

A meeting of the Botetourt County Board of Supervisors was held on Wednesday, April 22, 2015, in Rooms 226-228 of the Greenfield Education and Training Center in Daleville, Virginia, beginning at 7:00 P. M.

PRESENT: Members: Dr. Donald M. Scothorn, Chairman
Mr. L. W. Leffel, Jr., Vice-Chairman
Mr. John B. Williamson, III
Mr. Billy W. Martin, Sr.
Mr. Todd L. Dodson

ABSENT: Members: None

Others present at the meeting:

Mr. Tony Zerrilla, Director of Finance
Mrs. Kathleen D. Guzi, County Administrator

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 7:00 P. M. He noted that this meeting is to conduct a public hearing on the proposed FY 15-16 School budget which was approved by the School Board on March 26, 2015.

Dr. Scothorn noted that Mr. Dodson and Mr. Leffel represented the Board of Supervisors on the School Budget Committee. He noted that the County is required by the Code of Virginia to approve the school budget by May 1 of each year. He stated that Mrs. Guzi will give a brief overview of the proposed school budget and then the floor will be opened to allow the public to speak. Dr. Scothorn thanked those individuals who are present at this meeting for their attendance.

Mrs. Guzi stated that she will provide an overview of the proposed school budget; the line item detail of the school's proposal is available on the County's website. She noted that the Board will not take action on the proposed budget at this meeting; this will be scheduled for consideration at the April 28 Supervisors meeting.

Mrs. Guzi stated that there are various funds that make up the school budget—operating fund, debt service fund, self-sustaining fund, nutrition fund, textbook fund, capital reserve fund. She noted that the debt service fund is shown as a part of the County's General Fund budget. Mrs. Guzi noted that the nutrition, textbook, and capital reserve funds are listed separately.

Mrs. Guzi noted that the increase in local contribution in FY 16 for the schools is requested to be 4.3% (\$977,713) to \$23.5 million. She noted that State funds are proposed to increase by 0.9% and federal funds are proposed to decrease by 27.3% in FY 16. Mrs. Guzi stated that the self-sustaining funds are proposed to decrease by 6%, the nutrition fund by 7.1%, and the capital reserve fund by 36.2%; however, the textbook fund is proposed to increase by 24.1%. Mrs. Guzi stated that the capital reserve fund is estimated to have a balance of \$740,000 by July 1, 2015.

Mrs. Guzi then reviewed the schools projected FY 16 expenditures. She noted that the operating fund is projected to have a 3.4% increase; the self-sustaining fund a 6% decrease; the nutrition fund a 7.1% decrease; and the capital reserve fund a 36.2% decrease; however, the textbook fund is proposed to have a 24.1% increase in expenditures. Mrs. Guzi stated that the total proposed expenditures equal the total proposed revenues.

After discussion, Mrs. Guzi stated that the County's proposed \$23.5 million local share of revenues to the school operational budget does not include payments of \$755,894 to the Literary Loan Fund and \$1.8 million in Virginia Public School Authority (VPSA) bond payments. She noted that these debt service payments are included in the County's General Fund budget.

Regarding the school's proposed Capital Improvement Plan, Mrs. Guzi noted that this information was previously provided to the Board members. She noted that these projects have been grouped into three minor categories and one major category. Mrs. Guzi noted that the minor category includes urgent (Lord Botetourt roof, seven school buses, and ActivBoards), essential (Colonial roof, and wireless service in the middle and elementary schools), and basic (wireless service at the School Board office and BTEC, running tracks for the middle and high schools, and grounds/paving/parking improvements at Breckinridge, Buchanan, and Lord Botetourt) projects. She stated that the major category includes replacement of Colonial Elementary School and an addition at Lord Botetourt.

Mrs. Guzi noted that the School's proposed line item budget and a copy of tonight's PowerPoint presentation have been posted to the County's website.

Dr. Scothorn thanked Mrs. Guzi for her presentation. He noted that Dr. Tony Brads, Superintendent of Schools; Dr. Brian Austin, Assistant Superintendent; and School Board members Ruth Wallace, John Alderson, Scott Swortzel, and Michael Beahm were present at this meeting and he thanked them for being in attendance.

Dr. Scothorn then opened the public hearing on the proposed FY 16 School budget.

Mrs. Lois Switzer of Old Fincastle Road then stated that the most important investment that the County can make is our public schools. She stated that her personal future, as well as that of the County and the country, will be shaped by the quality of education provided to the County's students.

Mrs. Switzer stated that, in a time of shrinking State and federal contributions to education, she appreciates the Board's efforts to sustain the County's excellent school system. Mrs. Switzer further stated that after years of belt tightening she asks for the Board's support of the proposed school budget. Mrs. Switzer stated that our educators are the key to quality learning and it is time to acknowledge the importance of their contributions by improving their salaries.

Mrs. Switzer stated that the County's students deserve the opportunity to be productive and successful citizens. She stated that funding for the STEM-H program along with availability of dual enrollment and career and technical education classes provide a level playing field and equal access for all of our students.

Mrs. Switzer then stated that she has reminded the Board in the past that brick and mortar do not provide a good education; however, benevolent neglect over a period of time will result in the expenditure of large sums of money in the future. She stated that the need for a new Colonial Elementary School, various school roof replacements, and wireless classroom projects cannot be ignored forever.

Mrs. Switzer asked that the Board support the proposed school budget as well as the needs of the school system in creating the County's strategic plan.

Mr. Tre Roberts of Breckinridge Mill Road then stated that he is a teacher in the County's school system. Mr. Roberts stated that this proposed budget is very important to the County's teachers because of their salaries. He stated that the teachers have been loyal to the school system and this salary increase is important to him and his family as well as the other teachers and their families. Mr. Roberts stated that it is up to the Board of Supervisors to do the right thing by approving this budget.

Mr. Roberts stated that he and other teachers got into this profession because it was a calling—not for the money. He stated that the proposed step salary increases will help them with their monthly bills and retirement. Mr. Roberts asked that the Board “do the right thing”

including helping with the requested school improvements, roof replacements, and wireless installations as he does not see any waste in this budget. Mr. Roberts stated that he is proud to work for the school system, the superintendent, and School Board. Mr. Roberts further stated that he is pleased to live in the County and work with the leadership at the schools.

Mr. Roberts also stated that he appreciates the Board's help in approving this budget which will help the teachers as individuals. Mr. Roberts stated that the proposed salary increase would result in a \$250 monthly increase for him and this "is huge for a teacher." He stated that anything that the Board can do for the teachers would be "tremendous."

After questioning by Mr. Williamson, Mr. Roberts stated that he teaches eighth grade science at Read Mountain Middle School.

After questioning by Dr. Scothorn, it was noted that there was no one else present to speak regarding this matter. The public hearing was then closed.

Mr. Martin stated that he appreciated those citizens who attended this public hearing and for the comments that were made but wished that more individuals would have spoken. Mr. Martin stated that he knows the school budget is important to them and it is important to the Board as well. Mr. Martin stated that he understands the issues regarding the quality of education and increases in salaries; however, the County only has so much money to allocate. Mr. Martin stated that the Board is looking at this situation to see what they can do to benefit the school budget.

Mr. Martin stated that the County has tightened its belt for many years and he hopes that the economy will improve in the future. He stated that the Board will further review the proposed school budget before making a decision next week.

Mr. Leffel stated that he appreciated everyone for attending the public hearing and he is aware of the work that has gone into developing this budget. Mr. Leffel that it has been strange for him this year as he was not directly involved in developing the proposed school budget as he was when he was a member of the School Board.

Mr. Williamson stated that he serves on the General Fund Budget Subcommittee and, due to the complexity of preparing this year's budget, separate public hearings will be held on the school's and County's portions of the FY 16 budget. He noted that there will be additional information forthcoming. Mr. Williamson stated that he appreciates the School Board for their preparation of the proposed budget and thanked everyone for attending tonight's hearing.

Mr. Dodson stated that he also appreciates those citizens who attended this hearing. Mr. Dodson stated that he agrees with Mrs. Switzer's comments that schools are very important in the County. He noted that the school budget is a big portion of the County's budget as a whole for the Board to consider.

Dr. Scothorn then stated that he appreciated the comments made at this hearing. He noted that the Board also considers the morale and wellbeing of the County's teachers during the budget process. Dr. Scothorn also thanked the School Board, Dr. Brads, and Mrs. Guzi for their efforts this year in putting the school budget together.

Dr. Scothorn stated that consideration of the budget is a very difficult situation for the Supervisors. He noted that there are a lot of issues occurring in the County which will impact the final budget's development. He noted that the Supervisors would like to have more economic development in the County to increase the tax revenues.

There being no further discussion, on motion by Mr. Martin, seconded by Mr. Dodson, and carried by the following recorded vote, the meeting was adjourned at 7:21 P. M (Resolution Number 15-04-03

AYES: Mr. Williamson, Mr. Dodson, Mr. Martin, Mr. Leffel, Dr. Scothorn

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAINING: None