

CLARKE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
April 9, 2014                      Public Hearing                      7:30 p.m.  
Main Meeting Room

At a public hearing of the Board of Supervisors of Clarke County, Virginia, held in the Main Meeting Room, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Berryville Clarke County Joint Government Center, 101 Chalmers Court, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Berryville, Virginia on Wednesday, April 9, 2013.

**Board Members Present**

Barbara Byrd; J. Michael Hobert; Beverly McKay; John Staelin; David Weiss

**Board Members Absent**

None

**Staff Present**

David Ash; Lisa Cooke; Tom Judge; James Royston, II; Brandon Stidham; Lora Walburn

**Others Present**

Constitutional Officers: Sharon Keeler; Donna Peake; Tony Roper

Clarke County Library Advisory Council: Chris Curran, Dirck Holscher, with Laurine Kennedy, and others

Clarke County School Board: Chuyen Kochinsky, Beth Leffel with Mike Murphy, Rick Catlett, Lisa Floyd, Diane Lasky, and others

Lord Fairfax Community College Board: Bill Daniel

Press: Val Van Meter

**Call to Order**

Chairman Hobert called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

### Citizen Comment Period

John Kanoe, Old Chapel Road: informed the Supervisors that he had spoken with Supervisor Staelin and Sheriff Roper about ongoing issues with a neighbor.

Chris Curran, Clarke County Library Advisory Council: briefly described the council and noted that April 9 marked the fifth anniversary of the Library's move to the Berryville Clarke County Government Center. He thanked the Supervisors for its support, as well as citizens that use the library. He extended special thanks to Chairman Hobert and Supervisor Byrd for their support and their countless hours in attendance at meetings and functions. Mr. Curran also thanked the Barns of Rose Hill for providing space for Library programs. He expressed his hope that with an improved economy the Library might be able to extend its hours of operation.

Laurine Kennedy, Clarke County Library Branch Manager and Clarke County resident: advised that her comments were budget related and opted to hold comment until the budget public hearing.

April Waugaman, Clarke County resident: put forth that she felt blessed to live in Clarke County and expressed her love for the local library. She stated that as a homeschooler the Library was like a blood source keeping them flowing and going. Ms. Waugaman said she was thrilled with changes made by the new Handley Regional Library Director, John Huddy. She noted the positive impact of the Library's recent extension of Saturday hours. She thanked the Supervisors for its support of the Library.

### FY2015 Budget

Chairman Hobert stated that this was a public hearing to seek comments on the proposed FY2015 budget.

Tom Judge, Director Joint Administrative Services, provided highlights of the proposed FY2015 Budget:

- Localities continue to wait for the Commonwealth of Virginia to pass its budget.
- At the April 16, 2014 FY2015 Budget Work Session, the Supervisors must determine whether it will adopt the County's FY2015 budget prior to the Commonwealth adopting its budget.
- FY2015 Budget covers the period of July 1, 2014 through June 30, 2015.
- Current Year Tax Rate covers January 1 through December 31, 2014.
- Budget includes:

- 2.5 cent tax increase, approximately \$556,000 revenue increase.
- EMS and Fire Programs: Increase to expand programs, staff and equipment.
- Economic Development Funding: \$60,000
- Government pay and classification plan: \$150,000
- Additional Government Capital: \$465,830 includes:
  - \$200,000 real property reassessment;
  - \$50,000 for Sheriff's building;
  - \$70,000 for microwave system for Sheriff to establish a redundant path for the radio system;
  - \$90,000 for Parks bandstand and shelter.
- School Operating: \$810,062 increase.
- Additional School Capital: \$124,016 increase. The School Board will establish the capital projects for which the funds will be used.
- Budget Deficiency from Fund Balance / Pay As You Go: \$1,365,516. Most of the fund balance amount will be used for non-recurring cost; and with debt falling off rather substantially over the next two to three year, it is not too risky to use some of the fund balance to cover a few recurring costs.

Following review, Chairman Hobert called for questions. Hearing no questions, at 7:50 pm, Chairman Hobert opened the public comment portion of the public hearing.

Amy Lowell, Physical Education Instructional Assistant, Clarke County resident: spoke in support of the Schools' budget and asked the Supervisors to approve the Schools' budget as presented in its entirety. She opined that in past years the Schools have suffered due to the lack of funding.

John Kanoë, Clarke County resident: asked for an explanation of the decrease in personal property tax.

Tom Judge and Supervisor Staelin provided response to the decrease from 52.3% to 48.7% of the Commonwealth's share of the personal property tax. Mr. Judge explained that the Commonwealth paid the County a fixed amount; however, as the total value of vehicles in the locality rises, the Commonwealth's share decreases.

Bill Daniel, Clarke County representative on the Lord Fairfax Community College Board: provided the Board with a document titled *LFCC Funding Requests*. On behalf of the LFCC Board, he expressed appreciation for the strong relationship between the Boards, as well as the Supervisors continued support. He advised that the increased enrollment for Clarke has outpaced its funding and drew the Board's attention to the document he distributed.

### **LFCC Funding Requests**

#### **Funding Request and Enrollment History:**

2010-11 Request \$16,349 Fall 2008 Enrollment: 319, (178 Dual Enrolled)

2011-12 Request \$ 16,012 Fall 2009 Enrollment: 354, (184 Dual Enrolled)

2012-13 Request \$14,355 Fall 2010 Enrollment: 334, (167 Dual Enrolled)

2013-14 Request \$13,924 Fall 2011 Enrollment: 293, (102 Dual Enrolled)

2014-15 Request \$17,534 Fall 2012 Enrollment: 349, (164 Dual Enrolled)

#### **Enrollment and 2014-2015 Budget Details**

Clarke County Enrollment is the second highest it has been since 2010-11.

Enrollment has increased 19% over figures for 2013-2104 budget funding.

College Board budget has increased 8% over 2013-2014.

2014-15 Request represents an increase of 26% over 2013-14 levels.

Clarke proposed 2014-2015 budget increases funding by only 4% over 2013-2014 levels.

Funding meeting only the 19% enrollment increase = \$16,569 (Approx. 2010-11 request).

In concluding remarks, Mr. Daniel opined that there was no better investment than the education of young people in the community and Lord Fairfax pays dividends in this all the time.

Chairman Hobert thanked Mr. Daniel for his service to Clarke County

Laurine Kennedy, Clarke County Library Branch Manager: provided the following comments and statistics of the Library's growth over the last five years. Highlights include:

- 2,300 more users;
- 45% of Clarke County residents use the Library;
- Over 50% of low income young adults and seniors use the library for internet access
- The number one complaint is that patrons cannot use the Library because of the reduced hours.
- Staff, throughout the entire library system, has not received raises in over six years.

- The Library conducts jobs training classes, language classes; small business development seminars and added a second children's story time – all free to the public.
- Currently, Library staff is conducting outreach in the community at the farmers markets, schools, and civic groups.

Ms. Kennedy concluded her remarks by expressing appreciation for the Supervisors' support and asked that the Library, an important part of the community, not be forgotten.

Chairman Hobert thanked Ms. Kennedy for her comments and her work.

Dirck Holscher, Clarke County Library Advisory Council: thanked the Supervisors for their willingness to serve. He thanked Barbara Byrd, Board of Supervisors liaison to the Library Advisory Council, commenting that she was very active and a big help in understanding the budgetary and other issues faced by the County. He thanked the Supervisors for the increased funding but noted the need for additional staff and operational hours. Mr. Holscher opined that the library was part of the County's economic development efforts noting that a strong library and educational system is a big plus. He stated that the library is a public service, a government agency that represents the county very well. He opined that the County was doing the best it could with the available resources with the continuing economic situation. He commended the efforts of all those working together in Clarke.

Sandra Stikovich, Berryville: spoke in support of the school budget. She commented that the special education program at D.G. Cooley was amazing and told the Supervisors of their work with her son. She asked the Supervisors to continue to fund whatever the Schools needed, particularly D.G. Cooley.

Being no other persons desiring to speak, Chairman Hobert closed the budget public hearing at 8:05 pm.

### **CY2014 Tax Rate**

Tom Judge summarized the proposed CY2014 Tax Rates.

- Real estate rate increase from \$0.63 to \$0.655 per hundred, an approximate 4% increase.
- Increase generates approximately \$556,000 in revenue in calendar year 2014.
- Personal Property Tax Relief by the Commonwealth of Virginia for vehicles valued between \$1,001 and \$20,000: Decrease from 52.3% to 48.7%.

At pm 8:06, Chairman Hobert opened the public comment portion of the tax rate public hearing. There being no other persons desiring to address the Supervisors, Chairman Hobert closed the public hearing.

Chairman Hobert called for Board comment.

Supervisor Staelin stated that the last several years had been difficult but the Supervisors had been able to provide funding increases for most entities, even though some increases were very small. He expressed appreciation for the work done by the members of the Board of Supervisors Finance Committee. He expressed appreciation to those attending the meeting noting that the Supervisors conducted all its public hearings in the evening and inviting anyone interested to attend these evening sessions.

Vice Chairman Weiss commented that it would have required a real estate tax increase in excess of \$0.09 to fully fund all the requests received by the Board of Supervisors.

Supervisory Byrd thanked Tom Judge for the pie chart he provided. She noted that it made it very clear that the federal government and the Commonwealth fund only 39% of the County's budget. She opined that the Commonwealth was not stepping up to cover mandates. She commented that local government funds 55% of the budget, which is a great deal of money to be raised by the local citizens. Supervisor Byrd stated that the Schools will receive 68% of the proposed budget; and while she wished more could be done, it was a large amount. She remarked that she was pleased that the County would be funding additional resources for fire and rescue services.

Chairman Hobert opined that most, if not all, were quite proud to be living in such a community like Clarke County. He expressed his gratitude to County employees, volunteers and representatives serving on boards, councils and commissions. He remarked that the County was extremely fortunate to have such high quality individuals, who are willing to give their time and efforts. He noted that schools were a substantial portion of the budget; and while there might be many that would be willing to pay more to fund local activities, there were many in the community just scraping by financially. He stated the Board had an obligation to all of the County citizens and to do the best it could with available resources allocating in a manner which honored and respected the entire community.

Chairman Hobert commented that last year funding was flat but this year there was an overall increase of 5% for the entire county. He remarked that the economy was just beginning to recover, inflation is occurring and the Supervisors tried to balance as best it could what was needed.

Chairman Hobert advised that the Board would be considering action on the budget and tax rate at its April 16, 2013 FY2015 Budget Work Session but the Board might delay its vote depending on the progress of the Commonwealth budget. Noting that it was

important to stay involved, he invited those interested to attend Board meetings as often as they could.

### Adjournment

There being no further business to be brought before the Board at 8:13 pm Chairman Hobert adjourned the meeting.

### Next Meeting Date

The next regular meeting of the Board of Supervisors is set for Tuesday, April 15, 2014 at 1:00 p.m. in the Main Meeting Room of the Berryville Clarke County Government Center, 101 Chalmers Court, Berryville, Virginia.

The next budget work session of the Board of Supervisors is set for Wednesday, April 16, 2014 at 6:30 p.m. in Meeting Room AB of the Berryville Clarke County Government Center, 101 Chalmers Court, Berryville, Virginia.

ATTEST: April 9, 2014

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J. Michael Hobert, Chair

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David L. Ash, County Administrator

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Minutes Recorded and Transcribed by:  
Lora B. Walburn, Deputy Clerk, Board of Supervisors