technology Campus, which was located just a mile from her house. She said that she feared that their water, sky, and health would be negatively impacted by its proximity. She said that it was too late for her, her husband, and their neighbors to benefit from the new regulations.

Ms. Carter said that she did not want other parts of the County to lose what they had. She said that the County must stand firm behind these new guidelines, especially when faced with opposition from the wealthiest and most powerful companies in the world. She said that the guidelines must be strong. She said that she requested the Board to not grandfather in any unapproved data centers. She said that her final questions to the Board were: how many data centers was enough data centers, and what would Stafford look like in five years with everything approved so far?

15. Vickie Clark Jennings, George Washington District, said that with 38 years of experience in real estate, she had decided to examine how data centers impact home values. She said that when someone bought a home, they typically looked for factors such as location, condition, price, and environment. She said that this meant they expected a home with access to utilities

like electricity, water, and sewer. She said that if utilities were hindered, it could negatively affect a home's value. She said that from her research, this was a significant concern with data centers.

Ms. Jennings said that buyers seeking a country environment expect peace, quiet, and beautiful views, which data centers often failed to provide. She said that the noise and disruption to wildlife were also issues. She said that as a homeowner, she expected her quiet enjoyment of her home, along with the preservation of wildlife, to be respected. She said that utilities were also a crucial aspect of a home's value. She said that for instance, living near a military base like Quantico, where heavy artillery could cause noise and cracking in homes, could significantly impact values.

Ms. Jennings said that when two homes with similar features were on the market, one near a data center and the other in a better location, the home away from the data center was more likely to sell. She said that studies had shown that disruption to quiet enjoyment, including views, utilities, and utility use, could deter buyers. She said that homes near commercial properties, databases, apartment buildings, and even schools were often overlooked by potential buyers. She said that as a seasoned broker, she was here to share her concerns with the community.

Ms. Jennings said that she believed home values would be negatively affected, and they would struggle to sell their homes. She said that she spoke to a listing agent in Riverbend, near the Simms property, whose home had been on the market for 85 days and had been reduced by \$20,000. She said that in her opinion, it was listed at a great price, but the data center was a major issue for potential buyers. She said that the listing agent had reported that the database was the primary concern of potential homebuyers. She said that as they said in real estate, location was key, and she urged the Board to consider how data centers could impact home values.

16. Caitlin Coogan Miller, Hartwood District, said that she was present to express her concerns as a parent, urging the Board to prioritize public health in Stafford's data center policies. She said that data centers emitted low-frequency noise, as others had mentioned, the deep vibrating hum that traveled long distances and penetrated homes. She said that many people mistakenly thought of this as just another noise that could be heard, but it was much more concerning. She said that low-frequency noise (LFN), was not just heard, it was felt, and it affected people in ways that disrupted both physical and mental health.

Ms. Miller said that this was especially worrying for families like hers, where her young daughter would likely be attending a school located near one of those proposed data centers. She said that she also spent a significant amount of time outside, where it could also be heard. She said that LFN was constant, unrelenting, and its impacts were cumulative. She said that it did not stop at your walls; it vibrated inside one's home and one's body. This was where the harm happened. She said that LFN disrupted sleep, increased stress, and impaired concentration and learning, and contributed to cardiovascular problems and fatigue. She said that because it was always on, their bodies never got a break and it became harder for them to recover.

Ms. Miller said that unfortunately, Stafford's current noise ordinance used DBA measurements, which completely overlooked the harmful low frequencies. She said that it was designed to address typical noise sources like lawnmowers or traffic, not the 24/7 mechanical hum from massive data centers. She said that Dr. Leiber's study had already shown that existing data centers were exceeding health-based noise limits. She said that this problem would only worsen as more facilities were built. She said that these were not isolated buildings; they were clusters of data centers, and the noise from multiple facilities compounded.

Ms. Miller said that several large centers had already been approved, and if the County chose to grandfather these projects in, the new standards, no matter how strong, would not protect anyone. She said that the only solution would be costly, after-the-fact mitigation, which was a poor substitute for preventive action. She said that to protect the health and well-being of Stafford's residents, they needed to apply new performance standards to all data center projects, not just future ones. She said that they needed to establish distance-based buffer zones of at least one to two miles to prevent LFN from reaching homes, schools, and parks.

Ms. Miller said that they needed to require indoor post-construction testing in homes where residents reported LFN symptoms, rather than relying on perimeter measures or outdoor averages. She said that Stafford's ordinance claimed to protect health and the enjoyment of property, but this could not be achieved unless they addressed LFN as an industrial health risk, rather than a mere noise. She said that the health of their residents, especially their children, must be prioritized now before further harm was done.

17. Heidi Farley, Hartwood District, said that she would like to share her personal experience regarding data centers. She said that from what she had seen, data centers did not make good neighbors. She said that they had all witnessed the destruction that occurred at the end of Kelsey Road, where the potential data center developer had disregarded the buffers around homes after they had spoken out against the data center development in the area. She said that the heat had been unbearable lately, and she had noticed the temperature at the end of the road was significantly hotter than it used to be.

Ms. Farley said that she also recently had the opportunity to visit Manassas and rescue her son from a locked truck, and while she was there, she was stunned by the sheer number of data centers in the Wellington area, particularly around southern Manor Road. She said that Iron Mountain had three facilities within a half-mile, where there used to be just a patch of trees. She said that she strongly encouraged the Board to visit this area; their job was to protect the citizenry of Stafford County.

Ms. Farley said that she did not want her property values to go down and she did not want her well to go dry. She said that the low-frequency noise from data centers was a growing concern, and she worried about its effects on their children. She said that as data centers were relatively new, they were still learning about their side effects. She said that people were speaking out because they were concerned for their community, and the repetitive comments were indicative of what still needed to be addressed.

18. Sally Harmon, George Washington District, said that she specifically lived on Snowden Farm, which was located immediately west of the Simms property. She said that six years ago, her family, who owned the property, had placed it in conservation with the intention of preserving the beauty and diversity of that over 200 acres for as long as possible. She said that as a result, she was present today because it was in her interest to not live next to data centers, but also because it was in the greater interest of all County residents to have meaningful regulation of these facilities.

Ms. Harmon said that she never expected living in a beautiful rural Stafford County to potentially be surrounded by data centers in the near future. She said that her main point was that the revised performance standards should not be diluted, and no applications should be grandfathered in. She said that this was crucial because constraints drove innovation, and this rapidly changing industry would have far-reaching consequences for the residents of the County and the state if these utilities were not meaningfully regulated. She said that the long-term risks were too great, and the short-term risks to property values and the beauty and livability of their districts should make the decision to support these performance standards straightforward.

19. Carrie Sobolik, Hartwood District, said that she wanted to provide some information from respected sources. She said that in JLARC's December 2024 presentation, slide 63 clearly stated that data centers were industrial facilities that were largely incompatible with residential uses. She said that slide 66 went further, recommending that localities designate optimal locations for data center development away from residential areas. She said that the Sierra Club's recent report on constrained demand suggested that established state-level planning standards could prevent reckless expansion adjacent to residential areas and agricultural land.

Ms. Sobolik said that the Urban Land Institute's October 2024 research stated that data centers were uniquely an industrial use, they believed they were not suitable for residential districts. She said that the Community and Environmental Defense Services also recommended that these facilities not be located near homes or other sensitive areas. She said that the message was consistent and clear: data centers did not belong where people lived. She said that she wanted to thank the Board for sending the performance standards back in May for review.

Ms. Sobolik said that they had been listening then, and the community needed the Board to listen now. She said that she had been encouraged by the subcommittee's work, which had been outstanding. She said that they had been exceptionally thorough, thoughtful, and genuinely engaged, asking the right questions and seeking expert input from across the state. She said that she was asking the Board to trust the subcommittee's hard work and let their research and diligence stand without alteration.

Ms. Sobolik said that if a data center campus was built next to her home, she would lose more than just peace and quiet; she would lose her sanctuary. She said that she did not want to leave Stafford, but her home would be forever changed with a data center next door. She said that she was not just fighting for herself; she was fighting for the trees, the wildlife, and the quiet that her home provided, just as much as she needed the air to breathe. She said that her property

often had wildlife visitors, and she wanted to ensure they were protected as much as the property owners in Stafford.

20. Patrick Sobolik, Hartwood District, said that he wanted to urge the Board to follow a simple but crucial principle. He said that no data center proposal that had not yet been approved should be allowed to proceed under outdated performance standards. He said that in 2023, Stafford County took a significant step forward by passing new performance standards for data centers. He said that that was a good start; however, as they all knew, a great deal had changed since then. He said that over the past few years, they had learned more about the real-world impacts of data centers on their communities, infrastructure, and environment.

Mr. Sobolik said that they had seen firsthand how noise from generators and cooling systems could disrupt nearby neighborhoods, and how energy demand could strain their power grid and water consumption became a growing concern. He said that they had also heard from citizens who never imagined massive industrial facilities would be built near their homes under rules written before these risks were fully understood. He said that as a result, Stafford County was actively revising and strengthening its 2023 data center standards to reflect these lessons. He said that this was progress.

Mr. Sobolik said that it did not make sense to let proposals submitted under older, weaker standards proceed now, after they had acknowledged that those standards were insufficient. He said that this would be a loophole. He said that if a data center had not already received formal approval, it should be held to today's understanding and today's rules, not yesterday's blind spots. He said that grandfathering outdated standards would create unfair advantages for developers, while putting their neighborhoods, roads, and power grid at unnecessary risk.

Mr. Sobolik said that it would also weaken the very improvements this County was working so hard to make. He said that this was not about stopping progress; it was about making sure that progress was smart, reflected what they now knew, and respected the will and well-being of the people who lived there. He asked the Board to not undermine Stafford's future by letting yesterday's rules decide tomorrow's development. He said that if it had not yet received formal approval, it should meet the new standards, full stop.

Mr. Sobolik said that these decisions would fall to the Board. He said that at 3:00 a.m. this morning, the U.S. Senate had voted 99 to 1 against a measure in H.R. 1 that would have put a 10-year moratorium on state regulations on how AI systems, data centers, could be regulated, or a County's right to govern how data centers would be developed. He said that the choice was now with the Board of Supervisors.

21. Jennifer Yarbrough, George Washington District, said that her family had a long history in this area, with their home built in the 1960s. She said that she was proud to say that she was part of five generations that had called this place home. She said that it was her favorite place in the world. She was situated halfway between the I-95 Bridge and the Falmouth Bridge. She said that what made this area unique was that it was situated on the fall line, where the Piedmont met the coastal plain.

Ms. Yarbrough said that this unique combination of geography brought many benefits, including rapids, waterfalls, and a diverse range of wildlife. She said that every year, birds migrated to this area to take advantage of the fish and other resources, and photographers and anglers also visited from around the world to fish and document the beauty of this place. She said that there was also habitat endemic to this area that many forms of wildlife made their home. She said that between her house and the Falmouth Bridge, they had a wide variety of plants and animals, including deer, fox, raccoons, owls, and eagles. She said that she woke up every morning to eagles outside her window.

Ms. Yarbrough said that she was deeply concerned about the proposed data center, which would be located just 300 feet away from her home. She said that she knew that she was speaking on behalf of herself and her immediate environment, but she wanted to emphasize that once the data center was built, it would be irreversible, and the damage to the land and wildlife would be permanent. She said that she was not just talking about her own home; she was talking about the entire ecosystem that supported all of their wildlife. She said that she was one of many neighbors who had lived in their family homes for generations, built on the premise that this land was suitable for agriculture, with many restrictions that did not allow for much development.

Ms. Yarbrough said that she was worried about the impact of rezoning proposals would have on their community, their environment, and their way of life. She said that she was grateful to the committee for all their hard work and research, and she appreciated the time they had taken to listen to their concerns. She said that it was crucial that if they proceeded, they did it correctly. She said that she also wanted to emphasize that they should not grandfather in pending applications; they should thoroughly examine the unique impacts these developments would have on this area, particularly its location on the fall line.

22. Ross Billman, Aquia District, said that he would like to briefly state that the County should not grandfather in any existing applications for data centers. He said that a 1,000-foot setback was a good idea, which had been voiced by many people. He said that he was sure that the Board had heard numerous studies, facts, and evidence about how these developments affected other places, and at some point, someone would come and study data centers' effect on Stafford County. He said that he would like to ask the Board if they would want their names associated with the ill effects documented in other places.
23. Vicki Lindberg, George Washington District, said that she was a fourth-generation family in her home. She said that while data centers may offer benefits such as increased tax revenue, job creation, and infrastructure improvements, these advantages cannot outweigh the significant risks they pose to the thousands of citizens affected by their development. She said that regarding the proposed Blaisdell project and likely many other pending projects, they were appealing to developers due to their proximity to existing power lines and reduced investment costs.

Ms. Lindberg said that however, the proposed projects highlighted the same concerns that drove the discussion to revise data center standards in Stafford County. She said that noise and light pollution, waste and runoff issues, and the environmental impact of replacing forest with

industrial facilities near residential areas presented unacceptable hazards to the community. She said that as the JLARC staff stated in their presentation at Chairman Diggs' town hall meeting, data centers were largely incompatible with residential use.

Ms. Lindberg said that while improvements in technologies had helped mitigate the negative impacts from data centers, no technology could overcome the existing standards in Stafford County. She said that the well-being of Stafford County residents and the preservation of their community's natural and residential character must remain the top priority. She said that they greatly appreciated the County's ability to take a step back and acknowledge that changes must be made to the zoning and performance standards to reduce the risk.

Ms. Lindberg said that each of the Supervisors tonight had the opportunity to make it right for the next generation and the generation after that. She said that they respectfully requested that no applications not already approved by the Board of Supervisors as of May 20, 2025 be grandfathered. She said that additionally, all current applications should be subject to the same pending revisions aimed at balancing the needs of the citizens with economic growth. She said that a minimum 1,000 foot setback should be required for all data center projects and a minimum of a 300 foot vegetative buffer should be required for all data center projects.

24. Maria Morin Zaluski, George Washington District, said that attending the data center town hall last week was an opportunity to gain insight or, more optimistically, be reassured that the public's concerns were being taken seriously. She said that while she did not learn anything new that the public, as a whole, had not already discussed and presented at previous Board meetings, it was at least validating to hear the JLARC representative reiterate what the public had been saying all along: that data centers were fundamentally incompatible with residential and mixed-use areas.

Ms. Zaluski said that the Commissioner of the Revenue failed to clearly communicate that the effective tax rate for data centers was a fraction of a percent, which was an inequitable raw deal for resident taxpayers like herself and small businesses. She said that most of the tax revenue came during construction, and the equipment depreciated rapidly. She said that according to his own slides, to offset this rapid depreciation, Stafford would need a steady stream of new data centers over time just to maintain revenue.

Ms. Zaluski said that this was not a sustainable revenue model, but rather a treadmill or a pyramid scheme disguised as economic development. She said that no smart community built its future on a model that relied on sacrificing more land, resources, and neighborhoods. She said that Bohler, the consultant working on the Simms property, along with many others, published a document called the data center development playbook, which encouraged developers to move quickly before the public became aware.

Ms. Zaluski said that this was their business model, as stated in their own words: streamlined entitlements, fast-track approvals, and overcome community pushback through public relations (PR) spin. She said that the public was not an obstacle; they were trying to push massive industrial complexes into their neighborhoods without proper transparency, caution,

or public tangible benefit. She said that she implored the Board not to rubber-stamp corporate development. She said that they should protect the residents.

Ms. Zaluski said that they should not rezone, should not water down subcommittee standards, should not grandfather existing projects, and should not pretend that this was harmless. She said that if there were public benefits that outweighed the real costs the public had continuously described, those benefits should be stated clearly and made to the public. She said that as of yet, she had heard nothing. She said that the public would not accept a future shaped by what developers wanted. She said that the officials, as elected representatives, should not either. She said that the public needed real accountability, real data, and real protections, not blind trust in billion-dollar corporations pushing a broken model.

25. Connie Peebles Barrow, Rock Hill District, said that she was here to present some data that they had gathered from Stafford County, including planning and school information. She said that she would be providing this data to the Board later, along with a map, which showed the locations of data centers within two miles of Stafford County Public Schools. She said that as of today, if they included the three data centers that have already been approved and under construction, 37% of Stafford County's public schools and programs were within two miles of a data center project that was either approved or had applied and was currently under consideration by the County.

Ms. Barrow said that nine of the 14 data center projects are within one mile of a school, and three were within a half mile or less. She said that this was of concern because low-frequency noise could travel two and a half miles or more, depending on the building's height and the number of data centers. She said that several of these schools focused on students with special needs, particularly those on the autism spectrum. She said that one example was the Heather Enfield Day School, which was 1.6 miles from one of the data center projects. She said that the school provided highly structured, low-distraction environments for its students.

Ms. Barrow said that she would like to know how the low-frequency noise from the data center project would impact these students and how they could ensure their health, safety, and adequate learning environment. She said that as the County revised these ordinances, she asked that they please consider how to hold data center projects accountable and ensure the well-being of these students. She said that specifically, she recommended not grandfathering projects that had yet to be approved and using language that prioritized accountability, such as "shall" and "will." She asked if the interests the Board would prioritize would be those of industries and developers, or those of students and residents.

26. Don Hall, George Washington District, said that he had lived in this District his entire life. He said that his parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents had all been raised in Stafford County. He said that the reason why many long-time residents chose to stay was because the area had been preserved to remain rural. He said that the influx of northern Virginia residents had been a welcome addition, but they had also brought with them the negative aspects of their previous communities. He said that specifically, the data centers, townhouses, and apartments had changed the character of the County.

Mr. Hall said that he urged the Board to set their legacy as the Board that protected Stafford County. He asked what was wrong with having a legacy of being the Board that did the right thing. He said that they had successfully balanced the presence of six or seven data centers in the M-2 zoning areas, where they could generate enough revenue to run the County. He said that therefore, he implored the Board not to sell out to high-pressure sales tactics and fancy lawyers who claimed their proposals were all necessary. He said that they were only looking out for their own interests, not the wellbeing of Stafford County. He said that the Board had the power to protect them, and he was shocked that they would even consider rezoning an A-1 property.

Mr. Hall said that it was totally unnecessary to rezone properties for data centers. He said that besides the noise and environmental impacts, the ugliness of the buildings, especially those close to the road, would seriously detract from the beauty of the County. He said that berms of dirt and a couple of trees were not enough to make it look better. He said that he was concerned the Board had been duped; he urged the Board to do the right thing and protect Stafford County.

Mr. Hall said that if he was in the Board's position, he would certainly want his legacy to be that he was a person who protected Stafford County, balancing a few data centers for revenue with protection of the rural area. He said that he believed the Board could achieve this, and he asked that they listen to the good ideas the Planning Commission was developing for their review.

27. Jerrilyn Eby McGregor, Rock Hill District, said that her position against the Patawomeck Indian Tribe of Virginia was that they claimed to have records proving their descent from Indians. She said that however, she had yet to see these records. She said that according to the tribe podcast, in a recent email, Mr. Payne stated that these families have extensive lineage in Stafford County. She said that their lineage was white. She said that some of their lineages were documented in the binder she had with her, and she welcomed the Board to review them. She said that the issue was not the length of their lineages, but rather the lack of Indian lineage.

Ms. McGregor said that in truth, the combined Virginia and Stafford records showed that they had been consistently white since the 1600s, or at least since they decided to claim Indian ancestry in the 1990s. She said that the Patawomeck Tribe claimed that Walter Plecker's racist policies in the first half of the 20th century erased them from Virginia's records. She said that if this was true, one would expect to see these White Oak families designated as Indians prior to 1912, when Plecker became Virginia's first registrar of vital statistics.

Ms. McGregor said that his staff spent years searching for families that were then classified as white, but for whom earlier records suggested they may have mingled with another race. She said that Plecker's goal was to categorize every Virginia resident as either white or colored. She said that the White Oak families were white before, during, and after Plecker. She said that in 1943, Plecker issued a list titled "Surnames by Counties and Cities of Mixed Negroid Families Striving to Pass as Indian or White." She said that Stafford and King George were not included on this list because he found no families in these areas that concerned him.

Ms. McGregor said that the Virginia Council on Indians' 1998 memorandum informed Chief Robert Greene that the Patawomeck Tribe did not qualify for state recognition because, quote, No persons in the Patawomeck group in the 1920s through the 1950s were harassed by the state's vital statistics bureau. She said that Dr. Plecker's 1943 circular listing suspicious surnames County by County does not list anyone in Stafford or King George. She said that additionally, the U.S. census schedules that Dr. Plecker had access to, 1790 through 1860, list the Patawomeck's ancestors as white, unquote.

Ms. McGregor said that this had nothing to do with physical appearance or claims of ancestry; it was all about records. She said that in 2010, the Patawomeck Tribe told the Assembly they had records proving they were Indians. She said that however, they never shared these documents with the VCI. She said that if they did not have them, then the Patawomeck Tribe was a group of white people and no one should acknowledge them as Indians.

28. Rick McGregor, Aquia District, said that the leadership of the current Patawomeck Tribe was attempting to convince people that they were legitimate, but the records did not support them. He said that the tribe claimed a tribal merger between the Patawomeck and the Mattaponi tribes in the form of a wedding. He said that a recent letter of support from the Mattaponi Tribe to the Bureau of Indian Affairs stated that Elizabeth Newton, a member of the Patawomeck tribe, was married to Chief O.T. Custolo of the Mattaponi Indian tribe and reservation in February 1954 and resided on the Mattaponi reservation in King William County, Virginia.

Mr. McGregor said that this was true; however, the records specified that Elizabeth Newton's birth certificate showed she was born white to white parents in 1918, and her divorce decree indicated she married a white man as a white woman in 1935 and divorced him in 1949. He said that then, in 1954, she married Chief O.T. Custolo. He said that given the Racial Integrity Act and Walter Plecker's efforts to identify mixed-race families, it was unlikely that Elizabeth Newton, a known white woman, could have legally married a known Indian chief in Virginia in 1954. He said that they had a copy of their marriage license, which showed they were married in Henderson, North Carolina, where Chief Custolo claimed to be white under oath and penalty of law. He said that it appeared that this marriage was not legitimate as a tribal merger, and letters of support were not proof of a tribe.

29. Erin Cinzero, Hartwood District, said that she wanted to commend the Board as they all deliberated on the updated performance standards and the grandfathering issue. She said that she sincerely urged the Board to reflect on the proactive steps taken by other Virginia counties over the past year, specifically within the past 10 months. She said that these efforts aimed to strike a better balance between economic development goals and the protection of residents' quality of life. She asked if the Board would follow suit and take the necessary steps to protect Stafford County's future. She said that Henrico, Loudoun, Fairfax, and York Counties had all adopted stricter regulations on data centers within the last 10 months, and several within the last three.

Ms. Cinzero said that notably, Henrico was applying its new standards retroactively to projects in the review pipeline. She said that there was precedence for Stafford to draw upon. She said that Prince William County was actively reviewing its own noise ordinance to address low-

frequency noise concerns that neither its ordinance nor Amazon's millions of dollars nor their own noise ordinance could currently address or resolve. She said that by applying the undiluted performance standards to projects in the review pipeline, Stafford County would join these other counties in demonstrating a clear commitment to safeguarding residents while continuing to pursue responsible economic development.

Ms. Cinzero said that they would join a group of forward-thinking counties in Virginia, moving towards greater oversight of data center development, ensuring that long-term community impacts were genuinely and properly considered. She said that while developers were often asked to substantiate their claims, their citizens had consistently honored requests to be credible, citable, and legitimate, providing evidence to back up their statements.

Ms. Cinzero said that the evidence was clear. She said that there was no reason to move forward with considering 30 million square feet of proposed data center under performance standards that they all knew left residents holding the bag. She said that this was an opportunity to choose a future where Stafford's development reflected not just short-term gain but long-term sustainability for its residents. She said that the choice was in the Board of Supervisors' hands. She asked if they would align with the growing trend of proactive, responsible oversight, or if they would continue down a path that jeopardized the future of those they represented.

30. Cade Hildreth, Hartwood District, said that he wanted to urge the Board to not allow grandfathering. He said that second, he wanted to discuss the tax concerns related to data centers. He said that as a professional forecaster with over 20 years of experience, he had spent over 100 hours reviewing the Stafford Tax Code and data center fiscal impact statements. He said that he had also attended the recent town hall where the Commissioner of the Revenue presented projections for data centers, and he had a few concerns regarding the numbers being presented and the conclusions being drawn. He said that the numbers appeared to be skewed, and the conclusions were incorrect.

Mr. Hildreth said that the Commissioner of the Revenue believed that the revenue from these heavy industrial facilities would produce good revenue, but when he cross-checked his presentation numbers, he was confused by the conclusion he drew. He said that the effective tax rate, which any accountant would consider, was shockingly low, just a fraction of a percent. He said that neither the Commissioner nor the data center applicants were disclosing the effective tax rate because it was clear that if they did, it would show that they were not being paid fairly relative to the size of these developments.

Mr. Hildreth said that to illustrate this point, he would consider Crane's Corner, where they would have \$600 million in computer equipment, \$350 million in real estate, and \$50 million in business personal property. He said that according to those figures, the building would pay just \$6.8 million in taxes in the first year, resulting in an effective tax rate of 0.68%. He said that this was alarmingly low, and that was before applying the technology zone incentive package from Section 23-86 of the municipal code, which could reduce the tax rate by 70% for two years, 50% for two years, and 30% for one year. He said that with those incentives, the effective tax rate would be 0.2%, or 1.5%.

Mr. Hildreth said that Mr. Mayausky had stated that none of the four approved data centers had applied for this incentive yet, but there was a good reason for that, and they could at any time. He said that they likely would once operational or financially advantageous, when their revenue was kicking in. He said that at any time, unless they were sure that they could legally deny every application within the technology zone incentives, that revenue could drop by 70% at any time. He said that they were not seeing any tables that showed this potential drop in revenue.

Mr. Hildreth said that the Commissioner also stated that since several end users could be tax-exempt, they should solve this problem by having more of them. He said that however, they could not solve a problem with the same problem. He said that the Commissioner of Revenue also had several financial and strategic inaccuracies in his presentation that he offered to discuss with him. He said that he wanted to be clear that they were considering exchanging pollution-heavy industrial-scale production near homes and schools for almost no return. He said that the trade-offs should concern every resident of Stafford County.

REPORTS BY BOARD MEMBERS

Ms. Bohmke – expressed her appreciation to the group of people who had invited them to see the Simms property last Saturday. She said that she visited for about 30 minutes, where she met some new people and saw some old friends. She said that she appreciated being able to see the rural land from that vantage point. She said that she was out of town right now, so she appreciated being able to attend tonight's meeting virtually. She said that she wanted to wish everyone a happy and safe Fourth of July holiday.

Mr. English – reported that on Saturday, he went to Curtis Park for the yearly seminar for HAM radios, which was a great event but it was too hot, so he did not stay for long. He said that he also had a statement he wanted to read to the community. He said that in November 1986, Stafford County was rocked by one of the most horrifying crimes one could imagine: Jacqueline Lard was tragically murdered at the Mountain Vernon Realty Office on Garrisonville Road. He said that he was a deputy then and the crime shook their community to the core and created enormous anxiety and concern throughout the region.

Mr. English said that for decades, it was the hard work and dedication of numerous law enforcement professionals, lab technicians, and prosecutors who provided closure. He said that last week, June 26, 2025, justice was delivered when a jury found the man responsible for Jacqueline Lard's death guilty in Stafford County Circuit Court. He said that the killer was indicted for the murder in March of 2024 after forensic evidence collected nearly 40 years ago matched his DNA. He said that the jury rendered a guilty verdict for second-degree murder, abduction with intent to defile, breaking and entering with the intent to commit murder, rape, or robbery, and malicious wounding.

Mr. English said that he wanted to especially thank Detective David Wood, who like all other cold case detectives before him, never gave up. He said that Detective Wood was simply the best. He said that special thanks were due to the Commonwealth Attorney's Office, Deputy Commonwealth Attorney Amy Casey, and Assistant Commonwealth Attorney Sarah Watkins, who absolutely

poured themselves into this case. He said that their tenacity, preparation, compassion, commitment, and empathy led to these convictions.

Mr. English said that the Stafford County Board of Supervisors extended their deepest gratitude to the Stafford County Sheriff's Office and Commonwealth Attorney's Office for their tireless work and unwavering dedication to securing justice for this 40-year-old murder. He said that on behalf of those who had waited so many years for justice and all who valued it, he thanked them. He said that their work was not only honored in memory of the victim, but also restored a measure of peace to those who had carried the weight of this tragedy for such a long time.

Ms. Gary – reminded everyone that this Board was committed to conservation and preservation. She said that this was something they had been dedicated to, even before the issues with the data centers arose and how they would impact the environment. She said that they did care, and they were doing what they could. She said that there were efforts before she joined the Board, including the down zoning initiative.

Ms. Gary said that they had the tree canopy ordinance that was soon to be coming back to the Board, and they had a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Northern Virginia Conservation Trust (NVCT). She said that the NVCT had preserved hundreds of acres since they established that position a few years ago. She said that she wanted to assure them that their concerns were heard, especially on that point. She said that she thought they were on the same page there.

Ms. Gary said that she had attended a meeting with the National Association of Counties (NACo) Veterans and Military Services Committee the previous week. She said that the protections for veterans facing home foreclosure remained a significant concern, along with other issues. She said that she understood that there had been an increase in homelessness in the region. She said that she thought it would be beneficial for the Board to hear a presentation from Sergeant Curtis on the Sheriff's Department's efforts and their partnership with Micah Ecumenical Ministries to address this issue.

Ms. Gary said that she also attended a design meeting held by County staff last Thursday to share details and answer questions from residents in the Brooke area about the S-curve project. She said that staff had done an excellent job in doing that. She said that she wanted to thank staff, the Timmons Group, and VDOT for their comprehensive explanations and engagement with concerned residents. She said that a few other issues were raised regarding the water and how it had moved to cause flooding in other areas, which she looked forward to addressing thoroughly as they finalized the acceptance of the \$10 million federal Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient, and Cost-saving Transportation Program (PROTECT) grant.

Ms. Gary said that she wanted to again thank County staff for securing that game-changing funding after many rounds of grant applications. She said that another issue raised at that design meeting was about the safety of areas along Brooke Road, which had steep drop-offs and people had brought up the consideration of installing guardrails. She said that she understood now, after conversations with Kyle Bates from VDOT, that VDOT had taken steps to ensure soil stabilization,

including the use of soil nails, as a preparation for potential guardrails. She said that she was awaiting more information from VDOT on this possibility.

Ms. Gary said that she also wanted to address the public comments regarding the subcommittee created from the Planning Commission. She said that it had been established by the Chair of the Planning Commission and also the Chair of the Board of Zoning Appeals without input from the other Commissioners, which raised concerns about accountability and thorough review of the work being done. She said that as elected officials, their job was to be accountable to the public. She said that this meant thoroughly reviewing what was brought back to them by the Planning Commission and making informed decisions.

Ms. Gary said that she wanted to remind them all to remain diligent and consider all factors, even if they agreed with the work being done. She said that she had taken notes during the meeting and wanted to discuss several topics further, including the data center development playbook. She said that she was looking forward to reviewing it. She said that additionally, she wanted to address a comment about pretending that this was harmless. She said that she did not recall who had made this comment, but she wanted to assure them that she was not pretending this issue was harmless.

Ms. Gary said that she had personally experienced some health issues related to products cleared by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) that were not thoroughly tested, and she had seen instances where companies failed to fulfill their testing requirements, allowing them to continue. She said that she thought they often encountered situations like this, where they may not fully understand the risks or may not have conducted adequate due diligence. She said that while she was hesitant about making decisions based on incomplete information, she wanted to consider all available data and acknowledge that they did not have all the answers yet.

Ms. Gary said that she encouraged the public to continue sharing their thoughts and opinions, as this helped the Board understand the perspectives of their constituents and leaders. She said that as elected representatives, they had a unique position to represent the residents of Stafford County and their organization. She said that she believed it was essential to remember that and to stay connected to the community. She said that she was grateful for the opportunity to engage in these discussions and appreciated the transparency and openness that they brought to the table.

Ms. Vanuch—expressed her gratitude to VDOT for completing the epoxy coating on the Rock Hill Church Bridge. She said that a constituent had brought this issue to their attention approximately a year ago, sharing a personal experience of a young driver losing control of their vehicle on the bridge due to wet conditions. She said that they had reached out to VDOT, and they had developed a plan to apply an epoxy coating, which would provide better traction when wet. She said that this was a temporary bridge project had been completed relatively quickly, considering the government's timeline.

Ms. Vanuch said that secondly, she would like to provide an update on the Mountain View Dog Park. She said that as they may be aware, the park was initially scheduled to open in August of last year. She said that however, due to changes in the state's regulations and stormwater management requirements, the project had been delayed. She said that the delays had been caused

by a combination of factors, including contracting delays, weather-related delays, materials shortages, and concrete delivery issues due to the stormwater requirement changes.

Ms. Vanuch said that she wanted to assure residents that she was providing this information to ensure transparency regarding the significant delay in the project. She said that however, she was pleased to report that the dog park was almost ready to open. She said that in January, during their offsite retreat, each Board member had been given the opportunity to propose one idea for the Board's support, either for their district or Countywide. She said that she had proposed the naming of the dog park after a retired and deceased Stafford County Sheriff's Office dog. She said that she would like to thank her colleagues for their support of this idea.

Ms. Vanuch said that their staff was currently working with the Sheriff's Office to finalize everything, and they planned to unveil the dog's name at the grand opening of the park, which was expected to take place in early to mid-August, approximately a year after the original scheduled opening date. She said that on a separate note, she would like to share some positive news regarding the data center front. She said that if anyone was following the federal legislation within the reconciliation bill, they may want to consider sending a thank-you email to Senator Blackburn, even though she represented Tennessee and not Virginia.

Ms. Vanuch said that her vote, which was instrumental in passing the floor amendment to repeal the moratorium on state AI, was a significant achievement. She said that the vote had passed 99 to 1, and she believed it was worth acknowledging her efforts. She said that Senator Tillis from North Carolina had been the only one to vote against the proposal. She said that she wanted to ensure that the public was aware of her efforts, as she had been a champion throughout the weekend. She said that she had effectively whipped votes and attempted to negotiate a five-year moratorium early on Monday. She said that then, she had received feedback from some individuals and decided not to pursue that option.

Ms. Vanuch said that instead, she had worked tirelessly throughout the night, securing votes to ensure she had sufficient support to kill the amendment. She said that lastly, she would like to extend her gratitude to Mr. English for recognizing Detective Wood. She said that she not publicly mentioned this before, but her father, a former Prince William County Police Officer, had been the lead detective on the Jackie Lard case. She said that he had testified in court last week and had always spoken about the unsolved case with great regret.

Ms. Vanuch said that the involvement of Prince William County in the case had been due to the location of Jackie Lard's body in Woodbridge. She said that her father had told her that he had a blank check from the FBI to find the killer. She said that closing this case had brought closure to her family, and she was deeply grateful to Detective Wood for her efforts. She said that she would like to request that the Board consider presenting Detective Wood with a proclamation at their next meeting.

Dr. Yeung – reported that she recently attended the Fredericksburg Regional Alliance meeting, where they discussed the long-term strategic direction of the regional partnership that would continue to support Stafford's growth and economic resilience. She said that she also participated in the Virginia Railway Express (VRE) commission meeting, where she emphasized the

importance of maintaining community transportation as a top priority while advocating for smarter infrastructure and increased access for Stafford commuters.

Dr. Yeung said that as the representative on the Rappahannock River Basin Commission for the past four years, she had seen firsthand the significance of protecting their natural resources. She said that on June 18, she represented Stafford County at the Rappahannock River Basin Commission, and prior to that, she had raised concerns about the potential impact of data centers' water usage in their region, not just Stafford County. She said that since then, the commission had heard from key entities, including JLARC and Dominion Energy, and she had recommended forming a subcommittee to delve deeper into these issues. She said that subcommittees would allow them to thoroughly examine both the pros and cons, ensuring their policies protected their natural resources and left the earth in a better state than they had inherited.

Dr. Yeung said that on June 19, she celebrated Juneteenth with the Embrey Mill community and was invited to speak about her service. She said that her speech focused on truth, progress, and service, and she called on those who served communities to reflect, speak up, and lead with courage to build a future where everyone could live freely and fully. She said that they were committed to putting people and families first. She said that she would like to share a letter she received while discussing service, and before she did, she would like to recognize the strong collaboration behind their outdoor classroom efforts. She said that it was essential to acknowledge the work they did in their communities beyond this meeting.

Dr. Yeung said that she would like to thank Mr. Jouett, a resident of Garrisonville, for his dedication and vision in building an outdoor classroom in Winding Creek Elementary. She said that his initiative was instrumental in making it a reality, and she said that she would like to express her gratitude for his teamwork and support.

Dr. Yeung read, "Dear Mr. Will, On behalf of the residents of Garrisonville District and the greater Stafford County community, I would like to take a moment to acknowledge and appreciate the many ways you have invested in their people and their future. Your commitment to service spoke volumes, from building outdoor classrooms at Anthony Burns, Hampton Oaks, and Winding Creek Elementary Schools, to ensure their children have spaces that nurture both learning and imagination. Your work is not just noticed; it is deeply appreciated. I understand that the students were so moved that they sent you several thank you notes, which reflect how much your efforts have meant to them.

"You continue to show up wherever your hands and heart are needed, whether serving on the board of directors for Tsunami Swimming, coaching basketball, or umpiring baseball. You understand, as I do, that sports are not just about games, they are about mentorship, discipline, and building character in their youth, and it takes selfless volunteers like you to make that possible. Your long-standing service with the Arlington National Cemetery Wreath Project is another testament to your spirit.

"Truck captain, recycler, fence installer, cleanup crew – you have worn many hats, and each one with grace and purpose. Giving back on that level year after year demonstrates a profound love for the country and the sacrifices made by those who have served it. And speaking of service, I want

to personally thank you for your time in the United States Coast Guard and for continuing that mission of service through your work at Dominion Energy. Both roles speak to your strength, integrity, and calling to serve the public good. Stafford County is blessed to have people like you. You are the kind of neighbor who quietly makes a significant impact. I want you to know you have our utmost gratitude.”

Dr. Yeung said that as Chairman Diggs mentioned, they had a Fourth of July celebration, a day to honor the nation's independence. She said that while they came together to celebrate the Fourth of July and Juneteenth, a delayed but hard-won freedom, they must also recognize that freedom, justice, and equity are still being fought for many today. She said that as James Baldwin said, people were trapped in history and history was trapped in them.

Dr. Yeung said that this was especially true now, as they faced real disruption in their communities, rising food insecurity, healthcare loss, and economic strain. She said that she encouraged everyone to enjoy their summer, and also mark their calendars for their 2nd Annual Jazz Fest in the Park, coming soon to Autumn Ridge Park in Garrisonville. She said that it was a day of music, unity, and community, and because Stafford thrived when they came together, she asked that they keep putting Stafford families first.

Ms. Gary said that she had one point she wanted to clarify for the public. She said that there had been a lot of comments about the energy usage related to data centers, and she wanted to clarify that Dominion Energy was regulated by the state. She said that Dominion Energy representatives were careful in their relationships with elected officials, and she would encourage everyone to view the Virginia Public Access Project (VPAP) where more information about these connections and issues could be found. She said that she wished the County could do more about the rates for electric bills, but they could not. She said that she wanted to encourage everyone to contact their elected officials at the state level to express their concerns about those issues with Dominion Energy.

Mr. Diggs – asked the Board if it would be acceptable to direct staff to review their ordinance’s regulations on dangerous dogs in response to comments they received today about a dog attacking residents.

Ms. Vanuch said that Animal Control may be able to provide some more information about how to address the issue, what the ordinance entailed, and what their restrictions might be.

Mr. Diggs said that he understood that Animal Control was involved and that it was currently going through a court process. He said that he would like to know if staff could find any improvements they could make to their local ordinance to prevent these types of situations from happening, and what state restrictions they must follow.

Mr. Diggs said that there was Board consensus to direct staff to provide more information on the situation. He said that he thought their town hall meeting had gone very well, and he would like to address a few comments that he had heard. He said that as a Supervisor, he strived to listen to everyone and take notes. He said that when he heard certain concerns or issues, he followed up with emails to ensure he was addressing them. He said that he was very grateful for everyone who

took the opportunity to share their perspectives at Board meetings, and he wanted to encourage that continued engagement.

Mr. Diggs said that however, the County was facing a challenging situation where they had heard people say they did not want taxes, development, data centers, or powerlines. He said that every issue they had, there were constituents who said they did not want those things. He said that the Board's job was to find a balance between competing interests, including environmental concerns, constituent lifestyles, and economic development. He said that he would like to revisit the concept of grandfathering, which had been discussed at the town hall meeting.

Mr. Diggs said that while it may seem like a data center issue, it was actually about the broader theme of grandfathering and how it applied to data center development. He said that he wanted to clarify that his experience with data center development was not representative of the concerns surrounding Kelsey Road. He said that based on his experience, he could not agree with the concept that data centers were wholly evil. He said that the Board was certainly listening to constituents, but he also felt like the information being shared with the public was not being considered seriously.

Mr. Diggs said that he noticed people had talked about the JLARC portion of the town hall meeting, but then said that the Commissioner of Revenue had not accurately presented the revenues they would be receiving. He said that he believed they should also be looking at the negative aspects as well as the benefits that other jurisdictions had experienced from data centers, in order to achieve consistency in their decision-making.

Mr. Diggs said that finally, he wanted to clarify a point about the substation in Richmond, which he had visited to gain a better understanding of the issue. He said that when he spoke with residents in the area and observed the surroundings, he found it intriguing that he could hear the substation, but the residents couldn't, as it had become a normal part of their environment. He said that this was not specifically about the data center, but for him, it raised questions about what constituents would face if a substation were installed.

Mr. Diggs said that similarly, when visiting data centers in the north, he had heard concerns and experienced issues firsthand and he wanted to share this with them. He said that interestingly, he was informed recently that there was a school in Loudoun County with a data center on either side, so that would be the next trip he would take to investigate the impacts on the students, teachers, and community. He said that he appreciated it when the public brought concerns to him, as it allowed him to investigate and provide real-world experiences.

Mr. Diggs said that he hoped they could maintain a relationship where they listened to their concerns and provided information, allowing them to have a back-and-forth dialogue. He said that he wished everyone a happy July 4th celebration, and he looked forward to seeing many of them at Pratt Park.

REPORT OF THE COUNTY ATTORNEY

Rysheda McClendon, County Attorney, said that she had no report at this time.

REPORT OF THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

William Ashton, County Administrator, said that he had no report at this time.

PRESENTATIONS AND REPORTS BY AGENCIES

There were none.

ACTION ITEMS

ITEM 15. FIRE AND RESCUE; APPROVE MASTER LEASE FINANCING AND AUTHORIZE THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR TO EXECUTE A CONTRACT WITH ATLANTIC EMERGENCY SOLUTIONS, INC. FOR THE PURCHASE OF TWO FIRE ENGINES; PROPOSED RESOLUTION R25-169

[2:05:36 Speaker?] said that the Fire and Rescue Department was before the Board this evening to seek approval of master lease financing and authorization to execute a contract for the purchase of two fire engines. He said that their fleet department regularly evaluated their apparatus and made recommendations for inclusion in their Capital Improvement Budget. He said that they utilized a replacement plan that suggested their engines should be evaluated after 10 years of frontline service, followed by five years of reserve status, and then the life cycle may be extended or shortened based on wear and tear.

He said that the cost of apparatus had increased significantly over the past several years and was projected to continue. He said that currently, the time from contract signature to delivery was three years for engines. He said that in April, they became aware of an upcoming increase in August, which would have resulted in a 0.75% increase. He said that to mitigate this, they worked together to submit the necessary paperwork before the August increase. He said that he would like to take a moment to thank the staff members who made this process possible.

He said that they utilized a specific specification that limited their options and secured the best pricing available through a contract. He said that he wanted to assure the Board that their team was committed to extending the life cycle of apparatus without compromising safety or long-term expenditures.

Mr. English asked if this item was included in the budget for this year.

Speaker? said that yes, this was included in the CIP and already appropriated. He said that this item was just for the execution of the contract and putting it on the master lease.

Ms. Allen motioned, seconded by Ms. Vanuch, to approve Proposed Resolution R25-169.

The Voting Board tally was:

Yea: (6) Allen, Bohmke, Diggs, English, Gary, Vanuch

No: (0)

Absent: (1) Yeung

ITEM 16. FIRE AND RESCUE; CONSIDER AUTHORIZING THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR TO APPLY FOR THE 2024 STAFFING FOR ADEQUATE FIRE AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE (SAFER) GRANT TO SUPPORT HIRING ADDITIONAL CAREER FIREFIGHTERS; PROPOSED RESOLUTION R25-180 (INCLUDING 12, 24, OR 36 POSITIONS)

Joe Cardello, Fire Chief, said that he was here tonight seeking approval to apply for the federal Fiscal Year 2024 Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) Grant. He said that the SAFER Grant, administered by Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), was funded with approximately \$324 million this year, and it was expected to award about 300 grants. He said that the grant provided federal funding to fire departments to increase the number of frontline firefighters, helping communities meet industry minimum standards and achieve 24-hour staffing for adequate fire protection. He said that the performance period for the SAFER grant was 36 months.

Chief Cardello said that award recipients were responsible for personal protective equipment, uniforms, training, and physicals. He said that if their application was approved by the Board and they were awarded the grant, they would likely return to the Board in the September timeframe to formally accept the grant. He said that they would then have six months to hire and recruit firefighters, and once they were hired, the performance period would begin.

Chief Cardello said that award recipients were required to contribute 25% of the cost in the first two years and 65% in the third year. He said that beginning in the fourth year, when the performance period ended, the recipient would be responsible for 100%. He said that FEMA's contribution covered the salary, benefits, and Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) over time for the awarded positions. He said that they had three fire stations without 24-hour dedicated fire protection: Widewater Station 3, Potomac Hill Station 10, and Brook Station 5.

Chief Cardello said that they had presented three options for staffing: 12, 24, or 36 firefighters for one, two, or all three stations. He said that in the background report, there was an error in the calculation for option one, year three, when the County would start paying 65%. He said that specifically, it listed the County's contribution as \$1,094,333, when it should be \$971,578.

Ms. Bohmke asked how the County would absorb the cost if it was not anticipated in their budget.

Chief Cardello said that they expected to be notified in September of their success, so they would have a six-month window to begin the hiring process. He said that it was possible that this timeline could be shorter, but it was likely to be closer to next year. He said that therefore, they would have six months to hire the new staff. He said that once they had hired them and started paying them, the performance period would commence.

Ms. Gary said that there had been some ongoing difficulties with balancing the volunteer firefighters with the career firefighters in their system, and she would like to follow up with Chief Cardello regarding those issues as they related to this initiative.

Ms. Allen said that there had been an identified need for increasing fire station staffing levels to meet their community's service needs. She said that she knew that they would need to hire these firefighters regardless of the process, so if the federal government could provide the County with funding to help pay for these new hires, it was better than the County having to pay the entire cost. She said that the three years of grant funding would help them absorb the costs rather than pay for it all at once. She asked if Chief Cardello had any data that showed the impacts over time that certain stations faced due to covering areas that did not have 24-hour staffing. She asked how much overtime would be covered by the grant funds.

Chief Cardello said that it would cover the overtime that was built into their work schedule, which they worked a 56-hour work week. He said that having to staff these three locations, including Station 9 and Station 2, and the area north of them, required coverage for all areas. He said that in Station 10 area, Potomac Hills, there had been 500 calls so far this year. He said that in Brooke, there had been 300 calls. He said that although the number of calls in the Widewater area was relatively low, with only about 100, the impact was still significant.

Chief Cardello said that when Station Nine 9 out responding to a fire call, Station 14 had to cover the area, which could be challenging. He said that staffing these stations was necessary for the communities they served, but it also helped to minimize the impact on the rest of the system. He said that by having staff in these locations, response times across the entire system were likely to be reduced, allowing companies to stay in their areas more effectively.

Ms. Allen asked if that impacted the lifespan of the firetrucks as well.

Chief Cardello said that having the road miles on the vehicles did contribute to the wear and tear and ultimately shortened the service life of the vehicles.

Ms. Allen said that she had been on ride-alongs with the Fire Department and had seen this issue firsthand. She said that it was also important that fire trucks were a significant investment and she was wholly supportive of this proposal. She said that keeping minimum staffing levels was non-negotiable for public safety.

Mr. English asked Chief Cardello how likely the County was to receive the grant.

Chief Cardello said that the odds were tough, but they were hopeful. He said that if they were awarded the grant, the Board would accept the grant a few months after that.

Dr. Yeung said that she had previously supported the hiring of 12 firefighters through a SAFER grant, but the Board did not support it at that time. She said that she was concerned about the lack of data provided with this proposal. She said that the staffing levels of each station and the areas where staff filled in gaps were important to know. She said that additionally, she would like more information on how volunteer firefighters were being recruited.

Chief Cardello said that they recently modified their volunteer recruitment process. He said that previously, individuals would visit their website, fill out an application, and they would receive about one application per day, 365 days a year. He said that their volunteer coordinator would

manage this process. He said that they have now switched to an interview-style approach. He said that to maintain a consistent group, they divided volunteers into cohorts and onboard those groups a couple of times a year, so that they all trained together and worked as a team.

Dr. Yeung asked if the volunteers filled in the gaps where staffing was most needed.

Chief Cardello said that yes, Potomac Hills or Widewater were the highest priorities.

Dr. Yeung said that she was wondering why the safety percentages for year one and year two were significantly different.

Chief Cardello said that in year two, the estimated costs for PPE went down. He said that he would review the formulas they used to make sure those numbers were correct.

Ms. Vanuch said that in the background report, under the options staff presented, it suggested that the full-time personnel would be assigned to either Widewater Station 3, Brook Station 5, or Potomac Hills Station 10, as they did not currently have full-time engine company staffing. She said that the request for 12 firefighters would be used to provide a four-person engine staffing for one of those proposed stations. She asked if they typically staffed their engines with three people.

Chief Cardello said that there were three shifts with a minimum of three people. He said that if no one took leave on a given day, there would be four staff members, but in the event someone was absent, they had three people.

Ms. Vanuch asked for clarification that the Board would have the option to accept the grant and then move forward with staffing if the budget allowed for it.

Chief Cardello said that yes, they had to come back for Board approval of the award.

Ms. Vanuch said that she wanted to make sure they knew where the eventual cost absorption would come from within their budget, as well as specific statistics that provided some insight into how the new firefighters would be distributed across the County fire stations. She said that she did not want to have to consider a tax increase in order to support these new firefighters.

Mr. Diggs said that he agreed with Ms. Gary that as they hired more paid staff, they should maintain their relationship with their volunteer system. He said that he fully supported the pursuit of this grant.

Ms. Bohmke said that she would like more information about their volunteers to understand how the numbers of volunteers had changed over the last five years. She said that the volunteers were of tremendous value to the County. She said that she would also like to see statistics that indicated where the new staffing was justified and how it related to call volumes and responses throughout the County. She said that she wanted to ensure their decision was educated in the event they received this grant.

Chief Cardello said that he apologized for not bringing those statistics as part of this report; they were against a tight deadline to submit this grant.

Ms. Allen motioned, seconded by Ms. Gary, to approve Proposed Resolution R25-180 for 12 positions.

The Voting Board tally was:

Yea: (7) Allen, Bohmke, Diggs, English, Gary, Vanuch, Yeung

No: (0)

ITEM 17. CAPITAL PROJECTS; AUTHORIZE THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR TO APPROVE AN AGREEMENT WITH VIRGINIA PASSENGER RAIL AUTHORITY (VPRA) FOR REIMBURSEMENT OF COSTS TO RECTIFY WATER/SEWER CONFLICTS WITHIN THE POTOMAC CREEK THIRD TRACK SOUTH (SIDING A) PROJECT; PROPOSED RESOLUTION R25-179

Bryon Counsell, County Engineer, said that this item was a follow-up to the Board's motion and action last year to approve preliminary financing for the design work on the third track and first siding project through Stafford, as proposed by CSX and VPRA. He said that this project was currently in design, with construction expected to begin in several months. He said that as a follow-up to that, they were asked to develop an agreement to pay the full cost of CSX and VPRA's relocation of significant portions of the water and sewer infrastructure in those areas. He said that the current agreement only covered \$500,000 for design services and preliminary fees, with the understanding that they would make payments over a two-year period once a detailed construction estimate was created.

Mr. Counsell said that when they first started this process about a year ago, preliminary estimates ranged from \$8 to \$12 million. He said that they were now feeling more comfortable with estimates in the range of \$3 to \$5 million, which was a significant reduction. He said that although this project was not initially anticipated, funding had been identified to cover the costs. He said that therefore, the item before the Board tonight was to approve, consider, and approve the agreement, with the hope of finalizing it.

Mr. Diggs asked if the funding to cover these costs was moved from another project or if it was part of unallocated funds in the budget.

Chris Edwards, Chief Operating Officer, said that one of the things they had to do was budget \$1.5 million for this year, which they were able to allocate. He said that for the remainder of the project, they had budgeted \$4 to \$5 million, which would be inserted into their rate model to ensure they had sufficient funding for next year.

Ms. Vanuch motioned, seconded by Dr. Yeung, to approve Proposed Resolution R25-179.

The Voting Board tally was:

Yea: (6) Bohmke, Diggs, English, Gary, Vanuch, Yeung

No: (1) Allen

ITEM 18. CAPITAL PROJECTS TRANSPORTATION; AUTHORIZE THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR TO EXECUTE TASK ORDERS WITH RUMMEL KLEPPER & KAHL, LLP AND ATCS P.L.C. FOR TRANSPORTATION PLANNING SERVICES REGARDING THE COUNTY'S TRANSPORTATION IMPACT FEE PROGRAM; PROPOSED RESOLUTION R25-172; PROPOSED RESOLUTION R25-158

Bryon Counsell, County Engineer, said that the Board had been very active in transportation impact fees over the last year. He said that most recently, they had approved a rate. He said that as it took time to conduct these studies and they were required to review them every couple of years, they were already starting the process to review the number. He said that this year, they had taken a different approach. He said that they were hiring two consulting firms to compare their findings and create the best possible fee recommendations. He said that the award of a contract to two different consultants would result in a proposal to create a fee schedule. He said that this would allow them to move forward within an appropriate time and before the next action by the Board on the transportation impact fee.

Ms. Vanuch motioned, seconded by Mr. English, to approve Proposed Resolution R25-172.

Dr. Yeung said that she was supportive of this initiative, but she was concerned that the County was paying for work that Fredericksburg Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (FAMPO) should be sharing the cost of because it benefited the whole region.

Mr. Counsell said that he was unsure of what Dr. Yeung was referring to. He said that they were using the FAMPO model.

Dr. Yeung asked if the model was only being applied to Stafford County.

Mr. Counsell said that yes, it was just for Stafford County.

Dr. Yeung asked if this was in addition to the previous work done by a different company. She asked if they were able to use any of the information that came out of the previous studies.

Mr. Counsell said that the work on the transportation impact fee that the Board had most recently considered, began in late 2022 and early 2023. He said that the derivation of the number had started more than two years ago. He said that the process of taking it through the Planning Commission and the Board had taken quite a while. He said that as a result, the number by code standards was effectively void. He said that according to the code, they needed to conduct a new study, and this year, they would undertake this new effort. He said that while the previous work gave them the best information they had at the time, they had to make sure it was updated, which was what they were doing with peer-reviewed critiques in this year's process.

Ms. McClendon said that to clarify, the code standard required an assessment that was akin to the original assessment, which was why this new item for a reassessment. She said that it would look at the old data, but they had to treat it as if they were doing all over again, which met the requirements of the state code.

Mr. Diggs called the vote on approval of Proposed Resolution R25-172.

The Voting Board tally was:

Yea: (7) Allen, Bohmke, Diggs, English, Gary, Vanuch, Yeung

No: (0)

Ms. Allen motioned, seconded by Ms. Vanuch, to approve Proposed Resolution R25-158.

The Voting Board tally was:

Yea: (7) Allen, Bohmke, Diggs, English, Gary, Vanuch, Yeung

No: (0)

CLOSED MEETING

Ms. Allen motioned, seconded by Mr. English, to enter into closed meeting.

The Voting Board tally was:

Yea: (7) Allen, Bohmke, Diggs, English, Gary, Vanuch, Yeung

No: (0)

Resolution CM25-10 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 probable litigation regarding the development of a retirement housing community, which is also a specific legal matter requiring the provision of legal advice by such counsel where such consultation and briefings in open meeting would adversely affect the negotiating and litigating posture of the Board; and (2) discussion of the performance of specific appointees of the Board; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Virginia Code § 2.2-3711(A)(1), (A)(7), and (A)(8) such discussions may occur in Closed Meeting;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Stafford County Board of Supervisors on this the 1st day of July, 2025, that it be and hereby does authorize discussion of the above matters in Closed Meeting.

CERTIFY CLOSED MEETING

At 8:57 p.m., Ms. Allen motioned, seconded by Dr. Yeung, to certify closed meeting.

The Voting Board tally was:

Yea: (7) Allen, Bohmke, Diggs, English, Gary, Vanuch, Yeung

No: (0)

Resolution CM25-10 (C) reads as follows:

**A RESOLUTION TO CERTIFY THE ACTIONS OF THE
STAFFORD COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS IN A CLOSED
MEETING ON JULY 1, 2025**

WHEREAS, the Board has on this the 1st day of July, 2025, 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 1st day of July, 2025, 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 Dr. Yeung, to approve Proposed Resolution R25-183, A Resolution Authorizing Execution of a Settlement Agreement Regarding the Development of Phase 2A Section 12 of the Embrey Mills Subdivision.

The Voting Board tally was:

Yea: (7) Allen, Bohmke, Diggs, English, Gary, Vanuch, Yeung

No: (0)

Ms. Allen motioned, seconded by Dr. Yeung, to approve Proposed Resolution R25-181, A Resolution Recognizing the County Administrator and County Attorney's Annual Performance Evaluation and Authorizing an Amendment to the Compensation Provided at 2.75.

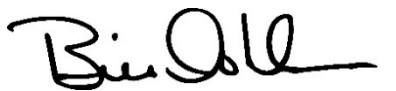
The Voting Board tally was:

Yea: (7) Allen, Bohmke, Diggs, English, Gary, Vanuch, Yeung

No: (0)

ADJOURNMENT

The Board adjourned its meeting at 9:01 p.m.



William H. Ashton, II
County Administrator