

Virginia:

AT A SPECIAL CALLED MEETING of the Nelson County Board of Supervisors at 9 a.m. in the Former Board Room located on the fourth floor of the Nelson County Courthouse, in Lovingston, Virginia.

Present: Jesse N. Rutherford, East District Supervisor –Chair
J. David Parr, West District Supervisor – Vice Chair
Thomas D. Harvey, North District Supervisor
Ernie Q. Reed, Central District Supervisor
Robert G. “Skip” Barton, South District Supervisor
Candice W. McGarry, County Administrator
Amanda B. Spivey, Administrative Assistant/Deputy Clerk
Jerry West, Director of Parks and Recreation
George Miller, Director of Nelson County Service Authority
Jennifer Miller, Nelson County Service Authority

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Rutherford called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m. with five (5) Supervisors present to establish a quorum.

II. MASTER PLAN WORK SESSION FOR FORMER LARKIN PROPERTY

A. Recreation Survey Results – Jerry West, Parks and Recreation

Jerry West, Director of Parks and Recreation, reviewed the results of the recreation survey. He reported that a total of 738 responses were received with a majority of the responses coming from Afton, Rockfish, Nellysford and Wintergreen. He also noted that a majority of the responses came from two person households. He also noted that over 450 people who responded were within the 55 to 69 year-old age category. He pointed out that those people within that age range would most likely be using an indoor facility Monday through Friday during the daytime. He noted that the younger people would most likely be using an indoor facility on evenings and during the summer. He indicated that only 61 responses had a household member with a qualifying disability as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). He noted that they would like to make any facilities as ADA compliant as possible.

Mr. West reported that the majority of people responding had utilized the trails for hiking, walking, or mountain biking. He noted that other interests included use of playground equipment, and swimming. He also indicated that of 464 respondents had confirmed that they were able to participate in active recreation activities as often as they would like. He said that of the 260 who responded that they were not able to participate as often as they would like, one of the biggest reasons provided was the lack of desired facilities. He noted that as part of the discussion for the day, they would talk about the needed facilities that would allow people to be able to participate in recreational activities.

Mr. West indicated that when respondents were asked what type of parks, recreation and cultural activities their households primarily visited, they answered that they utilized public parks or trails in Nelson County. He noted that the second highest response rate for the question was that they visited parks, trails or a facility in another municipality. He pointed out that the pandemic set a new standard for outdoor recreation, and a need for outdoor space to play.

Mr. West reported that a majority of the respondents want like to see an indoor recreation facility. He noted that Parks and Recreation saw a need for indoor recreation space on a daily basis. He explained that when scheduling youth basketball leagues or indoor activities, indoor space had been at a premium. He noted that they were working around school sports and activities that took place in the school facilities. He reported that other facilities that people look for are outdoor athletic facilities, outdoor playground areas and open space. He suggested that an outdoor amphitheater may be another option for the site.

Mr. West reported that out of 738 people, 468 people were not members of a recreation facility anywhere. He explained that those who did go to a recreational facility drove to Charlottesville, Waynesboro or Lynchburg. He noted that in the answers from the “Other” Category, many went to Crozet to use recreation facilities, which he assumed may be the ACAC swim club there. He explained that those who answered that they were members of a recreation facility were either members of a YMCA, local Parks and Recreation Centers, private swim club, or a fitness center. He indicated that 73 percent of respondents answered that they would be willing to pay membership fees for an indoor facility in the county. He noted that 76 percent of respondents thought a swimming pool was needed in Nelson County. He indicated that 37 percent preferred an indoor pool, 14 percent preferred an outdoor pool, while 48 percent had no preference on indoor or outdoor, they just wanted to see a public pool available.

Mr. West reported that in terms of supporting Nelson County spending additional public funds on developing new or improving existing facilities, the overwhelming response regardless of the amenity, was that people supported additional funding and maintaining current spending. He noted that the top five recreation spaces most desired were: a multi-use indoor facility, swimming facility, playgrounds, trails, and greenspace. He noted that other responses included dog parks, more walking paths, and pickle ball courts. He explained that pickle ball was the nation's fastest growing sport and noted that he always had inquiries from citizens about where they could play pickle ball. He reported that the Sunday pickle ball group average 20 to 25 participants per week. He also noted that Parks and Recreation had an Intro to Pickle Ball Class.

Mr. West noted that there were varying levels of satisfaction with the parks, recreation and cultural activities in the County for each age group. He reported that the top item that people wanted in Nelson that was not currently available was an aquatic facility.

Mr. Jim Vernon of Architectural Partners noted that the results would help the design process.

Mr. Barton stated that people came from all over the world to Nelson County because of its beauty. He noted that residents had expressed a desire for a swimming and park-like area. He felt confident in Architectural Partners having the responsibility to help design something for Nelson County. He stated that the vast majority of people living in Nelson did not have recreational opportunities. He asked that Architectural Partners designed something appropriate to the beauty of Nelson County. He wanted people to visit the pool and not only be able to be grateful for the pool, but also to be able to look around and be grateful to live in Nelson County. Mr. Vernon agreed that it was not an urban facility and they would capitalize on the beauty of the area.

B. Discussion of Priorities for Site – Architectural Partners

Ms. McGarry noted that the purpose of the day's meeting was for the Board to discuss priorities for the site with Architectural Partners. Mr. Gary Harvey noted they were present to ask questions to get a good understanding of what was wanted and needed. He referenced the recreation survey noting that the residents had provided input on what they wanted to see in Nelson County.

Mr. Gary Harvey explained that they had developed a list based on previous discussions for use of the property. He suggested that they review the list to determine whether they want to include those projects in the master plan. Mr. Vernon commented that the results of the survey were straight forward. He noted that the need for aquatic facility kept popping up as the most prominent. He stated that they could work with that and the Board could determine whether it would be an indoor or outdoor facility. He noted that could be dependent upon budget, and whether people wanted to be able to use the facility year round. He pointed out that trails, an aquatic facility, playground, and greenspace seemed to be the dominant needs that were reflected in the survey. Mr. Gary Harvey noted that the focus of the survey was recreation. He asked if the sole purpose of the property was recreation as they had also discussed industrial manufacturing, housing development, technical training, a reservoir, other energy opportunities and a FFA facility. Mr. Rutherford agreed that the list needed to be narrowed down. He noted that the pool had been a priority for a year and a half, along with some sort of recreation. He pointed out that career and technical education had also been a recent discussion with Amherst.

Mr. Rutherford noted that they also had some strong interest in housing. He noted the concept of a land trust. He pointed out that affordable housing was a major issue in Nelson. He commented that there were different scenarios of what that might look like, and noted that they also had water and sewer capacities to work with. He asked for opinions from the rest of the Board. Mr. Barton felt his priorities were the same as Mr. Rutherford.

Mr. Reed stated that he was glad that George Miller and Jennifer Fitzgerald of the Nelson County Service Authority were present. He felt that the core of all of it had to do with Dillard Creek, and the possibility that it could provide water for expanded infrastructure not only for the property, but the Lovington area. He pointed out that when they were talking about a facility, they were also talking about their commitment to the Parks and Recreation department. He noted that they would also be committing to ongoing maintenance of a facility. Mr. Reed felt that housing should be considered as well as a land trust. He noted the geotechnical work at Callohill for the Social Services building, indicating that the results could also play into the Larkin property discussion. He indicated that he was excited about it and noted that they needed to make sure that they did something that was appropriate in terms of scale that utilized the natural beauty of the area.

Mr. Vernon noted that Architectural Partners had not been part of the conversation regarding Dillard Creek and the water capacity. He asked for more information. Mr. Rutherford noted that a reservoir at Dillard Creek was only in concept. Ms. McGarry provided introductions between Architectural Partners and the Nelson County Service Authority. Mr. Barton noted they wanted to look at an area in a long term way for

use as reservoir. Mr. Vernon noted possibilities of using the reservoir not only as a utility, but also for recreation and aesthetics.

Mr. Parr explained that when he considered the list of possibilities, he looked at them as A, B, and C.

- A: recreation center, athletic fields and a reservoir that could also provide recreation opportunities
- B: potential housing on property and potential for expanding FFA facilities
- C: possible career and technical facility, energy opportunities (not necessarily solar unless it was on facilities)

He pointed out that they needed to plan ahead for future uses so that they did not place something in a location that was better suited for another project on the site. He noted that he was ready to scratch industrial development all together. He did not feel that it was the right site or road. He pointed out that he would rather see something like that located in Callohill.

Mr. Rutherford commented that Nelson did not have the bodies to facilitate manufacturing jobs. Mr. Parr noted geography on site did not work.

The Board was in agreement to omit industrial development from the list of possibilities for the property plan. Mr. Barton suggested that if a company was interested in coming to Nelson, they could work to purchase the property on their own. Mr. Reed suggested that with the proximity to the schools, it would be nice if they did something that could be complimentary to the schools, that they could easily access and use. He felt that the schools could offer consideration on what they may be able to do in the future. Ms. McGarry noted that the schools were not present at current meeting, but felt that there would be future meetings to include them. Mr. Rutherford suggested narrowing down the scope before bringing in additional stakeholders.

Mr. Gary Harvey reviewed the priorities for the property:

- A: recreation center and aquatic center, athletic fields, and a potential reservoir that could also be used for recreation
- B: potential housing development with a land trust to be utilized for affordable housing and potential for expanding FFA facilities for livestock.
- C: a potential career and technical education training facility near the middle school and high school, energy opportunities such as hydroelectric and solar power

He noted that they were removing the industrial manufacturing option. Ms. McGarry clarified that it did not have to be industrial, but it could also be some other type of economic development driver. Mr. Gary Harvey noted that private businesses could purchase property to locate on, while the County's task is to determine uses on a public piece of property. Mr. Rutherford suggested a phased approach may be good to determine what would be tangible.

Mr. Barton noted that the South District was underrepresented in the survey, as well as East District. He commented that the concept of a park was the biggest priority. He noted that people in his district were less interested in indoor facility, and more interested in an outdoor park and pool concept. He did not think they needed to focus on indoor facility, noting that it was costly. He felt that while an indoor facility could be used during the winter, it would not be used as much by the people of Nelson County.

Mr. Rutherford suggested showing both options for indoor and outdoor pool facilities. Mr. Vernon noted that they could provide a comparison for both types of facilities. Ms. McGarry suggested that an outdoor facility may have a better location on one part of the property, while an indoor facility may be better suited in another location. She suggested exploring both options.

Mr. Parr commented that he would love to have the reservoir area designed into a park area with outdoor swimming facilities, trails, Frisbee golf. He suggested that an indoor facility could be placed in another location. He felt that the elderly would use indoor pool year round and there could be potential for a youth swim team and swimming lessons. He noted that it was important to keep indoor facility on the table. Mr. Vernon reminded the Board that the design could capitalize on the beauty and have roll up doors to the outside.

Mr. Vernon asked if any studies had been done to determine the acreage needed for a reservoir and where it may be located on Dillard Creek. Mr. Miller noted that they had not started a study of the property. Mr. Vernon noted that they could look at the topography to determine where the best area may be for the reservoir. Ms. McGarry noted that based on conversations with the Service Authority, a water treatment plant would also be needed at the location. Mr. Miller reported that they were at 63 percent capacity for water, 65 percent capacity for wastewater. He explained that everything stopped at 80 percent until capacities could be increased for both water and sewer. He noted that the facilities in Colleen were very limited and there was no room for expansion. Mr. Miller noted that Piney River was included within that

capacity total. He reported that the Service Authority did not have any property or capability to expand in that area.

Mr. Rutherford pointed out that as they looked at water and sewer as it pertained to affordable housing, there were CDBG block grants available. He explained that as they look at projects, they needed to see what blocks of money could be used.

Mr. Reed asked Mr. Miller for his thoughts on possibly developing Dillard Creek. Mr. Miller noted that the suggestion came from Russell Otis in the 1980's, prior to the industrial park and the water plant and wastewater plant. He commented that the area had been looked at before as an area for a reservoir, but there was nothing on paper. Mr. Rutherford suggested that the Service Authority work on a master plan for water capacity. Mr. Gary Harvey indicated that they would need to think about the topography, potential water run offs from an FFA livestock facility and how that would affect location of reservoir. Mr. Rutherford noted that the livestock facility would probably be very small scale. Ms. McGarry and Mr. Rutherford both noted that the FFA facility was something that the Schools had plans for. Mr. Rutherford indicated that the FFA facility may not be something that the County needed to build, but they needed to be aware of the location and whether they would need to utilize County property. Mr. Gary Harvey pointed out that they needed to be aware of water runoff and what may get into the drinking water. Mr. Vernon also noted that they would need to consider the aesthetics of where a water treatment plant would go. Mr. Parr asked about the water capacity and lay of the land on the south side of Drumheller Orchard Lane. Mr. Rutherford noted Montreal Village had County water but had private sewer systems. He indicated that they could have a mix with water and sewer. He indicated that there were nice view sheds along the border looking towards Drumheller's Orchard and noted that the topography was nice and pretty forgiving.

Mr. Vernon noted that they would have to get lines on paper to start to see how much square footage was required. He explained that they would take small steps and ask questions to determine what was needed and start to get into more detail. Mr. Reed asked about their next meeting with Architectural Partners and what they would bring to update to update the Board. Mr. Gary Harvey suggested that they first get an idea of how to build out the whole site and then consider how they would go about developing and phasing the project. He explained that they may want to develop certain areas first, but they would also need to consider infrastructure like roads that would also need to be built to accommodate for future growth. Mr. Vernon suggested that they may have broad areas of where things would be sited.

Mr. Gary Harvey asked about housing aspect and whether they were considering multi-family dwellings or single family dwellings. Mr. Rutherford noted it was just conceptual at the moment He noted that the demographic that needed the housing was less than the average income in Nelson, so they were not able to infiltrate the housing market in Nelson. He referenced that Thomas Jefferson Land Trust as successful examples of single family and multi-family housing. Mr. Rutherford preferred to look at single family dwellings so people could utilize equity in the future. He noted that they needed to make sure that people at 80 percent AMI (average median income) could afford housing. He explained that the County would not be building the houses, rather, the housing authorities or Habitat for Humanity would be the facilitator and another entity would ensure the demographic was affording the homes.

Mr. Reed commented that the zoning concept was critical because if they chose to have housing, it would help determine where to locate it on the property. Mr. Rutherford noted that the topography would also play a role in that. Mr. Parr noted that the point of the work was really to determine what they wanted to do and where it would be best located. Mr. Rutherford and Mr. Parr agreed that they would most likely be looking at single family dwellings.

Mr. West reference Mr. Gary Harvey's comments on phasing out the project. As an example, Mr. West explained that if the indoor facility was not in an immediate phase, they could grade it out and use as soccer fields as needed until they were ready to proceed with construction of an indoor facility. He noted that they needed to think about placement and how close they may want the recreation center located to the athletic fields and greenspaces. He pointed out that they may not want a park setting in the same area as the athletic fields that may be busy on a Saturday morning. Mr. West also noted that a playground may be nice to have located next to the athletic fields, particularly when a parent has an older child participating in soccer practice and a younger child needs a place to play during that time. He explained that they would need to find a balance to also maintain the beauty of the property. He suggested that they consider whether they would want the ability to lock down the athletic field complex after dark.

Mr. Gary Harvey asked whether the athletic fields would be completely separate from the school athletic fields. Mr. West reported that during the sports committee meeting, they discussed potential joint use of the facilities with the schools. He noted that having the fields in close proximity would provide for the schools to be able to use spaces at fields or a recreation facility. Mr. Vernon noted that they may have a higher priority of choosing best location to capitalize on the beauty, rather than the convenience to schools. Mr. Barton did not think a swim team was a priority, noting they didn't have that many students to participate in the current sports programs.

Mr. West noted that partnerships with the high school could be determined as things were closer to being planned. Ms. McGarry noted the indoor aquatic facility option and asked if they should consider it being usable for the future in terms of pool dimensions for competitive swim and spectator seating.

Mr. Gary Harvey noted earlier conversations with YMCA contacts and asked whether the YMCA would potentially takeover the operation of the facility. He asked if an indoor facility could potentially be run by the YMCA, or whether the County would handle the operations. Mr. Rutherford did not think they had ruled out the YMCA option. Mr. West noted that YMCA operations would help with annual operational costs. He noted that he had calculated staffing needs after the visit to the Brooks Family YMCA. He explained that for a smaller scale YMCA, they would be looking at 8 to 11 full-time staff and up to 40 part-time staff for an indoor facility. He estimated that an outdoor facility would need around 3 full-time staff and potentially 11 part-time staff. Mr. Rutherford suggested that the YMCA contacts could provide guidance and be a good resource for the project. Ms. McGarry noted that they had only had preliminary conversations with the YMCA. She reported that the YMCA had existing debt with their Charlottesville facility, so they were not interested in a capital investment partnership, rather something more along the line of programming and operations. Ms. McGarry noted they would still have conversations with the YMCA to determine what a partnership could look like.

Mr. Rutherford called for a recess so that the Board could travel and reconvene at the Larkin Property for a site visit.

III. SITE VISIT

The Board reconvened at 950 Drumheller Orchard Lane to conduct a walking tour of the Larkin Property. Board members present for the tour were Mr. Rutherford, Mr. Parr and Mr. Reed along with the following County staff: Ms. McGarry, Ms. Spivey, Mr. West and Mr. Demetrius Vaughan. Mr. Harvey and Mr. Barton did not attend the walking tour. Mr. Gary Harvey and Mr. Vernon, of Architectural Partners, also participated in the tour. Mr. George Miller and Ms. Jennifer Fitzgerald of the Nelson County Service Authority, along with a few members of the public were also in attendance. The group walked from the Drumheller Orchard Lane side of the property to Dillard Creek, near Stevens Cove Road. Mr. Rutherford noted the topography of the site and the view sheds. He also pointed out the old bromine test sites located in various areas of the property.

Mr. Rutherford called for a recess so that the Board could depart from the Larkin Property and return to the Courthouse.

IV. OTHER BUSINESS (AS PRESENTED)

Mr. Rutherford called the meeting back to order in the Former Board Room of the Courthouse with Mr. Parr and Mr. Reed also in attendance. Mr. Harvey and Mr. Barton were not present.

V. ADJOURNMENT

At 12:05 p.m., Mr. Parr moved to adjourn the meeting and Mr. Reed seconded the motion. There being no further discussion, Supervisors approved the motion by vote of acclamation and the meeting adjourned.