

December 15, 2015

Virginia:

AT A CONTINUED MEETING of the Nelson County Board of Supervisors at 8:30 a.m. at Veritas Winery in Afton, Virginia;

Present: Constance Brennan, Central District Supervisor
Allen M. Hale, East District Supervisor – Vice Chair
Thomas H. Bruguere, Jr. West District Supervisor
Larry D. Saunders, South District Supervisor – Chair
Thomas D. Harvey, North District Supervisor
Stephen A. Carter, County Administrator
Candice W. McGarry, Administrative Assistant/Deputy Clerk
Chip Boyles, Retreat Facilitator (Executive Director, Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission)

Absent: None

I. Call to Order

Mr. Saunders called the meeting to order at 9:03 am with all Supervisors present to establish a quorum.

II. Board of Supervisors Retreat

Introductions:

Mr. Boyles introduced himself and thanked the Board for inviting him to facilitate their retreat.

He then advised that they would be looking at things for Nelson County using the Department Head ideas and their own ideas. He advised them to identify key things to be started that year and or started and completed in the next year. He added that this was not so much a long term planning meeting but rather one that would help staff go in a certain direction over the next year or two.

He noted that they would identify and prioritize items to move forward as it related to funding in the budget and he advised them to keep it manageable and to stay with what was doable.

Mr. Boyles then gave the Board some background noting that he had been with the Planning District Commission (PDC) and living in Albemarle County for twenty months now. He noted that he had accomplished a lot and the PDC had a great staff. He noted that he spent five years in Baton Rouge LA working for the Mayor there and had a \$20 Million budget out of a \$700 Million total budget. He added that he had worked in redevelopment and worked with 700 abandoned properties and \$10 Million in CDBG grants. He noted that prior to that he was in City Management in South Carolina and Maryland.

Mr. Boyles then asked the Board members to introduce themselves and note what had gotten them started in local politics.

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Board Member Introductions:

Mr. Hale:

Mr. Hale noted that he was interested in politics and sought the Democratic nomination for the US House of Representatives in 2000 and then decided to look at the General Assembly, having the view that they were not addressing issues important to him. He noted that he received 35% of the vote there and then decided to run for the East District Board of Supervisors seat. He advised that he had two opponents and won with a strong majority. He related that his motivation was to try to bring the average person's needs and concerns about government to bear and to act upon them. He added that he enjoyed listening to what people had to say while campaigning and that local government was the most representative form and affected everyone. He concluded by noting that schools were important as were real estate taxes.

Mr. Harvey:

Mr. Harvey noted he has been on the Board for thirty-one years and that Emergency Services had gotten him started. He added that there was not much organization or cohesiveness to it and the County was not contributing anything to the volunteer departments. He noted that they then established a county-wide EMS Council and set up the first budget. He added that schools were also important to him. Mr. Harvey noted that he has run a business for forty-one years, was born and raised in Piney River and moved to Afton when he graduated from High School.

Mr. Boyles then asked if emergency services was better and if it was where he would like it to be. Mr. Harvey noted that volunteerism was tough and the departments were stretched out so that none were first due in their own county, however they were first due outside of the county. He added that an interest free loan fund of \$700,000 had been established so that the departments could borrow money for land, equipment, etc. and that a year or two ago the County started purchasing vehicles for them. He advised that for rescue squads, the County matched grant funds for ambulances and for Fire Departments, the County provided an 80-20 match. He related that six fire trucks and three ambulances had been purchased and that every year, it rotated departments and that when a new one was gotten, the old one was disposed of.

Ms. Brennan:

Ms. Brennan noted she moved to Nelson County in 1974 and her kids went to Nelson County public schools. She noted that in the 1990s, she ran for School Board because education was important to her. She noted that when she moved to Nelson, she ran calls with the rescue squad because health was also important to her. She advised that in 2000, the County was redistricted and a new district was formed She then realized that the Board of Supervisors controlled the money and so she ran for office. She noted she was now in her fourteenth year on the Board. She added that she was interested in criminal justice, was on the Community Criminal Justice Board and was trying to get her arms around managing an aging community. She added that Nelson had the highest rate of growth of aging people in the Planning District.

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Mr. Boyles agreed that the aging population was growing and he suggested that as the Board was having discussions, they not just focus on how to address negative sides of services, but rather be thinking about how to take advantage of it. He added that many localities were putting in facilities as economic development tools. He added that they could think about recreational facilities for those over 50 as an example and that concerns could also be an opportunity.

Mr. Saunders:

Mr. Saunders noted he was born and raised in Nelson County and owned and operated a construction business since 1964. He added that he was retired now and in 2008 ran for office and lost by three votes. He noted he ran again and won and was now newly re-elected. He noted he thought that with his construction background, he could bring this knowledge to the Board. He added that he enjoyed working to help people and it was a good feeling to help.

Mr. Bruguere:

Mr. Bruguere noted that he was a co-owner of Dickie Bros. Orchards, which was a seventh generation farm. He noted that he ran for the Board primarily because he did not like the person running in his district. He noted his focus was the school system and he noted his family was heavily involved in education as he had a family of teachers. He related that he has had a hard time with the dollars requested over the last few years, it bothered him how much money was being utilized; acknowledging that much of it was for salaries which was important. He noted that he wanted to change some things; however he could not since he was not on the School Board. He noted that he had joined the rescue squad because the needed help and he volunteered for twelve years. He noted that he has always wanted a County swimming pool for recreation; however that was expensive. He added he was not in favor of raising taxes and it was difficult to work within what the County had. He noted that Nelson was still basically a poor county despite the presence of Wintergreen, the wineries, and breweries; adding that the general populous was low to moderate income. Ms. Brennan added that the County's free and reduced lunch rate was 50% and most were free. Mr. Saunders noted he was in favor of school uniforms and free lunches for everyone.

Mr. Boyles noted he kept falling back to his opinion that things were not perfect and there was a long way to go as leaders in the region; however things also were not so bad at all either.

County Mission and Services:

Mr. Boyles then referred to the County's Mission Statement: "It is the mission of the Board of Supervisors to maintain Nelson County as a beautiful, safe, healthy, and prosperous rural county; where public services are effective, efficient, adequate and responsive to the needs of its citizens; where education is a life-long process; where citizens are involved in all aspects of their governance; and where the community is well planned to assure respect for and dedication to its traditions and resources, while continuing to improve its economic viability."

He noted that all had mentioned priorities that were contained within the mission statement and specifically all had mentioned education being important. He then noted that the PDC

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used note cards with their mission and goals on the back to have as a reminder; which they found helpful.

Identification of Priority Issues:

Mr. Boyles then suggested that they go around the table and have the Supervisors give their highest priority. He added that a good fiscal practice to keep in mind was the difference between a onetime expense and a recurring expense. He noted that a letter C could be used for capital expenses and an O could be used for operating expenses.

Supervisors then noted the following high priorities:

- Education/Schools
 - Maintain adequate funding
 - Maintain communication and cooperation
- Infrastructure and Business Attraction in Southern Nelson County
 - Extended water/sewer
 - Look into Go Virginia Program
 - Look into Larkin property acquisition
- Continued Route 151 Area Planning
 - Planned Development and Zoning
 - Community Engagement
- Aquatic Center
 - County-wide Access
 - Consider Building in Stages.
- Economic Development
 - Encourage Home-based and Small Businesses (low impact)
 - Increase Broadband Access
- Increase Overall Community Engagement
 - Between New and Long-term Residents
 - Develop Method to Reach All Residents
- Improve Rural Roads
 - Upgrade Dirt and Gravel Roads
 - Improve VDOT Maintenance
- Upgrade GIS system
 - Include layers for EMS, Health, and Schools
 - Make GIS More User Friendly
- Wireless Broadband Development , Use & Business Management
 - Better Market The County's Network
 - Engage Private Providers
 - Expand Services

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- Look Carefully At Imposing New Regulations
 - Review and Streamline Existing Ordinances & Processes
 - Review New Ordinances for Consequences
- Review Boards and Commissions
 - Consider Term Limits
- Blue Ridge Tunnel Restoration
 - Ongoing Operations
 - Have State or National Parks System Assume Operation
- Investigate Pre-K Education
 - Funding
- Lovington Healthcare Center
 - Retain Access to Care in the County
 - Future Facility Use
- Emergency Services
 - Wintergreen
 - Funding
 - Equipment
 - Training & Regulations
- Staffing
 - Departmental Requests
- In House Reassessment

Confirmation of High Priorities:

Mr. Boyles then distributed ten dots per Supervisor and instructed them to place dots on the issues that were most important to them; with a maximum placement of three dots per person on one issue. He noted that he had labeled each issue with a C for capital cost (one-time expense) or an O for operating cost (recurring expense). He also suggested combining several of the items that were similar in nature and Investigating Pre-K Education was eliminated.

Supervisors then allocated their dots with the following results:

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|-------------------------------|--------|
| • Wireless Development | 6 Dots |
| • Business Development | 6 Dots |
| • Rural Roads | 5 Dots |
| • Education | 4 Dots |
| • Corridor Planning | 4 Dots |
| • GIS Upgrades/Operations | 4 Dots |
| • Lovington Healthcare Center | 4 Dots |
| • Emergency Services | 4 Dots |

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- Aquatic Center 3 Dots
- Community Engagement 3 Dots
- Blue Ridge Tunnel 3 Dots

Discussion of each item ensued as follows:

Wireless Broadband Development:

Operation of the County's network was discussed and Mr. Carter noted that the Authority could do this. He noted that this had been analyzed a couple of years ago and he noted that a company was in the process of being hired to develop a plan to help establish how to go about this.

Supervisors discussed that the Authority had not successfully engaged the private competition to the County-owned system and it was suggested that they sit down and talk to the local companies about it. It was also noted that the primary mission of getting Broadband out to the county quickly had failed. Mr. Boyles then suggested doing this type of exercise with the Broadband Authority. Mr. Carter noted that the Authority and County would have to invest more money to build it out; which would be a budgetary consideration. He noted that he would have the hired consultant come and report to the Broadband Authority. Mr. Boyles noted that the Go Virginia program could help with broadband funding for home based businesses if it was part of the business development plan.

Action Items: Create a business model & plan for broadband expansion. Increase marketing efforts for the network.

Business Development:

The question was raised as to how this item gets moved forward. Mr. Carter noted that the County could put together a budget amount for an RFP for consulting firms to do a comprehensive study to development a needs assessment of how to invigorate the southern area of the County. Supervisors noted they thought that the Larkin property would need to be acquired prior to studying the area. It was noted the property contained 1,000 acres on both sides of Route 29 south of Lovingson and 50 acres near the High School. Mr. Carter suggested that the study should look at the area of Lovingson to Colleen. Supervisors agreed that acquiring the Larkin property was first priority.

Mr. Boyles noted that the PDC did get UVA students looking for projects and they could be used for this. Mr. Hale noted that there had not been much demand for the current lots available at the industrial park and the County should be cautious about purchasing 1,000 acres. Mr. Hale then advised that the Central Virginia Electric Cooperative would like to have a solar panel field and was looking for 25 acres. Mr. Harvey then suggested that the two Larkin parcels be separated by east and west. He added that the east side had already been studied and he thought the west side was more important.

Action Items: Budget for and create a comprehensive, county-wide economic development strategy, prioritize acquisition of the Larkin property, review and update the existing plan for the Larkin property.

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Rural Roads:

This item was removed due to it not being something that staff could really work on other than to lobby State Legislators.

Education:

It was noted that staff had a good working relationship with the new Superintendent and there was nothing more to be done presently. Supervisors were advised to speak to their School Board counterparts about any individual or constituent concerns. Mr. Boyles noted that the common thread seemed to be that the cooperation and communication between School and County staff continue.

Corridor Planning:

Supervisors discussed Route 151 planning and it was noted that the associated AFID grant related to this was in process. Supervisors discussed protecting the Route 151 corridor as well as planning for development. It was also noted that community engagement on this was very important. Supervisors then discussed that the only way prevent over-development was to design for it and it was also noted that there was limited land that could be developed because of topography. It was agreed that staff should continue its activities on this, address community engagement, and identify build-able vs non-build-able properties. Other corridor planning should also be addressed.

Action Items: Identify buildable and non-buildable parcels on Route 151, identify infrastructure, budget for either in-house or consultant for plan development.

GIS Upgrade/Operations:

Supervisors agreed that this item may require evaluation at budget time and it was noted that they had the department's recommendation.

Action Item: Develop a departmental committee to pursue opportunities to share data.

Lovington Healthcare Center:

Supervisors discussed what to do with the facility and implementing an aging type of healthcare. Staff noted this has been worked on for three years now. Another suggestion was to move those County Departments leasing space into that facility.

Action Item: Continue to pursue like service providers to utilize the facility.

Emergency Services:

Supervisors and staff discussed the increase in these expenditures and it was noted that this was related to: the increase in volunteer agency funding, the increase in paid crew staffing, and contracted services. It was noted that volunteerism was down and the County still had the same number of fire and rescue agencies. It was noted that the issue was how to more effectively provide these services. Collecting ambulance fees was discussed and it was noted

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that debt set-off procedures could be used to collect; however the Board did not want to deter citizens from calling for help. The volunteer effort was discussed and it was noted that this depended upon the agency. Mr. Carter noted that all had done better; however some were below a 30% response rate. Leadership was discussed as an issue and that there is no leadership training offered by the State. Mr. Carter noted that the volunteer agencies had been in existence for so long and no one wanted to give up their agency and consolidate and the consideration was were overcoming these inefficiencies worth the potential upheaval. Mr. Carter then advised he would send out Ms. Miller's year to date call response report.

Action Items: Budget for 24/7 rescue services and identify or develop leadership training for volunteers.

Aquatic Center:

It was noted that this could be a part of the Larkin Property discussion. Mr. Boyles noted that Business Parks that became inclusive were becoming prominent. Ms. Supervisors noted they would like to see this located near the High School and they would like to see the operational costs associated with this. It was noted that this could be a joint project with the schools and it should be available after hours for the public. Mr. Boyles suggested that they look at using a Design-Build arrangement when it got to the point of construction. He suggested that the operational costs associated with this were pretty large and the Board should consider whether or not this was worth a tax increase. It was also suggested that the community be engaged in this issue.

Action Items: Develop pro-forma annual operating costs and work towards land acquisition for the facility.

Community Engagement:

Mr. Boyles noted that the PDC could help with these efforts. He noted that people were not as apt to go to a website; rather the information had to be pushed out to them via email, Facebook etc. He added that these could contain a link to a website. Mr. Carter noted that the County was transitioning to a new 911 system and it could send out public service announcements. Supervisors noted they wanted to work on this and that an application called "Constant Contact" could help push this.

Action Item: Develop a plan to increase community engagement efforts.

Blue Ridge Tunnel:

The ongoing operations of this once it was complete was briefly discussed. It was noted that ideally the State or National Park Service would take it over in two to five years. It was noted that staff should begin conversations on this as more use would be achieved if it were a State Park.

Action Item: Develop a pro-forma annual operating budget and continue to efforts to partner with State or Federal Parks Services for operation and maintenance of the tunnel and trails.

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Conclusion:

Supervisors noted they would like to see a timeline for completion on some of these things and that coming back in a year and looking at it would also be constructive. It was also suggested that funding sources be identified for each item.

III. Other Business (As May Be Presented)

There was no other business considered by the Board.

IV. Adjournment

At 2:05 pm, Mr. Hale moved to adjourn and Ms. Brennan seconded the motion. There being no further discussion, Supervisors voted unanimously by voice vote to approve the motion and the meeting adjourned.