

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 Monday the 6th day of May, 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.

Supervisor Christopher Maness reported that the Budget Committee brought a \$3,000,000 deficit to the full board, and no one wants to see that. He went on to say that the Board will work through the cuts, and there will be several budget workshops. He pointed out that the statement in the paper is misleading. It says proposed. The Board of Supervisors have to vote to make a proposal to raise taxes. Supervisor Maness referred to the minutes from the last meeting, and he pointed out that there are no proposals to raise taxes by 23 percent. He told those in attendance that they had been lied to, the Board has a responsibility to the public, and he is glad that the public came out to the meeting. He went on to say that he does not want the citizens to be stressed, and he recalled a resident who called him crying because she thought that she was going to lose her home because she could not afford the tax increase. Supervisor Maness noted that the Board of Supervisors will not be raising taxes for the sake of raising them. Supervisor Maness asked the County Administrator if any members of the Board had contacted her about the budget.

She replied Supervisor Darrel Jeter, Chairman Michael Brickey, and Supervisor Maness. Supervisor Eddie Skeen sent an email.

Supervisor Maness commented that there are takers and doers, and he is trying to be a doer. He expressed appreciation to everyone who came out to the meeting.

Chairman Michael Brickey pointed out the policy procedure handbook that states the Board of Supervisors are to follow Roberts Rules of Order. The information that showed up on Facebook about part of the Board of Supervisors being for taxes and part against is a total lie. Supervisor Skeen asked for a vote that should never have been asked. There was no motion or second, and it was in a budget meeting. The first time he did this was in January when he asked about a Virginia Department of Transportation meeting. Supervisor Brickey stated that he voted no because he knew that only two supervisors could attend. After that meeting, Chairman Brickey stated that

Supervisor Skeen requested a private meeting with him. Chairman Michael Brickey noted that Supervisor Skeen told him that he voted political. Supervisor Brickey went on to say that he worked in this county for 40 years, and twenty of those years as a principal. Chairman Brickey stated that he worked with thousands of students, parents, and grandparents, and he guarantees that not one of them could tell if he was Republican or Democrat. Chairman Brickey told Supervisor Skeen that he was offended. This budget process starts in January. The Capital Improvement Committee meets first. There are fifty departments that tell us what they want. This process is a zero budget meaning that everyone starts at the bottom. Chairman Brickey reported that he appointed Supervisor Stefanie Addington and Supervisor Eddie Skeen to serve on the budget committee. The three percent cost of living increase for county employees was cut. The state employees will get the three percent. The budget was cut in the budget committee. At our last meeting, it was still too high. Chairman Brickey encouraged those in attendance to listen as the County Administrator reviews the budget to see that there is a big difference. Chairman Brickey pointed out the pie chart that shows a breakdown of the budget.

Supervisor Eddie Skeen reported that he does not have Facebook. He thanked everyone for attending the meeting. He went on to say that the reason that there have been adjustments to the budget is because of you. He stated that the thing he referred to in his ad was not for or against taxes. It was for or against one expense item that we discussed. He stated that he talked with an attorney before releasing the ad. The attorney stated that it looked great to him and asked where Mr. Maness got his law degree. As far as Roberts Rules of Order, we do have an attorney who is an expert in Roberts Rules, and her response was that we could take a vote.

Chairman Brickey replied that was a budget hearing, and she said it was a part of budget discussion. You can do a consensus, but you asked for a vote.

County Attorney Sally Kegley stated that she was asked whether or not the Board could talk about it in open session and replied that it could be if it was about the budget. When the vote came up, Ms. Kegley pointed out that she was saying consensus, no one posed that question to her directly.

Supervisor Eddie Skeen referred to the January meeting.

Chairman Brickey noted that was in open session at a regular meeting.

Supervisor Skeen replied we do have an attorney.

Supervisor Chris Maness asked Mr. Skeen why he needed an outside attorney if you knew what you were publishing was true.

Supervisor Skeen replied that he does not think it was much different than what was in the paper, and it was referencing Ms. Starnes on the one cent tax.

Supervisor Maness replied that Supervisor Skeen is avoiding the question and asked why Supervisor Skeen needed a lawyer if he was being honest.

Supervisor Skeen replied that it was after the fact.

Supervisor Maness stated that is not what Supervisor Skeen told him on the phone.

On a motion by Darrel W. Jeter, duly seconded by Stefanie C. Addington, this Board hereby approves the agenda.

- Voting aye:

Darrel W. Jeter and Stefanie C. Addington.
- Voting nay:

L. Michele Glover, Eddie N. Skeen, Michael K. Brickey
Danny M. Casteel, and Christopher S. Maness

Supervisor Danny Casteel stated that he does not remember hearing 23 percent, but he did hear Ms. Starnes say 18 percent. He went on to say that he can solve it, and give it a zero. We will figure it out no matter who is lying.

On a motion by Eddie N. Skeen, duly seconded by L. Michele Glover, this Board hereby amends the agenda by adding Citizen Expression Period.

- Voting aye:

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

Darrel W. Jeter.

Wendel Burke with Nickelsville Rescue Squad thanked the Board for all they do and everything they have done for the first responders. He suggested that the Board of Supervisors get along as best they can.

President of the Fire Association and Chief of Duffield Fire and Rescue Roger Carter stated that he has been to many budget workshops in the past. He went on to say that he is here on behalf of the seven fire departments in Scott County. Mr. Carter presented the budget for the fire department. He went on to say that prices have increased in the last ten years. He addressed ISO rating requirements and cost for equipment. Mr. Carter pointed out that trucks are over \$500,000, ladder trucks are 1.5 to 2 million dollars, turnout gear is \$3,000 for one person, and one pager costs \$500. These are all things needed to fight fire. The cost per agency is \$54,000. The average paid firefighter in the State of Virginia is \$57,300. A minimum of 28 fire fighters would be needed to man seven fire stations. That would cost 1.6 million dollars. That does not include equipment which would be millions. There were 824 calls in Scott County last year between the seven departments. He pointed out that the fire department and county will fail if the equipment is old. The fire department is the only one the Board funds that gives back to the citizens through ISO ratings. ISO ratings on home owners is 1 to 10. One being the best. Right now, every fire department in Scott County is six or below. That is good for a volunteer fire department.

Wendel Burke added that there are some fire departments close to a four. ISO ratings are so important. It takes a lot into consideration from 911 communication, training, type of equipment, area served, number of fire hydrants, and how close fire hydrants are to homes. Home owners insurance is cheaper if you are close to a fire department. We can improve, but it takes volunteers and money. We have been lacking on both for a long time. There is coming a time when there will be no more volunteers. Fire coverage is mandatory. It was pointed out that everyone at some point will either need law enforcement, fire department, or emergency medical service.

Supervisor Maness pointed out how important the fire department and ISO ratings are to the companies located in the Duffield Industrial Park.

Supervisor Eddie Skeen stated that he did not know about the ISO ratings, and he is trying to get better educated on that.

Mr. Burke pointed out that fire hydrants have to be tested to keep our ISO ratings, and that is done by the volunteers.

An unidentified person in the audience stated that the fire department is benefiting everyone unlike other items in the budget.

Supervisor Maness inquired about the 824 calls being for fire only.

Mr. Carter replied yes. There were over 4,000 EMS calls.

An unidentified person in the audience questioned why Weber City Fire Department purchased another building when they had one, and the building they are in now could have be used for a business instead.

Weber City Fire Chief Bruce Cross replied that he is trying to get off the hill due to bad weather conditions and keeping the road clean, and there is only one bathroom. There are four female fire fighters. Mr. Cross went on to say that the building they are currently in sat empty for 25 years. No one tried to purchase it. Mr. Cross stated that he is trying to better the Weber City Fire Department.

An unidentified person in the audience inquired about the age to volunteer.

Mr. Burke replied that there are junior members. You have to be 18 to take the training and 21 to drive.

Supervisor Eddie Skeen inquired about holding Citizen Expression now instead of at the end of the meeting.

Chairman Michael K. Brickey opened Citizen Expression to receive public comments.

Melissa Marshall from Sinking Creek stated that it frustrates her to listen to the first responders talk about how they need help. We are all struggling. The cost of operations is the same as the cost of living. There are families struggling to fix their vehicles and feed their kids. She went on to say that we cannot afford a tax increase like that. Ms. Marshall stated that her grandparents have owned land in Scott County since 2017. They have been over charged for taxes. They thought they got it straightened out. They were being overcharged plus being charged for the people who owned the property before them. She added that her grandparents could not physically take care of it so she came in order for someone to take her seriously. Ms. Marshall went on to say that someone needs to figure something out with the first responders. She questioned what time they would get to her home if it caught fire

if they don't have the equipment or volunteers. She added that she lives at the end of the county line. She pointed out that it might be one of the Board's homes.

Troy Purdue from Weber City stated that his biggest issue is the fire department. The Board is giving money for a fire department to operate two properties right now. He went on to say that he does not understand that when the Town of Weber City is giving them money as well. When the flea market is over, there is trash everywhere. There are tires that they are using for trees so why not put them in the ground. He went on to say that it makes no sense why they can't use the building furnished to them by the Town of Weber City. In addition, they could remodel or add an addition. They had to have another building that would have been good retail space for Supervisor Jeter to bring in a business. He added that the personal property tax is not being paid by a large number who live here. Mr. Purdue stated that he counted 16 people on his street with Tennessee tags. The Sheriff's Office used to patrol. Mr. Purdue pointed out that Jim Benton told him that he had 15 days when he moved here to get his tags changed. He has noticed that some have lived on his street for five years with Tennessee tags.

Josh Lane from Weber City stated that his property taxes went up 125 percent two years ago. He went on to say that the Board wants to raise property taxes again. Mr. Lane added that the people elected Supervisor Jeter, and there are things you don't want to cut, but that is why you are sitting there. The Covid money was not free. Another property tax increase is upsetting. Mr. Lane stated that he has lived in Weber City for forty years. Now there are gambling machines in every convenience store he goes in along with lottery dispensaries. He stated that warehouses may be next. A property tax increase is upsetting. Mr. Lane stated that he works 60 to 70 hours per week, and he took off work to be here. Mr. Lane concluded, by saying, that he doubts the Board will be sitting there next time if taxes are raised.

Paul Calhoun from Yuma stated that there are people working from our county in Greenville, Elizabethton, and Abingdon. Those people are not able to get their trash to the convenience center with the hours it is open. On Saturday, it is closing at 12 noon. Mr. Calhoun noted that the Board could leave everything the same and give everyone a card to access the convenience center, charge \$25 per month for the card, and everyone could go in there 24 hours per day and dump their trash. He went on to say that he has family members who leave at 6 a.m., and they do not get back until 6 p.m. There are others who have the same problem. He addressed numbering the prime property next to the ballfield and giving season pass holders first opportunity, and he noted handicapped spaces that are too narrow in that area.

Danny Casteel commented that Mr. Calhoun should speak with Public Works Director Bill Dingus about the convenience center remaining open 24/7.

Supervisor Darrel Jeter noted the hours at Yuma unless it gets full.

Mr. Calhoun suggested increasing the haul off if it gets full.

Mr. Dingus replied that increasing the haul off increases the cost.

Mr. Calhoun stated that people would be paying for their card to get in. It works the same as storage facilities. You go in any time night or day.

An unidentified woman spoke about putting up cameras at the convenience centers and sending a ticket to those abusing the center.

Danny Castell agreed with her, but he stated that all he hears is that the judge will not convict them.

Jeff Watson from Fort Blackmore stated that people cannot afford a tax increase. He explained that he is on disability and cannot pay any more. The county bought land in Weber City. He suggested selling it.

Dale Sanders stated that he has been a volunteer fire fighter for 49 years. He went on to say that he can remember when the fire departments did not get any money from the county. 1978 was the first time the fire departments received funds from the county. In 1981, the county bought each department a new fire truck. Our department knocked on doors to raise money to buy equipment. He requested that the board support the fire departments more than what has been done in the past. He thanked the county for all they have done in the past including the Covid funds that were provided to the fire departments. A lot of the fire equipment has to be replaced. It is mandated that the equipment be replaced in ten years no matter how little it has been used. Fire fighters go out all hours of the day and in all kinds of weather. The volunteers are getting older, and the younger people are not going to do it. He went on to say that his son lives in Montgomery County, and there is one fire department that has paid fire fighters because they could not get volunteers. It is not looking good here in Scott County. You have to love it to do it. It is all about helping people.

Peggy Tyus from Snowflake addressed the Board. She went on to say that she knows the Board cannot budget money for dirt roads. She suggested putting something in at the Riverside property to bring in revenue. She suggested a technical college.

Ashley Robinson from Big Moccasin in Nickelsville addressed the Board. She went on to say that she respects the Board of Supervisors and what they do. She noted that she worked in residential and property management for ten years in Northern Virginia. She went on to say that she is from Wise County. She has been in Scott County since 2017 and moved back here for a good and safe place to live. Ms. Robinson noted that she has worked with budgets and managed properties. That involved 27 different budgets. The key here is what everyone wants. You need to look at your needs. Look at the revenue coming in. We have to take care of our fire

departments, first responders, and law enforcement. That is our needs. Without our residents, we do not have a county. Everyone says they are moving to Tennessee if their taxes are raised. She pointed out that everything is being given to Tennessee. She suggested bringing something here that Tennessee will come here for. Let them spend their tax money here. There is nothing to draw them in. She went on to say that she appreciates the small town and county. Everyone is talking about the Riverside Property. She suggested a Walmart and some restaurants for that location. She suggested generating some funding instead of giving our money to Tennessee. She went on to say that she orders everything from Walmart and has it delivered. She pointed out that she wants her daughter to be able to succeed here instead of leaving. Ms. Robinson stated that there is not enough made on the farm to pay the 23 percent tax increase. Ms. Robinson stated that she moved back here, and she loves it. She went on to say that her daughter goes to school here, and she does not have to worry about her.

Dr. Donald Thurston stated that he is a retired Navy Captain and lives here in Scott County. Last year, he noted that he served on the Equalization Board. There are expenses, and there is income. He stated that his property went from \$700 per year to \$13,500. There is no reduction for those 65 and over or those that are retired. There is nothing for the youth to stay here. He went on to say that he has 115 acres in Scott County. The answer is income. There is a beautiful property on the Holston River. The Board needs to get off their butts and bring something in here for revenue and taxes equitable to everyone. There is a budget problem; therefore, we need to bring in the income.

JoAnn Bright from Gate City stated that her family has lived here for over 200 years. She went on to say that Scott County has been going downhill for the past 20 years. Ms. Bright pointed out that costs have increased, but she does not understand why Scott County cannot attract businesses to increase our revenue. The public would like to know if there are any proposals to bring more business in the county. If not, maybe you could get some ideas from other counties. Scott County is a very poor county. A lot of people live in shacks. Their property values cannot be much. She went on to say that it is a disgrace. Ms. Bright stated that she would like to see more businesses come in the county even if they got a tax break for the first five years. She concluded that all we have here in Scott County is poor people drawing from the Government.

Paul Calhoun noted a Facebook post about the county having a full-time attorney. The counties around us do not have a full-time attorney, and we should not. He stated that Scott County will be a ghost town if Tennessee students are charged tuition. He suggested starting with a \$25 tuition for Tennessee students. Mr. Calhoun stated that Dungannon Elementary has no special purpose. Fort Blackmore does have a purpose. It has 84 students pre-K to grade seven. That is a really high price per student. He asked if it was time to start working toward a Scott County High School.

An unidentified man requested clarification on the County Attorney's salary. He questioned if it is really \$230,000 per year.

Supervisor Eddie Skeen replied that it is around \$200,000.

Supervisor Addington replied that is the entire department budget.

Supervisor Skeen stated that is for the entire department.

Gary Baker spoke about putting cameras up at the convenience centers. Mr. Baker went on to say that he suggested that the Economic Development Authority pursue the gun manufacturers to locate in Scott County; however, those manufacturers went to other locations. Mr. Baker went on to say that we need something in Weber City to bring in revenue. County employees driving county vehicles home needs to cease. It is a big waste of gas and expense on automobiles. Mr. Baker suggested that no new vehicles be purchased. The Board needs to get a grasp on the budget. The Commissioner of the Revenue needs to get out and add new construction. A lot of people build following a reassessment. Mr. Baker stated that we are very fortunate to have County Attorney Sally Kegley. He stated that she was good to him when he was Commissioner of the Revenue. Our taxes were \$0.69 during the time I was Commissioner. There is no reason why it cannot be done now. When Redwine was on the Board, that Board micromanaged. He went on to say that he did not waste any money when he was Commissioner. He suggested that the Board micromanage until everyone gets in line. People cannot afford any more taxes. Mr. Baker stated that he does not want to see taxes go up, but he will pay them if he has too.

Kim Frances with Southern Graphics in Gate City stated that she has been in Scott County her entire life, and she is really disgusted. She inquired about getting the number of county vehicles. She inquired about county vehicles being used by employees for getting back and forth to work. She asked the County Administrator if she drives a county vehicle back and forth to work.

The County Administrator replied that she does, and it is a part of her employment contract.

Kim Frances replied that the average salary in Scott County is \$37,000 and the County Administrator gets paid \$148,000 plus a vehicle.

The County Administrator replied no that is not correct.

Ms. Frances inquired about taxes since Supervisor Maness called out Supervisor Skeen.

Supervisor Maness replied that it will not be 28 percent. It might be low single digits.

Ms. Frances stated that she owns a business in Scott County and has begged these people for years to do business with her. She went on to say that she has bid and got rejected. She went on to say that it is going to go back into this county even if she charges \$100 over. It is not going to the eastern part of Virginia. She suggested selling county property to take care of the shortfall.

The Board responded that the property is owned by the Economic Development Authority. They meet here on the second Wednesday.

Ms. Frances asked if they are going to sell it.

Supervisor Maness stated that she would have to talk with the Economic Development Authority about that.

Supervisor Michele Glover pointed out that the Economic Development Director John Kilgore will be at the meeting tomorrow.

Ms. Frances asked if the Board is looking at anything to cut expenses. The salaries are ridiculous. She inquired about the Board cutting some of the salaries instead of gauging others.

Laney Blair stated that his concern is people driving county cars home. The only ones who should be taking their vehicle home are the police officers or fire department because they may need to go out in the middle of the night. He pointed out that two boys and two girls pulled in at the Quik Stop market in a county vehicle. They were there on the weekend filling up with gas. Mr. Blair stated that he worked for Eastman, and they never supplied him with gas. At the end of the day, county vehicles should be left on site. Mr. Blair added that business is needed in this county. He pointed out that the convenience centers are closed on Sunday, and suggested using cameras at the convenience centers.

Jeff Watson inquired about the salary of the one over business in Scott County. He went on to say that he has not done anything in 30 years so get rid of him.

Katrina Holt stated that she lives in the Town of Gate City. She pointed out that an increase in county taxes makes the town taxes go up as well. She went on to say that a lot of people are leaving here and going to Tennessee. Ms. Holt stated that she has thought about it herself, and she has lived here for fifty years. She stated that Scott County is beautiful, and she likes living in Scott County. She inquired about any plans to reopen the Filter Plant Road Convenience Center. That would alleviate a lot of trash from the Yuma site.

The Board noted that property is owned by the Virginia Department of Transportation.

Ms. Holt offered to contact them.

Vern Mays from Nickelsville stated that he has worked with over a million dollar budget every year for the past five years. He went on to say that hard decisions had to be made. If you do not see the benefit of the people you put in these positions, they are not going to change until they become uncomfortable. A person is going to take free money. Mr. Mays added that he knows people have been on the County Attorney. That attorney is just one. The Board is representing the people. He told the Board if they can't do it to get out. Just leave because we do not need more baggage. Baggage is what causes these deficits. The board can shake their heads like they agree, but what has been done. He went on to say that the Board is delinquent in their duties if they are not asking questions. He added that his employer will put him walking if he does not perform well. The Board needs checks and balances. Mr. Mays added that these people are not being held accountable because they are not doing their job. He pointed out that Scott County could have economic development instead of putting residential on one of the best properties in Scott County. No one in their right mind would do that. Business is where your income will come from.

Gary Baker added that farmers are the biggest landowners in Scott County. They pay 43 percent of the taxes.

Tom Hall from Yuma stated that he has been a resident of Scott County his entire life. Chairman Brickey was his principal. He added that he worked for a contractor at Tennessee Eastman for thirty years. Then, worked for the county and got hurt. Now, he has lost his eyesight. Mr. Hall stated that he owns his own place, and paid his taxes right down to the penny. The way it is going everything will be so high that no one will be able to live. When you are not working, you are not getting anything. Mr. Hall stated that he is not even drawing an income. He understands that the fire departments need their money. He stated that he has no problem with that. In addition, he stated that he does not have any insurance because he cannot afford it. Mr. Hall pointed out that some of you are making good money. Some are retired and maybe drawing two or three incomes. Mr. Hall stated when he got hurt working for the county, he did not get a dime from insurance. He refused to take their money, and wanted to be fixed instead. The way it is going people are going to lose their home. Mr. Hall stated that he may lose his land, but no one will get the house because he will put it on the ground.

Hearing no further comments, Citizen Expression Period was closed.

Supervisor L. Michele Glover asked those in attendance if they could afford any tax increase at all.

The audience shouted no.

Break 4:40 p.m.

Reconvene: 4:55 p.m.

Supervisor Chris Maness explained that the Enterprise Zone Incentives will be presented by the Economic Development Director John Kilgore at the next meeting.

Supervisor Eddie Skeen confirmed that the three percent salary increase was removed for county employees.

County Administrator Freda Starnes replied that the three percent cost of living increase was removed, and the two percent merit based on an evaluation is budgeted.

There was discussion regarding \$5,000 for the Upper Tennessee River Roundtable salary and the employee doing the same job if that amount was reduced. There was a suggestion to fund \$1,000 instead.

Supervisor Eddie Skeen inquired about the school bus garage assisting with county vehicles.

County Administrator Freda Starnes replied that they are.

There was discussion as to the salary for the County Attorney.

The County Attorney replied that she works five days per week, a lot on weekends, and a lot a night.

County Administrator Freda Starnes reported that audit interviews will be conducted tomorrow, and that amount will be included in the budget.

There was discussion as to the S.C.O.T.T. Service program. It was pointed out that Wise County has two employees with a similar program. There was discussion about the S.C.O.T.T. Service program being self-sustainable. There was also discussion about reducing staff and transferring \$50,000 from Fund 1325 to help with salary supplements for attorneys.

Supervisor Darrel Jeter inquired about other expenses for the program.

County Administrator Freda Starnes replied drug testing.

Supervisor Michele Glover asked about the \$250 program fee coming back to the county.

County Administrator Freda Starnes replied that it does not have to come back to the county at the end of the budget year if it is in a separate fund.

There was discussion about the American Rescue Plan Act funds and casino funds.

County Administrator Freda Starnes stated that she will send out the Sheriff's office mileage.

Supervisor Stefanie Addington requested that the Sheriff attend the next budget workshop.

Supervisor Michele Glover noted that citizens are concerned about there being two officers at night.

There was discussion as to moving American Rescue Plan Act funds from the Sheriff to the fire departments, and not give all fire departments an equal amount. It was noted that each department has different needs. The Towns of Gate City and Weber City make contributions. It was pointed out that the county might end up funding the whole thing including personnel if there is too much interference. There was also discussion about the rescue squads receiving American Rescue Plan Act funding.

County Administrator Freda Starnes reported that the American Rescue Plan Act funds will be gone at the end of the year.

There was discussion about the county having two building inspectors.

Bill Dingus pointed out that there was an additional inspector added last year due to an anticipated workload and having someone in the office. He added that they do our zoning, and there is administrative work that needs to be done in the office while inspections are being done. He went on to say that office was made with two inspectors in mind. Mr. Dingus added that he does not have as many calls since another inspector was hired. In addition, he mentioned the inspector does new construction for the towns.

There was discussion as to Animal Control and Litter Control driving their vehicles home.

Bill Dingus replied that they are called out after hours for emergencies and traffic stops. If they did not drive their vehicle home, they would have to go to the animal shelter and change into uniform.

The Board inquired about protective equipment for those who work at the Transfer Station.

Bill Dingus replied that boots, shirts, coats, gloves, eye protection, and hats have been provided. He noted that he has a maintenance line item that he could use for uniforms.

It was the consensus of the Board to reduce the maintenance line item to \$2,000 and add it to uniforms line item.

There was discussion about raising the golf course fees at the next meeting.

There was discussion about the Tourism Director retiring and making that position part-time.

County Administrator Freda Starnes reported that she is waiting to hear back from the architects on the sally port for inmate holding.

Supervisor Eddie Skeen reported that the vocational school students can prefab a building, move it in sections, and it could be erected with a crane. He went on to say that would be a good opportunity for the students.

Break: 6:25 p.m.

Reconvene: 6:35 p.m.

County Administrator Freda Starnes reported that the animal control truck has 145,000 miles, and the litter control truck has 190,000 miles.

There was concern about the Economic Development Authority not utilizing the American Rescue Plan Act funds for a firm to market Scott County for retail business and those funds being returned.

County Administrator Freda Starnes stated that she would send a letter.

There was discussion about S.C.O.T.T. Service contributing to the maintenance shop and have an office there instead of paying rent for office space.

There was discussion as to Victim Witness using the house for office space if the Circuit Court Judge vacates that space.

It was the consensus of the Board that the Sheriff and S.C.O.T.T. Service attend the next meeting.

There was discussion about a cigarette tax and increasing the transient occupancy tax. The County Administrator stated that she would research that before the next meeting.

It was the consensus of the Board to not raise the Machinery and Tools tax.

There was discussion about adding a \$0.03 tax for the fire department.

Supervisor Casteel recommended an enrollment fee for students from Tennessee.

County Administrator Freda Starnes reported that personal property increased from \$1.40 to \$1.65 in 2020.

Supervisor Maness reported that progress was made during a meeting with the School Board Chairman and Vice-Chairman. He went on to say that it was a good meeting, and everyone agreed to meet quarterly.

It was the consensus of the Board to ask the School Board for \$200,000 from their budget.

Supervisor Stefanie Addington asked Supervisor Skeen why he did not use the County Attorney instead of getting his own attorney. She went on to say that Supervisor Skeen is affecting this entire board and putting us and the staff in jeopardy.

Supervisor Skeen stated that he contacted the attorney after speaking with Supervisor Maness.

Supervisor Darrel Jeter told Supervisor Eddie Skeen that he stirred up the entire county by putting the ad in the paper about a 23 percent tax increase. It put the Board and staff in jeopardy.

Supervisor Eddie Skeen replied that is called marketing.

Supervisor Maness asked Supervisor Skeen to think about what it did to the people in the county. He went on to say that he had a lady call him crying. It put people in a state of fear. It was noted that Supervisor Skeen wanted to create the emotion for people to show up.

Supervisor Addington told Supervisor Skeen that he is not alone on this Board regardless how the Board votes.

Supervisor Skeen stated that he contacted an attorney after the fact.

Supervisor Addington questioned why Supervisor Skeen did not contact the County Attorney and utilize the source that is available. She is the one that knows the county business. An outside attorney does not know the details.

Supervisor Darrel Jeter informed Supervisor Skeen that there are people in jail for some things they have said like this. No one on this Board should be putting anything in the paper.

Supervisor Castell stated that he can see both sides and maybe Supervisor Skeen is right and maybe he is wrong.

County Attorney Sally Kegley pointed out that a tax increase can only be voted on after a public hearing is held.

Supervisor Stefanie Addington thanked Supervisor Glover for the Board taking a beating on Facebook. That was a huge divider for this Board.

Chairman Michael K. Brickey adjourned the meeting until May 7, 2024 at 6:00 p.m.

CHAIRMAN

CLERK