

The regular meeting of the Botetourt County Board of Supervisors was held on Tuesday, April 26, 2016, in Rooms 226-228 of the Greenfield Education and Training Center in Daleville, Virginia, beginning at 12:45 P. M.

PRESENT: Members: Mr. L. W. Leffel, Jr., Chairman
Mr. Todd L. Dodson, Vice-Chairman
Mr. John B. Williamson, III
Mr. Billy W. Martin, Sr.
Dr. Donald M. Scothorn (arrived at 1:00 P. M.)

ABSENT: Members: None

Others present at the meeting:

Mr. Gary Larrowe, County Administrator
Mr. David Moorman, Deputy County Administrator
Mr. Michael W. S. Lockaby, County Attorney

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 12:45 P. M.

On motion by Mr. Leffel, seconded by Mr. Martin, and carried by the following recorded vote, the Board went into Closed Session at 12:45 P. M. to discuss the acquisition/disposition of real property for public purposes; a prospective business or industry not previously announced; and consultation with legal counsel regarding specific legal matters as per Section 2.2-3711(A) (3), (5), and (7) of the Code of Virginia of 1950, as amended. (Resolution Number 16-04-02)

AYES: Mr. Williamson, Mr. Dodson, Mr. Martin, Mr. Leffel

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Dr. Scothorn

ABSTAINING: None

The Chairman called the meeting back to order at 2:01 P. M.

On motion by Mr. Leffel, seconded by Mr. Martin, and carried by the following recorded vote, the Board returned to regular session from Closed Session and adopted the following resolution by roll-call vote. (Resolution Number 16-04-03)

AYES: Mr. Martin, Dr. Scothorn, Mr. Leffel, Mr. Dodson, Mr. Williamson

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAINING: None

BE IT RESOLVED, that to the best of the Board members' knowledge only public business matters lawfully exempt from open meeting requirements and only such matters as were identified in the motion to go into Closed Session were heard, discussed or considered during the Closed Session.

The Chairman then asked for a moment of silence. Mr. Martin then led the group in reciting the pledge of allegiance.

Mr. Larrowe then asked Mr. Jeff Scott, Building Official, and Mr. Brandon King, Combination Inspector, to come forward. Mr. Larrowe noted that he asked that Mr. Scott be present at today's meeting in order to be recognized for receiving his Certified Building Official designation last month from the International Code Council.

Mr. Scott stated that his first year of employment with Botetourt County has been a great experience and he appreciates the opportunity to serve the County.

Mr. Dodson congratulated Mr. Scott for receipt of this certification.

Mr. Larrowe then stated that Mr. Brandon King has received ICC certifications in the residential building, residential plumbing, and residential mechanical designations in his first year as a County Combination Inspector. He noted that this was a major accomplishment on Mr. King's behalf.

Mr. Dodson and the Board congratulated Mr. King for his work toward and receipt of these certifications.

Mr. Jim Farmer then introduced Mr. Eric Daniels to the Board. He noted that Mr. Daniels was previously a part-time Recreation Maintenance worker but earlier this month was made a full-time employee.

The Board welcomed Mr. Daniels to employment with the County.

Mr. Farmer then stated that he would also like to recognize the local American Legion organization for their generous \$1,400 donation which will be used to help the County's youth sports program. He noted that Mr. Joel Eig, with the American Legion, was present at today's meeting.

Mr. Eig stated that it is a pleasure to make this donation on behalf of the American Legion for the County's youth recreation program.

The Board thanked Mr. Eig and the American Legion for this donation.

After questioning by Mr. Leffel, it was noted that there was no one present from the public who wished to make any comments at this time.

After discussion, on motion by Mr. Williamson, seconded by Mr. Dodson, and carried by the following recorded vote, the minutes of the Board's joint meeting with the Economic Development Authority held on March 15, 2016, were approved as submitted. (Resolution Number 16-04-04)

AYES: Mr. Williamson, Mr. Dodson, Mr. Martin, Mr. Leffel, Dr. Scothorn

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAINING: None

On motion by Mr. Dodson, seconded by Mr. Martin, and carried by the following recorded vote, the minutes of the regular meeting held on March 22, 2016, were approved as submitted. (Resolution Number 16-04-05)

AYES: Mr. Williamson, Mr. Dodson, Mr. Martin, Mr. Leffel, Dr. Scothorn

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAINING: None

On motion by Mr. Williamson, seconded by Mr. Leffel, and carried by the following recorded vote, the minutes of the budget work session held on March 28, 2016, were approved as submitted. (Resolution Number 16-04-06)

AYES: Mr. Williamson, Mr. Dodson, Mr. Martin, Mr. Leffel, Dr. Scothorn

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAINING: None

On motion by Dr. Scothorn, seconded by Mr. Dodson, and carried by the following recorded vote, the minutes of the joint meeting with the Planning Commission held on April 11, 2016, were approved as submitted. (Resolution Number 16-04-07)

AYES: Mr. Dodson, Mr. Martin, Mr. Leffel, Dr. Scothorn, Mr. Williamson

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAINING: None

Mr. Larowe then stated that the County has received notification from the Government Finance Officers Association that they have awarded Mr. Tony Zerrilla, Director of Finance, a

certificate of achievement for his work on the County's annual audit report for the 2014-15 fiscal year. He noted that this is the highest form of recognition in the area of governmental accounting and is a well-earned award for Mr. Zerrilla.

Mr. Larrowe stated that, prior to becoming County Administrator in January, he was informed by the County's auditor, Corbin Stone with Robinson, Farmer, Cox Associates, that Botetourt County has one of the best finance directors in the State.

After questioning by Mr. Williamson, Mr. Zerrilla stated that this is the eleventh time that he has received this award. Mr. Zerrilla stated that compilation of data for the audit report is due to a combination of items including the assistance of many County employees, department heads, the County school staff, the Treasurer, and the Commissioner of Revenue. He noted that compiling the audit is a joint team effort each year.

Mr. Leffel thanked Mr. Zerrilla for his work and congratulated him on receipt of this award.

Consideration was then held on approval of transfers and additional appropriations. Mr. Tony Zerrilla, Director of Finance, stated that there were three transfers and nine pass-through appropriations for the Board's consideration this month.

Mr. Zerrilla stated that he would also like to request consideration of an additional transfer in the amount of \$250,000 from the General Fund Undesignated Fund Balance to the Economic Development Authority in anticipation of receipt of bills associated with the grading work on the Eldor site in Greenfield. He noted that the Board had approved an initial transfer of \$750,000 to the Authority at their March regular meeting for Eldor's project-related costs. Mr. Zerrilla further noted that these site grading expenses will be reimbursed by the State of Virginia.

After discussion, Mr. Zerrilla then stated that the appropriations were for receipt of grant funds, expenditure reimbursements, and insurance recovery funds.

There being no discussion, on motion by Mr. Williamson, seconded by Mr. Leffel, and carried by the following recorded vote, the Board approved the following transfers and appropriations: (Resolution Number 16-04-08)

AYES: Mr. Leffel, Mr. Williamson, Mr. Dodson, Mr. Martin, Dr. Scothorn

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAINING: None

Transfer \$1,644.92 to Sheriff's Department - Vehicle & Power Equipment Supplies, 100-4031200-6009, from various departments as follows for vehicle repairs at the County Garage:

\$132.99 General Svces. – Repair & Maint. – Vehicles, 100-4040000-3312
 \$132.80 Develop. Svces. – Repair & Maint. – Vehicles, 100-4034000-3312
 \$664.01 Animal Control - Veh. & Power Equip. Suppl., 100-4035100-6009
 \$ 48.02 Parks & Rec. – Veh. & Power Equip. Suppl., 100-4071000-6009
 \$ 43.03 Van Program – Repair & Maint. – Vehicles, 100-4071500-3312
 \$386.92 Tourism – Veh. & Power Equip. Supplies, 100-4081600-6009
 \$237.15 Fire & EMS – Repair & Maint. – Vehicles, 100-4035500-3312

Transfer \$70,000 of budgeted funds from Contingency, 100-4093000, to County Administrator, 100-4012110. These funds will cover certain extended and separation costs relating to the transition between County Administrators.

Transfer \$250,000 from the General Fund Undesignated Fund Balance to the Economic Development Authority in anticipation of receipt of invoices associated with grading work on the Eldor site in Greenfield. These expenses will be reimbursed by the State of Virginia.

Additional appropriation in the amount of \$1,000 to Parks & Recreation – Coaches Certification, 100-4071000-3181. These are sponsorship funds received from Shenandoah Baptist Church which will be divided between the County's seven athletic booster clubs.

Additional appropriation in the amount of \$3,000 to Sports Complex – Purchase of Services – Other Government Entities. 100-4071300-3800. These are NCCAA softball tournament sponsorship funds received from the Roanoke Valley Convention and Visitors Bureau.

Additional appropriation in the amount of \$7,500 to Emergency Services – Capital Outlay - Other Capital, 100-4035500-8012. These are LEMP (Local Emergency Management Preparedness) grant funds received from the State which will be used to offset applicable expenditures.

Additional appropriation in the amount of \$1,341.06 to Correction & Detention – Medical & Lab Supplies, 100-4033100-6004. These are reimbursement funds received from Craig County for their inmate medical expenses.

Additional appropriation in the amount of \$1,600.00 to Correction & Detention – Police Supplies, 100-4033100-6010. These are rebate funds received from Kenwood for police radio purchases.

Additional appropriation in the amount of \$3,750.92 to Sheriff's Department – Subsistence & Lodging, 100-4031200-5530. These are reimbursement funds received from the State for extradition expenses.

Additional appropriation in the amount of \$1,956.63 to the following Sheriff's Department accounts: \$1,817.58 to Overtime, 100-4031200-1200; and \$139.05 to FICA, 100-4031200-2100. These are recovered costs for providing police services for Valley Group (transformer escort).

Additional appropriation in the amount of \$4,609.50 to Sheriff's Department – RAID Patrol, 100-4031200-5830. This is a quarterly reimbursement of RAID program expenses for the Botetourt County Sheriff's Office Alternative Program.

Additional appropriation in the amount of \$1,000 to Maintenance – Repair & Maintenance – Buildings, 100-4043000-3313. These are insurance funds received for damage to a rock wall at the Circuit Courthouse.

Consideration was then held on approval of accounts payable and ratification of the Short Accounts Payable List. Mr. Tony Zerrilla, Director of Finance, stated that this month's accounts payable totaled \$811,451.36 in General Fund expenditures. He noted that the Short Accounts Payable totaled \$301,813.81; \$298,758.81 in General Fund invoices; and \$3,055 in Debt Service Fund expenditures.

Mr. Zerrilla stated that this month's large expenditures included \$133,674 to the Botetourt County Health Department for two quarterly budget payments; \$28,502 to Colonial Ford Truck Sales for a new pickup truck for the Parks and Recreation Department; and \$27,563 to Harris Computer Systems for the first of three payments for new financial software.

After questioning by Mr. Williamson, Mr. Zerrilla stated that all of these expenses are within the budgeted allocations for these departments.

After questioning by Dr. Scothorn regarding a \$15,000 payment from the Volunteer Fire Department account to the County Fire and EMS Department, Mr. Zerrilla stated that this invoice was for costs incurred by career unit vehicles.

There being no further discussion, on motion by Dr. Scothorn, seconded by Mr. Leffel, and carried by the following recorded vote, the Board approved the accounts payable and ratified the Short Accounts Payable List as submitted. (Resolution Number 16-04-09)

AYES: Mr. Williamson, Mr. Dodson, Mr. Martin, Mr. Leffel, Dr. Scothorn

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAINING: None

Consideration was then held on adoption of a resolution designating the Roanoke Valley region as "Virginia's Blue Ridge." Mr. Jim Farmer, Director of Parks, Recreation, and Tourism, stated that Mr. Landon Howard, Executive Director of the Roanoke Valley Convention and Visitors Bureau, Mr. Lee Wilhelm, Chairman of the CVB Board, and other Bureau representatives were present at this meeting.

Mr. Farmer stated that the County will be a full member of the CVB as of July 1, 2016. He noted that the Bureau is working with the regional governments and private businesses by creating a regional brand name designation, "Virginia's Blue Ridge."

Mr. Howard then gave a brief presentation. He stated that the CVB had a successful annual meeting last week. He noted that the organization has grown considerably in the last four years and they currently have almost 1,100 business members. Mr. Howard stated that their advertising program has been a huge success and has increased 585% over the past five years.

Regarding public relations, Mr. Howard stated that the CVB works with Botetourt County's staff when hosting visits by journalists to this area. He noted that these public relations activities have resulted in an estimated \$6 million in revenues for the region's economy. He noted that the trend over the past five years has shown an increase in the number of visitors to the area. Mr. Howard stated that their research estimates that there has been an additional \$134 million in annual spending by these visitors in the area's economy which equates to \$2,558 per resident.

Mr. Howard stated that their information indicates that tourism has created 520 jobs in the area in the past five years and 7,600 people are employed in the travel and tourism industry in this region. He noted that 1.2 million hotel/motel rooms have been sold in the past five years which generated an increase of \$8.5 million in lodging revenue. Mr. Howard further stated that, in 2016, Botetourt County's hotel/motel room demand increased 19% and hotel/motel revenues have increased by 16%.

Mr. Howard stated that "tourism is economic development's first date" as visitors to the region may return to open new businesses. He noted that Botetourt County has had great success in its economic development efforts in the last few months and the area's metropolitan/mountain mix is a great attractor of visitors and business representatives. Mr. Howard stated that the CVB believes that tourism visits will increase in the future.

After discussion, Mr. Howard requested that the Board adopt the proposed resolution designating the Roanoke Valley as "Virginia's Blue Ridge" to improve the area's recognition and marketing efforts. Mr. Howard further stated that he and his staff appreciate the opportunity to work with Botetourt County as it has a "fabulous product."

Mr. Williamson stated that the County requested and received approval from the General Assembly earlier this year to increase its transient occupancy tax from 5% to 7% and asked if the CVB is willing to endorse this tax increase.

Mr. Howard stated that, on behalf of the CVB's members, he endorses the proposed transient occupancy tax increase from 5% to 7%.

Mr. Howard further noted that their figures indicate that, since 2010, there have been only two months of negative tourism growth in the area and this was due to the federal govern-

ment shutdown in 2013 which closed the Blue Ridge Parkway and other federal monuments/parks in this area.

There being no discussion, on motion by Mr. Martin, seconded by Mr. Dodson, and carried by the following recorded vote, the Board approved the following resolution supporting the designation of the Roanoke Valley region as Virginia's Blue Ridge and directed the use of the Virginia's Blue Ridge brand by the County on promotional and marketing materials in support of expanded destination travel and tourism in this region.

AYES: Mr. Martin, Mr. Williamson, Mr. Dodson, Mr. Leffel, Dr. Scothorn

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAINING: None

Resolution Number 16-04-10

WHEREAS, travel in Virginia's Blue Ridge generates nearly \$784 million in travel expenditures annually by visitors and supports over 7,600 jobs; and provides more than \$55 million in direct state and local tax revenue; and,

WHEREAS, leisure travel, which accounts for more than three-quarters of all trips taken in the United States, supports our region's arts, entertainment, and recreation sectors of tourism and spurs local job creation; and,

WHEREAS, traveler spending in our region enhances the lives of local residents through sales taxes paid by out-of-town guests, thereby decreasing residents' taxes to cover services enjoyed by all; and,

WHEREAS, travel and tourism are vital components of Virginia's diverse economy, a cornerstone of our vibrant quality of life, and a catalyst for entrepreneurship, cultural enrichment, historic preservation, community revitalization and economic growth; and,

WHEREAS, the goal of the Roanoke Valley Convention & Visitors Bureau is to promote the travel and tourism industry in our region, direct the development of local tourism marketing programs, and increase the prosperity and welfare of the people of Botetourt County and our region; and,

WHEREAS, in an effort to market Virginia's Blue Ridge as a premier travel destination, the Roanoke Valley Convention & Visitors Bureau works in partnership with localities, businesses and non-profit institutions to extend the appeal, reach and impact of the "Virginia's Blue Ridge" brand; and,

WHEREAS, the Virginia's Blue Ridge brand promotes a positive and attractive image, regionally, nationally and globally; and,

WHEREAS, Botetourt County desires to work with other regional governments and private businesses to unite under one regional brand, Virginia's Blue Ridge; and

WHEREAS, Botetourt County, in cooperation with other localities within our region, desires to cooperate, collaborate, develop and maintain a consistent message that supports the Virginia's Blue Ridge brand.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the Board of Supervisors of Botetourt County, Virginia as follows:

1. Botetourt County joins its regional partners in designating our region as Virginia's Blue Ridge.
2. The Board directs that Botetourt marketing and promotional materials support the Virginia's Blue Ridge brand, to promote, encourage and sustain the growth of destination travel and tourism within the greater Roanoke Valley Region.
3. The Board directs the Clerk to provide an attested copy of this Resolution to the Roanoke Valley Convention & Visitors Bureau, the City of Roanoke Council, the Roanoke County Board of Supervisors, the Vinton Town Council, and the Salem City Council.

Mr. Wilhelm thanked the Board for the support that they have given to the CVB and expressed his appreciation for the Board's approval of this resolution. He noted that the County has been a great supporter of the Bureau and he believes that there are more good things to come.

Mr. Wilhelm further noted that the Board made a great decision in hiring Mr. Larrowe as County Administrator as he has been a very enthusiastic supporter of their organization and its activities over the past few months.

There being no further discussion, they then left the meeting at this time.

Consideration was then held on a resolution declaring the week of May 15 – 21, 2016, as Emergency Medical Services Week. Mr. Jason Ferguson, Deputy Chief, stated that the third week of May is considered National EMS Week and a resolution recognizing this week in Botetourt County has been provided for the Board's consideration. He noted that this year's theme is "EMS Strong: Called to Care."

Mr. Ferguson stated that several representatives of the County's volunteer and career EMS staff are present at today's meeting. He noted that these personnel provide 24/7 service to the County's citizens.

Mr. Leffel thanked each of the County's EMS members for their service and dedication. Mr. Leffel stated that he knows that the service that these personnel provide is not easy.

Mr. Martin stated that the EMS personnel provide a great service for the County and the Board appreciates each of them for their dedication.

There being no further discussion, on motion by Mr. Martin, seconded by Mr. Williamson, and carried by the following recorded vote, the Board adopted the following resolution declaring the week of May 15 – 21, 2016, as Emergency Medical Services Week.

AYES: Mr. Williamson, Mr. Dodson, Mr. Martin, Mr. Leffel, Dr. Scothorn

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAINING: None

Resolution Number 16-04-11

WHEREAS, emergency medical services are a vital public service; and,

WHEREAS, the members of emergency medical services teams are ready to provide lifesaving care to those in need twenty-four (24) hours a day, seven (7) days a week; and,

WHEREAS, access to quality, emergency care dramatically improves the survival and recovery rate of those who experience sudden illness or injury; and,

WHEREAS, the emergency medical services system consists of emergency physicians, nurses, medical technicians, paramedics, firefighters, educators, administrators, 911 telecommunications officers, and others; and,

WHEREAS, the members of emergency medical service teams, both career or volunteer, engage in thousands of hours of specialized training and continuing education to enhance their lifesaving skills; and,

WHEREAS, it is appropriate to recognize the value and the accomplishments of emergency medical service providers by designating Emergency Medical Services Week,

NOW, THEREFORE, we, the Board of Supervisors of Botetourt County, Virginia, do hereby proclaim the week of May 15 through 21, 2016, as **EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES WEEK** in the County of Botetourt; and,

FURTHER, with the theme "*EMS Strong: Called to Care*," we encourage the community to observe this week with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities.

Consideration was then held on a request from Relay for Life for a variance to the Noise Ordinance regarding an event scheduled at Daleville Town Center. Mr. David Moorman, Deputy County Administrator, stated that the local Relay for Life group is holding a fundraising event for the American Cancer Society from 11AM to 11PM on Saturday, May 7 at Daleville Town Center.

Mr. Moorman noted that this event will include music to keep the participants motivated and engaged; however, the County's noise ordinance prohibits the production of music from any device after 10:00 PM "in such a manner as to be plainly audible across property boundaries ... or plainly audible at fifty (50) feet from such device." He noted that Daleville Town Center is requesting a variance to Section 15-59 of the Noise Ordinance in order to allow music to continue between 10 and 11 PM during this event.

Mr. Moorman stated that the ordinance allows the Board to grant a variance if it finds that the noise does not endanger the public health, safety or welfare, or compliance with the ordinance's provisions would produce "serious hardship without producing equal or greater benefit to the public."

After questioning by Mr. Dodson, Mr. Moorman stated that Daleville Town Center staff do have equipment to monitor the noise levels generated by this event.

Ms. Molly Henry, Director of Sales, Events and Marketing with Fralin and Waldron, stated that they do have the equipment available to monitor the music's decibel levels during this event.

After questioning by Mr. Dodson, Ms. Henry stated that they will keep the event's noise at the levels the County allows in its ordinance. After further questioning, Ms. Henry stated that she does not know of any complaints received from adjacent property owners about the noise level of events held in 2016. Ms. Henry noted that Sheriff Sprinkle is in attendance at the meeting and he may have this information.

After questioning, Sheriff Sprinkle stated that he does not know of any noise complaints received by his office since Daleville Town Center made some adjustments to their site setup in 2015.

Mr. Williamson suggested that Daleville Town Center provide notices to the adjacent property owners along Glebe Road of this 11AM to 11PM event to try to reduce the number of complaints received by the Sheriff's Department.

Mr. Dodson stated that he believes that Mr. Williamson's suggestion would be a good outreach effort for the community by Daleville Town Center.

There being no further discussion, on motion by Mr. Dodson, seconded by Dr. Scothorn, and carried by the following recorded vote, the Board approved the request from Relay for Life of Botetourt County for a variance to the County's Noise Ordinance for their event scheduled at Daleville Town Center on Saturday, May 7, 2016, from 11AM to 11PM as the noise does not endanger the public health, safety or welfare, and compliance with the ordinance's provisions would produce "serious hardship without producing equal or greater benefit to the public." (Resolution Number 16-04-12)

AYES: Mr. Williamson, Mr. Dodson, Mr. Martin, Mr. Leffel, Dr. Scothorn

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAINING: None

Mr. Dan Collins, Residency Administrator, Mr. Craig Moore, Assistant District Location and Design Engineer, and Mr. Kevin Hamm, Maintenance Operations Manager, with the Virginia Department of Transportation, were then present to speak to the Board.

Mr. Collins stated that he and Mr. Moore were present to provide an update on the Route 220 safety improvement project. Mr. Collins then presented the Board members with a handout on the project's details.

Mr. Moore stated that VDoT is holding a public hearing and presentation on the proposed safety improvements along the Route 220 corridor between Eagle Rock and Iron Gate on Thursday, April 28 from 5 to 7PM at Eagle Rock Elementary School. Mr. Moore noted that they plan to advertise this as a design/build project in order to expedite the project's construction to begin in late 2017 versus the previous date of 2019. Mr. Moore stated that they hope to have a contractor hired in early 2017 for phases 1 and 2 of this project. He noted that Thursday's hearing will be on the improvements proposed for phases 1 and 2.

After discussion, Mr. Moore then noted that VDoT will request a resolution in support of this project from the Board of Supervisors in the future.

After questioning by Mr. Williamson, Mr. Moore stated that the total current allocation for this project is \$79 million; \$66 million for phase 1 and \$30 million for phase 2. After further questioning by Mr. Williamson, Mr. Moore stated that phase 2 of this project was not included in VDoT's draft budget for House Bill 2 (HB2) projects as it did not score well during the review phase. Mr. Moore stated that VDoT will work with the County to submit another funding application for this project in the next round of HB2 submissions.

After questioning by Mr. Williamson, Mr. Moore stated that the contractor may be able to partially begin work on phase 2 if there are project savings remaining from phase 1.

Mr. Leffel thanked Mr. Moore for this update. He noted that having the project begin two years earlier than previously discussed is appreciated.

Mr. Collins then noted that VDoT's reference guide for boards of supervisors has been updated and he provided the Board with a means to access this new manual on VDoT's website.

The Board thanked Mr. Collins and Mr. Moore for their updates.

Mr. Hamm then reviewed VDoT's monthly report. He noted that VDoT's staff are very busy now that the spring construction season has begun. He further noted that there will be lane closures and traffic delays due to travel lane restriping on the Exit 150 project in the next week or so. Mr. Hamm stated that rehabilitation work on the I-81 bridge across the James River near Buchanan will begin in May with work beneath the bridge scheduled during daylight hours and work on the I-81 portion will be performed at night.

Mr. Hamm stated that the Catawba/Etzler Road intersection/bridge project is now estimated to be completed during the winter of 2016.

After questioning by Mr. Dodson, Mr. Hamm stated that he would forward additional information to Mr. Dodson on the cause of this delay.

Mr. Hamm stated that the box culvert replacement on Indian Rock Road should be completed in May and work on the Roaring Run Road culvert will begin this week and be completed in June. He noted that the bridge replacement on Route 615 should begin later this week and completed on Monday, May 2. He noted that traffic will be reduced to one lane during the repair work and reopen to traffic early on May 2. Mr. Hamm further stated that bridge work on Route 779 should begin in mid-June.

After discussion, Mr. Hamm stated that VDoT reviewed one project and issued 9 private entrance, utility, and construction entrance permits in the past month. He further stated that mowing operations on the primary roads should begin on May 9 and, once completed, mowing will begin on the secondary roads. Mr. Hamm stated that a pipe replacement project on Archway Road is scheduled to begin this week and then the crew will move to Gala to replace pipes in that area.

Mr. Hamm then stated that a section of Long Run Road (Route 772) southwest of Buchanan has collapsed and the roadway will be closed for approximately a week for pipe replacement. He noted that the roadway collapse resulted in a hole approximately 6' – 7' deep.

After questioning by Mr. Leffel, Mr. Hamm stated that he would provide Mr. Leffel with the location of this repair site.

Mr. Hamm stated that the through truck restrictions are in effect on Mountain Pass Road, Humbert Road, and Laymantown Road and all appropriate signage has been installed. He noted that VDoT has received a few telephone calls that trucks are still using these roadways but the number is less than in the past and it will now be an enforcement issue for the Sheriff's Department and State Police.

Mr. Martin thanked Mr. Hamm for having these signs installed and noted that he recently received a call regarding a truck becoming stuck on Mountain Pass Road and delaying traffic for about 1½ hours. After questioning by Mr. Martin, Mr. Hamm stated that the truck restrictions effect vehicles that are 7,500 pounds or more and require a Commercial Driver's License to operate. Mr. Hamm stated that Valley Road and Webster Heights Road are restricted to tractor trailers only while Mountain Pass, Laymantown, and Humbert have full truck restrictions in place. Mr. Hamm further stated that, if trucks have a delivery to make along these roads, then they are allowed to use the roadway.

After further questioning by Mr. Martin, Mr. Hamm stated that Mountain Pass Road is on VDoT's paving schedule this year.

There being no further discussion, the Board thanked Mr. Hamm for his report.

Consideration was then held on a request to advertise for a public hearing on proposed amendments to the Transient Occupancy Tax Ordinance. Mr. Jim Farmer, Director of Parks, Recreation and Tourism, stated that this year the Virginia General Assembly approved a request from the County to increase the Transient Occupancy Tax rate from 5% to 7%. He noted that the Governor signed this law into effect as of July 1, 2016.

Mr. Farmer stated that staff is requesting that the Board authorize the advertisement of a public hearing at the May regular meeting on amendments to the Taxation Ordinance to increase this rate from 5% to 7%. He noted that these revenues over 5% are to be designated and expended solely for advertising the Roanoke Metropolitan Area as a tourist destination by members of the Roanoke Valley Convention and Visitors Bureau.

On motion by Mr. Williamson, seconded by Mr. Dodson, and carried by the following recorded vote, the Board authorized the advertisement of a public hearing at the May 24 regular meeting to consider amendments to Chapter 23. Taxation, Article X. Transient Occupancy Tax of the Botetourt County Code to increase the tax rate from five (5) to seven (7) percent. (Resolution Number 16-04-13)

AYES: Mr. Williamson, Mr. Dodson, Mr. Martin, Mr. Leffel, Dr. Scothorn

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAINING: None

Consideration was then held on guidelines for the Library Incentive Fund. Mr. Steve Vest, Library Director, stated that the County created this incentive fund, which is similar to the Parks and Recreation Incentive fund, last year with an initial allocation amount of \$5,000. He noted that the program provides citizens and organizations the opportunity to fund 50% of improvement projects for the library system with the opportunity to request up to 50% in matching funds from the County.

Mr. Vest stated that guidelines to define the purpose and uses of the fund, methods of application, etc., have been developed and included in the Board's information packets for their review.

After questioning by Dr. Scothorn regarding subsection "E" ("The County must inspect, approve and accept all work related to a project before reimbursement.") under Project Administration in these guidelines, Mr. Vest stated that he would inspect the work prior to approving reimbursement funds.

After questioning by Mr. Dodson regarding subsection "D" ("Any project must be completed within a year of the date of approval.") under this same section, Mr. Vest stated that he would be surprised if any proposed project would take longer than one year to complete.

After further discussion regarding project delays, Mr. Tony Zerrilla, Director of Finance, stated that, if a project was delayed until the following fiscal year, the County could, if necessary, rollover funds into the new fiscal year to allow the project to be completed.

After discussion, the Board agreed to amend subsection "D" under Project Administration to read as follows, "Any project must be completed within a year of the date of approval, unless authorized by the Board of Supervisors or Library Board of Trustees."

There being no further discussion, on motion by Mr. Williamson, seconded by Mr. Dodson, and carried by the following recorded vote, the Board adopted the guidelines for the Library Incentive Fund with the following amendment and authorized the Evaluation Committee and Library Director to now accept project requests. (Resolution Number 16-04-14)

AYES: Mr. Williamson, Mr. Dodson, Mr. Martin, Mr. Leffel, Dr. Scothorn

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAINING: None

Subsection "D" under Project Administration to now read as follows, "Any project must be completed within a year of the date of approval, unless authorized by the Board of Supervisors or Library Board of Trustees."

Consideration was then held on a policy regarding procedures to allow the County Administrator to sign Treasurer's financial warrants/checks. Mr. Michael Lockaby, County Attorney, stated that, upon being elected County Treasurer four years ago, Mr. Bill Arney reviewed the various policies and practices of the office as set out in the Code of Virginia to determine if any updates were needed. He noted that these procedures pertain to the entry of lawful contracts, the issuance of lawful warrants, and the conversion of the warrants into negotiable instruments by the Treasurer.

Mr. Lockaby stated that the Code of Virginia allows the Board to delegate these powers to the County Administrator by resolution; however, staff has been unable to locate this adopted resolution. He noted that failure to follow the statutory procedures can result in liability for the Administrator, Treasurer, and Board, so the Treasurer and County staff developed a policy to set the current procedures in writing.

Mr. Lockaby noted that the changes in this policy from the current practices are minor and should result in minimal differences in how the County's financial warrants are handled or how the Board operates on a monthly basis. He further noted that the Finance Director has reviewed and concurred with this proposed policy and it has been discussed with Corbin Stone with the County's auditing firm, Robinson, Farmer, Cox Associates.

After questioning by Mr. Dodson, Mr. Arney stated that he agrees with the proposed policy language.

There being no further discussion, on motion by Dr. Scothorn, seconded by Mr. Dodson, and carried by the following recorded vote, the Board approved the "Finance Policies and Procedures" guidelines as presented. (Resolution Number 16-04-15)

AYES: Mr. Williamson, Mr. Dodson, Mr. Martin, Mr. Leffel, Dr. Scothorn

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAINING: None

Mr. Larrowe then requested the Board's consideration of a resolution requesting restoration of VDoT funding to a House Bill 2 (HB2) project application for the I-81/Arcadia safety improvement project. He noted that, after receiving and scoring the first round of HB2 transportation funding applications last fall and earlier this year, the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) included funding for I-81 safety improvements at the "S" curves located at mile markers 166.5 through 168.5 in the Arcadia area.

Mr. Larrowe stated that, after public hearings, the CTB recommended changes to the funding scenario earlier this month which removed funding for this project in favor of lower scoring projects. He stated that staff has drafted a resolution requesting reconsideration of funding for this project. Mr. Larrowe stated that a letter and a copy of this resolution will be sent to the CTB, the Governor, the Secretary of Transportation, VDoT, and the County's General Assembly representatives.

On motion by Mr. Williamson, seconded by Dr. Scothorn, and carried by the following recorded vote, the Board adopted the following resolution requesting that funding for I-81 safety improvements in the Arcadia area be restored in the Primary System Six Year Plan.

AYES: Mr. Williamson, Mr. Dodson, Mr. Martin, Mr. Leffel, Dr. Scothorn

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAINING: None

Resolution Number 16-04-16

WHEREAS, the Botetourt County Board of Supervisors is committed to advocating for and ensuring the long-term provision of superior transportation infrastructure both in the County and the region; and,

WHEREAS, the Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board adopted HB2 application and scoring guidelines in June 2015 allowing localities to apply for funding through the HB2 process; and,

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors directed County staff to submit an application for the following project: I-81 Safety Improvements from MM 166.5-168.5; and,

WHEREAS, the project meets a number of needs in VTrans 2040, including being on a corridor of statewide significance, maintaining corridor reliability, providing inter-regional network connectivity, and requiring safety improvements; and,

WHEREAS, specifically, this project will significantly help mitigate a major traffic risk area that is known to cause accidents resulting in catastrophic failures of both I-81, the major economic connector between the Roanoke and Shenandoah Valleys, and U.S. Route 11, a two-lane road that serves as Main Street for the Town of Buchanan; and,

WHEREAS, the project received a project benefit score of 1.6, and the Secretary of Transportation's staff recommended funding for the project under a draft scenario released in January 2016; and,

WHEREAS, the Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board met in April 2016 to revise the funding scenario, removing the recommended funding from the Botetourt County project in favor of funding other projects that received lower project benefit scores; and,

WHEREAS, the significant need for the project still exists and the benefits to the County, Town, and region would be maintained by the successful funding and completion of this project; and,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Botetourt County Board of Supervisors requests that the Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board recommend restoring funding to the I-81 Safety Improvements from MM 166.5-168.5 project in the Six-Year Plan; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be submitted to Secretary of Transportation Aubrey L. Layne, Jr., Virginia Department of Transportation Commissioner Charles A. Kilpatrick, and Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board Members William H. Fralin, Jr., and Court G. Rosen for their due consideration.

Ms. Cristina Finch, Manager of Transit Planning and Programming for the Roanoke Valley/Alleghany Regional Commission, was then present to give a presentation on the Regional Transit Vision Plan. Ms. Finch stated that transit is a component of a multimodal transportation system.

She noted that work on a Regional Transit Plan to offer future additional transportation options in the County and the region began last year. She further noted that a livable Roanoke Valley includes economic and workforce development, health, and environmental sustainability. She noted that the health aspect includes opportunities for residents to walk and bike and have transportation options available to access medical facilities and appointments.

Ms. Finch stated that their work last year began with research into what options are currently available in the Roanoke Valley, hiring a consultant, and establishing a steering committee which consists of members from the area's local governments, chambers of commerce, Blue Ridge Independent Living Center, Ride Solutions, Health Department, Valley Metro, etc. She noted that several public workshops were held last fall and early this year and a draft plan has been developed. Ms. Finch stated that over 4,000 pieces of information were received and considered.

Ms. Finch stated that she has made presentations on the plan's proposals to the area's local governments and is present today to obtain Botetourt County's input before the Transportation Planning Organization considers the document for approval.

After discussion, Ms. Finch stated that the transit service analysis included a determination on locational gaps in service as well as gaps in service connections, e.g., where are people coming from and going to. She noted that the committee also considered the area's geography, rivers, and railroads, which are barriers to transit. Ms. Finch then reviewed a map showing the existing transit system's connections which show areas that are conducive to multi-model transportation and would require only a 10 minute walk to reach a bus stop or have high-density residential/commercial areas, e.g., Roanoke Memorial Hospital, Tanglewood Mall, Salem, Vinton, etc.

Ms. Finch stated that the report's short-term recommendations include an increase in service to Vinton and along the I-581 corridor, extensions of transit service to the Cave Spring

area and western Salem, and new routes along Electric Road and Williamson Road toward Hollins, and along U. S. Route 460 and Alternate 220 to EastPark Commerce Center. She noted that Blue Ridge area residents could park at the Bonsack Wal-Mart and take a shuttle bus to downtown for appointments and shopping.

After questioning by Mr. Dodson, Ms. Finch stated that “short-term’ is defined in this report as within the next six years.”

After questioning by Mr. Williamson, Ms. Finch stated that there is a potential for a park-and-ride to be located along the Route 460/Alternate 220 corridor. She noted that there are many informal park-and-ride sites in this region.

She stated that the medium-term transit recommendations include service to Botetourt Center at Greenfield, express commuter service from downtown Roanoke to the Hollins/Plantation Road area, and Greenfield/Daleville.

After discussion, Mr. Williamson suggested that language be included in the proposal for development of a future park-and-ride to be located along Route 220 north of Exit 150.

After questioning by Mr. Dodson, Ms. Finch stated that “medium-term” is defined as 6 - 12 years.

After questioning by Dr. Scothorn, Ms. Finch stated that the commuter service is proposed to operate in Botetourt County during the morning and afternoon peak travel periods; however, this would depend on the shifts and business needs in the region and other transit services in downtown Roanoke.

Ms. Finch then reviewed the long-term recommendations which are defined as 12 – 25 years in the future. She noted that this includes increases in the frequency of all daytime service to Botetourt County and Greenfield and add local service along U. S. Route 11 toward Troutville. Ms. Finch noted that she also reviewed this proposed transit plan with the County’s Planning Commission earlier this month and they recommended the inclusion of a connection from Bonsack to Daleville/Greenfield.

Ms. Finch then reviewed the study’s broad recommendations which included maintaining a centralized hub in downtown Roanoke, developing peripheral connections to areas such as Carilion and Lewis-Gale hospitals, the area’s three shopping malls, the VA Medical Center, Cave Spring, Hollins, Vinton, and downtown Salem, and coordinate transit service with Amtrak schedules.

Dr. Scothorn stated that expanding the valley’s transit system will cost a lot of money. He questioned if Carilion provides any sponsorship for transit services.

Ms. Finch stated that Carilion is currently partnering with the transit system through the trolley service from downtown Roanoke to the hospital. She noted that partnership opportunities do exist with the area’s businesses. She also noted that people want to connect with the new Amtrak schedule when service is restored to Roanoke next year.

Ms. Finch further stated that the plan’s broad recommendations also include establishing more partnerships for services and bus stop amenities, incorporate real time passenger information, regionalize services for the area’s disabled citizens, construct pedestrian and bicycle accommodations near future transit points, and consider transit in all new developments. She noted that House Bill 2 (HB2) funding is not the only funding option for pedestrian infrastructure.

After discussion, Ms. Finch stated that the plan’s land use recommendations include promoting development that is primarily people-oriented, not car oriented which includes placement of buildings near streets/transit corridors and locating parking lots to the side or rear of buildings, amend land use/zoning ordinances to increase development density near future

transit, and incorporate pedestrian/bicycle connections to future transit services. She encouraged the County and its staff to consider density concentrations in future development discussions.

Ms. Finch stated that the next steps include the presentation of this report to the other Roanoke Valley jurisdictions, finalize the report's recommendations, cost estimates, and implementation strategies for completion of the final report by June, consideration of the plan's approval by the TPO Policy Board this summer, and request for local government endorsement of the final plan later this year.

After questioning by Mr. Williamson, Ms. Finch stated that this plan is being carried out under the Regional Commission's work program.

Mr. Dodson stated that this report supports what the Board is doing to revive development at Exit 150 including discussion on the location of a park-and-ride facility in that area.

There being no further discussion, Mr. Leffel thanked Ms. Finch for her presentation.

Ms. Terri Brockly of Ray Street stated that this proposal is an opportunity to connect the southern portion of Botetourt County via public transit to Roanoke. She stated that "we need them just as much as they need us." Ms. Brockly stated that the County has to be connected and noted that the proposed greenway/trail connections between the County and Roanoke are a wonderful idea.

Ms. Brockly stated that "to grow you need transportation" and the County also needs to bring young people into this area. She noted that this is an important time for the County and the Board should consider letting transit into the County to bring in people to work. She encouraged the Board to have an open mind about transit.

Discussion was then held on various appointments.

After discussion, on motion by Mr. Martin, seconded by Mr. Leffel, and carried by the following recorded vote, the Board appointed Mr. Gary Larowe as a non-elected representative on the Roanoke Valley/Alleghany Regional Commission's Board of Directors for a term to expire on June 30, 2017. (Resolution Number 16-04-17)

AYES: Mr. Williamson, Mr. Dodson, Mr. Martin, Mr. Leffel, Dr. Scothorn

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAINING: None

Mr. Williamson then stated that he has served one year as the County's representative on the Western Virginia Water Authority's Board of Directors and has submitted his resignation to the Chairman of the Authority's Board. Mr. Williamson suggested that Mr. Stephen P. Clinton be appointed to complete his term. He noted that Mr. Clinton is willing to be appointed, is a former Supervisors member, and has significant business and engineering experience.

On motion by Mr. Williamson, seconded by Dr. Scothorn, and carried by the following recorded vote, the Board accepted Mr. John Williamson's resignation as the County's representative on the Western Virginia Water Authority's Board of Directors effective April 30, 2016, and appointed Mr. Stephen P. Clinton of 108 South Braemar Circle, Daleville, to complete this term which expires on June 30, 2017. (Resolution Number 16-04-18)

AYES: Mr. Dodson, Mr. Martin, Mr. Leffel, Mr. Williamson, Dr. Scothorn

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAINING: None

On motion by Mr. Martin, seconded by Mr. Williamson, and carried by the following recorded vote, the Board reappointed Ms. Erin Henderson as the County's citizen representative on the Roanoke Valley/Alleghany Regional Commission's Board of Directors for a three-year term to expire on June 30, 2019. (Resolution Number 16-04-19)

AYES: Mr. Williamson, Mr. Dodson, Mr. Martin, Mr. Leffel, Dr. Scothorn

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAINING: None

On motion by Mr. Leffel, seconded by Mr. Dodson, and carried by the following recorded vote, the Board ratified the appointment of Mr. Greg Hamilton as an at-large member on the Blue Ridge Behavioral Healthcare Board of Directors for a three year term to expire on December 31, 2018. (Resolution Number 16-04-20)

AYES: Mr. Dodson, Mr. Martin, Mr. Leffel, Mr. Williamson, Dr. Scothorn

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAINING: None

After discussion, on motion by Mr. Williamson, seconded by Mr. Martin, and carried by the following recorded vote, the Board reappointed Mr. Joe Obenshain as the Buchanan District representative on the Social Services Board for a four year term to expire on July 1, 2020. (Resolution Number 16-04-21)

AYES: Mr. Martin, Mr. Williamson, Mr. Dodson, Mr. Leffel, Dr. Scothorn

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAINING: None

Mr. Dodson and Dr. Scothorn requested that the appointments of the Amsterdam and Valley District representatives to the Social Services Board be tabled until the May regular meeting.

Mrs. Beth Doughty was then in attendance to give a presentation on the Roanoke Regional Partnership's annual report. Mrs. Doughty thanked the Board for the opportunity to present this report and for their continued support of the Partnership's efforts.

Mrs. Doughty stated that one-half of their funding is provided from the eight local governments that the organization services and one-half is from the business sector. Mrs. Doughty stated that her presentation today focuses on the work that the Partnership has been doing in five different areas—market intelligence, visibility raising, business attraction, asset development, and product development. She noted that the Partnership's purpose is to create prosperity and workforce opportunities in the region.

Mrs. Doughty stated that the Partnership filled 378 information requests last year compared to 329 in 2014 and 285 in 2013. She noted that these requests were from local governments, elected officials, private businesses asking for information on economic trends, and from non-profit agencies who needed information to complete grant applications. She noted that the Partnership staff also conduct their own cost-of-living research and studies to make informed decisions on issues that affect the economy.

She stated that the Partnership's website was redesigned several years ago and their social engagement with the internet, Facebook, Twitter, and newsletter subscribers continues to grow. Mrs. Doughty stated that their business attraction/expansion/retention activity has increased based on the number of project files that her staff has created. She noted that this has increased from 270 project files in 2012 to 514 in 2015 and 100 more files were opened in 2015 than in 2014.

Mrs. Doughty stated that she and her staff generate leads, process them, and deliver leads to the localities so they “can close the deal.” She stated that the Partnership is able to cultivate these leads in order to provide opportunities for Botetourt County and their other business partners.

She also noted that they use software to measure the economic impact of businesses in the region and noted that it is estimated that Eldor will have \$247 million in yearly economic impact in the region. Mrs. Doughty stated that data from each economic development announcement is used to calculate the recurring impact of the business on the local economy. She noted that the annual impact in 2015 was \$2.4 billion compared to \$1.5 billion in 2014.

Mrs. Doughty stated that the County’s announcements in March of Eldor’s location in Greenfield and the Virginia Community College System’s shared services Center in Daleville will create 570 new jobs in the County. She noted that the County cannot discount the spillover of these announcements in the local economy.

Mrs. Doughty stated that it is estimated that there were 2,700 net, new jobs created in the Roanoke region in 2015. She noted that the area’s unemployment rate decreased to 3.8% in 2015 and there are an estimated 11,000 to 13,000 unfilled jobs in this region. Mrs. Doughty stated that the region needs to focus on workforce development issues.

Regarding asset development, Mrs. Doughty stated that the economic impact of the Blue Ridge Marathon was estimated to be over \$550,000 in 2015 and the attendees at the GO Outside Festival increased by 22% in 2015. She noted that these are just two of the events that bring visitors to the valley and monetizes the region’s assets. Mrs. Doughty stated that the Partnership is continuing with its outdoor branding and community narrative efforts.

Regarding product development, Mrs. Doughty stated that the Greater Roanoke Valley Development Foundation’s shell building project in Greenfield is waiting on final construction costs to be received and the financial entity to complete its due diligence on the loan application.

She further stated that six area localities are members in the Western Virginia Regional Industrial Facility Authority. She noted that the Authority has identified large tracts of land that could be jointly developed as “product” (sites) for new industries in the region and a study has been completed which prioritizes the properties for development potential.

Mrs. Doughty stated that their next step is to acquire and develop a large site (50+ acres) as there are very few sites of this size or larger currently available for economic development in the valley.

Mrs. Doughty stated that she and her seven staff members continue to be busy and thanked the Board for their support and the opportunity to present this report. She also noted that the County’s staff is great to work with.

Mr. Leffel thanked Mrs. Doughty for all of her work in the County’s March economic development announcements.

There being no further discussion, she then left the meeting at this time.

There being no further discussion, the Chairman continued the meeting at 3:45 P. M. until 6:00 P. M.

The Chairman called the meeting back to order at 6:00 P. M.

Mr. Leffel stated that the County had received a letter from the President of Cash Building Supply Company withdrawing their rezoning and Special Exceptions Permit application from consideration.

After discussion, on motion by Mr. Leffel, seconded by Mr. Martin, and carried by the following recorded vote, the Board then amended the meeting's agenda to remove the public hearing request in the Valley Magisterial District from Cash Building Supply, Inc., to rezone from a Business (B-3) Use District to a Business (B-2) Use District, with possible proffered conditions; a Special Exception Permit for a flea market; a Special Exception Permit for indoor commercial recreation uses; and a Special Exception Permit to reduce the minimum district size, with possible conditions, for antique retail shops, bingo, and on-site auctions on a 3.027-acre lot at 3396 Lee Highway, Troutville, located approximately 0.6 miles north of the Exit 150 interchange, identified on the Real Property Identification Maps of Botetourt County as Section 101(5), Parcels 10 and 11. (Resolution Number 16-04-22)

AYES: Mr. Martin, Mr. Williamson, Mr. Dodson, Mr. Leffel, Dr. Scothorn

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAINING: None

On motion by Mr. Williamson, seconded by Mr. Leffel, and carried by the following recorded vote, the Board approved the request from Cash Building Supply, Inc., to withdraw their request for a public hearing to rezone from a Business (B-3) Use District to a Business (B-2) Use District, with possible proffered conditions; a Special Exception Permit for a flea market; a Special Exception Permit for indoor commercial recreation uses; and a Special Exception Permit to reduce the minimum district size, with possible conditions, for antique retail shops, bingo, and on-site auctions on a 3.027-acre lot at 3396 Lee Highway, Troutville, located approximately 0.6 miles north of the Exit 150 interchange, identified on the Real Property Identification Maps of Botetourt County as Section 101(5), Parcels 10 and 11. (Resolution Number 16-04-23)

AYES: Mr. Williamson, Mr. Dodson, Mr. Martin, Mr. Leffel, Dr. Scothorn

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAINING: None

There being no further discussion, the Chairman then adjourned the meeting at 6:03 P. M. until 7:00 P. M.

The Chairman then called the meeting back to order at 7:00 P. M. at Lord Botetourt High School.

Mr. Leffel stated that he appreciated everyone's attendance for tonight's public hearings on the proposed County and School budgets and tax rates. He stated that Mr. Williamson, Chairman of the General Fund Budget Subcommittee, would give a brief overview on the proposed FY 17 County budget and tax rates prior to the hearings being opened for public comment.

Mr. Williamson stated that the proposed budget was developed to help the County prepare for the future in the aspects of public safety, education, infrastructure, community development, economic development, technological efficiency, and fiscal sustainability. He noted that for the last three years, the County adopted a deficit budget and had to use between \$1 and \$1.3 million in Undesignated Fund Balance monies to balance the budget.

Mr. Williamson stated that approximately \$500,000 of the proposed FY 17 budget increase is to fund an additional rescue squad unit at Troutville to meet the area's emergency

call response needs. He further stated that the County has deferred maintenance on buildings and infrastructure over the past few years and upgrades are needed to the County's telephone and software systems.

He stated that the projected FY 17 revenue sources are: local--\$48.9 million; State--\$10.8 million; and federal--\$0.9 million. He stated that the General Fund's revenues (\$60.6 million) are proposed to increase 8.4% or \$4.7 million and school revenues (\$32.8 million) are proposed to increase 1.4% or \$0.4 million for an increase of 3.6% or \$3.2 million over the current fiscal year. He noted that the 2016 reassessment valuation increases were net neutral and new construction in the County was flat. He further noted that the proposed budget has an advertised real estate tax rate of 81¢ (increase of 9¢) and a proposed rate of \$2.76 (13¢ increase) for the personal property tax rate.

Mr. Williamson stated that most of the proposed \$4.9 million in revenue increases are in local revenues (11.2%) as there are proposed decreases in State (1.2%) and federal (9.7%) monies in FY 17. He noted that the Supervisors members considered various scenarios of different rate increases to balance the proposed budget. Mr. Williamson noted that a 1¢ increase in the real estate tax rate equates to \$350,000 in new revenues. He then reviewed the impact on taxes paid on a \$150,000 home based on the proposed real estate tax increase.

Regarding the proposed personal property tax increase, Mr. Williamson stated that the current rate of \$2.63 per \$100 assessment is proposed to increase to \$2.76. He noted that a 1¢ increase in the personal property tax rate generates approximately \$20,000 in new revenue. Mr. Williamson then gave an example of taxes assessed on a \$10,000 vehicle currently and as a result of this proposed tax increase.

Mr. Williamson stated that the proposed General Fund expenditure increase would be 5.6% (\$1.7 million); the debt service is proposed to decrease 13.6% to \$3.3 million; the school expenditures are proposed to increase 3.5% to \$57.1 million, and the contingency would remain at \$200,000 over the current fiscal year. He noted that total expenditures are proposed to be \$93.3 million or 3.6% (\$3.2 million) over the current fiscal year.

He stated that these proposed budget increases are to fund a new Sheriff's road deputy position, a new 24/7 EMS crew at Troutville, continuation of Sheriff's vehicle and ambulance replacement programs, 2% wage increase for staff, funding for Sheriff Department's salary compression adjustments, capital improvements to County buildings and property and an attempt to repair school roofs as little to no facility maintenance has been funded in the past 5 – 6 years. He noted that the budget also proposes to fund the future including economic development initiatives at Greenfield and Gateway Center, library strategic planning, and technological upgrades.

Mr. Williamson stated that the school system has requested between \$1.8 and \$1.9 million in new monies and the FY 17 budget proposes \$1.5 million--\$1.3 million in teacher compensation and \$0.2 million for the purchase of new school buses. He noted that the total County funds transfer to the Schools is proposed to be \$24.3 million.

In summary, Mr. Williamson stated that there is a proposed real estate and personal property tax increase, a 3.6% overall budget increase, increased investment in County infrastructure and overall service delivery, a sustainable budget for major service areas and targeted increases in key areas, e.g., public safety, education, economic development, facilities/infrastructure.

He then reviewed the next steps in the budget approval process including that the school budget has to be approved by May 15 and the County budget and tax rates approved by June 30.

Mr. Williamson stated that a flyer has recently been handed out at several locations to County taxpayers. He noted that this flyer indicates that County teachers are paid \$195,000 per year. He noted that this information is not correct.

Mr. Leffel then reviewed the rules for tonight's public hearings. He noted that the Board is present to hear the citizens' comments regarding the proposed budget and tax rates. He noted that this is not the time to receive or answer questions and, if the citizens have questions, they are asked to contact their Board of Supervisors representative or the County Administrator after this hearing. Mr. Leffel stated that each person will be given five minutes to speak, the speakers should try to not repeat comments made by previous speakers, no personal attacks would be permitted, and speakers should focus on the issues.

Mr. Leffel then called the public hearing to order on the proposed FY 17 County and School budgets, CIP, and tax rates.

Mrs. Ruth Wallace of Glebe Road then stated that she is Chair of the Botetourt County School Board. Mrs. Wallace thanked the Board for working with the School Board on the proposed budget. She stated that this is a "must needs" budget and there are no non-essential items included in their funding request. Mrs. Wallace stated that the school system needs the proposed \$1.5 million in funding to help them to do what needs to be done so they can continue to move the County's schools forward.

Mrs. Wallace stated that she supports the proposed increase to prepare the students for the future. She stated that each entity is trying to do what they can to meet the needs of the citizens. Mrs. Wallace stated that she appreciates the cooperation and trust between both the School Board and the Board of Supervisors over the past few years and she would like to continue the joint meetings to work toward fulfilling their future needs. Mrs. Wallace requested that the full amount of this much-needed budget increase be approved.

Mr. Douglas Helms of Etzler Road stated that he opposes the proposed tax increase. He noted that the County "got rid" of the truck stops facility with "no plans to replace the tax base and revenues." Mr. Helms stated that this is "his money." Mr. Helms stated that the County moved the historical buildings at Greenfield just in case someone wants to locate a business on that site.

Mr. Helms stated that Exit 150 is still congested. He stated that the County used \$100,000 in federal stimulus money to purchase an emergency response vehicle with a self-contained breathing system and he does not know where this type of vehicle would be needed in the County. Mr. Helms stated that the upkeep on this vehicle has to be funded by the County and he has not seen any benefits from having this vehicle.

Mr. Helms then stated that the Daleville Town Center developers "sold us a bill of goods" and the County cannot dictate what businesses are located in that development. He stated that a proposed 7-11 Store at the Route 11/220 intersection is not a truck stop and will not replace the revenues lost from the truck stop. Mr. Helms stated that the County should "send some people to Japan" to see how education is done right. He stated that the County should look at Exit 150 as it has a problem. He stated that there are other interstate exits that can be built at.

Mr. Charles Whiting of Cedar Lane in Buchanan stated that he worked to bring Virginia Forge and a New Zealand company to Botetourt County. Mr. Whiting stated that he does not want the taxes raised on his employees and he does not pay his company treasurer 50% more

than what he receives in revenues. He questioned whether County employees' salaries are competitive with the market or are they the highest paid employees in the County. Mr. Whiting also questioned how much do County employees' pay toward their medical benefits.

He stated that the citizens have a tough job as well. Mr. Whiting stated that real estate 'went into the cellar' in 2007 and the citizens paid top taxes during this time. He stated that the citizens "got a little relief" and now the Board wants to increase taxes again. Mr. Whiting stated that there should be some "fiduciary accountability" for the County's citizens and accountability for the budget's line items.

Mrs. Lisa Farmer of Roanoke Road stated that the County's tax revenues increased \$24.5 million two years ago and this year's proposed increase would increase the County's revenues by \$5 million. Mrs. Farmer stated that she works for herself and has not had a raise in 10 years.

Mrs. Farmer stated that the County should find the money somewhere else to pay the teachers. She stated that the schools asked that the Lord Botetourt roof be repaired four years ago. Mrs. Farmer stated that the County "should make it work." She stated that the County has an aging population and people cannot afford this tax increase. She stated that we need to live within our budgets and be fiscally responsible.

Mr. Ron Cassell of Roanoke Road stated that there should be no added taxes. He stated that we need to spend what we have efficiently. Mr. Cassell stated that the County is generating more tax money than it ever has and the County has businesses that we have never had. He stated that there are large homes in the County. He stated that people are struggling and increasing taxes would push people out of the County.

Mr. Cassell stated that it has been said that there are not enough children in the schools. He stated that people cannot afford to move here and we need to be more efficient with what we have.

Ms. Pam Wiegandt of Murray Street stated that she affirms the budget in general and is in favor of the School's funding request. She stated that when the recession hit it seemed fair to ask everyone to share in the cutbacks and delays in salary/step increases that teachers are promised as a part of their contracts. Ms. Wiegandt stated that there has been only one step increase for teachers in 7 years. She stated that the County is not paying teachers inflated salaries.

Ms. Wiegandt stated that the County has "put off taking care of the people who are taking care of our children." She stated that there are also infrastructure needs that should be funded on a pay as you go basis. Ms. Wiegandt stated that she affirmed the School budget as proposed.

Mr. Ronald Young of Botetourt Road stated that he is not a native of the County but moved here in 1957. Mr. Young stated that he spent 17 years in Roanoke and came back to the County 30 years ago. Mr. Young stated that he loves the County but he does not love what he hears is happening now. Mr. Young stated that he is not in favor of bureaucrats as they are not elected but cause all kinds of misery for the citizens.

Mr. Young stated that "we need to cut some salaries." Mr. Young stated that he has been concerned about the senior citizens and stated that he cannot raise money to pay his taxes. He stated that "we need to do something about this" and the Board needs to listen to the citizens.

Mr. Young stated that a former Congressman from this area, Richard Polk, used to ask his constituents how he should vote as he was concerned about doing the will of the people. He stated that “democracy must begin in Botetourt County.” Mr. Young stated that the Board should listen to the people and we need to “cut, cut, cut” and live within our means.

Mr. Young stated that he is aware that the Supervisors do not have an easy job but encouraged them to listen to the people. Mr. Young stated that the County has lost some great taxpayers and become less business-friendly. He encouraged the Board to cut, not raise, the budget and, “if you lose people, we have some talented people in the County that could use these jobs.”

Mr. Phil Gimli-Mead of Grandview Drive in Troutville stated that he does not understand what the County is doing and would like it to stop. He stated that forward-leaning leadership from the Board and County Administration is needed to meet future challenges. Mr. Gimli-Mead stated that there have been leaking roof issues at several schools for many years. He noted that the County has said that they have no money for these repairs but money was found for the proposed YMCA.

Mr. Gimli-Mead stated that the budget proposes \$4,500 for the Botetourt County Chamber of Commerce, and \$3,500 for the Roanoke Regional Chamber of Commerce and questioned why is the County paying these groups. Mr. Gimli-Mead stated that this does not make a lot of sense. Mr. Gimli-Mead stated that he does not blame the employees for wanting more money—a lot of the citizens would like more money. He stated that only 18% of private employees have pensions and public employees have pensions and great health insurance. Mr. Gimli-Mead stated that he does not see where the proposed tax increase makes any sense.

Mr. Gimli-Mead stated that the County has used a 30+ year horizon in its strategic planning. He stated that this did not work for the Russians and he does not know why the County is trying to do the same thing. Mr. Gimli-Mead stated that the County Administrator previously stated that one of the County’s strategic goals is to lower the average age of its citizens. He said that “this is social engineering.”

Mr. Gimli-Mead stated that the County would like to finish construction of two additional ballfields at the Sports Complex; however, the County is losing money at this facility as it sits empty most of the time. He stated that the County has a reserve fund and, “if taxes were not so high, the citizens would have one as well.” Mr. Gimli-Mead stated that the budget also includes contingency money that may or may not be used. He stated that, if these monies are not needed, why does the County want to take these funds out of the citizens’ pockets.

Mr. Dennis Radtke of White Tail Drive requested that class sizes not increase and that funding for teachers be raised. He noted that parents have made good comments about the County’s schools. He noted that his daughter attends Colonial Elementary School which is over 75 years old. Mr. Radtke stated that there are 21 students in one kindergarten class and 18 students in his daughter’s class.

Mr. Radtke stated that the teachers at Colonial identified his son’s auditory symptoms and they were able to find treatment. Mr. Radtke stated that, if this teacher had had 35 students in her class, he does not think that his son’s hearing issues would have been discovered. He stated that the quality and talent at Colonial Elementary are second to none.

He noted that the three kindergarten teachers at Colonial Elementary have 70 years of experience and he was surprised that the top talent had not received a raise in several years and many were at the top of the pay scale. Mr. Radtke requested that funding be provided to restore teachers’ pay scales so the County can retain its top talent. He stated that education

was an integral part of his decision to move to the County, along with community and recreational opportunities.

Ms. Sharon Mougín of Archway Road stated that she has one child in Read Mountain Middle School and one at Colonial Elementary. Ms. Mougín asked that the Board consider a large piece of the pie for our schools. She stated that the County's teachers have not had a raise in many years and their pay/compensation system needs to be fixed so we can keep these wonderful teachers. Ms. Mougín stated that the County has lost several teachers to other localities.

Ms. Mougín stated that it is not fair to the child or the teacher when there are more than 20 students in the class—it is doing a disservice to the children. She further stated that school buses need to be replaced as “children are precious cargo” and bus drivers should not have to worry if they will make it to the next stop or to school.

Ms. Mougín stated that capital improvement projects at the schools are also needed. She noted that the schools receive calls to view their facilities from people who are considering moving to the County and repairs are needed. She asked that the Board consider more funding for Schools throughout the budget process.

Ms. Kit Williams of Summit Ridge Road in Roanoke stated that there are impacts for teachers that have not received salary step increases. She stated that teachers cannot continue to tighten their belts. Ms. Williams stated that one teacher has taught in the County for six years and is currently paid at the level of a first-year teacher. Ms. Williams stated that there are teachers that come into the system today with less experience that are getting paid more than she receives as a teacher.

Ms. Williams stated that the teacher she has mentioned has two children in school, is a coach, club sponsor, and has many other duties. She stated that this person loves to teach but she will not continue to teach in the County's system unless they are paid what they are worth and what they are promised.

Ms. Williams stated that another teacher has 11 years of experience but is paid at a level of a teacher with only four years of experience. She noted that another teacher took maternity leave and had to come back to school after four weeks because she needed the paycheck. Ms. Williams asked that the Board consider the School Board's budget request and fully fund the proposed budget.

Ms. Libby Shiffer of Crumpacker Circle asked that the Board consider whether the proposed tax increase and proposed budget expenditures are necessary. She noted that this tax increase would cause a financial burden for the taxpayers and the Board should consider the citizens' financial situation. Ms. Shiffer stated that costs are increasing and citizens have not seen their wages increase over the past few years. She further stated that health insurance coverage costs have increased even though the coverage options have decreased and the individual has to make up the cost difference.

Ms. Shiffer asked if the budget can be cut and are there any items that the County can do without. She stated that people are struggling and residents cannot raise their revenues like the County can. She stated that residents must cut back or go out and earn their income. Ms. Shiffer asked that the Board show restraint in the proposed budget.

Mr. Mark Tyson of Hardbarger Road in Buchanan stated that he is astounded that the County is considering for another tax increase. He stated that this proposed increase is the largest in Botetourt County history. He noted that the 2012 tax increase was 27%. Mr. Tyson questioned what this tax increase is for.

Mr. Tyson stated that the Board panicked the citizens last time by saying that schools would be closed and sports teams cut unless taxes were increased. He questioned what did the Board do with the money—it was squandered. He said that teacher, administrative, and County employee benefits were increased and they are doing it all over again. Mr. Tyson stated that the Board is disconnected. He stated that currently there is the lowest number of people employed since 1977 and the middle class has not seen an income increase in 15 years.

Mr. Tyson stated that 20% of the County's citizens are elderly and Social Security payments have not increased in the past two years. He stated that the elderly are on fixed incomes and questioned how are they going to be able to afford these tax increases. Mr. Tyson stated that the proposed rate will be 47% higher than Franklin County and 60% higher than Bedford County's tax rates.

Mr. Tyson stated that his property assessment increased by 27%. He stated that this disparity is "mind-boggling" as his tax bill will be 52% higher than last year. Mr. Tyson stated that he is retired and questioned how the elderly will cope with these continuing increases. He further stated that more and more people are being paid by 1099s without benefits. He said that this is "immoral."

Mr. Tyson stated that teachers are important but when you value all of the lavish benefits, time off throughout the year, and their salaries, their effective annualized compensation exceeds \$150,000. He stated that this is insane. Mr. Tyson stated that a County employee wage and benefit study was conducted several years ago but its results were never released. He stated that it was indicated that everyone in the County was underpaid and this is not true.

Mr. Don Beheler of Sherwood Drive stated that he is retired and on a fixed income. He encouraged the Board to say no to the proposed tax increase.

Mr. Brad Chrimes of British Woods Drive stated that he has been a County resident for 28 years and is on a fixed income. Mr. Chrimes stated that he has watched where the dollars go. He noted that his street has only received a slurry seal, no pavement, for many years.

Mr. Chrimes stated that he is only asking that the County be fiscally responsible for where the money goes. He stated that nothing would be enough for teachers' salaries. Mr. Chrimes stated that he was a soccer coach. He encouraged the Board to give some time to proposing other solutions to this proposed tax increase and be creative in how we can derive some income. He said that there should only be taxes on items that are consumed. Mr. Chrimes stated that he paid \$385 in taxes in 1988 and paid over \$1,400 last year. Mr. Chrimes stated that the County should be sincere in the tax rate that they are proposing. Mr. Chrimes stated that he does not have a reserve fund and the County should be responsible and accountable for his money.

Mr. Don Assaid of McIntosh Road stated that he would like to respond to Mr. Williamson's comment regarding the high salary values listed on a flyer that was being handed out at various locations in the County. Mr. Assaid stated that the citizens would not have to guess what teachers, administrators, and County workers' salaries were if the wage study had been completed. He questioned what is the Board hiding by not releasing this study and why do they not want the citizens to know what the pay and benefits are for County staff and teachers.

Mr. Assaid stated that, several years ago when he was a Board member, the staff reported that the County had a \$4 million surplus and the County gave their employees raise after raise at the expense of senior citizens who said that they could not afford it. He noted that the County then mentioned that there was a \$5 million surplus. Mr. Assaid stated that he told the staff at the time that the improvements to the Tinker Creek Interceptor and other projects

were expensive. He said that there was never a surplus—it was misnamed. Mr. Assaid stated that the Board then said that a tax increase was necessary or the County would have to close schools and layoff teachers.

Mr. Assaid stated that the County has not fixed the Lord Botetourt roof or purchased new school buses but they implemented 5% County employee raises and 8% raises for the teachers. Mr. Assaid stated that only in government can a lack of a raise be considered a cut. He stated that the County employees have not considered a recession while the citizens have. He noted that the County employees' retirement funds have a 7½% return and the average taxpayer does not have that rate of return on their retirement account.

Mr. Assaid questioned how can a County or a business that is running a deficit give a pay raise. He stated that the citizens have said that they cannot give any more money. He said that it is not fair and is immoral to give raises on the backs of senior citizens. Mr. Assaid stated that, if the only way that the Board knows to govern is to raise the tax rate, he would call on the Board to resign. He stated that the County should be operated without tax increases and these proposed tax increases are considered elder abuse.

Mr. Dean Paderick of Leatherneck Road in Troutville stated that there is another piece of the County budget that the citizens and the Board need to think about. Mr. Paderick stated that over 50 years ago he joined the Troutville Fire Department and had to take first aid classes for two nights a week for two weeks to become certified. He noted that other training followed and he became an advanced first aid provider.

Mr. Paderick stated that, when the funeral homes gave up the ambulance service, the volunteer fire departments had to assume this service. He stated that the County has an aging population and we need support for the aging community. Mr. Paderick also noted that he was awarded a lifetime achievement award by the County several months ago.

Mr. Paderick stated that the County cannot continue to depend on volunteers to supply the needs of fire and rescue in the County. He noted that to become a basic EMT today requires 120 hours of study and 120 hours of ride-along time as well as continuing educational hours throughout the year to remain qualified. He stated that a paramedic today requires over 2,000 hours of training to be certified. Mr. Paderick stated that volunteer fire and EMS members cannot keep up with the current State training and educational requirements and provide adequate care as well.

Mr. Paderick stated that he supports three things in the budget—public safety to have better EMS care, Sheriff's Department salary increases so that a starting deputy is not eligible for food stamps, and teachers need to be paid to teach the next generation.

Ms. Melissa Amos of Autumn Lane in Troutville stated that she is President of the Botetourt Education Association. Ms. Amos stated that she is in favor of the proposed budget and tax increase as it will be used to maintain and improve services including education, EMS, and public safety as the County plans for its future economic growth. She noted that a well-educated and a well-trained workforce is vital to the County's future growth.

Ms. Amos stated that the school system's aging infrastructure, retirement of teachers, and the teachers' salary scales need to be addressed. She stated that many teachers have educated our children throughout the recession without a step increase which has resulted in the loss of thousands of dollars in salaries over the past few years. Ms. Amos stated that some teachers have taken part-time jobs. She stated that Botetourt County's teachers deserve to be compensated for their hard work. Ms. Amos stated that the BEA supports the efforts of the School Board to alleviate this issue in their budget. She stated that the County has a quality

educational system and requested that the Board approve the proposed budget and associated tax increases.

Mrs. Margaret Bailey of Zimmerman Road in Blue Ridge stated that she opposes any increases in real estate and personal property taxes. Mrs. Bailey stated that the taxes are already too high and she cannot afford to pay them on a fixed income. Mrs. Bailey stated that she is a recent widow and her income has suddenly and substantially decreased and her pension did not include a cost of living increase this year.

Mrs. Bailey stated that Medicare Part B premiums have increased along with her health insurance costs. She stated that the cost of everything continues to increase. Mrs. Zimmerman stated that she has to live within her means and the County should do the same. She stated that County workers and teachers received large salary increases three years ago—she did not and her taxes should not be raised to give pay increases.

Mrs. Bailey stated that the County's citizens should not be viewed as "cash cows." She asked that the County carefully review every budget line item to find places to cut spending. She stated that these are lean times for people, especially the elderly.

Mrs. Bailey stated that the core functions of government should be funded with a freeze on spending, except for essentials, until business expansion revenues are realized. She also stated that the County should be business-friendly to those who are trying to set up small businesses as there are many obstacles to their locating in the County. Mrs. Bailey stated that police and emergency services are essential but the "largess" should be discontinued. She stated that the elderly should not pay additional taxes and the "government should be our servant, not our master." She stated that "we are citizens, not serfs."

Mrs. Bailey stated that the schools should make do with general funds already allocated and stop asking for money. She noted that, with all of the monies taxpayers have provided, the United States' education system is lagging behind many other countries. She stated that the schools have become dangerous places where students and teachers are being killed. Mrs. Bailey stated that the failing school system should not be awarded with salary increases.

Mrs. Bailey stated that, in Texas, citizens who reach the age of 65 can apply for a homestead exemption which freezes the amount of school taxes that they pay. She further stated that she agrees with the letter to The Fincastle Herald that Mr. Don Assaid wrote several weeks ago which included a sentence that the tax rates for citizens over 65 should be frozen.

Mr. Jim Crosby of Orchard Lake Drive stated that he has been attending the Board of Supervisors hearings on tax increases for 25 years representing the taxpaying County citizens. Mr. Crosby stated that a large group of the County's residents cannot afford the proposed tax increases. He stated that 20% of residents are senior citizens, including himself.

Mr. Crosby stated that he works with a Medicare program and hears concerns from his customers about not being able to pay their taxes, buy prescriptions, heating fuel, etc., and "this is not right." He stated that the County's tax rate was increased 10% four years ago and now the County is proposing a 12.5% tax increase. He said that "this has to stop" as senior citizens are caught in a financial situation.

Mr. Crosby stated that those citizens who live within the towns would pay a double tax and questioned how this proposed tax increase would affect them. He stated that the citizens have not had their benefits increased at all. He stated that there have only been a 1.7% and a 1.5% increase in Social Security benefits during the past two years which equates to approximately \$30 - \$34 per month. He stated that "this is hardly anything."

Mr. Crosby stated that schools are a major portion of the County's budget. He noted that \$55,000 was spent on a school efficiency study in 2015 which recommended suggestions that could save the schools \$1.32 million in the first year but these recommendations have not been implemented. Mr. Crosby stated that the \$55,000 was wasted.

He stated that the County works for the citizens and stated that no tax increase should be implemented. Mr. Crosby suggested that the Board "do the easy, right thing."

Ms. Terri Brockly of Ray Street stated that she has lived in the County for 16 years and remembers the tax increase implemented four years ago. She stated that the Board needs to get younger people to move into the County so there will be more children in the schools and, to do this, taxes need to remain low. She stated that by doing this teachers will keep their jobs. Mrs. Brockly stated that the County needs to be accountable for bringing in businesses to provide taxes to pay for these extra increases.

Ms. Brockly stated that the County has good schools and the Board needs to step up and figure out where this money is going. Ms. Brockly stated that she is against any tax increase.

Mr. Michael Cassell of Meadow Circle stated that he opposes the proposed tax increase. He stated that the Board has lost the grip on reality. He stated that the elderly are struggling the most and everything is becoming more expensive. Mr. Cassell stated that his parents had to move in with him. He stated that the Administrator is bringing in six-figure jobs and benefits while the average worker struggles to stay ahead. Mr. Cassell stated that he has a problem with the tens of thousands of dollars that are wasted in the County budget.

Mr. John Busher, Superintendent of Schools, stated that he worked with the Virginia Department of Education prior to becoming Botetourt's Superintendent and this provided him the opportunity to work with school divisions, teachers, etc., all across the State. Mr. Busher stated that there is no school system like Botetourt County—we are the best.

Mr. Busher stated that he is concerned with this country. He stated that we are a global economy and then read part of the School system's mission statement—"It is the mission of Botetourt County Public Schools to ensure that all students participate in quality learning experiences necessary to grow, to adapt and to meet the challenges of responsible citizenship in a changing global society." Mr. Busher stated that the school system should educate the County's children so that they are employable at companies located in the County and for those new companies that locate here in the future.

Mr. Busher stated that he has been participating in a new County program which connects the school system with local businesses to discuss their employment and training needs. He noted that meetings have already been held with Lawrence Companies and Arkay Packaging Corporation. Mr. Busher stated that it is a competitive world and it is a global challenge to get jobs. He stated that Botetourt County's kids should get these jobs.

Mr. Busher stated that it takes technology, buildings, and relationships with teachers working directly with the students. He stated that it takes dedicated teachers who have been working for years and reaching their professional development goals. He stated that many teachers in the County's system are approaching retirement and are leaving the County to work for other school systems who offer "a pay bump" compared to the Botetourt County salaries. Mr. Busher stated that the County needs to maintain and sustain the effectiveness of these students so they can be whatever they want to be.

Mr. Busher stated that Botetourt County is like nothing else—it is a wonderful place that needs to be sustained and maintained. Mr. Busher stated that he wants the students to be successful and he wants them to come home to work and live.

Ms. Jen Ward of Scott's Lane in Eagle Rock stated that she wants to talk about fiscal responsibility. Ms. Ward stated that she is a single mother with three kids and “basically, the County is killing her.” Ms. Ward stated that she has lived in the County for 15 years, her farm's value has decreased, and her road has not been acceptable for school bus usage for seven years so her children have to attend private school. Ms. Ward stated that there are 14 kids on her road and the parents struggle every day to get their children to and from the bus stop. Ms. Ward stated that she pays her taxes but has not seen much for it. Ms. Ward stated that she is paying teachers' salaries just like everyone else but her kids do not attend the County's schools.

Ms. Ward further stated that there are few day care opportunities in Botetourt County. She stated that they are the last bus stop on Old Fincastle Road and cannot get a school bus to come down the road to pick up 14 children. She stated that “there is something wrong” when this happens. She further stated that her road is not the only County road that a school bus will not use and asked that someone look into this situation.

Ms. Ward stated that her property's assessed value decreased this year and she cannot get an appraisal.

Ms. Ward stated that another reason why young families are leaving the County is that there are no services to support them. She encouraged the Board to “think about what we really need” and “cut something else in the budget” and not raise taxes but still provide money in teachers' pockets.

Mr. Tommy Watts of Orchard Drive in Daleville stated that he has a lot of questions about the budget. He stated that the County has indicated that there is no other revenue to keep Botetourt County growing but he cannot understand a County that gave away the water company, turns sewer and trash collection over to private entities, and then says that they will take more taxes. He stated that this is wrong for the citizens to bear the burden.

Mr. Watts stated that he is scared that Greenfield is going to kill us. He stated that there are walking trails at Greenfield and proposed through Daleville Town Center that the County's taxpayers will have to pay for. Mr. Watts then asked for all the senior citizens present at this meeting to raise their hands.

Mr. Watts stated that he does not have much income and cannot afford all of the tax increases. He stated that “decisions have probably already been made about the taxes.” Mr. Watts stated that he likes the schools and the County does not have the trouble in our schools as Roanoke County has recently had, but we have leaking roofs.

Mr. Watts stated that we are paying more for grading in Greenfield for a company but we do not know when they will begin paying taxes. He stated that the \$2 million used for grading could have been used for the Lord Botetourt High School roof.

Ms. Joanne Monday of Archway Road stated that she is opposed to the tax increase. She stated that there are a lot of teachers in the audience and they are “looking out for themselves.” She stated that there are more people to be concerned about instead of the teachers.

Ms. Monday stated that people cannot afford an increase in taxes as they are living on fixed incomes. Ms. Monday stated that she keeps her house at 62° in the winter months to save money. She stated that there are homes that are still “under water” and may be foreclosed on and industries have disappeared from the area and they are being replaced by lower paying jobs. She stated that there is a lot of unemployment and underemployment and many people

are not receiving unemployment insurance. Mrs. Monday stated that many positions are part-time so the employees do not receive benefits.

Mrs. Monday stated that her supplemental insurance costs have sky-rocketed. She stated that here is no job security, no raises, and benefits and pensions are being lost. She noted that many people in Ashley Plantation Subdivision are living paycheck to paycheck. She stated that the Board of Supervisors is looking to turn Botetourt County into an upscale community “and busing the last of us including senior citizens out.”

Mrs. Monday stated that the Board of Supervisors work for the citizens and people need to accept the community the way it is without the special amenities. She stated that “we like the County the way it is.” She questioned why the teachers feel that they deserve pay increases any more than anyone else in this society. She stated that they should be happy to have a job and the more money that is thrown at education the dumber our kids are. Mrs. Monday stated that she is “tired of teachers bellyaching” as they only work 10 months out of the year. She stated that we need more dedicated teachers and should not throw money at it.

Mr. Chuck Browder of Buffalo Road then stated “here we go again.” He stated that the faces are different but the attitude is the same. Mr. Browder stated that he was at this hearing four years ago. He stated that the Board is now proposing a 12.5 % tax increase and are pitting the taxpayers against the teachers. He stated that this is the wrong attitude—it is a question of management. Mr. Browder stated that the County cannot manage within their means but should do so without raising taxes every 2, 3, or 4 years.

Mr. Browder stated that the County should try to do the most with what we have but they are asking for another tax increase. He stated that the County should not have a tax increase less than published just so the citizens feel relieved when the adopted tax rate is less than advertised. Mr. Browder stated that the purpose of government is to serve the people and to provide the things that we need, not just the things we want. Mr. Browder stated that it is not the purpose of government to provide him with a ballfield or a gym or to speculate in business. He stated that when this is done the County is competing against the private sector. He stated that the County should “stick to the things that the County government is supposed to be doing,” e.g., teachers, police, roads, judiciary, and not be wasteful.

Mr. Browder stated that schools bring in people and low taxes bring in people and businesses which will increase the income and tax base. He stated that there are things we can do without burdening the residents. Mr. Browder stated that approximately 90% of the County does not work for the County and they should have a weighted vote in these issues.

Mr. Lee Hartzell of Country Club Road stated that he agrees with what has already been said but wants to ensure that his voice is heard. Mr. Hartzell stated that he opposes the proposed tax increase.

Mr. Jim Ludington of Asbury Lane stated that he is against the proposed tax increase and asked that the Board to go back and look for waste in the County budget. He said that the County should manage its business, be more efficient, and find money within the budget as it exists.

Mr. Ludington stated that he is on a fixed income and teaches on-line courses at Liberty University and Virginia Western Community College. He stated that Botetourt County produces a much better student at the college and university level than other localities.

He stated that there are 6,600 senior citizens in the County and 4,400 veterans and we are in a depressed economy. Mr. Ludington stated that adjuncts are doing most of the teaching

at colleges but are paid on a 1099 form without benefits/retirement funds. He stated that the on-line professors' classes were cut back from 12 to 8 classes per year.

Mr. Ludington stated that he is for raises for teachers but asked that the Board adjust their budget like private citizens have to do. He stated that excess money in the budget can be used for these raises. He stated that a 9¢ real estate tax increase is nonsense and asked that the Board not approve this increase.

Mrs. Bonnie Britt of Narrow Passage Road stated that she has lived in the County her entire life and still works one day a week to supplement her Social Security benefits which have not increased in two years. Mrs. Britt stated that she is in favor of giving teachers an increase in pay if we have the money to do so. She stated that they need to work just like everyone else.

Mrs. Britt stated that nurses that reach certain pay scales have their salaries frozen until a decision is made to approve an increase or whether they are ok with their current salary. Mrs. Britt stated that when she attended school there were 35 – 40 students in each classroom and she received a good education. She stated that 16 students in a classroom is good but now it takes more money, salaries, and benefits to educate those children.

Mr. Doug Gimbert of Peachtree Valley Drive stated that he has been a County resident since 1971. Mr. Gimbert stated that he does not think that there are any teachers that are against the elderly and vice versa. Mr. Gimbert stated that the private sector does not get a raise just for doing their job.

He thanked Mr. Martin for standing up and voting against this massive tax increase and stated that it is time for the rest of the Board to do the same. Mr. Gimbert stated that “we are losing this country” and we “cannot take from other people just to pocket the money.” He stated that the problem is not taxes; the problem is County mismanagement and waste. Mr. Gimbert stated that the schools paid \$55,000 for a 217 page efficiency study and it was not used. He said that this is waste. He noted that the study's recommendations could save the schools \$6.2 million.

Mr. Gimbert then questioned why does the County have duplications of services. He noted that the budget proposes \$404,000 to various community organizations including \$140,000 to the Roanoke Valley Convention and Visitors Bureau which had an increase of \$67,000 over the current fiscal year. Mr. Gimbert stated that “the Board must think the citizens are stupid.” He stated that the Board says that they are bringing in more business but they keep increasing taxes year after year and it has to stop.

Mr. Gimbert stated that the County now has 250 less students but has tripled the administrative staff. He stated that it is unconscionable to raise taxes because they cannot do their job. Mr. Gimbert stated that the Board should step down and get someone in that can do the job. Mr. Gimbert stated that Bedford County's real estate tax rate is 52¢ and they seem to be doing fine. He stated that “if you cannot do, get out of the way.”

Mr. Garry Taylor of Plantation Drive stated that the PowerPoint presentation given earlier this evening showed that there was minimal increase in the County's reassessment figures. Mr. Taylor stated that his assessment decreased 15% but was adjusted to a 9.4% decrease.

Mr. Taylor stated that he was a volunteer firefighter for 8 years and did his best to try to help the County's citizens. Mr. Taylor stated that he still volunteers for the County in search and rescue activities. Mr. Taylor questioned what is he getting back for this—a 23% increase in the taxes he pays to the County. He stated that this is a significant increase and is “getting out of hand.”

Ms. Diane Lowe of Andrew Drive stated that she has been a teacher in the County for 10 years and has lived here for 24 years. Ms. Lowe stated that the County's teachers put their heart and soul into teaching every day in the classroom. She stated that teachers do not want to be rich but are just asking to be able to live like everyone else. Ms. Lowe stated that she received her Master's degree and her take home pay is the same as when she started as a teacher. She stated that "it is about being able to live."

Ms. Lowe stated that her son has cerebral palsy but, through his teachers and the STEM courses he has taken, he has been accepted at James Madison University and Virginia Tech. She stated that, without the teachers who worked with him, he would not be where he is. Ms. Lowe stated that she cannot ask for a greater educational system than the County's.

Ms. Lowe stated that she is also present at this hearing as a citizen who believes that the County needs to continue to have quality education. Ms. Lowe also stated that the County's EMS operations are also in need. Ms. Lowe stated that she had an asthma attack last week and her 12 year old daughter had to call 911. Ms. Lowe stated that, if her emergency had happened an hour later, the rescue squad would have been on another call and there would have been no one else available to respond. Ms. Lowe stated that she could have died in her daughter's arms.

Ms. Lowe stated that she has listened to the elderly speakers at this hearing. She stated that they also use the County's ambulances and will benefit from the children that will be returning to the County to work. She stated that we should "keep Botetourt strong" and we need a tax increase so that these services can be taken care of.

Mr. Larry Ceola of Borden Run Road stated that, at last year's meeting, he discussed his property's appraisal and the loss of a significant amount of equity in his property. Mr. Ceola stated that, he told the Board that the same thing would happen during the reassessment and that the Board should eliminate waste, but nothing has been done. He stated that the Board has failed to do their job and none of them care about the burden on the elderly and young families. Mr. Ceola stated that people are struggling every day and trying to decide how to use their income. He noted that in his car repair business he sees people trying to decide whether to have transportation to work or delay needed repairs to their vehicles. He stated that it would be great if they (his customers) could just vote themselves a rate increase. Mr. Ceola stated that the citizens make these decisions every day but the County does not.

Mr. Ceola stated that the Board does not deserve a pay raise as they have failed in their responsibilities. He stated that the increases in fees and taxes must end. Mr. Ceola stated that his business pays many fees and taxes every year including a 911 tax, business license tax, sales tax, personal property tax, vehicle decal tax, DSL tax, unemployment tax, electrical tax, retail transmission service tax, cost recovery tax, gas tax, business right-of-way tax, surcharge tax, State inspection tax, etc. He stated that every tax increase will be entirely borne by the consumers and will be passed on in the cost of doing business from every business in the County. He said that the Board should "do the hard, right thing" and get the spin under control.

Mr. Ceola stated that, during his tenure on the Board, he served on the Budget Committee for one year and found over \$2 million that he considered wasteful spending in the County budget. He stated that if the Board looks at the budget "you will find it."

Mr. Gilman Roberts of Breckinridge Mill Road stated that he thinks that the Board has put a lot of work into this budget and the School Board has been honest about their needs. Mr. Roberts stated that "we would benefit more if we listen to each other." Mr. Roberts stated that he respects the others' views. Mr. Roberts stated that he is a teacher and on a fixed income.

Mr. Roberts stated that his daughter's school bus has over 335,000 miles on it. He stated that others have made up numbers but not the two Boards. He stated that if nothing is done the teachers will not be able to pay bills or meet their obligations. Mr. Roberts stated that he is also representing the County's taxpayers. He stated that elderly tax exemptions are available from the County. He stated that "fear tactics" and efforts to pit the elderly against the teachers have been used.

Mr. Roberts stated that appropriate, controlled spending is needed to fix the crumbling infrastructure across the County and the country. He encouraged everyone to have integrity and respect for each other. Mr. Roberts stated that he is glad to see both sides of the issue in attendance at this hearing to express their opinions. Mr. Roberts stated that he respects them for their opinion but they have to see the other side of the coin. Mr. Roberts stated that everyone benefits from education and the County's teachers teach their students a hard work ethic.

Mr. Roberts asked that we have to work together and asked that everyone support the teachers. Mr. Roberts stated that the County's firefighters, EMS personnel, and even parks and recreation staff sacrifice because, instead of going out into the private sector, they have a calling to be public servants and sacrifice to do what they do. Mr. Roberts stated that his kids cannot go to college without step increases for their teachers. He noted that this is what the teachers have earned. Mr. Roberts stated that he appreciates what the Supervisors and School Board have done.

Mr. Chip Tarbutton of Brugh's Mill Road stated that he moved to the County in 1996 for the schools and the low tax rates. He stated that it has been reported that the County spends \$11,000 per year per student. He stated that if there are 30 students in a class this results in approximately \$130,000 per class. Mr. Tarbutton stated that what the County has done is despicable. He stated that senior citizens and teachers have spent three hours at this hearing beating each other up because the Board cannot do their job.

Mr. Tarbutton stated that he has seen a "smug" attitude from the Board members during this hearing. He noted that Roanoke City had similar citizen outrage over the demolition of the old Victory Stadium as the County has had over the relocation of the Greenfield slave cabins. He stated that Botetourt County has become the new Roanoke City. Mr. Tarbutton stated that the choices presented by the County are either tax increases or no new education funding. He stated that there is money out there to be saved but instead the Board wants to raise taxes.

He stated that four of the five Board members are Republicans and should use budgetary restraints. He suggested that they "take this into account when voting for the budget." Mr. Tarbutton stated that some of the Board members are up for election next year and he hopes that people remember this budget proposal at that time.

Mr. Adam McKelvey of Wyndermere Drive stated that he has lived in the County for approximately 10 years and grew up in Bedford. Mr. McKelvey stated that it has been noted that \$350,000 in revenues equals 1¢ in the real estate tax rate. He stated that the budget shows that \$2.2 million is needed for teachers salary increases, there are other School needs such as buses and new roofs, the Sports Complex is proposing two additional ballfields in the amount of \$485,000, \$500,000 for new County telephones and software, the schools have a \$500,000 surplus, and there is \$404,000 proposed for various community organizations/charities, and \$450,000 for community and economic development, among others.

He stated that it is a situation of priorities and an increase in the meals tax would be used to fund some aspect of economic development. Mr. McKelvey stated that the Sports Complex brings in revenue from hotels but this money is being allocated elsewhere. He further

stated that Greenfield and the Old District Courthouse are vacant during the business day. Mr. McKelvey stated that there are things that the County can do to cut the budget and allow the County to move forward.

He stated that \$1.3 million is proposed in next year's budget for the Comprehensive Plan update and the Capital Improvements Plan. He stated that if all of the funding levels stay the same, "we are going to be back here next year" with another proposed tax increase. Mr. McKelvey stated that the County had to have a trash transfer station because of the landfill closure issue and new voting machines will be an additional expense. He stated that Roanoke City outsources its school bus transportation and cafeteria operations to save money. He asked the County to conduct efficiency studies to see if any savings can be found. He also suggested that the County convert the Treasurer to a staff position instead of a constitutional office.

Mr. McKelvey stated that he pays \$5,000 in tuition for his kids to attend a Christian school and it costs the County \$11,000 to educate each child. He stated that there has to be some waste somewhere and asked that the Board review the efficiency studies. Mr. McKelvey stated that he wishes that the citizens could ask questions at this hearing. He suggested that, in the handouts available to the citizens, information on school surpluses, actual budget, advertised budget, and current year's budget information to date should be included.

Ms. Jana Heck of Orchard Park Drive stated that she is a 23 year veteran in education at Buchanan Elementary School. Ms. Heck stated that she is passionate about what she does. She noted that the top 15% of the educational society has Masters degrees. She further noted that teachers' salaries start lower than other professions and she has had only one step increase in salary in the past 8 years. Ms. Heck stated that, if she had received the required step raises during this 8 year period, she would have made an additional \$45,000 in income.

Ms. Heck stated that her monthly gross income is \$4,668 but deductions for taxes, benefits, etc., result in a net income of \$2,225 on which she has to raise three children. Ms. Heck stated that her net annual income is \$2,450 above the federal government's poverty line.

Ms. Heck stated that her children have teachers and educators that care about their students. She stated that the teachers know her kids and care about what happens to them in the future. Ms. Heck encouraged the citizens' support of the positive things that occur in the County's schools. She stated that "it has to start now."

Mr. Craig Coker of Mountain Pass Road thanked Mr. Martin for his leadership in the Blue Ridge District. Mr. Coker asked that the Board consider alternatives to the 12.5% tax increase. Mr. Coker stated that he is a small business owner and "is not thrilled" about the personal property tax rate increase. Mr. Coker stated that he can accept this because business have to accept their burden of taxes. He stated that real estate taxes are not evenly distributed toward commercial/industrial sources; they are slanted to residential property owners and are an undue burden.

Mr. Coker stated that he applauds the Board's efforts to improve this imbalance. He suggested that a one-time tax relief program be considered for senior citizens who can demonstrate a need. Mr. Coker also suggested that there be an improvement in the balance of economic development in the County and encouraged the Board to complete the development of Gateway Crossing and Botetourt Center at Greenfield.

Mr. Coker stated that the growth of large development spurs the creation of small development which spurs residential housing which broadens the tax base. He noted that positive economic programs are needed and the contribution between commercial, industrial and residential needs to be balanced. Mr. Coker stated that the County should help small businesses to

thrive through amendments to the Sign Ordinance and other County regulations. He also suggested that the County increase tourism opportunities so visitors come in and spend money.

Mr. Coker stated that value engineering should be used to establish the value of a project commensurate with the cost and review how existing County programs operate—“are we getting the best bang for our buck.” Mr. Coker asked the Board to review the budget to see “what we have to have” and what is proposed that is “nice to have.”

Mrs. Molly Gimbert of Peachtree Valley Drive stated that she has a creative idea for the amount of money that the teachers need. She stated that the people in the County have a heart and suggested that the citizens and fellow teachers fund those teachers who are in need.

Ms. Lisa Fouch of Highland Drive stated that she is the President of the Cloverdale PTA. Ms. Fouch stated that she believes that her kids are receiving a quality education in the County and she is concerned that the County’s teachers are looking for jobs elsewhere due to a lack of pay increases here. She stated that Botetourt County is starting to become a teacher training ground as new teachers come here for a few years and then go elsewhere.

She asked that the County increase teachers’ salaries to keep the quality personnel that we have and to keep the pay scale in line with other area localities. Ms. Fouch stated that new school buses are needed and additional nurses and counselors are needed as two schools currently share a nurse and counselor position. Ms. Fouch stated that the lack of counselors concerns her due to the number of school shootings that occur in this country.

Ms. Fouch stated that the proposed tax increase is worth the investment to keep teachers in our community.

Ms. Robin Steffey of Monterey Circle stated that she is the President of the Lord Botetourt High School PTA. Ms. Steffey stated that she has been actively involved in the County’s schools since 1999. She stated that her children continue to have a very positive educational experience here and this can only be achieved when the best faculty and facilities are available. Ms. Steffey stated that, to retain and attract these kinds of teachers, fair compensation, benefits and resources are needed to provide the best education possible.

Ms. Steffey stated that the County must keep pace with our sister counties and cities to provide the best education possible so children can thrive into the future. She stated that to do this we must invest in their education today. Ms. Steffey asked that the Board approve the requested budget so children will be ready for the next step in their lives.

Mr. Charles Gladu of Shawnee Trail stated that the situation here is not teachers versus the elderly. Mr. Gladu stated that his wife was a teacher in Roanoke County because the salaries were higher. He stated that, if the teachers were promised a step increase and the promise was gone back on, he “would shoot them.” Mr. Gladu stated that the County used to have enough money to do what we want.

He then gave an example of the expense of fixing a curve in the road by building a curved bridge instead of the less expensive option of cutting back the dirt bank. Mr. Gladu questioned the expenditure of \$55,000 for a study that was not used. He stated that the School Board needs to look at this issue and make some value-based judgments. Mr. Gladu stated that “you can have all of the studies that you want if you do not make use” of them. He asked that the County try to be “fiduciarly responsible”

He stated that teachers are competing globally and we need the best we can get and this means that we will have to pay for it. Mr. Gladu stated that there are ways to reduce spending but this is a hard concept for those in government to understand.

Mr. Gladu stated that he has heard noise from a bulldozer operating after 10PM on the Eldor property. He asked that the County “try to use some common sense and be responsible.” He stated that it is incumbent on the Board to do the best that they can for the citizens. Mr. Gladu stated that he could afford the proposed tax increase but many others cannot. He stated that the Board has an obligation to cut the budget instead of raising taxes and the County should live within its means.

Mr. Steven Hamblin of Oak Hill Road stated that the County’s taxes are too high and we need money for schools and EMS. He heard a solution from someone earlier this evening—“cut out the fluff.” Mr. Hamblin stated that the County is proposing \$100,000 to the YMCA and \$400,000 for the Sports Complex but these monies could be used to pay for the school’s budget increase and maybe EMS. Mr. Hamblin stated that, if a diligent study is done, citizens will support a modest tax increase. He said that the YMCA is optional.

Mr. Hamblin stated that every bit of spending adds up to a lot of money. He stated that the citizens are being asked to pony up taxes. He challenged the Board to go through the budget line by line to make reductions. He further stated that no one is against the proposed wind turbine tax increase.

Ms. Mary Bradford of Ray Street stated that her son attends Read Mountain Middle School. She asked that the Board increase the amount of money to the schools. Ms. Bradford stated that she is a commercial realtor/developer and she sees funding from a workforce and land development perspective. She stated that the County has vast land and development opportunities. Ms. Bradford stated that workforce development is another reason to properly fund the County’s schools as businesses who want to move here need workers and technology professionals.

Ms. Bradford stated that Botetourt County has the land and we need to continue grow the school system’s workforce development programs. She noted that this requires continuous development as we must not fall behind.

Regarding the \$11,000 spent to educate each student, Ms. Bradford noted that many other states spend less. She noted that Arizona spends \$7,800 per student and they are seeing the results of this funding as teachers are leaving and development is not locating in the state. Ms. Bradford stated that Botetourt is a future development area for the Roanoke region and money is needed for teachers, arts, music, computer science, science, and English. She encouraged the County to continue to attract businesses and their workforce to the County by increasing the FY 17 school budget.

Ms. Jodie Weidman of Ballpark Road in Eagle Rock stated that she was a past PTA president and learned a lot about the County. She stated that the Botetourt County staff and Board of Supervisors work with the School Board and their staff but this is not the case in Alleghany County and other area governments. Ms. Weidman stated that she learned about the State and federal requirements on schools that are not funded. She stated that there are many unfunded State mandates delegated to the County included employee retirement costs.

Ms. Weidman stated that she is present tonight as a parent with two sons. She stated that, if the County’s teachers have the opportunity to leave the County to receive higher pay elsewhere, then they will go. She noted that some localities pay newly hired science and math teachers a \$10,000 bonus. Ms. Weidman stated that the County has to retain its teachers as they are highly educated and some have doctorates; however they do not receive enough in salaries to pay their loans. She stated that seven years at the same salary is quite an issue.

Ms. Weidman requested that the Board approve funding for step raises for teachers so that the County can retain its teachers.

Ms. Cindy Reid of Dixie Road in Eagle Rock stated that she is the President of the Eagle Rock Elementary PTA and has two children. Ms. Reid stated that she supports funding for the schools for the upcoming year. She stated that the County needs to retain its teachers as they will go elsewhere for higher salaries. Ms. Reid stated that the comments of one of tonight's speakers regarding the more money given to education, the dumber the kids are was inappropriate. Ms. Reid stated that she supports the County's teachers.

Mr. Paul Brooks of Houston Mines Road stated that he follows what the Board does through The Fincastle Herald's article. Mr. Brooks stated that what the County has done over the past 6 – 7 years has been amusing. He stated that the Board should listen to the citizens and what they want. Mr. Brooks stated that, regarding the relocation of the Greenfield historic structures, the Board "did what they wanted to do" even though the citizens opposed this relocation.

Mr. Brooks stated that the citizens have lost trust in the Board and he asked that they take a different approach as to how they can help the citizens. Mr. Brooks stated that, regarding the studies previously mentioned, the County should do more research. He stated that the Board should cut the budgets and cut taxes. He further stated that his assessment went up 13% and Board wants to approve a 13% tax increase. He stated that this is a large increase for the County's citizens. Mr. Brooks stated that "we should have the services we want and this requires taxes" but with a 26% tax increase he believes that he is "getting scammed."

Mr. Brooks stated that he is sure that the Board is trying to do their best but the citizens do not trust the Board. Mr. Brooks stated that he has lived in the County since 2000 and does not want to leave. He further stated that the County cannot get new residents to move in if the taxes are so high.

Mr. John Alderson of Shaver's Farm Road stated that he is a member of the County School Board, a farmer, and a businessman. Mr. Alderson stated that the County's teachers serve its citizens and their children well and their pay has been compared to others on a declining scale over the last several years. Mr. Alderson stated that the School Board received the Efficiency Study with great sincerity and seriousness and many of the study's recommendations have been addressed; however, some have not but will be in the future.

Mr. Alderson stated that a figure of \$11,000 has been stated several times at this hearing as the cost to educate a child in the County. He stated that this number is correct; however, the citizens do not understand that the State of Virginia mandates that the education of disabled children are the responsibility of the local school division. Mr. Alderson stated that there are disabled children in the County's schools that they pay \$50,000 per year to educate and the School system accepts this responsibility.

Mr. Alderson stated that the Board of Supervisors has been very supportive of the school division. Mr. Alderson stated that he has been on the School Board for 4 1/3 years and, when he was elected, the County's "belt-tightening" had begun because of the effects of the recession. Mr. Alderson stated that, when the economy declines, the County's revenues decreased as well.

Mr. Alderson stated that the previous Board of Supervisors had reduced the real estate tax rate from 75¢ to 65¢. He stated that the County has not yet returned to the 75¢ level. He stated that the Board of Supervisors conducts business in a responsible way and he appreci-

ates their efforts. Mr. Alderson asked that the Board maintain the proposed 9¢ real estate tax increase.

After questioning by Mr. Leffel, it was noted that there was no one else present to speak. The public hearing was then closed.

Mr. Martin then thanked everyone for attending this hearing and providing comments on their feelings regarding the proposed budget. He noted that everyone was respectful of the comments made. He noted that the Board will consider all comments and make their decision.

Mr. Williamson stated that the Board will consider tonight's comments and meet again as a budget committee as a whole as the County is required by State Code to adopt the school budget by May 15 and the County budget by June 30. Mr. Williamson stated that he appreciated everyone that came to the hearing and for the comments that were made.

Mr. Dodson also thanked everyone for attending this meeting and noted that he has been a member of the Board for 2 1/3 years. Mr. Dodson stated that the more people who attend these hearings the better as the citizens are more engaged with the Board. Mr. Dodson then stated that the County does have a program for elderly and disabled tax relief through the Commissioner of Revenue's Office.

He also thanked Mrs. Lowe for sharing the story about her 911 call after having an asthma attack and for the e-mail that she sent to him as well. Mr. Dodson stated that the role of local government includes public safety, education, adequate infrastructure, quality of life, and economic development. He stated that each of these needs should be balanced throughout the County.

Mr. Dodson stated that the Board and County staff review every program in the County budget. He noted that the County has a new administrator and a new superintendent of schools and suggested that the administrator again review the County's budget line by line to determine if any additional reductions can be made. He challenged the School Board and the Superintendent to do the same.

Mr. Dodson encouraged the citizens to read the County's strategic vision which lists the Board's priorities. He also stated that the School Board should consider compiling a long-term plan.

Dr. Scothorn thanked everyone for attending this meeting and thanked those citizens who were still present after a 4 hour public hearing. He noted that this hearing allowed all concerned citizens, both for and against the proposed budget and tax rate, to speak. He noted that civil discussion is important on these issues and there were many topics brought up during this hearing for the Board to consider.

Dr. Scothorn stated that the Board and its citizens are getting together and working together toward a better Botetourt County. Dr. Scothorn stated that, with the Board's new strategic plan and new energetic administrator and superintendent, he can see the County's future. He stated that "we need to work together and look at these concerns."

Mr. Leffel then stated that he appreciates everyone for attending this meeting. He noted that both sides have spoken and there was a lot of passion during this hearing and "this is what it should be about." Mr. Leffel stated that "it does start with local government" and the County is going to do great things with the new administrator and superintendent. He said that we should be glad to have them.

Mr. Leffel stated that as Chair he can call this his Board for a short time and he cannot say that we have not had a better Board of Supervisors. Mr. Leffel stated that the Board does not agree on every issue but he has "all the faith in the world" in this Board. Mr. Leffel stated

that the Board has not bowed down for things that they felt were in the best interests of the County. He further stated that this Board is the hardest working Board that he has seen.

There being no further discussion, Mr. Leffel continued the meeting at 10:41 P. M. until 6:00 P. M. on Friday, May 6, in Rooms 226-228 of the Greenfield Education and Training Center for consideration of adoption of the proposed FY 17 budgets and tax rates.