

AT A CONTINUED MEETING OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF ROCKBRIDGE COUNTY  
VIRGINIA, HELD AT RCS CENTRAL OFFICE, LEXINGTON VIRGINIA ON THURSDAY,  
JANUARY 19, 2017 AT 4:30 P.M.

**PRESENT:** CHAIRMAN D. W. HINTY, JR.  
**MEMBERS:** R.S. FORD, JOHN M. HIGGINS, A.W. LEWIS, JR.  
**ABSENT:** R.R. CAMPBELL  
**COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR  
AND CLERK TO BOARD:** SPENCER H. SUTER  
**FISCAL SERVICES  
DIRECTOR:** STEVEN J. BOLSTER  
  
**SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS:** CHAIRMAN DAVID MCDANIEL, ALBERT JAY LEWIS,  
WENDY LOVELL, LAURIE STRONG  
  
**SCHOOL STAFF:** JACK DONALD, PHILLIP THOMPSON, JOHN MORRIS,  
MATT CROSSMAN; STEVEN WILDER

**Call to Order:**

Chairman Higgins and Chairman McDaniel opened the meeting at 4:35 PM and welcomed all present.

**Discussion:**

Chairman McDaniel reviewed the agenda gave a brief update on performance contracting, noting that Trane started building assessments on January 3, with a goal of returning a draft energy audit in March. He also noted that the A&E audit at the RCHS is getting underway.

Mr. Suter then noted that he was working with Trane and the Commonwealth to begin the process of determining if the County Administration building and Courthouse were candidates for a similar project.

Chairman McDaniel then introduced the discussion on a proposed alternative education program, thanking County staff for assisting with a tour of the old Rockbridge Middle School. Dr. Thompson noted that it appeared that the lower level of the building would be more suitable for the program than the shop building. He then handed out a document and reviewed estimated operational costs for the program, which could support between 5 and 20 students. Chairman McDaniel pointed out that the program could also assist regular education students by allowing them to concentrate on their studies with no distraction. He then asked

Mr. Suter what had been learned about potential up-front renovation costs. Mr. Suter recalled that Mr. Morris was going to contact a local contractor to develop a rough budget estimate for the costs to turn the facility into a suitable space.

Supervisor Higgins asked Dr. Thompson about the school's visit to Amherst County to review their program, stating that he wants to make sure that our program does not grow too large if implemented. Dr. Thompson noted that Amherst is a bigger system, yet only has 50 students in the program. He stated that we don't want our system to serve more than 20. Chairman McDaniel added that he also visited Amherst and stated that students in the program are excited to gain acceptance and love to come to school. Mr. (Jay) Lewis stated that the larger system does not dilute the effectiveness of the program.

Supervisor Ford asked if any of the Amherst Students have an IAP and Dr. Thompson affirmed. Supervisor Ford noted that he could envision children with learning disabilities prospering in such a program. In response to a question from Ms. Strong, Dr. Thompson explained that students are admitted to the program through an application process.

There was brief discussion on getting startup cost estimates. Supervisor Lewis suggested that costs be reviewed by the executive committee and brought back to the full group. Mr. Morris agreed to pull together an estimate for the executive committee.

Mr. Suter then gave a brief update of the County's budget process, noting that requests were still coming in. He provided overview information on some of the bigger-ticket items thus far, including Fire/EMS and jail costs.

Chairman McDaniel then provided an overview of the schools initial budget forecast including projected increases in health benefits costs and costs to implement the new financial package. He concluded that it appears that there will be a need for \$640,000 of increase, of which \$340,000 is for basic needs. He added that this does not include \$200,000 in annual operational costs for an alternative education program.

Mr. Wilder then presented a handout with costs for the school's credentialing exam. Supervisor Higgins noted that in the last budget cycle, the Board had agreed that it would like to assist. Chairman Hinty agreed.

Supervisor Ford then asked if there was any new information on charter schools from the state. Dr. Donald replied that there are several bills circulating and that charter schools would take funding from public schools.

Ms. Strong then noted that many other localities utilize a funding formula, such as a percentage of overall County budget going to the schools. Supervisor Hinty cautioned against such a program, using Fairfax as an example of how it can hurt schools in a downturn. Chairman McDaniel noted that there are pros and cons each way, but that a formula would assist in the budgetary planning process. Supervisor Lewis noted that this is something that the executive committee should be discussing, to bring back a recommendation to the Boards. Chairman Hinty noted that conversations are ongoing in the executive committee. Supervisor Higgins stated that he had no problem continuing the discussion.

Chairman McDaniel stated that the schools plan to put together a budget document similar to last year. Mr. (Jay) Lewis then noted his recollection that the schools were going to give a categorical estimate of need earlier in the process this year. After discussion, it was agreed by consensus that the schools would present a categorical estimate of need on February 16<sup>th</sup>.

Chairman Hinty announced that Supervisor Lewis is now part of an economic development committee, along with Mr. Suter and Sam Crickenberger. He asked school staff and Board members to feel free to contact the committee with anything related to economic development.

Supervisor Higgins moved to adjourn at 5:45. Supervisor Lewis provided the second and the motion passed by unanimous vote.