

April 28, 2015

County of Greene, Virginia

THE GREENE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MET ON TUESDAY, APRIL 28, 2015, BEGINNING AT 7:30 P.M. IN THE PERFORMING ARTS CENTER AT WILLIAM MONROE HIGH SCHOOL.

Present were:           David Cox, Chairman  
                              Jim Frydl, Vice Chairman  
                              Eddie Deane, Member  
                              Davis Lamb, Member  
                              Bill Martin, Member  
                              John C. Barkley, County Administrator  
                              Ray Clarke, County Attorney  
                              Patti Vogt, Deputy Clerk  
                              Tracy Morris, Finance Director

The Chairman opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance followed by a moment of silence.

RE: PUBLIC HEARING ON PROPOSED FY 2015-2016 COUNTY BUDGET AND TAX LEVIES

Mr. John Barkley, County Administrator, gave a brief overview of the FY 2016 Budget which serves as a guide for the County's expenditures and revenues during the course of the fiscal year, and can be amended through a public process at any point during the year. It was developed using conservation estimates for overall economic growth based on leading economic indicators and trends. The budget reflects a culmination of the efforts of County staff along with constitutional officers under the guidance and direction of the Board of Supervisors and a continued commitment to fiscal responsibility.

Budget priorities included:

- Continued funding and support of County core services: schools, law enforcement emergency services, community and economic development, recreation and parks facilities and programming, fire and rescue organizations, social services, transportation and environmental protection.
- Support of local and regional partners.
- Focus on utilizing technology to provide better information and services to residents and businesses.
- Enforcement of current County regulations and state mandates in a fair and equitable manner.

The total assessed valuation County-wide decreased 1% from 2013 – 2015. The County's real estate tax rate is proposed to be \$0.75 per hundred dollars of assessed value. Budget includes funds for core government services, public schools, infrastructure and increased cost of correctional and EMS services.

The total County budget is proposed to increase by 1.5%. There is a 1.03% decrease in local expenditures and a 3.3 increase in School funding. The County debt payment obligation decreases by 10%.

Mr. Cox read the notice of property tax increase as advertised.

The floor was opened for public comments.

Mr. Bob Young – Comments about perspective. In FY 2013, the County drew down \$1.6 million from “reserves”. In 2014, \$1 million withdrawn from “reserves”. Current year trend is around \$4 million and budget tonight will withdraw an additional \$3.2 million from “reserves”. We’re not here to talk about \$.03 increase in the tax levy. For the current year we’re really talking about a tax levy of \$.90. A typical homeowner would pay about \$500 more per year which many may not have. Reserve is a number on paper that is calculated per policy and is tied up in a lot of assets. He is not against having money stored away but we have to really understand what that means.

Bobby Madison – County is going to be broke in a couple of years. The tax levy will be \$.92 if County keeps letting growth come in without anything to support it. Felt developers of low-income houses are laughing at us. They’re building all those houses, running out and we’re stuck with the tax bill. Thinks it’s time for the people to take back the County. Start looking round and doing some cutting in offices. Do something with budget rather than keep going in the hole.

Wayne Koontz – How is he supposed to keep paying taxes when he draws \$1,300 to \$1,400 per month? Taxes keep going up but his wages aren’t going up. Feels it’s not a solution to keep raising taxes. He could cut \$1 million from budget tomorrow.

Joanne Burkholder – Thanked Board members for service and what they do. Knows this is a tough time of year. Need for water going up 32% by year 2040 (article in Daily Progress). Urged Board to do something about water impoundment. She supports new telephone system for Schools but suggested the numbers not be changed until after the end of school year. Current numbers are printed on documents and it would not be cost effective to change numbers now.

Norman Dean – Has been building houses around here for about 40 years. He finds that it gets harder every day to get anything approved. Feels like he’s running in circles all the time. Things should be approved in timely manner. Asked Board to look at situation and correct problems.

David Dean – The Dean family pays a lot of taxes and fees. There should be an environment that supports growth and businesses to make investment in community. Encouraged Board to look at what investors do in County and take that into consideration for all policies.

William Shifflett – Second reading of allocation of funds for VRS reimbursement was agenda item in November, 2014. Inquired and submitted a FOIA request. County employee was inadvertently not included in VRS. Finally obtained copy of loan agreement for \$5,700 to Mr. Barkley, County Administrator, after 14 correspondences over a 4 month period of time. Just floored him. Why do citizens have to work so hard to get information that we have all rights to? What happened to objective stated during terms on board as to build trust within the community with transparency and open communication? What gives you the authority to make a decision to give a private loan to a member of the leadership team with our funds? He would like details on how to acquire a no interest loan. What makes you think you are above the rules and regulations that every other employee and every other member of this community must submit to? No secret

County Administrator position is six figure income. Why not go to bank like everyone else to get the money? How can you serve the County and make these kinds of decisions?

Sharon Mack, Chair of the School Board – Thanked Board for consideration of their adopted budget. Soaring enrollment has been greatest challenge. Considered both growing enrollment and mandate driven needs. School Board has scrutinized requests and optimized existing resources to develop a budget that truly does represent needs. Request includes: completing final phase of VRS pass thru of 2%; 2% raise for staff which is partially funded by State money; adding teaching positions; and funds for furniture to address growing enrollment. Appreciates consideration of request and thanks in advance for seeing the value of investing in the education of those that are the future of Greene County.

Brent Hall – Property owner, tax payer and business owner. Must voice his disappointment in the Planning Department. During a recent site plan process, it became apparent that immediate changes have to be made. He has been lied to, intentionally delayed, and subject to ever changing policy. How many other potential businesses have decided not to do business with Greene because of this? How can County continue to draw down on reserve but not promote business and make it easy to have a business? Because of the ongoing situation, they have decided to table everything. Will not develop any other property in Greene County, nothing they have is for sale and they are going to try to move as many businesses of theirs out of the County into Albemarle until this is fixed.

Tina B. Morris – Discuss issues with Planning Department. They have gone through massive amounts of paperwork. They are not getting productive service productive. Walk out of office not knowing what answers are. Answers given are verbal not written. Too many people handling same document. Decision should take little time, certainly not days or months. Should be done on the spot or within a week. Process takes too long. Why do we have to make an appointment to see County Administrator when parking lot is empty? Doesn't want to be frightened to walk out of office not knowing what next step is. Also would like a loan.

Kenny Collier – Agreed with just about everything that has been said tonight. Against any kind of raise in taxes. Still having to “rent” property from County. Supports all his neighbors who are against the increase. Knows of quite a few expenses that could be deleted.

The public hearing was closed.

Mr. Deane said the bottom line is money. He would like to add to complaints tonight. A gentleman who manages Clayton Homes in ten different counties in Virginia says Greene County is by far the worst county he has to deal with. Permits and fees are higher. Also had call from contractor who complained about situation. Everything was done all legal and it's not good enough. Gentleman was afraid to come to meeting tonight. Afraid of being penalized. When people are afraid of government, it's called tyranny. When government is afraid of the people, it's called liberty. Said he wants liberty in Greene County. Why would we want to drive away businesses? If we continue not to change things, to drive business away, we will find ourselves in a lot worse shape. Backbone of community is local business. Felt situation is uncalled for and apologized that it has happened on his watch. Will do everything he can in the next eight months to help business owners to keep business in Greene. If some things are being done wrong, we need to take care of it. We must be able to face citizens of County and tell them we have done all we could do to hold the line on discretionary spending. Citizens must know financial condition of this County and what choices are made by the Board will cost us all. Auditor recently described County as “presently stable but declining”. We must act now. The reserve

policy in place stipulates that we must have cash reserves of \$12.9 million for FY 15 and two months of operating funds. Understands we're below that level already. The tax rate would have to be increased to \$.90 to cover deficits. The Board needs to do everything absolutely necessary to ensure that we have made proper financial decisions that reduce unnecessary growth, remove waste, and provide for our priorities. Mr. Deane said he could not vote to pass the budget as presented.

Mr. Lamb agreed with some of Mr. Deane's comments. The equalized tax rate for this budget alone would be a \$.20 increase without dipping into reserves. Felt the County does not have sufficient reserve.

Mr. Frydl noted five of the eleven people who spoke did not comment directly on the budget. The reserve is a measure of fiscal health. The Treasurer does a good job of tracking cash reserve. By the way the reserve is measured, we haven't yet gone below the policy we set as a Board. Main draw on reserve has been water impoundment. The reserve was built up by the Board to pay for water impoundment. No one on the Board should be surprised it's dropping. Felt citizens should expect a little better leadership from the Board. The Board approved the fees everyone is talking about. Majority of fees being discussed are mandated by the State. The Board did not get to choose fees.

The Board voted to approve and advertise budget we had. Board members had opportunity to speak out and make changes. Mr. Deane did speak out about several items (about \$100,000). The State stopped funding things required and only option for County is to pay for those required programs by a tax increase.

Mr. Frydl said he did not believe anyone could walk out of any Planning Department with approval the same day requested. The process involves outside agencies reviewing request.

Mr. Frydl said, in regards to the loan, the County, as an employer, did not do what we were supposed to do. A mistake was made and there was a decision to not unfairly penalize the employee. Not an independent loan. We, as managers, are taking responsibility for error.

Mr. Martin said he was bothered by turn of discussion. Felt this has been anything but a budget hearing. It's been a session to complain about business practices and personnel policy. He said he was very confused by comments from colleagues. The Board worked hard to develop budget and now is time to stand together with what we decided as a group. It's the wrong time to back away. Budget has been cut to bare bones. The departments made hard choices this year. There is a 3.3% increase in School budget which is due to the rising school population. New students lead to new classrooms, which leads to a demand for more teachers. We're playing catch up.

Mr. Martin encouraged citizens to come out and participate. The reserve was raised with tax dollars. It can sit there doing nothing or it can work for us. We're paying debt of about \$3 million per year on water and sewer program. No one on this Board voted for that. The economic projections didn't work out. It is not the fault of the previous Board. They were doing the right thing. Recession hit and we didn't experience the economic growth expected. The Board has been quietly, calmly spending down the reserve fund on land purchases for water impoundment.

Mr. Martin said he would not address policy issues with Planning and Zoning as he did not feel this is appropriate forum but he heard what was said. The County is not charging anything that this Board did not approve. The audit indicates the reserve fund is declining but is

not a cause for concern. We're still suffering hangover of recession. It's tough but we're managing it better than most.

The growing school population is a conundrum. How do we pay for the growth which is a sign of a vibrant, healthy community? Mr. Martin said he is proud of our schools. Greene County is a wonderful place to work, live and play.

The County got hit hard with regional jail budget this year and next year will pay \$1 million more. To run away from the budget is not leadership. The State is ramming a lot of stuff down our throats. Citizens need to speak up with legislators. Mr. Martin said he does not like to see tax levy increase but it is time for the Board to exhibit leadership and move this budget forward.

Mr. Lamb said he made the motion for the increase in the tax levy and feels the Board has to be very aggressive in fiscal responsibility to citizens. We need industry and economic development in Greene County.

Mr. Deane said he agreed with the tax levy but not the budget. He said there is a problem when a surveyor who works in twenty counties says Greene is the worst. He has lived here all his life and wants local businesses to flourish. If we run them out of the County, we are going to be hurting.

Mr. Cox said the Board made the decision four years ago to pull \$1.4 million from reserve fund for school budget. That \$1.4 million was pulled again to support the schools. Mr. Cox said he is not against the schools. He supports the schools and is proud of the schools we have. He graduated from William Monroe High as did his children. Things have changed, whether we like it or not.

Mr. Cox thanked Mrs. Ethyle Giuseppe for her generous donations to PVCC, for the comfort station at the Park and for the basketball goals at the Park. He said water impoundment is important. Former Board had foresight to have \$2 million in reserve to purchase property for impoundment. There has been a lot of discussion over the years about the reserve and reserve policy. Reserve is our assets and cash beyond paying monthly bills. Mr. Cox said he is comfortable with budget in front of the Board which they worked diligently on. The Board will vote on the budget at the May 12 meeting.

RE: TAX LEVIES – FY 2015-2016

Mr. Cox reviewed the proposed tax levies. Mr. Deane said he would rather increase a little this year than have a huge increase next year.

Upon motion by Jim Frydl and unanimous vote, the Board approved the tax levies as advertised and listed below:

Levies on \$100 assessed valuation:

|                                   |        |
|-----------------------------------|--------|
| Real Estate                       | \$0.75 |
| Public Service Corp.              | \$0.75 |
| Personal Property                 | \$5.00 |
| Except Farm Machinery & Livestock | \$0.00 |
| Industrial Machinery & Tools      | \$2.50 |

|                |             |   |     |
|----------------|-------------|---|-----|
| Recorded vote: | David Cox   | - | Yes |
|                | Jim Frydl   | - | Yes |
|                | Eddie Deane | - | Yes |
|                | Davis Lamb  | - | Yes |
|                | Bill Martin | - | Yes |

Motion carried.

RE: RESOLUTION – PERSONAL PROPERTY TAX RELIEF ACT (PPTRA)

Mr. Cox read the resolution as proposed.

Upon motion by Bill Martin and unanimous vote, the Board approved the resolution regarding the percentage of relief. (See Attachment “A”)

|                |             |   |     |
|----------------|-------------|---|-----|
| Recorded vote: | David Cox   | - | Yes |
|                | Jim Frydl   | - | Yes |
|                | Eddie Deane | - | Yes |
|                | Davis Lamb  | - | Yes |
|                | Bill Martin | - | Yes |

Motion carried.

RE: MATTERS FROM THE PUBLIC

Bobby Madison – Commented on how much the water project is costing and asked where water will come from to fill reservoir. Thought we could have got something a little closer to the Rapidan. Remembered when Greene County was just about dry several years ago. There were porta johns in front of Walmart. Something should have been done years ago. The County wouldn't be in the shape we're in if RSA didn't handle finances. He noted all the stuff the County paid for and then gave to RSA to manage.

Mr. Madison also suggested the Board look at what's going in schools. He said he lost all respect for Greene County schools when he heard rap music with curse words in it at football game. He made complaint and nothing was done about it.

Frank Morris - Realizes we need more for schools, fire departments and rescue squad. We need to do more to bring more business in. He said he sits on two County boards and part of his job is to talk to business owners to get them to locate here. Hard to get business owners here when they are treated with lack of respect. No one wants to be made fun of. Every business owner he has talked to is having problems with system. This is our problem and we need to figure out what's going on. We keep running businesses out and bringing housing in. Slow housing down and get business that helps with taxes.

William Shifflett – Said he is tired of redundancy and really tired of bureaucracy in Greene. Leadership is required. If there is nothing to hide, he should have received immediate response the first time he asked for information. Should not have had to ask 14 times. Mr. Shifflett said he is not now nor has he ever, at any time during his quest for information, made an accusation of illegal activity. What he knows is that a required payment to VRS was not made by Mr. Barkley and that the County, under direction of the Board, supplied him with funds in the form of a loan, to meet this requirement. If in fact a violation was made, either legal or in the form of lack of leadership, he wants it made known to the community. If the Board can't be trusted in matters of \$5,000, what makes them think he would trust them with the budget for this County? He knows job is tough and decisions are tough. Members have to stand up at some

point and say we have to do this. Noted one donor who made significant contributions to County. Possible with more transparency and leadership, there may be more citizens willing to support the County.

RE: MATTERS FROM BOARD MEMBERS

Mr. Frydl said staff has no authority to do anything other than what the Board requires them to do in County ordinances and code. The Board of Supervisors has control over that. Some ordinances are required by the State. Staff is doing exactly the job that we have given them to do. The Board has made no effort, as a group, to discuss change to ordinances. If we feel it is important, we need to do our jobs to discuss changes and come to conclusion as a group. Mr. Frydl said he supports everything staff has done. If anyone is angry, the blame should be pointed at the Board as it is the Board's responsibility.

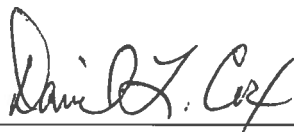
Mr. Deane said that is true in some aspects. However, a lot of small things that are not in ordinances are being pushed by someone. He is not against staff but against an over regulatory system that hinders businesses. He is not against Board members and said he respects everyone on the stage. If County policies are wrong, get ready to change them. He felt debate is good. Citizens should not be afraid of the County. We work for you. Our people are afraid of us and that needs to be changed.

Mr. Martin said citizens need to step up. The Board has meetings on the second and fourth Tuesdays. Mr. Martin encouraged citizens to attend meetings and talk to the Board.

Mr. Lamb said the Board works for citizens of Greene County. He said he tries to return all phone calls. Sometimes staff doesn't take care of problems. He will work hard to do everything he can to solve problems.

Mr. Cox thanked everyone for attending the meeting tonight. He would like to see the meeting room full. Expressed his appreciation to staff for work on budget.

The next scheduled Board meeting will be on May 12, 2015. The Board will vote on the budget that night. The meeting ended at 9:15 p.m.



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David L. Cox, Chairman  
Greene County Board of Supervisors

# RESOLUTION

**WHEREAS**, the Personal Property Tax Relief Act of 1998, VA Code Section 58.1-3523 et. seq. ("PPTRA"), has been substantially modified by the enactment of Chapter 1 of the Acts of Assembly, 2004 Special Session I (Senate Bill 5005), and the provisions of Item 503 of Chapter 951 of the 2005 Acts of Assembly (the 2005 revisions to the 2004-06 Appropriations Act, hereinafter cited as the "2005 Appropriations Act"); and

**WHEREAS**, these legislative enactments require the County to take affirmative steps to implement these changes, and to provide for the computation and allocation of relief provided pursuant to the PPTRA as revised; and

**WHEREAS**, these legislative enactments provide for the appropriation to the County, of a fixed sum to be used exclusively for the provision of tax relief to owners of qualifying personal use vehicles that are subject to the personal property tax on such vehicles.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** by the Greene County Board of Supervisors that:

qualifying vehicles obtaining situs within the County during tax year 2015, shall receive personal property tax relief in the following manner:

- Personal use vehicles valued at \$1,000 or less will be eligible for 100% tax relief;
- Personal use vehicles valued at \$1,001 to \$20,000 will be eligible for 50% tax relief;
- Personal use vehicles valued at \$20,001 or more shall only receive 50% tax relief on the first \$20,000 of value; and
- All other vehicles which do not meet the definition of "qualifying" (business use vehicles, farm use vehicles, motor homes, etc.) will not be eligible for any form of tax relief under this program.
- In accordance with Item 503.D.1, the entitlement to personal property tax relief for qualifying vehicles for tax year 2005 and all prior tax years shall expire on September 1, 2006. Supplemental assessments for tax years 2005 and prior that are made on or after September 1, 2006 shall be deemed "non-qualifying" for purposes of state tax relief and the local share due from the taxpayer shall represent 100% of the tax assessable.

Adopted in Open Meeting this 28<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2015.



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David L. Cox, Chairman  
Greene County Board of Supervisors