BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
STAFFORD COUNTY, VIRGINIA,
MINUTES
REGULAR MEETING
MAY 26, 2026

CALL TO ORDER – A regular meeting of the Stafford County Board of Supervisors was called to order by Deuntay Diggs, Chairman, at 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, May 26, 2026 in Conference Room ABC, 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.

Absent was Kecia S. Evans.

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

ADDITIONS -DELETIONS AND APPROVAL OF THE REGULAR AGENDA

None.

WORK SESSION ITEMS

ITEM 1. FIRE AND RESCUE: QUARTERLY UPDATE

Joe Cardello, Chief of Fire Rescue, said that they had compiled statistics for Fire and Rescue services from this year, specifically for the month April and the year to date. He said that for the year to date, they had had approximately 6,100 calls, and on the table below was the number of units they had sent to those incidents, with an average of about two units per incident. He said that the next page provided a breakdown of incidents by station, which may be helpful for understanding the activities in each district.

Chief Cardello said that the stations that responded to the most incidents were Berea, Falmouth, and Garrisonville, Aquia and Stafford, similar to previous years. He said that he had also included data on the average travel time for each of these areas. He said that this was not the total response time, but rather the time from the moment the doors open and the wheels start rolling to the time they arrived on the scene. He said that for suburban areas, such as those in the middle of the County, the drive time was five minutes. He said that in rural areas like Widewater, White Oak, Hartwood, Rock Hill, Mountain View, had driven times of 10 minutes.

Chief Cardello said that the areas that stood out, however, were Station 9 and Station 12. He said that the drive time for these stations should have been five minutes, but in April, it was seven minutes for both. He said that the reason for this discrepancy was that these stations received so many calls that they frequently were not at the station to answer new calls in a timely fashion. He said that they had broken down the data for each election district as well.

Chief Cardello said that next, he would discuss the Fire Marshal's Office, which had experienced a busy month in April, with 10 fire investigations and 58 year-to-date. He said that the revenue for the Fire Marshal's Office was currently just shy of $600,000, generated from inspections, permanent inspections, new construction, and site plans. He said that the year-to-date revenue for the Fire Marshal's Office was $591,501.

Chief Cardello said that the first item for an update was the Hartwood Station living quarters. He said that they had been working with the leadership of the Hartwood Volunteer Fire Department to modernize the sleeping area and bathrooms at Station 6, which had not been updated in a long time. He said that the building was not designed to accommodate the permanent full-time staff and active volunteers who worked there. He said that to address this, upgrades were necessary. He said that staff would be presenting three items to the Board on June 16: a budget and appropriation request for the use of volunteer system reserves, approval of a jot contract, and a signed lease agreement from the Hartwood Volunteer Fire Department.

Chief Cardello said that the next update was for Widewater. He said that they had been working with the leadership of the Widewater Volunteer Fire Department to address their aging and outdated septic system, which was currently failing. He said that they were currently undergoing engineering work to finalize the scope of work and estimate the costs. He said that in the future, they would come back to them with a lease agreement, a jot contract, and a budget and appropriation, similar to their previous collaboration with the Hartwood.

Chief Cardello said that the next update was regarding representatives from the Washington Executive Stafford Regional Airport Authority, who had reached out to discuss potential future improvements for their operations. He said that this was because the airport did not currently have firefighting or aircraft rescue firefighting (ARFF) services. He said that a full presentation with that agency would be provided at an upcoming Board meeting.

Chief Cardello said that Recruit Academy 21 was progressing well, with a target date of mid-to-end July for the completion of the six-month hiring process for their next recruit academy, which included all authorized positions within the FY27 Operating Budget. He said that the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) had recently announced that their Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER), Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG), and Fire Prevention and Safety (FP&S) grants were active and funded, with a 30-day application deadline.

Chief Cardello said that staff had been working diligently behind the scenes to explore opportunities and anticipated coming to the Board with ideas very soon. He said that they would work with County Administration first and then proceed accordingly. He said that he would like to take a moment to express his gratitude to the Board and School Division for their ongoing support of their high school fire program.

Chief Cardello said that over the past seven years, they had seen 90 graduates, with about half of them moving on to become volunteer or career firefighters. He said that the program's success was a testament to the collaborative efforts of the Board, School Board, and Superintendent, and he would like to thank them for their support. He said that they had also completed the selection process for next year's program, with the goal of having 20 students participate.

Ms. Allen asked if they were experiencing any challenges with recruitment in their upcoming classes.

Chief Cardello said that recruiting was indeed very challenging at the moment. He said that compared to six or seven years ago, the number of applicants had been cut in half. He said that they used to receive around 600 applicants, but now they struggled to get 300. He said that there were several factors contributing to this decline. He said that one major factor was the increasing competitiveness of pay, not just in their region but nationwide. He said that additionally, the work schedule had become a significant issue in the past year and a half.

Chief Cardello said that previously, if someone wanted to increase their earnings, they would have had to move north. He said that however, with the shift in the north, many people were now working fewer hours while still earning competitive pay. He said that places to the west and south were also experiencing this trend, where pay was competitive, but hours were reduced by 14 or 16 hours per week. He said that this made it difficult for Stafford to compete with these locations.

Ms. Allen asked if staff planned to brief the Board on the full scope of the situation so they could be aware. She asked if they had thought about starting a program for people to start second careers as firefighters.

Chief Cardello said that they did not have a specific program in place, but they collaborated with some of the local military bases to identify individuals who were out-processing and interested in pursuing a career in fire service. He said that the level of competition had increased significantly in recent years, particularly in terms of compensation and work hours. He said that if one of those individuals was considering joining, unless they resided in Stafford, which offered a more favorable environment, it was challenging for them to compete in terms of offering comparable opportunities.

Ms. Allen asked if they were thinking about connecting the Widewater station to water and sewer after their repairs were completed.

Chief Cardello said that he was unsure of where the water system was located in that area, and unless it was right up the street, he did not think they could connect to it.

Bill Ashton, County Administrator, said that there was no water or sewer in that area.

Ms. Allen said that maintaining well and septic there would be very expensive.

Chief Cardello said that once they had finalized the scope of work, he would report back to the Board.

Ms. Allen asked if applying for SAFER grants would provide an opportunity to fund the Potomac Hills staffing, considering it had already been included in this year's budget. She asked if they could apply for the grant and potentially delay when they bring it online.

Chief Cardello said that the short answer was no. He said that the grants would not be awarded until September, and their hiring process would have already been underway for about three months. He said that per the federal guidelines, they could not supplant things already approved or currently working on.

Ms. Vanuch said that regarding the Hartwood Volunteer Fire repairs, she would like to know if the lease would be similar to Aquia and Rock Hill, where the Volunteer Fire Squad would pay the County for the tax dollars used for the repairs if they sold the building.

Chief Cardello said that the lease agreement would be essentially the same as the other three that they had.

Ms. Vanuch asked if there had been any pushback on that.

Chief Cardello said that no, they were not getting any pushback. He said that they were working well with the volunteer organizations.

Mr. English asked what the state or national average was for response times.

Chief Cardello said that they could not compare Stafford to a large city, so national averages may not be helpful in understanding their response times. He said that in Stafford, they had two distinct standards: one for the urban services area (USA) and one for all the areas outside of that. He said that their response times were decent; however, there was room to improve on all of them.

Mr. English asked if their work with the Airport may include opportunities for federal funding.

Chief Cardello said that he hoped there would be an opportunity, but they had not had any in-depth discussions yet.

Mr. English asked what the cost to the County would be if they changed the work schedule.

Chief Cardello said that if they did it today, the estimated cost would be approximately $7.5 million. He said that he had given multiple presentations on this topic, and it had been a while since the last one, as it was part of the Public Safety Committee, which had been inactive for a couple of years. He said that there was a possibility of phasing it in over a period of two to three years, making it less burdensome.

Mr. English asked when the last time fees had been updated.

Chief Cardello said that he did not know the answer to that question, but they were currently working on a proposal to bring before the Board in the near future, which included updated fee schedules for the Fire Marshals, as well as other related matters.

Ms. Guy asked if Chief Cardello could clarify the difference between drive times and response times.

Chief Cardello said that there were three components to consider. He said that the first was the time it took for the dispatcher to process a 911 call. He said that the second was the time it took for the call to be sent to their facility. He said that the third was the time it took to leave their facility until they arrived at the emergency. He said that this breakdown allowed them to analyze each stage separately. He said that he had provided data on drive time, which measured the time it took from the moment they left their facility to the moment they reached the emergency scene.

Dr. Yeung said that during their budget season, Chief Cardello had brought up the different fire stations. She asked if the goal was to ensure their timing standard remained at five minutes, or if they were trying to reduce it further.

Chief Cardello said that five minutes or less in the urban services area and ten minutes or less in the rural areas were their goals.

Dr. Yeung asked if their additional fire stations would improve those times in Garrisonville and Aquia.

Chief Cardello said that yes, they had done and analysis and determined that the Embrey Mill Station would be crucial in taking the burden off of two of their busier stations.

Dr. Yeung said that she would like to see a schedule to start looking at that data.

Chief Cardello said that they were currently working on a new format for the next report, which would include more in-depth information to help illustrate key points, such as drive times and total response times, in order to demonstrate the unit hour utilization. He said that this would provide a better understanding of the time each company spent on work each day and the reasons behind potential delays in some areas. He said that busier stations often had personnel out in the field, leaving no one available to answer calls in those areas.

Dr. Yeung said that that made sense. She said that she appreciated the firefighter program in the School Division, and she wanted to thank Chief Cardello and his staff for their efforts with that. She asked if they were planning on using a consulting group to help with their federal grant applications.

Chief Cardello said that yes, they were using them just as they did last time.

Mr. Diggs asked if the Board could be provided with some additional historical data. He said that he would like to know how their response times changed over the years.

Chief Cardello said that yes, they could provide that data in the next report. He said that they were currently transitioning their way of compiling data, so there would be improvements.

Donna Krauss, Deputy County Administrator, said that she wanted to let the Board know that Sheriff Decatur could not attend this work session, but he would be present for the next public safety update.

ITEM 2. UTILITIES; MARINE CORPS BASE QUANTICO (MCBQ) UTILITIES SERVICE AGREEMENT

Chris Edwards, Director of Utilities, said that he had distributed a map to help guide the discussion. He said that for historical background, one of the first points in history for this item was the Water Services Agreement with Quantico Marine Corps Base. He said that Smith Lake, which was the primary source of water for their north County area, appeared blue and green on the map. He said that the green portions represented the Smith Lake Reservoir, which was primarily located on Quantico property, accounting for the majority of the reservoir. He said that the remaining portion was located on Stafford County property. He said that in 1966, they had entered into an agreement with the Marine Corps to construct the dam and reservoir on the Quantico property.

Mr. Edwards said that there had been about ten agreements since that time, and he would highlight just a few. He said that the first one they entered into was a 50-year land lease with Quantico, which was signed 60 years ago. He said that the lease had been renewed, but they were now down to 20 years on their current lease. He said that the second major agreement was in 1987, when they entered into a partnership with Quantico to provide sewer services to the west side of the base, which was the area in yellow on the map. He said that they treated that wastewater at their Aquia Wastewater Treatment Plant.

Mr. Edwards said that the third agreement was in 1996, when they constructed the Smith Lake Water Treatment Plant, which Quantico partially funded. He said that they had renewed the 50-year lease at that time, and now they had 20 years left on it. He said that currently, the main side of the base, which was the orangish-reddish area on the map, was provided with water and sewer services by Quantico. Camp Barret was provided with water and sewer services by the County. He said that right now, MCBQ was planning to replace its water treatment plant, which was nearing the end of its useful life. He said that Congress had appropriated money for it, and the project was expected to cost $200 million. He said that however, this would provide less resiliency, as it was a single source of failure.

Mr. Edwards said that to address this, MCBQ had engaged with their neighbors, Prince William Water to the north and Stafford County to the south, to develop a plan that would ensure a reliable water supply for Camp Barret. He said that Stafford County would provide the primary source of water and sewer, while Prince William Water would serve as the secondary source. He said that on the main side of the base, Quantico would decommission its plant, and Prince William Water would become the primary source, while Stafford would remain the secondary source. He said that Quantico currently paid for 0.75 million gallons per day (MGD), and they would like to purchase extra capacity for up to 1 MGD on a daily basis.

Mr. Edwards said that one of the things they did was provide raw water to Lake Lunga, which was located north of Smith Lake. He said that they treated this water and sent it through one of the creeks, replenishing Smith Lake. He said that as they took more water, they increased the flow, which helped mitigate the impact during emergency drought status; in fact, they had released more water than needed on several occasions. He said that the revised Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) would also renew the lease for an additional 50 years, ensuring continued access to Smith Lake.

Mr. Edwards said that the final section of his presentation was primarily financial, and the key point was that they were entering into a wholesale agreement with one of their providers for the first time. He said that a wholesale rate was defined in their County Code as any rate paid by an entity with a Public Works identification number. He said that Quantico was the only entity in their system that qualified for the wholesale rate, accounting for about 10% of the capacity at Smith Lake and 5% of the County's total water sales.

Mr. Edwards said that they had proposed a capital surcharge of 10% for the two major projects at Smith Lake, which totaled approximately $85 million. He said that Quantico would pay about $8.5 million of that amount. He said that this would come from the $200 million allocated by Congress, requiring an act of Congress to reappropriate. He said that staff wanted to ensure the Board was comfortable with this direction before they proceeded.

Mr. Edwards said that the wholesale rate was about 60% of their commercial rate, which their other commercial customers were paying. He said that when including the reduction in debt service, the County actually came out ahead, so it was better to implement the capital surcharge rather than the wholesale rate. He said that in this agreement, the capital surcharge would also be applied to future upgrades to their systems for per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) removal. He said that Quantico would continue to pay 10% of any upgrade outside of 3R projects.

Dr. Yeung said that she was supportive of the partnership and providing a model. She said that she was concerned about the rate, so she would like to better understand how staff arrived at the 60% number.

Mr. Edwards said that they worked with Raftelis, the same company that developed their rate model this year. He said that typically, 60% was a standard rate. He said that as they reviewed the model, they arrived at this conclusion. He said that it was essential to consider their operating costs. He said that in reality, it was usually about 20% over those costs. He said that when they factored in the fact that Quantico was paying part of their debt service, it reduced their debt service needs by approximately $1 million per year.

Mr. Edwards said that currently, they generated about $1.4 from Quantico; subtracting the $1 million in debt service, they actually needed to recover that remainder to stay ahead. He said that in this model, they still recovered $600,000 to $700,000, and as a result, they ended up $100,000 to $200,000 ahead. He said that they also calculated the reduction in debt service to ensure that when they added their new water service fee, the County's overall debt service would be ahead of where it would have been otherwise.

Dr. Yeung said that she did not hear a process in that explanation. She said that Mr. Edwards had mentioned they did not want to lose Quantico as a customer, and she would like to know how large of a customer they were.

Mr. Edwards said that Quantico composed about 4% to 5% of their water sales.

Dr. Yeung asked who Quantico would go to if not Stafford County.

Mr. Edwards said that they were making a secondary connection to Prince William Water. He said that even at the 60%, Prince William Water was about 70% of their costs, but they were willing to pay that extra 30%.

Dr. Yeung asked how they fared in comparison.

Mr. Edwards said that they were approximately 1.5 times more expensive than Prince William.

Dr. Yeung asked if staff could provide additional data on this topic.

Mr. Edwards said yes. He said that one of the factors they also had to consider was the competition for water service, which was a new situation for them. He said that one of the key concerns for Quantico was resiliency, ensuring they had two reliable water sources. He said that as a result, they were willing to pay a premium for this secondary source. He said that it was worth noting that Prince William County purchased water from Fairfax Water, which produced 1 billion gallons of water per day. He said that in contrast, Stafford County produced 10 million gallons of water per day, with similar staffing numbers and water treatment plant operations, which meant they did not have the same economies of scale. He said that this realization likely led them to conclude that they would need to pay a bit more to secure the secondary source.

Dr. Yeung said that with so much demand on the County's water, the prices should increase in response. She said that she did not see why they had to keep it cheap.

Mr. Diggs asked if he heard correctly that Stafford was more expensive than Prince William.

Mr. Edwards said that yes, they were more expensive than Prince William. He said that once Stafford reached a point where their costs exceeded the cost of rebuilding the Quantico plant to produce water, it no longer made sense for Quantico to purchase from Stafford. He said that they were still offering a very competitive rate; in fact, they ended up benefiting more from selling water to them this way than with their commercial rate.

Mr. Edwards said that one thing to remember from the Master Plan was that they were 50 to 60 years away from using 100% of their water capacity. He said that they were never scheduled to reach that point, so any additional water they could sell for a profit served as a bonus to the Department, ultimately helping to keep rates lower for everyone else.

Ms. Vanuch asked if it was correct that they would not be building their own on-site wastewater treatment facility.

Mr. Edwards said that was correct; they were going to mothball their own water plant and buy water from Stafford and Prince William to cover both sides of the base. He said that if either entity was unavailable, they would buy from the other entity.

Ms. Vanuch asked how much they would be getting from Prince William.

Mr. Edwards said that they were getting about 1 MGD from Prince William County.

Ms. Vanuch asked if the County could take on 2 MGD with all of their other commitments.

Mr. Edwards said that yes, they could. He said that another advantage was that they had access to Lake Lunga, which was located upstream of Smith Lake. He said that they could release water there to make up the additional water they needed.

Ms. Vanuch asked if the agreement capped their usage at 1 MGD per day. She asked, for example, if a data center were to be located on a federal base, would they be able to supply water to the data center via that agreement?

Mr. Edwards said that the water capacity on the west side of the base was capped at one million gallons. He said that under emergency situations, they would need to request an emergency situation, at which point they would be charged at the County's commercial rate. He said that they could get up to two million gallons, but there was a limitation of only 14 days out of the year.

Ms. Vanuch asked if the County would be required to give that water in an emergency situation. She said that they may need to turn off water for their residents and businesses if they did not have enough capacity.

Mr. Edwards said that staff had looked into it to ensure they had adequate capacity. He said that it would take two to three years to get this in place.

Ms. Vanuch said that this was why the agreement mattered. She said that they were asking for a certain amount today, but she would like to know if they stipulated any caps. She asked if the agreement stated that if in 10 years and Quantico had 50 data centers and there was a national security emergency to supply them with water, would the County be legally required to provide them that water, based on the way the agreement was written?

Mr. Edwards said that the agreement stated that they were allowed to have one million gallons per day, with up to two million gallons per day for 14 days out of the year.

Ms. Vanuch asked if it was limited to that two million gallons.

Mr. Edwards said that yes, it was intended for emergency purposes only.

Ms. Vanuch asked if the County had pulled any documentation from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regarding the cleanup at Lake Lunga to see if that water was eligible to be transferred to the County. She said that she recalled it was full of lead, waste, and explosives.

Mr. Edwards said that interestingly, one of the reasons they could only provide so much water was because they could not lower the water level in Lake Lunga too much without exposing the unexploded ordnances.

Ms. Vanuch said that while the cleanup efforts had removed a significant amount of contamination, she still had concerns about the safety of using that water. She said that she was not suggesting that Quantico was the same situation, but numerous federal bases had experienced chemical spills and other incidents that had contaminated their onsite water sources. She asked, if the County were to accept that water, would they be putting themselves at risk? She asked if they had done their due diligence of thoroughly assessing its safety for transfer to their own water supply.

Mr. Edwards said that one of the things they had done over the past year or two was conduct extensive testing to ensure they understood the implications of this plan. He said that it was also important to remember that the Smith Lake Water Treatment Plant was releasing about 10% of the water from Lake Lunga. He said that for the past 60 years, they had been releasing water to the Smith Lake Water Treatment Plant, and this was simply a minor increase to help them overcome the current challenges.

Ms. Vanuch said that she would like to see those documents, as she had conducted a quick search and found a 2005 U.S. Geographical Survey (USGS) report that discussed the contamination issues at Quantico. She said that the report cited various contaminants, and she would like to know what had been cleaned up and what the current water quality measurements were, as reported by the EPA. She said that she was trying to be cautious and ensure that they did not replicate a situation similar to Camp Lejeune. She said that it was a real issue, as the federal base could dispose of whatever it wanted, but there were effects on the neighboring communities.

Mr. Edwards said that the majority of the water they were receiving was whatever came over the spillway. He said that the County had been meeting all federal and state standards for their water. He said that they could ask Quantico for any additional information on that topic.

Mr. Diggs asked if the Board could receive a copy of the agreement and the rate-setting process.

Mr. Edwards said that yes, they had a draft MOU that they could provide, along with the necessary documentation for the rates. He said that he could provide some of the old agreements as well as the new one.

Ms. Allen said that she thought they had been concerned about Smith Lake's capacity, which was why they were transferring water from Lake Mooney to there. She asked if they would be able to meet the demand of Quantico.

Mr. Edwards said that this process would likely take three to four years. He said that Mooney would be online, and the data center should be off of their potable water. He said that as a result, any capacity currently being used by the data centers should be returned to the County, and this capacity would then be available to be allocated to Quantico if needed. He said that Quantico would need to return to Congress to get the money reappropriated, and they had been working on this overall plan for the past year and a half. He said that they wanted to make sure they were in a good position to move forward, considering the lengthy process.

Ms. Allen asked how they would be treating them as customers in the event of a drought, considering they would be billed at the wholesale rate.

Mr. Edwards said that in the current agreement, Quantico was allowed to take 0.75 MGD without any type of drought restrictions. He said that one of the items included in the new agreement was that if the County had to impose drought restrictions on other County customers, Quantico had to put drought restrictions on the base. He said that it was included in the MOU, which he would provide to the Board.

Mr. Diggs asked if Mr. Edwards was aware of the report mentioned by Ms. Vanuch regarding Lake Lunga.

Mr. Edwards said that no, he would need to research that.

Ms. Vanuch said that she could send it to Mr. Edwards.

ITEM 3. UTILITIES; COMMUNICATION EQUIPMENT ON WATER TANKS

Mr. Edwards said that this item was regarding telecommunications equipment on water tanks and their agreement with Milestone Towers. He said that they had a contract with Milestone Towers, which dated back to 2016. He said that the company specialized in the development and management of wireless tower assets, and as part of this agreement, Milestone marketed Stafford's infrastructure, including their water tanks and land for monopoles. He said that this allowed the County to receive revenue in return. He said that currently, they had six installations in place, and Milestone was proposing three new ones.

Mr. Edwards said that one of the benefits for the County was the space on the monopoles, with the Sheriff's Office and Utilities Department being the two largest users. He said that the first new proposal was in the Griffis-Widewater District, near Smith Lake. He said that the County owned all of the property adjacent to the reservoir, and Milestone had proposed to put a 150-foot tall monopole in an area there. He said that staff felt it was an appropriate location, but he wanted to highlight a few key points.

Mr. Edwards said that this required a zoning application and public hearing, so the Board would eventually review this proposal. He said that the Sheriff's Department had indicated they needed space in that area; they were currently using a commercial carrier to piggyback on the existing towers and was paying approximately $60,000 per year. He said that by using the proposed monopole, they could save the County $60,000 per year.

Mr. Edwards said that the second proposal was in the Hartwood District near Lake Mooney. He said that there was a bare area where Milestone proposed another 150-foot tall monopole. He said that this would require a similar zoning process and public hearing, and the Sheriff's Department could utilize the space there. He said that this would result in another $50,000 in savings.

Mr. Edwards said that the third proposal was in the George Washington District, which was located at their Ferry Road tank. The tank was no longer in service and had been dry for almost seven years. He said that it had been a redundant asset, and this proposal could potentially be a cost-effective solution. He said that they generated low pressures by having the tank in service, and to address this, they would decommission the tank. He said that they still had a small piece of property, and they would propose installing a 150-foot-tall monopole on that site.

Mr. Edwards said that this would generate revenue for the County and provide the Sheriff's Office with the potential to relocate its equipment. He said that they would incur costs with the Utilities Department to remove the existing tank, but these costs were significantly lower than the long-term upkeep of the tank. He said that staff analysis indicated that removing the tank would be a more cost-effective option than repainting it, which could cost around $1 million. He said that demolition costs, on the other hand, were typically between $100,000 and $200,000.

Mr. Edwards said that currently, steel prices were relatively stable, so they believed they could get the demolition costs lower than expected. He said that additionally, the monopole would generate approximately $35,000 to $40,000 in revenue per year. He said that he wanted to ensure that the Board was aware of this proposal as it moved through the application process.

Dr. Yeung asked how much the County would be receiving from the new poles.

Mr. Edwards said that the County would receive about 50% of the revenue. He said that Milestone would construct the monopole, and the County received about $1,500 to $2,000 per month for each monopole location. He said that this totaled about $30,000 to $40,000 in revenue per year.

Dr. Yeung said that hundreds of kids visited Smith Lake Park every weekend. She said that she could not support putting a monopole in that location.

Mr. Edwards said that these proposals would return to the Board in the future, and it was just an informational item today.

ITEM 4. REVENUE SHARING WITH STAFFORD COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Andrea Light, Chief Financial Officer, said that this proposed Revenue Sharing with Schools presentation had been provided to the Joint Schools Working Committee in August 2025. She said that this was the exact same presentation that they had received, and it was being presented to this Board now. She said that the School Board had received this presentation during their March 10 meeting. She said that she would go through the current School process for their budget, definition of what was revenue sharing, components of what a revenue sharing agreement may contain, some benefits and challenges, comparative localities, and potential next steps.

Ms. Light said that revenue sharing was an agreement between the local government and a public school system, where a portion of the County's revenues was allocated directly to fund public education, providing a consistent funding model. She said that the purpose of it was to ensure consistent funding methodology for Schools and simplify the County budget process. She said that she had provided an overview of the Schools' budget process, which began in January with the Superintendent's proposal, followed by the School Board's approval, the County's adoption in April, and then the School Board's adoption later in April.

Ms. Light said that when considering a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) for revenue sharing, several items needed to be taken into account, such as dedicated revenues, new or existing revenues, debt service, capital needs, carryover funds, reappropriations, shared services, and additional funding needs. She said that staff believed that these factors should be determined for inclusion or exclusion from the revenue sharing agreement before the agreement was pursued. She said that there were potential benefits and challenges to this proposal.

Ms. Light said that one benefit of this model was the predictability of resources for long-term planning and priorities; however, available revenues may not meet the needs of the School Division. She said that this model could provide flexibility for the School Division to allocate future funding between their Operating and Capital needs. She said that for example, if they wanted to open a new school, they may need to consider debt service, and they could also compare their operating salaries to determine the pros and cons of their needs. She said that however, debt capacity limitations still applied, and they must follow their County financial policies.

Ms. Light said that this proposal could also provide more transparency of local school support and did not account for state or federal revenue. She said that if state revenue increased, it would not change the County's allocation. She said that this also linked both the County and the Schools with their economic growth or decline, which may not align with the Board's priorities. She said that the FY 2026 data was provided, noting that approximately 84% of the revenues were potentially shareable, but not already dedicated to a specific purpose.

Ms. Light said that upon reviewing the FY27 budget again, they were still at approximately 84%. She said that she had included comparable localities that had similar revenue structures. She said that if the Board directed staff to move forward, they would start to examine the revenue sharing models of these localities. She said that after this Board discussion, they could determine the timeline for implementation if the Board chose to move forward with revenue sharing.

Ms. Allen said that she thought the revenue sharing could be considered after the next few years when revenues improved. She said that considering the County's tight budget at present, it was difficult to support this proposal. She said that once larger projects came online and had some better answers from the state with regard to tax exonerations, this conversation could be more productive.

Mr. Diggs said that although they could not enact it now, he would like the County to begin to consider what their framework for funding the School Division would look like in future years when data center revenues came in. He said that staff could continue to plan, rather than waiting until that time to begin the process.

Ms. Allen said that she understood that, but they were still three or four years out from seeing any significant revenue. She said that she did not know if working on a framework right now would be worthwhile at this time when the projections would need to be refined anyway. She said that it made more sense for this Board to determine this item two years from now, rather than today. She said that there was so much change underway that she would rather wait until they had better projections.

Mr. Ashton said that he would be returning in June to discuss the revenue policy, which will focus on the impact of increasing revenues from data centers. He said that this discussion would be part of the Board' C-Day in June, and it was referenced in the pipeline report. He said that the School Division already received 57% of the County's revenue. He said that he agreed there were significant challenges that required flexibility on the part of the County, and they should avoid limitations on their process until their financial situation improved somewhat. He said that it would improve at some point, but not within the next year or two.

Mr. Diggs asked if the 57% was solely for the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) or in total.

Mr. Ashton said that it included school debt.

Mr. English asked if the 57% included CIP, 3R projects, and everything else.

Ms. Light said that it included Operating and debt service.

Mr. English asked if the revenue sharing agreement would remain the same regardless of whether the County brought in less revenues than anticipated.

Ms. Light said that it would be determined by the terms of the revenue sharing agreement. She said that they could write into the agreement how they would share excess revenues and how they would share reduced revenues.

Mr. English asked if other departments could be included in the revenue sharing agreement.

Ms. Light said that this item pertained specifically to the Schools.

Mr. English asked if other localities were doing well with their own revenue sharing agreements. He said that he had heard anecdotally that Prince William was considering ending their revenue sharing agreement.

Ms. Light said that she was unsure of the particular situation in Prince William, but one of the downsides of entering into a revenue-sharing agreement with any different body was that they lost control over their strategic priorities. She said that for example, if their strategic priority was to add three new fire stations and staff for them, which cost $6 million, and if they were to share 50% of the revenue with the Schools, that necessary amount would increase to $9 million.

Ms. Light said that the extra $3 million, however, did not directly address a specific need. She said that when budgets were tight and they could not tie expenses to exact needs, it was challenging to justify a $3 million increase. She said that she was not suggesting that the Schools did not have needs; the issue was that providing three sets of staff and $3 million to the School Division did not necessarily align.

Mr. English asked if the revenue sharing agreement would limit the School Division from making additional requests to the Board.

Ms. Light said that the Schools could ask for additional funds, but the County did not have to accept those requests. She said that they already did this in their current budget process.

Ms. Guy said that two years ago, this conversation began in the School Division. She said that initially, they anticipated the data center revenues would be received by the County by this point in time. She said that however, those projections had changed and there was no additional revenue from data centers yet. She said that without those additional revenues, there was no reason to enter into a revenue sharing agreement.

Ms. Guy said that she had assumed it would take about two years for the Board and School Board to develop a mutually beneficial framework, and then enact it in the next few years. She said that she understood Ms. Allen's point that they should not do the work yet, but she also thought it could be advantageous to proactively develop the framework so they would be prepared to implement revenue sharing when they were ready. She said that she was supportive of a revenue sharing agreement that met the County's and the Schools' needs, but she did not want to simply pursue it for the sake of doing it.

Ms. Guy said that the School Division had the challenge of developing a budget without concrete allocations from the County and the state. She said that the revenue sharing agreement would provide some level of control and predictability for the School Division to work with when developing their budgets, as opposed to trying to anticipate what the County was planning for the year.

Ms. Vanuch said that she did not support this proposal and she would always be opposed to this.

Dr. Yeung said that she had always been in favor of their revenue sharing agreement. She said that however, she thought that the School Division should have a more conservative budgeting approach. She said that typically, they worked with the last adopted budget from the County as their starting point. She said that she would like to see two or three scenarios. She said that she was supportive of staff continuing their analysis of this item. She asked if there was a way to start with their known debt and CIP numbers and see how the revenue sharing could work.

Ms. Light said that they did the same thing with the five-year financial plan ever year.

Dr. Yeung said that they could build on that.

Ms. Krauss said that she would like to add a few details to the timeline that Mr. Ashton and she had discussed with the Superintendent. She said that they were a bit behind schedule, but if both Boards were to move forward, a significant amount of analysis would be required on both sides. She said that they had planned to conduct this analysis over the summer, if the project were to move forward for next year, with the goal of starting immediately and assembling their two teams to review the necessary data. She said that this would involve producing reports and establishing structures that could be presented to both Boards. She said that their original timeline was aggressive, aiming to implement something within the next budget cycle.

Ms. Krauss said that based on the conversations they had about the data center policy and revenue projections, she thought it may be premature to start this work now. She said that they had a lot of work happening over the next few months, and she believed it would be wise to take a more measured approach. She said that they could consider some small steps now and revisit this project more aggressively next summer, once they had a clearer understanding of their fiscal situation after the next budget cycle.

Mr. Diggs said that he thought there was a way to work on this and plan for some of the issues that arise, but it was not the right timing at this point. He said that they would be entering into yet another tough budget this year, so he did not want to waste staff time on something that could not be implemented soon.

Mr. Ashton said that this year in their budget process, he and the Superintendent were very communicative about their respective needs and abilities to meet them. He said that they were very proactive in terms of providing numbers and requests, and over the course of a few months determined what was possible. He said that the level of communication was critical, and despite being a horrendous budget year, that was one bright spot.

Ms. Allen asked Ms. Vanuch what her concern was with regard to their earlier discussion about Quantico.

Ms. Vanuch said that she had sent everyone the report she had referenced earlier. She said that there had been major controversy with federal bases across the country where firefighting chemicals, munitions, and other toxic materials had been improperly disposed of and created serious pollution and environmental degradation. She said that this was particularly relevant to drinking water on federal bases. She said that there were ongoing conversations about federal rights and executive orders to allow locating data centers on federal bases, so she was trying to gauge how their agreement may be positioned with regard to these issues.

Ms. Vanuch said that from a contamination perspective, there was a USGS report on Lake Lunga's water quality. She said that she believed they had been directed to test the water there, and she would like to know what exactly those tests found before finalizing their agreement with Quantico. She said that she was thinking they may not want to build the water treatment plant on the base because they did not want it to take up room and because they did not want to maintain it. She said that she did not want Stafford to be opened up to potential risks from the agreement. She said that she did not know that Stafford received water from Lake Lunga, which was somewhat concerning.

Ms. Allen said that in the report, it mentioned that the flow of water to Smith Lake was from a different water source than what treated Quantico's water, so the contamination was difficult to determine.

Ms. Vanuch said that according to the reports, the contamination issue ran from west to east. She said that the contamination appeared to have had a significant impact on the fish population in the Potomac. She said that she was not trying to insinuate that there was a hidden agenda, but she believed they needed to do their due diligence and thoroughly look into it.

Mr. Edwards said that right now, the inflow into Smith Lake was primarily from the two creeks in the area.

Ms. Vanuch said that she also wanted to know what future plans they had to avoid contamination. She said that she was more concerned about Lake Lunga feeding into Smith Lake. She said that she did not have any problem with supplying the base with water as long as it did not go to data centers; however, that was a separate issue.

CLOSED MEETING

At 6:17 p.m., Ms. Guy motioned, seconded by Ms. Allen, to authorize closed meeting.

The Voting Board tally was:

Yea: (6) Diggs, Guy, Yeung, Allen, English, Vanuch
No: (0)
Absent: (1) Evans

Resolution CM26-12 reads as follows:

A RESOLUTION TO AUTHORIZE CLOSED MEETING

WHEREAS, the Board desires to hold a Closed Meeting for consultation with legal counsel and briefings by staff regarding transportation impact fees, which is a specific legal matter requiring the provision of legal advice by such counsel; and

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

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Stafford County Board of Supervisors on this the 26th day of May, 2026, that it be and hereby does authorize discussion of the above matters in Closed Meeting.

CERTIFY CLOSED MEETING

At 7:15 p.m., Ms. Guy motioned, seconded by Ms. Allen, to certify closed meeting.

The Voting Board tally was:

Yea: (6) Diggs, Guy, Yeung, Allen, English, Vanuch
No: (0)
Absent: (1) Evans

Resolution CM26-12 (C) reads as follows:

A RESOLUTION TO CERTIFY THE ACTIONS OF THE STAFFORD COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS IN A CLOSED MEETING ON TUESDAY, MAY 26, 2026

WHEREAS, the Board has, on this the 26th day of May, 2026, adjourned into a Closed Meeting in accordance with a formal vote of the Board and in accordance with the provisions of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act; and

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

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Stafford County Board of Supervisors does hereby certify, on this the 26th day of May, 2026, that to the best of each member's knowledge (1) only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements under the Virginia Freedom of Information Act, and (2) only such public business matters as were identified in the Motion by which the Closed Meeting was convened, were heard, discussed, or considered by the Board.

ADJOURNMENT

The Board adjourned its meeting at 7:16 p.m.

William H. Ashton, II
County Administrator