

**LUNENBURG COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
GENERAL DISTRICT COURTROOM
LUNENBURG COURTS BUILDING
LUNENBURG, VIRGINIA**

Minutes of the February 10, 2022 Meeting

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Lunenburg County Board of Supervisors was held on Thursday, February 10, 2022 at 6:00 pm in the General District Courtroom, Lunenburg Courts Building, Lunenburg, Virginia. The following members were present: Supervisors Frank Bacon, Alvester Edmonds, Mike Hankins, T. Wayne Hoover, Edward Pennington, Charles R. Slayton, Robert Zava, County Administrator Tracy M. Gee, Deputy Administrator Nicole A. Clark, County Attorney Frank Rennie and Assistant County Attorney Drew DiStanislao.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, guests, Supervisors and staff adhered to social distancing and wearing masks per the CDC guidelines.

Chairman Slayton called the meeting to order.

Supervisor Zava provided the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman Slayton requested additions to the agenda from the Board and the public. Supervisor Hoover requested that Crossroad Community Services be added as 8F. Administrator Gee requested that the Southside Center for Violence Prevention be added as 9A on a request she received earlier in the day.

Chairman Slayton called for any wishing to speak under Citizen Comment. There were none.

Supervisor Hoover requested that the Treasurer's December 2021 reports be removed from the Consent Agenda.

Supervisor Hoover made motion, seconded by Supervisor Edmonds and approved by roll call vote, with all seven Supervisors voting yes, and none voting no, to accept the Consent Agenda to include the January 13, 2022 meeting minutes and the following Warrants for Approval:

January 2022:	Payroll: Direct Deposit	\$ 160,540.07
	Payroll Check #2004	\$ 916.92
	Payroll Taxes Federal:	\$ 53,078.64
	Payroll Taxes State:	\$ 9,514.40
	Payroll VRS payment:	\$ 33,133.03
	Payroll ICMA-RC payment:	\$ 1,182.60
	Payroll Health Savings Deposits:	\$ 4,330.96
	Accounts Payable: #80379-80476	<u>\$ 803,087.44</u>
	Total:	\$ 1,065,784.06

Supervisor Bacon made motion, seconded by Supervisor Pennington and approved by roll call vote, with all seven Supervisors voting yes, and none voting no, to enter into public hearing regarding the proposed redistricting of election districts in the county.

Assistant County Attorney DiStanislao reviewed the proposed map and ordinance as recommended by the Redistricting Committee. He advised that Virginia Code requires districts be compact and concise. He added that these efforts resulted in the biggest changes for District Six (Hounds Creek) and District Two (Brown's Store). He also advised that in the proposed map, two of the polling places would be outside of their respective precinct. However, Virginia Code allows for a polling place to be outside of the precinct, as long as it is within one mile of the precinct line. Assistant County Attorney DiStanislao explained that code required forty-five days notice be given of the proposed changes as well as a thirty days public comment period. He continued that he would ask for a vote from the Board on the proposed map and ordinance at the March meeting. County Attorney Rennie shared that the total population of prisons had been removed from the population counts in the 2020 Census. As a result, District Two (Brown's Store) saw the most change in population.

Supervisor Hoover made motion, seconded by Supervisor Bacon and approved by roll call vote, with all seven Supervisors voting yes, and none voting no, to exit public hearing regarding the proposed redistricting of election districts in the county.

Administrator Gee advised that Assistant School Superintendent and Director of Finance, James Abernathy, was unable to attend the meeting and would report to her after the upcoming School Board meeting regarding spending reductions to meet the reduction in average daily membership.

Mr. Kevin Smith of VDOT provided the monthly report. He advised that there had been several winter weather events in the past few weeks. VDOT has prepared accordingly for each event. Mr. Smith added that crews have also been fighting pot holes and performing maintenance. He noted that litter control crews had begun cleanup efforts and as soon as the weather begins to warm up they will proceed with rural rustic projects, mostly likely beginning with Tinkling Road or Martin Road. Supervisor Zava commented on logging companies working in the area that are tracking and leaving mud in the roadways. He added that road can then become very dangerous for motorists. He questioned if VDOT was able to aid in preventing logging companies from creating these dangerous conditions. Mr. Smith replied that logging companies are required to obtain a permit from VDOT. If conditions are bad enough, VDOT is able to pull their permit and they will be required to stop logging. Mr. Smith commented that he will contact the local forester to help in their efforts to get the logging companies to clean up the roads.

Administrator Gee shared a request from Clerk of Circuit Court Gordon Erby to accept a check in the amount of \$6,000 to cover the salary and fringes cost of an additional full-time staff member for the month of January in the amount of \$4000, then apply the remaining \$2,000 to his part-time salary and wages line item. Clerk Erby hired a deputy clerk to replace a retiring deputy clerk and he employed them both during the month of January so that the newly-hired clerk could be properly trained. The funds come from the Circuit Court Clerk's local funds account and not from county funds.

Supervisor Pennington made motion, seconded by Supervisor Bacon, and approved by roll call vote, with all seven Supervisors voting yes, and none voting no, to authorize the receipt of funds from the Circuit Court Clerk's state fund account and credit \$4,000 to salary/wages and fringe benefits line items

to cover the cost of an additional full-time staff member for the month of January, with the remaining \$2,000 being credited to the Circuit Court Clerk's part-time salary/wages and FICA line items.

Administrator Gee advised that she had received the health insurance renewal from The Local Choice, and it included an eight percent increase in premiums. She noted that she is researching other options for affordable medical coverage for staff and their dependents. She plans to issue an RFP to three interested consultants to procure rates from several other providers. The selection must move quickly since The Local Choice requires that a contract be signed by March 25th.

Mr. Shawn Rozier, Vice President of Housing with STEPS, Inc., presented a proposal for a homeless housing facility to be located on West Third Street in Farmville and serve the counties within the Heartland Planning Group, which includes Lunenburg. They are requesting \$200,000 in ARPA funds from each of the six member counties. His proposal outlined their plan to provide emergency sheltering, support services and permanent supportive housing to mitigate the effects of the pandemic and strengthen compliance with COVID-19 health precautions. The initial plan includes eleven homes for emergency shelter, three homes for permanent supportive housing and a 1,380 square foot community center. Mr. Rozier indicated that he believes they will be able to begin construction within three months of securing funding and the ultimate goal would be completion in mid to late 2023. Supervisor Edmonds noted that the majority of the funds have been earmarked for other projects at this point, adding that if this proposal was presented last year, the County would have more flexibility in allocating ARPA funds to the project. Supervisor Pennington suggested that Administrator Gee and the Finance Committee review the request during budget discussion and make a recommendation as to what Lunenburg may be able to contribute.

Supervisor Hoover advised that he is now the Vice-Chairman of the Crossroads Community Services Board. He shared that they selected a new director for the organization to begin April 11, 2022. He added that CCSB has also hired a CPA firm to work with staff on the financials of the organization. Supervisor Hoover commented that the CCSB is making every effort to move forward in a positive direction.

Melody Foster, Executive Director for the Commonwealth Regional Council, provided an overview of their efforts in Lunenburg over the past year. She briefly reviewed the projects for which they applied and administered funding in the amount of \$249,055 in Lunenburg County this year. These projects included benefits to both towns, fire and rescue organizations, broadband initiatives, emergency planning assistance, and an update to the Regional Hazard Mitigation plan. Ms. Foster reminded the Board that their membership policy was amended to include terms stating that if the CRC audited cash fund balance was in excess of \$600,000, the excess amount would be equally divided and returned to the member localities. Their audited June 30, 2021 balance was \$634,674.22, resulting in a refund amount for each member, Lunenburg's share being \$4,953.46. Ms. Foster advised that each member locality may choose to keep the funds or they may reinvest the funds back into the CRC. She asked the Board to consider reinvestment of the funds. Supervisor Edmonds suggested accepting the funds and allowing the Finance Committee time to consider the best option for Lunenburg.

Supervisor Edmonds made motion, seconded by Supervisor Hoover, and approved by roll call vote, with all seven Supervisors voting yes, and none voting no, to accept the refund of dues from the CRC in the amount of \$4,953.46 and place the funds in the Economic Development fund.

Ms. Foster discussed consideration of launching a Regional Development Organization (RDO). She explained that RDO's are an integral part of the Virginia economic development system. They serve as the only conduit between the Virginia Economic Development Partnership and the individual localities, enabling regions to assemble assets comprehensively, creating a stronger market position. They also significantly support business retention/expansion, site development and provide professional economic development staffing support for local governments. Ms. Foster commented that this concept is just in the preliminary stages and she is approaching localities to consider a place holder in the CRC member's budget process in case the formation of an RDO does materialize. She advised that the initial cost would be around \$50,000. She added that the figure seems high, however, this would be initial costs of starting a new organization and not the ongoing membership costs. Administrator Gee advised that the county is currently a member of Virginia's Growth Alliance which provides similar services to localities. She added that if Lunenburg decides to withdraw its membership with VGA, notice must be given before December 31st prior to the fiscal year that the membership would discontinue. Ms. Foster commented that five of the seven members of the CRC have already withdrawn or given notice that they intend to withdraw from Virginia's Growth Alliance.

Mrs. Hattie Farrar, a Board member for the Southside Center for Violence Provention, approached the Board requesting consideration of funding for the upcoming fiscal year. She reviewed their services, noting that 120 clients from Lunenburg had been helped in their facilities during the past year. She advised that all of their services are free and confidential. Mrs. Farrar stated that their budget request for the upcoming 2022-23 fiscal year had been submitted to Administrator Gee and she appreciated the Board's consideration of their request.

Administrator Gee advised that the County had received only one response to the RFP for fiber infrastructure and broadband services. She advised that a proposal from Kinex Telecom committed to seventy-five percent of the project completed within four years. Administrator Gee commented that \$800,000 in ARPA funds had been earmarked for this project. Supervisor Hoover stated that high-speed internet throughout the county was crucial. It has proven to be detrimental to those areas without internet service during the pandemic.

Supervisor Hoover made motion, seconded by Supervisor Bacon, and approved by roll call vote, with all seven Supervisors voting yes, and none voting no, to accept the proposal from Kinex Telecom for the construction of broadband services with the commitment of seventy-five percent of the project to be completed within four years and allow Administrator Gee and County Attorney Rennie to review and sign the contract with Kinex Telecom and the other two localities.

Mr. Rodney Newton provided an update on the Radio System project (Project LUIS). He advised that discussions continued regarding options for towers to place the new equipment around the county. He added that the monthly lease fees for cell towers were much higher than projected. During the RFP process, vendors selected the best coverage options from four possible locations of radio communications sites. Mr. Newton stated that one of the towers was located at the Lunenburg Correctional facility and involved no costs to the county. The load study for the tower on Gary Road would not support the equipment, and therefore, could not be used. Mr. Newton explained that monthly rental cost for the remaining towers ranged from \$2,000 to \$4,000. He advised that he and Cheryl Giggetts of CTA Consultants were looking into other options as neither expected tower owners to request such high rental costs. Mr. Newton commented that Victoria Fire and Rescue's Station 7 in Kenbridge has land in which the county could use, free of charge, to construct its own tower. He shared that he is also in communications with Southside Electric Cooperative as they own the land at Gary Road. The County

could potentially build a tower at that location to use for the radio system. Mr. Newton shared the average cost of building a tower was around \$400,000, however, any new tower built and owned by the County would have space for others to rent to place their equipment. The potential rental income could help offset the cost of building the tower. Mr. Newton advised that some funding for tower rental was built into the contract with L3Harris, so those funds can also be applied to the cost of building a tower. Administrator Gee noted that she is also researching options for additional funding if the Board decides not to use additional ARPA funds for the tower expenses. Mr. Newton shared that this issue has already pushed the project back two months. He stated that he would need a determination from the Board on how to move forward. Supervisor Hoover commented that the radio system project is a matter of public safety which is the purpose of ARPA funds. He added that every police unit, emergency services unit, school bus, public works vehicle, and countless others use and rely on the radio system for communication. He continued that he does not see where the county has much choice and certainly cannot afford the fees vendors are requesting for rental space.

Supervisor Hoover made motion, seconded by Supervisor Bacon, and approved by roll call vote, with all seven Supervisors voting yes, and none voting no, to use federal ARPA funds toward the construction of two towers for use in the radio communications system, one located the property of Victoria Fire and Rescue's Station 7 and one located at the Gary Road tower site, pending discussions with Southside Electric Cooperative.

Ms. Taylor Newton, Director of Community Development, provided her monthly report. She advised that she is exploring grant opportunities for additional hangars at the airport. She shared that the first Planning Commission meeting of the year was held in February. Mr. James "Buck" Tharpe was re-elected Chairman and Mr. Walter Thompson was elected Vice-Chairman. County Attorney Rennie shared that Assistant County Attorney DiStanislao would start serving as the attorney advisor for the Planning Commission. County Attorney Rennie will remain with the Board of Supervisors.

Administrator Gee provided her monthly report. She shared that she and Supervisor Hankins attended the VACo legislative day in Richmond, along with Rodney and Stacey Newton. She shared highlights with the remaining Board members. Administrator Gee advised that COVID-19 testing and vaccine clinics were ongoing within the county. She thanked all those involved in the planning or organization of the clinics. Administrator Gee advised that Meridian Waste is not currently interested in increasing their tonnage at the landfill. However, they are looking for land to purchase to use as a barrow pit. She shared that the County has some land near the animal shelter that could be available. County Attorney Rennie advised that if that comes to fruition, a public hearing would be required.

Supervisor Pennington made motion, seconded by Supervisor Hankins, and approved by roll call vote, with all seven Supervisors voting yes, and none voting no, to appoint Jamyce Watson of 489 K-V Road, Victoria to fill the unexpired term ending December 31, 2022 on the Department of Social Services Advisory Board for District 5 (Love's Mill).

Supervisor Pennington made motion, seconded by Supervisor Bacon, and approved by roll call vote, with all seven Supervisors voting yes, and none voting no, to enter Closed Session citing Virginia Code Section §2.2-3711A7 Consult with Legal Counsel regarding legal matters needing legal advice.

CERTIFICATION OF CLOSED SESSION MEETING

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors of Lunenburg County, Virginia (“Board”) convened a Closed Session Meeting on this date pursuant to an affirmative recorded vote in accordance with the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act; and

WHEREAS, Section §2.2-3712 of the Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, requires a certification by the Board that such Closed Meeting was conducted in conformity with Virginia law.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board hereby certifies that, to the best of each member’s knowledge, (i) only public business matters lawfully exempted from Open Meeting requirements by Virginia law were discussed in the Closed Meeting to which this certification resolution applies, and (ii) only such public business matters as were identified in the motion convening the Closed Meeting were heard, discussed or considered by the Board.

VOTING YES	VOTING NO	ABSENT
Supervisor Edmonds		
Supervisor Hankins		
Supervisor Bacon		
Supervisor Hoover		
Supervisor Pennington		
Supervisor Slayton		
Supervisor Zava		

Supervisor Hankins made motion, seconded by Supervisor Bacon, and approved by roll call vote, with all seven Supervisors voting yes, and none voting no, to return to Open Session.

Supervisor Hoover made motion, seconded by Supervisor Bacon and approved by roll call vote, with all seven Supervisors voting yes, and none voting no, to adjourn.

Tracy M. Gee, Clerk
County Administrator

Charles R. Slayton, Chairman
Board of Supervisors