

SCOTT

VIRGINIA

At a budget workshop of the Scott County Board of Supervisors begun and held in the Supervisors’ meeting room located at the Community Services Building in Gate City, Virginia on Tuesday the 16th day of April, 2024 at 3:00 p.m.

- PRESENT:

Darrel W. Jeter
L. Michele Glover
Eddie N. Skeen
Michael K. Brickey - Chairman
Danny M. Casteel
Christopher S. Maness – Vice-Chairman
Stefanie C. Addington
- ABSENT:

None.

Chairman Michael K. Brickey called the meeting to order, gave the invocation, and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

On a motion by Darrel W. Jeter, duly seconded by Christopher S. Maness, this Board hereby amends the agenda by adding Eddie Skeen to New Business.

- Voting aye:

Darrel W. Jeter, L. Michele Glover, Eddie N. Skeen, Michael K. Brickey
Danny M. Casteel, Christopher S. Maness, and Stefanie C. Addington.
- Voting nay:

None.

Supervisor Eddie Skeen reported on the budget committee meetings. He informed the Board that the committee met with the departments, and the Commissioner of the Revenue was the only one who made suggestions on how to lower costs. He realized that the County Administrator is very knowledgeable about the county finances, and Ms. Vicars was also very important. He added that Supervisor Stefanie Addington took the lead on the school. It started with each department submitting their proposal. At that point, there was a 30 percent increase with property taxes. At our last budget committee meeting, it was down to 17 percent. Supervisor Eddie Skeen stated that he had his neighbor in mind throughout this process. She is on a fixed income, and that is who he is representing.

County Administrator Freda Starnes reviewed the budget notes from the budget committee meetings and a draft budget (Said notes and budget attached to the minutes of this meeting; Minute Book 34 Attachment No: 59).

Supervisor Eddie Skeen led discussion about the County Attorney position. He went on to say that it is not due to the performance of the County Attorney. Supervisor Skeen pointed out that some adjoining counties have a part-time attorney. He noted that the salary for a part-time attorney in one of the surrounding counties is \$20,000.

Supervisor Stefanie Addington pointed out that the matter needs to be discussed in closed session.

Supervisor Eddie Skeen replied that this is not about performance. It is a budget issue. He confirmed with County Attorney Sally Kegley that it could be discussed in open session.

County Attorney Sally Kegley advised that it could be discussed in open session.

Supervisor Darrel Jeter pointed out that the adjoining counties with a part-time attorney could not be attending all these other meetings.

After much discussion among the Board, Supervisor Skeen proposed four scenarios that include leaving the position as is, making the position part-time, leaving the position full-time with more responsibilities, or leaving the position full-time with reduced pay.

Supervisor Addington suggested leaving the position as is.

Supervisor Michele Glover stated that three other counties are doing just fine with part-time.

Supervisor Addington replied that we do not know what the other counties do.

Chairman Michael Brickey suggested leaving the position as is. He went on to say that the former County Attorney had the school and Department of Social Services in addition to these other agencies, and it proved to be too much. He pointed out that the Board can be sued, and it is well worth having a County Attorney at these meetings. He recalled contacting County Attorney Kegley many times to find out the right way to do things. The school and social services require specialized legal services. Sally is part of the team that keeps things rolling.

Supervisor Danny Casteel asked the County Attorney to voice her opinion.

County Attorney Sally Kegley stated that she was not prepared to speak, and she met with Supervisor Eddie Skeen earlier. She went on to say that in addition to the Board of Supervisors, she attends the Economic Development Authority, Public Service Authority, Planning Commission, and Housing Authority meetings. Those agencies would have to be funded in addition to a part-time County Attorney, or they would have no representation. Ms. Kegley stated that she likes her job and being full-time. She went on to say that she is sorry this is such an issue and inquired about her performance.

Supervisor Skeen replied that it is not about her performance; furthermore, everyone thinks that the County Attorney does a good job.

Supervisor Michele Glover added that it boils down to taxpayer dollars, and she is thinking about the taxpayers.

Supervisor Eddie Skeen pointed out that the Cyber Security position, Sheriff Deputy, and Human Resource positions were not added to the budget, but they could be by reducing this position.

Supervisor Maness pointed out the salary to hire a Cyber Security position, and he inquired about the savings.

Supervisor Skeen replied that it would have been a 30 percent tax increase with each department's proposed budget if the budget committee had gone with that. We are now at 17 percent. Supervisor Skeen noted the outside legal services for the Public Service Authority, Social Services, and Human Resource matters.

Supervisor Maness inquired about the savings if the budget is at 17 percent.

Supervisor Skeen replied \$200,000 vs. \$20,000.

Supervisor Maness questioned \$20,000 being certain for a part-time attorney.

Supervisor Skeen replied that is what another county is paying.

Supervisor Jeter replied they are not getting much for \$20,000.

Supervisor Maness inquired about the amount that would save.

County Administrator Freda Starnes stated that one cent equals \$174,000.

Supervisor Christopher Maness pointed out the institutional knowledge that would be lost if the County Attorney position is not funded.

Supervisor Michele Glover noted that she is thinking about the taxpayers. The county is in the red now. Cuts have to be made. A part-time attorney would help with that. She suggested reaching out to Terry Kilgore who is the part-time attorney for Russell County.

Supervisor Addington replied that the other agencies would need legal services if this position is made part-time. She went on to say that you do not know how valuable it is to have a County Attorney. Supervisor Addington stated that she knows what issues have come up in the past, and she knows what the County Attorney does. She asked Supervisor Michele Glover if she knows.

Supervisor Glover replied that she has talked with the County Attorney.

Supervisor Stefanie Addington offered to give up her \$5,000 salary in order to keep the County Attorney, and she asked if other members of the Board would be willing to do the same.

Supervisor Darrel Jeter stated there is no way he will vote to make the position part-time.

Supervisor Christopher Maness added that he did not see how it will save in the long term.

Supervisor Eddie Skeen called for a roll call vote to make a change with the County Attorney position or leave it as is.

Darrel W. Jeter - leave it as is.

L. Michele Glover - make a change.

Eddie N. Skeen - make a change.

Michael K. Brickey - leave it as is.

Danny M. Casteel - make a change.

Christopher S. Maness - leave it as is.

Stefanie C. Addington - leave it as is.

Following a roll call vote, the County Attorney position remained full-time.

County Administrator Freda Starnes pointed out that the Juvenile and Domestic budget increased 13.93 percent due to the increased usage.

There was some discussion among the Board as to the increase.

Ms. Starnes replied that she would check to see if there is something we can do. It will fluctuate some, but not this much.

There was discussion about the S.C.O.T.T. Service Community Work Program and the number of participants in the program. There was discussion as to the program funding itself. The Board requested more data from S.C.O.T.T. Service and requested that they speak at the next workshop.

BREAK: 4:21 p.m.

RECONVENE: 4:56 p.m.

It was the consensus of the Board that the Fire Association & Rescue Association President Roger Carter along with the Fire Chief from each Fire Department attend the next budget workshop.

Eddie Skeen and Michele Glover reported that they met with the transfer station employees. There was discussion about the manned sites, closing the gate at each solid waste site at the end of eight hours, and tipping fees on everything except household bagged trash. In addition, it was suggested to have cameras at the transfer station to monitor the solid waste sites.

Michele Glover suggested getting a bigger monitor for the transfer station to view the sites. She added that the employees at the transfer station were so helpful. They have great ideas, and it was great to talk with them.

Mr. Dingus replied that it has been under a month since fiber was installed in that area, and he would look into getting them a bigger monitor. He went on to say there is a lot that could be done, but it costs.

Supervisor Glover pointed out that revenue is needed from business.

Supervisor Jeter noted that eight hours is not enough for people to get their trash dumped.

Mr. Dingus pointed out that it would cost approximately \$350,000 to man the sites.

There was discussion about using S.C.O.T.T. Service workers at the solid waste sites.

Mr. Dingus noted that the Solid Waste Committee came up with a schedule. The demand for convenience is a lot. There is no way to provide convenience any cheaper. Anything changed will cost money and impact convenience.

There was discussion about uniforms and boots for the transfer station employees.

Supervisor Eddie Skeen reported that the Budget Committee met with Superintendent of Schools John Ferguson and Maintenance Supervisor Robbie Saltee. There was discussion about the cost for out-of-county students. Supervisor Eddie Skeen noted that the School has agreed to service county vehicles.

It was noted that Chairman Michael Brickey and Vice-Chairman Christopher Maness will be meeting with the School Board Chairman and Vice-Chairman for further discussion.

BREAK: 6:30 p.m.

RECONVENE: 6:40 p.m.

There was discussion about the Commonwealth's Attorney space needs. After much discussion, it was a consensus that the County Administrator check on the cost for a sally port.

County Administrator Freda Starnes reviewed the revenue portion of the budget.

Supervisor Michele Glover suggested raising the cost to rent the club house at the Scott County Golf Course. There was also discussion about raising the tipping fees at the landfill and the building permit fees.

The Board directed the County Administrator to contact the Economic Development Authority about contracting with someone to seek retail for the county or return the American Rescue Plan Act funds in the amount of \$125,000.

There was discussion about holding a budget workshop on May 6th at 3:00 p.m. and May 15th at 8:30 a.m. if needed.

Chairman Michael K. Brickey adjourned the meeting to a budget workshop on May 6, 2024 at 3:00 p.m.

CHAIRMAN

CLERK