

## Board of Supervisors - March 12, 2020 Regular Meeting

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The Wise County Board of Supervisors met in a Regular Meeting on Thursday, March 12, 2020 @ 6:00 p.m. in the School Board Education Center located at 628 Lake Street in Wise. The following members were present:

Honorable John T. Schoolcraft – Chairman

ABSENT

Honorable Steve Bates – Vice-Chairman

Honorable Fred Luntsford

Honorable Robert R. Adkins

Honorable Bobby Cassell

Honorable J. H. Rivers

Honorable Robert E. Robbins, Jr.

Honorable James Lawson – members of said Board and

Michael W. Hatfield – County Administrator

Karen T. Mullins – County Attorney

Annette Underwood – Executive Secretary

### PRAYER

Robby Robbins led in prayer.

### PLEDGE

All led in the pledge of allegiance to the flag.

### MINUTES

A motion was made by Robby Robbins, seconded by James Lawson, to approve the minutes of February 13, 2020 as presented. The motion was unanimously approved.

### AGENDA

A motion was made by Robby Robbins, seconded by Steve Bates, to approve the agenda as presented. The motion was unanimously approved.

### IN RE: BUDGET 1% INCREASE --RATIFY SETTING PUBLIC HEARING

A motion was made by Robby Robbins, seconded by Bobby Cassell, to ratify setting a public hearing on 3-12-2020 on a proposed 1% increase in the County's FY 2019/20 budget. The motion was unanimously approved.

### IN RE: PUBLIC HEARING – 1% INCREASE IN BUDGET

A public hearing has been duly advertised for this date to receive citizens' input regarding a proposed 1% increase in the County's FY 2019/20 budget.

There being no public comments, the public hearing was closed.

### IN RE: HIGH KNOB REGIONAL INITIATIVE MASTER PLAN UPDATE

Idalina Walker, representing Friends of Southwest Virginia, spoke briefly about the High Knob Master Plan and its purpose. This Plan is to look at resources that are available in our area and to look ahead as to what can be developed and what cannot. The High Knob area is a tourism attraction and an economic engine for Wise County. The Plan is a road map as to the possibilities for development, and the intent to bring our region together by working with other counties to reach beyond our boundaries.

#### IN RE: SPEARHEAD TRAILS UPDATE

Shawn Lindsey, gave an overview of Spearhead Trails ongoing activities, and the different projects that are underway to expand the trails in Wise County, which in turn will create more jobs. The latest economic impact study showed that Spearhead Trails has doubled the economic impact in the 7-county region.

Spearhead Trails is asking each of the 7 counties for a donation of \$35,000 to help with operational expenses in managing and running the trails. The \$35,000 donation goes towards the efforts to patrol, maintain, design, insure, and market this trail system.

#### IN RE: PUBLIC EXPRESSION

Frank Kibler, representing LENOWISCO Planning District One, addressed the Board requesting the Board's support of the CDBG Grant Application for the Glamorgan Sewer Project, which is on the agenda for Board consideration. The project will meet the VCDBG National Objective of providing benefit to low- or moderate-income persons by providing new public sewer service to at least 45 households.

Travis Anderson, a resident of Appalachia, stated that the Sheriff Departments across the Commonwealth of Virginia have been impacted by the recent events with the firearms legislation taken place in Richmond. Because of this, the Sheriff Departments may have lost their 3% raises. However, he heard that they may get a 2% raise. He asked the County to step up and help deputies get their raises since they have been penalized because they would not enforce this new gun legislation.

He also made mention about SB35 "Concealed Carrying Penalty" that is up for adoption. He asked the Board to consider adopting a resolution or ordinance standing against the SB35.

Larry Williams voiced his support for an increase in salary for police officers, rescue, and EMS employees. He explained that there are no volunteers anymore. More funding is needed to support these critical departments so they can be fully equipped and fully staffed.

There being no further comments, the public expression period was closed.

#### IN RE: CONSENT AGENDA

A motion was made by Robby Robbins, seconded by Steve Bates, to approve the consent agenda as follows:

#### IN RE: APPROPRIATIONS 4TH QUARTER

Approved the 4th quarter appropriations as presented

#### IN RE: RESOLUTION TRANSFER OF KELLY VIEW SCHOOL HOUSE

Adopted the resolution approving the transfer of Kelly View School House Structure to the Town of Appalachia

**RESOLUTION # 9 - 2020**

(Said resolution is on file in the County Administrator's Office)

**IN RE: RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT – CDBG GRANT APPLICATION -GLAMORGAN SEWER**

Approved the resolution in support of Community Development Block Grant Application for the Glamorgan Sewer Project

**RESOLUTION # 10 – 2020**

(Said resolution is on file in the County Administrator's Office)

**IN RE: DECLARATION OF LOCAL EMERGENCY**

Ended the Declaration of Local Emergency effective February 16, 2020

The motion to approve the consent agenda was unanimously approved.

**IN RE: AUDIT SERVICES**

A motion was made by Fred Luntsford, seconded by J. H. Rivers, to award the County's Audit Contract to Robinson, Farmer, Cox Associates for the fiscal years ending June 30, 2020 through June 30, 2022. The motion was unanimously approved.

**IN RE: COUNTY BUDGET INCREASE – 1%**

A public hearing was held on March 12, 2020 to receive citizens comments regarding a proposed 1% increase in the County's FY 2019/20 budget. There were no public comments regarding the proposed increase.

A motion was made by J. H. Rivers, seconded by Steve Bates, to approve the 1% increase in the County's FY 2019/20 budget as presented. The motion was unanimously approved.

**IN RE: MUTUAL AID AND COOPERATION AGREEMENT**

A motion was made by Robby Robbins, seconded by Bobby Cassell, to approve the Mutual Aid and Cooperation Agreement Between the County of Russell, Virginia, the County of Wise, Virginia, the Sheriff of Russell County, and the Sheriff of Wise County for Law Enforcement Services. The motion was unanimously approved.

**IN RE: TAX RATE – SET PUBLIC HEARING**

A motion was made by Steve Bates, seconded by Robby Robbins, to set a public hearing for 04-09-2020 @ 6:00 p.m. to receive citizens comments on setting a proposed tax rate. The motion was unanimously approved.

Supervisor Rivers voiced his opposition to a tax increase.

IN RE: SUPPORT AGREEMENT SWVA REGIONAL JAIL AUTHORITY & WISE COUNTY

A motion was made by Robby Robbins, seconded by James Lawson, to approve the Amended and Restated Support Agreement Between Southwest Virginia Regional Jail Authority and Wise County. The motion was unanimously approved.

IN RE: RESOLUTION SWVA REGIONAL JAIL AUTHORITY – JAIL FACILITY REVENUE REFUNDING BONDS

A motion was made by J. H. Rivers, seconded by Bobby Cassell, to adopt the Resolution of the Wise County Board of Supervisors approving the Execution and Delivery of a Support Agreement or Agreements with the Southwest Virginia Regional Jail Authority for the Issuance by such Authority of its Jail Facility Revenue Refunding Bond or Bonds. The motion was unanimously approved.

**RESOLUTION # 11 – 2020**

(Said resolution is on file in the County Administrator's Office)

IN RE: BUDGET AMENDMENTS

A motion was made by Robby Robbins, seconded by Steve Bates, to approve budget amendments #29 thru #33 as presented. The motion was unanimously approved.

IN RE: APPOINTMENT – LONESOME PINE YOUTH SERVICES BOARD

A motion was made by Robby Robbins to re-appoint Erin Slemp to the Lonesome Pine Youth Services Board.

It was noted that Ms. Slemp did not wish to be re-appointed at this time.

Supervisor Robbins withdrew his motion.

Robby Robbins made a motion to table the appointment to the Lonesome Pine Youth Services Board. James Lawson seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

IN RE: APPOINTMENT – PLANNING COMMISSION

Robby Robbins made a motion that Richard Houchins be re-appointed to the Planning Commission for a term of four years. James Lawson seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

A motion was made by Steve Bates, seconded by James Lawson, to re-appoint Roger Mullins to the Planning Commission for a term of four years. The motion was unanimously approved.

IN RE: APPOINTMENT – PUBLIC SERVICE AUTHORITY

A motion was made by Robby Robbins, seconded by James Lawson, to re-appoint Ruthie Rainey to the Public Service Authority for a term of four years. The motion was unanimously approved.

IN RE: CLOSE SESSION

A motion was made by Robby Robbins, seconded by Steve Bates, to go into close session as permitted by the following Code Sections:

Section 2.2-3711 (A)(6) Investing of public funds  
(A)(7) Consultation with legal counsel  
(A)(1) Personnel

The motion was unanimously approved.

After close session, a motion was made by Robby Robbins, seconded by Steve Bates, to reconvene the regular meeting. The motion was unanimously approved.

#### IN RE: RESOLUTION CLOSE SESSION CERTIFICATION

Supervisor Luntsford read the certification for close meeting.

A motion was made by Fred Luntsford, seconded by Bobby Cassell, to approve the resolution certifying that only public matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements as were identified in the motion convening the close meeting were heard or discussed by the Board of Supervisors. The motion was unanimously approved by roll call vote.

#### **RESOLUTION # 12 – 2020**

(Said resolution is on file in the County Administrator's Office)

#### ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Administrator Hatfield briefed the Board on measures that are being implemented to keep the Coronavirus from spreading in our area. Meetings are ongoing with constant changes being made as more is learned about the virus.

He gave an update on the proposed minimum wage increase and the impact it will have on the County budget once it has been signed into law. There are three options regarding the proposed increase.

- (1) To move only the minimum wage salaries to the new minimum wage would cost \$53,000 in 2021, and up to \$181,000 in 2023.
- (2) To give everyone a \$2.25 increase, would cost \$1.2M the first year and over \$3M in 2023.
- (3) To give a 31% increase to everyone would cost \$3M the first year and over \$6M in 2023.

With the County's financial situation at this time, and the fact that taxes have been raised over the last three years, Administrator Hatfield recommended going with the new minimum wage only, which could be done with no tax increase.

Supervisor Robbins suggested waiting until the Governor signs the Minimum Wage Bill before making a decision. However, he would vote for the minimum wage increase only.

Administrator Hatfield stated that he needs some direction from the Board for budget purposes at this time, and that could be done by consensus.

It was the consensus of the Board to consider including the proposed minimum wage increase in the upcoming budget.

Administrator Hatfield gave an update on the status of the proposed renovations of the J. J. Kelly High School facility. He stated that the first plan was to modify the three stories of the existing building, and add elevators, which did not include the gym and auditorium. To move all the people that have been considered for office space at this facility, would require more space. There will be a need to renovate

the gym and the auditorium into two-story sections to get the space for all the people. To do this, the cost estimated is now twice as much as the first cost estimate. The site will also need to be renovated. Last year the Board voted that 2 cents of the tax increase would go toward these renovations and draw down the money over a 25-year period if they proceed with the project. Financial Advisor, Davenport, has worked new numbers to show that the County can borrow the money needed to do the project over a 30-year period and still stay within that 2-cent increase. At this time, there is a deadline of 14 months to move Social Services to another facility. The Board needs to decide to proceed with the renovations of the existing building or look for another option for Social Services.

Administrator Hatfield stated that if the Board decides to proceed with this project, the next steps will be to hire an architect, replace windows, and replace the roof.

Supervisor Cassell stated that it is critical to do something for Social Services. He made a motion to go with the original project at renovating the J. J. Kelly building.

It was noted that in order to act on this item the agenda will have to be amended to put this item on for discussion.

Supervisor Cassell withdrew his motion.

Supervisor Lawson suggested entering negotiations with the City of Norton to combine Social Services, Schools, and Health Departments, and put them all in the old Magic Mart and Goody's building.

It was noted that these buildings are located in the City of Norton and would require a boundary adjustment. With the time crunch of having to move Social Services, that would not be a feasible option at this time.

Supervisor Rivers stated that it may be more feasible to purchase a site and build a multi-story building to save money since the cost to renovate the J. J. Kelly building is estimated to cost between \$20-25M.

#### IN RE: AGENDA AMENDMENT

A motion was made by J. H. Rivers, seconded by Steve Bates, to modify the agenda for discussion on the J. J. Kelly High School facility. The motion was unanimously approved.

#### IN RE: J. J. KELLY HIGH SCHOOL RENOVATIONS

A motion was made by Bobby Cassell, seconded by Steve Bates, to authorize Administrator Hatfield to proceed with the design phase on the J. J. Kelly High School facility.

Aye-	Bobby Cassell	Nay-	Fred Luntsford
	Steve Bates		James Lawson
	John Schoolcraft		
	J. H. Rivers		
	Robby Robbins		

Motion carried.

#### BOARD COMMENTS

Supervisor Lawson said he would like to see the Board start having meetings to discuss the future of Wise County for the remainder of 2020 and for 2021. He wants to make plans to move Wise County forward.

Supervisor Robbins asked that VDOT be contacted regarding the need for guardrails near the shooting range located near the high wall on Pole Bridge Road.

Supervisor Rivers asked that any information the County has available on the coronavirus be put on channel 19 and the County website to keep the citizens updated on steps the County is taking to keep the virus from spreading. He noted that he received a call from a citizen regarding a wall that has fallen on the highway at 4215 ESG Road. The gentleman said he has an agreement with VDOT to replace the culvert, which would help the drainage in this area. He asked that VDOT be contacted on this matter.

Chairman Schoolcraft said he would also like to see the Board have different meetings to discuss the future of Wise County and come together on things that the Board can do to make Wise County a better place to live.

ADJOURN

A motion was made by Fred Luntsford, seconded by James Lawson, to recess the meeting at 9:05 p.m. The motion was unanimously approved.

ATTEST:

WISE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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Michael W. Hatfield, Clerk

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John T. Schoolcraft, Chairman