

An adjourned meeting of the Board of Supervisors of Albemarle County, Virginia was held on February 28, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. in Lane Auditorium, Albemarle County Office Building, 401 McIntire Road, Charlottesville, VA 22902. The meeting was adjourned from February 21, 2024.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Mr. Jim H. Andrews, Mr. Ned Gallaway (Arrived at 6:03 p.m.), Ms. Beatrice (Bea) J.S. LaPisto-Kirtley, Ms. Ann H. Mallek, Ms. Diantha H. McKeel, and Mr. Michael Pruitt.

ABSENT: None.

OFFICERS PRESENT: County Executive, Jeffrey B. Richardson; County Attorney, Steve Rosenberg; and Clerk, Claudette Borgersen.

Agenda Item No. 1. Call to Order. The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by the Chair, Mr. Jim Andrews.

Mr. Andrews said Albemarle County Police Lieutenant Angela Jamerson and Senior Police Officer Ronnie Vanderveer were present at the meeting to provide their services.

Mr. Gallaway arrived 6:03 p.m.

Agenda Item No. 2. **Public Hearing: Public Hearing on the County Executive's FY 2025 Recommended Budget.** To receive comments on the County Executive's FY 2024/2025 Recommended Budget.

The Executive Summary as forwarded to the Board states that each year, the County Executive formally presents their recommended budget to the Board of Supervisors at a public meeting. This is followed by a public hearing on the recommended budget at a subsequent Board of Supervisors meeting.

The recommended budget contains summary information on the total County budget, organized into several funds to provide appropriate accounting and budgeting control, including: the General Fund (expenditures for general operations of the County), Special Revenue Funds (expenditures restricted for specific governmental purposes such as state and federal grant funds), the School Fund (expenditures for general operations of the County school system), Other School Funds (expenditures restricted for specific school purposes such as the Food Services Fund), Capital Funds (expenditures for acquiring, constructing, or maintaining capital facilities), and Debt Service Funds (expenditures for paying principal, interest, and charges on general long-term debt). The recommended budget contains a complete itemized and classified plan of all contemplated expenditures and estimated revenues and borrowings for the fiscal year.

This public hearing is part of the regular process to develop and approve the annual County budget.

Staff recommends that the Board conduct the public hearing.

Mr. Jeff Richardson, County Executive, said that he had previously presented before the Board regarding the County Executive's recommended FY25 budget. He said that they had several work sessions scheduled after tonight, during which Jacob Sumner, CFO, and Andy Bowman, Assistant CFO, from the Finance and Budget Office would discuss the next steps and be available, along with himself, to answer any questions from the Board. He said that he understood that tonight was the public hearing, and he would keep his remarks concise.

Mr. Andrews said that Mr. Gallaway had joined the meeting.

Mr. Richardson said that he would present an overview of their budget development process, keeping their Strategic Plan in mind. He said that they would primarily focus on the recommended FY25 budget and then discuss subsequent steps. He said that to begin, he would explain their strategic budgeting approach. He said that in the autumn of 2022, the Board developed a five-year Strategic Plan after working closely with staff members. He said that they identified six primary goals that they would prioritize over the next five years. He said these goals served as their guiding principles for allocating resources.

Mr. Richardson said that last year, they aligned year one of the budget process with these six goals. He said that as they approached year two, they would collaborate with the Board in the coming weeks to evaluate resource alignment in each of the six areas. He said that their budgeting process was almost year-round, taking into account the economic outlook, five-year financial planning, and their five-year Strategic Plan. He said that they also monitored revenues while working toward the start of the budget process. He said that they considered existing commitments and adhered to their financial policies, which had helped them maintain their Triple Triple A bond rating.

Mr. Richardson said that he was pleased to recommend a balanced budget for that year, which maintained current tax rates. He said that the slide displayed these tax rates and the lines of revenue that contributed to their overall annual revenue picture. He said that for FY25, the theme was to maintain the momentum initiated in FY24, which marked the beginning of several new programs after extensive

planning and onboarding efforts. He said that they entered the second year of their five-year Strategic Plan, they were starting to see the fruits of their investment in FY25.

Mr. Richardson said that last week he had informed the Board about the slower pace of economic growth in their local area compared to previous years but emphasized that they still experienced strong revenue growth in their community. He said that the Board's actions from the previous year had strengthened their budget stabilization reserve and directed a portion of ongoing revenues into a one-time transfer to the capital fund. He said that this positioning of the County had mitigated potential revenue declines in FY25, which had occurred. He said that due to the Board's efforts in the previous year, they moved forward into FY25 from a position of strength, allowing them to continue advancing their Strategic Plan priorities. He said that they shifted their focus from stabilizing the foundation to building momentum throughout FY25.

Mr. Richardson said that he wanted to remind the Board that while they conducted a one-year budget process for FY25, they could easily trace back to FY24 and examine the commitments made with multi-year implications. He said that they then looked at FY25 while considering FY24 and even FY26. He said that although they budgeted annually, their decisions from one year to the next had lasting effects on future years' budgets.

Mr. Richardson said that this was why they emphasized multi-year Strategic Planning; they could not address every opportunity or problem in the community, but their goal was to align resources where they had their most significant opportunities or challenges. He said that the Board had done an excellent job of working strategically and assisting them in their annual budget process.

Mr. Richardson said that he would briefly remind the Board that federal relief revenues had been a significant part of County budgets since FY22. He said that funding through the America Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) was designed to support people and communities during challenging times caused by COVID-19. He said that the amount of funding from FY22 and FY23 had been substantial, with only a small amount remaining for FY24. He said that they had utilized federal money received during the pandemic and allocated it to areas that they believed had had the greatest impact on the community during those difficult times. He said that they had now transitioned back to local funding, and that these programs were funded with one-time money and managed accordingly. He said that in FY24, there was only a small amount of federal funding left as they moved forward.

Mr. Richardson said that their past decisions had indeed driven future budgets, as demonstrated by three areas. He said that firstly, pilot programs showcased commitments made by the County to try new things, explore innovative service delivery methods, and foster cross-departmental and cross-agency collaboration. He said that in some cases, pilot programs had been integrated into their ongoing budget or new facilities.

Mr. Richardson said that secondly, they had committed to new facilities in FY25, which would require funding for construction and operation once completed.

Mr. Richardson said that lastly, grant funds demonstrated their ability to secure non-local dollars for initiatives that required expansion or startup funding on a pilot level. He said that they planned for these grants' deadlines and sunset provisions as they continued to develop this year's budget.

Mr. Richardson said that the total budget for FY25 was \$629 million, which was an increase of \$74.3 million from FY24. He said that this increase was due to an increase in local revenue; however, annual fluctuations in their capital program needs also contributed to this change. He said that the budget could be affected by the timing of capital outlay for projects and debt issuance in any given year. He said that the Board spent significant time on general fund revenues and the general fund budget, which was the primary funding source for schools, capital debt, local government, and allowed for maximum policy discretion during budget preparation. He said that the recommended budget for FY25 had general fund revenues of \$432.2 million.

Mr. Richardson said that last week, they had discussed the allocation of new shared revenues using a Board-directed formula between Local government, County Public School system, and joint debt and capital. He said that 10% of shared revenues was allocated for joint debt and capital to pay for both Schools and Local Government capital. He said that 54% percent was earmarked for Public School operations, while 36% was for Local Government operations.

Mr. Richardson said that general fund expenditures in the FY25 recommended budget also balanced at \$432.2 million. He said that this funding type differed from the previous slide but showed that 50% of general fund expenditures still went to their Public School System, making them a key partner for them.

Mr. Richardson said that in FY25, the recommended budget included an additional \$10.1 million for Public Schools. He said that he would highlight specific areas of increased capacity for next year's budget. He said that on the top right was an additional \$9.3 million for local government, earmarked for customer service enhancements and compensation. He said that funds for health care and other related partner agencies totaled \$2.2 million in the middle section of the slide. He said the quality of life section, located in the middle right, included an additional \$2.1 million for public transit.

Mr. Richardson noted that obligations totaled \$2.8 million in the bottom left corner, driven by contracts, agreements, and multi-year commitments. He added that \$1.1 million was allocated for safety

and well-being in the bottom right corner. He said that this slide did not capture all revenue and commitments for next year; it was merely a high-level overview. He mentioned that they would delve into more details about department service delivery and community impact during budget work sessions over the coming weeks.

Mr. Richardson said that the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for Schools and capital recommendations for next year amounted to \$206.8 million over five years, and on the slide were green checkmarks aligned with the budget years for recommended increases in School System projects. He added that the CIP for Local Government totaled \$128.9 million over five years, providing insight into commitments from year one through year five. He thanked everyone for the opportunity to present that night's overview and said that their staff was available to answer any questions. He concluded by saying that Mr. Sumner would now discuss next steps and provide specifics about work sessions.

Jacob Sumner, Chief Financial Officer, said that he would like to present the budget calendar for the remainder of the budget season. He said that as they moved into March, they had at least five work sessions planned. He said that he would elaborate on some more details regarding the work sessions, particularly focusing on the topics that they would cover in the first three work sessions. He said that in April, they would shift their attention toward public hearings on the tax rate and the budget itself. He said that finally, they would look forward to May 1 for the appropriation and adoption of the budget and setting of the tax rate.

Mr. Sumner said that he would like to take a moment on the slide to discuss the first work session, which was scheduled for Wednesday, March 6. He said that this would start with the general fund. He said that they would concentrate specifically on general fund revenues before moving onto general fund expenditures, starting with Administration, Judicial, Public Safety, and their objective was to cover Public Works as well. He said that these were functional areas and categories that they reported out on for the budget. He said that these were not department-specific categories. He said that there were departments embedded within each of these functional areas.

Mr. Sumner said that the second work session on March 11 would be a joint work session between the Board of Supervisors and the School Board. He said that during this session, the Public Schools would provide their recommendation or request to the Board. He said that at the conclusion of that conversation, they would proceed to finalize the items planned for the general fund. He said that these items would cover functional areas such as Health and Welfare, Parks, Recreation, and Cultural, Community Development, and their non-departmental section of the general fund.

Mr. Sumner said that finally, he would discuss work session three. He said that the focus would be on their CIP and debt service. He said that they had reserved time for addressing general fund items from previous nights if necessary. He said that their aim was to conclude these items by March 13.

Mr. Andrews opened the public hearing.

Ms. Heidi Farr, White Hall, said that she was from Earlysville, and she would share her experiences as a parent and volunteer in 4-H. She said that she hoped to demonstrate the importance of fully funding the Virginia Cooperative Extension's Office 4-H budget for FY25. She said that with 4-H participation at its highest level in 20 years, it was evident that their community was looking for what 4-H had to offer. She said that however, sustaining and expanding these invaluable programs that were free to anyone required resources, making the Board's support critical. She said that by endorsing the budget request for 4-H, they were not only allocating funds but investing in future leaders, innovators, and changemakers in Albemarle County.

Ms. Farr said that she would like to tell a story about one of these future leaders. She said that in 4-H, children ran their own business meetings, with volunteers assisting when needed. She said that recently, one club needed to appoint a fundraising committee. She said that half a dozen kids volunteered, but no one wanted to be the chairperson. She said that the president had the responsibility to appoint a chairperson and came up with a unique solution. She said that she organized a game of rock-paper-scissors until there was only one person remaining. She said that the winner or loser became the new chairperson. She asked the Board to imagine what this kind of out-of-the-box thinking could do as she and her peers participated in their community.

Ms. Farr said that the funding request was for \$117,335. She said that with over 3,250 children served last year, this investment amounted to just \$36.10 per child annually. She said that they were not planning on stopping there; they had a lot more to do.

Ms. Farr said that while she could talk about many other things, she wanted to tell another story about a particularly shy young lady during club elections. She said that with her hands and body trembling, she shared her reasons for wanting to become the club historian. She said that not a single child moved or spoke while she was speaking, and when she finished, they erupted in cheers and applause for her. She asked them to imagine what this could do when other kids have it. She said that she invited them to visit a club or 4-H event to see these stories firsthand. She expressed her gratitude for the current funding and humbly requested their full support for the Virginia Cooperative's FY25 budget.

Mr. Dan Rosensweig, CEO of Habitat for Humanity of Greater Charlottesville, said that he would begin by sharing some positive news regarding the partnership between Habitat and the County at

Southwood Mobile Home Park. He said that the \$500 million national model redevelopment project without displacement still had a long way to go; however, it had already surpassed their expectations, as well as the Board's own benchmarks. He said that in similar redevelopment projects nationwide, only 11% of residents returned.

Mr. Rosensweig said that at Southwood, the second group of families, or the first group after the early adopters, had made their choices, and an impressive 85% of families were staying. He said that they expected that this retention rate would actually increase. He explained that this group was the only one unable to design their own neighborhood due to COVID-19 restrictions. He said that therefore, all future neighborhoods would have the opportunity to design their own neighborhoods. He said that as a result, they believed that they could achieve a retention rate above 90%, which was unprecedented nationally.

Mr. Rosensweig reported that they had exceeded their first performance agreement with the County by 60 affordable units. He said that the initial performance agreement required them to create 155 affordable units; however, they were currently delivering 215 units. He thanked the Board for their support. He said that as they evaluated this year's budget, he asked them to keep Southwood in their consideration. He said that prior to the first rezoning of the property in 2018, they had entered into a performance agreement that provided the County with clear deliverables in exchange for cash contributions and tax increments.

Mr. Rosensweig explained that three years ago, during the lead-up to the second phase, it was decided that they should wait until after the rezoning to enter into another performance agreement, which occurred approximately two years ago. He said that the second phase of development represented about 80% of the park. He said that Habitat had spent over \$3 million remediating and clearing the first section of phase two due to severe health and safety issues resulting from failing septic systems. He said that over 12 acres of land had now been cleaned, making it pristine, as confirmed by the DEQ (Department of Environmental Quality).

Mr. Rosensweig noted that this process had created significant cash flow challenges for their non-profit organization. He said that their current expenditures threatened to delay the project, which could endanger families by keeping them in unhealthy living conditions, potentially forcing some of them to move twice and causing costly inefficiencies in land development and new home construction. He requested the Board's support for phase two at Southwood in their upcoming budget. He asked if there was capacity within the remaining year's budget to consider allocating funds to help them continue their partnership with the families at Southwood.

Mr. Gustavo Espinosa said that he was a tenant organizer with Legal Aid Justice Center. He said that he worked with low-income renters in Albemarle County. He said that before his current role, he was a rent relief assister, assisting hundreds of Albemarle County residents in accessing the state's pandemic rent relief program, which had since ended. He said that he wanted to express his gratitude to the Board and the Department of Social Services (DSS) for launching ACERP, Albemarle County's Emergency Relief Program.

Mr. Espinosa said that before ACERP was implemented, he found himself knocking on people's doors to inform them that they were being evicted and brought to court. He said that while he could provide legal assistance during this time, he was unable to offer any financial assistance. He said that with ACERP in place, there was now financial assistance available; however, \$260,000 was insufficient to address the needs of all affected residents. He said that this year alone, less money was being distributed, and the number of eviction cases continued to rise.

Mr. Espinosa said that in 2023, there were 1,330 cases filed, which equated to four cases per day across Albemarle County. He said that when he looked at a list of the top 20 evictors, they were across all districts, including Diantha McKeel's district at Spark Charlottesville, Barracks West, Parks Edge, Ned Galloway's district at Cobalt Ridge, formerly Abington Crossing, Mallside at Rio Hill, Bea LaPisto-Kirtley's district at Wilton Farm Apartments, and Mike Pruitt's district at Cavalier Crossing, Timberland, and Jim Andrews' district at Brookdale. He said that in Ann Mallek's district, there were numerous LLCs with mysterious names that were difficult to associate with specific apartment complexes or manufactured home communities. He said that it was likely that many evictions were occurring in her district as well.

Mr. Espinosa said that this highlighted the need for ACERP to be funded at a significantly higher level than its current \$260,000 budget, which equated to approximately \$5,000 per week. He said that people were being taken to court for amounts ranging from one month's rent to several months' rent, and ACERP needed to be better funded in order to meaningfully help the families residing in Albemarle County.

Mr. Espinosa said that due to ACERP providing less financial aid, there were no resources available within the City or County that could cover rent balances exceeding one or two months' worth of rent. He said that when individuals faced job loss, funeral expenses for family members, hospitalization of children, or other crises, they often required more than just \$1,000 to maintain their housing situation. He said that by providing adequate emergency rental assistance, not only was it the right thing to do, but it also proved cost-effective for the County. He said that this was because fewer services were needed when people could remain in their homes and maintain their children's education.

Mr. Espinosa said that budget decisions were always challenging, and moving money around

would be necessary. He said that the previous year marked the first time Albemarle County contributed its own funds to emergency rental assistance, which was commendable. He emphasized that this funding needed to be at a higher level than \$260,000 to adequately address the needs of the community.

Mr. Roger Torres provided his presentation in Spanish, followed by the following English translation:

Mr. Roger Torres said that he had been a resident of Southwood for over 20 years. He said that he raised his family there with his wife, and now their grandchildren also called Southwood home. He said that he believed in values such as God, family, and hard work, which they shared at Southwood. He said that last December, during the Christmas season, Habitat for Humanity provided him with the keys to their new home. He said that this made their Christmas warm and comfortable, as their house had no holes in the walls, no leaks in the roof, and a well-functioning sewage system, preventing unpleasant odors.

Mr. Torres said that similar to his family, there were over 200 families in the trailer park working toward having a decent home for their children, a place where kids could be healthy, happy, and attend school to become educated individuals, positively contributing to their country. He said that he had been actively involved in the Habitat project aimed at transforming Southwood from a trailer park into a welcoming neighborhood, providing decent homes for everyone, regardless of race, political beliefs, or religion. He said that tonight, he came before them once again to request their continued support for Habitat, to continue supporting hundreds of families and hundreds of children who represented the future of Charlottesville and Virginia. He thanked them, and may God bless them all.

Ms. Maria Tereza Jimenez provided her presentation in Spanish, followed by the English translation:

Ms. Maria Tereza Jimenez said that she had been a resident of Southwood for more than 20 years. She said that she was the proud mother of two daughters and a son. She said that her occupation involved cleaning houses, but she had also initiated a business of planning birthday parties. She said that living in a trailer for such a long time had been challenging for her family. She said that financially, maintaining the trailer's warmth during winter was costly, amounting to nearly \$400 per month. She said this was equivalent to cleaning four houses to cover that expense.

Ms. Jimenez said that constantly repairing the trailer's structure added to the challenges. She said that emotionally, she felt disheartened because owning a house remained an almost unattainable dream. She said that nevertheless, despite these limitations, her daughters continued their studies, and she persisted in her work to contribute positively to their community. She said that the Habitat program had provided her family with the opportunity to acquire a safe and affordable home. She said that this dream was something she strived for daily, fueled by faith in God, Habitat, and the Board's support as authorities.

Ms. Jimenez said that their assistance could help them continue this project. She said that they required resources to continue building Southwood and ensure that hundreds of families could realize their dream of owning a home. She asked them to please make the right decision. She said that they should continue supporting their project and provide future generations with shelter. She thanked the Board, and said may God bless them.

Mr. Carlos A. Moreno, White Hall, said that he knew that they were at the beginning of their budget process, and he was hopeful that they would include robust funding for Habitat's efforts in non-displacement initiatives. He said that he was a Colombian immigrant who arrived in the United States in the 1960s and spent 30 years renting in New York City. He said that as a renter, he had no concept of homeownership. He said that it was not until purchasing his first home in his 30s, and then purchased a second home. He said that after working as a state prosecutor for five years and a federal prosecutor for 15 years, he was now a criminal defense attorney in the area.

Mr. Moreno said that two years ago, he decided to give back to the community by volunteering with Habitat for Humanity. He said that he spent his time helping build homes at Southwood and also served as an interpreter for volunteers or workforce participants who needed assistance. He said that at another time, he became a member of the Habitat board, so he now sat on the board. He said that growing up in New York City, when one heard a gunshot, they learned how to duck. He said that as he walked around Southwood, he saw the children who were now playing in the homes that they had finished. He said that these homes provided clean streets, a safe environment, and a learning environment.

Mr. Moreno said that what Habitat was doing was truly helping these individuals live and experience the American dream, which was what they all wanted. He said that their support of Habitat would further that American dream of these individuals. He said that as Mr. Rosenzweig had mentioned earlier, Habitat had done so much to assist in non-displacement, which was so important. He said that there were so many families that had chosen to stay based upon what Habitat had done to allow them to stay. He said that over 80 families had not been displaced due to the efforts of Habitat and due to the County's own efforts. He said that he implored them and encouraged them to please continue supporting Habitat in this endeavor.

Mr. Bruce Eaves, said that he had lived in White Hall, Ann Mallek's district, for 77 years, except for when he lived on Cherry Avenue during his childhood. He said that he graduated from Lane High School before everyone was drafted into either the Marine Corps or Army, and he was sent to Vietnam. He said that upon returning from Vietnam, he was unhappy and did not want to talk about Vietnam for 27 years. He said that a man named Jim Shisler encouraged him to speak at the Dogwood Vietnam Memorial, which was the first of its kind in the country. He said that he referred to this location as "the Hill that Heals" because it allowed him to confront his inner demons. He said that veterans were still healing, and there were 7,000 veterans in Albemarle County.

Mr. Eaves said that as they continue to heal from various wars, it was essential to recognize that 25 veterans commit suicide daily. He said that to bring their community together in support of these veterans, they proposed raising funds for a pedestrian bridge and parking lot near the memorial. He said that the project required \$3 million, and that currently, \$600,000 has been allocated by the City into their CIP, with plans to match this amount. He said that Ms. Mallek had recommended that he apply in September, but he hoped to secure funding in this year's budget and complete the project before their lifetime ended. He said that he hoped the County would help them out. He said that they had lost eight individuals from Albemarle High School who were memorialized on that hill.

Mr. Gallaway said that he wanted to express his gratitude to everyone who attended this evening's meeting. He said that he requested that they ensure they took thorough notes while discussing the efforts and requests for support. He said that they would carefully consider these notes and their words as they worked on the budget.

Mr. Gallaway said that he would also like to acknowledge Mr. Richardson for presenting the budget to them last Wednesday and then conducting the employee town hall the following day. He said that he was not sure if others were able to join in. He said that he appreciated Mr. Richardson's effort in walking through the budget for all staff and employees. He said that he especially appreciated the questions asked during the town hall and took note of them. He said that as they worked through the budget this year, he wanted to acknowledge that those questions and notes would be kept at the forefront.

Ms. Mallek thanked everyone who attended, spoke, and listened during the event. She encouraged all of them to continue providing input through emails, letters, or attending public hearings. She said that as more information emerged regarding all aspects of the budget, numerous questions would arise that they would address during budget work sessions. She said that this would enable them to gather additional information and make well-informed decisions for everyone's benefit. She asked everyone to please continue participating actively in this process.

Mr. Pruitt said that he would like to thank everyone who attended today for their input. He said that he especially wanted to thank everyone who came to speak on behalf of Southwood. He said that earlier today, he informed a constituent that he had immense pride that he was able to claim that Southwood was in his district, which was entirely unearned since he had not contributed to it. He said that it was a truly generational investment in their community. He added that it was also an important national model for community-led development, and he was excited to continue to support it as a member of the Board.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley said that she agreed with her fellow Supervisors that they appreciated everyone coming out to discuss items such as 4-H, Southwood, and the Vietnam War Memorial. She asked everyone to please attend or listen to each budget workshop they had. She said that there were several upcoming work session where they could listen to their proposals and considerations.

Ms. McKeel thanked the public for coming to the meeting. She said that the data Mr. Rosenzweig had shared with them was outstanding. She said that this project was exceptional. She said that it was great to see students there. She said that they valued engaging young people in their discussions and thanked 4-H clubs for bringing them there. She said that Mr. Richardson's presentation was excellent, and she appreciated staff being there. She said that as they began this process, they had recorded all information and documents for future reference. She said that participants could access meeting recordings online or listen in real-time. She encouraged their active involvement and expressed her sincere thanks.

Mr. Andrews said that he would like to add his welcome and appreciation for everyone's presence there that night to discuss the matter with them. He said that they valued community engagement, and that was their first public hearing. He said that there would be several more hearings in the future; however, he encouraged the public to share their thoughts sooner rather than later. He said that to facilitate communication, there were various ways to reach them through their official channels. He said that people could visit albemarle.org, the County's website, and access the budget office's process. He said that additionally they would hold regular meetings throughout this process where the public could come and share their comments

Mr. Andrews closed the public hearing.

Mr. Gallaway said that last week they received an update regarding the Fontaine Avenue intersection, which was directed by the Board. He said that the decision was made unanimously at today's MPO (Metropolitan Planning Organization) meeting, except for one abstention from Mr. Nelson of VDOT. He said that the four electeds voted in favor of proceeding with the plan presented last week, addressing all questions and concerns raised during the meeting. He said that he was hereby updating the Board on this development.

Ms. Mallek encouraged residents to contribute their thoughts on three chapters of the recently released drafts of the AC44 Comprehensive Plan: Growth Area Land Use and Transportation, Rural Area Land Use and Transportation, and Community Facilities. She said that they could listen to the Planning Commission discussion from last night, which should be available in a day or so. She said that this recording would serve as a helpful starting point for their own comments and for reviewing the materials available on the website. She said that they could provide printed copies if needed. She said that also, they required input on elements discussed in the budget, as well as the Solar Ordinance Draft and Wireless Facilities. She acknowledged that there were numerous aspects to consider and personal thoughts to share as they moved forward.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley said that she would like to inform the audience that they would be hosting budget meetings and town halls through their Community Advisory Councils (CACs). She said that these events were open to the public and aimed to educate attendees about their budget process and its implications. She encouraged everyone to look up their local CACs and attend meetings in their community or elsewhere in any district.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley said that she was requesting the Board's permission to establish a Fire Rescue Foundation, similar to their existing Parks Foundation. She said that this 501(c)3 non-profit organization would raise private funds for amenities in their Fire Department. She said that the foundation was currently in formation, and she sought the Board's approval for its establishment.

Mr. Andrews said that he did not believe the matter required the formal approval of the Board.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley clarified that she was making the Board aware of it. She asked if Mr. Richardson had anything to add.

Mr. Jeff Richardson, County Executive, said that when any Board member requested to make others aware of something and sought support, if there was staff involvement in working on that or supporting that endeavor, it was helpful for everyone to know that the full Board was aware of it and endorsed it. He said that this way, if staff time and resources were required to support that initiative, they could prioritize it freely and clearly.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley said that the organization was fortunate because they already possessed the Articles of Incorporation template and the MOA (Memorandum of Agreement) from the Parks Foundation. She said that they could utilize the same format that was employed when establishing the Parks Foundation. She noted that they had used the Articles of Incorporation for the Police Foundation as a starting point. She said that this endeavor was essentially a continuation of previous efforts, and there would not be a significant number of staff members involved.

Mr. Andrews said that he would feel more comfortable if he knew what was expected of staff before they proceeded further with this, involving staff time. He said that they could have that discussion at some point, he would appreciate it.

Ms. McKeel said that staff could return with estimated impacts. She said that last week, the Regional Transit Partnership (RTP) met to discuss the progress toward establishing a transit authority. She said that as previously mentioned, this was the primary objective of the RTP. She said that the group agreed to support the staff of the City and County working together over the next 90 to 120 days to develop the foundational elements of a transit authority concept to take back to City Council and the Board of Supervisors.

Ms. McKeel said that Ms. Mallek participated in the meeting along with representatives from both the City and County. She said that following the budget cycle, staff would present the basic requirements for establishing an authority. She said that the Code of Virginia required that a local authority must begin with the City and County, so this step was essential in the process. She said that the partnership planned to address this matter during the summer months.

Mr. Andrews said that he and Mr. Pruitt attend the Albemarle Broadband Authority meeting prior to the Board of Supervisors meeting and VATI (Virginia Telecommunications Initiatives) 2021 and 2022 projects which were proceeding and should be on time for 2025, essentially connecting all the areas of the County. He said that one of the things that struck him at the meeting as they talked briefly about was the phaseout of the Affordable Connectivity Program, which unfortunately had not gotten additional federal funding at this point. He said that the transition of the people who were in that program into the regional digital equity coalition; they learned that there were 2,568 enrollees in that program, so it was very significant. He said that this staff who was working with them were working with them to assist them with digital skills and to find transitional ways to continue to be able to access the internet and digital resources.

Ms. Mallek asked if Mr. Andrews could say a little more about the regional digital equity, and whether it was local or a state program.

Mr. Andrews said that the steering committee thus far consisted of BRHD (Blue Ridge Health District), JABA (Jefferson Area Board for Aging), the library, and other participants, forming a regional group aimed at helping transition from the Affordable Connectivity Program to serve this coalition as a resource for the public who would otherwise struggle to access the Internet.

Ms. Mallek asked if it was more about skill development versus money.

Mr. Andrews said that it also included transitions to locating financial resources.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley asked what level of staff involvement was required.

Mr. Andrews said that the initiative was already a part of the Albemarle Broadband Authority BAAO.

Agenda Item No. 4. From the County Executive: Report on Matters Not Listed on the Agenda.

There was no report.

Agenda Item No. 5. Adjourn to March 6, 2024, 1:00 p.m. Lane Auditorium.

At 6:59 p.m., the Board adjourned its meeting to March 6, 2024, 1:00 p.m. in Lane Auditorium, Albemarle County Office Building, 401 McIntire Road, Charlottesville, VA 22902. Mr. Andrews said opportunities for the public to access and participate in this meeting would be posted on the Albemarle County website on the Board of Supervisors home page and on the Albemarle County calendar. He said participation would include the opportunity to comment on those matters for which comments from the public would be received.

Chair

Approved by Board
Date: 06/04/2025
Initials: CKB