

AT A SCHEDULED BUDGET WORK SESSION OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
OF ROCKBRIDGE COUNTY VIRGINIA, HELD IN THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATION
BUILDING, 150 SOUTH MAIN STREET LEXINGTON, VIRGINIA ON
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2015 AT 5:30 P.M.

PRESENT: CHAIRMAN J.M. HIGGINS
MEMBERS: D.W. HINTY, JR., R.R. CAMPBELL,
R.S. FORD, A.W. LEWIS, JR.
COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR
AND CLERK TO BOARD: SPENCER H. SUTER
FISCAL SERVICES
DIRECTOR: STEVEN J. BOLSTER

Call to Order:

Chairman Higgins called the meeting to order at 5:33 p.m.

Budget Work Session #1:

Chairman Higgins explained that tonight's budget work session was an opportunity for external agencies to provide the Board information on their fiscal year (FY) 2015-16 budget requests. He also explained the protocol in addressing the Board.

Mr. Bolster followed by giving a concise explanation on how he was managing the session's proceedings.

Rockbridge Emergency Rescue Group (RERG) President Robert Hickman introduced himself and RERG Vice President Steve Reese. Mr. Hickman discussed the efforts to complete a different worksheet to submit budget requests for FY 2015-16. He stated that when the RERG coordinated the volunteer rescue squad budget submissions, they only looked at the emergency management services side for the Kerrs Creek and Effinger budgets. Mr. Hickman remarked that the majority of representatives for the RERG voted to request that 75% of the operational budgets be funded by Rockbridge County. As a result of this funding mechanism, the FY 2015-16 budget request for volunteer rescue squads is up \$28,257 (6.5%) when compared to FY 2014-15. Mr. Hickman specified that the RERG requested level funding of \$10,000. He also indicated that the volunteer rescue squads were seeking capital funding as presented in the new budget request worksheets, to include procurement of an ambulance costing from \$144,000 to \$175,000 - plus defibrillators at \$28,000 to

\$45,000. Mr. Hickman noted that Buena Vista Rescue Squad is also funded by an agreement with the County. Supervisor Hinty asked why representatives from the Buena Vista Rescue Squad were not available for the RERG budget meeting. Mr. Hickman stated the squad representatives were responding to a call leading up to the scheduled meeting. Chairman Higgins expressed the Board's appreciation for all that the volunteers do in support of the citizens of Rockbridge County and also thanked the squads for the timely completion of the agreed-upon procedures related to agency financial documents for FY 2013-14.

Rockbridge County Firefighters Association (RCFA) President Colby Irvine introduced himself, along with other members of volunteer fire department community who were present. Mr. Irvine spoke about the RCFA meeting on Jan 28th, where members completed discussions on the FY 2015-16 budget submission to Rockbridge County. The RCFA representatives voted to request an increase in the annual allotment by 15%, to seek funding support at 15% of agency operational budgets, and to maintain variable pay at \$138,948. The RCFA representatives believed this was a fair proposal of budgets and use of taxpayer dollars. Chairman Higgins thanked Mr. Irvine for his time in presenting the budget request on behalf of the volunteer fire departments and voiced the Board's appreciation for what they do in serving Rockbridge County.

Rockbridge County Community Development Director Sam Crickenberger spoke on behalf of three external agencies requesting FY 2015-16 funding support. Mr. Crickenberger stated the Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission's (CSPDC), annual assessment request is based on a formula of 70 cents per capita, resulting in \$17,282. He also commented that level funding for the Appalachian Regional Commission and Fields of Gold agritourism programs were included by the CSPDC. Next, Mr. Crickenberger spoke for the Shenandoah Valley Partnership (SVP), whose funding request has remained level over the past several years. He commented that the new SVP Executive Director is Carrie Chenery, a Rockbridge County native. Lastly, Mr. Crickenberger represented the Shenandoah Valley Small Business Development Center (SV-SBDC). He stated that the SV-SBDC funding request is higher by \$500. The SBDC is seeing more clients in Rockbridge County who are seeking assistance with business plan development. Supervisor Ford commented that SV-SBDC representation informed the Board that they were planning on doubling their visits to Rockbridge County during FY 2014-15.

Mr. Crickenberger responded by confirming Supervisors Ford's statement.

Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE) Unit Coordinator Tom Stanley thanked the Board for their continued funding support for VCE programs over the previous years. He discussed the 4-H program as their flagship program. Mr. Stanley remarked that VCE expects an expanded 4-H presence in the Rockbridge County schools. He stated that they are leveraging funds for a Family Consumer Science position that is 100% federally funded. Mr. Stanley stated that for 3-4 years they've been targeting rural areas such as Goshen and Glasgow; they are looking forward to see positive impacts from this program. He also stated his appreciation to Mr. Bolster and Mr. Suter for assistance with the budget process.

Rockbridge Regional Library System Director Julie Goyette thanked the Board for their continued funding support seen in the annual appropriations. Ms. Goyette remarked that the Library is seeking additional funding to support the replacement of the HVAC system which dates back to 1986. In addition, they are outsourcing information technology services in support of computers and servers which they procured from their reserves. She commented that the Bookmobile retrofit project was a success and that the Library offers several programs resulting from the upgrade. Lastly, Ms. Goyette stated February 2015 is "Love Your Library" month.

Central Shenandoah Emergency Medical Services (CSEMSC) Executive Director Chad Blosser remarked that this was the third year he's had the opportunity to speak to the Board of Supervisors on the CSEMS budget request. He stated the CSEMSC request is based on the formula of \$0.45 per capita. As a result of a slight gain in Rockbridge County population, the request for FY 2016 is \$10,052. Mr. Blosser highlighted some of the CSEMSC planning efforts and programs that assist regional agencies; these include: Ebola outbreak preparations; grant writing assistance; and stress management for EMS responders. He followed by discussing the CSEMSC management of a \$125,000 VA Office of EMS grant to publish new website/literature for counties in the area. He stated that the official campaign is wrapping up. Mr. Blosser continued his comments by communicating

that the CSEMSC's primary focus is training EMS responders. He stated that 80% have received initial training from CSEMSC on at least one required certification requirement. Mr. Blosser ended by saying the CSEMSC has a good working relationship with the County and its volunteer rescue squad community.

Valley Program for the Aging Service (VPAS) Executive Director Jeri Schaff provided the Board of Supervisors a VPAS handout and thanked them for their previous funding support. She stated VPAS is seeking level funding for FY 2016. Ms. Schaff indicated their September 2014 personal care spending rose when compared to last year, up from \$183,000 to \$238,000 for Rockbridge County residents. In addition, she informed the Board that the hours of personal care are up from 914 hours to 2,312 while the number of individuals served went from 7 to 22. Ms. Schaff remarked that VPAS created a new internal business, MR Home Care, to serve rural residences; the effort created 15 jobs in the area. Ms. Schaff said that VPAS is now 10 years old as an agency. She stated that the Maury River Senior Center's social and recreational services have risen from 4,716 hours to 8,670; in addition the 60 years and over population category is increasing as "Baby Boomers" age. Supervisor Ford asked if a planned VPAS data-sharing program which seeks to coordinate care was up and running. Ms. Schaff answered, "No." She explained that the stumbling block involved the Virginia Information Technologies Agency, which was not comfortable with the oversight of the necessary information exchange.

Blue Ridge Legal Services (BRLS) Executive Director/General Counsel John Whitfield informed the Board of Supervisors that BRLS was a not-for-profit legal service covering the area from Winchester to Rocky Mount, Virginia. Mr. Whitfield stated BRLS was seeking level funding for FY 2016 based on the formula of one dollar per person below the poverty level in Rockbridge County. He described some of the BRLS support has provided to 80 low-income Rockbridge County residents; they included: getting wages back when not paid; divorce proceedings; domestic violence protection; child support; home-closure avoidance; and preparing wills. Mr. Whitfield ended by commenting that free legal services to low-income resident amounted to around \$66,000.

Rockbridge Area Community Services (RACS) Executive Director Dr. Dennis Cropper thanked the Board of Supervisors for their continued funding support provided over the years. He stated the RACS request is up \$4,511 up due to changes in population and amounts received from State. Dr. Cropper spoke on the outcomes method in evaluating RACS performance. One example included patients seen by RACS reflecting 100 fewer days in hospital as compared to other CSB agencies in the region. He also mentioned that RACS emergency contacts have doubled in the area. Dr. Cropper remarked on a toll free number in service for the area that allows individuals to get directly in touch with a clinician to assess the crisis and that it's proven essential to the Rockbridge County community. Supervisor Hinty asked if the toll free number will go directly to a local clinician. Dr. Cropper answered that the situations are typically managed over the phone, but respondents will have a direct phone number to a local clinician to assist with the case, if needed.

Natural Bridge Soil Water and Conservation District (NBSWCD) Personnel Committee Director Jay Gilliam thanked the Board for their continued funding support and indicated the 2016 request is level funding at \$7,500. Mr. Gilliam remarked that the NBSWCD has an excellent staff, with each member having 18-20 years of experience. He stated that in calendar year (CY) 2014 the NBSWCD received \$337K from the state to assist with local agriculture-related assistance efforts. Mr. Gilliam added the District seeks to incorporate the best management practices in serving the community. He further complimented NBSWCD technician Robert Hickman as being as good a technician as there is in the state, and indicated that the Hayes Creek total maximum daily load project is supported by one full-time employee via a state grant. Mr. Gilliam ended by saying that in CY 2014 the NBSWCD had 77 requests for assistance, of which 16 were brand new requests.

Rockbridge Area Occupation Center (RAOC) Executive Director Roy Funkhouser thanked the Board for their previous years of funding support. Mr. Funkhouser stated that RAOC provides employment opportunities to those with disabilities. He indicated that 19 of their employees are from Rockbridge County. Mr. Funkhouser remarked that the local funding will assist support of the mobile work crew program. He added that the funds

help individuals earn wages along with self-respect and esteem. Mr. Funkhouser mentioned that RAOC has replaced one of their vehicles this FY through fundraising activities.

Rockbridge Area YMCA Executive Director Alysyan Raymond appreciated the Board's including the YMCA request for \$1,000 in the current budget and that the upcoming FY request is level. She indicated that the funding supports the reading and math readiness summer program which is led by a licensed teacher. Ms. Raymond stated the summer program prepares children for the upcoming school year and involves 10 hours of curriculum over 10 weeks during the summer break. She added that the reading comprehension program involves 30 minutes of daily reading. Ms. Raymond expanded her comments by stating that too many children are not reading over the summer and also lose learned math concepts from the prior school year. She mentioned that the YMCA has built up 200 more books in their library through a gift from an elementary school in Massachusetts; the books are available to participants if they want to have them. Furthermore, the YMCA collaborates with the United Way and the Rockbridge Regional Library System to support growth in their summer program. Ms. Raymond said the literacy effort includes a pre- and post-test evaluation to track progress of the participants. Supervisor Hinty stated his appreciation that the YMCA is able to assist in areas the Rockbridge County Public Schools cannot support over the summer.

Main Street Lexington Executive Director Stephanie Wilkinson remarked that this was the first time that Main Street Lexington was coming to the Board to request funding support. She indicated that Main Street Lexington was part of the National Main Street Center organization. Ms. Wilkinson added that the national association includes 2,200 communities across the nation and has existed for over 30 years to assist with economic development in the context of historical, locally-owned business and tourism. She added that Main Street Lexington is a partner with the Lexington-Rockbridge County Chamber of Commerce and the Small Business Development Center in developing events to bring folks to downtown Lexington throughout the year for free; she added that a vital downtown supports the region's

economy. Ms. Wilkinson stated her group had recently presented the local Virginia Science Festival, which drew a large number of residents from the area to view science projects completed by students. She further commented that the Science Program facility is to be housed in downtown Lexington in the future. Ms. Wilkinson ended by highlighting the events supported by Main Street Lexington: Rock the Bridge, a community celebration on Nelson Street Bridge; Restaurant Week; a bike parade; and the Christmas parade. Supervisor Hinty asked whether Main Street Lexington sends out emails on their downtown Lexington activities. Ms. Wilkinson answered in the affirmative.

Talking Book Center Board of Directors member Daniel Swift thanked the Board for their past funding support. Mr. Swift explained that the Talking Book Center has a single mission to serve regional citizens who are blind or have a severe visual disability. He explained that the Center doesn't duplicate Rockbridge Regional Library System services, but rather complements them. Mr. Swift displayed the equipment that is used to provide their support services. He detailed that the equipment is sent to clients in the mail free of charge and a device similar to a USB (Universal Serial Bus) contains the books. Mr. Swift remarked that most of their users are over 60 years of age and are managing to live independently through the decline in their vision. Other patrons live in nursing homes and have access to independent living image centers. The goal is not leaving anyone isolated. Mr. Swift ended by saying he looks forward to the continued funding support from the Board. Supervisor Ford remarked that the Talking Book Center has been funded at a lower level over the years compared to the cities of Lexington and Buena Vista, and expressed his support for funding the full request. He went on to note that the Center's services also assist those who have or are developing other degenerative diseases, and that the Lions Clubs International helps fund much of the Talking Book Center budget at the state level.

Lexington-Buena Vista-Rockbridge County Chamber of Commerce ("Chamber") Executive Director Tracy Lyons thanked the Board for their continued support of the Chamber. Supervisor Hinty offered his congratulations on her recent hiring with Chamber. Ms. Lyons expressed her appreciation for the warm welcome from the

community. She also stated her thanks for the Board's planned \$20,000 funding support for the Rockbridge 20/20 proposal; she expects to achieve great things from the Rockbridge 20/20 effort. Ms. Lyons highlighted some of the Chamber's activities since her arrival about a month ago, including a move to a new location and the recruiting of eight new members. She explained the Chamber's funding request is to support new planned programs involving membership retention and recruiting efforts, increased marketing, creating a stronger business community, updating their software package and website, and providing more business seminars. Ms. Lyons said there are 460 Chamber members from Rockbridge County, that they need to reach out to the business community with more effort, and that the Chamber wants to be a great partner in helping the County build economic growth.

Rockbridge Area Transportation System (RATS) Executive Director Betty LaRock thanked the Board for their continued support and stated that RATS is seeking level funding for FY 2016. Ms. LaRock commented that RATS is celebrating their 20th Anniversary in providing affordable transportation to the region's citizens. Their program provided 18,027 trips in the prior year; most riders pay on the lower range of their sliding fee scale. Ms. LaRock also remarked that RATS and the Maury Express make for an excellent transportation combination in the area. Chairman Higgins asked if RATS was getting many requests from the Buffalo District, as it appeared in their funding support documents that his district had low ridership. Ms. LaRock said that RATS collaborates with several assisted living facilities to support citizen requests. She also mentioned that 62% of their patrons are from Rockbridge County. Supervisor Hinty asked if RATS has an emergency preparedness policy in place. Ms. LaRock replied that they have one in place; it was completed by an ad-hoc committee who did the research to build the policy plan. Supervisor Hinty asked if the procedure is setup for RATS on how to handle and announce emergency situations to their clients and that they need to complete the process if it's not ready. Ms. LaRock stated they will.

Valley Associates for Independent Living (VAIL) Resource Development Specialist Lelia Graham informed the Board that VAIL serves Planning District 6 and has offered an array of services in the area since 2000. Ms. Graham stated that 51% of VAIL staff

and their Board of Directors have disabilities. She added that VAIL's mission is to assist the disabled to live independently by offering transition planning, home egress/ingress support and working with the Valley Program for Aging Services to support clients. Ms. Graham communicated that VAIL is asking for \$2,000 in funding support to add 40 hours of services in Rockbridge County.

Rockbridge Area Habitat for Humanity ("Habitat") Marketing and Development Director June Dunlap thanked the Board for their previous funding support. Ms. Dunlap stated Habitat reached their 25-year milestone and has helped put 24 new homes on the County's real estate tax rolls, with 4 more homes to be completed this calendar year. She added that 60 total homes have been built in the area when including the cities of Lexington and Buena Vista. Ms. Dunlap stated that Habitat is asking for \$500 more in FY 2016 when compared to 2015. She highlighted Habitat's recent efforts, which include teaming with Rockbridge County on the Greenhouse Village project to build eight houses and expand the subdivision's infrastructure, and the expected completion of the Thompson's Knoll project by May 2015.

Rockbridge Area Hospice ("Hospice") Executive Director Teri Humphries and Business Manager Karen Parker thanked the Board for funding this safety-net program serving the indigent and under insured citizens in the area. Ms. Humphries explained how the FY 2014 contribution of \$4,800 goes into the Good Neighbor Fund, which supports their services. She explained that Hospice does not turn away anyone requesting services, which include grief counseling, bereavement support groups, and nursing care. Ms. Humphries provided some statistics on Hospice's 2014 impact in the area: serving 30 patients at approximately 62 days; 273 family members received bereavement counseling, and 49.93% of deaths in Rockbridge County served by Hospice (national average is 44%). Ms. Humphries closed by saying thank you for the long-term support. Chairman Higgins commented that he's run into so many people who have been served by this group; he added that Hospice does a great job of serving community.

Rockbridge Area Health Center (RAHC) Chief Executive Officer Suzanne Sheridan thanked the Board for their continued

funding support. Ms. Sheridan informed the Board that the current fiscal funding supports the overall operation of the RAHC. She added that there was also a capital contribution which helped complete renovations for adding four medical exam rooms, a medical lab, and waiting room expansion, all of which led to an overall improvement in operating efficiency. Ms. Sheridan stated that six new jobs were added this year and six more are planned. She provided the following statistics for the Board's consideration: the 2,467 patients served in 2014 doubled the number of citizens served in the prior year; RAHC expects to serve 5,500 area residents in 2015. Ms. Sheridan remarked that the Virginia Department of Health dentist retired, and she understood that there was currently no plan to replace the vacancy, though a March meeting is scheduled with VDH to discuss. As result, she told the Board that RAHC has added many children and their parents after the loss at the State Health Department dental program. Ms. Sheridan commented that the RAHC is looking into plans to integrate behavioral health services into their current programs; they are partnering with social workers to research needs in the community prior to moving forward on the proposal. Ms. Sheridan closed by reminding the Board about the 9th Annual Bull and Oyster Festival coming up on April 4th. Chairman Higgins asked about how the State Health Department funding request for 2016 is impacted by their lack of a dentist. Mr. Suter indicated that he was scheduled to meet with State Health Department representatives on March 3rd to discuss the status of their dental program request of \$82,106, since RAHC has absorbed most of their patients. Ms. Sheridan remarked that the State Health Department's dental program, which includes two two dental chairs, has not seen patients since November 2014. Supervisor Ford stated that a potential exists to move other services to RAHC from the State Health Department. Mr. Suter replied that the parties involved have not discussed this potential.

Lexington-Rockbridge Area Tourism Director Jean Clark thanked the Board for their continued support. Ms. Clark stated all three localities have seen positive increases in their tourism-related revenues. Chairman Higgins asked if the Board can get a copy of the tourism budget. Ms. Clark responded in the affirmative. Supervisor Campbell asked what their plans were for

the upcoming year. Ms. Clark indicated their plans for a website upgrade to occur during the summer, updating the tourism strategic plan, providing local customer service training in April, and partnering with the Natural Bridge on a marketing grant whose details will be included in future press release that is coming soon.

Adjourn:

It was announced that the next scheduled budget work session was for February 25th at 5:30 p.m. in the Board Meeting Room. With no further business, the budget work session was adjourned by unanimous roll-call vote.