

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
STAFFORD COUNTY, VIRGINIA,
MINUTES
SPECIAL MEETING
APRIL 28, 2026

CALL TO ORDER – A special meeting of the Stafford County Board of Supervisors was called to order by Deuntay Diggs, Chairman, at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, April 28, 2026 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; Maya P. Guy, Vice Chairwoman; Tinesha O. Allen; Pamela Yeung; Darrell E. English; Crystal Vanuch; Kecia S. Evans.

Absent was none.

Also in attendance were Bill Ashton, County Administrator; Rysheda McClendon, County Attorney; Sukhi Purewal, Deputy Clerk; various staff members; and other interested parties.

INVOCATION

Mr. English led the invocation.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

CHAIR REMARKS

Mr. Diggs said that before they began, he said that he would like to provide a brief overview of the purpose and focus of this evening's meeting. He said that they had several important public hearings related to their utility system, including consideration of updated water and sewer rates, the establishment of user fees for reclaimed water, and proposed updates to pro rata fees. He said that they would also review the establishment of a rate for reclaimed water service availability. He said that these items were part of their ongoing effort to ensure the long-term sustainability and reliability of their utility services.

Mr. Diggs said that in addition, the Board would take up several significant financial and policy decisions, including setting the Calendar Year 2026 real estate tax rate, including the establishment of a solar facility rate. He said that they would also review and consider approval of the FY 2027 Virginia Public School Authority (VPSA) bond issuance, along with the County's Capital Improvement Program (CIP) covering FY 2027 through FY 2036, both of which were critical to supporting their schools and long-term infrastructure needs.

Mr. Diggs said that a key item tonight was the adoption and appropriation of the FY 2027 Budget, which reflected their priorities as a community and funded County operations and services for the coming year. He said that they would finally consider referring to the proposed

amendments to the Comprehensive Plan to the Planning Commission, specifically regarding the process and routing of proposed power lines through the County. He said that they appreciated the public's engagement in these topics and encouraged participation as they moved through the agenda this evening.

Mr. Diggs said that he would also like to highlight that Stafford County would honor and remember the fallen at the Stafford Regional Airport this year with a mobile history unit and a vintage airplane. He said that the Rise Above exhibit featured a mobile unit with a 160-degree theater recounting the incredible history and legacy of the Tuskegee Airmen and the Women's Air Force Service Pilots (WASP). He said that the ceremony would take place at 10:00 a.m. on Friday, May 22, 2026, at the airport located at 95 Aviation Way, Fredericksburg, Virginia.

Mr. Diggs said that Chris Allen, the director of the Rise Above road exhibit, would be the keynote speaker. He said that the exhibit would be on display at the airport from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. daily starting Friday, May 22, through Monday, May 25. He said that this was a great free, family-friendly event for the Memorial Day weekend, and he hoped they could all attend.

ADDITIONS - DELETIONS AND APPROVAL OF THE REGULAR AGENDA

ADD-ON TO ITEM #4; UPDATED PRESENTATION SLIDES AND UPDATED PROPOSED RESOLUTION R26-48

ADD-ON TO ITEM #6; UPDATED PROPOSED RESOLUTION R26-49 (ADOPT BUDGET) AND PROPOSED RESOLUTION R26-51 (APPROPRIATE BUDGET)

Bill Ashton, County Administrator, said that there were two add-on items. He said that they had updated presentation slides and proposed resolutions R26-48 for Item 4, as well as proposed Resolutions R26-49 and R26-51 for Item 6, related to adopting the budget and appropriations, respectively. He said that the presentation for Item 4 would be presented during tonight's meeting, and the updated proposed resolutions were included in the folder the Supervisors had in front of them.

Ms. Allen motioned, seconded by Ms. Evans, to approve the regular agenda as amended to include the add-on items to Item 4 and Item 6.

The Voting Board tally was:

Yea: (6) Diggs, Guy, Evans, Allen, English, Vanuch

No: (0)

Absent: (1) Dr. Yeung

PRESENTATIONS BY THE PUBLIC

1. Julia Neal said that she stood before the Board today to speak for those who the Board may not otherwise hear from. She said that she had pulled statistics from Google, and she wanted to emphasize that the impact of the Dominion lines was a serious concern. She said that over 800 people, potentially up to 875 homes, were directly affected by these lines, with over

9,000 homes within a 1,000-foot radius. She said that this translated to approximately 290 homes that would be directly impacted.

Ms. Neal said that one in 31 homes today had a child or a person with a disability, including autism. She said that this meant that 25 to 28 homes along this line would be directly affected by these lines. She said that mental health was also a significant concern, with one in five adults in 2024 experiencing mental health issues, and one in 20 children. She said that this was not just about Stafford County; it was about the individuals and their homes. She said that as a resident of Stafford County since 1995, and prior to 2010 her family lived in a subdivision in Hampton Oaks, on the corner of a busy intersection.

Ms. Neal said that her family and she had moved to Hunter's Pond in 2010 to provide a safe and supportive environment for their son, who had severe, profound autism, generalized anxiety disorder, and sensory processing disorder. She said that the cul-de-sac and tree lot in their property had been instrumental in his treatment plan, providing a sense of safety, privacy, and calm. She said that many other families along the Dominion route would also have children with disabilities, and the stress of losing these trees would have a profound impact on their mental health.

Ms. Neal said that the potential for meltdowns, self-harm, and unhealthy coping mechanisms would be exacerbated by the change. She said that this was not just about one family; it was about the many constituents in Stafford County.

2. Jenny Smith Hartwood District, said that she was thrilled about the information she had read about the proposals that were about to be sent to the Planning Commission. She said that she also wanted to thank them for considering the health implications and including that in the documentation. She said that as she lived at Poplar Grove Farm, which was the largest family-owned property on the Kraken route, she was aware that Dominion no longer cut trees to maintain its rights-of-way.

Ms. Smith said that instead, Dominion now sprayed growth retardants and herbicides, the names of which they would not disclose on their website, to control the trees. She said that her property received all its water from an above-ground stream that passed directly through the Kraken route, which meant the water used for her farmhouse and crops would be sprayed with chemicals from the Kraken route. She said that as a matter of public record, she wanted to note her concern that the information being passed on to the Planning Commission did not include a mention of groundwater protections.

Ms. Smith said that she also wanted to know if substations were being considered. She said that she hoped the Planning Commission would review this information and she would pass it on to them. She said that next, they would be hearing from Tom King, who had shared his research with her. She said that his findings were based on real science and were not exaggerated. She encouraged everyone to read his research.

Ms. Smith said that she had sent an email to the Board from Towering, on behalf of the Towering Concerns Board of Directors, regarding their concerns with confusing communication with Dominion. She said that they had a similar issue in November, with

short notice, late notice, and incorrect information about meetings. She said that when citizens reached out to the State Corporation Commission (SCC) to complain about these issues, the SCC rejected every letter from Stafford citizens.

Ms. Smith said that it was not until legislators like Paul Milde reached out to the SCC that they responded to Stafford County residents. She said that she understood this was adding more to the Board's workload, but why they were asking the Board to take the time to send a letter to the SEC on their behalf, expressing their concerns about the unacceptable way Dominion communicated with Stafford citizens.

3. Thomas King said that he would like to speak about the health concerns that had become increasingly alarming to him, despite his initial lack of knowledge on the subject just a few short months ago. He said that as he had delved deeper into the issue, he had become more alarmed. He said that he wanted to emphasize that he could not cover everything he had found, as his prepared material was extensive and would require a three-hour class at the college level.

Mr. King said that he would like to provide a brief mnemonic. He said that there was an epidemiology group and a biomarker group. He said that they all recalled the story of the American cigarette, popularized in the 1940s and 1950s. He said that family doctors at the time began to understand that in terms of epidemiology, people who smoked cigarettes were prone to illnesses. He said that epidemiology was about understanding how diseases behaved, where they occurred, and who was affected.

Mr. King said that smokers were more likely to develop lung cancer, but the exact reason was unknown at the time. He said that similarly, people living near overhead power lines were at risk of developing various health issues, including cancer, asthma, and low birth weight. He said that research had shown that exposure to these power lines could have a significant impact on children's cognitive development, leading to learning problems and other neurological and psychological issues.

Mr. King said that he predicted the widespread use of these power lines in schools would exacerbate special education problems, although he hoped he was wrong. He said that to summarize, he would like to remind them of the concept of epidemiology, which highlighted the risks associated with these power lines. He said that they knew that these risks existed, but the industry would likely downplay them, claiming they were safe.

Mr. King said that if they strung so many powerlines throughout the County, they would undoubtedly create a group of research subjects who would serve as biomarkers to explain why the powerlines caused people to get sick.

4. Jeffrey Traeger, George Washington District, said that he was here tonight to discuss the budget and the importance of ensuring it supports educators effectively. He said that when reviewing a budget like the County's, it was essential to consider the long-term implications for education. He said that as someone who had lived in this County for 47 years, he had witnessed numerous changes. He said that he was confident that the next 47 years would bring even more transformations.

Mr. Traeger said that one concern that had become increasingly apparent was that people consistently said that while they loved working in Stafford County, other Counties paid educators significantly more, and people were tempted to leave so they could bring home better pay for their family. He said that this meant that they lost experienced educators, paraprofessionals, librarians, and administrators. He said that they were losing talented individuals due to competition.

Mr. Traeger said that they needed to prioritize providing raises to retain their staff, ensuring that they could continue to provide a stable and supportive environment for their educators. He said that it was going to be a disaster if they constantly had a revolving door of educators coming in and out of school buildings. He said that everyone remembered a teacher that influenced them, so they should do their best to ensure teachers could continue to influence students into the future, as well.

5. Mark Bryngelson said that he had been a chiropractor here in Stafford, Virginia since 1992. He said that he was also certified in functional medicine, which involved identifying the underlying causes of disease and helping patients achieve natural wellness. He said that he would like to make a connection with what Mr. King was discussing earlier. He said that disease was often the result of stressors, which could be chemical, biological, or emotional in nature. He said that these stressors could include toxins, pathogens, and heavy metals, as well as emotional and electrical stresses. He said that a doctor's goal was to eliminate these stressors.

Dr. Bryngelson said that he conducted research on the electrical stresses caused by low-frequency electromagnetic frequencies (EMF) from these towers, and melatonin, a hormone that played a crucial role in regulating their sleep-wake cycles, was also connected to the mitochondria, the energy-producing structures within cells. He said that research had shown that all disease was linked to low energy in the cell, which impaired the cell's ability to perform essential functions such as protein synthesis and toxin reduction.

Dr. Bryngelson said that he would like to highlight a key finding from a study by Michael Chang, a medical doctor and certified functional medical practitioner. He said that melatonin had been shown to possess numerous protective actions, particularly in relation to the mitochondria. He said that it was synthesized in the mitochondria and bound to melatonin receptors, providing a defense mechanism against oxidative stress. He said that melatonin had been found to decrease nitric oxide-free radical formation in the brain, reducing its damaging effects, and also reduced electron leakage.

6. Jamil Hernandez said that he would like to focus on the issues with Dominion's planning and due diligence process with regard to the Kraken Loop. He said that Dominion was incentivized to build out infrastructure, and they did not prioritize the community's needs. He said that they failed to conduct thorough due diligence and consider alternative solutions. He said that during their discussions, Dominion acknowledged this. He said that he had asked them directly, as an engineer, if they had considered reconducting the existing power lines. They did not, citing PJM's need for additional infrastructure to address lack of capacity for data centers.

Mr. Hernandez said that because of that identified need, they created this new line, the costs of which they would pass onto customers. He said that they overlooked the existing infrastructure's capacity and potential for waste. He said that they could have reconducted the existing powerlines without needing these old rights-of-way. He said that in his case, living in Embrey Mill, the proposed power line would be less than 250 feet from his house.

Mr. Hernandez said that this would expose children to the effects of the power lines, both at their homes and within proposed schools. He urged the Board to consider the residents' voices and ensure that Dominion prioritized their needs. He said that as Stafford was merely a conduit for the power to support new data centers in Manassas, it was unfair that they would bear the costs and effects of this infrastructure.

7. Emma Siegmund, Garrisonville District, said that she was a freshman at Mountain View High School would like to talk about funding their schools. She said that as a student in Stafford County Schools since kindergarten, she had never seen this school system properly funded. She said that for 10 years, she had been upset that her teachers, who had mentored her, coached her teams, inspired her, and written her recommendation letters had to pack up and leave for Fairfax and Prince William Counties.

Ms. Siegmund said that they did not leave because they were unhappy or unfulfilled; they simply could not afford to live in this County with their current pay. She said that last month, the School Board approved a budget of \$529.3 million to get them through this year. She said that this was not a wish list or a bucket list; it was what they needed to make these schools function over the next year. She said that they needed to open these three schools in August, pay their teachers, and provide essential services.

Ms. Siegmund said that as someone who was inside a school building five days a week, she could attest that they needed these schools. She said that they could not afford to lose any more bus drivers, teachers, or administrators; yet, it had been proposed that the County give them only \$15 million of the \$18.6 million they needed to make this work. She said that this meant that their teachers would lose support, bus drivers would lose pay, and students would lose opportunities.

Ms. Siegmund said that their school was being forced to do more with far less than it truly needed. She said that she had been in this system for a decade, and she had heard the promises. She said that she had seen the yard signs come up and go down, but she had yet to see any action. She said that the Board members could not sit there and look her in the eye and tell her that they cared about her education and the education of her peers when they were actively choosing to defund their potential.

Ms. Siegmund said that she had helped many of them in their journey to this Board. She said that now, she was asking that they help her in her education and close the gap. She asked the Board to please fund their schools and do the jobs they were elected to do, because when they stayed silent, the students were the ones who paid the price.

8. Blaine Donnelly, Rock Hill District, said that he had lived in Stafford for 40 years. He said that when he first moved in, there was just a Kentucky Fried Chicken on I-95. He said that he

had seen Stafford change over the years. He said that he grew up in Stafford, attending Garrisonville Elementary all the way through Mary Washington University. He said that he met his wife in Stafford, raised his children in Stafford, and even sent them to college here. He said that he loved this place.

Mr. Donnelly said that in fact, he said that he used to drive through Seven Lakes, Hunter's Pond, Shelton Run, and dream of living there. He said that it took him over 20 years of hard work and sacrifices to buy a house in Seven Lakes, from working part-time at Sam's Pizza to going to college, and then putting in over 120 hours a week with work. He said that now, he was facing the loss of that house because he had bought it for the neighborhood, the County, his neighbors, the trees, and the beauty of Stafford.

Mr. Donnelly said that Dominion's entry into the picture threatened to ruin all that. He said that he would not have power lines on his property, but he would be within 200 yards of one because it was on his neighbor's land. He said that this would harm his family, his neighbor's family, and the 12 deer that regularly visited his backyard. He said that it was unacceptable. He said that as a business owner and taxpayer, he was deeply concerned. He said that he paid a significant amount of taxes on his multiple houses in Stafford.

Mr. Donnelly said that for the first time, he had considered moving. He said that these power lines were putting their properties at risk, their families at risk, and the beauty of Stafford at risk. He said that they were destroying their trees, spraying pesticides all over their lawns, polluting their waterways, and stealing their dreams. He said that he used to drive through Stafford, dreaming of owning a house with his wife and children. He said that they would walk through the neighborhoods before they lived there, and all of that was going to be gone unless the County did something.

9. Tiffany Hampton, said that she did not prepare anything to say, so she would speak from her personal experience since moving to Stafford in 2023. She said that as a military spouse, she had been stationed at the Pentagon and was looking for a place to stay, like many soldiers do. She said that a battle buddy suggested she check out Stafford, and she was introduced to the County through her husband, who was a Zillow enthusiast. She said that they bought their house online, sight unseen, and she was pleasantly surprised.

Ms. Hampton said that she had the chance to drive through the corridor and appreciate its beauty. She said that her son, who had to move multiple times due to their frequent permanent change of station (PCS), had thrived in Stafford, starting kindergarten and now in the second grade. He loved it, and so did she. She said that she was hesitant to PCS again, as Stafford had won her over. She said that the community itself was gorgeous, and the culture was unique and welcoming. She said that on a recent drive, she had seen the size of the towers that would soon be populating people's backyards, and it was alarming.

Ms. Hampton said that she understood soldiers did not typically give comment at forums such as this, but despite perhaps not being here for the long term, she wanted to speak on behalf of those who would be here for the rest of their lives. She said that she hoped the Board would be the voice for the residents who were trying. She said that she had never had

to worry about selling her home due to PCS, but she was concerned she may not have the opportunity in the future.

10. Barbara Rice, representing the Autumn Ridge area, said that she was deeply concerned about the proposed power lines, specifically the North Anna to Bristers power lines, also known as the Kraken Loop project. She said that she had lived in this area for 36 years, and she had seen it change dramatically. She said that Stafford was a small town, and it was beautiful. She said that she had seen firsthand the impact of development and growth.

Ms. Rice said that as someone who has been actively involved in local issues, including redistricting, but nothing has resonated with her as strongly as the potential harm these power lines could cause to their community. She said that she was struggling to see how they could recover from the scars they would leave behind. She said that they could adapt to changes in their school districts, a Buc-ee's development or other things.

Ms. Rice said that once these power lines are installed, there was no going back. She said that she believed this would have a lasting, long-term impact on their community if they did not take action to change the route. She said that she was aware that Dominion may not want to spend the money and wanted to utilize existing easements, but those easements were 60 years old, established in a different time, and the area had changed significantly since then.

Ms. Rice said that Dominion needed to consider alternative routes that would minimize the impact on their homes, their environment, and their quality of life. She said that Dominion had been running advertisements downplaying the significance of this project. She said that they were making it seem like a minor issue, but she believed it was much bigger than that; this was a critical issue that requires their attention and action. She said that it seemed like the community was more concerned about Buc-ee's than this project, but this was much more concerning.

Ms. Rice said that she thanked the County for attempting to address it, but she thought it needed to be thrown back to Dominion to figure out a better plan and not use their communities as their direct route for powering data centers in northern Virginia.

11. Randy Butler, Rock Hill District, said that his family had lived in Woodbridge since 1998, purchasing a house in 2003 and raising their children there. He said that his daughter was an upcoming senior at Mary Washington next year, and they decided to buy a house here after months of consideration; however, due to the government shutdown, they were unable to close on their house at the time.

Mr. Butler said that his wife was a federal employee, and he had just retired. He said that once the shutdown ended, they were able to close on the house three days later. He said that as they were unpacking on that night, his neighbor approached him and mentioned the power lines. He asked him what he was referring to, and he explained that they would be running directly through his backyard, behind the swing set.

Mr. Butler said that this would result in the destruction of four of his five acres, including all the trees. He said that this was the primary reason they moved to this location. He said that he had severe tinnitus from his military service, and his wife had a bone in her ear that required

brain surgery if it became severe. He said that there was only one doctor in the country who could perform this surgery. He said that this would significantly affect these preexisting health issues. He said that they had finally found their dream house, and he was eager to stay here.

Mr. Butler said that he was concerned about the impact of the power lines on his property. He said that he recently visited the landfill on Eskimo Hill Road, where he saw the exact powerline setup that would occur in his backyard. He said that he was deeply troubled by this and did not want his family to have to endure it. He said that he had team members located from Guam to Florida to New York, and he did not have to stay here; however, he would prefer to remain in this location. He said that his family had roots in this state dating back to the colonial era.

Mr. Butler said that he did not place all the blame on Dominion. He said that the County was also responsible for this issue. He said that the right-of-way had existed since his wife was born, and it should have been filed as an abandoned right-of-way decades ago. He said that the state, Counties, and other entities should have taken action. He said that nothing with his title, VA loan, or other documents commented on that right-of-way, in spite of federal statute.

12. Molly Denham, Hartwood District, said that she was here tonight to support the advertised property tax rate of \$0.985, but she also wanted to emphasize that this entire debate was frustrating to watch because it did not have to be this way. She said that year after year, the Board had avoided making small, responsible adjustments to keep pace with inflation and the needs of a growing county, and now, once again, they were trying to manage the consequence in a single vote.

Ms. Denham said that what was even more frustrating was how much time and energy had been spent debating what amounted to a minimal difference to the residents. She said that according to the County staff's data, the gap between the County Administrator's proposal and the conclusion of the hours of discussion last night was about a difference of \$100 a year, or roughly \$8 a month for the average household. She said that this was the difference between funding the County and underfunding it.

Ms. Denham said that by funding the County, she meant a pared-down County budget that did not truly fund the entire County. She said that after all the work, all the debate, and all the back-and-forth, that was the Board's win - a 25-cent-per-day difference. So, the question was, why did this continue to be the focus every single year? She said it was because they did not see this level of urgency when it came to workforce housing, ensuring that County employees could afford to live where they worked and serve, or addressing data center planning and long-term goals.

Ms. Denham said they did not see it when residents asked about data center planning, industry identity, or follow-through on economic development recommendations from a consultant the County had paid for. She said that instead, what they saw was a pattern of short-term solutions, social media one-liners, and messaging that made them feel good for

five minutes but avoided the bigger picture. She had said it before, and she would say it again: Stafford County did not have a spending problem; it had a revenue problem.

Ms. Denham said that supporting the \$0.985 rate was not about asking too much of the residents; it was about making necessary adjustments and taking their responsibilities seriously. She said that every year it was the same debate over the same problems, with no solutions. She said that it had been years of discussion with no path forward. She said that she was not eager to pay higher taxes, but she was willing to support the \$0.985 rate so they could properly fund their County. She said that more importantly, she was asking that as they went forward, the Board put the same energy they put into this budget into all the other decisions that needed to be made for this County.

13. Isabel Morrow said that she had three children and took care of her 92-year-old mother. She said that she provided a home for her brother-in-law and his daughter after his wife passed away. She said that they chose Hunter's Pond very intentionally. She said that it was well-established, well-maintained, and offered something incredibly rare - a peaceful, rural lifestyle that was just minutes away from essential stores and services.

Ms. Morrow said that also due to this location, their children would be able to attend some of the best schools in the County, schools they were excited to be part of. She said that they made this investment not just financially, but emotionally. She said that they set roots here, but now, all of that is at risk. She said that she wanted to speak specifically about the proposed high-voltage power line, originally named the Kraken Loop, and what it meant for families like hers.

Ms. Morrow said that there was a growing concern supported by reviews such as the one by Mr. King, that long-term exposure to EMF fields may be associated with adverse health effects. She said that while research continued and perspectives differed, what they could not ignore were the credible concerns that existed, and when it came to their children, even the possibility of harm deserved serious weight.

Ms. Morrow said that her family carried a high risk for serious health conditions, including cancer, heart disease, and a rare and destructive ear condition called cholesteatoma. She said that her husband had it, her mother had it, and her eight-year-old son had already had two ear surgeries. She said that introducing a high-voltage power line into the center of their community added another layer of risk that she did not choose, that they did not choose, and that they cannot control.

Ms. Morrow said that this project threatened the environment that they depend on. She said that the community existed within a region that is deeply connected and protected by the Chesapeake Bay. She said that she was asking the Board to consider the full impact of this decision, not just the immediate benefits, but the long-term consequences for the community that already exists here. She asked the Board to please protect their neighborhood, their schools, their environment, and most of all, their families.

14. Tammy Burkhardt, Rock Hill District, said that she had the opportunity to attend a couple of meetings here over the past couple of months. She said that as a member of Tower Concern

and someone who was involved in a similar fight 20 years ago, she was reminded of the power of community coming together to make a difference. She said that the past issue resulted in the Virginia State Corporation Commission requiring Dominion to bury a 230 kilovolt (kV) line for five miles through Aquia Harbor to the Mountain View substation.

Ms. Burkhardt said that it was not a coincidence that this happened; it was a result of her community showing up, speaking up, and demanding better for their communities. She said that today, they faced an even greater challenge with rapid growth and the surge of data centers. She said that their electrical grid had increased dramatically, and now Dominion was proposing a 500 kV overhead transmission line on a 170-foot monopole through their neighborhoods for more power.

Ms. Burkhardt said that 20 years ago, they packed Colonial Forge to standing room only, not just once, but twice; the SEC had to return twice. She said that yet, today, they were limited in their ability to speak at the upcoming town hall meeting on May 7 with Delegate Stacey Carroll. She said that they were told they had to submit emails, so they adapted by going door-to-door in the most affected neighborhoods. She said that she was talking about Shelton Run, Shelton Knoll, Austin Ridge, Autumn Ridge, Windy Creek, Embrey Mill, Seven Lakes, Hunter's Pond, Poplar Estates, and even Jenny's Farm.

Ms. Burkhardt said that they took a month to do this, talking to real neighbors and learning about their concerns. She said that it humbled her to have to tell people that they had buried lines. She spoke with a woman who did not even speak English, and all she could do was show her what the monopoles look like. She said that in Shelton's Run, the homeowners association (HOA) was told they had to take down their tot lot because 500 kV was deemed not safe for a playground. If it was not safe for kids, it was not safe for homes around it.

Ms. Burkhardt said that regarding schools, 20 years ago there was transparency, and schools engaged, with students learning about what was happening in their community. She said that she personally worked with Rodney Thompson teachers and parent teacher organization (PTO). She said that the kids went to the Board meetings, they went to Richmond, and they were a part of the whole process.

15. Pam Evans said that she lived in Hunter's Pond. She said that when she purchased her home in Hunter's Pond, she was told by the builder and the County that the VEPCO easement crossing her yard was a "dead" easement that would never be used. She said that 23 years later, that promise was being broken. She said that now she faced the very real possibility that Dominion Energy would clear-cut the trees in her backyard, trees that took decades to grow, displacing wildlife and forever changing the character of their community, all to erect 170-foot monopoles carrying 500 kilovolts of power just 130 feet from her home.

Ms. Evans said that Dominion described this as a visual impact, but it was actually environmental destruction, loss of property value, and a permanent alteration of the place they call home. She said that what made this even harder to accept was that this power was not even for Stafford County. She said that their families were being asked to bear the burden, the noise, the disruption, the loss of their trees, and views, so that electricity could be

transmitted elsewhere. She had to ask, why were Stafford residents being asked to sacrifice so much for something that does not serve their community?

16. Christina Westover, Garrisonville District, said that she would like to start by thanking the Board for proposing the amendments designating Segment 5 as an underground transmission corridor. She said that as a resident of this area, if the 150-plus foot towers were to be erected overhead, they would be less than 100 feet from her home. She said that from where the Supervisors were sitting to the back of this room, that was where those towers would be. She asked if they would be amenable to having their children play in that space, because she certainly was not.

Ms. Westover said that in Embrey Mill they had paid additional premiums to live on wooded lots, seeking a safe and stable investment. She said that now, they were being told that they might be a potential site for data centers in another County. She said that Dominion was relying on easements from 2006, before their neighborhood and current density existed. She said that however, a 500 kV industrial line was not routine maintenance, according to these easements; it was a material change in burden.

Ms. Westover said that Dominion could not claim that they were minimizing impact by using the current path, while simultaneously expanding the wattage and footprint of these lines. She said that even if they could afford to move with the current investment rates, she questioned who would buy this house knowing that there was a megatower coming, or that their children would have to attend school with high voltage buzz and potentially hazardous pesticides leaching into the soil.

Ms. Westover said that she was asking the County to evaluate the risk of this project, the route, and a rigorous comparison of all alternatives. She said that for example, a new path following a highway down I-95 away from homes, could be faster and less strategic than forcing a line through an outdated residential easement. She said that the impact on their community must be minimized. She said that when high-end homes in Embrey Mill lost 10% to 20% of their value, that was a permanent recurring loss in property tax revenue for the County.

Ms. Westover said that safety was also a concern, as overhead lines posed health risks from EMFs and industrial herbicides. She said that they should be keeping lines away from schools and bedrooms. She said that they should utilize new state laws that forced the industry to pay for this infrastructure. She said that by voting to adopt these amendments, the Board was protecting their health, investments, and future county viability. She said that they applauded the Board for listening to the families they represented and being a leader for them. She said that as one of the fastest-growing counties in Virginia, they had the opportunity to set the standard for the next decade of Virginia's growth.

17. Kristen Maxson, said that at the April 20, 2026 Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee meeting was posted on January 2026 at 9:00 a.m. She said that a clock was incorrect. She asked how this affected the budget cuts. She said that Musselman and Carl Lewis Park revenues were removed from the budget decisions. She said that with money transfers,

agendas were to be fixed upon meetings, not four months into the past. She said that agenda time stamps were critical.

Ms. Maxson said that for example, the EDA meeting also lacked a time stamp. She said that March 26 work session said that Destination Stafford was gone because it did not include the courthouse, and that was bad management with nondisclosure, which costed the taxpayer. She said that 25% of the purple reclaimed water pipe consumed by two data center projects and was the budget driver for their heavy debt and utility increases. She said that these projects were overpriced, with a billion dollars being presented to taxpayers by an applicant with a large hidden agenda.

Ms. Maxson said that the unmanageable scopes, applications with nested applications, and existing applications of land dating back to 1980 now being frozen due to government crackdowns and the slashing of environmental control departments. She said that on November 6, 2025, it was stated that the STC infrastructure lists 130 data center buildings in the pipeline for Stafford County. She said that a Board member mentioned that Amazon was replaced by STC, giving advantage to preferred entities, while Stafford County future loans and bonds were voted in.

Ms. Maxson said that this placed the Stafford public as indentured servants to tax figures to chosen banks. She said that regarding the North Anna Kraken Loop Transmission Project, on January 29, 2026, the town hall Speaker stated that only 10% of the data centers used repurposed water. She said that some noted that this elaborate system was mainly for ground mining. She said that Stafford Technology Campus had a mining permit.

Ms. Maxson said that Stafford residents had come forward to report that their wells had gone dry, such as those on Patton Clark Road affected by the Westlake subdivision. She said that the public had been told that the completion of the five data center projects was 10 to 15 years out. She said that the proposed shelter of these investments might be obsolete by the time it was built.

18. Mary Ann Konya, Rock Hill District said that she had lived in Stafford for 36 years. She said that as a retired naval officer, she and her husband chose to stay in Stafford after their time in the Navy. She said that they eventually purchased a home in Seven Lakes because they loved the wildlife and the wooded community. She said that they took great care to preserve their environment, and they could tear down a tree without permission; that was the kind of community they had here.

Ms. Konya said that they needed to protect their wetlands. She said that Seven Lakes had four ponds, and it was an equestrian community. She said that she had a pond in her backyard, and it was home to fish, Canadian geese, wildfowl species, and many owl species. She said that they also had horse trails that would be directly affected by the high-voltage lines. She said that their horse trails were actually the easements where the voltage lines were located.

Ms. Konya said that this meant their horses could no longer use the trails. She said that the entire development had horse trails around the outside, and that was where the easements

were. She said that they had heard that chemicals would be used to maintain the power lines, and if those chemicals were used, they would harm the wildlife, owls, and especially the fish in her ponds. She said that the fish would be severely impacted if chemicals were used. She said that streams connecting her ponds would also be affected, making it impossible to maintain healthy fish populations.

Ms. Konya said that these power lines would be in her backyard, and she was concerned about the impact on her pond and the wildlife that lived there. She said that she was not the only one who was concerned - she said that she had a residence in West Virginia that was experiencing similar issues. She said that the problem was not just that they were not receiving the power, but that they were making sacrifices to supply power to Loudoun County and Prince William County, which had already authorized all these data centers.

Ms. Konya said that they should have looked to the future and considered local sources of power, such as their own power stations, water, and cooling systems. She said that they all knew that this infrastructure would be much smaller in just a few years.

19. Lisa Vose said that she moved here when she began 10th grade, and she had been here ever since, and she truly loved Stafford County. She said that like another gentleman who spoke earlier, she would ride the school bus and often dreamed about the neighborhood she would pass every day that she longed to call home. She said that she had been living in the community she had always dreamed of as a teenager, Clearview Heights, and she has noticed that the property tax has been steadily increasing.

Ms. Vose said that last night, she was able to watch the Board's discussion on budget items and understand the challenges they faced in balancing their goals and meeting the needs of the County. She said that for her, however, property taxes could become unsustainable, and she may no longer be able to afford to live in Stafford County. She said that as a retiree, she had a fixed budget. She said that she intended to stay in this community for as long as possible, so she did not care about her house increasing in value.

Ms. Vose said that was also concerned about the issues with Dominion, as she had existing power lines on her property that were over 60 years old, causing frequent snapping and popping. She said that the easement they had across her property restricted her ability to use her own land, and she could no longer make changes to it without their permission. She said that she could empathize with those who are facing similar challenges.

Ms. Vose said that she was a bit disappointed with the way budget items were presented for review. She said that she was concerned to hear that Ms. Vanuch and Dr. Yeung may not have had access to all the necessary materials to agree on budget reductions. She said that she was unsure if they ever got those materials. She said that this was a concern.

20. Matthew Lentz, George Washington District, said that he wanted to first ask the Board to keep in mind the 1985 Whitney Houston song, "The Greatest Love of All." He said that children were their future, and he wanted to know how they were keeping those words alive in Stafford. He asked if they wanted to teach them well and let them lead the way. He said

that Mr. Traeger and Ms. Siegmund talked about the future, and it did not appear to be looking too bright.

Mr. Lentz said that he knew that if he did not pay for things, they tended to disappear. He said that if one cut corners on merchandise, the quality would decrease, and eventually, nobody would want to buy. He said that similarly, if they continued to cut corners in education, their children would continue to suffer. He said that when they neglected their schools, they were not just neglecting buildings; they were neglecting people, including their employees and most importantly, their children.

Mr. Lentz said that they had a responsibility to support their children and their future because they wanted them to lead the way. He said that he was not going to be there forever, and it was imperative that they took action to support their children and their future. He said that he urged the Board to think about how they could support their children and their future, and let them lead the way.

21. Brian Hudson, Hartwood District said that he opposed to the proposed \$0.98 tax rate. He said that he was speaking on behalf of the homeowners and taxpayers behind him. He said that over the last three years, considering the rate proposed tonight, every taxpaying homeowner in this County should be alarmed. He said that the County had failed to diversify its revenue streams and control its ballooning budget, instead perpetuating the same pattern year after year.

Mr. Hudson said that it was a pattern of treating taxpayers like an ATM, taking more money without regard for their financial well-being. He said that in 2023, property taxes were increased by 11%, followed by another 10% increase the following year. Last year, they experienced a minor reprieve with a 3.3% increase, but now the Board proposed a \$0.98 rate, which would raise taxes another 15.3%.

Mr. Hudson said that if this rate was approved, they would have increased property taxes by 46% over the last four years for homeowners in this area. He said that even if the tax rate remained at \$0.9367 from last year, based on the assessments, it would still represent a 10% increase on property taxes and a 38% increase over four years. He said that to put this into perspective, New York City made national news this year for proposing a 10% property tax hike.

Mr. Hudson said that down here, 10% increases had become the norm. He said that three increases of 10% or more in four years were not anomalies, but a pattern. He said that this high level of taxation was unsustainable, stifling local economic growth, reducing household disposable income, and increasing businesses' operating costs, which were then passed on to taxpayers. He said that with property values rising 30% over the last two assessments, the average homeowner's tax bill had increased substantially.

Mr. Hudson said that this year's proposed increase would become the new baseline. He said that taxes would not decrease from here; they would only continue to climb. He said that it was essential to remember that homeowners did not truly own their homes; they leased them from the County, and failing to pay taxes meant losing their homes. He said that his final

comment was to the Board: do not claim to be making the hard choices by raising taxes.; they were making the easy ones.

Mr. Hudson said that it was the taxpayers who would be forced to make the hard choices, cutting budgets, sacrificing groceries, college savings, and retirement funds. He said that taxpayers deserved a government that managed budgets responsibly, not one that viewed their homes as endless revenue sources.

22. Anastasia Siegmund said that she was a senior at Colonial Forge High School and North Stafford High School. She said that she was currently completing her nurse aid certification and would begin nursing school in August, with the goal of returning to Stafford County to work after graduation. She said that having attended four schools in Stafford County and currently attending two, she had witnessed firsthand the impact of inadequate funding on students.

Ms. Siegmund said that many parts of their schools are in disrepair, with gaps between doors and windows, cracks in the brick, and flickering lights. She said that a pipe burst at her middle school a few years after she left, releasing boiling water into the building just hours before students would have been present. She said that incidents like this did not just cause damage; they created fear, and if it happened once, it could happen again with devastating consequences.

Ms. Siegmund said that students should not have to fear for their safety in a school building. She said that this was not a safe or effective learning environment. She said that over time, she had seen these issues persist from elementary school to now. She said that it was discouraging to watch the school system they were meant to be proud of receive so little care, which made students question why they are expected to work so hard in an environment that was not supported.

Ms. Siegmund said that the lack of funding also meant they lost teachers, counselors, and bus drivers. She said that during her four years in high school, she had three counselors, all of whom left for higher-paying counties. She said that as a senior, that made preparing for college harder, as counselors were meant to know them as individuals, not just as transcripts. She said that transportation was another issue. She said that she rode a travel bus every day, arriving at 6:50 a.m. in the morning to ensure she got on time.

Ms. Siegmund said that due to driver shortages, buses were often doubled up and make multiple stops. She said that school started at 7:30 in the morning, but she had arrived as late as 9:15 a.m., missing an entire class. She said that students like herself were doing their part by showing up early and working hard, making sacrifices to prepare for their futures; they needed the County to do the same.

Ms. Siegmund said that this was not a fault of their drivers, teachers, or administrators, who were doing everything they could with what they had. She said that they needed support. She said that she sincerely hoped that her younger brother, who started kindergarten this year, did not face the same challenges she and her other siblings had. She said that therefore, she

requested the Board to please fund their schools, support their students, educators, and community, so that they could receive the education they deserved.

23. Albert Undercoffer, Rock Hill District, said that as a lifelong resident of 41 years, he was deeply concerned about the North Anna to Bristers power one project, also known as the Kraken Loop, would place high voltage infrastructure in close proximity to their schools and neighborhoods, directly impacting the health and environment of their children. He said that the school leaders had a moral and ethical responsibility to inform parents when something of this magnitude was happening.

Mr. Undercoffer said that parents had the right to know. He said that unfortunately, three out of four people they spoke to when going door-to-door were completely unaware that these power lines were planned, even when they were in their own backyard. He said that they were asking their leaders give attention and transparency so that every family was fully informed and able to make decisions with all the facts, and giving the same level of attention to budgets as they did to protecting their children's health and environment.

24. [01:13:20 Speaker?] said that she had witnessed firsthand the decline of the school system, having seen it firsthand while her children attended schools from 2002 to 2020. She said that she was also aware of the \$40 million shortfall that no one wanted to address. She said that people were hesitant to discuss it because it may be perceived as anti-veteran. She said that she was not anti-veteran; her husband had served almost 18 years, and she saw the sacrifices veterans made every day.

She said that however, it was a matter of framing. She said that if the Board explained that this shortfall was largely due to decisions made by the General Assembly, which disproportionately affected Stafford County, she believed they could gain traction. She said that she would like to hear the Board's plan for addressing this issue. She said that Stafford County was facing a slow and painful decline, a death by a thousand cuts, which was difficult to recognize because it was a gradual process.

She said that the General Assembly did not see their struggles, and they needed to take bold action to bring attention to the problem. She proposed that they work together to present a unified front to the Senate Finance and Appropriations Committee and lobby Senator Lucas, Senator McPike, and Senator McDougal. She said that they needed to make it clear what they were losing and why they needed state support.

She said that they had five years before they saw substantial revenue from data centers, and they needed to act now to fund their Schools and staff. She said that they needed to aggressively engage with the General Assembly, particularly the most influential members, and present their case in a persistent and effective manner. She said that newer members such as Delegate Carroll may not have as much influence, so they needed to persistently reach out to the Senators.

25. Theresa Cridge, said that she had visited multiple Buc-ee's locations and really liked the idea of a special on- and off-ramp for it because she had been trapped in their parking lots for 40 or 50 minutes just trying to get out due to the traffic. She said that she also supported a sports

center there, but hoped it would not take away from other area sports centers, such as the Rouse Center or the YMCA. She said that she also wanted to mention the Kraken Loop.

Ms. Cridge said that she lived just next to the area where the line went directly through Rodney Thompson Middle School. She said that she knew this project would affect their students and their homes. She said that there would be constant EMF. She said that it would also be affecting Mountain View, Stafford Middle School, Brooke Point High School, and a new elementary school. She said that children of all ages would be exposed to high levels of EMF. She said that she wanted to thank the County for hiring a lawyer to assist with this issue.

26. Steve Rossi said that he worked at North Stafford High School and also has a farm property on Shelton Shop Road. He said that he would like to discuss two concerns he had. He said that as a staff member at North Stafford High School for 15 years, he had witnessed numerous staff members leave the school. He said that he was one of the 11 remaining staff members with 15 years of service. He said that he had seen many people depart, and it had been disheartening. He said that he had joined the school staff with high hopes and was thrilled to have colleagues that seemed like a family.

Mr. Rossi said that however, he had watched that sense of community wither away, largely due to pay issues and the pursuit of better opportunities. He hoped that they could find a solution to their budget to fund the schools. He said that additionally, he was affected by the Kraken Loop, which spanned the back corner of the property he had inherited from his parents in 1983. He said that they had purchased the land when they moved to Virginia from California. He said that he had been there for a number of years.

Mr. Rossi said that he felt misled by Dominion Energy because during their initial meeting, they had assured him that the power line would remain underground. He said that he had spoken to two employees at the Rowser Building and confirmed that it would stay underground. He said that he had since learned that it would be a monopole, and it would be erected on the hill in the back of his farm, approximately 200 feet from his house. He said that his son and grandson currently lived there, and he had anticipated leaving the farm to his son when he passed away, so his family would be residents of the County into the far future.

Mr. Rossi said that however, this change would significantly impact his property value, and he was considering selling the land to avoid losing its value. He said that the land had been in his family for 43 years, and he was prepared to leave it if the poles came to be built, as he did not want to see it compromised. He said that when his parents bought the farm, they had been aware of the easement, and he remembered his father mentioning it when he was 16. He said that they had all been told it was nothing to worry about, but it suddenly became a reality when the power lines were built.

Mr. Rossi said that through the efforts of the community, they could get it put underground. He said that he was truly grateful for the effort being put in, and he hoped that Stafford would advocate for all the citizens who had spoken out tonight, as this was a significant concern for everyone. He did not envy any of the Supervisors, as they had chosen this profession and were elected to serve. He thanked the Supervisors for their hard work.

27. Ashley Domino said that she currently taught at North Stafford High School, and she was looking forward to joining Hartwood High School next year when it opens. She said that she wanted to attend this meeting to lend her support to the voices of teachers who were struggling to stay in Stafford County. She said that she did not live in Stafford County because she could not afford to do so. She said that as a year three teacher, she was in a difficult position where she wanted to stay, but the benefits she was losing, such as student loan support, made it harder for her to do so.

Ms. Domino said that she wanted to emphasize that they often talked about Prince William County, she was concerned that if they did not adopt the proposed raises from the Superintendent, she may be able to afford to teach in Spotsylvania. She said that she did not want to leave Stafford, as it was her desire to teach at the new school in Hartwood and contribute to the County's progress was keeping her here. She said that it was challenging for her to do so when their raises continued to be pulled back.

Ms. Domino said that she had researched salary information, and she knew they were behind the initial five-year plan for teachers. She said that again, it was difficult for them to stay in the County even when they wanted to be there. She said that she wanted to raise a point about property tax increases, which she did not think was a long-term solution. She said that she thought they needed to explore ways to incentivize developers and provide benefits to them, while also cutting costs and maintaining development without losing too much money. She said that she wanted to stay in Stafford, but she needed the Board to understand that underpaying teachers would continue to lead to significant teacher turnover.

28. Alane Callander, Falmouth District, said that she did not envy the challenges the Board was facing with their tax rates and budgetary decisions. She said that budgets were always difficult, but she did not think any of them could have predicted the national economic turmoil they were experiencing at this time. She said that as the saying goes, they had to play the hand they were dealt. She said that her inclination was to prioritize the well-being of our community.

Ms. Callander said that this included repairing hazardous staircases, filling potholes in parking lots, ensuring they have sufficient firemen and trucks to respond to emergencies, and providing a safety net for those in need of food, shelter, healthcare, and legal aid. She said that it was also crucial to consider the long-term costs of delaying construction projects, as they may ultimately be more expensive. She said that kicking the can down the road could have unintended consequences.

Ms. Callander said that she appreciated the Board's commitment to funding essential services, even if it was not an easy decision. She said that as a long-time supporter of education, she was aware of the challenges their school system faced in maintaining its excellence. She said that she firmly believed it was essential. She said that although her husband and she were retired and raising taxes was difficult for them, they understood the importance of supporting their community and the benefits they received from it. She said that they were willing to bear the burden of increased taxes to ensure their County continued to thrive. She said that she wished the Board the best of luck in making their decisions.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

ITEM 1. UTILITIES; CONSIDER PROPOSED ORDINANCE FOR INCREASES IN WATER AND SEWER USER FEES AND ESTABLISH RECLAIMED WATER SERVICE USER FEE RATES, FOR FISCAL YEARS 2027, 2028, AND 2029; PROPOSED ORDINANCE O26-05 (OPTION 2)

Chris Edwards, Chief Operating Officer, said that he would give a presentation for all three public hearings. He said that the first ordinance, Ordinance O26-05, Option 2, increased water and sewer user fees by 6% in FY 27, 5.5% in FY 28, and FY 29. He said that the proposed Ordinance updated their commercial rate structure to make it more equitable with their residential rate structure, effectively raising the commercial rate to ensure they were recovering costs. He said that it also established reclaimed water fees for FY 27 to FY 29.

Mr. Edwards said that the second ordinance, O26-06, adjusted pro rata fees for water and sewer, and introduced new pro rate fees, which they did not currently have. He said that the third ordinance, O26-11, established a new availability fee for reclaimed water, allowing the County to recoup costs associated with the reuse water system.

Dr. Yeung asked if the language regarding reclaimed water in Ordinance O26-06 pertained to companies or to citizens.

Mr. Edwards said that reclaimed water would only impact those connecting to it, which were typically large commercial users. He said that the reclaimed water user fees also did not impact constituents; they only went to the users.

Mr. Diggs opened the public hearing.

1. Jamil Hernandez said that there were three proposals for adjusting fees, which included all types of water rates, and all of them mentioned reclaimed water. He said that he wanted to ensure this was a matter of fairness and ensuring that the investments made for creating capacity for reclaimed water services were properly assigned and shouldered by those who would be using the rates. He said that they were aware that this was primarily done to support the data centers, which were a major user.

Mr. Hernandez said that he wanted to ensure that none of the residential customers bore the cost of the shared infrastructure and the new commitments to build out the capacity. He said that when they discussed this, the impact on residential customers should only occur if those residents actually required the service. He said that this should be properly considered and the costs should not be passed on to the rest of the ratepayers in any form.

2. Kristin Maxson, Falmouth District said that the costs of utilities were expected to increase by 25% within the four-year period she mentioned earlier. She said that the costs were related and they could not say that it would not be directed towards the users. She said that on March 26, 2026, the Board of Supervisors stated that a possible 68% increase in taxes would become unsustainable. She said that 2 hours and 32 minutes into the Board video meeting, the utilities, water, sewer, and reclaiming water budget drivers were highlighted as a significant concern for the citizens of Stafford County.

Ms. Maxson said that a graphic shows that utilities costs would increase by 25% in four years, as discussed on April 16, 2026. She said that if they could review that graph, it appeared to be between Fiscal Years 23 and 27. She said that the mission-critical date for the data center was approved on March 26, 2026. She said that it was surprising that utilities were not prioritized with better drivers before accepting applications for five major data centers. She said that this lack of planning indicated a sense of priority with their representatives. She said that during the budget work session, a supervisor stated that the Board of Supervisors was split.

Ms. Maxson said that watching 23 minutes into the video on April 16, 2026, showed how their representatives were concerned about this budget and the lack of control due to bonds. She said that the Board of Supervisors authorized \$42 million for water reuse and sewer upgrades with utility improvements. She said that this was noted on page 195 of the agenda from April 16, 2026. She said that a special meeting was held on April 17, 2026, and the agenda for that day states that the Fiscal Year 2027 Capital Program did not include Transportation.

Ms. Maxson said that a month prior, on March 24, 2026, the Utilities Department specified a revenue sharing agreement of \$315 million, potentially sharing that amount. She said that this was noted on page 68 of the agenda from March 24, 2026. She said that additionally, they may need to examine the Department of Utilities' tables under Transportation and bundle them into R26-105, as dated April 7, 2026.

Mr. Diggs closed the public hearing.

Mr. Diggs asked if staff could address the concern that increases to reclaimed water fees would be passed to constituents.

Mr. Edwards said that he would like to point out is that water and sewer services were separate from reclaimed water. He said that the construction of the reclaimed water system was entirely funded by the data center developers. He said that in contrast, water and sewer rates were paid by their constituents; reclaimed water rates would be borne by the data centers as well.

Bill Ashton, County Administrator said that to further clarify, they had two water services agreements: one with Old Potomac Church and one with STC infrastructure, to construct the capital reclaim system, to invest capital into the reclaim system, and to build the piping necessary to allow the reclaimed water to flow from it.

Mr. Ashton said that for those unfamiliar, reclaimed water was the byproduct of the wastewater treatment plant, which was treated and then treated again, making it non-potable and unsuitable for human consumption. He said that they were utilizing reclaimed water that would otherwise be discharged, and it would be used for cooling purposes.

Mr. Ashton said that the reason for the rates was that the county must operate the system. He said that once the system was built, ownership would transfer to the County, and the County would operate the system, with the rates covering the cost of operation. He said that it was essential to note that these rates were separate from water and sewer rates, which were totally separate.

Mr. English asked what users other than data centers would use the reclaimed water system.

Mr. Edwards said that the hospital was one potential user. He said that the cost to connect to the system would be high, likely preventing many businesses from connecting to it. He said that he believed data centers would be the primary user, in general.

Rysheda McClendon, County Attorney, said that she would like to add to that. She said that the state sets the regulations for users who were allowed to use reclaimed water, so the County would have to adhere to those guidelines. She said that the state determined who can use that water and the conditions under which it can be used, and then those users would need to apply to their Utilities Department to be permitted to use it.

Ms. Guy asked if the state dictated on how much the County could charge users to operate the system.

Ms. McClendon said that no; the County had the authority to charge. She said that they charged commensurate with the services provided, so there was no limit by the state. She said that they did try to ensure the fees were commensurate with the services provided to the user.

Ms. Allen motioned, seconded by Dr. Yeung, to approve proposed Ordinance O26-05 (Option 2).

The Voting Board tally was:

Yea: (7) Diggs, Guy, Evans, Yeung, Allen, English, Vanuch
No: (0)

ITEM 2. UTILITIES; CONSIDER A PROPOSED ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE WATER AND SEWER PRO-RATA FEES AND TO ESTABLISH RECLAIMED WATER SERVICE PRO-RATE FEES; PROPOSED ORDINANCE O26-06

Mr. Diggs opened the public hearing. Seeing no speakers, he closed the public hearing and the matter rested with the Board.

Ms. Allen motioned, seconded by Dr. Yeung, to approve proposed Ordinance O26-06.

The Voting Board tally was:

Yea: (7) Diggs, Guy, Evans, Yeung, Allen, English, Vanuch
No: (0)

ITEM 3. UTILITIES; CONSIDER A PROPOSED ORDINANCE TO ESTABLISH THE RECLAIMED WATER SERVICE AVAILABILITY RATE; PROPOSED ORDINANCE O26-11

Mr. Diggs opened the public hearing. Seeing no speakers, he closed the public hearing and the matter rested with the Board.

Ms. Allen motioned, seconded by Ms. Guy, to approve proposed Ordinance O26-06.

The Voting Board tally was:

Yea: (7) Diggs, Guy, Evans, Yeung, Allen, English, Vanuch

No: (0)

PRESENTATIONS/REPORTS BY DEPARTMENTS

ITEM 4. BUDGET AND MANAGEMENT; CONSIDER SETTING THE CALENDAR YEAR (C) 2026 REAL ESTATE TAX RATE, AND RELATED RATES, INCLUDING ESTABLISHMENT OF A SOLAR FACILITY RATE; PROPOSED RESOLUTION R26-48

Andrea Light, Chief Financial Officer, said that the Board was asked to take action tonight on the Calendar Year 2026 real estate tax rate, the Virginia Public School Authority (VPSA) bond issuance, the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), and the Fiscal Year 2027 Budget to adopt it and appropriate it. She said that the proposed Calendar Year tax rate was \$0.985. She said that after the work session yesterday, the Board reached consensus on a rate of \$0.967.

Ms. Light said that the Board was asked to consider authorizing the debt issuance of Fiscal Year 2027 for school projects. She said that this was an incremental financing plan for Drew Middle School, Hartwood, and 3R projects, totaling approximately \$65 million. She said that when fully borrowed, this would result in a \$5.2 million increase in debt service. She said that their Capital Improvement Plan, as proposed in Resolution R26-50, was primarily for education, and education was their largest driver in the CIP.

Ms. Light said that Utilities funds and other expenses, as mentioned by Mr. Edwards, accounted for 27% of the total. She said that the final budget work session from yesterday evening had resulted in a real estate tax rate of \$0.967. She said that the major budget drivers within this included \$15 million for schools, \$8.9 million for school debt service, \$12 million increase for mandatory tax relief, pay increases, and \$1.6 million for health insurance increases.

Ms. Light said that she had provided charts that enumerated the changes they had worked through last night. She said that they would notice that revenues from grants, opioid funds, and school one-time funds were tied into other items. She said that this should reflect all the other changes made during their work session.

Ms. Light said that they had added an amendment to their financial policies, allowing the Board to provide flexibility between operating and infrastructure needs to utilize their ongoing revenue where it was most necessary. She said that staff was asking the Board to amend the existing policy from 3% of expenditures to a range of 2.2% to 3.5%, with an annual planning target of 3%.

Ms. Light said that yesterday, there were significant questions about partner agencies and the 6% reduction. She said that she had provided a chart that listed proposed changes for each partner agency within that 6% reduction. She said that as they had discussed yesterday, this did not include the Health Department, the Office on Youth, or Rappahannock Community Services Board (RACSB); however, it did include the regional library.

Ms. Light said that she had received additional Board questions since the work session. She said that the first question was regarding the budget impact of replacing part-time school protection officers (SPO) with two full-time school resource officers (SRO). She said that this adjustment was budget neutral, and the Board would need to add authorized full-time strength.

Ms. Light said that she had also explored the cost of adding one additional school resource officer to the budget, which would be approximately \$140,000 for salary and benefits, resulting in a \$0.0005 increase in the tax rate, resulting in a total \$0.9675 tax rate. She said that staff had prepared resolutions to make these adjustments, and she could provide those to the Board if desired.

Dr. Yeung asked if the CIP item for Hartwood Elementary was for the old school or the new school being built.

Ms. Light said that it referred to the new school.

Dr. Yeung said that this meant there would be three schools in Hartwood. She said that they had taken Embrey Mill off of the CIP list. She said that they just built a school on Courthouse Road, and they did not have transportation numbers yet. She said that she had wanted to phase in these schools so that they would not have such a sudden increase in debt and costs of opening the schools simultaneously. She said that Embrey Mill would have allowed 700 kids to walk to school, reducing transportation costs. She said that they had to vote to increase the budget because of that.

Dr. Yeung said that regarding the library not getting fully funded, Spotsylvania had this issue of underfunding, and they had to recognize the consequences. She said that the hours of the library would be decreased, and she wanted to make sure people knew that up front. She said that libraries served as community centers for citizens of all ages, and she wanted to emphasize that they were cutting important services if they cut the library funding. She said that she was concerned about the consequences.

Mr. English motioned, seconded by Ms. Vanuch, to approve the Calendar Year 2026 Real Estate Tax Rate at \$0.92 per \$100 of assessed value.

The Voting Board tally was:

Yea: (2) English, Vanuch

No: (5) Diggs, Guy, Allen, Evans, Yeung

Ms. Vanuch asked if they were including two part-time SPO positions being converted to full-time SROs, plus an additional SRO for the new high school, totaling 3 SRO positions.

Mr. Diggs said that yes, they would have two SROs for the elementary schools and one for the high school.

Ms. Allen motioned, seconded by Ms. Guy, to approve the Calendar Year 2026 Real Estate Tax Rate at \$0.9675.

Mr. Diggs said that he would like to discuss a few points regarding the .09675 tax increase. He said that it was important to frame this discussion correctly, as people often asked what benefits they were receiving from this tax increase. He said that he would like to note that they were gaining three new schools: Hartwood High School, Hartwood Elementary School, and Crow's Nest Elementary School.

Mr. Diggs said that they were increasing per pupil funding, implementing salary increases for school staff and teachers, and maintaining funding for public day schools. He said that for their first responders, they were building a fire station in Aquia and Rock Hill, adding career staff at Potomac Hills Station in the Griffis-Widewater District, and maintaining the integrity and funding of the public safety step plan. He said that they were also continuing to design and build Musselman Park and the Carl Lewis Community Center.

Mr. Diggs said that moving forward, they would be having a conversation about the BPOL tax break for businesses and exploring the framework for data center revenue. He said that they were taking care of people, trying to retain their staff, and keeping in mind their constituents who were bearing a lot of the burden.

Ms. Allen said that it was worth noting that Widewater was the only district without a staffed fire engine, which could be a significant concern for the community. She said that in an emergency situation, Widewater residents did not know when a fire truck was coming to help them. She said that they had a large state park there, as well, and increased likelihood of brush fires was a serious concern. She said that they could not maintain public safety and community safety if there was a section of the community that lacked coverage.

Ms. Allen said that Widewater was the last district that did not have adequate coverage, so she was committed to correcting that. She said that Widewater residents were paying the same taxes as everyone else, yet they were not receiving the services. She said that she also wanted to mention growth, which had increased by 14,000 people since the 2020 census and by almost 50,000 people since 2010. She said that this was out of the County government's control, but they needed to ensure they kept pace with that growth.

Ms. Allen said that to ensure they could serve a larger population, they had to hire deputies, with 143 hired since 2022. She said that they had hired 33 Fire and Rescue staff members since 2022. She said that she was unsure how many teachers they needed to hire in their school system, which had experienced an influx of students. She said that the size of their community required them to educate those children, so after 18 years of not building any new schools, they were now building three to deal with it.

Ms. Allen said that in regard to people's reassessments increasing and the shifting burden, the Commissioner of Revenue shared that their commercial tax base had grown 9%, slightly above the national average of 8%. She said that for a County trying to generate revenue, they were keeping up with commercial growth. She said that the data indicated they were moving in the right direction, and the Board planned to take aggressive action to put forward policies to generate revenue.

Ms. Allen said that in terms of the tax burden based on home values, the total value change of houses valued up to \$299,000 was 51% over the past three reassessment cycles. She said that however, the average monthly increase in taxes was \$67 per month. She said that for that \$67 per month, they had been able to make essential public safety and education hires. She said that for houses valued at \$349,000, the value change was 45.75% and the average monthly increase was \$105. She said that for \$500,000 to \$699,000, the average was 44.41% and the average increase in taxes was \$145. She said that for \$700,000 to \$999,000, there was a 46% change and the average monthly increase was \$200. She said that for homes \$1 million and higher, the change was 43.89% and the average was \$339.

Ms. Allen said that the percent increases were significant, but the dollars were on average with what past years had seen. She said that furthermore, these trends were not unique to Stafford County. She said that she hoped people saw their tax bills and understood it paid for their Sheriff, Fire and Rescue, and School Division. She said that they also had a significant amount of road projects. She said that this was the cost of growth. She said that the Board tried to be fair and cognizant, but when the past 20 years had not addressed growth and infrastructure, they had to take action to stabilize the situation.

Ms. Allen said that the County Administrator's presentation on the FY27 Recommended Budget emphasized how minimalistic the budget was. She said that they were not getting anything new, but they still trimmed that budget to reduce the burden. She said that she supported the proposed rate because she could clearly demonstrate how it supported the new fire station in Widewater, allowed them to hire a sufficient number of educators, and sustain their public safety departments, which had many benefits to constituents. She said that they were also making important and essential improvements to their roads.

Dr. Yeung said that she would not be voting on this tax rate. She said that she did not support the cuts, but she also could not support placing this burden on homeowners, seniors, and families on fixed incomes. She said that she did not have support for a balanced middle ground option, but she also needed specific data that she did not receive. She said that they owed their residents the right to informed decision-making, grounded in facts, planning, and accountability.

Dr. Yeung said that she recognized that both the County and their Schools made difficult cuts, and she understood that their schools must be funded, including new schools and ongoing operations. She said that their teachers, staff, students, and families deserved that support. She said that she had always been a strong supporter of education, but her concern was that these decisions must also be driven by sound data and long-term planning. She said that she supported phasing in new schools because it would have cost approximately \$2.6 million, not \$10 million.

Dr. Yeung said that replacement and redistricting decisions could have reduced transportation costs, eased traffic, and created long-term savings. She said that revenue diversification was also essential. She said that she had been advocating for this for a while. She said that they needed to attract businesses that were truly beneficial to Stafford County, strengthen their tax base, create quality jobs, and align with their long-term goals.

Dr. Yeung said that they must also be careful to evaluate how those decisions would impact their infrastructure, traffic, public services, and overall quality of life in the years ahead. She said that

as someone who had worked in education, she understood the pressure that many working families faced, earning \$331 per paycheck. She said that this vote was not against schools; it was a vote for a balance, accountability, affordability, revenue diversification, and data-driven decision-making that she sought. She said that for those reasons, she would be voting no.

Ms. McClendon said that to clarify, the rate being considered by the Board was \$0.9675 for real estate, which would also include manufactured homes and the solar energy equipment, facilities, and devices. She asked if the Board would be voting on the fire levy at this time or if they would be voting on that separately.

Mr. Diggs said that the Board would vote separately on the fire levy.

Ms. Vanuch said that she enjoyed working with the Board, and they all had very different priorities and opinions. She said that she and Mr. English were definitely in the minority in terms of what they would choose for the tax rate this year. She said that since she had joined the Board, she had a deep concern about what people were paying in their taxes. She said that according to data she had the Commissioner of Revenue provide, the average taxpayer in 2021 was paying \$2,994 on the average assessed house. She said that this year, that same taxpayer would be paying \$4,764, a staggering \$1,770 increase per year.

Ms. Vanuch said that this was particularly concerning for homeowners who purchased their homes for under \$500,000, which had increased as high as \$900,000. She said that this was driving people out of the County who could not afford the tax bill. She said that she also wanted to note that the County's budgets had grown over time. She said that the state's budget for the school system increased from \$156 million in 2018 to \$192 million in 2021, and it was proposed to increase again this year to over \$300 million.

Ms. Vanuch said that meanwhile, the County's contribution to the schools had grown from \$128 million in 2021 to \$194 million. She said that if teachers were not receiving pay raises, she did not understand where the money was going, given the substantial increases in school funding. She said that in total, this represented a 57% tax increase for residents in Stafford County. She said that it was wrong, and she strongly objected to this tax rate because of that.

Mr. Diggs said that to summarize and reiterate, their community faced numerous challenges, and the easiest solution was often to delay addressing them. He said that he recalled Ms. Fingerholz bringing a can to demonstrate to the Board that important investments were being "kicked down the road." He said that this was a real issue that they must solve. He said that it was easy to say they would take care of it next year, but they knew these challenges would persist for the next two to three years.

Mr. Diggs said that as a result, they were making cuts, trying to minimize them while retaining their staff. He said that they also needed to recruit new staff across the government. He said that this was a difficult situation. He said that he had to look some of his constituents in the eye who were struggling to make ends meet, living paycheck to paycheck. He said that it was a tough seat to sit in. He said that however, he could stand by this budget and assure them that they were taking care of their people, keeping their constituents in mind, and prioritizing essential services.

Mr. Diggs said that when they called 911, they could expect a deputy to respond, that they could expect firefighters to respond. He said that they were also ensuring their schools were protected with the hiring of SROs.

Mr. English said that he did not support the proposed tax rate. He said that he understood the challenges faced by the County but thought they could have cut a lot more from the budget than they did. He said that he felt bad for people on fixed incomes. He said that he wanted to assure the public that the County had been continuing to stress their concerns to their legislators in Richmond. He said that everything was going to increase this year and they would have a bad budget again next year. He said that he had to pay those taxes just like everyone else and he knew it was going to be tough with light bills, gas bills, and everything else increasing by so much. He said that they were in a bad way, so he could not support this tax rate right now.

Mr. Diggs said that he was proud of how the Board this year had worked together on this budget. He said that even though they disagreed, they had the conversations and did the work. He said that he was proud of what they had accomplished this year. He said that he wanted to sincerely thank Ms. Light for all the work she did on behalf of the government, constituents, and the County as a whole. He said that he also wanted to apologize for the Board's behavior yesterday and how they made her feel. He said that the Board had wronged her publicly, so he felt a public apology to Ms. Light was necessary. He thanked Ms. Light again for her work.

Mr. Diggs called the vote on approval of the real estate tax rate at \$0.9675 per \$100 of assessed value.

The Voting Board tally was:

Yea: (4) Diggs, Evans, Guy, Allen
No: (3) Vanuch, English, Yeung

Ms. Allen motioned, seconded by Dr. Yeung, to approve the fire levy as advertised.

Ms. Vanuch said that the fire levy included budgetary increases related to the Rock Hill Fire Station, and she wanted to stress the importance of getting that fire station done by 2027.

The Voting Board tally was:

Yea: (6) Diggs, Guy, Evans, Yeung, Allen, Vanuch
No: (1) English

ITEM 5. BUDGET AND MANAGEMENT; CONSIDER AUTHORIZING THE FY2027 VIRGINIA PUBLIC SCHOOL AUTHORITY (VPSA) BOND ISSUANCE AND FY2027-2036 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (CIP); PROPOSED RESOLUTION R26-105 (VPSA); PROPOSED RESOLUTION R26-50 (CIP)

Ms. Allen motioned, seconded by Ms. Guy, to approve proposed Resolution R26-105 (VPSA).

The Voting Board tally was:

Yea: (6) Diggs, Guy, Evans, Yeung, Allen, English
No: (1) Vanuch

Ms. Allen motioned, seconded by Ms. Guy, to approve proposed Resolution R26-50 (CIP).

The Voting Board tally was:

Yea: (4) Diggs, Evans, Guy, Allen
No: (3) Vanuch, English, Yeung

ITEM 6. BUDGET AND MANAGEMENT; CONSIDER ADOPTING AND APPROPRIATING THE FISCAL YEAR 2027 BUDGET; PROPOSED RESOLUTION R26-49 (ADOPT BUDGET); PROPOSED RESOLUTION R26-51 (APPROPRIATE BUDGET)

Mr. Diggs asked if the Board needed a reprinted version.

Mr. Ashton said that the numbers were all correct, but there was a typo that he would fix for the signed copy.

Ms. Vanuch said that she would appreciate taking a break so she could read it, even if she voted against it.

Mr. Ashton said that that was fine. He said that to clarify, the typo was in the Resolution of Appropriations, not the adoption of the budget.

RECESS

The Board recessed at 8:43 p.m. and reconvened at 8:57 p.m.

Ms. Allen motioned, seconded by Ms. Evans, to approve proposed Resolution R26-49 (Adopt Budget) as revised and provided at the dais tonight.

The Voting Board tally was:

Yea: (4) Diggs, Evans, Guy, Allen
No: (3) Vanuch, English, Yeung

Ms. Allen motioned, seconded by Ms. Guy, to approve proposed Resolution R26-51 (Appropriate Budget) as revised and provided at the dais tonight.

The Voting Board tally was:

Yea: (5) Diggs, Guy, Evans, Yeung, Allen
No: (2) English, Vanuch

Ms. Allen motioned, seconded by Dr. Yeung, to reconsider the vote on proposed Resolution R26-48, in order to separate the solar facility tax rate from the other tax rates.

The Voting Board tally was:

Yea: (5) Allen, Diggs, Evans, Guy, Yeung
No: (2) English, Vanuch

Ms. Allen motioned, seconded by Ms. Evans, to approve R26-48 with the real estate tax rate at \$0.9675, including the real estate rate and mobile home rate.

The Voting Board tally was:

Yea: (4) Allen, Diggs, Evans, Guy
No: (3) English, Vanuch, Yeung

Ms. Allen motioned, seconded by Ms. Evans, to approve the solar facility tax rate at \$0.9675.

The Voting Board tally was:

Yea: (5) Diggs, Guy, Evans, Yeung, Allen
No: (2) English, Vanuch

Ms. Vanuch said that regarding R26-49, she knew the Board had made a number of changes between yesterday and today. She said that they approved 12 positions for the fire crew, two part-time to full-time conversions, and adding an SRO. She said that this added up to 15 positions in total. She said that \$562 to \$578 was only one more.

Ms. Light said that those numbers referred to the ambulance recovery technician, and that was included in the County Administrator's proposed budget.

PRESENTATIONS/REPORTS BY DEPARTMENTS

ITEM 7. COUNTY ATTORNEY; CONSIDER REFERRING TO THE PLANNING COMMISSION PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN CONCERNING THE PROCESS AND ROUTING OF PROPOSED POWER LINES THROUGH THE COUNTY; PROPOSED RESOLUTION R26-159

Rysheda McClendon, County Attorney, said that since the Board was made aware of the proposed large-scale energy transmission line project that would transverse the County, the Board had been advocating for reduced impacts on the County and opposing alignments that would negatively affect Stafford County residents, their quality of life, and Stafford County Public Schools.

Ms. McClendon said that to that end, pursuant to Virginia Code §15.2-2223(C)(A), the Board desired to consider proposed amendments to the Comprehensive Plan to provide general guidance on the designation of corridors and routes for electric transmission lines of 150 kilovolts or more, as allowed by state code. She said that they would also like to apply these policies to the proposed Dominion Energy Line for North Anna to Bristers Transmission Line project.

Ms. McClendon said that the proposed amendment would consist of two parts. She said that first, the Comprehensive Plan would include general guidelines, to be proposed as new Section 3.2,

which would provide the following policy guidelines. She said that within the urban services area (USA), new high-voltage transmission lines should be placed underground, high-voltage transmission lines should be located to minimize impacts on residents, schools, and sensitive land areas. She said that residential density and intensity should be considered when it comes to routing high-voltage lines.

Ms. McClendon said that where high-voltage lines were already placed underground, there should be a presumption that new or expanded lines should also be underground. She said that the Comprehensive Plan would also provide support for coordinating and proactive planning for projects, ensuring they were planned and coordinated for proximate siting at the same time.

Ms. McClendon said that the other amendment would be proposed specifically for the North Anna to Bristers project, to be proposed as new Section 3.13. She said that under this project-specific section, the Comprehensive Plan would make the following findings: high-voltage lines through segments 5 and 6 would be inconsistent with the Comp Plan, given the extraordinary density of residential homes and schools in that area and segments 5 and 6 of the project were also not designed to minimize visual or environmental impacts.

Ms. McClendon said that the project-specific guidelines would recognize the following policy guidance: recognizing the high cost of undergrounding lines in certain industries that have increased the demand for electric services outside of Stafford County, the County would support direct assignment of transmission costs, including incremental costs for undergrounding placements, to the customer class responsible for the needs of the new lines.

Ms. McClendon said that also, the policy guidance would designate segments 5 and 6 of the project as designated underground transmission line corridors or routes within the Comprehensive Plan. She said that finally, nothing in the plan would discourage the underground placement of any other high-voltage lines within any segment of the project. She said that approval of proposed Resolution R26-159 would refer the proposed Comprehensive Plan amendments to the Planning Commission, which would hold a public hearing and provide its recommendation back to the Board within 60 days of the date of this resolution.

Ms. Vanuch asked if Ms. McClendon could explain to the members of the public who were present at tonight's meeting the resources available to the public and the timeline of the steps being taken by the County to address this issue. She said that she wanted the public to be aware of when to be engaged.

Ms. McClendon said that the Board of Supervisors became more active with this project in late 2025. She said that at that time, the Board took action to utilize its powers to obtain information from Dominion, and the Board sent information to their legislative delegation in an effort to promote more locality power when it comes to these projects. She said that however, the normal power that localities had with zoning was largely diminished by this project.

Ms. McClendon said that the Comprehensive Plan was one way in which a locality could designate where power lines should be located in the County. She said that she would like to note that this was an advisory process, meaning that the SCC would review this, but it was unclear whether they would require a power provider to build along the designated route. She said that

beyond that, the Board had established a project website, which could be found on the County's website, to keep the public informed about the project.

Ms. McClendon said that they also frequently reviewed and updated Dominion's website, and she noticed that they had recently updated their site. She said that they were now conducting their second round of community meetings, following their first round in October or November of last year. She said that they anticipated submitting their project to the SCC in the beginning of Q3, which marked the beginning of the public engagement process. She said that during this time, written comments would be accepted, and there would be an opportunity for public testimony.

Ms. McClendon said that outside counsel would be working with the County and citizen groups to coordinate efforts and present a unified response. She said that additionally, the Board held a town hall meeting on March 5 of this year to gather feedback from the community. She said that staff would be providing a report on the results of this town hall at the Board's next meeting, which would be used to support the Board's opposition to the project and its alignment.

Ms. McClendon said that beyond this, this item would then be sent to the Planning Commission, providing an opportunity for a public hearing at that level, as well as another at the Board level, when it comes to Comprehensive Plan amendments discussed tonight.

Ms. Vanuch said that Ms. McClendon did a great job of explaining the local authority the County had here. She said that they were trying to do as much as they could, but the SCC was the final decision-maker. She said that she hoped the schools and students would get more engaged with this issue, as well learning how public hearings and the government process worked. She said that she wanted to inform everyone that on April 20, President Trump did a presidential determination pursuant to Section 303 of the Defense Production Act of 1950 on grid infrastructure, equipment, and supply chain capacity.

Ms. Vanuch said that she encouraged everyone to read that document and ensure they submitted comments when the federal Registrar published any documentation from the Department of Energy. She said that she was concerned that this would supersede local and state authority on these types of projects. She asked the public to stay aware of this issue, which was a pathway to allowing more high-voltage power lines.

Dr. Yeung said that Ms. McClendon had mentioned the community survey, but the survey was closed.

Ms. McClendon said that that was correct; the survey was open for two weeks as a County effort. She said that additional comments would be directly given to the SCC.

Ms. Allen motioned, seconded by Ms. Vanuch, to approve proposed Resolution R26-159.

The Voting Board tally was:

Yea: (7) Diggs, Guy, Evans, Yeung, Allen, English, Vanuch

No: (0)

ADJOURNMENT

The Board adjourned its meeting at 9:10 p.m.

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

William H. Ashton, II
County Administrator