

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
STAFFORD COUNTY, VIRGINIA,
MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
AUGUST 19, 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, August 19, 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; 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.

Mr. Diggs asked for a motion to allow Ms. Gary to participate electronically in the meeting.

Ms. Allen motioned, seconded by Dr. Yeung, to allow Ms. Gary to participate electronically in the meeting.

The Voting Board tally was:

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

INVOCATION

Mr. English led the invocation.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Dr. Yeung led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

CHAIR REMARKS

Mr. Diggs said that he had several remarks to share this evening. He said that it was with deep sorrow that he spoke today in honor of the life and legacy of Lieutenant Colonel Vincent D. Applewhite, U.S. Marine Corps, retired. He said that Lieutenant Colonel Applewhite had lived a life rooted in service, dedicating himself to his country, community, and family. For over 22 years, he had served with honor, courage, and commitment in the United States Marine Corps, and his service did not end with his retirement.

Mr. Diggs said that he continued to pour his dedication into his community, improving public spaces, guiding and mentoring youth, and instilling valuable leadership and service principles in countless young people. He said that today, they bid farewell to a life well-lived and a legacy of

service that would never be forgotten. He said that he extended his gratitude to Lieutenant Colonel Applewhite.

Mr. Diggs said that the summer recess had been filled with activity for Stafford County. He said that they had cut the ribbon on August 9, 2025 at the Friends of Havoc Dog Park in the Rock Hill District, the first park to open in that district. He said that the event had drawn a fantastic turnout of over 50 dogs and their owners. He said that their efforts to improve services for residents had been recognized; they had won third place in the 2025 Digital County Survey, a national competition that recognized innovation and efficiency in local government, where Stafford County was the only Virginia County to place in the top 10 nationwide.

Mr. Diggs said that their Treasurer's Office had received accreditation from the Treasurer's Association of Virginia, recognizing its adherence to statewide best practices in treasury management. He said that they had also won two Virginia Association of Counties (VACo) Achievement Awards, one for their Legacy Business Program and one for their Start on Success Program, which provided work experience to students with challenges. He said that they would have a formal presentation for the latter in the fall.

Mr. Diggs said that Stafford Utilities had received a AAA bond rating from Standard Poor's for Water and Sewer System Revenue Bonds, enabling them to save almost \$5 million in debt service payments on upgrades to the Smith Lake Water Treatment Facility. He said that lastly, their Board chambers had undergone a renovation, as could be seen. He said that the renovation had been part of their Capital Improvement Program (CIP) plans to enhance the space and make some cosmetic upgrades.

Mr. Diggs said that all the technology upgrades had been paid for with Public, Educational, and Governmental (PEG) fees, not from taxpayer dollars. He said that PEG fees came from the County's franchise agreements with internet service providers and must be used for upgrades to streaming access to public meetings. He said that additionally, their transportation projects were in full swing. He said that they had projects underway at Route 1 and Telegraph Road, Courthouse and Route 1, Berea Church, and a sidewalk project at Staffordboro. He said that all of these projects had work crews present and significant activity.

Mr. Diggs said that he wanted to remind everyone to be vigilant and watchful for their students, especially those who walked to school. He said that they had new drivers, buses, and parents on the roads taking kids to school. He asked everyone to please be mindful of their students. He said that he also wanted to take a moment to recognize the Stafford County Public Schools bus transportation team for their incredible job this year. He said that transporting over 31,000 students to and from school every day was no small task.

Mr. Diggs said this year's process had been smoother and more efficient than ever. He said that this kind of improvement did not happen by accident; it took planning, dedication, and teamwork. He said that he wanted to express his gratitude to all of them for the vital role they played in ensuring their students arrived safely and ready to learn; their outstanding work was truly commendable.

Mr. Diggs said that the Sheriff's Office had shared a heartwarming story on Facebook about a couple from Ghana who came to the courthouse to obtain a marriage license. He said that Deputy First Class Edwin Donker, who speaks the native language of Twi, was able to assist them, demonstrating the exceptional service that the deputies provided to the public every day with integrity, compassion, fairness, and professionalism.

Mr. Diggs said that he was particularly proud of the deputies who consistently served with such dedication. He said that the post quoted Maya Angelou, saying "Love recognizes no barriers to arrive at its destination full of hope," which he found heartening. He said that he was pleased to see that the residents responded with over 510 positive and encouraging comments on the post, showcasing the wonderful spirit of the community.

Mr. Diggs said that during International Assistance Dog Week, which took place from August 3 through August 9, they honored the invaluable contributions of dogs who had helped so much in the lives of the community and the work of Stafford County. He said that as a special treat, they had created a video showcasing the hard work of their tracker dog, Ruby the bloodhound, and their accelerant sniffing dog, Lincoln, as they worked tirelessly to serve Stafford County citizens.

PRESENTATIONS

PRESENTATION OF A PROCLAMATION DECLARING AUGUST 31 AS INTERNATIONAL OVERDOSE AWARENESS DAY IN STAFFORD COUNTY

Mr. Diggs presented the proclamation.

The recipient accepted the proclamation and gave remarks.

PRESENTATION OF A PROCLAMATION RECOGNIZING AND HONORING MICHAEL R. KEYES FOR HIS SERVICE TO STAFFORD COUNTY

Mr. Diggs presented the proclamation.

Mr. Keyes accepted the proclamation.

Scott Mayausky, Commissioner of Revenue, gave remarks.

RECESS

Mr. Diggs said that the Board would take a brief recess to resolve some technical difficulties with the audio for the meeting recording.

The Board recessed at 5:23 p.m. and reconvened at 5:27 p.m.

ADDITIONS – DELETIONS AND APPROVAL OF THE REGULAR AGENDA

Mr. Diggs said that he would request that Item 24 be moved to after Presentations from the Public.

Ms. Vanuch said that she would like to remove Item 27 from the agenda.

Ms. Vanuch motioned, seconded by Ms. Bohmke, to approve the agenda with the proposed changes of moving Item 24 after Presentations from the Public and to delete Item 27 from the agenda.

Ms. Allen motioned, seconded by Mr. English, to substitute motion to approve the agenda with the proposed changes of Moving Item 24 after Presentations from the Public and to retain Item 27 on the agenda.

Ms. Vanuch said that the Chair had previously polled the Board on Item 27 around May or June of this year, at which point the Board decided not to move forward with it. She said that despite that, it appeared on the agenda for today's meeting. She said that prior to this meeting, she had reached out to the County Administrator, who informed her that the item was brought forward by the Chair and Vice Chair due to a state deadline change.

Ms. Vanuch said that unfortunately, this information was not shared with the rest of the Board. She said that she believed it was particularly concerning to have this discussion without the support of the Board members, especially considering the potential budgetary implications. She said that she believed the cost had increased from \$200,000 to \$1.5 million, outside of the budget process.

Ms. Vanuch said that she thought it would be beneficial for the Board to have one-on-one discussions with the County Administrator, and then make a collective decision with that information before considering any proposals that could have a significant impact on the tax rate, especially since the Board had been previously polled on this issue and did not want to bring it forward.

Mr. Diggs said that he wanted to explain why they had brought it forward. He said that he recalled their previous conversation, which was prompted by the feeling that it had been presented to them at the last minute. He said that during that discussion, they had to make a decision that night without any information. He said that as a result, they had brought it up again during the Chair and Vice Chair meeting, which provided additional time for consideration.

Mr. Diggs said that there were multiple options available, and they felt it was essential to bring it back to the Board for a thorough discussion. He said that it did not imply that it would be approved, as it was still being debated in the public sphere. He said that other employees were aware of the issue, and he believed it was necessary to present the information to the Board so they could make an informed decision. He said that therefore, it was back on the agenda.

Mr. Diggs said that staff had prepared multiple options for their review, and he did not think it should be a surprise that it was being presented to the Board. He said that they had had additional information and time to consider the matter, and it was also worth noting that other organizations, such as Social Services, would be impacted by this decision.

Ms. Bohmke said that she was caught off guard by this. She said that she recalled their initial conversation in May, and she believed it would have been beneficial if the Chair had reached out to each of the Supervisors individually. She said that regardless, she knew that this decision had a budget impact, and she would like to see this item brought back to the Board in two weeks, at their September meeting, after they had all had a chance to thoroughly review and digest the matter.

Mr. Diggs said that Ms. Light would like to speak on this issue as well. He said that they received the agenda on Thursday, and while he did receive calls today regarding the agenda, he believed those issues should have been discussed earlier than today. He said that he thought the presentation on this item would be providing the Board with valuable information, and no decision needed to be made tonight.

Mr. Diggs said that they could review the information and then determine if they needed more information. He said that he did not see anything wrong with staff preparing a presentation on these topics and bringing it to the Board for discussion. He said that they would all hear it at the same time and could discuss it together. He asked if Ms. Light would like an opportunity to share her thoughts.

Andrea Light, Chief Financial Officer, said that she apologized for any delayed information that the Board may have received. She said that before considering this item, drawing down the Comp Board funding and Social Services funding would require a public hearing to be held on September 16, 2025 to meet state deadlines. She said that there were two advertisement requirements that must be completed prior to that date, which was why staff was requesting the Board's approval to advertise the public hearing today. She said that she hoped this clarification helped the Board understand the timeline.

Ms. Vanuch said that to her, this was no different from when it was brought up at the last minute in May. She said that they had to make a decision on the spot, advertise the public hearing in June, and they were now in the same situation as when they polled the entire Board, and they voted against moving forward with it. She said that this item was about County employee bonuses that fell outside the budget process.

Ms. Vanuch said that this had significant budgetary implications, even if they moved it forward to a public hearing. She would be interested to hear Mr. Ashton's opinion, as he usually ensured that he had the support of the Board before bringing such matters forward. She said that this was particularly important, as it affected morale when proposals were presented, discussed, and then rejected if not supported by at least four Board members.

Ms. Vanuch said that they did not have the budget to accommodate such a significant expense, which was between \$500,000 and \$1.2 million. She said that this was why they were coming from this perspective, not out of a desire to be confrontational or accusatory. She said that she believed they should have received a professional courtesy, as they did when the state provided information on bonus structures for Comp Board employees in May. She said that unfortunately, the state's lack of information had led to this situation, and they were now facing the consequences of the budget process at the local government level.

Mr. Diggs said that he believed he understood what Ms. Vanuch was saying, but there was another perspective for him, at least. He said that he was aware that there was information available that suggested they could get a second bite at the apple. He said that he agreed with her concerns about budgetary issues. He said that he thought they had had to do the same thing with the jail, requiring additional funding outside of the budget cycle. He said that he was concerned about how employees would perceive this situation. He said that if they did not discuss it and instead let it go, it may be perceived as a lack of transparency.

Mr. Diggs said that when they talked about morale, they may all agree that this was not an issue they could address now, and perhaps they would revisit it during their budget cycle. He said that he wanted to bring it up and have this conversation, rather than letting it be swept under the rug. He said that he did not want to be seen as not being transparent. He said that yes, this could be a morale killer, but they could also explain the budgetary constraints and the reasons behind their decision. He said that simply saying they would take it up at a later date would be misleading, as it implied that they were not willing to even have the discussion about it. He said that was his thought process.

Mr. Diggs called the vote on the substitute motion to approve the agenda, moving Item 24 after Presentations from the Public and retaining Item 27 on the agenda.

The Voting Board tally was:

Yea: (4) Allen, Diggs, English, Gary

No: (3) Bohmke, Vanuch, Yeung

CONSENT AGENDA

ITEM 1. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT; PROCLAMATION DECLARING AUGUST 31, 2025 AS INTERNATIONAL OVERDOSE AWARENESS DAY; PROPOSED PROCLAMATION P25-11

ITEM 2. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT; PROCLAMATION HONORING AND RECOGNIZING MICHAEL KEYES FOR HIS YEARS OF SERVICE; PROPOSED PROCLAMATION P25-27

ITEM 3. COMMONWEALTH'S ATTORNEY; ACCEPT GRANT FUNDING FROM THE VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE SERVICES FY26 VICTIM/WITNESS GRANT AND BUDGET AND APPROPRIATE THE ADDITIONAL GRANT FUNDS; PROPOSED RESOLUTION R25-184

ITEM 4. COUNTY ADMINISTRATION; APPROVE THE JUNE 17, 2025 BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING MINUTES

ITEM 5. COUNTY ADMINISTRATION; APPROVE THE JULY 1, 2025 BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING MINUTES

ITEM 6. COUNTY ADMINISTRATION; AUTHORIZE THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR TO ACCEPT A VIRGINIA OPIOID ABATEMENT AUTHORITY COOPERATIVE PARTNERSHIP GRANT AWARD FOR MOBILE MEDICATION ASSISTED TREATMENT AND CRISIS STABILIZATION FOR OPIOID ABATEMENT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2026 AND TO BUDGET AND APPROPRIATE THE GRANT FUNDS; PROPOSED RESOLUTION R25-192

ITEM 7. FACILITIES MAINTENANCE; RATIFY A CONTRACT EXECUTED WITH AUTOMATED LOGIC CONTRACTING SERVICES, INC. FOR SUSTAINABLE BUILDING SERVICES AND EQUIPMENT FOR SUSTAINABLE BUILDING SERVICES AND

BUILDING AUTOMATION SYSTEMS; PROPOSED RESOLUTION R25-185

ITEM 8. FACILITIES MAINTENANCE; RATIFY A CONTRACT EXECUTED WITH HAPPY CO. FLOORS LLC FOR THE FURNISHING AND INSTALLATION OF CARPET AND FLOORING AT MULTIPLE COUNTY FACILITIES; PROPOSED RESOLUTION R25-186

ITEM 9. FIRE AND RESCUE; RATIFY A CONTRACT EXECUTED WITH R.K. CHEVROLET, INC. FOR THE PURCHASE OF EQUIPPED SUPPORT VEHICLES; PROPOSED RESOLUTION R25-194

ITEM 10. INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY; RATIFY A CONTRACT EXECUTED WITH PRESIDIO NETWORKED SOLUTIONS LLC FOR THE PURCHASE OF CISCO PRODUCTS AND SERVICES; PROPOSED RESOLUTION R25-209

ITEM 11. PARKS, RECREATION, AND TOURISM; AUTHORIZE THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR TO EXECUTE AN AGREEMENT TO OPERATE A RECREATIONAL YOUTH LACROSSE PROGRAM; PROPOSED RESOLUTION R25-145

ITEM 12. PARKS, RECREATION, AND TOURISM; RATIFY A CONTRACT EXECUTED WITH FIELDTURF, USA, INC. TO PROVIDE OUTDOOR ATHLETIC FIELDS AT EMBREY MILL AND OTHER CIP PROJECTS; PROPOSED RESOLUTION R25-203

ITEM 13. PLANNING AND ZONING; APPOINT KEIRAH OLIVIA MILLS AS PURCHASER OF DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS (PDR) ADMINISTRATOR FOR STAFFORD COUNTY; PROPOSED RESOLUTION R25-196

ITEM 14. PLANNING AND ZONING; AUTHORIZE APPLICATIONS FOR MATCHING FUNDS THROUGH VARIOUS LAND CONSERVATION AGENCIES TO SUPPORT THE PURCHASE OF DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS (PDR) LAND CONSERVATION PROGRAM; PROPOSED RESOLUTION R25-206

ITEM 15. SHERIFF; AUTHORIZE THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR TO ADVERTISE A PUBLIC HEARING TO CONSIDER AMENDING STAFFORD COUNTY CODE SEC. 15-169, "CHANGES FOR TOWING AND STORAGE OF MOTOR VEHICLES" TO INCREASE THE ALLOWABLE FEE FOR TOWING FROM PRIVATE PROPERTY; PROPOSED RESOLUTION R25-195

ITEM 16. SHERIFF; AUTHORIZE ACCEPTANCE OF FY26 NEXT-GEN 911 ADDITIONAL FUNDING GRANT FUNDS FROM THE VIRGINIA 9-1-1 SERVICES BOARD AND BUDGET AND APPROPRIATE THE GRANT FUNDS; PROPOSED RESOLUTION R25-200

ITEM 17. SHERIFF; RESCIND RESOLUTION R25-79, AUTHORIZE ACCEPTANCE OF THE FY26 PSAP SHARED CALL HANDLING EQUIPMENT GRANT FROM THE VIRGINIA 9-1-1 SERVICES BOARD, AND BUDGET AND APPROPRIATE THE GRANT FUNDS; PROPOSED RESOLUTION R25-199

ITEM 18. UTILITIES; RATIFY A CONTRACT EXECUTED WITH CARTER MACHINERY

COMPANY, INCORPORATED TO FURNISH HEAVY CONSTRUCTION EQUIPMENT
WITH RELATED ACCESSORIES, ATTACHMENTS, AND TECHNOLOGY; PROPOSED
RESOLUTION R25-187

ITEM 19. UTILITIES; RATIFY A CONTRACT EXECUTED WITH MID-ATLANTIC
LABORATORIES, INC. FOR UTILITIES WATER AND WASTEWATER TESTING;
PROPOSED RESOLUTION R25-190

ITEM 20. UTILITIES; AUTHORIZE THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR TO EXECUTE A
WORK ORDER WITH SAGRES CONSTRUCTION CORPORATION FOR FERRY FARM
NEIGHBORHOOD WATER SERVICE INSTALLATIONS; PROPOSED RESOLUTION R25-
204

Ms. Bohmke motioned, seconded by Ms. Allen, to approve the Consent Agenda minus Item 12.

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 12.

Mr. English said that he had a couple of questions for Mr. Edwards. He asked if the \$2 million they were allocating for this project would be drawn from the Capital Improvement Plan.

Chris Edwards, Chief Operating Officer, said that that was correct. He said that the project was approved and the funds were allocated in the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) budget for Fiscal Year (FY) 2026.

Mr. English asked if any proffer funds were used for this project.

Mr. Edwards said that he did not believe so.

Mr. English asked if that could be considered as an option for this project.

Mr. Edwards said that he did not think there was proffered funding available for this project.

Mr. English asked if this project would replace the two fields at Embrey Mill.

Mr. Edwards said that yes, the project would replace two natural grass fields with artificial turf at Embrey Mill.

Mr. English asked if they could consider postponing this project for another year or so, or if it would cost more money in the future.

Mr. Edwards said that the future cost would likely be affected by inflation, so it could potentially cost more. He said that one of the other advantages of this project was that they were able to host more soccer games and provide greater services overall, making it a more financially viable option. He said that they were also addressing an issue that would arise in the next two to three years: the

need to upgrade the existing fields, which were approximately 15 years old. He said that the intent was to make these two fields available for use while the other fields were being upgraded.

Mr. English said that turf fields lasted about 10 to 12 years, so they would have to go back and do this again in the future. He asked if the reason they were requesting these turf fields was because the current fields were in bad shape.

Mr. Edwards said that the existing fields were in poor condition, they tended to retain water and they did not utilize them as much as their four artificial turf fields. He said that by converting them to artificial turf, they could expect to host twice as many games as they would on the grass fields. He said that they were currently planning to replace the other four fields within the next two to four years. He said that having these fields already converted to artificial turf would provide them with additional playing time and enable them to more easily absorb the lost games resulting from the replacements of the other fields.

Ms. Bohmke motioned, seconded by Dr. Yeung, to approve Proposed Resolution R25-203.

The Voting Board tally was:

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

No: (1) English

PRESENTATIONS/REPORTS BY DEPARTMENTS

ITEM 21. COMMONWEALTH ATTORNEY; CONSIDER INCREASING THE COUNTY'S AUTHORIZED FULL-TIME STRENGTH TO ADD TWO COMMONWEALTH'S ATTORNEY POSITIONS AND BUDGETING AND APPROPRIATING ASSOCIATED FUNDS FROM THE STATE; PROPOSED RESOLUTION R25-193

George Elsasser, Deputy Commonwealth Attorney, said that Commonwealth Attorney Office had been given a new position that was 100% County-funded, which they had learned about it this spring and was included in the most recently ended fiscal budget. He said that they had advertised the position and found a great candidate, who was currently waiting to be appointed. He said that he was scheduled to be available yesterday, but they had postponed his appointment until this issue was resolved. He said that this 100% County-funded position was part of a recently ended budget.

Mr. Elsasser said that subsequently, they were informed that the Compensation Board had approved two new positions, so they considered three positions in total. He said that when they worked with the County budget, it became clear that by forgoing the 100% County-funded position and taking the two Compensation Board positions, they would actually save the County approximately \$27,000. He said that this was because they would be adding the compensation for the two Compensation Board positions, which would reduce the County's outlay of money by almost \$27,000, as the figures were detailed in the paperwork.

Ms. Vanuch motioned, seconded by Ms. Allen, to approve Proposed Resolution R25-193.

The Voting Board tally was:

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

ITEM 22. COUNTY ADMINISTRATION; CONSIDER APPROVAL OF RAPPAHANNOCK AREA COMMUNITY SERVICES BOARD (RACSB) BIENNIAL PERFORMANCE AGREEMENT WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES (DBHDS); PROPOSED RESOLUTION R25-217

Donna Kraus, Deputy County Administrator, said that staff was requesting the Board to adopt the Rappahannock Area Community Services Board (RACSB) Biennial Performance Agreement. She said that this was a requirement by the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (DBHDS), and they had completed this process before. She said that the Supervisors would find in their background information the changes made to the performance contract provided by DBHDS. She said that she would like to invite Brandi Williams from the Community Services Board to address any questions the Board may have regarding the agreement.

Dr. Yeung motioned, seconded by Ms. Allen, to approve Propsoed Resolution R25-217.

The Voting Board tally was:

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

ITEM 23. PLANNING AND ZONING; CONSIDER REQUEST TO GRANT TIME LIMIT EXTENSION FOR A CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT APPLICATION (PROJECT KNOWN AS SC PLAZA); PROPOSED RESOLUTION R25-197 (APPROVE); PROPOSED RESOLUTION R25-196 (DENY)

Brian Geouge, Principal Planner, said that this item was a request for a time limit extension for the SC Plaza project. He said that the project was located on the west side of Route 1, across from Potomac Creek Industrial Park, and was a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) project. He said that code required consideration of a CUP to be within 12 months of it being deemed complete. He said that this application had been submitted in December 2023. He said that the Planning Commission had granted a six-month extension in January, extending the deadline to June 12, 2025. He said that the ordinance specified an 18-month timeframe for consideration.

Mr. Geouge said that extensions past 12 months could be granted by the Board considering the application, but extensions beyond 18 months required approval from the Board of Supervisors; that was why they were there tonight. He said for context, the CUP was for auto sales in the B-2 Zoning District. He said that the applicant had requested an extension until February 28, 2026. He said that the applicant had provided their justification as Attachment 3. He said that it was at the Board's discretion to accept or deny the request.

Ms. Bohmke said that given that this project was located in the Falmouth District, she wanted to acknowledge the delays and extensive Planning and Zoning work that had taken place. She asked Mr. Geouge if the request was justified.

Mr. Geouge said that the justification submitted by the applicant mentioned some issues with the adjacent property owner, including unauthorized impacts on their property. He said that he could not speak to the validity of these concerns. He said that the County had been reviewing this particular application for approximately five and a half months. He said that the applicant had been in court for a total of roughly 14 months.

Ms. Bohmke said that from her perspective, 14 months seemed like a long time. She said that without the specific expertise that Planning staff had, she was unsure how to analyze the situation.

Mr. Geouge said that to be fair, County staff's workload had affected the timeline to some degree; however, the applicant had had it for a considerable period of time. He said that the second round of comments were issued to the applicant in January of this year, and staff had not received a third submission from the applicant as of yet. He said that the applicant had initially stated that they had completed the revisions and the resubmission was imminent, but the County had not received the resubmitted document yet.

Ms. Bohmke asked if it was correct that the applicant would have to reapply for a CUP and pay all the associated fees if the Board denied this specific request.

Mr. Geouge said that that was correct.

Ms. Vanuch said that she was not in favor of extending this for a couple of reasons. She said that the first reason was that they had a significant staff workload, and when they had unresponsive applicants, it did not make staff's jobs any easier. She said that the second reason was that when they had viable projects driven by the community's economic development needs, they were being tied up by this. She said that the Planning Commission had already granted a six-month extension, and now they were considering a 12-month extension in addition to that.

Ms. Vanuch said that after November 5, 2025, they could not take up any land use matters until the new Board took office at their first meeting in January. She said that given that, it was unlikely that this would be addressed by the new Board at their first meeting. She said that considering all these factors, she said that she was definitely opposed to granting this extension.

Dr. Yeung said that based on the three issues raised in the letter, she would like to know how the delay that affected this project would be resolved.

Mr. Geouge said that he had conducted some research on the justifications the owner outlined. He said that he had been unable to verify the first two points; it was not consistent with the information he had received from the Fire Marshal or VDOT. He said that he was unable to validate the third point, which referenced the owner's work with the adjacent property owner on potential impacts. He said that he was unclear about the background on this point or its current status.

Dr. Yeung said that upon reading the information, she read that most applicants were actively addressing comments, but staff had noted that it was not always the case. She said that she could not determine what the case was, so she was relying on staff's recommendation to guide the Board on what the current situation was. She said that from what she gathered, it sounded like staff did not recommend granting this extension.

Mr. English said that his interpretation was that the applicant was not being very cooperative or following through with what was required of them.

Mr. Geouge said that he personally had not been involved with this project, so he could not provide much detail. He said that his experience was that he had not been able to validate two of the three issues included in the justification from the applicant.

Ms. Bohmke motioned, seconded by Ms. Vanuch, to approve Proposed Resolution R25-198, to deny the request for the time limit extension.

Mr. Diggs said that he wanted to clarify a few points as he was hearing a lot of information and reading between the lines. He said that when they discussed the delays and issues that businesses had faced, he wanted to be sure that those delays were not due to the time it took for Planning and Zoning staff to process the information. He said that he did not want to see their decision tonight based on speculation or inferences, only to find out the County had been partially responsible for the delays. He said that he wanted to make sure that the County had not prolonged the process in such a way that required the time limit extensions for this CUP.

Mr. Geouge said that he understood Mr. Diggs' concern. He said that if the Planning and Zoning Department were fully staffed, this application likely would have taken two months to process through the County court, but it took about five and a half months instead. He said that he would contend that there were some delays on the County side, but not to the extent of the delays on the applicant's side.

Mr. Diggs said that this was the point he wanted to highlight for the Board's consideration. He said that he wanted to hold developers accountable for ensuring the development process progressed in a timely manner; however, the County was also accountable for their part of the process. He said that he had mixed feelings due to this aspect.

Ms. Allen said that she typically tried to give the benefit of the doubt, but in this case, she was not so sure. She said that the County had delayed this by an additional four months, but she was unsure of how much work could be done in another three months.

Mr. Geouge said that if the applicant resubmitted the application soon and addressed the comments, it was possible they could have this item before the Planning Commission for a public hearing before the end of the year.

Ms. Allen said that she wanted to operate fairly. She said that if they were going to consider taking an additional three months, she was willing to give them the extra time the County had already taken as part of processing the application. She said that if they could not meet the new deadline within those three months, then that was on them. She said that three months was more than adequate time. She said that giving them the extra three months would be her suggestion. She said that if the applicant still could not meet the new deadline, then it was not the County's responsibility.

Dr. Yeung said that she was concerned about whether there was sufficient time for them to bring it to a public hearing. She said that after they responded, she was still unsure if it would be possible to schedule a public hearing in time.

Mr. Geouge said that given the limitations of taking public hearings in November and December to the Board, he would say no.

Mr. Diggs said that however, it could be presented to the Planning Commission by that time.

Ms. Allen said that she was wary of that; as Ms. Vanuch mentioned, the Board did not take up land use matters after a certain date. She said that she believed it was fair to give the applicant the benefit of the doubt with providing them an additional three months. She said that if they were not responsive at all during this time, it would make the County's job easier to deny their request. She said that on the other hand, if they were able to respond within the three-month timeframe, it demonstrated their willingness to continue their project. She said that in her opinion, if a public hearing was scheduled for the new year with the new Board, it would be a fair opportunity for them to try to salvage the project.

Mr. Geouge said that to clarify, this CUP was considered as expired on June 12, 2025, so the three-month extension would continue it to September 12, 2025. He said that it was being considered after the fact because the request was submitted prior to the expiration and today was the earliest date the Board could consider the request.

Ms. Bohmke said that she believed they had had a productive conversation, but given that the application would not be able to hit the public hearing deadlines by the end of the year, and that the applicant had had sufficient opportunity to communicate with staff, she felt the Board had to make a decision on what had occurred thus far.

Ms. Gary asked if the Board could consider granting a time limit extension shorter than 12 months in order to make up for the delays on the County's side of the process while still encouraging the development to make timely progress.

Mr. Diggs said that he agreed everyone needed to be held accountable, but in this situation, the County was somewhat at fault for the delay.

Ms. Vanuch said that the three-month extension granted by the Planning Commission had ended back in June, and Mr. Geouge had reiterated that staff had not heard from the applicant in that time period. She said that the applicant had the opportunity to respond to staff comments that were left open since January, but they had not responded. She said that in response to the comments staff sent back, it was clear that there were significant issues with the property, and she believed the project's viability was questionable.

Ms. Vanuch said that a review of the letters indicated there were inter-parcel connection problems as well. She said that she did not think this extension would be beneficial; instead, it would likely only serve to further delay the project, causing staff to become increasingly frustrated as they attempted to address and respond to these comments, only to find themselves in a back-and-forth battle. She said it seemed unlikely that this would lead to any meaningful progress.

Mr. Diggs said that his understanding was that the applicant had requested an extension prior to the deadline in June, meaning that they were responsive.

Ms. Vanuch said that staff had sent back comments to the applicant in January. She said that the applicant had not responded to staff's questions since January but instead had requested an additional extension for the CUP.

Mr. Geouge said that that was correct.

Ms. Allen asked if the applicant was waiting for the Board's decision on the extension before they responded to staff's comments.

Mr. Geouge said that he could not speak to that.

Dr. Yeung said that the applicant and owner had stated that their engineer had been unsuccessfully been attempting to contact the County Fire Marshal to clarify his comments.

Ms. Vanuch said that the County Fire Marshal was present and was shaking his head no.

Dr. Yeung said that it appeared the applicant's statement was incorrect.

Mr. Geouge said that staff had researched that and determined it was an invalid statement.

Dr. Yeung asked if this was one of the two statements staff had determined to be incorrect.

Mr. Geouge said yes.

Mr. Diggs called the vote to approve Proposed Resolution R25-198, to deny the time limit extension for the SC Plaza CUP.

The Voting Board tally was:

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

No: (0)

Abstain: (1) Allen

Mr. Diggs asked if Ms. Allen could share her reason for abstaining from the vote.

Ms. Allen said that her abstention was largely based on the need for more information. She said that she required clarification on the situation, and she may have been incorrect in assuming that the applicant was waiting for their decision. She said that she would never know for certain, so unless she felt that she had sufficient information, she could not truly be against or for the proposal from the applicant. She said that unfortunately, they did not have the time to gather that information.

ITEM 24. PLANNING AND ZONING; REVIEW OF DRAFT AMENDMENTS TO COMPREHENSIVE PLAN GUIDELINES AND ZONING ORDINANCE REGULATIONS RELATED TO DATA CENTERS; PROPOSED RESOLUTION R25-205 9REFER TO PLANNING COMMISSION FOR PUBLIC HEARING)

Mr. Diggs said that the Board would address Item 24 after Presentations from the Public, so they would first address Item 25.

ITEM 25. BUDGET AND MANAGEMENT; CONSIDER ADOPTING THE FISCAL YEAR (FY) 27 BUDGET CALENDAR; PROPOSED RESOLUTION R25-130

Ms. Vanuch said that she would like to make a request of the Board. She asked if they could move this item to the Board's August work session. She said that she believed that there were several items that needed to be discussed and worked on for their public hearing process, particularly the budget from last year into next year. She said that given that they were essentially voting on this item that followed a similar process to last year, she thought it would be beneficial to take it up in a work session and workshop it. She said that she specifically would like to hear what the Chair thought had gone well and what had not, along with how the schedule would best fit into the Board's new meeting structure.

Ms. Vanuch said that she would like to take some time to discuss this with their staff and the other Supervisors, and then come back at the following meeting with a revised calendar that they could all agree on. She said that there was no issue with waiting to approve this calendar until September. She said that she thought there were no issues with the calendar dates in October, November, and December, but she thought they should review the dates for the public hearings and work sessions that would be happening in the new year. She said that they certainly may find the calendar to be appropriate as presented, but she would appreciate some more time to discuss it with the Board and staff to make sure.

Mr. Diggs said that he had no issue with that request, but would like to ensure it would not negatively impact their staff's work schedule and that everything was planned appropriately.

Dr. Yeung said that she had a question regarding the calendar, specifically concerning the school presentation on the CIP in December of 2016, followed by the joint School Board meeting in the following month. She said that the two events appeared to occur relatively close together. She said that she was uncertain if they should consider moving those meetings.

Ms. Light said that they had intentionally included that in the December agenda for the schools to provide a presentation to the Board, particularly because they anticipated the school division to have a lot of information on CIP projects that may result in a lengthy presentation. She said that this schedule would give the Board time to digest that, ask questions of colleagues and staff, and then return in January to resume discussion at their next meeting.

Ms. Bohmke said that she thought it was important for the Board to review the budget calendar in a work session. She said that considering there would be new members of the Board in January, this information should be presented again for everyone to review again. She said that additionally, regarding all of their regional organizations funded by the County, such as the library, the jail, Virginia Railway Express (VRE), Potomac Rappahannock Transportation Commission (PRTC), she would like the Board to have preliminary information on those regional agencies' funding requests by October or November. She said that this would facilitate better-informed discussions amongst the Board and their committee members.

Ms. Allen said that at the Chair and Vice Chair meeting in January, they had discussed this item with staff and agreed they should try to map out the budget calendar in advance. She said she did not have an issue with discussing the calendar dates in a work session, but she wanted to confirm

with Ms. Light that they had enough time in a work session to approve the calendar before budget season would kick off.

Ms. Krauss said that for this calendar, yes. She said that they had a C-Day scheduled as a budget work session in October.

Ms. Allen said that she was referring to the work session Ms. Vanuch had requested for review of the calendar.

Ms. Vanuch said that her request was to add this item to their August work session.

Ms. Allen asked if there was enough time to add this item between August and September.

Ms. Krauss said that yes, they could make that work.

Ms. Allen said that she was amenable to that, then.

Ms. Krauss said that Ms. Light was going to cover this in her presentation, but she would like to address it now. She said that she wanted to acknowledge Ms. Vanuch's perspective and understood her concern. She said that they had worked closely with school staff, and Mr. Ashton and she had met with the Superintendent and Deputy Superintendent, as well as Finance staff, the Clerk, the County Attorney, the Commissioner of Revenue, and the Treasurer, to map out this next budget cycle. She said that there were specific timelines that they had to navigate, and they had to adjust this calendar accordingly.

Ms. Krauss said that she was happy to share this information in a more detailed presentation for the Board, so they could understand the reasoning behind this proposed calendar and the time constraints involved. She said that there were several factors at play, and they were willing to sit down and share this information with the Board to ensure that they could make informed decisions that met their needs for the budget.

Dr. Yeung said that she wanted to build on Ms. Bohmke's comments on ensuring that partner agencies, as well as regional boards, participated in work sessions to proactively compile budget information. She said that the Library Board had its first work session and had already sent preliminary information to the County Administrator, and she would like for all of the Supervisors who sat on regional committees to encourage them to send in this budget information as early as possible.

Ms. Krauss said that they would try to do that as best as possible, and staff would rely on the expertise of the Supervisors serving on the boards to help them navigate the process. She said that there were timing issues to consider, as not all boards adopted budgets at the same time. She said that some of them would not be in place until January, which would put the County well into the budget process by then. She said that to mitigate this, they would need to consider various factors and do their best to incorporate this information into their discussions with staff. She said that they would ask for the Board's assistance in filtering this information and presenting it to staff, so they could effectively incorporate it into their conversations.

Ms. Vanuch motioned, seconded by Mr. English, to defer Proposed Resolution R25-130 and place the item on the Board's August work session agenda.

The Voting Board tally was:

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

No: (0)

ITEM 26. BUDGET & MANAGEMENT; CONSIDER AUTHORIZING ADVERTISEMENT FOR A PUBLIC HEARING TO AWARD A BONUS TO DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES EMPLOYEES, SUPPORTED WITH STATE, FEDERAL PASS-THROUGH, AND YEAREND FUNDING; PROPOSED RESOLUTION R25-207

Ms. Light said that she would like to present a comprehensive overview of the proposed bonuses for Social Services and Commonwealth-approved bonuses for County staff. She said that the presentation would therefore cover Item 26 and Item 27 on the agenda. She said that the Board was being asked to consider the advertisement of potential bonuses for Social Services, constitutional officers, including the Registrar and Electoral Board, Comp Board-funded positions only, or all County employees except for Social Services, which would be considered separately.

Ms. Light said that beginning with Social Services bonus advertisement, the estimated cost of a bonus for Social Services was over \$100,000. She said that staff had identified revenue sources for the Board's consideration. She said that state funding would provide approximately 50% of that amount, and federal funding would provide an additional 18.5%. She said that they were also requesting that the Board budget and appropriate General Fund reserves as a revenue source to meet the costs of the 93 full-time and five part-time Social Services employees.

Ms. Light said that she would like to highlight some important frequently asked questions to bring to the Board's and public's attention. She said that any state funding not used by a locality for the bonus would be redistributed to those localities that provided the 1.5% bonus. She said that if Stafford County did not provide the bonus, their state funding of \$46,405 would be redistributed to those localities that did provide the bonus. She said that this meant that localities that did provide the bonus would receive extra funding.

Ms. Light said that if the Board chose to approve the Social Services bonus on September 16, 2025, after the public hearing and other localities did not provide the bonus, there was potential that Stafford may receive additional revenue; however, they did not have a projection of what that revenue would be. She said that this proposal impacted employees hired on or before June 30, 2025, and the bonus must be provided by October 20, 2025.

Ms. Light said that the County was required to hold a public hearing before the Board adopted an ordinance to give the bonus, and September 16, 2025 was the designated date for that public hearing. She said that this would ensure that they met the October 20, 2025 deadline to have the bonus included in Social Services employees' paychecks. She said that this information covered Item 26 and Proposed Resolution R25-207 for Social Services only.

Ms. Vanuch motioned, seconded by Ms. Gary, to approve Proposed Resolution R25-207.

The Voting Board tally was:

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

No: (0)

ITEM 27. BUDGET & MANAGEMENT; CONSIDER AUTHORIZING A PUBLIC HEARING TO PROVIDE A BONUS FOR COMPENSATION BOARD FUNDED POSITIONS, GENERAL REGISTRAR'S OFFICE, AND THE ELECTORAL BOARD ALL SUPPORTED WITH STATE FUNDING, AND FOR OTHER COUNTY POSITIONS AND EMPLOYEES; PROPOSED RESOLUTION R25-212

Ms. Light said that with the Compensation Board-funded and state-funded bonuses for constitutional officers and their employees, the Registrar and Electoral Board, the Board had two options to consider. She said that the Proposed Resolution to advertise this was R25-12. She said that Option A included all constitutional officers, the Registrar, and the Electoral Board.

Ms. Light said that a key difference between the number of Comp Board-funded positions and the actual filled positions as of June 30, 2025, was evident. She said that for example, the Sheriff was allocated 97 Comp board funded positions, but he actually had 279 full-time positions as of June 30, 2025. She said that the Registrar and Electoral Board were not Comp Board funded, as they were funded through the Registrar's Electoral Board. She said that the total cost of the bonus for Option A would be \$562,888, equivalent to a 1.5% bonus.

Ms. Light said that they had calculated the state funding for this bonus to be approximately \$140,000, which provided about 25% of the revenue to fund this bonus. She said that the potential funding sources for Option A included state funding of just under \$140,000 and General Fund reserves of \$423,522. Option B was for Comp Board positions only. She said that the sheriff had 97 Comp Board funded positions, and if they only funded bonuses for those positions, the cost would be \$166,000. She said that the potential funding sources for this option would be the same as Option A, with state funding and General Fund reserves.

Ms. Light said that it was also worth noting that there were some details regarding Comp Board funding that she thought were important to discuss. She said that the Sheriff's Department included both uniformed and non-uniformed Comp Board-funded positions, which could sometimes be viewed differently. She said that however, the Comp Board funding was an inventory, and it would create inequity within a department if only Comp Board funded positions were given the bonus. She said that for example, Deputy A and Deputy B may perform the same job, but one was Comp Board-funded and the other was not. She said that the Comp Board funding was not based on skill sets or abilities, but rather the funding source for each position.

Ms. Light said that all Comp Board-funded positions must receive their bonus by October 30, 2025 and be employed at the time of the bonus payment. She said that this did impact employees hired before June 30, 2025, based on their June 30, 2025 salary. She said that they had excluded regular part-time employees and were assuming a 20-hour work week as part of these calculations. She said that the Electoral Board was also included in the state funding.

Ms. Light said that Option C would provide a 1.5% bonus to all County staff, excluding Social Services and including the Electoral Board. She said that staff intended to provide a comparison

of Fiscal Year 26 raises to the Board to see how Stafford County's employee raises compared to their comparable organizations.

Mr. Diggs said that the Board would resume discussion of this item after Presentations from the Public.

PRESENTATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

1. Jeff Eastland, Rock Hill District said that he would like to commend the County's Planning Commission for their hard work over the summer in addressing the need for stronger performance standards for data centers. He said that he had attended every Planning Commission meeting and subcommittee work session, and he was aware of the efforts they put forth. He said that other localities, such as Spotsylvania, had recognized the importance of this issue, having unanimously approved a 1,000-foot setback.

Mr. Eastland said that the Commission had demonstrated a commitment to their constituents by conducting thorough research, engaging with the community, and listening to concerns. He said that it was clear that they cared about their constituency and how they responded to them, but he did not see the same coming from this Board. He said that over the past four months, he had spoken at every Board meeting and attended most County events, sending several emails with attachments on data center construction and environmental reports highlighting their potential harm to the environment and human health. He said that with a few notable exceptions, he had never heard anything back.

Mr. Eastland said that he believed that more transparency was needed on this issue. He said that with all due respect, it was the Board of Supervisors' responsibility to protect their constituents, not the companies and their lawyers. He said that their communities, not out-of-state corporations, should be the Board's primary concern. He said that he was calling on the Board to advertise a joint public hearing to move forward with the recommendations and the work that the Planning Commission had done. He said that at the very least, he requested the Board to adopt the setbacks at 1,000 feet.

2. Christopher Beach, George Washington District, said that he would like to remain a resident of his district. He said that he was a native of this area and he wished to see things maintained as they should be. He said that he recognized the importance of the environment and believed it was essential to keep it safe. He said that was all he wished to say, and he appreciated the opportunity to speak.
3. Daniel Staples, George Washington District, said that he was born and raised in the White Oak area, had lived there for 75 years on the same piece of property. He said that he wanted to keep everything just like it was now and did not want to risk harming their land or water through data center development.
4. Lillian Swain, George Washington District, said that tonight, the Board would likely hear a great deal about data centers. She said that this may include concerns regarding health and water, rezoning issues, construction problems, and 1000-foot setbacks, the latter of which she was in favor of. She said that however, she was not going to discuss those issues and instead was requesting the Board to vote to advertise a joint public hearing with the Planning

Commission and the Board on the newly revised data center standards for Stafford County.

Ms. Swain said that the decision was straightforward, had precedent, was timely, and the research and deliberations were nearing completion. She said that in May, they requested the Planning Commission to review the existing data center standards that were approved by many of the Supervisors in 2023. She said that the Planning Commission did an excellent job, holding multiple meetings, listening to constituents, and consulting with staff, the County Attorney, and other Counties.

Ms. Swain said that now, it was the Board's turn to demonstrate to their constituents where they stood. She asked if tonight the Board would choose to delay or to move forward with these new standards. She requested the Board to move forward tonight and to authorize the advertisement for a joint public hearing with the Planning Commission on the newly revised data center standards. She said that they had the standards, and they reflected many of the improvements citizens had requested. She implored the Board to advertise it now and to not wait until after the election nor until next year.

Ms. Swain said that the developers and mega corporations were not slowing down; more permits for data centers were likely to be applied for this fall. She said that she requested the Board to not to apply the brakes on data centers; vote tonight to move forward with the joint public hearing with the Planning Commission on the standards. She said that the future of Stafford County weighed heavily on the Board's decision tonight, and their constituents were all watching and listening.

5. Roxie Joyce, George Washington District, said that she had attended some of the Planning Commission meetings and had been impressed and thankful for the work they had done. She said that she resided only a few hundred feet from the proposed Simms Farm data center, which was literally approximately 0.25 miles from her house and even closer to her neighbors across the street.

Ms. Joyce said that she understood the importance of building more data centers to support artificial intelligence (AI), but in a rush to build more, local and state governments must consider the impact on residential homes, both those who owned the land that the data centers would be built on and those of the nearby residential homes. She said that there were numerous studies and reports documenting the negative impacts experienced by residents in close proximity to existing data centers. She said that they had all heard about the effects on rivers, water sources, groundwater for wells, aquifers, power grid demands, increased electric bills for citizens, loss of agricultural land, impact on wildlife, and noise and low-frequency noise and vibration pollution.

Ms. Joyce said that developers promised increased revenue from data center construction, but many studies had shown that the realized revenue was far less than that promised, and Counties often incurred additional costs not covered by developers to improve infrastructure affected by the building of data centers. She said that there were four data centers proposed within just a few miles of her neighborhood. She said that as a retired homeowner in close proximity to these four data centers, she was deeply concerned.

Ms. Joyce said that the County already had four approved and under construction, and there were at least 12 more proposed, including some that may be considered historical sites, such as Martha Washington's farm. She said that a drive through Loudoun County revealed the effects of allowing multiple data centers to be built. She said that large sections of that County were now dominated by data centers, creating a concrete jungle.

Ms. Joyce said that it had been well-documented that 75% of the world's data centers were already located in Virginia. She asked how much more Virginia could concede of its land. She asked when other states would step up to meet the demands of AI. She asked at what point was it too much for citizens to bear, and their quality of life impacted.

6. Elena Prokos, Rock Hill District, said that she had attended numerous meetings and had expressed her concerns about zoning changes, inadequate setbacks, environmental issues, unhealthy noise, extreme water and electrical usage, and deforestation of their precious ecosystems. She said that tonight, she would like to address the big picture and urge the Board to put serious thought into timelines. She said that in May, a 6-1 vote extended timelines in the name of doing it right.

Ms. Prokos said that the sole dissenting vote provided several valid reasons for not slowing down the timelines. She said that the most compelling point was that the longer the process dragged on, the more applications would be submitted in the interim. She said that the whole process had been complicated by the threat of lawsuits from developers who believed they did not need to follow performance standards. She said that additionally, the promise of revenue had created a sense of urgency.

Ms. Prokos said that she believed the Board owed the citizens of Stafford County the decision to make happen sooner rather than later. She said that she also believed they owed it to the Planning Commission members who worked tirelessly to develop the standards at those five-plus sessions, researching, analyzing, and listening to constituents' concerns.

Ms. Prokos said that she asked that the Board hold a joint public hearing with the Planning Commission and set the advertised setback for the data center buildings at a disappointing 500 feet or more. She said that she implored the Board to not water down the standards. She said that furthermore, she requested that they be forthcoming and transparent regarding the status of projects, as much as the non-disclosure agreements allowed. She said that she was told to trust that confidential information shared with the Board would be used in their best interest. She said that she struggled to feel confident with that suggestion. She said that finally, she wanted the Board to reflect on a poem by Wendell Berry, "The Peace of Wild Things."

Ms. Prokos said, "When despair for the world grows in me and I wake in the night at the least sound in fear of what my life and my children's lives may be, I go and lie down where the wood drake rests in his beauty on the water, and the great heron feeds. I come into the peace of wild things who do not tax their lives with forethought of grief. I come into the presence of still water. And I feel above me the day-blind stars waiting with their light. For a time I rest in the grace of the world, and am free."

7. Mike Lucas, George Washington District, said that he recently received information about the

proposed data centers in the mail, which meant he was a bit behind in terms of some of the discussions on this topic. He said that he knew that the information provided included four proposed centers around his house; two along the river and two located right next to him. He said that he understood the environmental concerns, but one thing he had not heard anyone else mention was the light pollution. He said that with four data centers in the area, they would have daylight 24 hours a day. He said that he was also concerned about the Rappahannock River, as the centers would require a significant amount of water for cooling.

Mr. Lucas said that he was also worried about the electrical grid's ability to handle the increased demand, which meant they may be using backup diesel generators more than anticipated. He said that this could be a concern, especially since they already experienced frequent power outages in the area. He said that he believed that industrial areas of the County would be more suitable for this type of development, rather than residential areas, which would minimize the impact on their homes and daily lives.

8. Wesley Grigg, George Washington District, said that he had been a part of this community since 1968, having been raised here. He said that as a retired firefighter captain from Fairfax County, he had spent 40 years serving. He said that he began his career in Hartwood with his father, and later retired from the Marine Corps after 28 years of service. He said that Hansford Abel's decision to change zoning in the past had a lasting impact on the area. He said that he recalled the changes pushing his father out of Hartwood, as it had become a large subdivision.

Mr. Grigg said that their family then relocated to White Oak, purchasing 240 acres and an additional 50 acres in King George. He said that at the time, they were drawn to the Agricultural A1 zoning designation. He said that however, over the past 40 years, the area had undergone significant changes. He understood the need for development, but he was concerned about the potential consequences. He said that it should be considered that these data centers may become empty in the future as technology changed and not as much space was required for data processing. He said that he was not sure what the outcome would be for all of these buildings when that happened.

Mr. Grigg said that his question to the Board of Supervisors of Stafford County was: could they not prioritize the preservation of rural areas like White Oak? He said that other counties had less revenue sources than Stafford; he questioned why 13 of these proposals were being pushed forward in Stafford County. He asked what would happen when these facilities were no longer needed. He said that his next question concerned the recent infrastructure projects across the southern part of the County. He said that millions of dollars had been invested in laying pipes, with work ongoing for eight months.

Mr. Grigg said that he had inquired about the purpose of these infrastructure projects, and the workers had told him that the work was being done in anticipation of data center construction. He said that he did not understand how they knew the data centers were coming and were willing to put money behind that while the citizens of the area had no clue. He said that he was confused about how people were willing to invest in projects that had not been approved, and he would like an answer.

Mr. Grigg said that he appreciated the response he received regarding groundwater usage for cooling systems, which affirmed the Board was not supportive of using groundwater to cool data centers. He said that however, he urged the Board to consider the broader implications of their decisions. He said that they were not a small, isolated community; they were a large County with diverse needs and concerns.

9. Francis (Bill) Bacon, George Washington District, said that he lived on Hollywood Farm Road. He said that he had been living there for nearly 40 years, and although he was not a farmer initially, he had come to be one. He said that they had built a beautiful and peaceful farm there. He said that he was concerned because it was reported that multiple data farms would be constructed in their area, which raised environmental concerns and potentially devalued their property and that of their neighbors. He said that he did not believe this was necessary, and he thought alternative locations should be explored.

Mr. Bacon said that for example, they had already had 2,000 feet of cable run through their property, and he had spoken with the workers involved. He said that they seemed to have a general understanding of the data farm locations, or they would not have installed the cables. He said that this had him worried, as it appeared these data farms would be concentrated in their area. He said that he believed more transparency was needed regarding this subject.

Mr. Bacon said that he wondered how they determined the locations of these data farms. He said that the extensive cable installation, costing hundreds of millions of dollars, was a significant concern. He said that they had already laid 400 miles of cable between Loudoun, Stafford, and King George, which was substantial. He said that it seemed they were expanding their reach, and he hoped they would not proceed with it.

10. Nancy Rueter, Garrisonville District, said that she hoped that the Supervisors all had a good vacation. She said that her vacation included attending the Planning Commission subcommittee meetings. She said that the subcommittee did an outstanding job in reviewing the regulations regarding data centers, listening, and learning. She said that their recommendations were well thought out, and she was very supportive of what they did.

Ms. Rueter said that a good vacation experience was worth sharing, and therefore, she asked that they give all Stafford residents the opportunity to learn and to speak. She said that by voting tonight to advertise a joint public hearing with the Planning Commission on the revised data center standards and to set the advertised building setback at 500 feet, but she would prefer 1,000 feet, considering Spotsylvania County had determined that 1,000 feet was a reasonable amount.

11. George Fenton, George Washington District, said that he was born 10 miles north of here and had spent the past 38 years in Stafford County. He said that he would like to express his gratitude to the Board for taking a pause over the summer, allowing the subcommittee of the Planning Commission to complete their work. He said that they did an outstanding job, and he wholeheartedly supported everything past commenters had stated thus far. He said that the wave of community members who had spoken tonight had made a compelling case, and he believed they were on the right track.

Mr. Fenton said that he would like to reiterate his takeaway, which was that the Board should move forward with the joint public hearing to review the proposed amendments by the subcommittee. He said that as representatives of this blue wave and the other supporters of firm guardrails on the proposed data centers, he urged the Supervisors to respect the wishes of her constituents. He said that he cautioned against ignoring the concerns of those who opposed the data centers, as this could lead to further division. He said that he thanked the Board for their dedication to this job and wished them good luck.

12. Gonzalo Huezo, Falmouth District, said that upon returning home on Monday, his 13-year-old daughter handed him a document that caught his attention. She said that she knew about the issue because he had taken her to Dulles and they had seen the numerous large buildings in Fairfax County. He said that when he saw this document, it was concerning to him. He said that he lived off McCarty Road and owned a farm there, relying on well water. He said that as a retired Marine, he had chosen to live in Stafford County 20 years ago, drawn to its beauty.

Mr. Huezo said that he was initially thrilled to find this place; it felt like heaven in some ways. He said that he loved the people and the County, and he believed they did a lot of good here. He said that however, he was deeply concerned about the overdevelopment in their area. He said that as someone who worked in Washington, D.C., he wanted to maintain his quality of life in Stafford, not to live in another D.C. He said that he wanted his children to grow up there, just as they were born and raised in Fort Belvoir. He said that they knew Stafford County and Fredericksburg, and now they had a farm of their own, where their animals relied on that well for water.

Mr. Huezo said that he was worried about the impact of these data centers, which would require significant resources to support. He said that Dominion's proposed solution, charging households for the power, did not seem fair. He said that while some may argue that data centers may bring jobs, he disagreed; they required minimal manpower to operate. He said that he had worked in the Pentagon for 20 years and had learned a lot about AI over that time period.

Mr. Huezo said that while AI may make their lives easier in some ways, there was a cost associated with it. He requested the Board to consider the cost-benefit analysis, because he personally did not think that Stafford County needed the revenue. He said that they had many well-off people living in this County, and it was easy to see from Embrey Mill and all the way down. He said that he sincerely asked the Board to listen to their constituents' concerns, as this would directly affect the families who had lived there for generations.

13. Shannon Fingerholz, Hartwood District, said that her comment was on a different subject than data centers, so she would be quick in consideration of all these other passionate speakers. She said that as they began thinking about next year and were already discussing budgeting and scheduling, she would like to reiterate the importance of coordinating meeting schedules with the School Board.

Ms. Fingerholz said that since both the School Board and Board of Supervisors meetings often took place on Tuesdays, she believed it would be beneficial for the funding body to align with the School Board's schedule. She said that this would allow for more effective communication

and community engagement. She said that by having meetings on different days, it would be easier for community members to attend both meetings and participate.

14. Bruce Norton, George Washington District, said that he was a retired Marine, Marine Corps historian, author, and movie producer. He said that Sherwood Forest, which had served as a hospital during the Civil War, held significant historical value. He said that it had been used by both the Confederate and Union forces, and it was home to the burials of Confederate soldiers, Union soldiers, and African American slaves. He said that the idea of desecrating this area was unfathomable to him.

Mr. Norton said that they had discussed the costs of utilities and water and electricity being passed onto their constituency. He said that the potential for expansion of these data centers was a concern, as once the camel's nose was under the tent, it continued on, and this issue had not been adequately addressed. He said that he would like to inquire about the effect on property values when these centers became a reality. He said that he urged the Board to consider these concerns and do the right thing.

15. Carolyn Whittaker, George Washington District, said that she was here tonight to ask for the Board's cooperation and action in protecting the health, well-being, and interests of their families, property, water, and electricity by voting no on the construction of data centers in agricultural farm land, residential areas around the Rappahannock and Potomac Rivers, and all land that was not commercial property. She said that this Board had the power to determine the future of Stafford County residents and the usage of their land forever.

Ms. Whittaker said that the question was, would the Board use their vote to protect the residents they represented in Stafford County, or would they vote based on speculation about what the County may gain or lose? She said that the Planning Commission had conducted extensive research, gathering facts about the good and bad aspects of data center construction in the County, and had heard from thousands of Stafford residents, as well as County administrators, who had expressed growing concerns about strict construction and requirements. She said that the Planning Commission was presenting to this Board stronger restrictions that needed to be put in place immediately.

Ms. Whittaker said that the Board must act quickly, without delay, and pass these restrictions to protect Stafford County and its residents. She said that the Board must hold a joint public meeting with themselves and the Planning Commission to gather all necessary information and answer any questions this Board may have. She said that by doing so, they would be able to vote yes and approve the restrictions recommended by the Planning Commission to safeguard Stafford. She said that she also strongly supported a minimum of 1000 feet separation between data centers and residential areas.

16. Jackie Arthur, Falmouth District, said that as a Protect Stafford Advocate, she was requesting that the Board vote to advertise a joint public hearing with the Planning Commission on the revised standards and to set the advertised data center building setback at 500 feet or more. She said that personally, she had preferred a 1,000-foot setback, but she understood the original setback to residential or school property lines was 100 feet – that was equivalent to the length of two school buses parked end to end. She said that the new setback would increase to 500

feet or more, with no equipment allowed within the first 200 feet.

Ms. Arthur said that many of these data center sites would have hundreds of diesel generators the size of tractor trailers. She said that in place of a 50-foot vegetative buffer, which could be clear-cut, a 200-foot buffer of preserved mature trees would be required. She said that a joint public hearing was the fastest and most effective way to update outdated resolutions, regulations, and protect the community from poorly sited data centers. She said that there were currently 16 plus data center applications in the pipeline, possibly more, many of which were proposed in locations the County did not foresee, including on top of residences, schools, and critical wetland areas such as the Accokeek Creek and Rappahannock River.

Ms. Arthur said that Stafford County was facing a data center boom, with 4,000 acres or 37 million square feet of proposed data center space. She said that to put this into perspective, 4,000 acres was equivalent to five to six times the size of Central Park, which was only 843 acres or 3,000 football fields, or the size of a small suburb town. She said that she was supportive of protecting land and avoiding habitat destruction and massive resource strain in Stafford County. She said that as a retired nurse, she was also concerned about pollution and public health issues on Stafford citizens.

Ms. Arthur said that the attorney representing the majority of the data center organizations had opposed these new recommendations, arguing that minimal regulations were necessary for economic development to be possible in Stafford. She said that in her opinion, all she heard was greed, greed, and greed. She said that these developers did not care about the citizens who lived in Stafford County or the needs and lifestyles that they had made that would be dramatically altered by the sites chosen for data centers. She said that she urged the Board of Supervisors to issue a joint public hearing in the fastest and most effective way to update outdated regulations and to protect the community from poorly sited data centers.

17. Ahmad Hotaki, George Washington District, said that he resided off of Hollywood Farm Road, with his wife and their two small children. He said that they lived directly adjacent to the proposed data center campus site on Forest Lane Road. He said that if this proposal moved forward, the data center would be visible directly in front of their home and yard, replacing the peaceful, idyllic farmland view they currently cherished with an industrial complex.

Mr. Hotaki said that no residential community should be forced to share a property line with something as large, loud, and visually destructive as a data center. He said that this type of development was better suited for a properly zoned industrial area, not in the middle of farmland or next to family homes. He asked that the Board consider: would they want a massive data center built right next to their home? He said that this project would forever alter the character of their neighborhood. He said that this data center did not belong in their neighborhood, and he hoped that the Supervisors would hear their voices and vote against it.

18. Patrick Sobolik, Hartwood District, said that a while ago, the Board had said they wanted interaction with the community. He said that with a full house tonight and 66 people in the overflow room, he thought that was meeting their request for community involvement. He said that he would like to commend the Planning Commission's subcommittee that they created to revise the performance standards for data centers. He said that their work had been a model of

teamwork, guidance, and respect, and the revisions they produced were thoughtful, timely, and much needed.

Mr. Sobolik said that it was imperative that this Board acted swiftly to adopt these recommendations. He said that each day of delay risked applications being considered under outdated standards that did not meet today's expectations for performance, sustainability, and community impact. He said that to move quickly, he respectfully asked the Board to advertise a joint public hearing with the Planning Commission. He said that under Virginia law, if the first ad ran this Friday, August 22, 2025, and the second ad on Friday, August 29, 2025, a joint public hearing could be held as early as Wednesday, September 3, 2025, or at the next regular meeting on Tuesday, September 9, 2025.

Mr. Sobolik said that the path was clear; all that was needed was the Board's action. He said that when they set that hearing, he urged them to advertise a setback of no less than 500 feet for data center buildings. He said that a 500-foot setback was not just a number; it was a commitment to protecting their neighborhoods, their quality of life, and the character of Stafford County. He said that in closing, he thanked the subcommittee for their outstanding work and urged this Board to honor their efforts by adopting these revised standards quickly and decisively.

19. Sarah Schroeder, George Washington District, said that she was here to emphasize the importance of swiftly adopting revised standards for data centers in Stafford. She said that they all recognized that data centers represented an economic opportunity, but the manner in which they were sited and designed would have lasting consequences for the County. She said that setbacks from neighborhoods were essential, with a minimum of 500 feet or more.

Ms. Schroeder said that without them, residents would face low-frequency noise, light, and air pollution, as well as visual impacts that diminished their quality of life. She said that these facilities should not be built along waterways, particularly the historic Rappahannock River. She said that once the landscape was altered by heavy industry, there was no going back. She said that protecting the riverscape not only safeguarded the environment but also the heritage and natural beauty that defined Stafford.

Ms. Schroeder said that economic growth mattered, but it could not be the sole consideration. She said that they must look beyond the immediate revenue to the broader implications for residents and the environment. She said that there was a path to achieve both economic benefit and community protection, but only if they established strong safeguards from the outset. She said that the choices the Board made today would shape Stafford not just in the short term, but for decades to come. She said that approving a data center was not a simple decision.

Ms. Schroeder said that it required discernment about which projects were appropriate and which were not, based on their siting and design. She said that the Planning Commission had already done the hard work of studying these issues and presenting thoughtful recommendations. She said that it was now time for the Board to act. She said that she urged the Board to review these revised standards promptly and without delay, and move them forward to safeguard both Stafford's growth and its quality of life.

20. Eric Schroeder, George Washington District, said that the proposals they had seen so far were primarily driven by business interests, without adequate consideration for the needs and concerns of Stafford County residents. He said that developers were focusing solely on their own benefits, whereas the Board's role was to protect the character of the County and make informed, forward-thinking decisions about its growth. He said that over the past few months, it had become clear that locating data centers near residential neighborhoods and endangered water sources was not a viable or responsible approach.

Mr. Schroeder said that this was not just a matter of resident opinion; it was supported by studies such as those conducted by Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission (JLARC), as well as real-world evidence from surrounding Counties that were now facing the consequences of poor planning. He said that what was crucial to note was that the Supervisors had the power to shape the outcome. He said that these companies could and would absorb any necessary requirements and costs if their proposals needed to be revised. He said that Stafford remained an attractive location for data centers, and there was a potential win-win to be had here.

Mr. Schroeder said that it was now time to act and lead. He said that Stafford could and should serve as a model for responsible data center adoption, where businesses were welcomed, but not at the expense of residents, neighborhoods, or County character. He said that the Planning Commission had already done extensive work, engaging with residents, County staff, and the County Attorney, and reviewing all new developments since the standards were last updated.

Mr. Schroeder said that their recommendations were thorough, balanced, and ready for action. He urged them to vote to hold a joint public hearing with the Planning Commission on the updated data standards. He said that he also recommended setting the building setback at 1,000 feet. He said that the decision was now in the Supervisors' hands. He requested the Board to not delay and to protect Stafford, protect their neighborhoods, and demonstrate that this Board was prepared to lead with foresight and courage.

21. Ruth Landry Stone, George Washington District, said that she had lived in the George Washington District for 30 years. She said that there were many considerations to be taken with regard to data centers, and she recommended the Board pause before making any other decisions about data centers. She said that it would be an injustice to their constituents and to the environmental resources that made Stafford a beautiful place to live. She said that they had a commitment to think before they acted, and when they did act, to act with the best interest of their constituents in mind, not just the interests of big business.

Ms. Landry Stone said that she urged the Board to vote to advertise a joint public hearing with the Planning Commission. She said that it was irresponsible to allow the construction of so many data centers in such close proximity to each other and to their already struggling river, which had been ranked as the sixth most endangered in the nation. She said that they only had that one river. She said that this was especially true considering the numerous negative impacts these centers had, including the significant amount of power they required, excessive water usage, threats to wildlife in their beautiful County, noise, light pollution, and more.

Ms. Landry Stone said that speaking of their beautiful County, the area where the centers would be built was in close proximity to an existing eagle nesting site that was used every year by a mating pair. She said that the closest centers, Sisson South and Forest Lane, were within two miles as the eagle flies. She said that this alone should be reason enough to deny the requesting rezoning given the many disruptions the center would create for the pair. She said that before any serious consideration was given to approving the rezoning centers, the County should consider the center's commitment to environmentally friendly options for construction, cooling, and other issues related to the centers.

Ms. Landry Stone said that for instance, there had been great strides made in using biomimicry and design to reduce the building's energy and water consumption needs. She said that the County had not only the opportunity but the duty to require responsible construction options for the centers if they were going to be built there. She said that in fact, the County could take this as an opportunity to be a leader in responsible environmental requirements for the data centers, taking time to pause the forward motion in the plans and work with organizations like the Biomimicry Institute on responsible design.

Ms. Landry Stone said that at a bare minimum, the Board needed to take time to revise the current data center standards to the benefit of the public and to demonstrate their commitment to protecting the citizens and the land they represented. She said that her preferred outcome would be no more data centers in Stafford County, period. She said that however, if they were to be built, there must be time taken to consider appropriate regulation of and location of the centers and required distances from the natural resources, like the Rappahannock River, which should benefit all citizens and wildlife.

22. Fanya Morton, George Washington District, said that she would like to express her appreciation for Mr. Diggs' prompt response to her email. She said that the flyers and other information regarding the data centers had left her with many questions and concerns. She said that upon researching data centers, she discovered that they could have a significant impact on resources such as electricity, water, and noise pollution. She said that the use of diesel generators during power outages was a concern. She said that transparency and information were essential for addressing the concerns of citizens.

Ms. Morton said that she believed that more knowledge on this matter was needed. She respectfully requested that the Board advertise the public hearing before moving forward any other projects. She said that as a resident of this area for over 28 years, she was particularly concerned about the proximity of the proposed Forest Lane data center to her home, which was just a half mile away. She said that she had chosen to live here because of the beauty, and as Mr. Keyes would often say, it was never too late to do the right thing. She urged the Board to prioritize the well-being of their community and consider implementing the best standards for data center development, including a 1,000-foot setback.

23. Floyd Bundrant, George Washington District, said that he would like to cite his experience attending Planning Commission meetings. He said that before the last meeting, he had read about a 2015 strategic development plan that discussed Stafford County's approach to identifying suitable locations for data centers. He said that according to that document, the County would take the time to identify such locations based on factors such as purpose and

situation.

Mr. Bundrant said that tonight, he would like to ask the Board of Supervisors how they define suitable locations for data centers, given that the ordinances were not appropriately defined for this purpose. He said that although there was a second effort to define suitable locations, he believed it was time to assess whether the current ordinances aligned with the 2015 plan's goal of finding suitable locations. He said that as he had heard from others speaking tonight, suitable locations were not typically near farms or housing divisions.

Mr. Bundrant said that as someone who lived near Kings Highway and may be subject to a data center, he found it disappointing, especially considering the potential impacts on property values. He urged the Board to consider the opportunity costs that could be missed by pursuing revenue from data centers without a clear explanation of what constituted suitable revenue.

Mr. Bundrant said that while he understood that revenue generally would be geared towards schools and law enforcement, he would like to know at what point revenue was deemed suitable. He said that additionally, he questioned whether data center revenues would remain consistent over time. He said that he believed there were alternative ways to address revenue issues. He said that he would like to caution that every decision made today may have unforeseen consequences that were not considered. He said that he would like to request that the Board of Supervisors advertise a joint public hearing with the Planning Commission on the revised data standards and set the rate.

24. Scott Teter, George Washington District, said that he was born and raised in the White Oak area. He said that the land that he owned was previously owned by his grandparents and then his parents. He said that his parents sold it to him when they moved away. He said that he had raised his children and grandchildren there. He said that he was deeply concerned about the proposed data center being built across the street from him. He said that there were numerous problems with this type of facility. He said that he was worried about who would be responsible for its maintenance.

Mr. Teter said that they lacked basic infrastructure, including water, sewer, or a fire hydrant. He said that despite this, a large, complex facility was being planned for this area. He said that it was being supported by the County, and he was worried about the impact it would have on them. He said that about six months ago, he noticed a trend in their area of the County; there had been simultaneous upgrades to water and sewer services, cable, fiber optics, road improvements. He asked where these improvements were 20 years ago.

Mr. Teter asked when the County decided that its citizens were second place to some big corporation who had only visited this County by flying over it in an airplane. He said that it was not right. He said that he paid taxes, had served as a fireman, had worked for the federal government, and had served his country, but had received no help from the County. He said that it was not until six months ago that a fire station was finally manned in their area, providing them with basic Fire and Rescue Services. He said that if they were going to approve this type of development in the County, he asked the Board to at least go with the recommendations from the Planning Commission.

Mr. Teter said that the 1,000-foot buffer would do nothing for him because it was open farmland across from him, so there was no buffer. He said that he would like to know how the proposed buffer would affect him, given that there would be open fields across from his property. He said that he was disconcerted by the lack of planning and consideration for their community. He said that he only recently discovered the information about this project when someone left a flyer in his mailbox. He said that it was clear that this was the reason for all the infrastructure improvements.

Mr. Teter said that he was not sure if the proposal had already been approved, but he would like to ask one question before he yielded his time. Does the County want to be known as the home of data centers, rather than the home of George Washington, who was born in Stafford County?

25. Jane Bailey, George Washington District, said that she was a native of south Stafford. She said that this morning while driving to work, she took a ride and observed the area around Wildcat Corner, Forest Lane, Springfield Farm, and White Oak Run. She said that as she was driving, she noticed a deer grazing on some ripe blackberries, which was the definition of agricultural, rural land. She said that four years ago, the Stafford County Future Land Use Comprehensive Plan had designated the Forest Lane track, Simms Farm track, and Sisson North track as agricultural areas.

Ms. Bailey said that at that time, there were five targeted development areas. She said that this was approved in October of 2021, and given that information, she believed they should consider placing the centers at these designated targeted development areas. She said that changing from A1 to M2, heavy industrial, which was the opposite of agricultural rural, was just wrong. She said that nothing else needed to be said; they should not even think about putting data centers in agricultural areas and put them only in the targeted development areas.

Ms. Bailey said that a lot of work had been put into the comprehensive plan and she thought they should stick with it. She said that she would also like to commend the subcommittee of the Planning Commission for their hard work and dedication. She said that she had attended one of their meetings and was impressed by their thoroughness. She requested the Board to take the subcommittee's advice into consideration. She said that additionally, she had heard a suggestion that if they had to have emissions from their vehicles tested, they should certainly consider testing emissions from data centers. She said that finally, regarding the "AI arms race," she agreed that data campuses were important, but they needed to be built in the right areas.

26. Pat Altman, George Washington District, said that he wished to pose a question to the Board. He asked if they did or did not serve in their capacity for the voting residents of the County. He said that the people in this room were here to tell the Board about their concerns about locating data centers near their communities. He said that they understood the need for tax revenue, but they must ensure that these facilities did not negatively impact them. He said that with his 35 years of experience in environmental capacities, he was well-versed in the science.

Mr. Altman said that according to reports from the Sierra Club and the JLARC study, the science did not paint a favorable picture for the residents who would be impacted by these

centers. In fact, he had only found one person who supported building data centers next to their homes. He said that he believed that if they were being built next to the Supervisors' homes, the Board's opinions would be different.

Mr. Altman said that he urged the Board to educate themselves on the real impacts to their communities, not to be swayed by the tax dollars that would supposedly come from these facilities, and to be a voice of reason to ensure the residents' concerns were heard and followed. He said that he urged the Board to enforce the requirements for the buildings of these facilities, including the minimum distances such as those implemented by Spotsylvania. He said that they needed a more deliberate selection process for where these data centers were built, so they did not impact their residents and their neighbors with knocking down forests and replacing them with concrete eyesores.

Mr. Altman said that furthermore, they needed to ensure that the owners of these facilities were not driving up electricity costs for their state by mandating that they fund necessary infrastructure improvements, and that they did not abuse their water infrastructure by using excessive amounts of water, which they had yet to publish. He said that they must also prevent the depleting and polluting of their local waters. He said that the data available now showed that these facilities did indeed impact private wells and the public water supply.

Mr. Altman said that therefore, they needed to make the water usage public. He said that they were talking about some of the most profitable companies in history, so he questioned why they were giving them tax breaks and not ensuring they paid their fair share. He said that taxpayers should not be subsidizing Amazon. He said that he recommended that the Board coordinate with Supervisors from nearby Counties, such as Loudoun, Prince William, and Spotsylvania, who had valuable lessons learned from allowing data centers to be built in their communities.

Mr. Altman said that building data centers close to homes was a common practice in Loudoun because it was allowed by right instead of special use permits, which would have given Supervisors more control over the projects and their impacts. He said that this was exactly what they did not want to happen in Stafford; they did not want to make the same mistakes that these communities had. He said that in closing, he appreciated what the Board did for their County and hoped they would make the right decision.

27. Mark Wilson, George Washington District, said that he had lived in the George Washington District for approximately 34 years. He said that his two daughters were raised in this area and graduated from Stafford High School. He said that he retired from the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) after working many years in Quantico. He said that he had a deep affection for Stafford County and was surprised to see the proposed locations for the data centers on the map. He said that his immediate reaction was, "why here; why in these areas?"

Mr. Wilson said that there were more logical places to build data centers and industrial centers, such as those that were not amongst residents, farms, and agricultural land in the George Washington District. He said that to him, it simply did not make sense. He said that they could not stop progress, and while they may all benefit from their products, they must also decide the best places where they should be built.

Mr. Wilson said that he would like to reiterate what had been said previously by these citizens and express his recommendation for a joint meeting with the Planning Commission to establish standards for data center development. He said that additionally, he also wanted to question the specific locations chosen for these facilities. He said that it seemed more sensible to build them in areas that would minimize the impact on farms, residents, and long-term residents of this County.

28. Bart Randall, Garrisonville District, said that in 2023, they brought this matter before them and decided to establish performance standards. He said that however, they now realized that those standards were not correct or sufficient. He said that he commended Ms. Bohmke for bringing this to everyone's attention; if she had not deemed them insufficient, they may not be discussing this tonight. He said that as they had been discussing, this was where the standards should be and what they should entail.

Mr. Randall said that this had been their focus throughout their planning process. He said that they had had two years since this issue was first raised in 2023, and they still did not have a plan. He asked what the plan was that they could present to the residents, outlining their goals and objectives. He said that they should be planning how many data centers they wanted and where they should be located, as well as the point at which they would no longer consider data centers for the County. He said that they did not have that information because there was no plan.

Mr. Randall said that when they discussed setbacks, they considered 1,000 feet and 500 feet. He said that this was a matter of what was best for each situation. He said that perhaps a 1,000-foot buffer and 200-foot planting buffer could be appropriate for a specific application. He said that it may take some applicants out of the potential mix. He said that they could consider a 500-foot setback, but with a 300-foot planting buffer. He said that if applicants could not provide a natural buffer, maybe they needed to build a 100-foot setback instead. He said that they needed to build this into their plan.

Mr. Randall said that the next issue was the joint public hearing. He said that they had held joint public hearings before, but he questioned the reason for delaying it. He said that Ms. Bohmke had brought it up in May, but they slowed down the process and said they would revisit it after the summer break. He said that there was no reason to take up this issue in August instead of May or June. He said that now they were talking about slowing down the process even further. He asked what the timeline was for approving these performance standards. He asked if they even had a timeline in mind, or if it was dependent on whenever staff presented it.

Mr. Randall said that there was no reason why they could not hold a public joint public hearing. He said that they all knew that the standards were incorrect and needed to be addressed. He requested the Board to move forward with this process and get it done. He said that they should focus on moving past this issue and addressing the rezonings that needed to be denied.

29. John Schmiedeke, Hartwood District, said that he was present to urge the Board to approve a joint public hearing with the Planning Commission and to advertise a setback of at least 500 feet for data center buildings. He said that while some locations in Stafford County may be

suitable for data centers, many proposed rezoning applications posed serious risks to residents and the environment. He said that data centers were heavy industrial facilities that brought real health and safety risks to nearby residents and watersheds. He said that in these cases, these developments were far from harmless.

Mr. Schmiedeke said that he had seen these risks firsthand, having witnessed a developer who owned the land near the GWV project illegally clear-cut 200 acres directly next to people's homes. He said that for a week and a half, they had heard the crashing sound of trees and the sounds of heavy industrial machinery. He said that out of 1,042 acres, he had chosen to destroy the land immediately beside the very residents who had the courage to speak up for responsible development. He said that it had taken the County Zoning Office, the County Attorney, a judge, and even a Sheriff's officer to finally stop this illegal behavior through a temporary and ultimately a permanent injunction.

Mr. Schmiedeke said that this was the same developer they were being asked to trust as a good neighbor, with an application that, if approved, would place a 7.9 million square foot data center campus just 100 feet from their property lines. He requested the Board to approve the joint public hearing and advertise setbacks of at least 500 feet or more. He said that the Board should prioritize the safety and well-being of their residents. He said that there was never a wrong time to do the right thing.

30. Heidi Farley, Hartwood District, said that she never thought she would spend so much time here with the Board and with her fellow citizens, as she was not one who enjoys speaking in front of people. She said that she had spent far too much time dealing with this issue. She said that she attended nearly every Planning Commission meeting, and she commended them for their work. She said that she saw individuals who seemed uninformed about many things quickly become educated. She said that she hoped that the Supervisors all would do the same.

Ms. Farley said that what interested her was that when a new subdivision was being built, there was a large sign indicating "Coming soon, new subdivision." She said that however, she found it peculiar that there was no similar sign for a data center in the neighborhood. She said that she wondered why there was so much secrecy. She said that most of these people were only aware of the data centers because a group of citizens who spoke out against the proposed GWV monstrosity behind their houses had brought attention to the issue.

Ms. Farley said that she wondered why County citizens were not more informed about what was happening here. She asked if the Board was attempting to just pass it and then deal with it. She said that as a property owner who had lived there since 1990, she had witnessed the destruction in the County. She said that for example, one could look at Courthouse Road, where both sides were once lined with trees, but now they were all gone, replaced with scrub.

Ms. Farley said that she could not trust the tax man who hounded her to pay \$10 for a dog license while data center companies were given millions of dollars in tax breaks. She asked why they were given such incentives and what the benefit to the County citizens would be. She said that the Board's job was to protect their citizens, not the corporations. She said that the data center company that was trying to go behind her property was not to be trusted. She asked

what his punishment would be for what he did. She asked why the public did not know. She asked if he would get a slap on the wrist or if there would be actual consequences.

31. Julia Lewis, Falmouth District, said that she appreciated the time the Board took to work with the Planning Commission members to help them develop new recommendations for data centers. She said that Supervisors had previously stated that Stafford County was open for business and the Board was inviting businesses to serve the community and generate tax revenue, without increasing taxes on residents.

Ms. Lewis said that however, medications have side effects, including death. She said that data centers also had proven harmful side effects. She said that while the industry had made improvements, they could not ignore these serious side effects. She said that the Board's role was to protect citizens from danger and to find revenue streams to fund essential programs, this Board was caught between a rock and a hard place. She said that developers must be good neighbors and be held accountable for their actions on the front end, rather than creating side effects that the people of Stafford would have to deal with and pay to clean up.

Ms. Lewis said that the Planning Commission had worked with staff to create significantly stronger guidelines for data centers. She urged the Board not to water them down. She said that she supported data centers being built, but they must align with what was best for Stafford County. She said that they needed to know who the end user was and what their plans were, to avoid situations where tax revenue was promised but a non-taxable entity moved in. She said that they already faced increasing unfunded mandates, and she cautioned against making deals with developers who were not willing to be good neighbors.

Ms. Lewis said that she invited the Board to carefully research the collateral damage that data centers may bring, and only allow them to build where their benefits outweighed the costs to the people and nature that called that location home. She requested the Board to please pay attention to the Planning Commission's recommendations and did not water them down.

32. Caroline Ulman, George Washington District, said that she lived off of McCarty Road. She said that she strongly opposed the data centers and the fact that apparently since 2023, planning for this had been underway, yet they only heard about it a couple of days before this meeting. She said that it was astonishing. She said that these data centers were diametrically opposed to their surroundings. She said that as someone had already mentioned, this was an agricultural area, and converting it to heavy industrial made absolutely no sense.

Ms. Ulman said that the residents who had chosen to live in this area wanted to preserve a certain way of life. She said that they wanted to live in a quiet, peaceful environment where they could see the stars at night, watch deer wander through their property, and maintain lots at a minimum of three acres. She said that this gave them a sense of security, knowing that the five acres next door could not be developed into 20 homes on 0.25-acre lots. She said that now, that security was now being threatened. She said that the proposed data center would follow the pattern of other centers across the country, and it would be a nightmare for her neighbors.

Ms. Ulman said that it would be a constant source of light and noise pollution, destroying the quality of life for those living adjacent. She said that this would lead to plummeting property

values, as many people would be affected. She said that their community, reliant on well water, may see their wells dry up due to the massive water needs of these data centers. She said that they knew that they harmed the aquifer, and they had seen this happen in other communities.

Ms. Ulman said that the final blow would be that their electric bills would likely double, if not more, as had been seen in other areas where data centers had been built. She said that if their community was treated like others across the country, they would be left with no one to hold responsible for their dry wells, their homes that would not sell, or their unaffordable electric bills. She said that this was a no-win for their community.

33. Al Watkins, George Washington District, said that he lived on England Run Lane. He said that there was a saying that those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it. He said that he was here to remind the Board of an event in their recent past, hoping to provide some perspective regarding an event that he hoped would occur in their County's future. He said that approximately a year ago, on July 2, 2024, this Board, by a narrow 4-3 vote, approved the rezoning of 132 acres known as Belmont Park.

Mr. Watkins said that the developer associated with that zoning application submitted a generalized development plan (GDP) that anticipated building a trucking distribution center and several warehouses on the parcels, if converted to M1 and M2. He said that the developer had entered into agreements with 14 landowners to purchase their property for planned industrial use. He said that the project had undergone several changes over the last five years, and these landowners who offered their properties were still on the hook for paying taxes, insurance, and other costs associated with ownership. He said that several members of this Board, hoping to assist these individuals finally unload their homes and property, voted to approve the rezoning so they could sell.

Mr. Watkins said that the 2024 total assessed value of those 132 acres, including the land owned by the developer, was just over \$3 million. He said that while each and every one of those homeowners still owned their properties, the developer never purchased a single parcel. He said that the reason for this was that the developer had no need to buy those properties until he had something to build on them, and he still does not. He said that the Board may recall that several members of the Board were shocked to hear what the developer's original plan was, located just west of Sanford Drive, south of Route 17, and very close to where FAMPO's proposed bridge and roadway to Commerce Parkway would exist.

Mr. Watkins said that the developer had a comprehensive plan to create recreational space, athletic fields, indoor facilities, and associated retail. He said that to a person, this Board indicated that had they known about that plan, they would have jumped at it, and rightfully so. He said that this would have been enough land to create amazing opportunities for their recreation programs, school teams, and families of the region to come and compete in weekend tournaments. He said that sports tourism would have brought enough people to fill the existing seven hotels just one mile from the location.

Mr. Watkins said that there would be transient occupancy taxes, meals taxes, and sales taxes that could offset property taxes, and probably taxes from data centers. He said that there would have been an event center and enough land to set aside for an additional park. He said that the

land was still sitting there, waiting. He said that he asked the Board to be wary of recent companies like Coliseum Sports Resort, which filled social media with AI-generated images to entice people with vaporware. He said that there were other companies that could provide this service that were real and had proven track records.

34. Hannah Sweeney, George Washington District, said that her husband and she were both raised in Stafford County and had chosen to raise their two daughters in this community as well because they loved it here. She said that she respectfully asked that the Board not allow the data centers to be built in the White Oak community. She said that she was extremely concerned about the water demands and potential water pollution for the community's rivers and well water.

Ms. Sweeney said that she was also concerned about the electricity demands, as Dominion had stated that they would need to double their current capacity within the next five years. She said that in other nearby localities, these costs were being passed on to customers. She said that she was particularly concerned about the impact of light and noise pollution on the residents and wildlife, which had been linked to negative physical and mental health outcomes.

Ms. Sweeney said that as technology advanced, it was uncertain when they would evolve beyond land-intensive data centers, but the environmental destruction would already be done. She said that she understood that these companies promised to increase revenue for the County, but she questioned what good that revenue would bring if this beautiful corner of the County was no longer safe and peaceful for its residents. She said that she echoed the request to advertise a joint public hearing with the Planning Commission on the revised data center standards.

35. Connie Peebles Barrow, Rock Hill District, said that she wanted to express her gratitude to the Board for their leadership in May, when they established the Planning Commission's responsibility to form a subcommittee to review and revise data center standards. She said that she had attended four of the five subcommittee meetings, and she had been impressed with the subcommittee's outstanding performance.

Ms. Barrow said that they had demonstrated a remarkable ability to get up to speed, become educated on highly technical issues, and respond to the public's concerns and research. She said that they had also updated the ordinances and Comprehensive Plan for the Board's review and approval. She said that as the Board had initially tasked the subcommittee, the subcommittee was now ready to move forward, and it was now the Board's responsibility to step up.

Ms. Barrow said that she urged the Board to immediately advertise the joint public hearing with the Planning Commission, and the advertised setback should be at least 500 feet or more. She said that the subcommittee had initially proposed a setback of 1,000 feet, but they were concerned that the Board might not support that setback. She said that as a result, they were at 500 feet. She said that she would like to mention that Spotsylvania County had set their setback at 1,000 feet, as an example of leadership. She said that in the past month, she had had the opportunity to canvas the townhome sections in Colonial Forge Community, including the Hartwood District.

Ms. Barrow said that she had spoken with or left flyers at approximately 125 to 140 homes within 1,000 to 2,000 feet of one of the planned data center projects. She said that this particular project proposed 23 buildings at 105 feet tall, along with 273 backup generators and eight substations. She said that she had spoken with residents in this area, and their response had been one of shock and horror. She said that many of them had expressed disbelief and grief about the impact this project would have on their families and children.

36. Deidre Reitwiesner, George Washington District, said that she had been a resident of Stafford for 31 years. She said that when her family first moved in in 1994, much of the County was rural and farmland. She said that suddenly, subdivisions began popping up everywhere. She said that at that time, the Board of Supervisors largely rubber-stamped development without informing residents or considering the impact of these subdivisions.

Ms. Reitwiesner said that many developers received approvals, and subsequent Boards of Supervisors realized the consequences, only to be grandfathered into outdated standards. She said that they had an opportunity now to establish strong standards for data centers, ensuring they were developed in suitable areas of the County. She said that data centers would undoubtedly bring revenue to the County; there was no denying that. She said that they did not want to repeat the mistakes of 30 years ago and rubber-stamp all these data centers, only to claim later that they were grandfathered into outdated regulations.

Ms. Reitwiesner said that they needed to set stronger standards. She said that the Planning Commission had proposed regulations and standards that were much stricter than what they had today. She said that it was time for a public hearing, where the Board of Supervisors and Planning Commission could discuss this. She said that she requested the Board to take a close look at the 14 data centers in the pipeline awaiting approval.

Ms. Reitwiesner said that they should not grandfather those centers into the current regulations, and instead assess the development around those centers to determine if they were suitable. She said that when she first moved in, many residents complained about the lack of big-box stores like Walmart and Trader Joe's. She said that the Board of Supervisors eventually complied, and now they had Garrisonville Road, and people complained that they had "Fairfaxed" Stafford. She asked the Board to please not make them become like Dulles or Loudoun County, where people lamented the loss of their character.

Ms. Reitwiesner said that she implored the Board to advertise the meeting in more than just the newspapers. She said that she suspected that many residents did not receive or read newspapers daily. She said that the Board had a list of registered voters in the County. She believed that all of them should receive information on the data centers and be able to comment on them.

37. Alane Callander, Falmouth District, said that approximately 30 years ago, Falmouth Supervisor Becky Reed appointed her to the Stafford County Beautification Committee. She said that since then, she had attended many public meetings. She said that however, it was remarkable to see the groundswell of citizens who had discovered this issue and had come out to protect their community, and for that, she would like to extend her congratulations to all of them.

Ms. Callander said that she would also like to congratulate the Board for having the foresight to bring this topic of data center standards to the Planning Commission and their subcommittee. She said that they worked very hard and she was truly grateful for their recommendations. She said that she hoped that the Board would see the bigger picture, beyond just financial considerations. She said that it was bigger than that; it was about preserving a community that was historic in nature and environmentally beautiful when protected.

Ms. Callander said that she was particularly moved by the turnout from the George Washington District, from the rural end of the district in southeastern Stafford. She said that it was heartening to see that previous Supervisors from that district had protected the rural area, and she hoped the Supervisors all would understand the value of preserving rural George Washington District and other rural parts of their County. She said that she would like to remind the Board of the historic nature of their County.

38. Sally Harmon, George Washington District, said that as a resident of the George Washington District and a south Stafford native, she urged the Board to support the updated revisions to Stafford County's data center performance standards. She said that it was the Board's duty to move forward with the joint public hearing with the Planning Commission on these updates, advertising the data center building setback of 500 feet or more.

Ms. Harmon said that her family owned a 216-acre farm off of Route 3, and had placed a conservation easement on their property six years ago, with the intention of contributing to the protection of the agricultural, ecological, and cultural resources in south Stafford. She said that the enormity of the developments proposed in their district, which surrounded their property to the east with the Simms development, west, and northwest, undermined these efforts and diminished the shared benefits of these large open green spaces. She said that they had never imagined the potential simultaneous industrial development of such vast amounts of farmland.

Ms. Harmon said that the least that could be done was to move forward with responsible standards to mitigate their impact on residents and on their neighbors. She said that the Planning Commission had worked diligently to develop these updated standards, and supporting them signaled their support for the livelihoods and well-being of their constituents. She said that again, she urged the Board to move forward with a joint public hearing with the Planning Commission on the updated data center standards and to advertise the data center building setback of 500 feet or more. She said that it was critical that the Board moved forward on this immediately. She said that they deserved responsible oversight that protected this community into the future.

39. Salem Waters, George Washington District, said that she had only been in Stafford for about 10 years, and she must admit that she was not initially excited to move here. She said that however, she had fallen deeply in love with the area. She said that it was truly beautiful, and she particularly appreciated the rural areas where she loved to drive around and take in the scenery. She said that she was very concerned about the potential loss of habitat for animals and the green spaces in Stafford.

Ms. Waters said that she cherished the time she spent with her family on the river, where her children love to paddle. She requested the Board to vote to advertise a joint public hearing with

the Planning Commission on the revised data center standards, and set the advertised data building setback at least 500 feet or more. She said that as representatives of the community, she implored the Board to listen to the concerns of their constituents, including the many of them present tonight. She asked the Board to please take their concerns seriously and do what felt right in their hearts.

40. Donald Squires, Hartwood DistrictDonald Squires, Harwood District, said that he had lived on Kelsey Road for the last 17 years, and this street had been at the center of Augustine South's plans to desecrate the forest at the end of their street. He said that they had already destroyed dozens of acres of property out of spite and malcontent. He said that this was the neighbor they had now. He said that he wanted to commend the Planning Commission and other County staff for their engagement and respect. He said that however, he must say that he had not had that experience with the Board of Supervisors.

Mr. Squires said that the Planning Commission had shown 100% engagement and respect; he suggested the Board to take a lesson from them. He said that he urged the Board to advertise a joint public hearing with the Planning Commission on the revised data center standards. He said that secondly, he urged them to set the advertised setback at a minimum of 1,000 feet or more, as the sound associated with data centers could travel for three miles, not 1,000 feet or 500 feet. He said that he recalled the first spring meeting he attended, where two Board members had expressed concerns about 15 developers being affected by the data center standards revision.

Mr. Squires said that unfortunately, he had never heard any of the Supervisors express the same level of concern for their citizens. He said that at the hearing, he had provided a list of at least 20 serious health impacts associated with data centers. He said that not a single one of the Supervisors had mentioned the potential health risks to their 170,000 residents. He said that they may have privately considered it, but they had not expressed it publicly, and in contrast, they had mentioned the negative impacts to 15 developers.

Mr. Squires said that he had previously lived in a different state where a common practice had led to a health catastrophe, resulting in clusters of brain cancer in the area where his family and he had lived for 11 years. He said that his wife had passed away from brain cancer in 2019, which they believed was associated with the health risk caused by those practices. He said that he wished he had the emotional and spiritual stamina to be involved in litigation. He said that he was sincerely asking the Board to consider the health of their residents.

Mr. Squires said that he honestly did not hear that happening here, and instead he heard about tax revenues. He said that he must say he did not believe a single word their tax expert said. He said that he had heard him talk more than once, and it was crazy. He said that his ultimate request to the Board was to not kill their residents in order to allow data centers in Stafford County.

41. Ashley Long, George Washington District, said that she was relatively new to Fredericksburg and Stafford County, having moved there with her husband and two small children just two months ago. She said that they had been highly encouraged to make this move by one of her close friends, who loved the County and had nothing but wonderful things to say about it. She

said that she was from a small mountain town in Idaho, and she had to say that it had been an extraordinary experience for them. She said that they had bought their dream home in Argyle Hills, and she had a beautiful backyard that was surrounded by woods, which brought back memories of the rural areas she had grown up in in the Mississippi Delta, where she was originally from.

Ms. Long said that she was not here to oppose progress, but she was here to request responsible development that prioritized the well-being of families, honored their history, and preserved the environment. She said that there were real health consequences associated with these data centers. She said that according to research published by UC Riverside, data centers could cause up to 1,300 premature deaths annually nationwide by 2030, with associated public health costs reaching \$20 billion annually.

Ms. Long said that these statistics were not abstract; they represented real people, including their neighbors, children, and elderly residents who would suffer from increased rates of asthma, cardiovascular disease, and respiratory conditions. She said that they did not need to look further than Memphis to see the reality of this. She said that the Southern Environmental Law Center reported that XAI became one of Shelby County's largest air polluters within just 11 months of operation.

Ms. Long said that another troubling factor was the apparent disregard for their area's profound cultural significance. She said that the Potawomack Indian Tribe and the federally recognized Rappahannock Tribe had ancestral territories encompassing virtually every proposed data center site. She said that according to Virginia Department of Historic Resources guidelines, multiple projects, including the Blaisdell property near the Revolutionary War era Hunter's Iron Works, required comprehensive archaeological investigation.

Ms. Long said that as someone who worked within environmental compliance, she had dealt with projects at this scale and much larger. She requested that the Board hold a joint public hearing and consider setbacks greater than 1,000 feet, preferably closer to half a mile.

42. Amanda Harvey, George Washington District, said that she was speaking tonight as a citizen and a voice for the communities' most vulnerable populations, including the children, elderly residents, and people of color, especially Native Americans, communities whose sacred lands and water they currently lived on. She said that today, they were at a critical crossroads, as 16 data center applications totaling over 16 million square feet of industrial development were on the table.

Dr. Harvey said that this was not progress; it was an environmental catastrophe in the making that would poison the air, water, and destroy cultural heritage sites that made this their home. She said that according to University of Tennessee researchers studying the data centers in south Memphis, nitrogen dioxide concentrations increased by 79% in surrounding neighborhoods within 11 months of operation. She said that residents in these predominantly minority communities were disproportionately affected, and now they were asking why they were having trouble breathing. She said that the reason was known.

Dr. Harvey said that beyond the health concerns, the water impacts were equally devastating. She said that hyperscale data centers consumed between 3 and 7 million gallons of water daily for cooling, while the proposed facilities would drain between 8.6 and 17.2 million gallons of water daily from the region, more than entire cities consumed. She said that this water, treated with industrial chemicals to prevent corrosion and bacterial growth, was permanently removed from the ecosystem and contaminated, lost forever.

Dr. Harvey said that it was not just about environmental statistics; it was also about the desecration of sacred lands. She said that the Rappahannock Tribe's Indigenous Cultural Landscape Study revealed that the Rappahannock River encompasses 552 square miles of ancestral territory, where travel communities had lived, fished, and conducted ceremonies for thousands of years. She said that the Patawomeck Indian Tribe, based in Stafford County, had documented village sites and cultural connections along both the Rappahannock and Potomac Rivers that spanned centuries before European contact.

Dr. Harvey said that the Environmental Protection Agency's environmental justice guidelines required enhanced consultation and protection measures for tribal communities, yet none of the proposed data centers had undergone meaningful government-to-government consultation with the federally recognized Rappahannock Tribe or state-recognized Patawomeck. She said that cumulative impacts create environmental justice catastrophes.

Dr. Harvey said that she urged the Board to vote for a joint public hearing on revised standards for the data development centers with the Planning Commission. She said that the choice was the Board's: industrial profits or the health and heritage of the people they were elected to serve. She said that she implored the Board to allow no more data centers.

43. Heather Wilder, George Washington District, said that she resided in the Argyle Hills neighborhood. She said that she and her husband moved there 10 years ago, and they have a 5-year-old who just started kindergarten at Ferry Farm Elementary, and they were expecting their second child in January. She said that she first learned about the proposed data centers from a mailer she received less than one week ago. She said that she was immediately shocked at the scope and proximity of proposed development. She said that as others had mentioned, upon viewing the map, her immediate reaction was, "where? Why there? That makes no sense."

Ms. Wilder said that she had never attended the Board of Supervisors meetings, but she felt it was extremely important for the Board to hear from people like herself who would be directly affected. She said that she stood before the Board today as a parent, a neighbor, and a voice for thousands of families whose children, pregnant mothers, and elderly relatives faced serious health threats from the unprecedented industrial development under consideration. She said that they were not asking the Board to stop progress, but they were asking that they work to protect the people who call this community home.

Ms. Wilder said that for families living within one to two miles of these proposed centers, like those in Argyle Hills and the surrounding rural areas, and around Colonial Forge High School and other residential communities, the health risks were immediate and severe. She said that their most vulnerable residents, including children, pregnant women, and the elderly, face the greatest danger. She said that studies had shown that children with developing lungs were

disproportionately affected by industrial air pollution, and children living within two miles of industrial facilities showed significantly higher rates of emergency room visits for asthma attacks, increased rescue inhaler use, and reduced lung function development.

Ms. Wilder said that prolonged exposure to air pollution before age five also was linked to greater rates of attention and learning difficulties. She said that for pregnant women, exposure to industrial air pollution increased risks of preterm birth, low birth weight, and developmental complications that affected children throughout their lives. She said that the proposed GWV data center would sit directly adjacent to Colonial Forge High School, where teenagers spent eight hours daily.

Ms. Wilder said that this 7.9 million square foot industrial complex would expose developing adolescents to continuous diesel generator noise up to 96 decibels, well above the 85 decibels threshold that caused permanent hearing damage. She said that it was not just their health, it was their homes, their futures, and their financial security. She said that according to real estate professionals, property in Argyle Hills and the surrounding area were valued for their country-like character and quiet residential atmosphere. She said that heavy industrial development fundamentally destroys these characteristics, causing significant property value decrease.

Ms. Wilder said that in the past, studies had shown that homes within two miles of industrial facilities experience 5% to 15% property value decreases. She said that she urged the Board to vote for an immediate moratorium on all data center approvals until comprehensive public health assessments were completed. She asked the Board to require health impact studies for all residents within three miles of proposed facilities.

44. Eileen Secrest, George Washington District, said that she lived on Kings Highway and had a small property, which, although not a farm, was often described by her visitors as a beautiful piece of land. She said that she believed that this County's significance, particularly in relation to George Washington's presence here, was worth remembering and honoring. She said that as a tourist destination, she thought that they should give more consideration to their County's historic value and strive to preserve it. She said that although it was not historic, she recalled visiting this area when she used to live in Arlington because there was a renaissance festival the County hosted. She said that she believed that there were alternative ways to develop this County.

Ms. Secrest said that for 20 years, she had lived in the same spot, and she had often wondered why this County did not seem to prioritize their citizens' needs. She said that she was able to connect to public water when she first moved to the County, but they still did not have sewer connections in her area. She said that instead of necessary infrastructure, they were getting wires put down along the roadside, as previous speakers had mentioned. She said that she thought it was essential to consider how to bring more attractive developments to their County and limit the revenue generated from data centers.

Ms. Secrest said that perhaps they could limit the revenue to 20% or limit the number of data centers, as they could not continue to expand indefinitely. She said that she believed that data centers should be placed in suitable locations, and her neighborhood was not one of them. She said that the fact that it was adjacent to the river made it ideal for farming, and they had

experienced flooding in the past. She said that she wanted to emphasize that this was a pressing issue. She said that she urged the Board to consider the potential risks associated with small modular nuclear reactors, which Dominion Power planned to use to generate electricity for these facilities. She said that she implored the Board and Planning Commission to ensure that these small modular nuclear reactors were not installed in their neighborhoods.

45. Nikita Tori Bundrant, George Washington District, said that she had been a resident of Stafford County since her parents relocated their family here, at which time she attended H.H. Poole Middle School, followed by North Stafford High School and Virginia Tech. She said that she pursued a medical degree and completed two residency programs in general surgery and internal medicine. She said that as a physician, she was here today to provide a more detailed examination of how data centers would impact their health.

Dr. Bundrant said that data centers relied on generators not only during power outages but also during routine maintenance and regular testing. She said that each time these generators were run, they emit a range of harmful pollutants, including nitrogen oxides, carbon monoxide, fine particulate matter, and volatile organic compounds. She said that these emissions can travel significant distances from the data center site – nitrogen oxides can drift up to 30 to 50 miles, carbon monoxide 20 to 50 miles, fine particulate matter, which was the most hazardous, can spread hundreds of miles, and volatile organic compounds can move 5 to 20 miles.

Dr. Bundrant said that these pollutants were strongly linked to serious health effects, and children's exposure was associated with asthma, impaired lung development, resulting in smaller lungs by adulthood, chronic bronchitis, pneumonia, and even attention deficits. She said that in adults, they contribute to inflammation and oxidative stress, which increased the risk of heart attacks, stroke, asthma attacks, and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) exacerbation. She said that additionally, these pollutants were hormone disruptors, impacting fertility.

Dr. Bundrant said that another serious concern was noise pollution. She said that supporters of data centers may claim that noise levels were only around 85 decibels, but that was misleading as well as an oversimplification. She said that data centers were made up of many components, each generating its own noise, and the impacts were much louder. She said that for example, the power supply fans generated about 70 to 80 decibels, while the rotary uninterruptible power supply systems emitted up to 110 decibels. She said that to put that into perspective, 110 decibels was equivalent to a jet flying 1,000 feet overhead.

Dr. Bundrant said that according to Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), one was supposed to wear headphones once sound reached 85 decibels. She said that the reason why that mattered was because the sound could result in elevated stress, sleep disruptions, neurocognitive decline, and reduced quality of life. She said that if one had conditions such as COPD, diabetes, obesity, prediabetes, or had children with asthma, or had survived a heart attack, in the medical community, they were considered at high risk. She said that bringing data centers into their residential areas puts people at even greater risk of suffering exacerbations from those conditions. She said that she urged the Board of Supervisors to consider transparency.

46. Kelly Robertson, Hartwood District, said that she was here tonight to urge the Board to do the right thing and rectify the mistakes made regarding the data center regulations. She said that they were all human, and mistakes happened, but leadership required acknowledging and learning from those mistakes, and choosing to do better. She said that the 100-foot setback regulation was a mistake, and most of the Supervisors had acknowledged it. She said that now, it was time to correct it. She said that the Planning Commission had completed its work, and JLARC had provided valuable research, and they now had benchmarks from other Virginia Counties. She said that none of this information was part of the original decision.

Ms. Robertson said that with this new information, it is clear that strong regulations are necessary to protect Stafford's residents. She said that there should be no doubt as to whose interests the Board represented. She said that the people of Stafford elected the Supervisors to serve, not the developers, corporations, or lobbyists who sought to influence them with campaign money, media deals, or personal favors.

Ms. Robertson said that they had seen this pattern in neighboring Counties, and Stafford had suffered long enough from backroom deals and poor leadership. She said that she was all too familiar with the consequences of government failing to correct its mistakes. She said that her family was stationed at Camp Lejeune in the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s, where leaders ignored and attempted to cover up the damage to the water supply. She said that this failure harmed countless families. She said that she did not want to see Stafford repeat the same pattern of looking the other way instead of fixing what was wrong.

Ms. Robertson said that the way forward was clear. She requested the Board to hold a joint public hearing and update these regulations. She asked the Board to show the people of Stafford who came first. She asked the Board to protect their County from poorly sited data centers and restore accountability and trust. She asked them to do the right thing and put their people first.

47. John Carey, Hartwood District, said that he would like to add his voice to the many comments that had been heard tonight. He said that he agreed with the overall sentiment, as he had heard many informative speakers. She said that as a resident of Stafford County for 48 years, he had seen significant changes in the area, now including the arrival of data centers. He said that while data centers were not new to the country, their presence was still relatively new to their community. He said that there were examples both positive and negative, with some Counties successfully integrating them into their economies while others had struggled.

Mr. Carey said that what was happening here seemed to be a deliberate plan, but was also appeared to be a questionable one. He said that the County had offered a lower tax rate than neighboring Counties to build these data centers, and it seemed that the County had been courted them to site them here. He said that the County could generate more revenue without subjecting residents to this. He said that he requested the Board to listen to the concerns of the community and consider the recommendations of the subcommittee, which had provided thorough information and analysis.

Mr. Carey said that there was no reason why the Board could not make the right decision. He said that he would recommend slowing down the process, watching how the first data center was implemented, and then evaluating its success before moving forward. He said that this was

a critical issue, and they had a lot to lose. He said that he respectfully asked the Board to represent the interests of the residents of Stafford County.

48. Tatiana Carey, Hartwood District, said that the previous speaker was her grandfather, and his house was where she was raised, and her mother was also raised. She said that she was here today not as a detractor of innovation, nor a critic of jobs, but as a young person who had grown up with technology and was aware of the potential consequences if it was left unchecked. She said that as previously mentioned, in South Memphis, Tennessee, there was a data center owned by Elon Musk, located just a few miles from a residential area.

Ms. Carey said that it was currently emitting nitrogen oxide, which was poisoning the air. She said that the data center company claimed the emissions were temporary, and as such, no regulation had been imposed on them for their actions in the neighboring communities. She said that the only hope for those affected was seeking justice through the courts, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), which had not been providing assistance.

Ms. Carey said that in Newton County, Georgia, Meta built a large campus just 1,200 feet away from a neighborhood. She said that the residents' wells had dried up, and the residents were forced to rely on bottled water. She said that this was similar to the situation in Flint, Michigan, where lead poisoning had led to the contamination of the water supply. She said that data centers, which used water and electricity, were taking a toll on their communities, and she asked, why did we allow this to happen?

Ms. Carey asked, why did they permit these centers and businesses to harm them when they did not tolerate similar actions from other institutions? She said that she remembered when Courthouse Road was a two-lane road, and the old landmark McDonald's by the I-95 exit, the sprawling landscapes of the County, and the creek that once ran through their backyard, full of water. She said that as a child, she would play in it, and now it was dry and barren. She asked, was money worth anything if they could not breathe?

49. Brian Quirk, George Washington District, said that he resided on Stableside Lane with his family for the last 10 years. He said that they are located at Wildcat Corner, approximately 600 feet from the proposed data site on their site number 16 on Forest Lane Drive. He said that the proposed data center site was one of the largest, consuming about 800 acres. He said that he was unclear about whether the data centers would utilize wells for water and septic for waste. He said that it was not clear to him what, if any, new electric capacity would be generated to offset demand.

Mr. Quirk said that as the most important decision-makers in Stafford County, the Board's choices today and at future meetings would determine the legacy they would leave and the impact on Stafford County for generations to come. He said that he was here out of fear of the unknown. He said that he was concerned about the potential impacts to local wells and the watershed. He said that Sites 13 and 15 bordered the Rappahannock, while sites 16 and 14 were in the watershed proximity. He said that he was also concerned about the impacts to wildlife, including the many bald eagle nesting pairs and turkey runs that he had observed.

Mr. Quirk said that he was unsure about the impacts to electricity costs, which could range from 10% to 200%. He said that he wondered if there would be brownouts when the data centers consumed the available power. He said that he was concerned about the stability of the power grid. He said that on the other hand, he was still reviewing published reports to understand the potential benefits. He said that the sudden awareness and public notice of this issue had been surprising.

Mr. Quirk said that maybe these data centers were inevitable and they could only take steps to minimize the negative impacts. He said that Stafford County had a precious resource that the data centers needed. He said that the companies involved had deep pockets, and he believed they should not be given subsidies or tax breaks. He said that he also proposed that they assess the environmental impacts, establish balanced regulations, and determine the right setback distance. He said that he also suggested that they make the data centers as quiet as possible and require them to contribute to a fund to offset electricity costs, price increases, and maintain power grid stability.

Mr. Quirk said that in fact, his wife had suggested that they build a new school at Ferry Farm Elementary. He said that if any of these unknowns were resolved, he would prefer not to see any of the proposed data centers. He said that he requested the Board to keep Stafford a safe place to live, work, and play.

50. Bryan Driskell, George Washington District, said that this was his first time attending a Board of Supervisors meeting; he never thought he would have to. He said that he was surprised to learn that a mega campus of industrial-sized data centers, consisting of 31 buildings and nine power substations, was being considered for construction in his backyard, near residential subdivisions in rural south Stafford County on agricultural land that was proposed to be rezoned as heavy industrial. He said that this development had infuriated him, his family, and his neighbors.

Mr. Driskell said that he recently visited a few of these data centers, taking a day off work to drive to Centreville, Fairfax, and Manassas, and stood outside the facilities, including those owned by QTS, Equinox, and Iron Mountain. He said that their setbacks from the residential areas appeared to be more than a 1,000 feet. He said that he had always understood setbacks to prevent a neighbor from building something right on the property line. He said that extreme setbacks were necessary for heavy industrial uses located next to residential and agricultural property.

Mr. Driskell said that as he drove to work, he often passed by Eskimo Hill Road, and he had previously assumed another subdivision was being built. He said that what struck him was the complete removal of every single tree; it was a stark reminder of the devastating impact that human development can have on the natural environment. He said that he was a fan of the TV series Yellowstone, but he never thought he would be personally experiencing the plot of that story.

Mr. Driskell said that a quote that resonated with him was that "men cannot truly own land, wild land, free land; we are born from it and must live with it. We are nourished from it and one day will return to it. For man to truly own land, you must rape it, bury with concrete so

thick, stack it with buildings so high that any existence of the land is erased. " He said that as he stood outside of those data center buildings, it became clear to him that this development would enslave the land, erasing its natural beauty and freedom.

Mr. Driskell said that he would never be able to enjoy the sight of a data center, as its presence would bar everything from the land. He said that ten-foot fences would prevent deer and other wildlife from grazing on the land, effectively erasing its natural existence. He requested the Board to set a joint public hearing with the Planning Commission, without grandfathering any existing developments, to vote no on rezoning land, and deny these applications where they did not belong.

51. Eric Rudenshiold, Falmouth District, said that he had lived here for decades, including 13 generations of his family who had called Virginia home. He said that he would first ask, who was willing to purchase his 1835 farmhouse, which featured four bedrooms and three bathrooms? He said that he was not eager to sell, but he was situated in the midst of this data center world. He said that he was concerned that his well water would eventually go to the data center. He said that they would have increased prices for energy as well. He said that he also doubted it would be the healthiest place for anyone to raise their family. He said that this was a decision that ultimately rested with the Board of Supervisors

Dr. Rudenshiold said that this was not the County that he wanted to live in, which used to be much more rural. He said that for example, Eskimo Hill, which was once a pristine 500-acre area, had been clear-cut. He said that this was a desecration, a travesty. He said that the people of Stafford were tired of this. He said that the people in this room were being very polite and gentile, considering how truly angry about this issue. He asked the Board to please listen to the Planning Commission; they had done some excellent work.

Dr. Rudenshiold said that he did support the 1,000-foot setback on data centers, and ideally he would like the distance between Stafford and Caroline County to be the setback. He requested that the Board of Supervisors schedule a public hearing with the Planning Commission as soon as possible. He asked the Board to please listen to the public's concerns; they were very worried, very upset, and very concerned about the future of their County.

52. Abby Carter, Falmouth District, said that she believed it was crucial that the Board and Planning Commission have a meeting as soon as possible. She said that she understood that if they voted on it tonight, the hearing notice could be advertised on Friday of this week and scheduled shortly thereafter. She said that she highly encouraged the Board to do this, as the new regulations for data centers would make a huge difference in the ability for the County to move forward. She said that she lived very close to Eskimo Hill, where they had cleared almost a square mile of trees

Ms. Carter said that GWV and other centers could result in almost two square miles of cleared land, non-porous pavement, and polluted waterways. She said that rather than focusing on square footage, they needed to look at the bigger picture - the County's overall square mileage that would be affected by data center buildings and associated infrastructure. She said that this was a concerning issue. She said that she acknowledged that some data centers were inevitable, but they must be placed in a responsible manner to maximize economic benefits. She said that

it was essential that the Supervisors were aware of the space requirements for these proposals and made themselves available for a meeting to approve these new regulations.

53. Mary Hanson, Falmouth District, said that she thanked the Board for establishing the data center subcommittee and meeting with County residents to address their concerns. She said that she was not against data centers; in fact, her retirement portfolio was counting on them. She said that however, she did not want data centers to negatively impact residences or the resources of their citizens. She said that she believed in people over profits. She said that what concerned her was the impact data centers would have on their power grid and water supply.

Ms. Hanson said that Business Insider had previously stated that data centers consumed quantities of power so vast that they had begun to strain entire energy grids. She said that Prince William Times stated that Dominion had transmission issues and difficulty providing power for data centers in Loudoun County. She said that Dominion even acknowledged that power delivery would be severely limited until 2026.

Ms. Hanson said that furthermore, Bloomberg reported that data centers were distorting the quality of electricity being delivered to homes, heightening the risks of appliance damage and possible fire, a phenomenon known as harmonics, which was prevalent within 50 miles of a data center. She said that Loudoun County had four times the national average threshold for bad harmonics. She asked if these power issues in other Counties had been resolved. She asked how they would mitigate these issues in Stafford. She asked what the impact would be on their water supply. She asked if they needed to be concerned about Legionnaires disease.

Ms. Hanson said that building water systems, especially cooling towers, were often the culprit, and data centers required a lot of cooling towers. She said that the Center for Disease Control (CDC) noted that Legionnaires disease had been increasing since 2000, with a range of 8,000 to 18,000 cases annually. She said that a recent outbreak in New York City, which affected 95 people and killed five, was attributed to 12 cooling towers. She said that even closed loop systems were susceptible and must be regularly cleaned and maintained.

Ms. Hanson said that to maintain water quality, water treatment plants required a stable power supply. She asked what precautions would be taken to protect their water supply. She asked which customers would receive priority during extreme weather conditions. She said that there was speculation in the community that their bills would increase by 25%. She said that her own electric bill had already significantly increased this year. She said that many people lived on a fixed income and could not afford an increase to their monthly expenses.

Ms. Hanson said that every dollar counted. She asked for assurances that residences would not be impacted by blackouts, brownouts, and ensure that their electric and water bills would not increase due to the data centers. She said that as the Board proceeded, she asked that the County would have maximum oversight while also limiting any burden placed on residents. She requested the Board to approve a 1,000-foot setback.

54. Kathy Scatchard, George Washington District, said that she had reviewed a lot of statistics and after listening to everyone, she felt they all knew what they were talking about. She said that she wanted to remind everyone that according to the 2024 JLARC study, the industrial scale

of data centers made them largely incompatible with residential uses, and that land use principles dictate that industrial and residential uses should not be zoned next to each other. She said that they were taking an agricultural area, where her sister, daughter, son, and grandchildren live, and now adding potential health risks.

Ms. Skatchard said that she recalled that a few years ago, a man who lived directly across from the proposed data center site on Forest Lane came to the County and asked if he could build an additional property for his elderly mother. She said that he lived in a house that had been in his family for 100 years. She said that he was told no because it was an agricultural area. She questioned how the County said no to that reasonable request but now was converting the agricultural land to industrial.

Ms. Skatchard asked the Board to consider what would happen after the data center was there. She said that it was likely that they would continue to proliferate. She said that someone earlier had mentioned the renaissance festival down Route 3, which was gorgeous but was now gone. She said that there were so many other places to put data centers, such as near I-95 where the land was already cleared. She asked the County to not destroy the last vestige of agricultural area that Stafford County had. She said that this was George Washington's birthplace, and they should be prioritizing conservation and tourism. She said that data centers would not bring tourism. She requested the Board to advertise the joint public hearing, and to make sure they had enough space for all the people who would attend.

55. Brandon Zaluski, George Washington District, said that he had attended many Board meetings without intending to speak, hoping to hear from them what would alleviate his concerns regarding the data centers. He said that however, that had not been the case. He said that with over 15 years of experience working for Dominion Energy, he had built and serviced transmission lines, distribution lines, and substations. He said that when it came to providing power to these data centers, the existing infrastructure did not exist.

Mr. Zaluski said that Dominion Energy was required to serve any customer with a need. He said that therefore, any data center approval brought with it the requirement for a substation and overhead transmission lines. He said that he had firsthand experience with the environmental impact, disruption, and death of local wildlife, as well as the scars left on the landscape. He said that he was not opposed to data centers, but he believed there was a time and a place for them.

Mr. Zaluski said that rezoning agricultural land and scattering data centers across the County was not the answer. He said that when it came to their discussions about data centers, a clear "no" was an acceptable answer. He said that while they may need to defend that answer, doing what was right was never the easy thing to do. He said that taking the high road and prioritizing the well-being of the County and its constituents was the right thing to do.

56. Ann-Michelle Morton, George Washington District, said that she would like to express her gratitude for the Supervisors' service to Stafford County. She said that she had family members who were public servants and understood it could be a thankless job. She said that however, she believed that most of their local representatives were in this position because they genuinely wanted to improve their community. She said that data center regulations could be

a complex issue, but she believed they could be beneficial when done correctly. She said that however, she shared the concerns that had been raised tonight.

Ms. Morton said that one of her primary concerns was pollution. She said that she lived within a mile of the proposed Forest Hill Data Center. She said that the diesel generators used in these facilities not only created noise pollution but also significant air pollution. She said that these generators were regularly tested, and in some cases, they were run continuously during peak energy seasons to supplement the power supply. She said that the exhaust from diesel generators produced tiny particulates that were too small for their noses and lungs to filter out. She said that increased exposure to these diesel fumes had been linked to various health issues, including infertility, birth defects, reduced lung growth in children, respiratory problems, heart disease, stroke, and cancer.

Ms. Morton said that as a mother, she was particularly concerned about the impact on her children's health. She said that the question was not whether data centers would pollute the air, but rather how much they would allow them to. She said that she implored the Board to hold a joint public hearing immediately to establish safer standards. She said that at the heart of their concern was this question: if they were living next to one of these data centers, what rules and regulations would they want in place to safeguard their physical and mental health, as well as the value of their property? She said that the Supervisors were in a unique position to make a significant difference in the quality of their lives. She requested the Board to please protect their fellow Stafford residents.

57. Brendan Hurley, George Washington District, said that he taught spatial statistics at George Washington University in Washington, D.C. and lived directly across the street from the Forest Hill Project. He said that one thing that had not been mentioned in the discussion about data centers was the people factor. He said that people moved to Stafford or lived there for various reasons, but one of the reasons he believed was why they lived there, why he lived there, was the concept of rural character.

Dr. Hurley said that the Board had expressed their support for it, as evidenced by its mention five times in the Comprehensive Plan, Chapter 2, Page 9, Chapter 3, Page 62, 75, 79, twice on Page 75. He said that that was why they were there, and that was why they cared about data centers. He said that he lived on Forest Lane, and he invited the Supervisors all to drive down the road, come out, and visit them. He said that they would offer them lemonade or a beer. He said that come see what was being proposed and repeat the phrase "heavy industrial" as they drove down the road.

Dr. Hurley said that it was a road lined with corn and forests, and if they looked closely, they would see houses with children. He said that he lived just 20 feet across the road from this proposed project. He said that he would like to conclude by saying that there were people out there, and a combination of factors that his wife and he would like the Board to consider denying the Forest Lane project outright.

58. Maria Morin Zaluski, George Washington District, said that when the Board established the Planning subcommittee, she was hopeful. She said that many of the people here had worked closely with the subcommittee to develop standards rooted in common sense, science, and

lessons learned from Counties that got it wrong. She said that the original plan included a 1,000-foot setback from residential areas and waterways, as well as a 300-foot vegetative buffer, both backed by health experts and real-world data.

Ms. Zaluski said that however, at the last subcommittee meeting, the hopeful tone shifted. She said that members arrived visibly deflated, having spoken with their Supervisors and come away with the understanding that if the 1,000-foot setback remained, the entire proposal would be rejected. She said that as a result, they cut it in half. She said that to be clear, this change was not driven by science or lessons learned, but rather by what the committee members believed the Board of Supervisors would politically tolerate. She said that this was not leadership; it was political damage control.

Ms. Zaluski said that there were concerns that a 1,000-foot setback would make some of the 16 pending applications untenable. She said that this was not a flaw; it was the point of revising the standards. She said that if a project could not meet basic standards that protected residents, it should not move forward. She said that this was not a general anti-data center policy; rather, it was against data centers being placed on top of homes, schools, and vulnerable environments. She said that the goal in Stafford should not be to clear the path for every applicant, but to approve only properly sited projects that minimized harm to residents and the environment.

Ms. Zaluski said that some of the Supervisors may be eyeing the upcoming elections and wanting to delay taking a public position on data centers. She said that however, she must remind the Board that no position was a position. She said that if they chose to stay silent and are unwilling to act in a manner that represented their constituents, voters would see through the inaction. She said that additionally, recall was a very real possibility for other Board members not up for reelection. She said that in her district, it took just 743 signatures to initiate a recall.

Ms. Zaluski said that based on the conversations she had had with people while out canvassing, she was confident they could gather that in a weekend. She said that however, it should not come to this. She said that it should not be a bridge too far for the Supervisors to act in the best interest of the people they represented. She said that tonight, she was asking the Supervisors to act. She requested the Board to vote tonight to immediately advertise a joint public hearing on the new standards, including, at the very least, a 1,000-foot setback, similar to their neighbors in Spotsylvania. She said that the issue was not going away, and public awareness was growing and the public was watching how they acted and how they voted. She asked the Board to please did not let them down.

59. Donn Hall, George Washington District, said that he had lived in Stafford County his entire life, 70 years. He said that his grandparents, parents, and he had all called this place home. He said that he did not come here and bring this type of development to the County like some others had. He said the lifelong Stafford County residents had put up with this type of stuff. He said that he had taken the time to write down his thoughts, but he did not feel the need to read them all. He said that what he did want to say was that the Board of Supervisors may think their jobs were difficult, but they were not really that hard.

Mr. Hall said that they had a Comprehensive Plan in place that set the standards. He said that he did not think the Planning Commission should be rezoning; it had already been done for them. He said that the Planning Commission had proposed new regulations, and the Board could simply vote on them. He said that the only issue he had with passing these regulations was that it gave them an out. He said that stricter regulations would allow for re-zoning of agricultural land, which he believed was unnecessary. He said that it just did not make sense to him why they were even discussing it.

Mr. Hall said that the people who were opposed to the current data center regulations were very smart people who were very well-informed. He said that when he had told people to email their Supervisors, the response was that there was a lot of misinformation being spread. He said that he had difficulty believing that all of these concerned citizens, including doctors, professors, and military members, were all misinformed about this issue. He said that he was not sure why the Board was against this or not against this, but he did not understand why they would even consider it to begin with.

Mr. Hall said that this had been blown out of proportion, and the amount of money the Board thought they would get was being exaggerated. He said that the Board was listening to developers and lawyers instead of the people, and they needed to listen to them. He said that this was not right, and the Board knew it.

60. J.W. Swain, George Washington District, said that had likely spoken to approximately 350 to 400 individuals about Stafford's data center issues, and he could confidently say that fewer than 10 of them had any knowledge about them. He said that even those who lived nearby to these data centers were shocked and uninformed. He said that of the 300 to 450 people he spoke to, none were in favor of the data centers. He said that however, most agreed that they needed data centers, but the number and placement must be well-thought out.

Mr. Swain said that the question remained, where was the transparency? He said that some individuals here seemed to believe that they could build data centers anywhere and reap endless tax revenue without regard for human health, pollution, and the environment, or even considering the constituents' needs. He said that there was no financial plan in place for two, three, four, or five data centers. He said that they had held town hall meetings, but unfortunately, they did not hear any real information or transparency. He asked if the Board had had conversations with developers, and if independent sources had accurately assessed the estimated taxes.

Mr. Swain said that one positive development was the Planning Commission's revision of the data center standards adopted in 2023. He said that it was a step in the right direction. He said that technology and data centers were constantly evolving, and the Commission listened to public concerns and improved the standards, which ultimately were limited in scope by the Board's higher authority. He said that they deserved transparency, honesty, and integrity in making decisions that would impact the County for decades. He said that some of the assumptions made in May regarding data centers were already outdated.

Mr. Swain said that Google was now suing Prince William County to lower tax rates and was also extending the refresh rate from five years to six years. He said that Google was actively

working on replacing chips in computers, which would lower their tax rates. He said that all of this was determined to be a detrimental impact on tax revenue. He said that he had recently emailed the Board with academic papers from Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), National Institute of Health (NIH), professional engineers, the National Library of Medicine, and the National Cancer Institute, highlighting the dangers of substations and cooling towers.

Mr. Swain said that the article cited a minimum of 1,000 feet of distance from residents. He said that Spotsylvania had revised its standards and adopted a 1,000-foot minimum standoff, and Stafford could do the same. He said that it was good science and good for their constituents. He said that he implored the Board for transparency and to listen to the wealth of knowledge coming from their citizens. He said that their citizens were their strength.

61. Vicki Lingberg, George Washington District, said that when she last spoke here, she was preparing to head out to summer vacation and felt hopeful and optimistic. She said that she was truly appreciative of the work being done to revise the zoning regulations related to data centers, which appeared to be moving in the right direction. She said that many citizens, citing studies and voicing concerns, highlighted the negative impacts on their community's physical and mental health and well-being, as well as the need to protect their natural resources, preserve historical and indigenous sites, and address concerns about the electrical grid, property values, and other topics.

Ms. Lindberg said that the message resonated with her – that data centers were incompatible with residential use. She said that as she prepared for this meeting, she reviewed the proposed revisions, and she found them to be significantly better than what they currently had in place. She said that with many others, she commended and thanked the Commission for their work. She asked that the Board vote tonight to advertise and hold a joint public hearing on the recommended revised standards.

Ms. Lindberg said that furthermore, as previously communicated to the Board of Supervisors, the residents of Belmont Hills and Ingleside Drive, also known as Pill Hill by longtime Stafford residents, respectfully requested a minimum 1,000-foot setback with a 300-foot vegetative buffer for all data center projects. She said that Chairman Diggs and the Board had encouraged residents to stay involved after this issue was resolved. She said that she looked forward to attending future meetings to discuss other topics, such as the need for additional crosswalks and lighting in Falmouth, and business development in the Route 17 corridor so she did not have to go to Fredericksburg and the County could retain more tax revenue.

Ms. Lindberg said that she needed the Board, as their elected officials, to do what the public had clearly asked. She said that their requests were reasonable and backed by science and well-documented research. She said that respectfully, it was time for the Board to work for the residents who had elected them, weighing the concerns and well-being of its constituents against the need to generate additional tax revenues.

62. Jennifer Yarborough Stamm, George Washington District, said that she lived on Ingleside Drive. She said that her neighbor had previously spoken. She said that first and foremost, she said that she wanted to thank the Board for allowing them to share their thoughts and for listening to them. She said that she thought everyone was doing a great job of expressing their

opinions and staying on topic. She said that she agreed with the comments from previous speakers.

Ms. Stamm said that she had been overcome with emotion listening to people discuss this issue. She said that she loved her home, where she lived near the river. She said that she lived right next to the Blaisdell properties, where data centers were planned to be built. She said that she wanted to stress how devastating this was for the environment, right on the river, in close proximity to residents. She said that she was shocked that something could change so drastically from agriculture to heavy industrial in such a short time.

Ms. Stamm said that another thing that was concerning her was that many people were there for the first time, unaware of the secret fight for transparency and health that was taking place in their county. She said that she knew the County needed more tax revenue, and she was not opposed to data centers, but they needed to get it right. She said that they were in a good position now, with the opportunity to learn from other Counties and see what worked and what didn't. She requested the Board to schedule a joint public hearing. She said that a 1,000-foot buffer was a good starting point, but she thought they could do better.

Ms. Stamm said that if they did this, they should do it with the best outcome, the most transparency, and the County residents involved. She said that her home was her lifeline, and she was never leaving it. She said that she knew every creek, rock formation, and historical site. She said that they had walls, clay, and arrowheads, with a rich cultural history with facets that had yet to be discovered. She said that she had been contacting historical societies and trying to get something started to protect it.

Ms. Stamm said that the wildlife was incredible, and she had been fortunate enough to have eagles nesting in her backyard. She said that she had been watching them and learning about birds from her gazebo. She said that she would not have that anymore; it would be lost. She said that with a proposed data center just 300 feet from her location, it was effectively gone.

63. Nabil Al-Tikriti, George Washington District, said that he was a professor at the University of Mary Washington, and had lived in the Fredericksburg area for 21 years, with 19 of those years spent in Stafford County. He said that he had raised two daughters, both of whom attended Stafford County schools. He said that they resided in Argyle Hills, and it had been a fantastic run, but his current feeling was that it was the end of that good run in many ways. He said that right over the hills would be these massive data centers.

Mr. Al-Tikriti said that the proposed massive data centers, which he discovered through a flyer, have been building in the background all summer. He said that it was only now that concerned citizens had brought attention to the issue, allowing them to understand what had been happening behind closed doors. He said that he would like to reiterate some points that have been made before, but from his own perspective.

Mr. Al-Tikriti said that the construction of these data centers would undoubtedly increase electricity costs for all of them, not just in Stafford County, but statewide. He said that he had spoken with a colleague who lived in Louisa County, and they had experienced a significant two-fold increase in their electrical bills, despite no increase in usage. He said that the water

usage would also have a detrimental impact on the river, and the sound pollution would affect not only residents in Argyle Hills and Argyle Heights but also rural residents in the surrounding areas.

Mr. Al-Tikriti said that another point to consider was that once these data centers were built, they could not be easily repurposed or returned to the property's original farmland state. He said that they would be concrete and permanent, leaving no room for future development. He said that this was why it was essential that they reconsidered the location of these facilities, particularly in southeastern Stafford County.

Mr. Al-Tikriti said that instead, they should be focusing on redeveloping industrial spaces in areas like Gary, Indiana, Norfolk, Virginia, Newark, New Jersey, where they were already industrialized and in need of revenue and redevelopment. He said that these tech companies' business models were also not as stable as they claim. He said that they may promise tax revenue for years to come, but they could collapse at any moment, leaving the County with significant financial burdens.

Mr. Al-Tikriti said that this past year, computer engineers in China had proven they could perform the same AI work with 5% of the computing power, which resulted in AI companies' stocks plummeted by 30%-40%. He said that this suggested that the AI industry may be an investment fad. He said that they risked paving over southeastern Stafford County only to be left with concrete and a failed business model. He said that he urged the Board to stop this process in its entirety and hold the joint Planning Commission public hearing. He requested information about the previous development plan, which aimed to concentrate everything along I-95, yet did not seem to be considered with regard to these data center development.

64. Jesse Adams, Aquia District, said that he was concerned that he was the only Aquia resident who even knew about the data centers, since no one else here was from the Aquia District. He said that he would not have considered attending a Board meeting, but he knew he could not sleep at night unless he discussed this issue with them.

Mr. Adams said that he was hesitant to get emotional, but he knew he had to speak up. He said that his five-year-old son had recently seen Eskimo Hill after it was cleared, and his son had said that the people responsible were mean and bad. He said that he knew that he had raised his son right. He said that he would yield the rest of his time in recognition of the fact that they all currently resided on Native land.

65. Kerri Sobolik, Hartwood District, said that Stafford County was facing an unprecedented data center boom, with 4,000 acres and 37 million square feet of proposed development, and more arriving every month. She said that this represented three times the number of applications they initially anticipated. She said that unfortunately, some of these proposals were landing on top of neighborhoods, schools, and critical wetlands such as Accokeek Creek and the Rappahannock River.

Ms. Sobolik said that the Planning Commission had done an outstanding job, and she did not need to highlight their achievements because others had already lauded their efforts in detail. She said that what was notable was that they not only listened to the public's concerns but also

conducted thorough research, spent countless hours on the task, and produced clear and detailed recommendations. She said, however, that now that the work was complete, it was time for action.

Ms. Sobolik said that she urged the Board to honor the Planning Commission's efforts by moving forward with a joint public hearing immediately and incorporating a setback of 500 feet or more, as had been done in Henrico County and Spotsylvania County. She said that she commended Spotsylvania County for setting a 1,000-foot setback, which aligned with the public's desired standard. She said that every week of delay meant more unchecked applications and increased risk to their communities. She said that residents were asking for one thing: standards that protect Stafford County before it was too late. She said that the Board had the authority to establish these standards; now they had to put them in place.

66. Kristen Maxson, Falmouth District, said that the public was requesting a joint public meeting and setbacks of 500 feet or more. She said that the Cranes Corner Data Center substation was working towards a certificate of public convenience (CPCN), and would serve data centers. She said that this was on page 12 of 406, dated June 12, 2025. She said that she would like to address the issue of information overload. She said that it was unprecedented to have 10 hearings scheduled for the public in one day, June 17, 2025, with over 1,500 pages to review.

Ms. Maxson said that at the last minute, 179 pages were added, which the Board and the public did not have a chance to review. She said that since March 2023, the public had come before the Board with concerns about data centers, and throughout these two years, the public had been told that data centers would have a minimal impact. She said that there had been an inconsistent representation at hearings. She said that today, she searched the local paper for any hearings for this date, and there were none. She said that however, there were indeed two hearings.

Ms. Maxson said that it was less about data than it was about the search routines, which were useless. She said that on July 1, 2025, utilities were not supposed to landlock properties according to Virginia law. She said that this was noted and proposed access roads were taken out on June 3, 2025. She said that people needed to access their land, but the rezoning had resulted in changes being done on the side. She said that on today's agenda, 2025 Victim Witness Grants Program Application had a clause regarding anti-lobbying and fraud in corrections, which could be found on page 38 of 814. She said that this document was an example of good concern and good government.

67. Stan Schroeder, George Washington District, said that he was very appreciative to the Board for giving the public time tonight to share their thoughts. He said that he and his wife had extensively discussed this topic, as had many others who had spoken tonight. He said that an analogy his wife had used to illustrate the situation was akin to a 21st-century gold rush, where data center barons were competing to capitalize on tax promises and incentives. He said that in Stafford County, 16 applications had been submitted, with four approved, and 12 additional ones pending.

Mr. Schroeder said that notably, all these applications had been processed under the existing set of rules. He said that this was a land rush, a gold rush, where everyone was trying to cash

in on tax benefits and promises. He said that if one considered the sheer scale of the proposed development, with 16 data centers, over 50 separate buildings, and a total of 100,000 square feet each, the numbers were staggering: 16 million square feet, many megawatts of power required, and millions of gallons of water needed.

Mr. Schroder said that he implored the Board to listen to the recommendations of the Planning Commission, which had thoughtfully balanced the need for data centers with the community's requirements and obligations to protect and ensure public safety. He requested the Board to advertise a joint public hearing with the Planning Commission as soon as possible and to move forward with approving this proposal, while protecting the citizens and balancing the needs of the community from a tax perspective.

68. Ashley Nantawongsa-Mosely, Hartwood District, said that she had been a public health professional for 10 years with her Master's Degree in Public Health. She said that her husband and she moved to Stafford three years ago, and they fell in love with the area. She said that they had been warmly welcomed by the community, which was a stark contrast to their experience in northern Virginia, where they often felt ignored. She said that when they arrived, they were impressed by the Sheriff's Office's efforts to keep them informed through social media and ensure their safety.

Ms. Nanthavongsa-Mosley said that they purchased their nearly four-acre land three years ago and were surprised to discover that the land behind Zachary had been desecrated. She said that they were trying to understand what had happened when they found a flyer announcing plans for data centers. She said that as a public health professional, she knew the potential consequences of this development on her community and her neighbors. She said that for instance, the diesel generators would pose a significant risk.

Ms. Nangthavongsa-Mosley said that her husband was a heavy-duty master mechanic who worked on underground infrastructure and had seen chemical spills all the time. She said that sometimes, the people who spilled those chemicals did not even clean it up, and as many of the residents in this area relied on well water, they risked being contaminated by the generators' emissions. She said that their children would be exposed to these pollutants through breathing the air and drinking water that could have serious health implications.

Ms. Nangthavongsa-Mosley said that additionally, their neighborhood frequently experienced power outages, so there was potential that the generators would be operating more than anticipated. She said that earlier today, she sent the Board a five-page essay with 27 scholarly articles and examples of the public health ramifications that this development would bring to her community. She said that she implored the Supervisors to review these resources, as the residents of this area had done their research and were well-informed.

Ms. Nangthavongsa-Mosley said that an example that was shared earlier was the Morris family in Georgia, who lived 400 yards from a Mark Zuckerberg data center. She said that they faced serious health issues, including contaminated water. She said that in Shelby County, people were experiencing severe respiratory problems linked to data centers. She said that she implored the Board to consider the potential impact on other Counties in Virginia, where data centers were being built with 500-foot setbacks to protect families.

Ms. Nangthavongsa-Mosley said that she highly recommended a 1,000-foot buffer to ensure their public health and safety, although a half-mile was likely the best distance. She said that she requested the Board to hold a joint public hearing to address this issue. She said that if a data center were to be built in her backyard where she could see the desecration of the land, she would be compelled to move her family away from the area in order to protect their health. She requested the Board to please protect their citizens.

69. Cade Hildreth, Hartwood District, said that he urged the Board to approve a joint public hearing with the Planning Commission and to advertise a setback of 1,000 feet for projects that abutted residences, schools, or the Rappahannock or Potomac River. He said that he, along with many others here, was not opposed to data centers in principle. He said that they were opposed to poorly sited data centers.

Mr. Hildreth said that he supported data centers when they were done responsibly, with proper siting away from residences, sensitive wetlands like Accokeek Creek and the Rappahannock River, as well as public facilities such as schools. He said that there were data center projects in their pipeline that made sense, and there were ones that did not. He said that he believed that many of them in this room did not view data centers as a simple yes or no decision, but rather as a complex issue about where and how these facilities were sited. He said that at this point, he thought they all shared a great deal of common ground.

Mr. Hildreth said that their neighboring counties had reached similar conclusions about the importance of setbacks, particularly when rezoning requests involved residences, schools, and wetlands. He said that Spotsylvania had recently unanimously approved a 1,000-foot setback. He said that as they knew, Stafford had entered into a 2018 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Spotsylvania, which they had made a public and legal commitment to match their tax rates, depreciation table, and incentives. He said that this meant that if they did not match their setback, Stafford's setback would function as a fourth County-level incentive, undermining the intentions of this MOU.

Mr. Hildreth said that to clarify, Stafford currently offered data centers a very low property tax rate, a generous depreciation table, and a technology zone incentive package. He said that for potential applicants, a 500-foot setback versus a 1,000-foot setback added a fourth incentive. He said that functionally, their lack of parity with Spotsylvania would encourage even more applications. He said that County officials had confirmed that they had received more applications than anticipated, and many were not in sites that they anticipated, and more were in the pipeline. He said that a failure to stay in line with Spotsylvania would further exacerbate the situation.

Mr. Hildreth said that science supported Spotsylvania's concern that a 1,000-foot setback was necessary. He said that a study published in December 2024 by UC Riverside and Caltech titled The Unpaid Toll, Quantifying the Public Health Impact of AI, projected that in 2030, AI and data centers would impose an astounding \$20 billion per year in public health costs. He said that arguments for bigger setbacks were evidence-based. He said that this was an election year, and the citizens had choices. He said that they were watching the Supervisors' choices and would remember them in two years, as well.

70. Tina Pierce, Garrisonville District, said that the Board had heard all about the health impacts and statistics from their constituents and neighbors, so she would not repeat what they had already heard. She said that instead, she would like to share a different negative impact from the data centers. She said that as one of many beekeepers in Stafford County, she was deeply passionate about the health of the residents, as well as the environment and wildlife.

Ms. Pierce said that the data centers would lead to a massive loss of habitat and a decrease in water resources essential for the well-being of the residents, bees, and other wildlife. She said that the increased local heat from energy-intensive operations, as well as the added noise and light pollution, would disrupt natural behaviors in bees, such as foraging, which was crucial for collecting pollen and nectar that produced honey, a food resource for the residents. She said that the disruption posed a significant threat to the already declining pollinator population, which was essential for maintaining healthy ecosystems and food production.

Ms. Pierce said that they may not be aware, but the loss of honeybees would have a devastating impact on humanity, with some estimates suggesting that without bees, humans would only have four years left to live. She requested the Board to vote to advertise a joint public hearing with the Planning Commission to revise data center standards to a minimum of 1,000 feet of setbacks to help preserve critical pollinator habitats and reduce environmental impacts, as well as minimize the harm these centers would cause to the residents and future generations. She said that as the representatives of the people, the Board of Supervisors had the power to create and bring about positive change in Stafford County. She said that everyone was watching how the Board would respond, and she did not want them to forget that they worked for their constituents. She asked the Board to make the right decision.

71. Rick McGregor, Aquia District, said that as a generational resident of Stafford, he had watched the construction of I-95 and was deeply troubled that data centers were being built. He said that it broke his heart to think about the environmental impact. He said that when he was working, he worried him to death that they had to go to direct deposit to save trees. He said that now, what was happening on Eskimo Hill, and it was disheartening to see such blatant disregard for preservation of trees.

Mr. McGregor said that his family had lived in Stafford for as long as anyone could trace back, to the time the Indians actively inhabited this land. He said that according to the records, the Indians left in 1666, likely because they were forced to leave by the European families who forcibly settled here. He said that the records showed that there was an order to kill all the Native Americans in this area, so they left to avoid the impending genocide. He said that was all they knew from the records. He said that someone had mentioned the existing Indian Tribe in Stafford County, the Patawomeck Tribe, but he wanted to clarify that they were a fake Indian Tribe.

Mr. McGregor said that the Virginia General Assembly had failed to verify the tribe's claims, relying on assumptions rather than actual records. He said that he had spoken to members of the tribe, including some in his family, and none of them were aware of the true nature of their supposed heritage. He said that they claimed to have records, but he had asked them to produce them, and they could not.

Mr. McGregor said that the General Assembly's lack of diligence had led to this situation, where non-indigenous people were receiving benefits and tax money meant for indigenous communities. He said that this was not part of Stafford County's history; the Indians left in 1666, and that was all they knew from the records. He said that people were living on Native land, but that did not make them indigenous people. He said that he appreciated the Board's efforts to verify the tribe's claims, and he hoped others would follow their lead in confirming this truth.

72. Jerrilyn Eby McGregor, Rock Hill District, said that she first wanted to say how impressed she was with all the speakers tonight. She said that she and her husband had been aware of the White Oak-ers for years, and it was astonishing that they decided to claim Indian heritage in the 1990s. She said that to be blunt, they initially dismissed them as a frivolous claim, thinking it would never lead to anything. She said that however, their shock turned to dismay when she read a Freelance Star article titled "Stafford Tribe Seeking Federal Recognition" on January 19, 2022.

Ms. McGregor said that tonight, she would address the absurdity of the Patawomeck narrative. She said that the article quoted former Chief John Leitner, stating that sovereignty grants the tribe the right to self-government without interference from the state government. She said that it was, in fact, guaranteed to the tribe by the English in treaties. She said that she was confused about what treaties he was referring to, as she had never heard of such a thing. She said that Chief Bootsy Bullock commented on Walter Plecker's campaign against Virginia Indians, saying, "But vital tribal records were seized by the government and destroyed."

Ms. McGregor said that Bullock emphasized that these records are essential to satisfy the Virginia Indian Advisory Board's tribal continuity requirement. She asked if the government had in fact raided Stafford and seized and destroyed private records. She said that the article continues, with Bullock stating, "Other than the two native tribes that had reservations, the Pamunkey and the Mattaponi, Plecker single-handedly just about eradicated Native Americans in the state of Virginia." She said that he had indicated that it was tough then in Virginia, and it was tough now.

Ms. McGregor said that Bullock recalled that Plecker visited Stafford County during his tenure in office after receiving a tip about a large Indian community concentrated near White Oak. Bullock said, "Fortunately, that night, White Oak residents were warned in advance of Plecker's approach. The White Oak area has always been a Native American community." She said that Mr. Bullock said the people were warned in advance, yet Plecker still obtained their records. She asked about the records they presented to the General Assembly in 2010, the ones the County was still waiting to see.

Ms. McGregor said that they had proven that Plecker found no Indians in either Stafford or King George County. She said that County records document the White Oakers as being white since the 1600s. She said that Plecker had no interest in them because he knew they had always been white. She said that Plecker did not raid White Oak, and this whole article was absurd.

73. Erin Cinzero, Hartwood District, said they could move quickly to advertise public hearings, which they actually learned this from observing how quickly a matter of personal

compensation, specifically bonuses, was put on an expedited public hearing track at the beginning of tonight's meeting. She said that she simply asked that they return to center and hold these decisions together. She said that if the urgency could be applied to bonuses enjoyed by some members of this Board and their friends, surely it could be applied to Planning Commission revisions that affect the whole community.

Ms. Cinzero said that this was why she wanted to add her voice to the throng of people here tonight and who had submitted comments and sent emails and who were here but not speaking to please vote tonight to move forward advertising a joint public hearing with the Planning Commission on these revised standards and to advertising a setback at 1,000 feet. She said that the expectation was simple: the choice was ultimately the Board's. She said that they knew that the county had received at least three times as many applications as expected, with the majority of those applications not cited in locations anticipated.

Ms. Cinzero said that however, that did not ultimately compel them all as a Board to take action. She said that it took residents getting involved, showing up to meetings, organizing, and activating to get them to the point they got to in May. She said that the Planning Commission's work was unimpeachable, and it had been done. She said that they had held five meetings, engaging with County staff, the County Attorney's Office, and robust resident participation, including written comments and testimony. She said that the Planning Commission had reviewed ordinances from across the Commonwealth and closely followed the Board's specific ordinance requests, although perhaps too closely in the decision for 500 feet versus 1,000.

Ms. Cinzero said that nevertheless, it was a decision made in an attempt to honor their ask. She said that the Planning Commission's bylaws vested the chairman with the authority to appoint a subcommittee, which was composed of appointees who either created the first ordinance and Comp Plan amendments in 2023 or represented districts with data center applications currently known to the public. She said that all those members attended at least one meeting, participated fully as members of the subcommittee, and voted unanimously to commend these recommendations to them. She said that only one subcommittee member, the Aquia District appointee who was running for the Falmouth District Supervisor seat, did not vote.

Ms. Cinzero said that the Board had pushed the Commission to do this work, and they had done it. She said that elections and retirement seats could give them up to four new members. She said that this Board had approved the 23 standards, and it was this Board's responsibility to refine and strengthen them now for the benefit of the public. She said that anything less would be a dereliction of duty. She requested the Board to advertise the joint public hearing with the Planning Commission and the setback at 1,000 feet. She said that their residents deserved nothing less.

RECESS

The Board recessed at 9:37 p.m. and reconvened at 9:47 p.m.

PRESENTATIONS/REPORTS BY DEPARTMENTS

ITEM 24. PLANNING AND ZONING; REVIEW OF DRAFT AMENDMENTS TO

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN GUIDELINES AND ZONING ORDINANCE REGULATIONS
RELATING TO DATA CENTERS; PROPOSED RESOLUTION R25-205 (REFER TO
PLANNING COMMISSION FOR PUBLIC HEARING)

Mr. English asked for a point of order. He said that Ms. Light had not finished her presentation on the previous item.

Mr. Diggs said that the agenda the Board had adopted at the beginning of the meeting required that Item 24 be discussed after Presentations from the Public; however, the Board could amend the agenda to first finish hearing Item 26.

Mr. English said that they could come back to it.

Mike Zuraf, Director of Planning and Zoning, said that he and Mr. Geouge were here to present the recommendations from the Planning Commission on the proposed amendments to the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance specific to data centers. He said that this was a team effort, with assistance from other Planning staff, including Juan Bernal and Said Habibi, who contributed to the research and data collection that went into this work.

Mr. Zuraf said that for background, prior to this recent work, data center regulations were amended in 2023 in response to their first two applications for data centers in early 2023. He said that since then, they had received many more data center applications, with four approved and 13 under consideration. He said that the growing number of projects, the evolving industry, and greater understanding of data centers as a use had led the Board on May 20, 2025 to request the Planning Commission study the existing regulations and provide recommendations.

Mr. Zuraf said that following that request, the Planning Commission established a data center subcommittee, which met five times in June and July. He said that they reviewed current regulations, best practices from surrounding localities, and conducted public outreach. He said that on July 23, 2025, the subcommittee presented their findings to the full Planning Commission, who voted to send the proposed amendments to the Board, which was what staff was presenting tonight.

Mr. Zuraf said that he would review the changes to the Comp Plan guidelines, and Mr. Geouge would discuss the Zoning Ordinance changes after that. He said that as a reminder, the Comprehensive Plan served as a guide, and as it related to data centers as a use, it included desired location and design criteria for data center projects. He said that these guidelines were general in nature and were intended to help determine if a project was suitable for a given location. He said that they were not the same as Zoning Ordinance requirements, which were strict legal requirements. He said that however, Comp Plan guidelines could help inform decisions about project appropriateness based on proposed designs. He said that he would not discuss the unchanged guidelines; rather, he would brief the Board on the recommended changes to the guidelines.

Mr. Zuraf said that there was a modification to the location and siting section, including clarifying preferred locations for data centers to be within a half-mile of existing transmission corridors. He said that this was intended to limit the extension of new high-voltage transmission lines throughout the community and reduce the recommended location of data centers outside of the urban services

area from one mile to a half mile. He said that a new section on site design was added, providing increased setbacks to incompatible uses, including schools and residential areas.

Mr. Zuraf said that these guidelines were more general in nature, and they would cover the specifics in the upcoming Zoning Ordinance changes. He said that to mitigate noise impacts, oriented noise-generating features, such as power generators, were to be placed between data center buildings rather than on the outside, where they might be more audible from adjacent lands. He said that another change was limiting building heights that were adjacent to incompatible uses with stepback provisions, with the intent to reduce visual impacts.

Mr. Zuraf said that the sound and noise section was modified to address incompatible uses, including schools and daycare centers, and to consider low-frequency noise. He said that a new section was added to address backup generators, incorporating mitigation measures to minimize noise and air pollution, such as limiting testing times, providing sound-dampening enclosures, and requiring Tier 4 generators, which were less impactful to the environment. He said that the visual impact section was updated to consider the use of berms where forested buffers may not be present and to recommend significant setbacks from the Rappahannock River and Potomac Rivers.

Mr. Zuraf said that the building design section was modified to recommend more specific building facade design elements and materials, aiming to encourage an aesthetically pleasing appearance, particularly for buildings along main roads and within sight lines. He said that a security section was added, outlining security fencing design preferences. He said that the land conservation section was modified to include the preservation of existing mature trees, identified as a high priority, and to enhance setbacks from the critical resource protection area (CRPA) buffers.

Mr. Zuraf said that the minimum requirement was 100 feet for critical resource protection area setbacks, and the goal was to increase setbacks adjacent to data centers. He said that mitigation of potential impacts to nearby wells was also considered, given the data center use had potential for widespread impervious area. He said that proffers had been proposed in past proposals to mitigate potential impacts, which may not be realized immediately but could occur in future years.

Mr. Zuraf said that the facility cooling section was modified, requiring proposals to identify a cooling approach, with water demands identified upfront when they applied, encouraging the use of reuse water for cooling purposes, as was being done with the Potomac Church project and Stafford Technology Campus. He said that they should also discourage the use of potable water, groundwater, or raw surface water for any cooling means. He said that regarding electricity demands, the section was modified to encourage the use of on-site power generation with renewable energy as a preferable source.

Mr. Zuraf said that they recommended documentation from a service provider to confirm the availability and capacity, as well as the timing that might be needed to serve a given project. He said that also recommended were additional fire safety measures to the public safety section and a construction mitigation section to help mitigate and recommend measures to minimize roadway damage that might occur over the lifetime of a project. He said that some of these projects may take many years, and heavy equipment could cause damage, so mitigation through proffers could help ensure repair in the case of damage during construction.

Mr. Geouge said that he had two slides to present, which covered a significant amount of ground. He said that the Planning Commission subcommittee's work focused on ensuring data centers were compatible with adjacent uses, particularly with residential uses. He said that as a result, they recommended revising the setback standards in the Ordinance. He said that to review, their current Ordinance required a 100-foot setback when abutting a residential use, and the proposed change would increase that to 500 feet. He said that the revised standard would apply to data centers adjacent to schools and the Rappahannock or Potomac Rivers.

Mr. Geouge said that this would also introduce a new setback requirement for accessory structures, parking loading areas, drive aisles, storage refuse areas, or substations. He said that this new requirement would establish a 300-foot setback for these site improvements when abutting schools or residential uses and zoning. He said that the 500-foot setback would apply to the principal building, while the 300-foot setback would generally apply to other site improvements, with some exceptions. He said that additionally, they recommend to revise the buffer requirement, which would increase the buffer requirement from the current 50-foot to 200 feet when abutting a residential property or across the street from a residential property. He said that this would also require the submission of a tree preservation plan concurrent with any site plan submission.

Mr. Geouge said that for sites outside the urban services area, the current Ordinance required 30% open space, or 5% above the normal requirement for M-2 zoned parcels. He said that the proposed changes to the Ordinance would increase the minimum open space requirement to 40%. He said that the proposed amendments would also increase the security fence height from seven feet to eight feet, prohibit the use of chain link fencing except around substations, and establish requirements for screening and enclosure of mechanical equipment. He said that specifically, the Ordinance would require screening of mechanical equipment as a first level, and enclosure as a second level, if feasible.

Mr. Geouge said that the proposed amendments would also establish view shed analysis requirements to demonstrate strength screening compliance, restrict building-mounted light fixture height, and establish maximum light levels. He said that the recommendations would require documentation from the electric provider for load availability, timing, and power delivery prior to reclassification or concurrent with a reclassification request. He said that the proposed amendments would also restrict generator use to back-up in emergencies only and limit testing to Monday to Friday between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., and none on federal holidays.

Mr. Geouge said that the proposed amendments established specific noise level limitations, with a maximum of 55 decibels at the boundary of the campus, regardless of the time of day or adjacent property, with a 3-decibel reduction for prominent discrete tones. He said that this mirrored the noise level limitations proffered at the Potomac Church Tech Center and Stafford Tech Campus. He said that those proffered amounts would be included as code requirements.

Mr. Geouge said that the amendments would revise noise study requirements, including a requirement for applicants to evaluate low-frequency noise, also known as dB(C), and to provide the sound study prior to reclassification approval. He said that currently, this requirement was met prior to site plan approval. He said that the ordinance also established a requirement for applicants to submit a plan specifying the type of industrial cooling to be used with any reclassification or site plan application.

Mr. Geouge said that this would provide clearer information upfront on the method of cooling, enabling better evaluation of the application. He said that the proposed code would also align with the requirements at the Potomac Church Tech Center and Stafford Tech Campus with the submission of an emergency action plan and a construction mitigation plan. He said that the emergency action plan would be coordinated with the Fire Marshal and Sheriff's Office, while the construction mitigation plan would address phasing of construction, including construction traffic, road impacts, and time of day.

Mr. Diggs asked if the Board had any questions for staff.

Mr. English said that one thing that was mentioned during the public comments was the potential for small modular nuclear reactors to be used at data center sites, as had been done in Tennessee. He asked if the subcommittee and staff had discussed that issue and whether it should be addressed in the code amendments.

Mr. Geouge said that he believed that the Comprehensive Plan currently encouraged the use of on-site power generation where feasible. He said that it did not specify the type of on-site power generation. He said that as he recalled from the Planning Commission discussions, they had been interested in exploring what that would look like and potentially even allowing it under certain situations.

Mr. English asked if the SMRs could be permitted with a Conditional Use Permit (CUP).

Mr. Zuraf said that yes, any power-generating station would require a separate CUP. He said that this process would not make that a by-right use whatsoever.

Mr. English said that he was also wondering why the distance from streams was 300 feet and not 500 feet. He said that in addition to the Rappahannock and Potomac Rivers, he was concerned about the impacts to creeks and streams throughout the County. He said that his recommendation would be for a 500-foot setback from those as well. He said that additionally, he thought that the setbacks from nursing homes and daycares should be stipulated as 500 feet, although he truly hoped they would never put a data center next to a childcare facility or nursing home.

Mr. English said that he also thought they should consider soundproof walls around the generator sites, such as the ones that bordered I-95 to dampen the sound. He asked if staff would consider adding a standard to that effect. He said that regarding the recommendation to disallow generator testing on federal holidays, he would recommend that also include state holidays. He said that instead of 500 feet, he would recommend a 1,500-foot setback from adjacent properties. He said that if data center companies really wanted to build their facilities in Stafford, they would make it work within the requirements that the County stipulated to them, and he did not think they were asking too much.

Mr. Diggs said that tomorrow, he would be attending a meeting to discuss SMRs, and he would give Mr. English the information on that in case he wanted to attend and learn more, although it would not help with their discussions tonight.

Dr. Yeung said that from her perspective, the 500-foot setback was not sufficient. She said that she did not know if 1,000 feet was really sufficient enough, either. She said that her question was,

did they have a consultant for noise, environment, and pollution, as well as a round table discussion where everyone had the opportunity to ask questions and receive answers? She said that she had heard that everyone had an opportunity to speak, but she wondered if staff was able to answer questions from the public. She said that it seemed like the discussion was primarily one-way. She said that additionally, she would like to know where the impression came from that the Board had indicated 500 feet was the appropriate amount.

Dr. Yeung said that in terms of consulting, she wanted to know what experts were present to advise their Planning Commission. She said that the subcommittee had done an excellent job with the information that they had, but she wanted to be absolutely certain that, in addition to zoning, the other issues related to data centers had been addressed in detail.

Ms. Bohmke asked if the County had a definition for the viewshed analysis, either in this document or another one.

Mr. Geouge said that there was no established definition of viewshed analysis. He said that however, the proposed Ordinance did outline what they expected to be screened. He said that typically, when they conducted a site plan review or rezoning, they obtained profile views of what was being screened and from what. He said that this could include a roadway, a resident, or any other buffer width that separated those uses, as well as changes in topography between those uses. He said that by examining these views, they could determine whether the proposed development would be effectively screened.

Ms. Bohmke said that she appreciated the clarification. She said that under screening, letter B, it discussed the viewshed analysis which would be submitted to demonstrate compliance. She asked if that could be done for a by-right project.

Mr. Geouge said that yes, that could be required to be submitted as part of the site plan for a by-right project.

Ms. Bohmke said that that was good to know. She said that on the last page of the document, under post-development noise conditions, she understood that when the occupancy permit was issued, it may only apply to a particular pod installed in a building, and the data center may not have all the pods built at that point in time. She said that based on her understanding, they would not conduct a noise study until the entire building was occupied and all pods had their equipment in place. She asked if this was specifically stated in the proposed amendments.

Mr. Geouge said that that was the intent, but to Ms. Bohmke's point, it could be clarified. He said that the language stated that after the issuance of the occupancy permit for each phase of the project, but one could interpret "phases" in different ways. He said that for example, a phase might involve multiple buildings, which could lead to varying interpretations of the language. He said that this may not necessarily imply a single building, as the language did not explicitly state that.

Ms. Bohmke said that it was referred to again in a different section of the document. She asked if staff thought it was sufficient as currently defined.

Mr. Geouge said that he believed staff should look at it again to ensure they had adequately specified it.

Ms. Bohmke said that one of her concerns that they had addressed in the past at Potomac Church was the road's condition. She said that the road was severely damaged, and she had constituents contacting her about it. She said that it took the developer a while to repair the road, and she believed it was not fair that they waited until the end to fix it. She said that people were navigating around large potholes every day, and in some areas, the road was less than 20 feet wide, making it even more challenging.

Ms. Bohmke said that this caused her constituents to slow down and wait for others to pass, which was frustrating. She said that she wanted to ensure that they included stronger language in the Comprehensive Plan amendments to address this issue, as the current language stated that "the developer should repair the construction within a reasonable timeframe following the final certificate of occupancy." She said that she believed stronger language could be used there.

Mr. English said that Eskimo Hill would likely get bad before it was over with.

Ms. Bohmke said that she was referring to a section under construction mitigation in the Comprehensive Plan. She said that she believed they needed to define a timeline in which the developer must repair the road if it was damaged. She said that she did not want them to wait until the Certificate of Occupancy (CO) was issued to fix the road.

Mr. Geouge said that perhaps they could change it so it would occur throughout the construction project.

Ms. Bohmke said that something like that would work.

Mr. Zuraf said that the first sentence under construction mitigation addressed data center projects, and stated that they should mitigate any roadway damage resulting from the construction phase. He said that perhaps they could expand that first portion.

Ms. Allen said that she would suggest adding something regarding the level of serviceability to that section. She said that as they would need to maintain a level of service for the road. She said that she thought this was where their Transportation team would need to come in and provide guidance. She said that in that section, they should state exactly that they must provide a certain level of service, it would be more comprehensive to say that they must maintain that level of service, and if they failed to do so, they would need to mitigate the impact during the process.

Ms. Bohmke said that she thought they needed to strengthen the language, and Ms. McClendon could assist with that.

Ms. Vanuch said that the Comprehensive Plan was the guide, and the way to specifically address that issue would be to strengthen the language in the proffers. She said that the Comprehensive Plan simply gave guidance to follow when deciding to approve or deny a project.

Ms. Bohmke said that she understood now. She said that she appreciated the experience of the Board members who had previously served on the Planning Commission.

Ms. Gary said that she believed there was a lot to consider here, and she thought that much of it was common sense that they could all agree on. She said that she believed that this point they

would narrow it down to a few key points to address. She said that she appreciated the idea of having VDOT advise on serviceability, and she thanked Ms. Vanuch for clarifying on how that related to the Comprehensive Plan. She said that regarding the recommended changes, she liked the tree preservation plan, which aligned with their existing efforts to address changing needs across the County.

Ms. Gary said that she also appreciated the load letter requirement. She said that ultimately, this issue was about the setbacks and what was feasible for the safety of their constituents and businesses, as well as schools and rivers, while also allowing the County to attract data center development. She said that staff had worked hard to position the County in a place where they could support better economic development.

Ms. Allen said that she had a substantial number of suggestions, totaling six pages worth. She said that she was concerned that they may not have sufficient time to thoroughly review them all. She said that after coming back from summer recess and listening to the public tonight, she believed it would be beneficial for the Board to hold a work session where they could discuss and incorporate public feedback and Planning Commission input. She said that this would allow them to fully develop the recommendations and then have a joint public hearing to approve them.

Ms. Allen said that she was not opposed to amending the setbacks, but there were some other minor things that mattered to her as well. She said that for example, she would like to explore the possibility of increasing the buffer distance from 200 to 300 feet to curb noise. She said that Ms. Bohmke and Mr. English had mentioned noise mitigation, and she knew that in Fairfax, they conducted pre- and post-noise studies to assess the noise impact of a project. She said that she thought that Stafford should consider doing the same.

Ms. Allen said that she would like to see more emphasis in the document on requiring noise-mitigating equipment to be used. She said that she had conducted extensive research on this topic, including a study of Frankfurt, the European capital of data centers, and they had implemented effective measures to mitigate noise and air pollution. She said that she believed this information should be shared with the Board to inform their recommendations. She said that she did not know if they would have enough time at tonight's meeting to thoroughly review all the relevant information.

Mr. Diggs asked for staff to please continue with their presentation.

Mr. Zuraf said that the Planning Commission had voted unanimously to forward this matter to the Board for their consideration. He said that in accordance with the original referral resolution, there was a suggestion to consider scheduling a joint work session after the Board received these recommendations. He said that this was one of the options for the Board to consider. He said that the Board could provide feedback and send the work back to the Planning Commission for further review. He said that alternatively, the Board could adopt the proposed Resolution before them tonight, which would send the amendments back to the Planning Commission to initiate the public hearing process.

Mr. Zuraf said that the Resolution provided allowed the Planning Commission to make any necessary edits as they deemed appropriate or as the Board may recommend to them. He said that

these were the available options. He said that the final option would be to do nothing, which he wanted to at least mention as a possibility.

Ms. Bohmke asked if the pre- and post-construction sound tests were included in the standards. She said that she thought she had seen that before. She said that additionally, she would like to ask staff what the height limit was for data center buildings.

Mr. Geouge said the the height limit was 65 feet, unless a conditional use permit was granted to allow for a taller height.

Ms. Vanuch said that Section 9, letter C, had information on pre- and post-development sound reports.

Ms. Bohmke asked if post-development was the same as post-Certificate of Occupancy conditions.

Mr. Zuraf said that the main requirement was in part B, which necessitated submitting the sound study with the zoning reclassification. He said that this requirement was clearly stated upfront with the application.

Ms. Vanuch said that part E specifically talked to the Certificate of Occupancy.

Mr. Geouge said that the post-construction process was handled more with sound monitoring, rather than with a sound study.

Ms. Bohmke said that she had another question regarding berms. She said that she recalled when VDOT moved a pile of dirt, which she at first thought was temporary, and then added grass seed to create a hill. She said that she was wondering if that would be an example of a berm.

Mr. Zuraf said that a berm would be parallel to the road frontage, rising up before dropping back down towards the building itself. He said that the building would not be at the top of the berm.

Ms. Bohmke asked if berms were effective in mitigating noise.

Mr. Zuraf said that the primary intention was for the berm to be used for visual purposes along a long roadway.

Mr. English asked if the Board could submit their suggestions to staff to refer back to the Planning Commission in the event the Board decided to advertise this for a public hearing.

Mr. Zuraf said that staff would incorporate any changes recommended by the Board.

Mr. Diggs said that there still seemed to be uncertainty regarding the appropriate setback distance. He said that tonight, he had heard people suggest anywhere from 500 feet up to half a mile. He said that he was concerned that fear may be driving the process of developing these regulations, rather than scientific fact.

Mr. English said that the GWV project would be very nearby his own home. He said that he wanted to be protective from here on out, including in the future when there would be new Board members.

He said that he wanted to see something concrete, and he believed 1,500 feet was an appropriate distance to ensure future projects were not sited too closely to residents. He said that he did not think that 1,500 feet was asking too much, especially considering Spotsylvania had approved 1,000 feet.

Mr. Diggs said that he had heard about Spotsylvania approving the 1,000-foot setback as well, but he had confirmed with the Spotsylvania Board of Supervisors that their Board had not approved that. He said that the issue still had to be heard before the Board. He said that there was an article out there that was inaccurate. He said that additionally, the flyer that was handed out was filled with concerning misinformation. He said that some of his constituents called him after receiving the flyer and expressed their concern, because he had clarified to the public at his town hall meeting that data centers would not be using water from the Rappahannock River nor from groundwater. He said that the County had already publicly clarified much of this information, but misinformation continued to be spread to their constituents. He said that he wanted to protect their residents and their environment, but he must rely on facts to do that.

Mr. English said that he could confirm that his neighbor's well had been affected by data center development, whether the data center was drawing water from the aquifer or not.

Mr. Diggs said that he felt that what Mr. English was describing was a separate issue from data centers using groundwater for their operations. He said that pulling water from the aquifer was different than the building affecting the well in some other way. He said that the County needed to understand at what point the building affected the water so they could create the appropriate standards and restrictions. He said that he certainly agreed with Mr. English that it was a serious concern, but he wanted to make sure their amended standards would actually be able to address the problems. He said that he was unsure if Mr. English's suggestion of a 1,500 setback would prevent wells from being impacted. He said that additionally, they had not discussed who would pay for the impacted wells.

Mr. English said that he believed the developer should be held responsible for that.

Mr. Diggs said that that may be the case, but he wanted to be sure that the standards accurately addressed the issues and protected the County's constituents and land.

Dr. Yeung said that regarding Dominion Energy, they did not discuss the company or its rates, but she had a meeting with their Dominion representative yesterday to inquire about nuclear reactors. She said that she believed it was essential that they were all on the same page in that regard. She said that in reference to Mr. English's concern, she was concerned about distribution centers transforming into data centers. She said that she was also concerned about the potential for these facilities to change their purpose unexpectedly. She said that they needed to establish clear guardrails to ensure that when facilities were established for one purpose, they did not end up serving another.

Ms. Bohmke motioned, seconded by Ms. Vanuch, to approve Proposed Resolution R25-205, with the recommended setback distance of 1,500 feet from adjacent residential properties, and 500 feet from streams and creeks, nursing home facilities, and childcare facilities, and to recommend a joint public hearing with the Planning Commission to be held on September 16, 2025.

Ms. Gary said that she could not support the motion at this juncture. She said that she believed that they needed to have a work session on this matter to ensure that they were all on the same page as a Board. She said that the Planning Commission had changed their recommendations due to uncertainty about the Board's response, and she thought it was essential that the Board demonstrate leadership by having open discussions about the details of this proposal before moving forward. She said that she truly believed that a work session was the next step to provide real leadership for the community and the Planning Commission, and then they could proceed with the joint session with them. She said that this was what she would prefer.

Mr. Zuraf said that for clarification, there were many different types of streams and creeks within the County. He said that it would be best to define the types of streams and associated setbacks the Board was seeking to amend with this document.

Mr. Diggs said that Mr. Zuraf had highlighted one of his own concerns. He said that these suggestions sounded good, but there were complexities that he did not feel confident that the Board had thoroughly addressed. He said that every application that came before this Board was reviewed in detail, and he was very concerned that if they rushed through these amendments, they would miss things and potentially cause more issues. He said that he wanted to be sure that they got this right.

Ms. Vanuch said that the Board could certainly make amendments to the language, so she would recommend that Board members just highlight their proposed changes in the document and give them to Ms. McClendon so she and Mr. Zuraf could incorporate the changes. She said that she supported the motion with the recommended setback distance. She said that it was a good idea to advertise it at a higher number to gather feedback from the community. She said that they had already received a significant amount of feedback as of today.

Ms. Vanuch said that if they advertised it at a lower number such as 500 feet, they risked circumventing some of the public comment process. She said that once they advertised a public hearing with specific numbers, they could not increase the size without holding another public hearing, but they could always decrease it from the advertised amount. She said that if they reached a consensus during their work session on August 24 that 1,500 feet was too high and 1,000 feet was the appropriate distance, they could adopt that lower number.

Ms. Vanuch said that this process was similar to how they handled advertising the tax rate, where some Board members may advocate for a higher level, and they worked it down. She said that she did not think there was any harm in advertising at 1,500 feet and incorporating some of these changes. She said that however, she did think they needed to move quickly, as they had recently received another application, bringing the total to 17. She said that she did not think that they could move quickly enough to ensure certain protections for residential homes.

Ms. Vanuch said that she would like to commend the public for their engagement and respectful dialogue. She said that it was impressive to see passionate speakers from diverse backgrounds discussing various topics, including health and wellness. She said that their input had been invaluable in shaping the Board's decision. She said that she appreciated their dedication and perseverance in the face of a challenging issue. She was sure that this summer had been difficult for many of them, and she understood the struggle.

Ms. Vanuch said that as a representative, it was her job to listen to their concerns and be a voice for them. She said that she was supporting the 1,500-foot setback, and she appreciated Mr. English's adjustments. She said that she hoped they would receive four votes to move this forward. She said that the Board could also have two-on-two meetings in the interim. She said that she and Ms. Bohmke had met with the Chair of the Planning Commission and the Chair of the subcommittee for several hours last week, during which they reviewed all of the documents that had been used to formulate these amended standards. She said that she believed they all were adequately prepared to move forward with this motion.

Ms. Gary made a substitute motion, seconded by Ms. Allen, to defer this item to the Board's next work session on August 26, 2025.

Ms. Allen said that she was not opposed to revising their Ordinance or updating their Comprehensive Plan, and she agreed with Ms. Gary that having a work session would be the best next step to work through all the details. She said that for example, there were some specific language nuances she would like to make sure were addressed, such as "should" versus "shall" and how that affected the enforceability of the standards. She said that these small details could make a significant difference in the outcome. She said that she was not taking a for/against stance on the data center issue; she simply wanted to ensure that they were doing this correctly and that their review process was thorough.

Ms. Allen said that she wanted to avoid having to revisit and revise their decisions later, which could cause confusion and controversy among the public. She said that she was willing to have a work session before the joint public hearing to address these concerns. She said that she agreed with Ms. Vanuch that the Board could set a higher setback for advertisement and adopt a lower one if they came to that consensus. She said that however, she was very concerned about some of the proposed language that needed to be clarified to ensure it was legally binding. She said that she was not comfortable moving forward until they reviewed that.

Ms. Allen said that she believed it was essential that they take the time to review and refine their language. She said that she had been doing her research to ensure that their solution was the best possible one, and she wanted to present it to the Board in a way that accurately reflected the facts. She said that she had wanted to have their Budget Director and Economic Development Director present to provide additional context and information, but they likely would not have time for that tonight. She said that she believed it was essential that the public had a clear understanding of the situation, especially given the recent allegations that the Board was involved in backdoor deals and secrecy. She said that she wanted to make sure every aspect was addressed so there would be no room for interpretation.

Ms. Allen said that she wanted to make it clear that when the Board first considered allowing data centers in the County, it was not with ill intention or with disregard to their citizens. She said that the budget the Board most recently passed was filled with extremely difficult decisions, and even with tax rate increases, they would not be able to improve the level of service in the County. She said that they were about to have three new schools and new fires stations that they had to support with a very lean budget. She said that she was trying to provide a balanced perspective and to ensure that they were making informed decisions that benefited the community.

Ms. Allen said that she certainly understood the logical arguments for protecting their residents and communities, but she also understood the fiscal implications. She said that for her, protecting their residents was not just about their health, but also about their economic well-being. She said that if she had to continually collect funds from their residents to pay for development that fell outside their purview, it was unsustainable. She said that for example, over the next five years, they were anticipating to build 4,000 new homes, and that did not even account for the additional children that would be added to their schools.

Ms. Allen said that assuming two children per home, that was over 8,000 children that would require increased funding for their schools, which were already at capacity and the new ones were not yet open. She said that their fire stations were also behind in terms of service, and those costs would need to be borne by the residents. She said that she had heard some people express concerns about data centers, and she had also heard that some people did not want this development. So, she was left wondering how they could balance competing interests and priorities.

Ms. Allen said that she believed that a work session was necessary to have an honest and fluid conversation among the Board members to come to a decision that truly protected their residents and businesses. She said that the original motion did not allow that to happen. She said that unless the original motion was revised and they had a work session before the Planning Commission public hearing, she would not be able to support the motion. She said that even if the 17 applications were submitted, those requests would still be heard by the Board at public hearings. She said that the Board would be dealing with each application individually, regardless of these proposed amendments.

Ms. Allen said that to clarify, she would like to have this item return at their next work session. She asked Ms. McClendon if the Board could take a vote at the upcoming work session to advertise the public hearing.

Rysheda McClendon, County Attorney, said that the Board's bylaws prohibit voting on work session days. She said that however, that if the Board determines that the matter is time-sensitive, a two-thirds vote can waive the bylaws to allow voting on at that meeting.

Mr. Diggs asked how that would impact the schedule of staff and the Board.

Ms. Krauss said that there were a couple of items on the agenda, and she would need to confer with staff to see if any of them were time-sensitive. She said that they likely could move some items around to make it work since this was a high priority.

Dr. Yeung said that they had extensively discussed zoning and setbacks, but she also wanted to reiterate her comments regarding the long-term tax rate structure for the data centers, and Dominion. She said that it was essential that they examine the pricing model, as she believed it posed a significant burden on individuals and their energy usage, ultimately affecting their residents and their ability to plan responsibly for the future. She said that these were complex technical issues that had not been thoroughly addressed.

Dr. Yeung said that while water issues and the purple pipe had been mentioned, and she was grateful for the 1,500-foot setback being proposed, but she felt they needed more time to discuss the details. She said that she had visited some of the affected areas, including agricultural land in

George Washington District. She said that she was glad to have had the opportunity to see firsthand the scope of the data centers.

Dr. Yeung said that she thought it would be beneficial to organize a structured roundtable discussion, as she had previously asked the Deputy County Administrator about reaching out to consultants who had previously worked with Prince William and Loudoun Counties on data center issues. She said that she wanted to know if these consultants had been utilized to address environmental concerns, pollution, and the location of these data centers.

Mr. Diggs said that they had not.

Dr. Yeung said that she was waiting to hear back on that matter. She said that while people had spoken their concerns, she felt it was only one way, so they had been heard, but they had not been able to participate in a discussion with experts. She said that she genuinely wanted people to have a seat at a table to converse about their concerns.

Mr. English said that the Planning Commission had done a phenomenal job and he thought the Board could proceed with the public hearing process.

Mr. Diggs said that no one was criticizing the Planning Commission's performance, nor was anyone criticizing their concerned constituents. He said that additionally, he did not think the way that Mr. Mayausky had been framed tonight was appropriate whatsoever, considering his long-standing service to the community. He said that he understood this was an emotional issue because it impacted people's lives and homes, but he wanted to be careful about how framed the issue. He said that again, no one thought the Planning Commission had done a bad job, but to Dr. Yeung's point, they had not conferred with experts. He said that he had asked that same question one month ago and the County Administrator asked that question prior to that. He said that he wanted to be accountable and straightforward with this.

Ms. Bohmke said that she wanted to return to Dr. Yeung's question regarding Dominion. She said that Dominion was the largest energy player in the Commonwealth, and they were all likely paying for data centers in this state that had already been built. She said that they would not just be paying for the ones they were building here in this County. She said that it was clear that the County and its residents had no control over the increase in energy bills, which she had already personally experienced.

Ms. Bohmke said that she had a conversation with Mr. Ashton a couple of weeks ago about the need to ask Dominion for information on where the power lines would be laid in this County, so that people could be aware of where these lines were going to be placed. She said that she was aware that they were being upgraded, but she would like to point out that in the PJM region, Dominion was facing a significant power deficit, with a 40% shortage of their own power in the Commonwealth. She said that they had to purchase power from PJM.

Ms. Bohmke said that she did not believe that the County would ever be in a position to control Dominion's actions. She said that she appreciated Dr. Yeung's perspective, but she did not think it was relevant to their current discussion about moving this item forward. She said that the Planning Commission had completed its work, and they had received another application for a data center.

She said that she had mentioned it to Mr. English because it was in his district, titled Market at Austin Ridge application, which included 443,000 square feet of data center space.

Ms. Bohmke said that this whole process had taken away many people's summers, including the subcommittee members. She said that everyone had been absorbed into researching this issue, including herself. She said that she was very appreciative to learn so much, but it was all out of grave concern for the community, so she wanted to move forward with the 1,500 setback. She said that she did not see the benefit of holding a work session and believed they should discuss it all now rather than wait any longer. She said that Ms. Allen had mentioned she had six pages of suggestions, and she would be glad to hear them now.

Ms. Gary made a motion to call the question.

The Voting Board tally was:

Yea: (5) Allen, Bohmke, English, Gary, Yeung
No: (2) Diggs, Vanuch

Mr. Diggs said that with that vote, they had ended discussion on the motion and would now vote on the substitute motion to defer this item until the Board's August 26, 2025 work session.

The Voting Board tally was:

Yea: (4) Allen, Diggs, Gary, Yeung
No: (3) Bohmke, English, Vanuch

PUBLIC HEARINGS

ITEM 28. FIRE AND RESCUE; CONSIDER AN 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 ORDINANCE O25-24

Matthew Good, Emergency Management Planner, stated that presented before the Board was Proposed Ordinance O25-24, which aimed to update Chapter 10 of the Stafford County Code to align with the Code of Virginia, necessary changes were identified as part of this year's revision to the Emergency Operations Plan, which would be on their agenda for the next Board meeting. He said that these changes updated various terminology and revisions in the Code, clarified the role and line of succession for the Director of Emergency Management, and also extended the maximum timeline to confirm a declaration of emergency.

Mr. Diggs opened the public hearing.

Kristen Maxson, Falmouth District, said that consistency in wording was crucial between Virginia and their County code. She said that she wanted to bring to everyone's attention that there were changes, such as the removal of service management services and the specification of emergency management for more automated handling. She said that emergency operating staff had been

replaced with an emergency operations center. She said that she simply wanted to inform those who paid attention that automation changes were underway. She said that if it was being implemented in Virginia, and they had good reason, but she was on the fence about this, but it would undoubtedly result in less human interaction.

Mr. Diggs closed the public hearing.

Ms. Allen motioned, seconded by Mr. English, to approve Proposed Ordinance O25-24.

The Voting Board tally was:

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

No: (0)

ITEM 29. CAPITAL PROJECTS TRANSPORTATION; CONSIDER APPROVING
SUBMISSION OF FULL APPLICATIONS TO VDOT FOR TRANSPORTATION
ALTERNATIVE PROGRAM (TAP) GRANT FUNDING FOR FOUR PROJECTS;
PROPOSED RESOLUTION R25-202

Bryon Counsell, Chief Director of Infrastructure, said that tonight, the Board was asked to consider the limited four applications for the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) through the Fredericksburg Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (FAMPO) and the federal government. He said that in March of this year, the Board had approved a list of projects to seek revenue sharing from VDOT and also a smaller list of projects to consider for TAP. He said that tonight, they were reducing the TAP project applications to their limit of four, as committed to in the Resolution from March.

Mr. Counsell said that the four projects were Mine Road and Greenspring Drive, Chatham Height and Kings Highway, Barrett Heights Road, and Forbes Street. He said that they had started work on two of the projects, with Mine Road and Greenspring Drive at 60% design, and Chatham Heights also at 60% design. He said that they had pre-design or scoping for Barrett Heights and Forbes. He said that the table provided showed the funding allocations for revenue sharing and their TAP request. He said that it should be noted that they were still refining their estimates, and the actual ask would likely be within this range, possibly less as they finalized their estimates.

Mr. Counsell said that tonight's public hearing provided an opportunity for the public to discuss these projects. He said that the deadline for submitting these projects was September 15, 2025, and they expected to receive results for both revenue sharing and TAP in early spring of next year.

Mr. Diggs opened the public hearing.

Kristen Maxson, Falmouth District, said that VDOT's revenue sharing for Fiscal Years 2027 and 2028 was located on page 813 of 814 of their agenda today. She said that the Transportation Alternatives Program sets aside funding, allowing money to be transferred from one project to another. She said that this was how she read it as a member of the public. She said that therefore, they had R25-202, which included R25-69, a project that had already been signed by their County Administrator.

Ms. Maxson said that the resolution stated that, on March 18, 2025, the Stafford County Board of Supervisors hereby designated the above-referenced projects and authorized the County Administrator and his designee to execute applications for the FY2023 and FY2028 TAP funding program, as well as project administration agreements and any other necessary documents. She said that the resolution was somewhat open-ended and could be seen as strong-handed, as it implied that the County Administrator had the authority to take action. She said that additionally, she would like clarification as to what the word "teste" meant in this document.

Mr. Diggs closed the public hearing.

Ms. Allen asked Mr. Counsell how staff determined that Center Street was the appropriate location for the Barrett Heights project. She asked if it was meant to serve the Germanna campus.

Mr. Counsell said that yes, he believed it connected to the existing structure.

Ms. Allen asked if it was correct that it cost \$3 million to connect those sidewalks.

Mr. Counsell said that was correct; through the federal process and land acquisition processes, the cost increased significantly.

Ms. Allen said that the majority of people who travel through that area did not use Center Street; instead, they primarily used Barrett Heights Road. She said that an alternative solution could be to redirect the \$3 million towards building out the Barrett Heights Road sidewalk. She said that given that the entire area was still part of the TAP project, she believed this would be a more effective use of funds. She said that she had been expressing concerns about this issue for a long time, and while progress had been made in fixing Onville Road, there were still many residents who worked or lived in the Barrett Heights area, including those who attended Barrett Heights Elementary.

Ms. Allen said that the kids in this area would likely continue to walk to school, and others would walk to nearby destinations like 610. She said that the military personnel who exited onto Barrett Heights Road to access 610 would also be affected. She said that to her, this was a more pressing issue, as it directly impacted the daily lives of many residents. She said that she would be more in favor of allocating the \$3 million to Barrett Heights Road, rather than Center Street, which was largely unused.

Mr. English said that more people worked on Barrett Heights than Center Street.

Ms. Allen said that was exactly her point. She said that she thought that the \$3 million could be better spent on Barrett Heights rather than being allocated to Center Street. She said that the truth was, only the people who worked in those office buildings in Germanna used Center Street, but they drove into the parking lot.

MR. Counsell said that the approach they proposed for this project was based on the volume of traffic in the area, which was what the model indicated would be the most beneficial. He said that if they had miscalculated the traffic volume or misunderstood the patterns, staff would certainly want to reevaluate that assumption.

Ms. Allen said that she thought they should. She said that she knew from personal experience that no one walked down Center Street, and the traffic was usually people using Barrett Heights Road to come down Center Street in order to access Route 610. She said that however, in terms of pedestrian access, the best location for improvements would be Barrett Heights itself. She said that however, if the data suggested otherwise, she was open to considering that.

Mr. Counsell said that the project consisted of sidewalks added from Center Street down to Garrisonville Road. He asked if this was her suggestion.

Ms. Allen said that she was referring to Barrett Heights itself.

Mr. Counsell said that the project would connect two pieces of sidewalk on the side of Barrett Heights Road, and on the north side, there was sidewalk along Barrett Heights extending from Center Street to Route 610.

Ms. Allen said that she had misunderstood. She said that she was supportive of the proposed improvements.

Ms. Allen motioned, seconded by Dr. Yeung, to approve Proposed Resolution R25-202.

The Voting Board tally was:

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

No: (0)

PRESENTATIONS/REPORTS BY DEPARTMENTS (CONTINUED)

ITEM 27. BUDGET & MANAGEMENT; CONSIDER AUTHORIZING A PUBLIC HEARING TO PROVIDE A BONUS FOR COMPENSATION BOARD FUNDED POSITIONS, GENERAL REGISTRAR'S OFFICE, AND THE ELECTORAL BOARD ALL SUPPORTED WITH STATE FUNDING, AND FOR OTHER COUNTY POSITIONS AND EMPLOYEES; PROPOSED RESOLUTION R25-212

Ms. Light said that she would continue from where she left off with their County staff bonuses. She said that if the Board decided to award a 1.5% bonus to all County staff, the total cost would be \$1.4 million, with \$139,000 of that covered by the Comp Board or the state. She said that there were potential funding strategies the Board may consider, including state funding for the \$139,000, utilizing General Fund revenues of \$877,000, or using Development Services revenues of \$48,000. She said that the Board may also recall that in Fiscal Year 25, they used \$8 million of Unassigned Fund balance to support the fire levy.

Ms. Light said that the fire levy in Fiscal Year 25 was expected to have approximately \$1.6 million in revenue above its budget, with the note that this was an unaudited opinion. She said that the Board may choose to reallocate \$200,000 from the fire levy to fund the bonuses, and Utilities personnel would be funded through the Utilities Fund. She said that the next slide provided a summary of the actions the Board was being asked to take. She said that Social Services bonuses already been approved to be forwarded to a public hearing, so they could mark that off. She said that additionally, the Board was being asked to consider funding constitutional officers, the

Registrar, and Electoral Board departments, as well as all County employees except Social Services.

Ms. Bohmke said that she would like some more context on why the state had required the County to approve these bonuses. She said that it was frustrating to be put in this budgetary position by the state.

Ms. Light said that she did not have that specific information with her this evening. She said that however, the General Assembly had approved this item as a 1.5% state employee bonus, which meant that the County's Comp Board must be treated the same. She said that the Board may recall that when the General Assembly implemented a similar strategy for schools, they had provided a 1.5% bonus, but in that case the bonus could be distributed amongst all employees rather than just the state-funded ones.

Ms. Allen said that she wished this had all happened earlier. She asked if the constitutional officer positions were included in general pay raises the County approved for employees.

Ms. Light said yes.

Dr. Yeung said that the school had a unique circumstance that allowed them to utilize the funding and distribute it across all employees. She said that this item was different because the bonus only applied to state employees.

Ms. Light said that that was correct.

Dr. Yeung asked if this bonus needed to be matched next year.

Ms. Light said that this was a one-time bonus, which was why staff had recommended some one-time funding. She said that as a result, they would look to utilizing one-time revenues in the future if the state were to implement a similar bonus strategy again, if the Board chose to go that route.

Dr. Yeung asked if the bonus amounts would be taxed.

Ms. Light said yes.

Mr. Diggs said that the County was considering this outside of their regular budget cycle, and he did not want to perpetuate a practice of only giving some employees pay raises. He said that he agreed that the state had put the County in a difficult position because they had a very tight budget. He said that however, he wanted to ensure they had a transparent and public discussion about this item.

Ms. Allen said that in her experience on the Board, she found these types of salary and budget issues to be difficult to contend with. She said that they did compensation and class studies that did not account for the state's independent decisions to award additional bonuses, and this led to discrepancies between departmental salaries. She said that in the past, the County had worked to absorb this type of expense, but they were barely able to pay their bills this year based on the adopted budget. She said that she was unsure of how they could make everyone whole in a

responsible manner. She said that she wished the state had not waited until the last minute to require this change, because she honestly did not know how to come up with that \$1.5 million.

Ms. Vanuch motioned, seconded by Ms. Gary, to table the item indefinitely.

Ms. Gary said that she wanted to address a comment made earlier by a member of the public regarding this item. She said that the comment insinuated that these bonuses would be given to the Board and their friends, but this was untrue. She said that she wanted to clarify that point.

The Voting Board tally was:

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

CLOSED MEETING

At 11:27 p.m., Ms. Allen motioned, seconded by Dr. Yeung, to hold a closed meeting.

The Voting Board tally was:

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

Resolution reads as follows:

A RESOLUTION TO AUTHORIZE CLOSED MEETING

WHEREAS, the Board desires to hold a Closed Meeting for discussions concerning two prospective businesses where no previous announcement has been made of the businesses' interests in locating their facilities in the County; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Virginia Code § 2.2-3711(A)(5) such discussions may occur in Closed Meeting;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Stafford County Board of Supervisors on this the 19th day of August, 2025, that it be and hereby does authorize discussion of the above matters in Closed Meeting.

CERTIFY CLOSED MEETING

Resolution (C) reads as follows:

A RESOLUTION TO CERTIFY THE ACTIONS OF THE STAFFORD COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS IN A CLOSED MEETING ON TUESDAY, AUGUST 19, 2025

WHEREAS, the Board has on this the 19th day of August, 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 19th day of August, 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.

REPORTS BY BOARD MEMBERS

Ms. Vanuch said that she thought that those on the prevailing side of the data centers should consider a motion to reconsider. She said that there was no harm in moving forward with the public hearing. She said that they could cancel it if they changed their mind and they could still have a work session, and there was no harm in advertising it to meet their requirement timelines. She said that since they had the work session, they may not make the public hearing timelines for the September 16, 2025 meeting, there was no harm in proceeding.

Ms. Vanuch said that the Ordinance dictated "shall," and the Comprehensive Plan was the document that said "should." She said that the Ordinance was good to move forward, and she believed it was a disservice to their constituents. She said that she was begging the Board to reconsider the prior deferral of the data center standards and instead vote to advertise the joint public hearing with the Planning Commission. She said that there was still a risk of M-2 zoning by right. She said that they had several applications for the George Washington District, and she had just received a call from Dominion representatives asking to schedule a meeting to discuss powerline expansions in Rock Hill. She said that to her, this meant only one thing: more data centers.

Ms. Vanuch said that Vulcan Quarry could be converted into a data center site because it was already zoned M-2. She said that she sincerely implored the Board to advertise the joint public hearing. She said that the public hearing could be continued if there were issues that were not resolved by that date. She said that the Ordinance would likely be updated more than once as this new industry evolved and they experienced the process. She said that her Planning Commissioner had given her information on ten other Virginia localities that were reviewing and amending their data center regulations for the same reasons.

Ms. Vanuch said that there was no harm in moving forward with the public hearing and tending to it all at that time. She said that their Planning Commission was as informed on this issue as they could be, and she had heard from many constituents about the great work the Planning Commission had completed with these amendments and the feedback provided. She said that she was seriously concerned that the Board was not listening to the public, and it bothered her. She said that she

would prefer to move straight to the joint public hearing, and if the Board still was not satisfied with the data center standards, they could vote against it. She requested her fellow Supervisors to make a motion to reconsider so they could advertise the joint public hearing.

Dr. Yeung said that she believed they needed a structured roundtable that included their staff, outside consultants for water and noise pollution, data center operators, and designated stakeholders. She said that she had been told that two or three of those experts had not attended their prior meetings, so she was glad to have a dedicated work session. She said that she hoped they would ensure there was enough time to schedule the joint public hearing. She said that she believed this issue was too important to rush through without proper consideration and did not want to return in a few months to do this all over again.

Dr. Yeung said that she understood that data centers would bring revenue, but she did not believe it should come at the cost of the quality of life of their residents or the protection of their environment. She said that it was essential that they had a full understanding of the implications, and although Ms. Bohmke said that they had no control over the issue, she knew that Dominion owned the power lines.

Dr. Yeung said that on another topic, she would like to advocate on behalf of the Library Board, which held its first-ever budget work session for the upcoming fiscal year. She said that she would like to request consideration from her colleagues for funding two of their capital improvement requests for FY26: the replacement of self-checkout machines and the conversion to radio-frequency identification (RFID) technology.

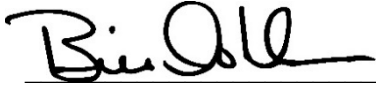
Dr. Yeung said that these proven tools would modernize their libraries, save staff time, and improve customer service. She said that these were one-time investments that would reduce long-term costs through staffing efficiencies and align with the modernization efforts of other libraries in the region. She said that by supporting these projects, they could ensure that Stafford remained current with modern library services while being fiscally responsible.

Mr. Diggs said that in his District, there had been an issue with a wayside stand that was not permitted in A-2, but was permitted in A-1. He said that this became an issue of concern in the community in terms of whether their Ordinance should be amended to allow wayside stands in that area. He said that he would like to look into that if the Board was amenable. He said that he would like to discuss one last thing, as time allowed. He said that as it pertained to the data center issue, and he did not appreciate the manner in which it was handled.

Mr. Diggs said that he had his suspicions about the events that transpired, and he would not elaborate on that. He said that attempting to isolate him through mailings and other means, followed by a threat of recall, was not an acceptable approach to conducting business. He said that the Board would conduct themselves in a manner that was fair and transparent, and their primary concern would be protecting the constituents. He said that throughout his tenure, he had consistently achieved success by doing things the right way, and he intended to continue doing so.

ADJOURNMENT

The Board adjourned its meeting at 11:59 p.m.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bill Ashton", written over a horizontal line.

William H. Ashton, II
County Administrator