

A regular meeting of the Board of Supervisors of Albemarle County, Virginia, was held on October 15, 2025, at 1:00 p.m. in Lane Auditorium, Second Floor, Albemarle County Office Building, 401 McIntire Road, Charlottesville, Virginia, 22902.

PRESENT: Mr. Jim H. Andrews, Mr. Ned Gallaway, Ms. Beatrice (Bea) J.S. LaPisto-Kirtley, Ms. Ann H. Mallek, Ms. Diantha H. McKeel, and Mr. Mike O. D. Pruitt.

ABSENT: none.

OFFICERS PRESENT: County Executive, Jeffrey B. Richardson; County Attorney, Andy Herrick; Clerk, Claudette K. Borgersen; and Senior Deputy Clerk, Travis O. Morris.

Agenda Item No. 1. Call to Order. The meeting was called to order at 1:01 p.m., by the Chair, Mr. Jim Andrews.

Mr. Andrews introduced the Albemarle County Police Department Officers present to provide their services at the meeting, Officers Angela Jamerson and Lauren Daly.

Agenda Item No. 2. Pledge of Allegiance.
Agenda Item No. 3. Moment of Silence.

Agenda Item No. 4. Adoption of Final Agenda.

Ms. Mallek **moved** to adopt the final agenda. Ms. McKeel **seconded** the motion. Roll was called and the motion carried by the following recorded vote:

AYES: Mr. Andrews, Mr. Gallaway, Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley, Ms. Mallek, Ms. McKeel, and Mr. Pruitt.
NAYS: None.

Agenda Item No. 5. Brief Announcements by Board Members.

Mr. Pruitt reminded the public that early voting was currently underway. He said that October 24 was the last day to register or update voter registration, however, it was still possible to update registration and cast a provisional ballot. He said that the easiest way to do this was to visit the early voting location in person. He said that community members could complete the process in one visit, with the option to do so in person on the same day, just make sure to bring some basic identifying documents. He said early voting would continue until November 1.

Mr. Pruitt said that as a reminder, early voting was being conducted at the 5th Street County Office Building, the same location where the police and Social Services were located. He said that the actual election would take place on the Tuesday following, which was November 4, 2025.

Ms. McKeel announced that yesterday, Albemarle County had a press release announcing that Fire and Rescue would be launching Community Connect, a new platform designed to assist their community in emergencies. She explained that due to the growing number of calls for service related to fire and rescue incidents, the Fire Department was seeking ways to better support residents and business owners.

Ms. McKeel stated that the Community Connect platform allowed users to share essential details about their homes and properties, which could be lifesaving in emergency situations. She said that this platform was free, secure, and aimed to help responders arrive at their home fully prepared. The platform would ask for information such as whether someone in the household relied on oxygen or had a disability, and sharing this information could significantly aid responders in emergency situations.

Ms. Mallek announced that on October 19, 2025, at 11:00 a.m., Piedmont Baptist Church on Half Mile Branch in Crozet would be celebrating its 155th anniversary. She said that a number of years ago, the church had caught fire, and a Crozet volunteer fire person was driving by and had managed to call for help, ultimately saving everything but the roof. She said that they had lived through many trials and tribulations and had come through stronger than ever, so this was a wonderful recognition for the parish there.

Ms. Mallek said that November was the time to prepare one's front porch or fence or business storefront for Operation Green Light 2025, when they would illuminate green lights to recognize the service of their veteran and active-duty neighbors. She reminded veterans to seek services at the Veterans Affairs (VA), even if their claims had been denied previously. She said new rules for Promise to Address Comprehensive Toxics (PACT) Act eligibility had been enacted in 2024, and the VA clinic locally and at McGuire were now in full operation.

Ms. Mallek said that America's Counties had a long and proud history of serving the nation's veterans, and this legacy continued today as they worked with all of their federal, state, and local partners. She asked everyone to show support for veterans by lighting their buildings green from November 4 to 11, or all year round. She said that by shining that green light, County governments and

residents would let veterans know that they were seen, appreciated, and supported.

Ms. Mallek announced that it was also apple butter season. She said that Mount Moriah was busy on October 18 with a fall festival, and then on October 25 the owners of the Bluebird and Company bookstore in Crozet, who were in their third year now of the Crozet Book Festival, were partnering this year with the Crozet Library. There were school events and events at Mudhouse, Bar Botanical, the Yellow Mug, and the large author events would be held at the library. She said that 33 writers would be coming for the weekend, many of whom would be going to Albemarle County schools that Friday.

Ms. Mallek said that the White Hall Ruritans, who maintained and cared for the historic White Hall Community Building in the village of White Hall, were having their apple butter event on October 25 and would be cooking from midnight to noon and selling from noon to 4. She hoped people would come, but said it usually sold out quickly so everyone should plan ahead.

Ms. Mallek announced that also on October 25 the Get Better Crozet Health Fair would be held at Crozet Park from 10:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Many partner agencies would be at this event, which was in its second year. She added that public safety as well as private business agencies and lots of children's activities would be participating, so she encouraged everyone to put that on their route when traveling around Crozet and western Albemarle.

Ms. Mallek announced that October 25 was also National Drug Take-Back Day. The Albemarle County Police Department (ACPD), in partnership with Sentara, Wegmans and the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), had four drop-off locations this year: the Wegmans Grocery on 5th Street, Sentara Martha Jefferson at Martha Jefferson Drive, Sentara Crozet Family Medicine on Park Ridge Drive and Forest Lakes Family Medicine on Proffit Road.

Ms. Mallek announced that Mint Springs Adventure Race would be held on November 8 and would consist of a four-hour and an eight-hour orienteering and mountain biking race through the mountains. She said that the eight-hour race began at 8:00 a.m., and the four-hour family race started at 10:00 a.m., with participants navigating the rugged terrain using a map and compass. For more information, the public should visit Crozet.racing/homebase. She said that proceeds would support the Crozet Cares Closet, a local thrift store.

Ms. Mallek said that November 8 and November 9 would be the 31st Annual Studio Tour, which was founded right here in Albemarle. She said that this event featured 47 artisans at 24 studios across Albemarle, Greene, Madison, and Nelson Counties, as well as the City of Charlottesville. With numerous events and activities to choose from, there were plenty of opportunities to enjoy the weekends.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley reported that at the Albemarle Economic Development Authority (EDA) meeting last night, GO Virginia presented a \$600,000 grant to the Albemarle EDA for the Rivanna Futures project, especially in the AstraZeneca area. She said that they also had a joint meeting with the Charlottesville EDA, which was very productive. They reached a lot of consensus on working together for economic development; they discussed what Albemarle and Charlottesville could do to collaborate on this front.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley announced that the County's annual Trunk or Treat events would be held on Thursday, October 23, from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m., in Claudius Crozet Park, and Friday, October 24 at Darden Towe Park. She said that this event, which brought together the Police and Fire Departments, was always exciting and enjoyable. She highly recommended attending, as it was great fun for both kids and adults. She said that she attended last year with her family from France, and the kids had a wonderful time climbing around the police vehicles, including the Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) car and fire engine.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley said that on October 6, 2025, they celebrated the steel topping out of the Manning Center, which aligned closely with their innovation corridor and bioscience initiatives in their area.

Mr. Andrews announced that there was an all-Community Advisory Committee (CAC) meeting scheduled for October 30, 2025, from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., where several reports would be presented, including the community well-being profile, Orange Dot report, and Map2Health report. He said that this meeting would also provide an opportunity for them to come together again and for everyone to have a chance to participate.

Agenda Item No. 6. Proclamations and Recognitions.

Mr. Andrews said that on Friday, several Board members had attended a staff gathering to honor the retirement of Chief Dan Eggleston. He said he would like to take this opportunity to publicly recognize Chief Eggleston's significant impact on the community. He said that Chief Eggleston had announced his retirement at the end of October, after more than 40 years in the fire service, including 23 years as the leader of Albemarle County's Fire and Rescue (ACFR).

Mr. Andrews said that under his leadership, the department had grown from a staff of nine to its current modern, unified career-volunteer combination department. He noted that combining career and volunteer departments was not an easy task. He said that during his tenure, Chief Eggleston had

overseen the construction of four new fire stations to reduce response times, hired over 200 career firefighters, and secured more than \$10 million in Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) grants to enhance staffing, training, and equipment.

Mr. Andrews stated that Chief Eggleston had also launched nationally recognized health and wellness programs to protect firefighters, modernized the fleet, expanded and advanced training programs, and served as the president and board chair for the International Association of Fire Chiefs. He said that he had testified before Congress on critical public safety issues and had built international partnerships, sharing best practices with fire organizations in Europe, South America, and the Middle East. He had been honored by the Netherlands Fire Officers Association for his contributions to global fire leadership.

Mr. Andrews said that Chief Eggleston's career had included service during pivotal events, such as Hurricane Floyd, post-9/11 operations in New York City, and the August 2017 civil disturbances in Charlottesville and the Albemarle area. He said that in the past year, he had had opportunities to discuss crises with the Governor. He emphasized that he was a man who had had a major impact, and he would like to ensure that they publicly congratulated him for his service.

Mr. Pruitt apologized for missing Chief Eggleston's retirement engagement due to his personal vacation, which he deeply regretted but hoped to ameliorate. He recalled when he first met Chief Eggleston during his campaign for Board of Supervisors, as he met with a group of local public safety officials. As their conversation progressed, he was struck by how incredibly lucky this County was to have his leadership.

Mr. Pruitt said that Chief Eggleston was a remarkably experienced and capable man who chose to serve Albemarle, leading their very complex, sophisticated system that he helped build from scratch. He believed his steady hand and incredible work in navigating intense issues in the County was something everyone acknowledged as essential and indelible, particularly in his own District. He said that he would always be grateful for that.

Ms. McKeel said that beyond his role as Fire Chief, Chief Eggleston's warmth and connectiveness to people was outstanding. She deeply appreciated his service and working relationships with people from all walks of life in the County. She said that his successful management of career and volunteer fire staff throughout the years, getting them to their current position, was mentioned multiple times. She said that on Friday, they had a room full of people, including current staff as well as former staff from the community who had worked with Chief Eggleston in the past. She thanked him sincerely.

Ms. Mallek said that she was pleased to be at Chief Eggleston's retirement party and to have the opportunity to address him one more time. She said that after decades of volunteers working together at wits end, from 1910 to the present, the development of their formerly designed combined system and its evolution into the successful 10 volunteer and 5 paid stations they had today, was a powerful legacy that stood alone in the fire history here.

Ms. Mallek said that she was glad to hear that he would stay in Crozet and visit every now and then. She said that as they enjoyed the outdoors on beautiful days like today, she wished him fair winds and following seas, because he certainly deserved every moment of it.

Mr. Gallaway said that he held Chief Eggleston in the highest regard and respect. He said that he personally had experienced the care the Fire Department took in their responses, which he knew was because of the Chief's leadership. He expressed his appreciation for that. He said that as someone who had attended the National Association of Counties (NACo) conference, he had learned to respect Dan's reputation at the national level. He said that he hung out with him in the hope that some of the regard and respect would rub off on him.

Mr. Gallaway said that Chief Eggleston had been an exceptional ambassador for the County, not just through his work and expertise, but also through his career and personal history. He said that his contributions, both here and outside of the County, had raised the esteem of their County. He said that he knew that these moments were bittersweet, but he was happy for him and the next chapter that lay ahead. He said that he was smiling for Chief Eggleston, knowing that his experiences would be fulfilling.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley said that it had been her honor to work with Chief Eggleston, and she believed that all of them could attest to his incredible qualities as a person and a leader. She said that he was innovative, forward-thinking, and the impact was evident in everything he had accomplished for this department. Speaking personally, she wanted to acknowledge the significant role he played in saving the Stony Point Volunteer Fire Station. She said that his innovative approach, which included introducing three career staff during the day and an ambulance, was a game-changer. Stony Point now had an ambulance that was used more frequently than anything else, and they were truly grateful for his efforts.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley said that Chief Eggleston was a skilled problem solver who listened, and that was what she most respected about him. His creative ideas were exciting, and his influence had been a monumental force in this County. She acknowledged they would miss him, but she was confident that he would continue to be involved in the newly created Fire Rescue Foundation, which would undoubtedly make a positive impact on their firefighters. She thanked Chief Eggleston very much and congratulated him on his retirement.

Mr. Andrews said that personally, he had always been filled with great confidence whenever

Chief Eggleston had had to come forward to address the Board. He said that he would like to extend an invitation to him, if he had any interest, to come forward one last time.

Mr. Dan Eggleston, Fire Rescue Chief, said that he wanted to take a moment to express his gratitude to all of them. He said that this position as Fire Chief in Albemarle County was the highlight of his fire service career, which spanned back to 1977. He said that he wanted to thank the Board, the County Executive and his team, the department heads, and their outstanding team of career and volunteer members.

Chief Eggleston said that recently, someone mentioned that when attending Fire Rescue meetings, they noticed the conversations were often tense. He said that he replied that it could sometimes lead to good policy, even if the mood was not always harmonious. He said that sometimes, conversation and friction could result in something positive. He said that he was sure the Supervisors were all aware of this as legislators. He said that he just wanted to reiterate that he truly believed in their collective vision, which the Board members had all worked hard to develop to make this the best County they could hope to have. He said that he saw it playing out in their community, and he was proud to be a part of it.

Chief Eggleston said that he had seen it firsthand, both in his work with their team and in his own community in Crozet. He said that Albemarle County was his home, and he would always be committed to staying connected and contributing in any way he could to help bring this vision to reality. He said that he wanted to thank the Board one last time for the opportunity and their trust and guidance over the years. He had thoroughly enjoyed working with them, and he appreciated the experience immensely. He thanked the Board and Mr. Richardson for their guidance and trust in him to do this job.

Agenda Item No. 7. Public Comment on: Matters Previously Considered or Currently Pending Before the Board (Other than Scheduled Public Hearings).

Ms. Sophie Massie, Samuel Miller District, stated that she was present today to express her support for Albemarle adopting a biosolids ordinance. She said that she had grown up in Rappahannock County, where a biosolids ordinance had been in place for decades. She said that she felt fortunate to have grown up in a place where biosolids had never been spread; unfortunately, that was not the case for her children. She said that in the last year, she had learned that biosolids were routinely spread on thousands of acres in Albemarle. She said that biosolids were treated sewage sludge marketed as cheap fertilizer for farm and timberland.

Ms. Massie said that there were numerous problems with biosolids, with one of the primary concerns being the preponderance of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), or “forever chemicals,” which did not break down in nature. She said that PFAS were linked to multiple cancers and infertility. She said that one source of the biosolids spread here was the Blue Plains Wastewater Treatment Plant in Washington, D.C. She asked that the Board try to imagine what went into a major metropolitan sewage system, then expand their imagination to include landfill leachate, the goo from landfills, because that also went into there.

Ms. Massie said that this sludge was tested for heavy metals and treated for pathogens, but it was not treated for PFAS. She said that she lived in the Totier Creek watershed, a designated drinking water protection area for the Town of Scottsville. She said that farms around her received biosolids. She said that she did not worry about her friends in Scottsville because they were the beneficiaries of robust water filtration from being on municipal water. However, she did worry about people in private wells. She said that she worried so much that she had her own well tested and the tests came back with higher than Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-recommended levels of PFAS.

Ms. Massie said that she had the means to install a whole-house PFAS filter, so her family was now protected; however, she knew how to test, what to look for, and she could afford to remedy the problem. She said that most of her neighbors did not even know to be looking for these contaminants. She said that yet she still had to live with the knowledge that her young children had spent the first years of their lives drinking contaminated water, and she had nursed her youngest while she was drinking contaminated water.

Ms. Massie said that she did not think her well was the only one contaminated. She said that she believed that a biosolids ordinance like Rappahannock’s would go a long way toward protecting rural drinking water. She requested the Board to consider the adoption of a biosolids ordinance, because rural residents deserved clean water too.

Agenda Item No. 8. Consent Agenda.

Ms. McKeel **moved** to approve the consent agenda. Ms. Mallek **seconded** the motion. Roll was called and the motion carried by the following recorded vote:

AYES: Mr. Andrews, Mr. Gallaway, Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley, Ms. Mallek, Ms. McKeel, and Mr. Pruitt.
NAYS: None.

Item No. 8.1. Approval of Minutes: January 15, January 22, February 5, March 10, March 12, March 17, and April 7, 2025.

Ms. Mallek had read the minutes of January 15 and March 12, 2025, and found them to be in order.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley had read the minutes of January 22, 2025, and found them to be in order.

Mr. Andrews had read the minutes of February 5, 2025, and found them to be in order.

Mr. Gallaway had read the minutes of March 10, 2025, and found them to be in order.

Ms. McKeel had read the minutes of March 17, 2025, and found them to be in order.

Mr. Pruitt had read the minutes of April 7, 2025, and found them to be in order.

By the above-recorded vote, the Board approved the minutes of January 15, January 22, February 5, March 10, March 12, March 17, and April 7, 2025, as read.

Item No. 8.2. Voting Credentials for the 2025 VACo Annual Business Meeting.

Virginia Association of Counties 
Connecting County Governments since 1934 Virginia Association of Counties

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Immediate Past President
Ann H. Mallek
Albemarle County

Executive Director
Dean A. Lynch, CAE

General Counsel
Phyllis A. Errico, Esq., CAE

Date: September 30, 2025
To: Chairs, County Board of Supervisors
County Administrators
From: Dean Lynch, CAE 
VACo Executive Director
Subject: Voting Credentials for the 2025 VACo Annual Business Meeting

The 2025 Annual Business Meeting of the Virginia Association of Counties (VACo) will be held on **Tuesday, November 11, at 10:00 a.m.** at the Omni Homestead in Bath County, Virginia.

As outlined in **Article VI of the VACo Bylaws**, each county must designate a representative of its board of supervisors to cast its vote(s) at the Annual Business Meeting.

If a board member is unable to attend, the Bylaws also permit counties to designate either:

- A non-elected official from your county, or
- A member of a board of supervisors from another county

to cast proxy vote(s) on behalf of your county.

To ensure your county is certified to vote, a **completed Voting Credentials Form or Proxy Statement** must be submitted to VACo no later than **October 24, 2025**. (Forms should be submitted via email to sklaczynski@vaco.org or mailed back to Virginia Association of Counties, 1207 E Main St, Suite 300, Richmond, VA 23219.)

Your county's participation is critical to the success of the business meeting and the work of VACo on behalf of Virginia's counties. We strongly encourage you to complete and return your credentials in a timely manner, so your county's voice is represented.

We look forward to welcoming you at the VACo Annual Conference, November 8 - 11, 2025!

If you have any questions or need assistance with the process, please don't hesitate to contact us. Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

1207 E. Main St., Suite 300
Richmond, Va. 23219-3627

Phone: 804.788.6652
Fax: 804.788.0083

Email: mail@vaco.org
Website: www.vaco.org

By the above-recorded vote, the Board designated Supervisor Ned Gallaway as Voting Delegate and Supervisor Ann Mallek as Alternate Delegate for the 2025 VACo Annual Business Meeting:



VACo 2025 Annual Meeting

Voting Credentials Form

Please return completed form to: sklaczynski@vaco.org
by Friday, October 24, 2025

Voting Delegate:
(Supervisor) Name: Ned Gallaway
Title: Supervisor, Rio District
Locality: Albemarle County

Alternate Delegate:
(Supervisor) Name: Ann H. Mallek
Title: Supervisor, White Hall District
Locality: Albemarle County

Verified by:
(County Administrator or Clerk of the Board)
Name: Claudette Borgersen Claudette Borgersen
Title: Clerk to the Board of Supervisors
Locality: Albemarle County

**VACo 2025 Annual Meeting
Proxy Statement Form**

_____ County authorizes the following person to cast its votes at the 2025 Annual Meeting of the Virginia Association of Counties on November 11, 2025.

_____, a non-elected official of this county.

-OR-

_____, a supervisor from _____ County.

This authorization is:

Uninstructed. The proxy may use their own discretion to cast _____ County's votes on any issue to come before the annual meeting.

Instructed. The proxy is limited in how they may cast _____ County's votes. The issues on which they may cast those votes and specific voting instructions are attached to this form. (List issues and specific instructions on a separate sheet and include with this form.)

Authorized by:

Name: _____

Title: _____

Locality: _____

Item No. 8.3. Rivanna Water and Sewer Authority (RWSA) Quarterly Report **was received for information.**

Item No. 8.4. Albemarle County Service Authority (ACSA) Quarterly Report **was received for information.**

Agenda Item No. 9. **Presentation:** Economic Outlook Report.

The Executive Summary forwarded to the Board states that the national, state, and local economy impacts the County's revenues and expenditures. Understanding the current economic state and future forecasts enables the County to engage in long-term financial planning, prepare fiscally responsible budgets, and monitor its ongoing fiscal health.

This report is the fourth annual Economic Outlook Report prepared by an outside consultant with

expertise in local government financial forecasting. Since the initial report, staff has remained engaged with the consultant on a quarterly basis, including the preparation of the updated annual Economic Outlook Report.

During this presentation, Dr. Sheryl Bailey, Visiting Professor of Practice from Virginia Tech's School of Public and International Affairs, will present the annual economic report for Albemarle County. Attachment A contains the full, detailed report.

The Economic Outlook Report will inform the five-year financial plan discussions with the Board scheduled for November and December.

Staff recommends the Board receive the presentation as an informational item.

Mr. Andy Bowman, Assistant Chief Financial Officer, stated that he would keep his comments brief today as he was here to introduce their guest speaker. He said that today marked the beginning of a three-part series on long-range financial planning with the Board this fall. He said that following today's meeting, on November 19 staff would discuss the Board's five-year financial plan, which aligned their strategic plan with long-term revenue and expenditure projections.

Mr. Bowman said that then, on December 3, they would have a joint work session on the School Division's capital needs. He said that today, they would be examining the current economic outlook, not only locally but also at the state, national, and worldwide levels, as presented in the Economic Outlook Report. He noted that this was the fourth year that their County had contracted with Virginia Tech and worked with Dr. Bailey to prepare this report.

Mr. Bowman explained that the report provided valuable insights by analyzing their local revenues and relating them to the broader economic landscape, taking into account the unusual times they had lived in over the past few years. He said that he would now introduce Dr. Sheryl Bailey, who had nearly 30 years of experience in the local, state, and public sectors, providing senior leadership. She had been at the forefront of policy initiatives at all public levels, serving in the gubernatorial cabinet, directing Virginia's largest municipal bond bank, as well as serving on the Board of Directors for the Municipal Securities Rulemaking Board under the authority of the Security Exchange Commission (SEC).

Mr. Bowman said that Dr. Bailey had also been a visiting economist with the Board of Governors for the Federal Reserve, presenting policy briefings on Capitol Hill, and had extensive academic credentials, including a summa cum laude bachelor's degree in economics from Norfolk State University (NSU), master's and doctorate degrees from Harvard University, and faculty positions at Harvard, Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU), Hampton, William & Mary, and Virginia Tech. He said that it was his privilege to welcome Dr. Bailey, who would present the Economic Outlook Report.

Dr. Sheryl Bailey, Visiting Professor of Practice with the Institute for Policy and Governance at Virginia Tech, extended her gratitude to Mr. Bowman for the generous introduction and greeted the Board and staff. She thanked them for having her and said she was honored to be here to share some recent developments, as it appeared that they were living in times of change. She was reminded of the military metaphors prevalent in Hampton Roads where she grew up, particularly the term Volatile, Uncertain, Complex, and Ambiguous (VUCA). She said that she felt they were living in a VUCA-type world, and as a local government, they were uniquely positioned to adapt to these changes and develop solutions.

Dr. Bailey stated that it was a time of disruption, and the likelihood of disruptions was increasing. She had been saying this for 10 years, and she was now experiencing it more often than she would like. Earlier this year, the economic landscape felt similar to that of the COVID-19 era, with constantly updated forecasts and webinars from Moody's, Standard & Poor's, and Fitch, along with other sources as things progressed and everyone attempted to analyze the information they had.

Dr. Bailey stated that the resilience of the economy was evident, but slowing, and there was more to happen. She stated that she would provide an overview of the U.S. trends and outlook, focusing on Albemarle County relative to Virginia. She would also highlight some unique developments in Albemarle County and conclude with some closing comments. For reference, she had included additional details in the appendix of the report.

Dr. Bailey said that to summarize, the U.S. economy had slowed, but it was not in recession, with modest growth. Their resilience was evident, but some impacts were delayed, leaving them with a significant amount of uncertainty. She said that in terms of comparing the economy to a weather forecast, they had some sunshine, but a lot of clouds. Uncertainty was a pervasive issue; they were hearing it every day, and this was a complex situation. She stated that the Virginia economy had cooled faster than the nations in the first half of 2025, and that was their current immediate environment. She said that despite this, Albemarle County had a solid economic base and would continue to do so with their proactive and prudent management.

Dr. Bailey said that this provided the County and leadership with a significant scope to plan and act proactively. She noted that they had a much more extensive scope than many other communities they worked with or those that called them for assistance. This did not mean they were immune to the current realities, but it did give a more comprehensive tool belt. She said that looking at U.S. trends, the economy had grown overall, between the first and second quarter, less than half as fast as their annual rate in

2024. They had entered 2025 with very solid, actually robust growth above the long-term trend. She said that the U.S. real gross domestic product (GDP) grew 2.8% in 2024, compared to 1.1% in the first half of 2025.

Dr. Bailey said that in 2023, there was a very robust recovery and a solid job market. However, things changed, and they had a lot of policy changes in the global world order, so the global economy was in flux. She said that in the first quarter, they experienced a 0.6% decline. She said that the primary reasons for this was consumers' pullback. She said that consumers accounted for the GDP, which was their domestic output and productivity. She said that they used real GDP, which was inflation-adjusted. She said that they also used constant dollars, which was another term for inflation-adjusted.

Dr. Bailey explained that they fixed these dollars in a certain time period, and most of these dollars were in 2017 dollars for federal statistics. The colors used in this presentation were as follows: Blue represented the U.S., red represented Virginia, green represented Albemarle County, and light green represented the Charlottesville Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). She said that these colors were used consistently throughout the presentation. The shaded areas in the graphs denoted recessions per the National Bureau of Economic Research's (NBER) determinations. These were not necessarily two successive quarters of negative growth; to better characterize a recession, they used the three D's: depth, duration, and dispersion.

Dr. Bailey stated that the NBER used these criteria, and they previously owned the GDP statistics before World War II, but those were absorbed by the federal government. She clarified that this served as a backdrop for their current situation; however, they lacked data beyond that point, which affected their understanding of the current tariffs' impact. Prior to the federal government's management, many statistics were proprietary and not publicly available. As a result, they were navigating uncharted territory in terms of the tariffs' effects.

Dr. Bailey said that to better understand this, they could compare this to the Smoot-Hawley Tariff Act of the 1930s, as they also lacked consistent data on this period. The general uncertainty was compounded by the lack of historical data. In the first quarter of 2025, consumers pulled back, which had a significant impact on the economy. She said that consumers accounted for nearly 70% of GDP, making them the most critical component. The second largest GDP component was business private domestic investment, which included equipment, structures, and intellectual property.

Dr. Bailey said that government was the third-largest contributor, and net exports were the fourth. She said that two main factors affecting the economy in the first quarter were consumers pulling back and businesses increasing inventories and imports to prepare for upcoming tariffs. This led to a buildup of inventory, which had a positive impact on the economy. Additionally, consumers purchased cars in March to front-run the impending tariffs, which contributed to the economic growth in the first quarter.

Dr. Bailey said that in the second quarter, the economy showed improvement due to the decrease in imports, which reduced the negative impact on GDP. The overall effect was that the economy was expected to benefit from the increased imports of the first quarter, and some of the impacts of the tariffs had not yet been felt. She said that looking at jobs, their job recovery was very solid coming into 2025, but they had significantly slowed down since January.

Dr. Bailey said that however, as of August, they had recovered and exceeded by 4.8% the jobs they lost in the pandemic. She said that the chart she provided showed the previous two recessions, the real estate bust of the early 2000s, the great financial crisis, and the pandemic. They had dropped faster and deeper in the pandemic because consumers stayed home, and as consumers accounted for 70% of economic activity, this had a drastic impact. If they had continued growing at the pace of 2023 and 2024, they would have made more progress, but job growth essentially stalled in April of this year.

Dr. Bailey said that from January to August of this year, the monthly average contribution to job growth was 75,000 compared to 168,000 a month in 2024 and over 160,000 in 2023. That was a significant change in the job market. Even though the job market was normalizing from the red-hot pace of 2021 and 2022, their job growth pace had slowed significantly. From January to August, they had an average of 75,000 jobs added per month. From just May to August, they were looking at 26,000 jobs added per month. As a result, they were now in a low-hire, low-fire labor market. The layoffs that were expected had not materialized. However, this meant that if someone lost their job, it would be challenging to find a new one.

Dr. Bailey said that the chart on the far right-hand side showed the job market data they had, which was limited due to the shutdown. She had included data from other sources that were available from September, but they lacked that information from the federal government. In terms of the unemployment rate, it was in a holding pattern, too. She said that the curious kind of balance was what Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell called it. The media called it weird, but his actual words were "curious kind of balance."

Dr. Bailey said that the unemployment rate had ticked up slightly, and that was the blue line on the chart, labeled as U3, which was the official unemployment rate. She had also included the six measures of labor underutilization that the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) issued most months, except this month. The official unemployment rate, U3, was a four-week snapshot from the middle of the month to the middle of the month. However, it only accounted for individuals who had actively looked for work during that period and were not working, on vacation, or on a temporary layoff waiting for recall. This narrow snapshot left out those who were outside the civilian labor force and not involved in the labor

market.

Dr. Bailey said that in contrast, U6, the broadest measure, extended the window to the previous 12 months, taking into account whether individuals had actively looked for work during that time. This measure also included the underemployed, who were part-time workers seeking full-time employment due to economic reasons. The U6 measure was often used by Social Services and governments, as it provided a more comprehensive picture of the labor market.

Dr. Bailey said that the Federal Reserve also had its own measure of unemployment, the Non-Employment Index, which used a finer analysis of microdata for each subset in order to determine the likelihood of reemployment, inclusive of part-time work. According to the Federal Reserve, the broader measures were approximately 8%, while the official unemployment rate of 4.3% was lower due to low job creation and a mismatch between labor supply and demand. The official unemployment rate was no longer the sole indicator, as labor demand and supply were now moving in tandem.

Dr. Bailey stated that the unemployment rate was still considered historically low, but they were not creating new jobs. On the other hand, consumers were still spending, albeit in a volatile manner, as described in some Federal Reserve surveys of businesses. However, when examining the month-over-month expenditure rate, they could see changes in consumer spending patterns, particularly in the goods area, in anticipation of tariffs. For example, in March, consumers bought cars, leading to an increase in spending. The orange bars on the bar graph represented real spending, while the blue bars represented personal disposable income.

Dr. Bailey explained that when the orange bars moved to the right, consumers were spending more than their monthly income, using credit and savings to do so. However, they then accelerated spending in anticipation of tariffs. This pattern was evident in the summer, when back-to-school purchases picked up early due to expiring tariff extensions in August. However, consumers continued to spend in August, despite the labor market stalling and cooling. She noted that they were waiting for the September data to confirm whether this trend continued further. While summer spending brought the country out of the economic doldrums, the question was whether this could continue.

Dr. Bailey said that this chart illustrated the difference between real consumer spending and the monthly change in disposable income. Low savings rates were evident, as consumers were drawing down their savings, and total consumer credit balances had also increased. What was not reflected in these numbers was the growing amount of buy-now, pay-later debt, which was not currently reported to credit agencies. However, the credit agencies were planning to add this information, and recent articles had highlighted the issue, citing a young woman who accumulated \$50,000 in buy-now, pay-later debt due to poor financial planning.

Dr. Bailey stated that this phenomenon was not limited to one individual; some families were using buy-now, pay-later services for everyday expenses, such as groceries. Student loans were now being reported, adding to the debt balances after the first quarter of this year. Once the buy-now, pay-later balances were added to institutional reports, they could expect to see more debt emerge. She said that inflation was trending upward. They were on track to meet the 2% long-term target set by the Federal Reserve last year, but that was no longer the case. The trend shifted in the early part of the year, but it turned around in late spring and summer and was now rising.

Dr. Bailey said that the Consumer Price Index (CPI) headline inflation rate was 2.8-2.9%, while core inflation, which excluded food and energy, was higher. She emphasized that this was unusual and had been the case for several years. She said that there were sticky areas in services, particularly healthcare, and shelter. She explained that the Federal Reserve used a more nuanced measure, the Personal Consumption Expenditures (PCE) inflation rate, which took into account substitutions and price comparisons.

Dr. Bailey said that currently, the PCE inflation rate was pushing up against 3%, with core inflation also near 3%. This meant they were not heading toward the long-term target. Despite this, the Fed took a risk management move by reducing the federal funds rate last month, after resuming its rate easing cycle. This decision was made despite the inflationary pressures, as the labor market was cooling. The Fed was now navigating a stagflation environment, where inflationary pressures and a slowing economy were putting opposing forces on its policy decisions. The Fed had previously projected two more rate cuts this year; however, they lacked the data, so they were unsure of the next steps.

Dr. Bailey said that on the provided graph, the blue line represented the federal funds rate, which was reduced. The orange line represented the Fed's balance sheet, which was significantly increased. The Fed bought securities from its member banks, treasury securities, and agency-backed securities to maintain liquidity and ensure the financial market functions properly. During the pandemic, they took steps to prevent a financial market freeze, similar to what occurred during the great financial crisis. They had done this more than once, providing liquidity to keep the market stable. However, they were now gradually reducing this liquidity.

Dr. Bailey stated that the Fed was carefully navigating this process to avoid recession, tame inflation, and maintain financial stability. While they were close to a soft landing, economists were now discussing the soft landing of the future. She reported that the outlook for the U.S. economy was slower, but still resilient, with high levels of uncertainty. Consumers and businesses had been on a holding pattern, waiting for clarity to emerge. The expectations for 2026 were mixed, with differing opinions from various sources.

Dr. Bailey explained that some economists predicted delayed impacts of tariffs would materialize in early next year, leading to lower growth. Others believed they could absorb these impacts and begin to grow. The median forecast for this year was 1.8%, so the 2025 economic outlook was quite tight, but 2026 was expected to have a wider range, with a difference of one point between 1.3% and 2.3%. The uncertainty in this forecast was largely due to differing expectations about the impact of tariffs and how they would affect the economy.

Dr. Bailey stated that the Conference Board discussed this topic earlier in the morning, and they predicted that the economy would experience a decline from 1.8% to 1.5% next year, with some of the effects of tariffs still yet to be fully realized. This uncertainty was a major factor in the economic landscape. Additionally, trade and fiscal policy changes, including new tariffs announced in the coming week, added to the unpredictability. The labor market was cooling, and inflationary pressures were building, with sticky core inflation and pressures on disposable personal income. The Federal Reserve faced challenges to its independence, and the market responded with tight credit conditions and lending standards.

Dr. Bailey stated that commercial real estate and the housing market also experienced challenges, with shifting supply channels and manufacturers looking for alternative locations due to tariffs. The global economy was experiencing slower growth, with growth in 2025 and 2026 expected to be lower than it was last year. These factors created a complex and dynamic economic environment. To navigate this environment, it was essential to stay vigilant, keep up with changes, and be prepared to adapt and adjust.

Dr. Bailey continued to report that looking at the County and Virginia specifically, the GDP growth in Albemarle and Charlottesville City exceeded the state and national averages, with the latest data showing real gross domestic product growth exceeding expectations. However, the average job growth in Virginia and the Charlottesville MSA had slowed, with the Charlottesville MSA experiencing slower monthly job growth. In the first eight months of this year, from the 2024 annual rates, the state's job growth had slowed significantly, falling from 2.4% annual growth in 2024 to 0.18% in January through August 2025.

Dr. Bailey stated that there was a lot of variability, and they had experienced job losses in both the state and their local MSA this year, with some months seeing a decline. She added that she had reviewed the chart and analyzed the data to better understand the job loss profile, because unlike previous economic seasons, this slowdown was not typical, and it was essential to consider the unique characteristics of each season. The job loss profile was heavily concentrated in college-educated professions, particularly those who were long-term unemployed in America. The professional and business services industry was the primary category for the long-term unemployed in Virginia, according to the Virginia Employment Commission (VEC).

Dr. Bailey said that notably, most of the government job losses had occurred in the federal sector between January and August, which would otherwise mask the state and local job changes. The extent to which state and local job growth was compensating for federal job losses had slowed in recent months. She emphasized that Albemarle, which had a higher percentage of its residents in the management, professional, and business services sector, should be alert as to how they may be affected. She stated that it had shown up in the Charlottesville MSA data, although the MSA data was not as robust as the Virginia data. She said that they relied on the summary data for the MSA, as the industry breakdowns were still preliminary and required further analysis.

Dr. Bailey added that she had attempted to prepare the chart, but the industry breakdowns were too preliminary. According to the BLS, the data was listed and had a 'P' next to it, indicating it was preliminary for two months. She said that as a result, they needed to wait for the data to be updated, which typically occurred every month for three months. This was part of their process. Meanwhile, they were seeing that professional and business services, as well as financial activities, were areas where job loss was identified in the Charlottesville MSA. Although it was not showing up in the state data, it was evident in the financial activities sector.

Dr. Bailey stated that one mitigating factor was the presence of biomedical and healthcare employment, which had been an area of growth and Albemarle had a high percentage of residents in that sector. Additionally, the federal government's work in the local area was heavily influenced by the Department of Defense (DOD), which had received additional funding in the Reconciliation Bill. These mitigating factors were worth keeping in mind. She brought this data to the County's attention so they could sharpen their focus and keep a close eye on it. In terms of the unemployment rate, the County consistently ranked below Virginia and the U.S., although the gap had narrowed.

Dr. Bailey reported that the wages for the MSA had been below the state and nation since 2013, with a particularly bumpy ride in the last year. In terms of real per capita personal income, she had provided an aggregate number representing total income, adjusted for inflation, and divided by the number of residents. It provided a way to compare, and Albemarle County had had a higher real per capita personal income above the U.S. and Virginia since 2008, according to available data. This gave them an economic base to work with and also showed a level of spending that could be expected.

Dr. Bailey said that in terms of home sales growth, the number of sales had declined since 2022. However, according to the latest data from the Virginia Association of Realtors, home prices were keeping pace with 2024, with growth almost matching the annual rate. Last year, she had noted the

slowdown in home price growth, but this year, the pace was almost identical to the annual rate in 2024, holding steady but at a slower pace than the U.S. and Virginia in 2025. The Charlottesville MSA was holding steady, according to this house price index, which encompassed all transactions, including new, existing, and refinancing values.

Dr. Bailey stated that this was one of the broadest measures of home values and was the standard used by the Federal Reserve. It was released quarterly, and so far, this year had shown promising results. However, they would need to wait for more data to understand further. Currently, the only data available was the CPI next week, which would influence Social Security benefits. In terms of median listing price per square foot, Albemarle County's value was above both the national and Virginia averages, with the exception of the past year. This report provided insight into the current market, which was experiencing fluctuations but overall remained stable. The steady upward trend had been tempered, but Albemarle County's economy remained strong.

Dr. Bailey stated that with a solid economic base, lower unemployment, and higher per capita personal income, the County was well-positioned for growth. While certain industries, such as healthcare and bio-med, were experiencing challenges, the presence of federal employment and a strong local business sector provided a positive outlook. In terms of the outlook, it was prudent to expect a slow economy with muted growth in 2025, followed by modest growth in 2026. The outlook for 2027 was uncertain, but it was possible that the County would return to trend growth, close to 2%. Furthermore, the outsized impact of federal cuts on Virginia's economy could not be ignored, and this was a major factor to consider in her recommendation.

Dr. Bailey said that in addition to the uncertainty surrounding various factors, many things were in flux, with a lot of uncertainty, a cooling job market, and expectations of anemic to modest growth. She said modest because the County and the surrounding region had done slightly better than Virginia, but they must wait for more data. Since many separations at the federal government had not taken effect until September, and they did not have data, there was still a lot of unknown. The inflationary pressures they expected to continue, with inflation expected to reach 3% next year, but not actually improve until the end of next year and 2027.

Dr. Bailey continued that the consumer and business demand expected to remain cool, especially in the cooling job market. This would put pressure on real disposable personal incomes. She hoped that credit did not become too disconnected from the consumer, as this would have a long-term impact. The housing market was expected to benefit from lower mortgage rates, with continued rate cuts from the Fed. It would continue to normalize but remain competitive. They had a push-pull effect, with housing starts and building permits slow, but with rate adjustments and further anticipated rate adjustments, the housing market was feeling optimistic about the future.

Dr. Bailey explained that in terms of business activity, they expected it to be modest. Businesses were facing inflationary pressure, supply issues, and a cooling consumer spending environment, particularly for small businesses. These businesses did not have the margins to absorb all the supply chain issues, as many only had one supplier. They were concerned about passing on price increases and did not know how to continue absorbing them. Therefore, they must stay attuned to the needs of their small businesses. She also wanted to highlight that the County's strategic economic development initiatives were bearing fruit, thanks to prudent planning and methodical execution. These initiatives were expected to bring economic vitality and diversity.

Dr. Bailey said that she believed the County had wisely invested in a healthy variety of economic strategies that would serve them well. However, the timing of all this will vary, and it would not be the same for every business. Those sensitive interests and consumers would be impacted more than others, so they must remain vigilant in monitoring the situation. She stated that enduring recommendations were still necessary, so if she had to provide one to the Board, she would recommend they stick to the basics. She noted that she had been providing these recommendations for about 10 years and had only added a couple of new recommendations since the pandemic.

Dr. Bailey stated that she had provided her recommendations focused on financial resiliency and agility. To achieve financial stability, one must have a clear understanding of their financial foundation and schedule regular reviews. Being clear on strategic goals was also crucial, as one must tend to them, manage them, and report on the progress. Long-term financial planning was an annual process, not something to do sporadically. Robust scenario planning, financial planning, and early warning systems could help one anticipate bottlenecks and develop a shopping list of options. Engaged staff and adaptive decision-making were also essential.

Dr. Bailey stated that she believed Rivanna Futures and AstraZeneca demonstrated the County's strong discipline in management and governance. She stated that these were bearing fruit, and she encouraged them to stay the course. She said that their solid economic growth base and proactive management would make a difference. She recommended continuing with this approach because it had put the County in good stead. The solid economic base provided a foundation for planning and acting proactively. She added that their history of prudent financial management cannot be overstated.

Dr. Bailey stated that Albemarle was one of only about 1% of Counties in the nation with a triple-AAA rating from all three rating agencies. This was a critical asset that also fostered a culture of behavior and planning, which would help them navigate this time. This provided a strong financial foundation and capacity, which many communities did not have; this capacity enabled them to drive strategic initiatives and advance toward their objectives. The County's methodical and systematic planning, management,

and governance would continue to advance the community.

Dr. Bailey stated that she was confident Albemarle would not only survive but thrive in the VUCA world. She urged them to continue driving forward and working together, and they would ride this out together, with their eyes peeled for any developments. She thanked the Board for the opportunity to work with them and appreciated the time they had given her.

Mr. Pruitt thanked Dr. Bailey for the presentation and said that he had a few questions that he would try to keep brief. He said that they had previously discussed the concept of a bubble in business-to-business sales, as well as the anticipated tariff shock, which had insulated them so far. He asked if there were prevailing industry expectations regarding when they could expect the impact of the tariff to become more apparent.

Dr. Bailey said that one of the resilient pieces has been consumer spending, although there was a slowdown in business total investment. She said that one factor that was really keeping them going is the investment in artificial intelligence (AI). She said that the AI investments were providing a buffer, as well as the continued consumer spending. She explained that every business would have to calculate through the impacts, and the diversity of the impacts was very broad, and they did not have a solid, broad measure of how each of them would be impacted. She said that at this point, AI and consumer spending were the factors mitigating the impacts of the tariffs; however, consumer spending was questionable, given the cooling labor demand.

Mr. Pruitt said that regarding the issue of a reduced supply in the labor market, he wanted to ensure that he understood the point correctly. He asked if this was referring to the general tightness of the market, which Dr. Bailey had mentioned earlier, characterized by low turnover rates, such as people not quitting or being fired.

Dr. Bailey clarified that labor force participation rates had declined, meaning there were fewer people working.

Mr. Pruitt said that when he spoke with his peers at the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission (TJPDC), he recently asked a question regarding the decrease in home construction activity. He said that anecdotally, they were seeing this trend, particularly when examining the zoning modification amendments they had. He said that he asked if other localities were experiencing the same decrease, and the answer was no, primarily due to the high cost of building, and their neighbors with lower costs could provide better returns, which was a significant factor.

Mr. Pruitt said that, however, there was still an appetite to build in Albemarle County, likely driven by the cost of capital. He said that he may be asking a somewhat technical question, but in high-cost communities like theirs, he wondered if there were prevailing estimates or thoughts on the required Federal Reserve discount rate for new construction to begin in these areas. He said that in other words, at what point did the interest rate need to decrease before they saw an increase in new construction starts in high-cost communities?

Dr. Bailey replied that demand played a crucial role in this situation. She said that as long as there was demand for Albemarle, and it had to meet a certain price point, the builders would construct. She said that it was not just the supply side; it was also the demand side. She said that if there was demand, businesspeople would find a way to meet that demand, which was what businesspeople did. The question was, what was the demand factor? She said that they observed that the demand was slower in Albemarle compared to their neighboring areas, where growth was occurring at a much faster pace, but that did not mean there was no demand in Albemarle.

Mr. Pruitt stated that he experienced anxiety regarding the idea that they were not only in a single industry bubble, but also in a multi-industry bubble driven by a prolonged period of low capital costs across various apps and services. He said that this included companies like Netflix and Facebook, which were both companies that did not turn a profit. He said that he wondered about the possibility of a system-wide collapse, as people were suddenly faced with the need to turn a profit. Nonetheless, he had not had the opportunity to discuss this with an actual economist to determine whether this was a serious concern or if it was being seriously considered by any of the Fed systems. He asked if there was actual concern about a multi-industry bubble.

Dr. Bailey said that there was an article yesterday on this by a prominent economist. She said that for context, AI as an industry had drawn a significant number of investors, and it was heavily impacting the stock markets. She said that seven industries were driving the stock market movement. She said that as a result, there was a substantial investment in this area. She said that there was concern, however, about when these investments in technology would actually yield identifiable productivity benefits and earnings as returns.

Dr. Bailey said that business was pushing heavily into technology because it was aware that it was facing a shrinking labor supply due to demographics. She noted that the largest cohort of baby boomers would all be 65 by 2030, so there would be more people 65 and older than 18 around the year 2033. She said that this aging America trend was prompting businesses to invest in technology, as typically, population growth and labor force growth had been sources of growth. She said that it was unclear whether these investments were premature, so they would have to wait and see if this investment translated into real productivity and earnings.

Dr. Bailey said that if they did get ahead of themselves there may be a rebalancing. She acknowledged that there was concern about how much technology was dominating their perception of the current situation, but it was also where businesses were putting in investments for the future. At this point, she did not think there was a prevailing perspective, and she certainly could not speak for the Fed. She said that even if the Fed could provide some insight, she did not think they would.

Mr. Pruitt said that he would like to ask a few more questions that are more locality specific. He said that Dr. Bailey mentioned demographics, and he would also like to inquire about the potential higher education cliff. He said that as he knew, the administration's threats to higher education had been concerning, and they were aware of the effects it was having. He said that however, there was also the demographic aspect to consider. He said that for his age cohort, they were the last large age group to have completed their degrees, which meant enrollment numbers would likely be down.

Mr. Pruitt said that furthermore, decreasing dividend from college education was driving people away from pursuing higher education. He noted that their local community was heavily reliant on higher education for economic growth. He said that he was wondering if there were indicators from other localities in similar positions as Albemarle that could provide insight into the potential higher education fiscal cliff or a drop-off in the market. He said that he was wondering what kind of support or strategies they could develop to prepare for and mitigate this potential issue.

Dr. Bailey stated that the good news was that they were currently discussing the educational enrollment cliff. She said that when she retired the first time, she was a municipal advisor to higher education, and she worked with institutions across the country, particularly in the Midwest. She explained that the enrollment cliff actually hit the Midwest before it reached this area, and the enrollment cliff is now affecting K-12 schools, which was happening before it impacted higher education. She said that many of their school divisions had experienced this decline, which was a demographic issue and affected enrollment.

Dr. Bailey said that they had a birth rate, but it was not the replacement rate. This meant that there was a rebalancing taking place in the higher education sector, which had been ongoing for 10 years. She said that it was hitting the east coast more, but it had been happening in other parts of the country earlier, due to their demographic changes. She noted that according to rating agencies like Moody's, S&P, and Fitch, the flagship universities were experiencing strong demand. She said that for example, UVA and Tech had consistently broken records with record applications every year for about five years in a row.

Dr. Bailey said that the value of flagships had a trend that was evident in the value of education. The smaller institutions, particularly private ones, were the ones feeling those challenges first. She said that Moody's, S&P, and Fitch all agreed on this. The difference lay in whether it was a public or private school, as private schools relied solely on their endowment for support, whereas public schools had state funding. This rebalancing was leading to consolidation among private institutions and some publics taking over, and various patterns were happening across the country.

Mr. Pruitt asked if Dr. Bailey could explain more about the data story behind the construction labor force growth in Virginia. He said that his guess was that it may be an echo of the low cost of capital from four years ago, but he was not certain about that.

Dr. Bailey clarified that they had been identified as the number one state for AI and data centers.

Mr. Pruitt said that made sense; it was a data center construction.

Dr. Bailey confirmed that was a significant factor.

Mr. Pruitt said that he greatly appreciated Dr. Bailey's answers to his questions. He said that he would like to reiterate a point he made last year, which was that he believed it was essential to address the mismatch between their per capita wage and per capita income, which suggested that their County's wealth was largely driven by the wealth of its residents, resulting in stagnant wages compared to their peers in the state and country.

Mr. Pruitt said that he found this alarming and believed it should be the primary focus of their economic development strategy. He said that he also wanted to highlight the issue of buy-now-pay-later schemes, which had led to an increase in consumer debt and were displacing traditional financial products with inferior underwriting and safety protocols. He recalled a personal experience four years ago, when he had to replace a sewage pipe in one of his homes, and was offered a buy-now-pay-later scheme instead of a home repair loan, which would have provided more protections and insurance. This lack of protection and underwriting was deeply insidious, as it pushed consumers toward these buy-now-pay-later options without adequate safeguards.

Mr. Pruitt said that he had one other question, and he was not sure he needed an answer to it because it was a complex issue that he hoped would not apply to the County. He said that they were discussing weathering financial strains, and the next major briefing they would receive would cover all the new expenses they would need to pay for. This was an extensive report that they received annually, and he thoroughly enjoyed reviewing it; however, he did not use all of its content in his decision-making, so he wondered if they were utilizing every part of it in their budget development. He said that this was simply a question about whether they thought this report was adequately scoped moving forward, or if it could be slightly de-scoped, which was a broad consideration for the County as they moved forward.

Mr. Bowman answered that the short answer was that they regularly reviewed this information. There was some work with the team that was de-scoped during this year's process, but they would continue to examine it. He said that in terms of how staff used this report, in the interest of time he could follow up with a report to the Board for everyone's understanding.

Ms. McKeel said that she appreciated Dr. Bailey taking the time to meet with them every year, as this information was always fascinating and she was grateful for her efforts. She said that she would also like to extend her thanks to their County Executive and Finance staff, who had been instrumental in guiding their decisions and leading them in the right direction. She said that their strong work had made a significant impact, and she appreciated their dedication to their Board's success. She said that his report had consistently demonstrated this, and she was grateful for their hard work.

Ms. McKeel said that Dr. Bailey had repeatedly emphasized the lack of data they had for some of these economic issues, and she understood that timing could be a factor. Nevertheless, she was concerned that she was seeing a reduction in data coming from their normally trusted sources. She said that this was concerning to her, and she was not sure what to expect as an answer, but she would like to ask if Dr. Bailey could help her understand how they could leverage alternative sources to supplement the data they had historically relied on in these circumstances.

Dr. Bailey replied that the concern about the budget and staffing pressures for their federal statistics was not new; it had been ongoing for several years. She said that the National Association of Business Economics had taken a stance on this issue, and the funding had been gradually reduced over time, staffing had been eliminated. She said that this year's reductions had accelerated, but they did not start this year. She said that given the previous gradual reductions and the accelerated reductions this year, it raised questions.

Dr. Bailey said that Chairman Powell had been asked about this issue this summer, and he responded that the data was being collected, and it was extremely important to the Federal Reserve's work and the business sector's and government's work. She said that he emphasized the importance of this data, and the National Association of Business Economics had consistently taken a stand on this issue, as recently as their annual conference this past weekend.

Dr. Bailey stated that things were good so far in that respect, but they would have to wait and see what was to come. She added that during the pandemic, the field of economics had developed high-frequency data analysis capabilities, including anonymized purchase data and mobility data. She said that this data was critical for understanding consumer behavior, leisure, and travel. This data on where people shopped, worked, and traveled could provide valuable insights. She said that they had some impressive sources of data, but she was concerned that they may become proprietary, which could limit their use. She said that as individuals, businesses, and investors, they relied on this data to make informed decisions.

Ms. McKeel commented that the university had a significant positive influence in this community and contributed a lot to their area, however, this was a double-edged sword. She explained that in her 28 years of experience, she believed that it was one of the reasons why they needed to consider pressing salaries in this region. She said that while it was wonderful and they appreciated the university's presence, they must be mindful of the fact that it could also have negative impacts, in addition to the many positive ways it benefited them.

Dr. Bailey agreed; she had heard that for many years. She noted that Harvard and MIT were two major institutions in Cambridge, so they had a major influence on employment in that area.

Ms. McKeel said that it was also reflected in their public schools, where they saw achievement gaps among their students. However, that was a separate issue. She expressed her gratitude to Dr. Bailey for this information and detailed data.

Dr. Bailey said that she also wanted to express her highest esteem and gratitude to Albemarle's wonderful staff. She said that they were data-driven and thoughtful individuals who consistently posed challenging questions, and she appreciated their diligence.

Ms. Mallek thanked Dr. Bailey for her informative and thought-provoking report. She said that she was grateful for her and staff's understanding and patience, as they often navigated significant comprehension gaps in their discussions. She said that Dr. Bailey had mentioned the low unemployment job market and the 26,000 corrected hires for August 2020. She said that she was curious to know when they expected or if the massive layoffs at the federal level in northern Virginia and throughout the state would be reflected in the data. She asked if these layoffs would not become apparent until the 2026 calendar year, or did they believe they were already beginning to impact the data.

Dr. Bailey clarified that they were not shown in the data yet. Moving forward, they did see 11,500 jobs. However, these were not the same as the people impacted. She said that the impacted people would take longer to be reflected in the job numbers. This was because some of their residents were working in the District and in Maryland, not just in Virginia. Therefore, the people impacted were not yet reflected in the job numbers. Additionally, many of the reductions in force and layoffs were delayed until September 30 or December 31, and the exact number was unknown.

Dr. Bailey explained that the projection was 150,000, but the latest number from the Office of

Management and Budget was 300,000 overall. It was unclear whether this number included the impact of the shutdown. She had spoken with a fellow intern who mentioned the Virginia Employment Commission's numbers, but this information had not been published. As a result, they did not have a clear understanding of the situation. She said that the September 30 data would not be available until the October report, which was typically released in November. However, it was unclear whether the October report would be completed, and if so, when. The data availability had been disrupted, and it may not be available until November.

Dr. Bailey said that as a result, they could only speculate about the timing of the release and what data would be included. She said that the December 31 data would not be available until 2026. Overall, there was a significant amount of uncertainty surrounding the situation, and they could only rely on snippets of information from federal officials about the projected total reduction.

Ms. Mallek said that there was a possibility the data would never be found because nobody asked. She said that the statement from Jerome Powell was also concerning, because while he affirmed that the Fed was receiving the data they needed, if they were not even aware of what was missing, the Fed could not be certain that they were receiving the necessary information.

Dr. Bailey noted that he said that back in July.

Ms. Mallek asked if the data on construction jobs had already been affected by the deportation and self-emigration of workers who had left the country.

Dr. Bailey explained that the Federal Reserve conducted a monthly survey of manufacturing and services, as well as a comprehensive report known as the beige book, prior to each Federal Reserve meeting. According to the Federal Reserve banks, their surveys of businesses indicate that the availability of labor in the construction sector was becoming increasingly tight. She said that this was particularly true for certain trades, many of which were manned by foreign-born workers, regardless of specific documentation or citizenship status.

Dr. Bailey said that certain trades, such as drywall installers and plasterers, were disproportionately represented by immigrants, and therefore those industries were dependent on those immigrant workers. Additionally, the construction industry was facing another challenge: A significant portion of its workforce was aging, with many tradespeople approaching or exceeding the age of 50. This demographic shift was also being reported by contractors and industry associations, including the Associated General Contractors, the Associated Builders and Contractors, and the National Association of Home Builders, who all indicated that labor availability was tight across the construction industry.

Mr. Gallaway expressed his appreciation to Dr. Bailey for this report, which he looked forward to each year. He added that it also created a lot of fodder for commentary, but he would try to avoid that for the sake of time. He recalled last year, when he had asked her how they predicted future events, he was particularly interested in factors such as bridge collapses in Baltimore and hurricanes as events influenced scenario planning.

Mr. Gallaway said that this year's report highlighted the changing federal dynamic, which was not limited to quarterly or weekly updates, and economic policy changes could be triggered by even daily events, such as a public figure's dissatisfaction with a magazine cover. He said that this unpredictability could be disconcerting, especially for staff who must consider these factors on a daily basis.

Mr. Gallaway said that he was curious to know how Dr. Bailey advised or what advice she had been given in response to this rapidly changing environment. He said that specifically, he was wondering if there had been any recommendations or guidance provided over the past eight months regarding how to navigate this level of uncertainty at the federal level.

Dr. Bailey replied that they should stay vigilant, first and foremost as it was essential to stay on top of everything, and while it did make one weary, they must stay in the game and stick with it. Additionally, her enduring recommendations for financial resiliency and agility predated this current environment. When she had been doing training on financial resiliency, she had been emphasizing the importance of expecting the unexpected. They were very good at what they knew, and they were very good at what they did not know; however, they were often uncomfortable with what they did not know they did not know, and they did not plan for that.

Dr. Bailey said that she had been saying this for nearly 10 years: Plan for what you do not know. She said that when they were faced with not knowing something in a particular known category, they could either consult on what they knew, or they could plan for what they did not know but could possibly expect. However, when they were in a VUCA nature, they knew that there was a certain element of unpredictability. If it was not one thing, it was two, as her former sister-in-law used to say. It used to be that if it was not one thing, it was the other; now, it was that if it was not one thing, it was two.

Dr. Bailey explained that in order to cope with this, they needed to adjust their expectations and make room for truly unforeseen circumstances in their planning. By doing so, they could minimize disruption to their psyche. It was important to maintain some openness to possibilities, so that when challenges arose, they could identify it and categorize it. They could acknowledge the variability and unpredictability, without acting as if they knew everything they did not know. This allowed them to make informed decisions and budget accordingly. She noted that she applied this strategy in Chesterfield County before the great financial crisis, where every new revenue that came in was budgeted. However,

when that turn came, it had a significant impact on revenues, budget, and staffing.

Dr. Bailey said that a major adjustment was necessary, and Chesterfield was able to make it work, but it was a significant adjustment that had been made due to the growth period. She said that during that time, they had budgeted for every new revenue stream, but they had also made room for the unknown. She said that the key issue was that they were now facing more of that than they had anticipated, but they had prepared for this possibility. She said that now, they simply need to stay vigilant and navigate this challenge. She acknowledged that it would be tough, but Albemarle had a strong team, network, and relationships to navigate them through it. She reiterated that if it was not one thing, it was two.

Mr. Gallaway said that her response gave him more confidence, as their team had been adhering to that and preparing with that strategy in mind.

Dr. Bailey agreed; in her conversations with them she found that their staff was scanning for new potential challenges all the time. She believed that while they were not perfect, they were vigilant and trying very hard.

Mr. Gallaway asked if businesses were rebuilding their inventories as new tariffs were anticipated and came into effect, as they did earlier in the year. He asked if that would further delay the impacts of the tariffs.

Dr. Bailey said that inventories were way down from the first part of this year. According to a chart she had seen that morning, it was significantly lower than the buildup they had experienced earlier in the year.

Mr. Gallaway asked if the impact of the prices would be coming.

Dr. Bailey said that supply and pricing would be affected. She said that she had been listening to the Conference Board presentation this morning, during which they reported that exporters were not paying import taxes, which were instead being reflected in domestic prices. She said that the Conference Board was set to release a report today, which would be posted online within the next day or two. She said that their comment was that this issue was beginning to manifest, and more was expected to follow.

Mr. Gallaway said that in Dr. Bailey's recommendation section of the report, it seemed like this was a more general guideline for governments, rather than a specific set unique to Albemarle County. He said that she mentioned the importance of untangling one-time funding from recurring expenses, which he thought their County had always done. He said that he wanted to confirm that she was advising governments in general, rather than suggesting that this was a new issue that arose specifically in Albemarle County.

Dr. Bailey replied that she would continue to say it every time they met, as it was a recurring issue that they must stay aware of.

Mr. Gallaway said that he had one final question regarding the recommendations. He said that it appeared that they had a good grasp of the situation, but he would like to clarify the strategy development and scenario planning process, particularly when it came to grant funding from the federal government. He said that as he understood it, they discussed the importance of planning and strategizing for grant funding, but he had always felt confident that they had done this effectively.

Mr. Gallaway said that he suspected that they had been doing it correctly. However, he had always been concerned about the potential for funding to be lost after the initial year. He said that if they were to lose federal funding, whether it was a grant or direct funding, he was aware that they had the capacity to manage it in the first year, but it was unlikely that the funding would be restored in subsequent years. Therefore, he trusted that the scenario planning and strategy development assumed that the funding would be maintained for at least three years, and potentially longer, depending on the federal government's level of support.

Dr. Bailey said that County staff had shared the results of their analysis with her, so she knew they were doing that. She said that overall, what they were finding at GFOA and ICMA was that local government was not as directly impacted by federal sources, although there were some direct federal grants. She said that instead, they were more impacted by indirect sources from the state. She explained that the state was experiencing significant potential impacts, and as a result, local governments were seeking alternative funding sources. She said that since the General Fund was only about a third to 40% of the overall state budget, there was not enough room for everyone to rely on it. This would lead to crowding out of funding sources that typically supported local government.

Dr. Bailey said that she was not as concerned about the direct impacts as she was about the indirect impacts. She added that VACo was actively addressing this issue, as she regularly discussed it with them through their Virginia Finance Network. They were a standing partner in this effort, and she knew they were closely monitoring it. She knew that there was intense scrutiny of the legislative committees, particularly the House Appropriations and Senate Finance and Appropriations committees, in preparation for the upcoming General Assembly session in January.

Dr. Bailey said that furthermore, there was supposed to be a September special session to address the impact of changing federal policy, but that was now scheduled for the upcoming session.

Therefore, VACo, their legislative representatives, and their local intergovernmental relations director would be crucial in keeping up to date on the latest developments. She said that she would be more concerned about indirect impacts and also ensure that they were being detail-oriented in anticipation of any direct impacts.

Mr. Gallaway said that he hoped to see Dr. Bailey at VACo's conference this year and he could share some of his other comments with her then.

Dr. Bailey said that she looked forward to it.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley thanked Dr. Bailey for her presentation. She said that they always looked forward to her reports. She said that she was concerned about some areas where they were headed. She said that she understood that their County's management was indeed taking proactive steps and making adaptable decisions. They had a solid economy, but there were many uncertainties that would arise.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley said that for instance, the construction sector, specifically housing construction, was a major concern for her. She said that she worried that they may not be prepared to handle a significant decline in that area. There was a pressing need for housing, which would be further exacerbated if they lacked the workforce to build the necessary homes.

Dr. Bailey said that if one listened to the construction contractors, the Federal Reserve, and other discussions on housing availability and affordability, it was clear that local regulations and requirements were a significant factor, and streamlining processes could make a substantial difference. Contractors had expressed that the requirements added cost, and she had couched that phrase in terms of a source. The Federal Reserve was also identifying this issue in some of its housing affordability reports. Furthermore, the land costs and supplies, particularly the tariff taxes on lumber and other materials, were a major concern.

Dr. Bailey said that the U.S. did not produce enough of these building materials domestically, and it would take several years for manufacturing to increase production within the country; she had heard that it could take five to ten years for manufacturing plants to gear up. This shortage was affecting contracting equipment, as seen by the National Association of Home Builders, the Associated Builders and Contractors, and the Associated General Contractors. These organizations were concerned about the rising costs of metal and aluminum.

Dr. Bailey said that despite the demand for housing, which had been underbuilt for over a decade, the price point was being driven up by factors outside of local government control, such as the global economy. In her experience, having transparent and understandable processes was crucial for local governments. If they could establish clear processes and avoid bottlenecks, it would greatly benefit the business community. Additionally, being in dialogue with them and providing a point of contact can make a significant difference, especially for smaller, family-owned builders who may not have the experience.

Dr. Bailey said that being process-friendly and streamlined could be beneficial without necessarily changing regulations. However, many of the cost factors impacting the community were outside of the local government's control.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley said that she believed that would hinder their ability to achieve the affordable housing they desired. Therefore, they must carefully consider this to ensure they could have the affordable housing they wanted. She said that with prices increasing, that was something they could not control, and as a result, they would need to be creative, which she was open to. She also said that planning for the unknown was something Dr. Bailey had mentioned, which was scary as they did not know what the future held.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley said that she agreed that it was crucial for them to be able to develop solutions, as she had presented. She said that in essence, it seemed she was suggesting that they must be prepared to adapt and pivot, whether it was in response to federal, state, or local changes, in order to deliver their services to their community effectively.

Dr. Bailey said that she would like to add one final point. She said that in areas that were already developed, she had found that land assembly could be a valuable tool for the government. She said that it could be a more efficient approach than working with multiple parcels and owners, as it saved time and money for developers. She said that she had successfully implemented this approach in her local government career. She said that for example, in Chesterfield, they made provisions for credits if developers upgraded existing residential properties in older developed areas; however, their regulations did not account for conversions from commercial to mixed-use properties.

Dr. Bailey said that to address this, they made adjustments quickly, allowing developers to secure financing from the Virginia Department of Housing. She said that this revitalized a Route 1 corridor area. She reiterated that she believed that they could apply similar strategies to prepare areas for redevelopment, leveraging land assembly and property conversion to make them more attractive to developers, similar to what they were doing with Rivanna Futures.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley said that this was something they were actively working on.

Dr. Bailey replied that it was a significant step that many communities were not doing, and she

commended them for it.

Mr. Andrews said that he also wanted to express his appreciation for the fact that Dr. Bailey had been working closely with staff, which gave him a great deal of comfort. He had gained a lot of insight and heard a lot of great questions from his colleagues. He said that he would leave it at that, as they were already behind schedule. He thanked Dr. Bailey for all her hard work.

Dr. Bailey said that she hoped to see the Board members at VACo this year, where she would be participating as a judge for Achievement Awards.

Recess. The Board adjourned its meeting at 3:06 p.m. and reconvened at 3:20 p.m.

Agenda Item No. 10. **Work Session:** Public Safety Staffing Studies Report Work Session.

The Executive Summary forwarded to the Board states that the County contracts external assessments to provide benchmarking and analysis on functional capabilities to meet national and local standards and comparison reports with other Virginia localities. These assessments often provide recommendations for long range planning and roadmaps for financial analysis and staffing. Early in 2025, the County of Albemarle retained Emergency Services Consulting International (ESCI) to conduct a comprehensive staffing study for the Albemarle County Police and Fire Rescue departments. The research included collection of data, interviews with staff, onsite tours of the County facilities, experiencing the physical size and scale of the county, and multiple meetings with command staff from each department.

The staffing study was designed to provide the County with a detailed understanding of current and future needs and includes tiered findings and recommendations for moving forward regarding the department's staffing for daily operations, emergencies, and administrative support functions. As such, it is designed to assist the departments with quantifying current service delivery, evaluating service delivery and response performance, identifying forecast growth and emergent conditions, and developing strategies to meet anticipated needs and future service demand. Data from national best practices in fire service, policing, laws of the commonwealth, geographic information data, and local calls for service were used in the creation of this report.

While two teams of experts created individual reports from both the Police Department and the Fire Rescue department, shared challenges were found. Both departments have seen service demands grow faster than staffing, resulting in a reliance on overtime and daily reassignments to maintain coverage. The departments are strained by frequently managing multiple simultaneous calls. Sworn staff are found to work in non-core tasks; attrition and training timelines create gaps.

Albemarle County Police Department (ACPD) serves a large, mixed-density jurisdiction experiencing steady growth. Over the last five years, overall incident volume and public-generated calls have risen, while key call types - motor vehicle collisions, suspicious activity, disorder, and larceny - dominate time on task. Geography and call mix stretch patrol availability and supervisory bandwidth. Concurrency analysis shows ACPD frequently manages multiple incidents at once (most commonly 3-5 simultaneous calls, with periodic spikes above 10). Ten-hour staggered shifts provide overlap but are not consistently aligned to peak temporal and geographic demand; officers are routinely pulled from lower-demand zones to cover hotspots, increasing travel time and reducing presence. Components of response time (alarm handling, travel, total) vary by sector, especially in more rural areas. Lean civilian capacity limits analytics and pulls sworn personnel into non-enforcement tasks.

Similarly, Albemarle County Fire Rescue's (ACFR) growth has not kept pace with demand. Call volume has steadily increased, with emergency medical services (EMS) transport representing the largest share of workload. Due to volunteer response capacity continuing to decline in areas and the increased calls for service, dynamic staffing has become normalized. Ambulances and suppression units are reassigned daily to cover vacancies, and Advanced Life Support (ALS) coverage is inconsistent, especially in rural areas. Battalion Chief coverage requires further depth to ensure a safe span of control across the County's geography. Administrative staffing gaps burden operational leaders, pulling them into procurement, HR, and logistics work outside their core role. Without relief, these challenges erode service reliability, impact firefighter wellness, and strain the system's ability to meet national performance benchmarks.

The reports provide tiered recommendations to stabilize and strengthen operations, develop leadership, enhance support systems, and promote sustainability for the County Administration and Board of Supervisors to consider through long-range financial and strategic planning.

There is no budget impact associated with this work session.

Staff recommend the Board receive the presentation as an informational item.

Ms. Kristy Shifflett, Chief Operating Officer, stated that she would begin by outlining their agenda.

They would discuss their progress, review the studies and assessments, and focus on the data and findings from the consulting company. They would then cover next steps and open the floor for questions and answers. She added that she had her team with her today, and they were prepared to address any questions the Board may have.

Ms. Shifflett said that to start, she would like to explain the role of the Performance and Strategic Planning team in the County. As part of their efforts to support the culture of improvement as supported by the Board, they managed assessments that focused on performance metrics and other key areas. She said the County's Strategic Plan, which began in 2017, aimed to improve accountability, decision-making, and transparency. They also strove to enhance community outcomes. To achieve this, they conducted regular assessments of their departments, examining their processes and identifying opportunities for improvement. She had provided a chart here today to illustrate their progress.

Ms. Shifflett said that while the County had conducted similar assessments in the past, they had taken a deliberate and intentional approach since 2017. She said staff analyzed the findings and created long-term roadmaps, often incorporating recommendations from these assessments. However, they did not implement every recommendation; instead, they considered, studied, and evaluated each one. She said their goal was to identify best practices, stay informed about federal and state mandates, and compare themselves to other localities in the state. They also examined workload measurements, recognizing that shortcuts or concessions could lead to inefficiencies over time.

Ms. Shifflett explained that additionally, they assessed their organizational design, including their organizational structures, full-time equivalent (FTE) alignments, and reporting structures. Recently, in 2024 their Chief of Fire Rescue and Chief of Police both expressed a desire to conduct a deep dive into their departments and functions. The Police Department needed to assess its operations due to a lack of recent assessments and to ensure they were operating efficiently and effectively in response to changing County demographics and call patterns. The Fire Department wanted to ensure that they were operating efficiently as a combination career/volunteer system, examining the changes in their calls for service, their coverage, and their ability to respond.

Ms. Shifflett said that therefore, they decided to combine these factors and have a study conducted on public safety in general, examining both departments in a non-conflicting manner. As a result, they hired the Emergency Services Consulting International (ESCI) to conduct the study which was referenced in the report.

Ms. Shifflett said that she would like to introduce their project manager, Rob Graff, who would review the data and share the findings of the report with you. They sought an independent, data-driven assessment, and Mr. Graff's team collected extensive data from their calls for service, geographic information system (GIS) data, demographic analysis, and physical landscape assessments. She stated that they used this information to develop recommendations, which were categorized into short-term, mid-term, and long-term items. They anticipated that these recommendations would be complex and time-consuming, and therefore, they asked ESCI to prioritize them into tiers. The report included these tiered recommendations, and they expected it to take five to seven years for the County to implement all of them. However, they would not necessarily work on every single recommendation immediately. They would review them annually with their board and make decisions about which ones to pursue. The reports were written to align the findings with the County's goal of achieving predictable service and accountability.

Mr. Robert Graff, Consultant with ESCI, stated that he first wanted to tell the Board that their team was amazing. He said that regarding the words they had shared with the Fire Chief at the beginning of their session that day, he hoped even half of that would be said about him and the work he had done in public safety when he retired. He explained that they had begun their project by taking a voluntary, objective look at the processes used by both their Police and Fire Departments, with the goal of achieving a predictable level of service for their citizens.

Mr. Graff stated that they had conducted a comprehensive system analysis of key performance indicators, industry best practices, and a comparative analysis with organizations such as the Center for Public Safety Excellence and CALEA. This allowed them to establish real benchmarks for measuring the performance of their agencies. He said that they had spent several days in town, meeting with both the police and fire chiefs, and their first goal was to gather their input on their priorities. The police chief had identified staffing, officer wellness, leadership development, and organizational culture as his top priorities. Their analysis had validated these priorities, and they had addressed them throughout the subsequent tiers.

Mr. Graff stated that the Fire Chief's priorities had been similar, with staffing, training and development, financial health, community relations, and technology being his top concerns. He said that they had validated that staffing was a central, Tier 1 issue for both departments. He said that they had also identified gaps in quantifiable supervision, workload assignment, and support for the agencies. Their report had provided a phased plan to address these issues. He said that he had listened to their team's planning efforts, and he believed their report would provide a valuable framework for their future planning.

Mr. Graff said that as they all knew, public safety was a significant concern, and implementing new measures took time due to the associated costs. To address this, they had provided them with a phased plan and approach to achieve a predictable level of service through a tiered process. He said that he would begin with the headline findings. He would start with the Police Department. He explained that public-generated calls had increased, and a small number of those calls accounted for the majority of

their workload. The Police Department often managed three to five simultaneous incidents at one time, which was considered a call concurrency.

Mr. Graff stated that rural areas experienced longer travel times, and cross-zone pulling of deputies and the travel time it took to get across zones was an issue. The scheduling versus demand, overlap of peak hours and hot spots, and cross-zone pulling made it challenging for deputies to cover the entire County with the required level of service. He said that consistent middle management presence was necessary for handling multi-scene coordination and risk management. Additionally, civilian capacity was limited in some areas, which led to sworn officers being pulled into administrative roles or non-enforcement tasks. He said that there were areas for efficiency and effectiveness in this area. When examining the headline findings for the Fire Rescue side, Emergency Medical Services (EMS) transports drove the workload.

Mr. Graff said that dynamic staffing had been normalized due to staffing shortages, and reducing staffing on one apparatus to keep another apparatus in service could lead to inconsistent advanced life support (ALS) coverage. Volunteer response capacity continued to decline, a trend observed across the country. He noted that volunteerism was down, and their jurisdiction had a robust combination Fire Department, which had a significant number of volunteers. While some areas were doing great work, others required improvement. He said that to monitor this, it was essential to have metrics in place to track changes over time.

Mr. Graff stated that having one battalion chief per shift at a time limited the span of control across the County, placing operational leaders with additional responsibilities such as procurement, human resources (HR), and logistics, which detracted from their administrative or operational duties. Both agencies shared some similar challenges. Despite growing demand for services, staffing could not keep pace, leading to reliance on overtime and daily reassignments to maintain coverage consistency across the jurisdiction. Police officers frequently managed multiple simultaneous calls, straining patrol operations.

Mr. Graff stated that the Fire Department also experienced a high volume of simultaneous calls. Additionally, declining volunteer participation reduced flexibility. Limited administrative and civilian support forces sworn staff into non-core tasks. Attrition and timelines for training new employees created gaps that were difficult to fill. When succession planning was necessary for retirements or turnover, the ability to replace them took time. Therefore, the path forward involved stabilizing operations, focusing on workforce gaps.

Mr. Graff stated that this was not about addressing operations that were destabilized, but rather addressing the time required to introduce new officers and firefighters into the system. To prepare for future needs, it was essential to predict and account for those needs ahead of time and be prepared. Developing leadership, investing in officer development, succession planning, and wellness would help prepare future leaders. Enhancing support systems, expanding HR, logistics, and administrative capacities, and promoting sustainability through phased, data-driven staffing and resource strategies would also contribute to long-term success.

Mr. Graff stated that two road maps were created, one for the Police Department and one for the Fire Department. The Police Department's roadmap had four tiers, while the Fire Department's had five. He said that Tier 1 for the Police Department focused on core stability, enhancing capacity and service equity. Tier 2 involved strategic leadership training and workforce development. Tier 3 emphasized organizational coordination and internal support systems. Tier 4 was long-term sustainability and strategic planning. He noted that each tier had a list of recommendations as well as short, medium, and long-term sections.

Mr. Graff continued that the Fire Department's roadmap had similar tiers, with Tier 1 focusing on core stability, delivering predictable countywide service when 911 was called. Tier 2 involved strategic leadership, emergency management, and volunteer integration. Tier 3 focused on workforce development and succession planning. Tier 4 was system efficiency and public interface, and Tier 5 was policy modernization and process optimization. He explained that as these phases were implemented, it was essential to have measures in place to manage success.

Mr. Graff said that numerous ways to measure success had been listed, and he would like to highlight a few examples. In the Police Department, one way to measure success was by tracking the 90th percentile for total response time by priority. The report provided recommendations on assigning priorities, realigning sectors, and managing the time it took for officers to respond to calls. Targets for proactive timeshares could also be set as metrics. Leadership could set targets for what they wanted their officers focused on, and those could be used as metrics.

Mr. Graff said that additionally, concurrency coverage could be tracked, which was the percentage of time that staff were covering more than one incident or more than three to five incidents at one time. By tracking these metrics, it was possible to see how often they occurred and implement ways to prevent them. In the Police Department, time on task in the top call types, such as staffing health, vacancies, attrition, mandatory overtime, training hours, and sick leave, could also be tracked. These metrics could help determine the health of the staffing ability. Furthermore, investigative flow, assignment of timelines, and follow-up cycle times, as well as community outcomes, such as citizen-initiated backlogs, response times, and voluntary contacts throughout the year, could be tracked.

Mr. Graff said that in the Fire Department, a similar approach could be taken. They could track

90th percentile turnout and travel times by zone, taking into account the different resources required for rural, urban, and suburban areas. Establishing demand zones based on population could help them create metrics for each zone. Conversely, when applying this methodology to the Police Department, they could create a target for predictable levels of service and gauge their performance. For the Fire Department, they could track the percentage of units consistently staffed at the ALS level, dynamic staffing frequencies due to daily reassignments, and other metrics to ensure that their staffing needs meet the community's needs.

Mr. Graff stated that volunteer contributions, staffed calls, response rates, and the metrics they were discussing were not limited to just one career station, but rather the entire organization. They considered this through the lens of a predictable level of service, which applied to both career and volunteer firefighters. The goal was to provide a consistent level of service, regardless of whether the responder was a career or volunteer firefighter. What mattered most was that the person responding to the 911 call was trained correctly, equipped with the right gear, and arriving on time.

Mr. Graff stated that the recommended metrics were designed to measure system-wide performance, taking into account staffing health, vacancies, attrition rates, mandatory overtime, and sick leave. These metrics could be tracked over time and used to manage the workforce. They could also examine training benchmarks, such as training hours per FTE, compliance with International Organization of Standardization (ISO) and National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards, and the administrative workload.

Mr. Graff said that throughout the report, they would see analysis of the workload to ensure that the right people were performing the right tasks in the right amount of time. If they failed to address these issues, they risked persistent response variability, slower investigations, and a decline in proactive community engagement. This could ultimately lead to higher long-term costs to catch up. Furthermore, the general trend of an aging workforce posed a significant challenge, with deputies and Fire Department personnel retiring and requiring replacement, which could take up to 18 months. He said that with the Fire Department, dynamic staffing could reduce service predictability, and inequities in pre-hospital and volunteer capacity could result in further decline if not properly supported and if the performance was not gauged. He noted that the Fire Department was already tracking many of these metrics on a regular basis, and a lot of what they found in this report was already being addressed by the department, which he commended.

Mr. Graff explained that supervisory span remained insufficient, and they must address this issue to ensure the long-term sustainability of the organization. Regarding major multi-incident scenes or multi-unit responses, those often required more than one officer, and with only one battalion chief on shift, it was a large County for one person to cover. Additionally, rising overtime and attrition contributed to significant long-term costs.

Ms. Shifflett said that staff wanted to ensure that the Supervisors had sufficient time to review the reports after they were made available. She said that this presentation primarily served as a public announcement that the report was now online and included in the Board's packet. She said that they would have an additional webpage dedicated to frequently asked questions, as the report was dense and contained a significant amount of data, so they wanted to make it easy for everyone to access and understand.

Ms. Shifflett said that administrative work related to the report was mentioned, and she wanted to share that a HR staff member had already been assigned to focus on the Fire and Police Departments, so that work had already begun. Additionally, some early findings from the Police Department regarding the lieutenant position had been addressed. She said that they would continue to work on this, including conducting a workload analysis to examine their internal processes, identify areas for improvement, and determine if any staff could be reassigned or onboarded to meet critical needs.

Ms. Shifflett clarified that no action from the Board was requested today. She said that this was meant to provide information and give the Supervisors the opportunity to ask questions to staff, including their fire and police chiefs. She explained that the next steps for this work would be their update of the five-year financial planning, looking at what everything looked like in that view as well as the FY27 budget recommendations. She said that they could discuss this report in the coming months as much as the Board would like as they moved forward with their long-range planning.

Mr. Pruitt said that he and Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley had thoroughly examined this report, and as a result, he had relatively few questions to ask today. He said that he did have one question that he had forgotten to ask yesterday. First, he would like to acknowledge that there was a key recommendation that he believed may be more feasible, as it did not require new hires. He said that he found it particularly timely, as it discussed the importance of reevaluating how they designated priority areas, moving beyond the traditional rural-urban binary to a more nuanced, layered approach.

Mr. Pruitt said that he also wanted to recognize that Ms. Mallek and he had expressed concerns regarding areas of their districts that were too remote to be accessible within the time frames required for certain high-priority fires. He said that this concern reflected a need and a recognition that their firefighters faced unique challenges, and he appreciated that the report acknowledged this as well.

Mr. Pruitt said that he believed it was essential to recognize that the report highlighted inconsistencies in performance standards and the challenges faced by their volunteer and professional forces. By identifying these problems, the report served as a call to action, and he wanted to emphasize

that the Board's role as representatives of the community was to ensure that this report did not perpetuate negative stereotypes about their volunteers. Instead, they should focus on empowering them as valuable assets to their County, contributing significantly to these essential services to the benefit of their taxpayers, along with their important cultural significance to Albemarle.

Mr. Pruitt stated that the Board's goal should be to empower and support their volunteers, rather than viewing them as a problem to be solved. The one question he had was regarding the increasing complexity of Fire and Police calls, particularly in urban areas. He said that he was curious to know how much of this was a local issue, driven by the changing demographics of Albemarle County, and how much was a broader cultural phenomenon, with people facing more complex and unusual problems that required public safety services.

Mr. Graff confirmed that this issue was widespread across the country. He said that when examining a jurisdiction with a large rural area that was rapidly growing and experiencing an influx of people moving from urban areas into rural areas, they often saw a blending of problems that were not present before. He said that as a result, the workforce was tasked with addressing these issues, which they may not be accustomed to handling. These complications tended to occur more frequently and simultaneously, rather than individually. For instance, two issues that were typically manageable on their own became complicated when they occurred at the same time. This was likely what was happening here, as people moved into less populated areas, and similar problems were being created nationwide.

Ms. McKeel said that she appreciated the presentation and the high-level overview they had provided. She said that upon reviewing the material, she acknowledged that there was a significant amount to consider and absorb. She asked if the Board would have future opportunities to discuss the findings of the report in finer detail, or if they would be looking at this more in the context of budgetary issues.

Ms. Shifflett replied that it was the pleasure of the Board. She said that if they would like to discuss further, as they did with any report, staff were happy to engage in a more in-depth conversation. She said that it may be beneficial to present the narrative and the story behind the request or challenge, which sometimes came through in the budget process. She said that if they would like to have a follow-up conversation about this topic, staff were more than happy to continue the discussion.

Ms. McKeel said that they likely did not have enough time in today's meeting to discuss this report fully, so she was wondering if, as the Board reviewed this information in future weeks, they could send questions to Ms. Shifflett.

Ms. Shifflett said that, yes, she and her staff would be glad to respond to any future questions about this information.

Ms. McKeel said that she also had a quick question or comment, specifically regarding the Fire and Rescue Department's use of the term "dynamic staffing." She asked if someone could elaborate on what "dynamic staffing" meant in this context.

Mr. Dan Eggleston, Fire Chief, stated that he had to admit that he had never been a fan of the term "dynamic staffing" because it might be slightly misleading. He said that it was a reality they faced on a daily basis in Fire Rescue. He said that when they were short-staffed, they had to make tough decisions, such as reducing coverage at rural stations. He said that for example, if they were short-staffed on a particular day, they might go from three firefighters to two, which meant one fire truck was taken out of service.

Chief Eggleston said that in some cases, they may also have to limit ALS or paramedic-level service at that station due to staffing constraints. He emphasized that this was one of the top-tier issues they needed to address, as they did not want to reduce services in any area. He said that unfortunately, some days they had to reduce services across the board. He clarified that dynamic staffing was essentially about making a deliberate choice to reduce services in certain areas rather than having reduced services across the board.

Ms. McKeel thanked Chief Eggleston for the explanation, as the term seemed somewhat misleading at first glance. She asked if this was a common term in the field of Fire Rescue.

Chief Eggleston replied that the term "brownout" was sometimes used, although it was not a common term in the fire service. He said that some departments facing staffing challenges, a widespread issue across the country, were opting for this approach because they lacked sufficient personnel to adequately staff all areas.

Ms. McKeel noted that the two terms relayed very different meanings. She said that regarding the police report, as someone who represented a large number of the older urban neighborhoods in the County, which were undergoing significant changes due to urbanization, she was wondering if staff other than sworn officers were being utilized in a different capacity to address some of these new circumstances.

Mr. Sean Reeves, Chief of Police, said that he believed Ms. McKeel was referring to a concept similar to the City of Charlottesville's Community Service Officer (CSO) traffic officers. He said that that was an area that they would certainly explore as part of their long-term planning, particularly in terms of non-sworn officers that could help alleviate the burden on sworn staff as they responded to calls for

service. He reiterated that part of their long-term planning would include factoring in those potential positions.

Ms. McKeel asked if that would be handled despite not being mentioned in this report.

Chief Reeves confirmed that was correct. He said that it was about prioritizing; currently, as the report indicated, it was about staffing. He said that it was about having sworn officers on the street to handle priority tier calls for service, where they would categorize parking violations as lower-priority responses.

Ms. McKeel said that she considered these issues to be quality of life concerns that were emerging in older neighborhoods within the urban ring as they continued to urbanize. She said that they required a significant amount of time and attention, and she received a lot of them as a Supervisor. She said that she believed these issues could be addressed in a more efficient and effective manner than calling in sworn officers to respond.

Chief Eggleston added that they were also experiencing the same challenges in the Fire Rescue Department. He said that aging in place was a significant issue for them, often straining their EMS resources and exacerbating social issues in general. He said that any shift in social issues would have a profound impact on their department. He noted that this was why he was particularly interested in Dr. Bailey's presentation, as economic downturns would disproportionately affect public safety; they were often considered the canary in the coal mine when it came to those issues.

Chief Eggleston said that he would like to commend the Chief of Police for his efforts in developing a strategy to address social issues and prevent unnecessary 911 calls. He said that his approach involved leveraging the resources available in the area to provide support and assistance to those in need before they reached a crisis point.

Ms. McKeel said that she appreciated Chief Eggleston's insight. She said that they had discussed this topic before as a Board, particularly in the context of their aging population and the prevalence of seniors living alone in homes or in retirement communities within their County. She said that they presented a unique set of challenges.

Ms. Mallek expressed her gratitude to everyone involved in the report and for the discussion. She appreciated that this was just the beginning or early middle of a process, not the end, so she knew there would be many more discussions throughout the community and tonight at the Fire & EMS (FEMS) Board, which would be a great start for the chiefs who had been unable to participate earlier. She was glad that this was happening.

Ms. Mallek said that she also wanted to acknowledge what Mr. Pruitt had mentioned, as their volunteer and paid staff were truly their assets, and they had been invaluable even after 18 years of working with this transition. It was not that the volunteers needed to be integrated into the rest, but rather that everyone needed to be integrated together. The language used was crucial, and words could make a difference. She asked everyone to be aware of how things were being heard and what might be implied.

Ms. Mallek said that she agreed that multiple agencies dealt with people who were lonely and called emergency services to get a ride somewhere, which had been going on for many years. However, she did want to follow up on the ALS coverage question, as that had been another 18-year discussion. She said that they had discussed whether every slip and fall requires an ALS person, and whether the ALS personnel who were trained and had spent two years getting their medic certificate get burned out because they were sent to slip and falls instead of triage being done. She said that she did not have the expertise to answer that question, but she knew it was a discussion that had been ongoing.

Ms. Mallek said that she also appreciated the discussion about having auxiliary or high-administrative personnel to take the burden off of sworn officers and paid staff. She thought that was a great solution. It was interesting that for years, people had described different approaches. Volunteers had been trained on one part of the engine, and they worked with four others who did their part of the engine, as opposed to a person who had the luxury of being trained to do all of them over the course of multi-year training programs. She hoped they would continue to appreciate this varied approach, as she had seen that people could run the pumps who may not have the ability to run into buildings anymore. She thanked Mr. Graff and Ms. Shifflett for the report, which she looked forward to studying in more detail.

Mr. Gallaway said that he wanted to endorse Ms. McKeel's sentiments. He said that he understood that the report would lead to budget conversations and could see the direct line from today to budget. He said he appreciated there would be work sessions that would be specific to this report. However, he did not feel that sending in questions for staff to provide simple answers to would be enough to address this report's contents. He said that he had reviewed the reports once and had amassed pages of notes, so he wanted to have a more in-depth discussion about this information. He said that for example, he felt some of the tiers were misplaced, and he would appreciate the opportunity to hash out whether or not his opinions were justified or feasible.

Mr. Gallaway said that he wanted a more robust interaction with the reports and the relevant subject matter experts so that by the time budget rolled around, he would have a better understanding of the issues and be able to make informed resource allocation decisions. He was concerned that if they only had electronic questions and a limited number of work sessions, he would not have what he needed

to have an effective budget discussion. He said that he was not sure what the format would be, but he thought it would be helpful to have more dedicated time just for the police report and a dedicated time just for the fire report.

Mr. Gallaway said that he was asking his fellow Board members what they thought about that, and if the Board felt they did not want a more in-depth process to address this, he may just need to meet with staff himself to work through all his questions and concerns. That being said, he did have some things he wanted to discuss today while they were on this topic. He stated that he appreciated the points made about the tension between volunteer and paid fire staff, but in his opinion, type of tension existed in each department in different ways. In the Police Department, he saw subordinate command tensions, and in the Fire Department, he saw departmental tensions with other departments, as well as tension between volunteer and paid personnel.

Mr. Gallaway emphasized that it was not surprising that these tensions existed, given the understaffing and overburdening of the departments. He said that he believed it was essential to address these issues in a more comprehensive manner. Regardless of whether they were a police officer, a paid firefighter, or a volunteer firefighter, they were always dealing with multiple issues out in the field at one time. Given the circumstances, of course it was challenging to communicate effectively among themselves when they were constantly and indefinitely on active calls.

Mr. Gallaway stated that as an organization, they would need to address this issue as policymakers and those responsible for budget control. Reducing the burden was essential, and this could be achieved through staffing adjustments, which would incur costs. He did not intend to minimize the issue or attribute it solely to staffing, and he would appreciate alternative perspectives on this matter. What he did appreciate was the willingness to engage in open discussion and the courage displayed by their departments in addressing this issue publicly.

Mr. Gallaway said that he was sincerely grateful to all of them for their bravery and dedication, as not all departments in this County faced the same level of public scrutiny, and not all departments operated at the same level of critical importance due to the nature of their work. He encouraged anyone to express their concerns and criticisms, but he also cautioned that the burden their departments were under and the exceptional service they provided were truly remarkable. He was hopeful that this issue could be resolved through effective follow-through, as the report indicated that progress was possible.

Mr. Gallaway said that in any scenario where there was too much work to do and not enough people to do it, the likely outcome was that some things would not get followed through on. He said that if there was a tension between a paid and volunteer person, it was essential to address the communication issues. He said that when someone was always on call and on a task, it was unclear when they would be able to focus on improving communication. He reiterated that he was hopeful this broad issue could be fixed, but it would not be a simple or short-term process.

Mr. Gallaway said that it would require serious commitment from the Board. He acknowledged that they had started that commitment in the previous year's budget, and they needed to continue it in the upcoming budget. The County's safety organizations had grown due to increased demand, forcing departments to become higher-performing organizations. To achieve this, they needed to be able to manage high demand while also having employees who enjoyed their jobs, had low turnover, and low stress levels.

Mr. Gallaway agreed that they needed to address the internal departmental frictions and tensions between paid and volunteer staff, as well as between upper and lower management, but they would need to deal with these tensions for a while until they addressed the underlying issue of reducing the overall burden on staff. He said that he understood the complexity of this issue and would be approaching it with a long-term perspective, particularly in the upcoming budget cycle. As he had re-upped for another term, he would have the opportunity to work on more budgets in the future.

Mr. Gallaway stated that he had a couple of specific questions regarding the report. He said that he was interested in knowing why the peak time for police spikes in this area was between 11:00 p.m. and 2:00 a.m. He said that he was assuming it was due to the area's nightlife and restaurants due to being a college town, but it was not specifically explained in the report. He said that they had discussed before how they would get a break during nighttime or weekends when everyone went home, but this 11:00 p.m. to 2:00 a.m. spike seemed different for them. Perhaps it was not unique to their County, but rather a characteristic of college towns.

Chief Reeves said that he would not describe the issue as being exclusively related to the student population. He said that their officers often made driving under the influence (DUI) arrests and DUI crashes occurred during those hours, and several of their shootings also had happened during this time. He said that he was unsure if ESCI had any data that shed more light on this issue. He said that most of the events they were seeing were in their urban area. He said that the population density within the urban ring was contributing to the draw of resources from rural areas, which they had previously discussed, to support officers in the urban areas.

Mr. Graff confirmed that Chief Reeves was correct; the urban environment at night was when the area was most active, and that was when they received the most critical calls.

Mr. Gallaway said that it was more indicative of metro areas and urban areas, so they were experiencing that. He said that regarding the incident analysis maps used in this report, he would like to

be able to interact with that data and drill down to specific areas, such as the Rio District and Rio Road. He asked if this data could be analyzed further in a future work session.

Mr. Graff clarified that the data was static; it was all compiled from local data and overlaid into a GIS map.

Mr. Gallaway said that he understood. He said that in the fire report, it was interesting that the new recruits that did not complete training were considered in the turnover numbers. He said that he understood the rationale, but he thought it was important to explain what composed the overall turnover. He said that he believed it was most relevant to consider the metrics related to staff who had been working and then decided to leave, and including the numbers of recruits who did not complete training seemed to muddy the turnover data.

Mr. Graff replied that Mr. Gallaway's point was well-taken, and he would note that the Fire Department did track those separately. He explained that he brought up the vacant seats to illustrate a point. He said that the County was paying 2.5 times the salary for a vacant seat, and they had to fill that spot, and that was his main point.

Mr. Gallaway said that he understood and totally agreed. He said that he would like to know the information regarding the percentages of change when individuals who did not complete training were removed from the data versus the turnover rate after they had already been placed in a filled position. He said that on another note, the volunteer liaison position appeared to be focused on internal workings and other details. However, they had also mentioned that volunteerism was down across the country, and this had varying levels of impact at their local level, with some stations facing more challenges than others.

Mr. Gallaway said that while some stations had no issues, but similar to the paid positions in Police and Fire, more personnel were needed in general. He said that in the paid world, funding could be allocated to hire additional staff. He said that, however, in the volunteer world, they could not force volunteers to show up. He said that he did not expect their volunteers or volunteer chiefs to figure out why volunteerism was declining. He said that he thought their County's land-use issues and policies, which did not account for population turnover, contributed to the problem.

Mr. Gallaway said that nevertheless, the fact that volunteerism was a national issue meant that there were organizations trying to create more volunteers and were likely to be successful. He said that he believed this should be included in the recommendations for the volunteer liaison, because it was unfair to expect their local volunteer chiefs to create a whole solution to improve volunteer staff recruitment. He said that if they wanted to adopt a mix of volunteer and paid personnel, they must also address the causes of the decline in volunteerism.

Mr. Gallaway said that he was not sure what the solutions were, but the alternative was to continue waiting for volunteers to leave, resulting in decreased coverage and the need for paid personnel. He said that he thought the volunteer liaison position could be a valuable resource in helping lagging stations and volunteers to increase their numbers. By examining what other organizations were doing creatively to address this issue, they may find innovative solutions.

Mr. Gallaway said that, for example, there was at least one community in Virginia and some out west that were successfully reversing the trend. He said that he would like to propose that they consider this as they moved forward. Additionally, he had a question about onboarding. He said that the presentation mentioned that it took a significant amount of time to get new hires to the field for both Police and Fire Departments, similar to volunteers. He asked if there were any examples of organizations that had found a way to shorten this process without compromising quality.

Mr. Graff said that the process itself was a significant time investment.

Mr. Gallaway asked if there were exemplars in the field that had found a way for the process to be shortened. He said that otherwise, they must accept it as a factor that they could not change. He said that he understood they did not want to rush this through.

Chief Eggleston stated that the six-month training process was extensive and required every bit of that time, especially given the diverse range of skills a modern firefighter must possess. He said that he believed they could explore increasing the number of recruit schools from one to two per year. He said that this would necessitate additional resources, but it could potentially get people on the streets sooner. He noted that they had already discussed this topic, and in his opinion, this was a Tier 1 issue, as filling vacant positions incurred significant costs, including time and a half pay. He said that therefore, he believed having two recruit schools a year was the solution to addressing that issue.

Mr. Gallaway said that his last comment referred to something in the police report. He said that at some point, the report was discussing a 30-minute response time and what a police officer could do in 30 minutes. However, it seemed to be a guesstimate, because later on the report began to explain what Albemarle was actually dealing with, and at that point the report was addressing the issues he felt were important. He said that then, they were using the time based on their reality rather than an estimate for staffing purposes.

Mr. Gallaway said that the report began to address the point of their types of calls they predominantly responded to and the time it took to respond. He felt this was the right direction for their analysis, because until they had enough people to address the two or three simultaneous calls, they must

consider how else they could manage it. He said that he hoped in five or ten years they would not have so many simultaneous calls being responded to.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley said that she was very glad to receive this report. She agreed that they needed a work session for each Police and Fire report, or two-on-two meetings. She said that any of these approaches would be fine for her, but she believed that as a Board, they needed to gain a deeper understanding of the complexities faced by the Police and Fire Departments, and she did not think they fully comprehended the scope of their challenges. She said that a work session on two-on-twos would be particularly valuable in this regard.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley said that the two schools that Chief Eggleston mentioned would be an excellent starting point. She said that she was aware that this would be a budget issue, and they were aware of that. However, this was a five-to-seven-year project that would ultimately require significant investment. She said that she was uncertain regarding the volunteer liaison position, and she expressed this concern because her experience had shown that volunteer chiefs often recruited from within, building a sense of community and camaraderie.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley noted that this was evident at Stony Point, where new leadership transformed the station. She said that she thought they should support and encourage that leadership, and the career staff should feel confident in supporting that. Ultimately, the community was key to this success. What was happening at the volunteer station was for the volunteers to build on their existing strengths and make the station an attractive place for people to volunteer.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley said that she was aware of concerns regarding continuity of equipment between volunteers and career staff, and there was a need for standardized equipment throughout the County. She said this would not only save them money but also ensure that staff had access to the equipment they needed. They also needed to ensure communication was at its best, because otherwise residents would suffer the consequences. She emphasized that she was proud of their career staff and volunteers, who were working tirelessly to assist the County. She said that Mr. Pruitt mentioned that the volunteers saved taxpayers a significant amount of money, and she would be in favor of exploring ways to support this effort at each volunteer station.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley said that in conclusion, she said that she thought it would be beneficial to delve deeper into the findings of these reports to gain a better understanding of the needs of both Police and Fire Departments. For police, she was not questioning the challenges, but she was not sure she fully understood the specific time frame between 11:00 a.m. and 2:00 a.m., because their EDA mentioned the lack of nightlife in their local area.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley said that she agreed with Chief Reeves was correct in his assessment that the main concerns were drunk drivers and possible shootings, rather than rowdy crowds at night. She said that she was not sure if they had a significant problem with the latter. However, both Police and Fire Rescue faced extremely difficult and stressful jobs. She said that she believed as a Board, they wanted to support them in making their departments successful, and they were willing to do what they could to help. She said that she thought this report was excellent, and she was looking forward to reviewing it in more depth in order to achieve success for their Police and Fire Departments.

Mr. Andrews said that it sounded like the Board would appreciate additional time with this information. He acknowledged that this report was a long-range plan, and he was still trying to fully grasp what they were working with in terms of data. He understood that staff had made a significant effort to provide a huge amount of data, but it was not always clear how the recommendations would be internally received or how they aligned with their broader goals.

Mr. Andrews said that he would like to hear more staff feedback on the report, which was originally an external evaluation based on the available data. He said that staff input would be an important aspect of their discussions, as it would provide insight into the internal reaction to the report. Given the complexity of the report, it was not always clear what the staff's opinion was. However, he did recognize that this report had significant implications. He had always been impressed with the success of the SAFER grants program; however, their success suggested that the County was in dire need of the staff the grant funding provided.

Mr. Andrews stated that furthermore, he was concerned about the impact of recent staffing changes, particularly in the Fire and Rescue Department, on the issues they were seeing. He said that the inexperience of some of the new personnel, combined with the mid-level gap in experience, may be contributing to some of the challenges they were facing as their department had grown considerably in recent years. He said that he would like to explore these issues further and appreciated the report which provided a foundation for this discussion.

Ms. Mallek noted that for some time there had been a discussion regarding benefits for volunteers that could be provided to help recruit, retain, and keep them engaged. She said that in the past, there had been a great effort to identify one standout benefit, but people's needs varied greatly. Going back to the drawing board, she thought having a menu of opportunities would be beneficial. She said that they should consider new benefits to offer. She said that, for example, one benefit that had been highly recommended to her in the past was the ability to buy into the County health system for self-employed individuals.

Ms. Mallek said that unfortunately, this option had become even more challenging due to the

limited opportunities for individuals to provide their own health insurance or form a group. She suggested that property tax rebates and insurance access were two benefits that would be valuable. She said that she was aware that Chief Eggleston's office had files that could be reviewed to identify potential benefits that would be more successful in today's context. She added that she would prefer a work session with all of the Supervisors present, as she usually learned a great deal from their questions and discussions as a group.

Mr. Jeff Richardson, County Executive, said that Mr. Andrews had hit on a key point that he wanted to discuss regarding the staff's opportunity to review and work through the report. He noted that staff needed time to digest the 350-page report and have the time to work through it. He said that he encouraged the Board to consider the report in three categories: management and operational issues, resource considerations, and policy considerations.

Mr. Richardson said that as a continuous improvement organization, they had been working on implementing plans and recommendations in various departments, starting Information Technology (IT) in 2017. The team, led by Ms. Shifflett, had become adept at working with departments to implement plans and recommendations in a multi-year, methodical approach. He said that regarding management and operational issues, these were specific to opportunities and problems, which was his responsibility to work on with staff.

Mr. Richardson said that their operating guidelines stated that the Board should focus on policy, while staff should focus on day-to-day operations. Therefore, staff would need time to address this. Their staff would take the report and work with Ms. Shifflett and her team to identify how to implement the recommendations. Second, regarding resource considerations, they would be looking at opportunities and problems that may require additional resources. He noted that the easiest thing for staff to do was to ask the Board for additional positions or budget resources. That was why he had told the Board they would not discuss specific department budgets in October; it was better to do that in February and March, when they had a comprehensive view of County departments and resource considerations.

Mr. Richardson stated that the work they would do between now and February and March would better prepare them to discuss budget priorities without resource considerations. He said that they could reengineer, move people around, do more with less, and provide training opportunities. They could also collapse or consolidate functions. He continued that the third component was that they would need to consider policy implications. He said that he appreciated Chief Eggleston's suggestion to run two recruit schools, but he did not know if staff had had the opportunity to discuss the specific management and operational issues, resource considerations, and policy implications.

Mr. Richardson said that he appreciated the Board's interest and willingness to have another work session, and he would meet their request. He said that with that in mind, he would like to request some time for staff to thoroughly work through the study, so that they could hopefully meet and exceed the Board's expectations, both in Police and Fire, regarding the feasible and challenging aspects, as well as the potential unintended consequences and the involvement of other departments that may be necessary. This was a lot to consider, but he hoped it provided a comprehensive overview.

Mr. Richardson said that he hoped the Board would take this into account. He said that Ms. Mallek had mentioned that she preferred the work session format, and he believed they would need some time to think through how that might work. Additionally, considering they were in mid-October with only eight weeks left in the year, they needed to determine what was feasible to accomplish between now and January. He was available to answer any questions the Board may have.

Mr. Andrews said that he primarily wanted to hear staff's and leadership's responses to this issue.

Ms. McKeel said that she would like to add a few thoughts to the conversation, as she would not be present in January. She said that she first wanted to say that it was not her intention to criticize any particular group of people. She said that they often discussed the non-residents in their community, including the tourists who visit as well as the daily commuters. She said that they had a significant impact on their public safety departments.

Ms. McKeel said that their County's first responders assisted anyone in the County, but she was unsure about whether there were best practices associated with handling non-residents in the County. She said that their community was unique due to the presence of students whose parents frequently visited and may not be familiar with their community. She said that they had the students, a significant tourism industry, and a substantial number of daily commuters who used their roads and contributed to accidents, health issues, and other problems.

Ms. McKeel said that she was wondering if this report provided an opportunity for them to think about how to better serve their community, particularly in terms of providing resources and support to help mitigate the costs associated with serving these groups. She said that she wanted to emphasize that they must continue to provide services to anyone in the County, including visitors, but the large influx of these visitors may need to be considered as a component in their planning. She said that she believed they should explore ways to improve their services and provide the necessary resources to address the challenges they faced as a result of their unique community dynamics.

Ms. Shifflett stated that before the Board took up their next agenda item, she wanted to take a moment to acknowledge the leadership and command staff of the Police and Fire Departments for their involvement in this work. She said that they had received constructive criticism and advice in a very

positive manner, and many of the suggestions were not surprising to them, as they were familiar with the challenges they faced on a daily basis. She said that, nevertheless, she wanted to acknowledge the exceptional way they had worked together.

Agenda Item No. 11. **Presentation:** Federal Advocacy Presentation.

The Executive Summary forwarded to the Board states that the County solicited quotations from qualified, experienced, registered federal lobbyist firms to assist County staff in the implementation of federal funding strategies that advance the County's efforts to achieve its vision, mission, and strategic priorities. Upon completion of the RFQ process, a contract was awarded to The Roosevelt Group (TRG), a limited liability company based out of Washington, DC.

The scope of TRG work includes raising awareness of needs and opportunities for Albemarle County at the federal level, advocating for existing program funding and engagement on federal funding changes that could impact funding levels locally and assist in prioritizing new projects or programs for future budget submissions and advising on federal legislative policy changes or impacts.

Upon awarding of the contract, and in coordination with identified County staff, an engagement plan was developed for the FY 26 federal budget with a focus on congressional earmarks - the Community Project Funding (CPF) program in the House and the Congressionally Directed Spending (CDS) program in the Senate - to meet the input timelines. Two projects were submitted: funding requests to support Boulders Road extension at Rivanna Futures and funding to support dam maintenance at two locations in the county. The Roosevelt Group will provide status of the FY 26 federal budget as part of the presentation.

Introductory meetings with TRG and County leadership were held on July 8 and July 9 to orient TRG to the county and identify key priorities and explore federal funding opportunities. These sessions focused on assessing immediate and long-term infrastructure needs, readiness for federal advocacy, and potential for regional partnerships. Discussions highlighted a strong consensus around strategic investments in public safety, technology, and economic development, and emphasized the importance of sustained federal engagement to secure future resources.

Today's presentation will provide updates on the FY 26 federal budget process, summary of input received by TRG during the summer orientation meetings, legislative projects for the FY 27 federal budget, and an overall federal advocacy package including a recommended engagement process.

Receive the information provided in the presentation and provide input into the FY27 process.

Mr. Trevor Henry, Deputy County Executive, stated that he would discuss their work within federal advocacy. Given the time constraints, he would provide a brief overview of their engagement with the federal government. He explained that this year, they had been formally engaged with the federal level for the first time as a community. As they reviewed the process for Rivanna Futures and the work they undertook a couple of years ago, they received advice on their effective collaboration with the state and state legislative process.

Mr. Henry said that with that in mind, there was a consideration that their formal engagement at the federal level might uncover opportunities for drawing down federal funding. In response, Deputy County Executive Ann Wall and he, along with their Chief Financial Officer (CFO) and the procurement team, conducted a pilot procurement process. They contracted with the Roosevelt Group to provide federal engagement services for the next two years. He said that Jakob Johnsen would provide a situational awareness of the current federal landscape and discuss the FY27 budget process. They were able to secure the Roosevelt Group's contract and provided input on congressional-directed spending by Friday, meeting the deadline.

Mr. Henry said that they identified two shovel-ready projects: dam repair work at Mint Springs and Rivanna Futures, as well as site preparation at Rivanna Futures. The dam repair project was elevated in the committee, and Mr. Johnsen would discuss this further. They also conducted site visits, met with department heads, and engaged in optional Board of Supervisors meetings to gather input and discuss opportunities for federal funding. This fall, they conducted an all-call of data with department heads to identify potential funding opportunities for next year. He said that Mr. Johnsen would provide an update on the current FY27 process and discuss next year's process, which may include new developments.

Mr. Henry stated that it has been a pleasure working with Mr. Johnsen and his boss, John Simmons. He noted that Mr. Simmons had been involved at the state level for years as a contract with the Veteran and Defense Affairs Office, and as a result, he had established connections with the County and their work at Rivanna Futures, which predated his current legislative work. He said that Mr. Johnsen, being a former Army veteran, brought a unique understanding of the D.C. landscape.

Mr. Jakob Johnsen, senior advisor with the Roosevelt Group, extended congratulations to the County on the AstraZeneca news. Recently, they had advised a different foreign company on a significant U.S. investment. Having worked on the other side of the table, he had seen firsthand the work communities needed to do to present themselves as contenders for projects, it was a substantial

undertaking. The fact that Albemarle County was chosen by AstraZeneca was a testament to the County's efforts and the people's dedication; it was truly impressive.

Mr. Johnsen explained that the Roosevelt Group was a bipartisan government relations firm based in Washington, D.C., and he would like to provide a brief overview, especially for those who had not met them. He said that they had representatives from both sides of the aisle, including the House, Senate, and administration. While their primary focus was on defense, they worked extensively with communities across the country, including the state of Virginia, Michigan, Maryland, Louisiana, Massachusetts, and California.

Mr. Johnsen said that they provided guidance to these states, engaging with their congressional delegations and executive branches to support their military assets, military communities, or military installations, as well as economic growth opportunities. One of their differentiators was their network of subject matter experts, with approximately 100 individuals providing depth of access, experience, and awareness for the Pentagon. While defense-focused, they also had a team with extensive experience in other areas.

Mr. Johnsen said that he trusted that if there was a Pentagon agency or intelligence community office requiring access, they could rely on their team and network of affiliates to assist. He stated that since the beginning of the year, various forces had been put in place, leading to the current situation. The administration's priority had been to right-size the federal government with the Department of Governmental Efficiency (DOGE), which led to the reconciliation process, known as the One Big Beautiful Bill Act. Although there may be disagreements about this title, statutorily, it was a legitimate piece of legislation.

Mr. Johnsen said that the bill's far-reaching nature and the budget reconciliation process had allowed Republicans in Congress to pass the legislation with simple majority votes. It included approximately \$150 billion for the DOD. Although this funding could potentially be used to continue paying military service members during a shutdown, it had not yet occurred. He continued to explain that the Rescissions Act, which allowed the administration to request budget cuts to previously appropriated funding, had also contributed to the current situation.

Mr. Johnsen stated that this process only required a majority vote, and it had frustrated many Democrats in Congress who had struggled to reach agreements with Republicans in previous Congresses or years. As a House expert, he believed the House generally moved more quickly than the Senate. He said, however, by this point in the year, many bills should have been passed through the House and at least moved through the respective Senate committees. The numerous items to be determined highlighted the delay and challenges faced this year.

Mr. Johnsen said that according to reports, Majority Leader Thune planned to bring the Defense Appropriations bill to the floor this week. If it passed, it would be a significant development. However, it underscored the delay and current situation entering the government shutdown. Many people, including those who worked on the Hill, initially thought this would be a relatively short shutdown. However, the reality was that it had already proven to be longer than expected.

Mr. Johnsen said that during government shutdowns, the media often highlighted the impact on military personnel, who may go without pay, serving as a forcing function to end the shutdown. This created a politically sensitive topic that members of Congress aimed to address as soon as possible, which often led to a shorter government shutdown. The government's decision to use multi-year funding to pay service members for this pay period removed that as a potential pressure point or forcing function to end the shutdown.

Mr. Johnsen said that while he previously thought it would end last week due to the potential image of military members going without pay, that was no longer the case. He said that it may be multiple weeks, or even longer. He said that on one other note, Senators Kaine and Warner submitted the congressionally directed spending request for the dam repair project. From speaking with friends who worked for members of the Senate Homeland Security Appropriations Subcommittee, the main reason that bill had not advanced yet was due to issues between Chairman Senator Britt and ranking member Chris Murphy. However, the earmarks or congressionally directed spending items in this bill were largely not political fights.

Mr. Johnsen said that therefore, if and when FY26 appropriations were enacted, they anticipated that the project would be included. As for FY27, they had provided enduring priorities that they had formulated with the County team, and they would continue to focus on revitalization and future growth, given their experience in the defense space, economic growth in general, and supporting federal and local partnerships and the ways in which the County received support from the federal government. In terms of looking at next year, they may make a request for the Boulders Road extension to support the Rivanna Futures site and the AstraZeneca investment.

Mr. Johnsen said that they would also support, in a general sense, federal programs that the County benefited from. For example, they had raised the issue of SAFER (Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response) grants in their previous discussion on public safety, and they would continue to express the importance of maintaining robust support for this grant program in the future. Additionally, they would support the \$1.1 million for disaster mitigation funding for dam safety and potentially funding for the Biscuit Run pedestrian bridge. He added that he spoke with a friend from the Transportation Appropriations Subcommittee this week, who thought both of these projects fit perfectly in those arenas.

They just needed to hopefully wrap up FY26 so they could move on to FY27.

Mr. Johnsen stated that as for their plan for the next 12 months, it was a bit complex, but federal actions and federal activities were at the top of their list. He said that they hoped the government shutdown would end soon, as well as reach a deal for FY26 appropriations. He said that looking toward the next year, the president was supposed to submit his budget request to Congress in February, which would kick off the FY27 process. He said that after that, the appropriations committees would have budget request hearings with different federal agencies and then move toward producing bills for FY27.

Mr. Johnsen said that to ensure the County was in a strong position to seek federal support and make its priorities known, they recommended potentially scheduling a meeting with the delegation within the next couple of months. This would allow them to reemphasize their community's priorities, who they were, and their general objectives, while also expressing their interest in the FY26 project and seeking additional support. It was crucial that they finalize their priorities over the next several months so that they could meet with the delegation in February.

Mr. Johnsen noted that by having local community leaders attend, it could make a more compelling message and demonstrate their commitment to their goals. He said that they would formally submit their priorities to the delegation and work with them to ensure they had the necessary information to support the County's requests. This would help them advocate for funding and additional support for next year. He said that direct engagement with the delegation was critical, and having County leadership attend the meeting could make a significant difference. If possible, he encouraged the Supervisors to attend, as their presence could greatly impact the outcome.

Mr. Pruitt said that they were currently in an interesting moment where discussing the budget did not clearly indicate what they were accomplishing at the end of the day. He said that funds were being spent that were not initially appropriated, and funds that were appropriated were not being utilized. He said that he was particularly interested in the situation with Habitat for Humanity, a community partner, which had received a significant grant from Housing and Urban Development (HUD) prior to the administration's turnover. He said that he was curious to know if there was any part of their advocacy process that served as a trailing function, essentially requesting for the allocated funds that had been approved.

Mr. Johnsen said that securing funding was a continuous process, and although the slide earlier focused on defense, it was a process that applied to various sectors. He said that until they had the necessary resources, the work was not complete. He said that they would continue to follow up and trail the grant process. He said that if a specific grant aligned with the community's priorities, he recommended that they notify the delegation so that they could make a strong case for the County's support. He said that by having the delegation present the request to the administration, it could be a persuasive way to secure the funds, as it highlighted the benefits of the grant for the residents.

Mr. Pruitt said that getting an update on the Habitat grant funding was certainly a priority for him and his District, so he would ask Mr. Richardson if it was possible to check with Mr. Rosensweig about the current status and next steps for securing the grant funding.

Mr. Richardson said that Ms. Wall had regular meetings with Mr. Rosensweig, so he would ask her for that information.

Ms. Ann Wall, Deputy County Executive, answered that she would check in with Mr. Rosensweig, which they already did on a quarterly basis. She said that she would like to highlight an instance where the Roosevelt Group provided additional support for a federal grant. Specifically, she said that they assisted them in the last couple of months by helping them obtain the necessary information from the funding partner. She said that this experience demonstrated the importance of their role in the County's work, providing an additional point of contact to ask questions and address concerns.

Mr. Gallaway noted that the NACo legislative conference was scheduled for February 21 through 24 of 2026. He said that as a few of them were involved with the NACo committees, they would likely be in attendance at that conference, so he would suggest that perhaps they could coordinate their efforts with the existing activity at the conference, as this could be advantageous to anticipate and consider.

Mr. Andrews said that he also encouraged the Board, whether he was present or not, to participate in these meetings with legislators and help push this forward. He said that it was a challenging time, but he was pleased that they had the Roosevelt Group and that they were pursuing this avenue, rather than leaving everything to chance.

Agenda Item No. 12. Closed Meeting.

At 5:01 p.m., Mr. Pruitt **moved** that the Board go into Closed Meeting pursuant to Section 2.2-3711(A) of the Code of Virginia:

- under subsection (3), to discuss and consider the acquisition of real property in the Scottsville Magisterial District for a public purpose, where discussion in an open meeting would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the County and the Board;
- under subsection (6), to discuss and consider the investment of public funds related to an

- existing performance agreement with Agrospheres, Inc., where bargaining is involved and where, if made public initially, would adversely affect the financial interest of the County;
- under subsection (8), to consult with legal counsel regarding specific legal matters (including a performance agreement with Agrospheres, Inc.) requiring the provision of legal advice by such counsel; and
 - under subsection (29), to discuss the negotiation or re-negotiation of a public contract with Agrospheres, Inc., involving the expenditure of public funds, where discussion in an open session would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the County and the Board

Ms. McKeel **seconded** the motion. Roll was called and the motion carried by the following recorded vote:

AYES: Mr. Andrews, Mr. Gallaway, Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley, Ms. Mallek, Ms. McKeel, and Mr. Pruitt.
NAYS: None.

Agenda Item No. 13. Certify Closed Meeting.

At 6:00 p.m., Mr. Pruitt **moved** that the Board of Supervisors certify by a recorded vote that, to the best of each supervisor's knowledge, only public business matters lawfully exempted from the open meeting requirements of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act and identified in the motion authorizing the closed meeting, were heard, discussed, or considered in the closed meeting.

Ms. McKeel **seconded** the motion. Roll was called and the motion carried by the following recorded vote:

AYES: Mr. Andrews, Mr. Gallaway, Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley, Ms. Mallek, Ms. McKeel, and Mr. Pruitt.
NAYS: None.

Agenda Item No. 14. From the County Executive: Report on Matters Not Listed on the Agenda.

Mr. Jeff Richardson, County Executive, presented the monthly Progress Albemarle Report. He stated that this month, he would be recognizing staff members who had reached significant milestones in their years of service, and he would be discussing another event that had taken place the previous week, specifically the economic development announcement at Rivanna Station.

Mr. Richardson reported that during their Years of Service ceremony, 86 staff members were recognized for their combined 1,140 years of service to Albemarle County. He highlighted Gary Davis, who had achieved an impressive 45 years of service with their organization, and David Benish, who had reached 40 years of service. He said that the recognized staff represented all departments, internal and external, working on behalf of the community and its citizens.

Mr. Richardson noted that Kim Harris was the only person in Albemarle County's Department of Social Services to have served every child welfare program. With 25 years of service, Ms. Harris had demonstrated exceptional dedication and expertise. Her leadership had led to the expansion of the family support program, which now served children and families across all Albemarle County Public Schools. This was particularly notable, as the national average tenure for Social Services professionals in child welfare was only 18 months. Her 25 years of commitment and compassion truly stood out.

Mr. Richardson stated that he would like to highlight Billie Taylor, who had played a significant role in shaping their organization. As a trusted leader, Ms. Taylor had lifted up others and contributed to the development of their core values. This was accomplished through her work on the original team that established the County's core values of integrity, innovation, stewardship, and learning. This effort predated his own arrival at the County several years ago. In recent years, the staff had worked to add community as an added core value for County government.

Mr. Richardson stated that Ms. Taylor's work on developing these values had resulted in a lasting legacy that continued to guide their organization today. Through her work in Finance and Budget, she had demonstrated leadership, humility, and commitment to excellence, exemplifying the principles she had helped establish. These values remained the foundation of how they served the community and each other every day.

Mr. Richardson stated that they had a ceremony where they recognized contributions made by staff members, including supervisors and management. However, many of these individuals did not want to be publicly recognized for their dedication to serving the County. He was glad that despite this, they would tolerate public recognition when it mattered. This was why they had a Living Our Values Awards program, which recognized employees who embodied the principles that guided their service to the community. These honorees demonstrated integrity, innovation, stewardship, learning, and community through their daily work.

Mr. Richardson stated that each nomination told a story of dedication, creativity, and care that strengthens their organization. The winners were then honored in front of their colleagues, and these

nominations came from across all of County government every year. Their team took the time to determine who stood out, but it was indeed challenging due to the many stories of dedication and creativity that highlighted their community's diverse successes.

Mr. Richardson stated that for example, the Copy Center team exemplified stewardship through their efficient and high-quality use of time and resources. They were honored for managing diverse projects with precision and professionalism, and their collaborative approach ensured creative and effective solutions for all County departments. These staff members modeled responsibility, care, and sound judgment in every project. These individuals had a lot of tenure in their organization and consistently went above and beyond to help them in any way possible.

Mr. Richardson said that for instance, they often provided support to other department staff members even when it was not part of their job description. This kind of attitude was a testament to the principles they strove to live every day. Additionally, Ms. Vidhi Danak exemplified the County's values of learning through initiative and adaptability; she quickly mastered public procurement, earning her promotion to Procurement Manager. Her revisions to the purchasing manual and benchmarking work improved County processes. Ms. Danak's commitment to continuous learning strengthened both her career and the County's effectiveness.

Mr. Richardson said that her dedication was representative of the entire procurement office team, whose commitment to excellence earned Albemarle County the National Procurement Institute's 2025 Achievement of Excellence in Procurement Award for the second consecutive year. This recognition was based on innovation, professionalism, and high standards. As the Board could see, some of this work had an outward-facing impact on the community, while other work was more inward-facing, serving both internal and external customers. They were always excited to recognize this work, as it all mattered.

Mr. Richardson said that the second topic he would discuss in his report was regarding a piece of property on Route 29 North. He stated that Emily Kilroy, Economic Development Director, was present at this evening's meeting, as well. He would like to take a few minutes to talk about AstraZeneca, which announced last week their acquisition of a parcel at their Rivanna Futures site.

Mr. Richardson said that this was a testament to the courage and vision of this Board, who had stepped forward to make this vision a reality, encompassing 462 acres that surrounded Ravanna Station. This area was home to 3,000 employees, including 2,700 DOD Intelligence staff working on DOD projects to keep their country safe, as well as 300 active military personnel. Since the organization purchased this property, their team had worked closely with them to discuss the future of Rivanna Futures and potential partnerships.

Mr. Richardson said that this campus continued to evolve thanks to the good work of the County. He explained that last week's announcement of AstraZeneca was a significant milestone. He would like to remind the Board and their community of the details. AstraZeneca was planning to build a biopharmaceutical manufacturing campus, featuring two specialized production facilities and processes. Approximately 75 acres of the Rivanna Futures property would be allocated to AstraZeneca, who would build two buildings that would house 600 direct new jobs.

Mr. Richardson said that the minimum salary for these positions would be \$125,000 per year, with an average salary of \$160,000 per year. He said that this is a total capital investment of \$4.5 billion. He wanted to take a moment to discuss the company, AstraZeneca. He said that AstraZeneca is a global pharmaceutical business committed to excellence in research and development, with a focus on making medicines that improve people's lives. He said that they also prioritize sustainability. He had reviewed their core values as a company.

Mr. Richardson said that AstraZeneca is present in 28 countries worldwide and has 47 buildings globally. He said that they are headquartered in London and have been actively investing in Virginia, with Ms. Kilroy and her team and Mr. Henry working closely with the state to assess the suitability of the Rivanna Station property for their needs. He said that they prioritized scientific advancement and innovation, patient care, and operational excellence.

Mr. Richardson said that their core values also emphasized doing the right thing, upholding ethical standards, and incorporating green design principles, renewable energy, and closed-loop systems. He said that they believed that this company's commitment to their workforce, including training and development, a diverse workforce, and community engagement, aligned with the County's values. He said that the company's representatives had expressed enthusiasm about joining this community and felt they had found a suitable location for their next manufacturing investment.

Mr. Richardson said that as a corporate partner, they prioritized patients, society, the planet, and shareholders. He said that their websites highlighted significant investments in climate, health equity, and access. He emphasized that he believed that this partnership could be transformative for the biotech and pharmaceutical industries in this corridor. He said that the opportunity to collaborate with the University of Virginia, Piedmont Virginia Community College (PVCC), and local companies on research partnerships, workforce training, and commercial partnerships was clear and critical.

Mr. Richardson said that with infrastructure development, they could create capacity and access for other properties, and they were confident that this partnership would attract good-paying jobs to the County in that area. He said that regarding strategic plan alignment, earlier in the year the Board and staff were heavily involved in the Economic Development Strategic Plan. He said that they were really talking

about the mission to strengthen and diversify the County's tax base, with the goal of supporting upscale business and redevelopment, and bringing in good-paying, career-ladder jobs to the community.

Mr. Richardson stated that the second goal was to grow into the mid-Atlantic premier destination for biotechnology and life sciences innovation. He said that the partnership with UVA, leading back to Rivanna Station, was an unbelievable opportunity for the County as they continued to work and plan for the success of the site. He said that last week's activity at the site drew state officials, state partners, and even national attention from Washington, D.C. He said that the bottom line was that AstraZeneca chose Albemarle, and they were here because they competed and convinced them that this was a good match and fit for Albemarle County; he certainly believed that it was.

Mr. Richardson said that staff was on site to help with the announcement event. He said that he wanted the Board to understand that with Ms. Kilroy's leadership and a small team in the Economic Development Department, it took a lot of support across County government to be able to outrun the competition and convince the state and AstraZeneca that they could meet their demand for tempo and pace. He said that this was a good example of good cross-departmental collaboration.

Mr. Richardson said that representatives from various departments were at the event, including Budget, Finance, Community Development, and IT, all working together to make this happen. It was a heavy lift across the organization, but they all understood how important this was and how they needed to respond and compete well. He said that he would like to take a minute to talk about the tax base. The Board had done a good job, as they worked through the Economic Development Strategic Plan, of challenging their team to build their tax diversification. One strategy was to attract the right kind of commercial and industry capital to their tax base.

Mr. Richardson said that he believed this fit into the work done with the Economic Development Strategic Plan. They were still working through the numbers, but they could see that they had made progress. In 2025 they had around 11% of tax value in commercial and industry. Once AstraZeneca was fully built out, that was expected to move them to just over 15%. He noted that some Board members may recall that in 2015, they were around 17% and had recently discussed that other communities had between 17% to 25% in commercial tax base.

Mr. Richardson said that diversification and balance enabled them to alleviate some pressure on the residential taxpayer in Albemarle County, as it primarily concerned cost for service. He explained that it was more expensive to provide services to residential areas compared to businesses and industries, so the revenue generated from businesses and industries allowed them to pivot and undertake strategic initiatives that might not have been feasible otherwise. He said that he would like to express his pride, not only in Ms. Kilroy and the Economic Development team, but also in Mr. Henry and the cross-departmental representation in this effort.

Mr. Richardson said that he would also like to acknowledge Jodie Filardo and her Community Development team, who had been working diligently on the Comprehensive Plan, which would be presented in a public hearing in a few minutes. They were running parallel tracks, just as the Board was, on a recurring basis. However, they deemed it essential to focus on this opportunity, and they would continue to work on it for a while into the future.

Mr. Pruitt said that he was very impressed with Mr. Richardson's presentation, which included recognition of their staff's achievements and new investments being made in the County, and he thought those paired well together. He said that the quality execution on this complex plan came from staff across all levels, and he thought it was extraordinary and wonderful that they were able to experience this. He acknowledged the challenge of securing AstraZeneca's investment here, and he wanted to commend Captain Donna Price, who was Chair of the Board of Supervisors when the initial land acquisition went through for Rivanna Futures. He noted that Ms. Price had emphasized her unwavering support for this project and its importance to the community.

Mr. Pruitt said that furthermore, he thought the biggest goal of their County's economic development work should be on raising their local wages, which were lower than those of most Virginians and most Americans, but had higher incomes. He said that this was because many Albemarle residents had incomes from investments of their preexisting wealth, rather than accumulating wealth through wages and salaries. However, local industries and the associated job opportunities could help correct that, and he hoped AstraZeneca would help in that capacity.

Ms. McKeel said that she agreed with Mr. Pruitt and, having been nicely phrased, she would try not to repeat his thoughts. She stated that AstraZeneca was going to create a game-changing situation for their community. She said that she recalled 12 years ago, when she was campaigning for this seat, she had emphasized how concerning it was that only about 18% to 20% of County revenues came from businesses. She said that was a key part of her campaign. She said that now they were at 13%, so AstraZeneca's new development would undoubtedly be a huge help.

Ms. McKeel said that they were a strong community and they would work through concerns as best they could. She said that this would provide good jobs, and she believed this would also enable children of local parents to secure jobs and stay in the community. She said that this was crucial because they would have a range of job opportunities, a good range of pay, and a chance for career advancement - something they currently lacked. She said that she applauded that. She said that on a personal note, her experience at UVA as a researcher had involved working with AstraZeneca.

Ms. McKeel said that she had positive interactions with their representatives, particularly in hospitals and clinics. She said that they were a wonderful group to work with. She said that not all pharmaceutical companies were the same, but AstraZeneca stood out. She said that on another note, she was thrilled that the Copy Center staff had received recognition. She said that they were working behind the scenes, producing critical reports and documents. She compared them to her late husband's job at the Highway Research Council, where they produced reports that required copying and binding. The Copy Center team was equally essential to their work here, and she was delighted they had received public recognition.

Ms. Mallek said that that was a great adventure last week, and many people had looked forward to or worried about it for a long time. She said that however, in the right place, at the right time, with the right people, and the right atmosphere, it was a success. She said that the company's community culture aligned with their community culture, which was why they chose to come here. She agreed with others that there would be greater demands due to this project, but to her, it was absolutely worth it for the good jobs it would provide for their children and grandchildren.

Ms. Mallek said as a grandparent, she wanted her grandchildren to have opportunities that did not require them to spend 10 years in New England before returning home. From a professional standpoint, she believed that every PhD needed a team of individuals without advanced degrees, which was her role in her lab work in Boston. She said she was the only person without an advanced degree or multiple ones, but they worked together as a team. It was a fantastic experience, and she hoped others would have a similar positive experience.

Mr. Gallaway thanked Mr. Richardson for the presentation. He said that it was great to see the camaraderie they had with staff, and the longevity achieved with employees in the organization. He said that this was particularly noteworthy, as it was not the norm in today's business environment. He said that he looked forward to seeing the team reach new milestones as they continued their careers. He said that he would like to extend his praise to the team and staff who made last week's accomplishments possible. He said that he also wanted to highlight Mr. Richardson's role as the leader of this organization.

Mr. Gallaway said that they had seen significant growth since he joined, and it was impressive to see the execution of their Economic Development Strategic Plan. He said that they had made meaningful progress in just under 10 years, and he was confident it would have a lasting impact on the County. Therefore, he would like to take a moment to acknowledge Mr. Richardson's leadership. He hoped he had been able to enjoy the experience and celebrate with his team last week.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley stated that Mr. Richardson's presentation was a great example of how incredible Albemarle County was and all its staff. She wanted to credit the staff for their hard work and dedication. She said that it was essential that they recognized the entire staff, and she appreciated the way they continued to do so, including their two Deputy County Executives. She said that they often talked about the staff and the incredible work they did. She said that if they were recognized by others, it was because of the staff. They were truly the backbone of their organization, providing support, guidance, and innovative solutions.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley said that they were now recognized as a bioscience innovation center with the Manning Institute, the BioHub, and AstraZeneca. She said that this was a significant achievement, and she thought they had been working toward it for some time. She recalled when she first joined the Board and they approved purchasing the Rivanna Futures land, they were taking a risk. She said that under his leadership, Mr. Richardson, they made the right decision. She said that he brought a vision to their County, and she believed it was essential to acknowledge that it was his leadership that made this happen.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley said that she was sure others may be taking credit for this achievement, but it was clear that their County, staff, and Mr. Richardson's leadership were the driving forces behind it. She could not be prouder of what they had accomplished. She said that their organization was a well-oiled machine that valued its employees, and that was truly appreciated. She wanted to emphasize that again. She said that they valued the people who worked for the County, and that was something to be commended. She thanked Mr. Richardson again for the report.

Mr. Andrews said that he was grateful for the presentation and the recognition given to the employees for their longevity and special achievements. He said that this event, which brought AstraZeneca to the County and Rivanna Futures, was a team effort, but it required exceptional leadership, and he was truly appreciative of that. He said that at this event, he had the opportunity to mingle with numerous representatives from AstraZeneca, who sent a substantial contingent to represent their interests.

Mr. Andrews said that the remarks were initiated by Pam Cheng, AstraZeneca's Executive Vice President for Global Operations and Chief Sustainability Officer. He said that he had the chance to discuss this with her, and her enthusiasm was evident. He said that she took this initiative seriously. He said that he was impressed and pleased to hear her outline the company's commitment to making this facility sustainable, aiming for net zero emissions and other values that AstraZeneca held highly. He said that the company was excited to establish a presence in Albemarle County, and he believed they should extend a warm welcome to them.

Agenda Item No. 15. Public Comment on: Matters Previously Considered or Currently Pending Before the Board (Other than Scheduled Public Hearings).

Ms. Alicia Lenahan, Scottsville District, stated that since April, the Board of Supervisors had been provided with stark warnings about the fragile state of their democracy. She said that the attacks on the constitutional order had been relentless. She explained that birthright citizenship and equal protection under the law granted by the 14th Amendment were hanging in the balance. She said that the sovereignty and authority granted to the states in the 10th Amendment were facing repeated assaults, as evidenced by the deployment of National Guard and active-duty military personnel.

Ms. Lenahan said that they could not count the number of people who had lost their Fourth Amendment right to be secure against unreasonable searches and seizures due to widespread surveillance and data collection. She said that this was closely tied to the failure to provide due process granted by the Fifth Amendment. She said that the federal government continued to pursue the largest mass deportation in history, despite its initial failure to target individuals with violent criminal backgrounds.

Ms. Lenahan said that Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and cooperating agencies were sweeping up anyone they could, regardless of their background. She said that the administration had made it clear that it would not stop with undocumented immigrants but would use ICE and the Department of Justice (DOJ) to threaten all of them. She said that in spite of the onslaught, the Board of Supervisors as a body had not considered the anti-ICE resolution presented in July or offered a statement of principle on behalf of their immigrant and refugee neighbors.

Ms. Lenahan said that the First Amendment was now under threat. She said that on Saturday, October 18, thousands of people, many of whom were their constituents, would line the sidewalks along Route 29 again. She said that they would exercise their right to speak, gather peacefully, and articulate their grievances to the government. She said that if the institutions built to protect democracy faltered or failed, the burden fell on ordinary citizens, pro-democracy advocates, and independent voices willing to speak up.

Ms. Lenahan said that for them, silence was not an option, as it would normalize the unacceptable. She said that this was her question to the Board: given all the ways the administration had targeted and denigrated its critics, if the National Guard was deployed to the streets of Charlottesville, and Trump supporters tried to disrupt and intimidate the No Kings participants, who would the County choose to protect? She said that they would be watching.

Mr. William Therrien, Rio District, said that as the Board may recall, on February 17, 2025, a gunman opened fire in the parking lot of the Harris Teeter in Crozet. He said that two people were killed before an off-duty federal officer, who just happened to be at the store, intervened and stopped the shooter. He said that the first 911 call came in at approximately 1:35 p.m., and the first Albemarle police unit arrived roughly six minutes later. Although this day was tragic, it was important to consider what could have happened in those six minutes if the federal officer hadn't been present; if the gunman had entered the store or continued firing.

Mr. Therrien stated that this was not a criticism of their officers, but rather a testament to the limitations of their efforts, which were often stretched thin. He said that the County's recent report highlighted this issue, revealing that their department regularly managed three to five calls at once, sometimes more than 10, with only nine officers on duty. He said that this showed how officers were frequently pulled between zones to cover gaps, leaving entire areas of the County without immediate assistance. He said that these statistics were not abstract; they described the current conditions under which their officers were working.

Mr. Therrien said that this was not limited to large-scale events like the Crozet incident. In August 2024, Deputy Hunter Reedy was shot and killed during a traffic stop, despite assistance arriving in seconds. He said that every officer in Albemarle County knew this feeling, making a stop or responding to a call and realizing backup might be 20 minutes away. He said that this happened every day and every shift, representing the risk that this report was warning about. The report framed this as a five-year plan, but a five-year plan was not how long it should take to stabilize their emergency services.

Mr. Therrien said that the safety of this community and the officers who protected it could not wait that long. This report outlined an emergency that demanded an immediate plan within the next 6 to 12 months. As one of the wealthiest Counties in Virginia, the question was not whether they could afford to fix this, but whether they chose to. He said that before today, they may not have realized the full extent of the risk, but now they did. If something happened to one of their officers or residents because help came too late, people would look back and rightly ask why action had not been taken immediately. They had the chance to prevent this outcome right now, and the Board hoped they would take it seriously.

Agenda Item No. 16. **Public Hearing: AC44: Final Adoption.** Pursuant to Va. Code § 15.2-2226, to consider adoption of a new Albemarle County Comprehensive Plan.

The Executive Summary forwarded to the Board states that the County is updating its Comprehensive Plan through the Albemarle County 2044 project (AC44). The County began AC44 in 2021 and has held numerous public engagement sessions and work sessions to elicit feedback and

comments from the public, the Planning Commission (PC), and the Board of Supervisors (Board). AC44 is in the last phase, Phase 4: finalizing the language for the four-part Comprehensive Plan document and developing Plan actions.

Over the past year, staff brought draft chapters to both the PC and Board for their input and review. The feedback obtained both during the work sessions and from the community has been fully considered in preparing the proposed final draft of AC44 (Attachments B-E).

On September 30, the PC held a public hearing and adopted a resolution to amend and recommend approval of AC44. The Board held its final scheduled work session of AC44 on October 1. Staff has addressed the Board's comments and feedback from that work session into the final draft of AC44 proposed for adoption at the public hearing on October 15.

A Summary of Changes to AC44 is provided as Attachment A. This public hearing is to consider adoption of the proposed final draft of AC44, set forth in Attachments B-E. A proposed resolution is provided as Attachment F.

If AC44 is approved and adopted by the Board, staff would communicate its contents with the development community and the general public. If adopted, AC44 would take effect on January 1, 2026.

There is no budget impact associated with this agenda item.

Following a public hearing, staff recommends the Board adopt the Resolution attached to the staff report as Attachment F, approving the proposed final draft of AC44 as presented.

Ms. Tonya Swartzendruber, Planning Manager, said that staff were here today to answer any questions that may arise and to consider adoption of AC44 after several years of work on this work. She said that she would keep this presentation concise, going through a few of the updates they had made to this final document, discussing a few next steps, and then the Board's general discussion.

Ms. Swartzendruber stated that a few notable changes over the last few weeks included updates to the language regarding the potential criteria for assessing development areas, as well as updates to the Future Land Use Map (FLUM) specifically regarding the SweetSpot property, as directed by the Board. She said that they also clarified some of the housing data and added several housing-related actions. She said that they clarified that the Big Moves were not in order of priority, and they had incorporated the Planning Commission's recommendations as directed by the Board.

Ms. Swartzendruber said that the Big Moves included in AC44 would be used to prioritize actions and incorporate those priority actions into their work plans. She said that moving forward, they anticipated working on several items, including a citizen-initiated Comprehensive Plan amendment process, developing development area plans that covered areas such as activity centers, affordable housing, urban design, and economic development. They also intended to incorporate a Rural Area Plan into their work plan over the next several years.

Ms. Swartzendruber said that as the Supervisors were aware, the zoning modernization project was already underway, and they expected to provide an update on that project to the Board in the next month. She said that they were prepared to coordinate the Big Moves with their County Strategic Plan, budget efforts, and with other agencies. She said that staff would answer any questions from the Board at this point, and they had provided a draft motion for the Board on a subsequent slide.

Mr. Pruitt said that over the past few days, the Board had received some comments of concern from the public regarding the citizen-initiated FLUM amendments. He asked if there was specific language in the Comprehensive Plan that addressed this, or if it was a staff action. If there was specific language, he would appreciate it if staff could point it out so he could reference it. Additionally, he would appreciate it if staff could help him understand the current vision for that process. He recalled that it was a process that did not yet exist, and they had talked about it in the context of SweetSpot. He said that it seemed to be a process that could either occur simultaneously with a Zoning Map Amendment (ZMA) or follow one.

Mr. Michael Barnes, Director of Planning, said that Ms. Swartzendruber would try to locate the specific reference in the plan, but he would try to address Mr. Pruitt's question also. He said there were several actions necessary in order to reintroduce the citizen-initiated Comprehensive Plan amendment process. He said that this proposal would be presented after adoption and would be reviewed by the Planning Commission and the Board.

Mr. Barnes said that the specifics of the process were still being discussed internally, and he believed it was best to have further deliberations before unveiling a specific proposal. He said that the purpose of this document was to shape the community's policies and guide future decisions. He said that they would review applications against the Comprehensive Plan and may identify areas that need to be revisited in the future due to changes in market conditions or individual circumstances. He said that in those cases, they may need to amend the Comp Plan in order to advance a good proposal while ensuring compliance with existing policies.

Mr. Barnes said that he believed the concern was that it may be used to circumvent policies and

inadvertently expand or reduce the development area, but he believed it was essential to maintain flexibility. He said that the process would involve coming before the Planning Commission and the Board to pass a resolution of intent, and then staff would lead the process to make recommendations for changing the Comprehensive Plan. He said that the outcome would likely depend on the specific development proposal and would be case-dependent. He reiterated that the goal was to provide flexibility that was not currently available, allowing for adjustments to be made in a public and transparent manner without waiting until the next full Comp Plan update.

Mr. Pruitt said that he appreciated the explanation. He asked if it was correct that the Board was not asked to take action on whether or how there would be a process for redesignating things under the Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Barnes confirmed that was correct; considering that process was not an item before the Board today.

Ms. McKeel said that she was grateful to Mr. Pruitt for asking and to Mr. Barnes for answering that important clarifying question. She said that she had been considering this in parallel with the report the Board heard today from Dr. Bailey. She said that Dr. Bailey emphasized the importance of making room for "what they don't know they don't know." She said that it was crucial to acknowledge that while staff were experts, the Supervisors were more like the community's eyes and ears. They must be flexible, recognizing that they all often did not know what they did not know.

Ms. McKeel said that she had seen many citizens come to the podium with innovative suggestions. She said that she was fully in support of implementing the citizen-initiated amendment process, and she recalled Ms. Filardo stating that it would not take long for staff to return with a proposal for it.

Mr. Barnes confirmed that staff's intent was to bring it back for the Board to consider in the short term.

Ms. Mallek said that she found this current discussion bizarre, because she got a totally different view when reading the objectives and after their discussion at the last meeting. She said that she would come back for more detail after the public hearing. However, she would like to bring to everyone's attention three concerns that she had. She said that regarding the Comp Plan in general, she had wonderful conversation with Pam Cheng after the AstraZeneca announcement ceremony, where Ms. Cheng mentioned that AstraZeneca would not have considered coming to the County without their strong community culture of environmental and natural resource protection.

Ms. Mallek stated that she wanted to mention that as a preface to her comments because it was a clear indication to her that these elements in the Comp Plan were not just beneficial to current residents and future generations, but also crucial for the County's financial well-being in the long term. She believed that they could have it all, and they must stand up for these elements in the Comp Plan to achieve it. They should not have to choose between environmental protection and career-ladder jobs. Unfortunately, there are sections of the Comp Plan that were underdeveloped compared to the rest.

Ms. Mallek stated that the years' worth of work to create a coherent and well-written document had resulted in some sections that did not meet that standard. She had proposed this before and would propose it again that these sections be either stricken or reduced to a future document. As the eyes and ears of the community, the Board relied on adopted ordinances to uphold their decisions, not just personal opinions.

Ms. Mallek said that she would focus on three topics. Firstly, the last-minute change to the property on Monacan Trail, which had been compared to the 2010 vote to change the western bypass funding policy, due to its abrupt and unannounced nature without a public process. She stated that secondly, the inclusion of land swaps, which were essentially increases to the development area without the rigorous criteria and work that has been done in the rest of the Comp Plan chapter. Thirdly, regarding the change to allow for a citizen-initiated change to the CPA and the FLUM, she knew from experience that this needed to be part of a future Comp Plan process or required as a combination CPA/ZMA, with proper process, not an 11 p.m. decision. In the past, this old process led to constant chaos and a circular burden on staff. They could not afford to put staff in that situation again for the sake of flexibility. She said that the Comp Plan must be as clear as possible to avoid forcing staff to make policy decisions.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley asked if staff had received her comments regarding photos in the Comp Plan documents.

Ms. Swartzendruber confirmed that those changes had already been implemented.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley thanked staff for that. She said that she liked the document as-is, and she believed Mr. Barnes had discussed flexibility, which she thought was extremely important. She said that as they navigated the unknown challenges of the future, she believed it was crucial to remain adaptable to address all the needs that would arise. She said that, for the most part, this document effectively did that. She said that therefore, she commended staff on their work.

Mr. Andrews said that he appreciated the effort that went into creating this document, and he believed a significant amount of work and public input were invested in its development. He said that if staff had the ability to summarize that, he would love to hear it, but he also wanted to assure everyone

that there had been numerous opportunities for public input, and he appreciated the input that had been provided.

Mr. Andrews agreed with Ms. Mallek's concerns regarding land swaps and the lack of clear criteria, and he would like to make a comment about the potential for future changes. He said that in his opinion, they needed to acknowledge that there were many criteria that had not yet been discussed and would require consideration before any action could be taken. He said that with respect to citizen-initiated changes, it appeared that this process was still in its infancy, and it was unclear how it would be structured. He said that he trusted that it would be a public process, and if it involved zoning changes, it would likely involve a public hearing.

Mr. Andrews said that he encouraged a public hearing in any event and recommended that any changes be reviewed by the Planning Commission. He noted that even with the recent change to the Monacan Trail property, there was not public vetting before it was done.

Mr. Andrews opened the public hearing and invited members of the public who had signed up to speak to come forward.

Mr. Rob McGinnis, Piedmont Environmental Council (PEC), stated that he would like to start by expressing his gratitude to the Board, the Planning Commission, AC44 staff, and County management for completing what was largely a successful Comprehensive Plan update. He said that the Growth Management Policy remained largely intact, and there was a clear focus on the value of the rural area and smart growth in the development areas. He said that as he had previously mentioned, he would like to continue sharing the Council's concerns regarding the land swapping between the development areas and the rural area. He reiterated that they had been advocating for this to be a separate process.

Mr. McGinnis said that they appreciated the text changes that acknowledged the need for further development of that process, but it needed to be developed further. He said that regarding the last-minute change to the FLUM, the PEC strongly agreed with the Planning Commission's recommendations to the Board that a change in land use would be better addressed through a future ZMA. He said that he would also like to address the impacts of economic development.

Mr. McGinnis said that while the PEC did not oppose economic development, the Central Virginia Partnership for Economic Development had made it clear just yesterday that the need for localities to assess the potential impacts of the proposed innovation corridor running from Fauquier County to Albemarle. He said that the County should initiate this process to identify both beneficial and adverse impacts from growth driven by the County's Economic Development Strategic plan. Their focus was now shifting to implementing the Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. McGinnis said that they planned to maintain and improve the County's conservation programs, implement the stream health initiative, update the Biodiversity Action Plan, the Rural Area Land Use Plan, and review the Biosolids ZTA. Finally, he would like to state the importance of aligning the modernization of the Zoning Ordinance with the County's AC44 goals and objectives and actions. He said that they hoped that the Zoning Ordinance update would be a state-of-the-art, innovative process.

Mr. Neil Williamson, President of the Free Enterprise Forum, stated that he would like to thank the public safety report presented earlier today for endorsing the Free Enterprise Forum's "lasagna model" approach. Tonight, the Board would likely enact a new Comprehensive Plan, designated AC44. To be clear, this plan did not include the Free Enterprise Forum's lasagna model. Staff had worked diligently on the plan. However, work should never be confused with accomplishment. AC44 failed to address the planning challenges Albemarle County would face in the next 20 weeks, let alone the next 20 years.

Mr. Williamson said that the Board of Supervisors were ultimately responsible for this failure. Due to a lack of vision and the reality of an evenly split Board, AC44 had ended up in a similar state as it was four years ago: confused, conflicted, and perpetuating the status quo. He should not be surprised, given his experience with Albemarle's Comprehensive Plan process, which he had now been through five times. The end of the AC44 process had all the faux drama of a Hallmark Christmas movie, but without a happy ending. Today, he was asking for a different outcome. He recognized that this Comprehensive Plan was late, and they had pressure to improve it; he expected that they would do so. This made AC44 a lost cause.

Mr. Williamson stated that he was asking them to do something different. His grandmother used to say that lasagna was a dish that took a long time to make well. He said that the Free Enterprise Forum was asking the Board to take the FLUM and the development area boundaries discussion out of the Comprehensive Plan process and update them separately, starting today. He explained that by focusing on these elements, the housing benefits of changing the development area boundaries would become clear. He said that they needed more housing everywhere for everyone, so he encouraged them to join together to make a great batch of lasagna.

Ms. Stuart Overbey, Samuel Miller District, said that she was with Don't Spread on Me, a grassroots group, working to stop toxic sewage sludge, also known as biosolids, from being spread on farms and forests as fertilizer around the County. She said that first and foremost, she would like to thank the Board and County staff for hearing their concerns and recognizing them as valid. She said that she appreciated that the sentence they had included the Environmental Stewardship Chapter in the AC44, which stated that they would investigate adopting a biosolids testing and monitoring ordinance. She said that this was a great first step.

Ms. Overbey said that now that the end of the Comprehensive Plan process was near, she hoped they could find an opportunity to move forward on actually adopting such an ordinance, perhaps as part of the zoning modernization plan. She said that the Board may recall that she had spoken to them about this issue in January, and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) had since acknowledged the problem of PFAS, also known as "forever chemicals," in biosolids. They had issued a draft risk assessment and fact sheets warning farmers and the public about it.

Ms. Overbey stated that however, since then, individuals who had previously lobbied for large chemical companies had taken leadership roles at the EPA. She said that they had declared that this risk assessment would not proceed beyond its draft phase. In fact, there was a rider in the budget bill that would completely defund the EPA subagency known as IRIS (Integrated Risk Information System), which was responsible for conducting these risk assessments.

Ms. Overbey stated that as a result, there would be no further risk assessments of toxic chemicals from the EPA. At the state level, despite repeated entreaties, the Department of Environmental Quality maintained that it would take no action on PFAS and biosolids unless the risk assessment moved forward to a final phase, or unless they were directed to take up such action by the General Assembly. Although lawmakers were becoming increasingly aware of the issue, and some were considering legislative action, they would face significant opposition from an alliance of lobbyists representing the Manufacturers Association, wastewater treatment plants, and the industrial agriculture sector.

Ms. Overbey said that the hope was that something would be done, but it was far from certain that anything would be passed into law. Therefore, it was more important than ever for Albemarle's local government to take action by adopting a thoughtfully written biosolids testing and monitoring ordinance. She said that they had a wealth of information that they were eager to share with the Board. She said that she hoped they could discuss this idea in more detail soon. Finally, she would remind the Board to visit their website, dontspreadonmead.org, if they had not already.

Mr. Tom Olivier, Samuel Miller District, stated that the proposed plan now included a Rural Areas Chapter, called for a standalone Rural Areas plan, and included constructive proposals for biodiversity, protection, and climate action. He said that these were all good. However, he strongly advised against the plan's proposed land swaps between difficult-to-develop parts of the development areas and rural areas. He urged them not to support a Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program with receiving areas in the rural areas.

Mr. Olivier stated that his greatest concern was that the plan failed to acknowledge the severity and breadth of current ecological crises. He said that it assumed rapid growth and outlined how they could best accommodate it, while ignoring the damaging consequences of projected growth and development on their greenhouse gas emissions and open space ecosystems. He noted that this lack of consideration for environmental impacts was unfortunately not new in their County, as seen in past initiatives such as Rivanna Futures, the eight-mile DOD Corridor, and the abandoned Data Center Ordinance.

Mr. Olivier said that in 2014, President Obama stated, "We are the first generation to feel the impact of climate change, and the last generation that can do something about it." He said that today, the World Meteorological Association reported that carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere reached a record high in 2024. He emphasized that it was imperative that humanity took immediate action to address worsening ecological crises, and Albemarle must do more now as well.

Mr. Olivier said that he proposed creating two independent planning departments: One focused on development areas, the other on open space planning, natural resource conservation, and the evaluation of environmental impacts of development proposals. He said that this restructuring should provide a more robust basis for their next Comprehensive Plan update and the climatically challenging times ahead. He said that he would submit a sketch proposal for a restructured planning process and structure to the Board in January, once the new Board members were seated.

Mr. Tom Loach, White Hall District, said that he was a resident of Crozet. He stated that in 1975, the Albemarle County Board of Supervisors faced a difficult decision that ultimately led to the preservation of their rural land and character. He said that after reviewing AC44 and the minutes from the Board of Supervisors' meetings, it was clear that Albemarle County was once again at a crossroads, where a decision on its future character was being made.

Mr. Loach said that after reviewing the data, it was clear to him that the original decision to remain a rural County had shifted toward a model that would eventually lead Albemarle County to

become another northern Virginia clone. He said that the vast majority of the Board's discussion had not been about preserving their rural land, but rather about destroying it. He said that even though the data showed that Albemarle County had 20 years of development, the discussion was constantly focused on expanding their growth areas.

Mr. Loach said that this included swapping rural areas and using the same sleazy tactics to force unwanted expansion through the master planning update process. He said that if implemented, this Plan would be a death by a thousand cuts that would destroy both their rural and development areas. He said that the County had long used the land-use tax subsidy for rural preservation, which relied on imposing an extra tax burden primarily affecting growth area residents. He said that their own data showed that rural development accounted for only 17% of all development in the County each year, yet there was no mention of the land-use program in AC44. He said that no one would continue to invest millions of dollars in a program with a 17% annual loss rate.

Mr. Loach stated that in his report on land use, Mr. Robert Tucker, County Executive, had stated that it was implicit in the concept of land use that the tax burden was shifted to other taxpayers. As one of those taxpayers, and given this situation, he would like to shift his pro-rata share of tax dollars that he now paid for land use to the Acquisition of Conservation Easements (ACE) program. He said that if residents were going to be asked to pay additional taxes for rural protection, they should have the option to direct where their money went.

Ms. Carroll Courtenay, Senior Attorney with the Southern Environmental Law Center (SELC), said that as she had shared with the Planning Commission, she would like to express the Center's appreciation for the substantial amount of work that the Board and County staff had undertaken over the past few years to reach this point. She said that this process had led to significant improvements in the Plan, including a fundamental one that she would like to support tonight: a standalone section on the County's Growth Management Policy.

Ms. Courtenay said that the County had long been regarded as a statewide model for adopting a strong and deliberate Growth Management Policy. She said that this policy supports a more livable and equitable communities, promotes economic development, encourages rural enterprise, and protects the environment. She said that a strong Growth Management Policy also delivers significant fiscal benefits to the County and its residents. She said that it makes it easier and less expensive to provide public infrastructure and effective public services, such as transit, emergency services, and schools.

Ms. Courtenay said that furthermore, it protects the County's invaluable natural areas, which safeguards the quality of their drinking water, drives economic growth and tourism, and helps the County meet its climate goals. Ultimately, the principles of responsible growth underpin almost every issue in the Comprehensive Plan. She said that the SELC shares concerns that had been expressed about the sections regarding swapping and potential boundary changes to the development areas.

Ms. Courtenay said that, however, they strongly support the County's decision to have a standalone Growth Management Chapter to emphasize the foundational nature of this policy in the County's long-term planning and help protect and promote Albemarle's uniquely valuable qualities for many years to come. She said that once again, she commends them all on the immense amount of work that had gone into this Plan, and she was glad to have this document to help chart a course for the County's continued evolution over the next 20 years.

Mr. Andrews closed the public hearing.

Mr. Pruitt said that he was pleased with their Comprehensive Plan. He said that although he had only been involved in it in a legislative capacity for the past two years, he had been involved in its development prior to that. He said that he had attended various community roundtables, provided feedback, and had been following the process since its inception. He said that this experience dated back to when he was discussing the plan with his predecessor about potentially running for this office.

Mr. Pruitt said that he was pleased with the overall product, as he believed it adequately incorporated many of the community concerns he had heard during the earlier roundtables. He said that he was also glad to see that many of the particular concerns he had brought to this Board had been addressed based on his own feedback. He noted that one aspect that he was particularly excited about was the way the plan treated rural areas. He said that he had previously noted that maps of the County showed rural areas as white, while development areas were filled in with color for zoning uses, which created an implicit understanding that rural areas were not areas where things happened.

Mr. Pruitt said that he appreciated that this had been corrected, as rural areas were now represented as a light green on their maps, and the Rural Area Chapters addressed it as a place where life happened and people lived. He said that this change engaged with the rural area as a place that benefited from economic opportunities, community, and other aspects of their Growth Management Policy.

Mr. Pruitt said that he was also pleased with the Housing Chapter, although he had some specific concerns that he would like to see addressed by their capable staff. He said that he agreed with the concerns they had heard from the public and some of his peers, particularly regarding the land area swap

concept. He said that he had been in favor of this concept since it was first floated, and he believed it should be explored further in the Comprehensive Plan. He said that while it was not yet fully considered, he thought it was an important aspect of the plan that warranted further discussion and definition. He said that this was a policy they wanted to envision and pursue, but they needed to consider the specifics of how it would be implemented, whether it would be feasible, and how it would be received by the community; those were the next steps.

Mr. Pruitt said that their Comprehensive Plan served as a statement of their intention to pursue this policy, and he was in favor of adopting it as written. He said that he was excited about the prospect of moving forward with the Comprehensive Plan and was in favor of approving it today.

Ms. McKeel said that she was very pleased with the document. She said that while she could probably go through and find some things that she would like to be written differently, as a document that six people had agreed to, she was very comfortable with this document at present. She noted that they had been working on this for at least three years, and the public had had numerous opportunities for input over that period.

Ms. McKeel affirmed that she believed this document positioned them well for the next 20 years. She said that although she was sure Albemarle County would continue to evolve, she thought this document provided sufficient flexibility, allowing her to feel confident in approving it. She said that she would not elaborate further, but she would like to express her gratitude to everyone involved for their hard work on this project. She said that she would also like to thank the public for their participation and engagement.

Ms. Mallek agreed that this was a monumental effort and had garnered much engagement from many people. She recalled that the first Comprehensive Plan work she attended was in 1985 at Broadus Wood School, where Elaine Echols was meeting to discuss the Rural Area Plan, and hundreds of people showed up because there was no internet or other distractions, and people must show up in person if they wanted to participate.

Ms. Mallek said that although life was different now, and it had taken her some time to adjust to the new process, they had so much to protect and preserve. She said that this was why she had been pushing hard to make this better. She said that she would review a few things and make some motions about making them better. She said that they all had received a copy of a heartfelt, thoroughly discussed, and respectfully written list of comments from the Crozet CAC (Community Advisory Committee).

Ms. Mallek said that the CCAC (Crozet Community Advisory Committee) had worked on this for weeks and undertook this resolution in pursuit of their committee's charge to provide assistance, feedback, and input to County staff and the Board of Supervisors on community and County efforts related to implementation and support of the adopted master plan, and she appreciated their work. She said that regarding the removal of underperforming areas, the CCAC requested that they present separate criteria for removing underperforming areas and for adding new land to the development areas.

Ms. Mallek said that failure to define how these two sets of criteria worked together risked making removal indistinguishable from expansion, contrary to their stated intent of limiting growth to existing boundaries at this interval. She said that whereas the policy lacked measurable conservation benefits, such as natural resource value or ecological significance, that would ensure tangible environmental gains when land was reclassified from growth area to rural area. She said that there needed to be many more details about this.

Ms. Mallek said that CCAC members also stated the concern that swapping land between the development area and rural area may divert investment from established communities that had pressing infrastructure needs, which applied to all six County Districts. She said that the CCAC believed that growth management decisions must also support communities designed for walking, biking, transit, and accessibility, rather than focusing primarily on motor vehicles. Additionally, they could not effectively pursue population growth and meet housing demand without properly investing in existing development area infrastructure, affordability, and redevelopment.

Ms. Mallek said that the CCAC also noted that the Growth Management Policy's broad language lacked clear, measurable standards that would help the Board deal with these newly added issues. She said that the CCAC asked the Board to reconsider the future growth management development needs and consider a few criteria that they hoped they would consider. She said that they listed potential criteria for assessing the removal or underperforming areas from the development areas, including clarifying the difference between removal and expansion within this policy, including tangible conservation outcomes and measurable environmental benefits for any development area land reclassified as rural areas.

Ms. Mallek said that land removed from the development to rural status must maintain natural topography, not have it destroyed already, and adhere to existing standards for the rural area, including tree canopy coverage, watershed permeability, and contiguous connection to current rural area land. She said that they should offer developers conservation for density swaps within the development area. She said that the developers who set aside land for conservation gained the right to increase zoning density elsewhere in the development area.

Ms. Mallek said that they should invest first in meeting infrastructure priorities within the development area before considering boundary adjustments. She said that to ensure a well-planned redevelopment, clear, strict standards for walkability and accessibility must be established in growth

assessments. She said that additionally, the long-term balance between housing supply, affordability, and infrastructure capacity must be considered, with growth management strategies reflecting both community design and economic feasibility.

Ms. Mallek stated that the CCAC group, comprising representatives from various neighborhoods and residential areas, brought diverse backgrounds and perspectives to the table. She had been impressed by their collaborative efforts in developing this concept over the past several weeks of meetings.

Ms. Mallek **moved** that the Board of Supervisors reconsider the last-minute change to the property on Monacan Trail due to the lack of process before it was included as a map change and zoning change in the Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Andrews **seconded** the motion.

Ms. Mallek emphasized the importance of substantial processes for their decisions. She said that she understood that some people were concerned about how long it took, but making mistakes make it an even longer time.

Roll was called and the motion failed by the following recorded vote:

AYES: Mr. Andrews and Ms. Mallek.

NAYS: Mr. Gallaway, Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley, Ms. McKeel, and Mr. Pruitt

Ms. Mallek **moved** that the Board of Supervisors remove the language in the Comprehensive Plan referencing potential land swaps between development areas and rural areas. Mr. Andrews **seconded** the motion.

In further discussion, Mr. Pruitt said that in their previous meeting he believed they had made it clear that these were preliminary criteria, and he saw that as meeting the ask. He added that he also wanted to emphasize that he agreed that this was a well-thought-out letter from the Crozet CAC. He said that he thought they had a strong team, and he believed these recommendations were thoughtful. He said that even if he did not agree with them individually, he thought they were good recommendations.

Mr. Pruitt said that upon reviewing them, he would recommend that the Board spend approximately half an hour discussing each item, which he believed they would do in the future. He said that he planned to revisit this topic when they had a substantive policy discussion. He said that he viewed the Comprehensive Plan as a framework for creating additional plans and strategies, and he saw the criteria they established here as a good first step in informing the community about their considerations for this potential plan.

Mr. Pruitt said that this criteria set the stage for soliciting good feedback from the community, which he believed was essential. He said that he appreciated and valued this feedback, and he would use it. He said that he believed they had gotten it because of the language in the Comprehensive Plan. He said that he wanted to make it clear that he would not be supporting this motion, but he appreciated the effort and wanted to consider this topic more thoughtfully. He said that he simply did not think this was the right time in their process for it.

Mr. Andrews said that the motion, as he understood it, was to eliminate the criteria because they had not been thoroughly fleshed out. He said that the CAC had proposed numerous criteria, and he would also like to reference the Planning Commission meeting where they adopted the Comprehensive Plan. He said that Commissioner Murray had brought up several criteria that were interesting but did not have time to be discussed, and therefore, they were not included. He said that was why, when he evaluated this, he recognized that it has not been fully vetted yet.

Mr. Gallaway said that Mr. Pruitt's point about the resolution that was submitted was valid. He said it had been discussed during previous AC44 discussions and noted that they had discussed this at the Board's previous meeting.

Mr. Andrews said that he did not believe he would support the motion because of what he had been hearing regarding the Board's commitment and recognizing that the criteria are not yet established and needed further vetting.

Mr. Andrews called the vote on the motion to remove the language in the Comprehensive Plan referencing potential land swaps between development areas and rural areas.

Roll was called and the motion failed by the following recorded vote:

AYES: Ms. Mallek.

NAYS: Mr. Andrews, Mr. Gallaway, Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley, Ms. McKeel, and Mr. Pruitt.

Ms. Mallek requested staff feedback on previous experience on citizen imitated projects that would disrupt the work program. She questioned what would be gained to change it and that it seemed to her like they were going backwards.

Mr. Barnes said that the applicable sentence on page 16 of the implementation section was that to offer options to property owners, the County may consider revising the process to include property owner-initiated amendments to AC44. He said that as for the exact process, he thought they were aware

of some of the potential downsides. He acknowledged that they were concerned about the workload it may put upon staff, particularly if there was pent-up demand for changes.

Mr. Barnes said that this concern was partly driven by community feedback and staff's own recognition of their inability to regularly revisit and update their master plans. He said that they would strive to create a process that was equitable, fair, and had built-in safeguards to prevent it from becoming overly burdensome on staff resources. He said that by engaging in the public process, they could identify and address potential flaws in the process, and hopefully, make it more usable and effective.

Ms. Mallek said that Mr. Barnes' point he had just made about their lack of timely progress on the master plans would be further exacerbated by this last sentence. There was no doubt about that.

Ms. Mallek **moved** that the Board of Supervisors remove the last sentence on page 16 of the Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Andrews **seconded** the motion.

Mr. Pruitt said that he would offer a substitute motion that he hoped could alleviate the concerns they had here. He said that as someone who was not a County resident prior to 2015, he did not have personal experience with this process. However, based on what had been explained, he imagined it to be closely tied to the ZMA process, although it could potentially be leading or lagging, depending on the needs of a property owner.

Mr. Pruitt said that he could see some limited value in this process, particularly in terms of protecting them from liability. He said that if they modified the Comprehensive Plan to align with future approvals, that was something he might consider. He said that he could see how if a property had been approved without amending the Comprehensive Plan to be in accord, he would not be surprised if someone brought action against the County because of that.

Mr. Andy Herrick, County Attorney, said that it was generally best when legislative actions were consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Pruitt said that there were instances where this concept had value, but he could also see the possibility where they had a process in place for landowners to request Comprehensive Plan changes that facilitated zoning modifications, although he did not see the significant value in this approach as they had previously discussed. It seemed that the lift required for each change was the same, so he could see the rationale for considering it all at once.

Mr. Pruitt acknowledged that this concept could have some edge value, and it was something they could discuss in greater detail. However, he did not see any value in using this to enhance the rural area or bring development into the rural area from the development area. He said that he did not see why a developer would want to do that, as they would still not receive Albemarle County Service Authority (ACSA) services, which was the primary concern. He said that the actual Growth Management Policy was driven by this, not the fictional lines they drew on maps.

Mr. Pruitt said that recognizing that there was no practical value to this concept, but also acknowledging that it was a point of community alarm, he would propose a substitute motion that instead of eliminating the sentence, they add a sentence following it stating that property owners would not be able to initiate Comprehensive Plan changes to add land to the development area from the rural area.

Mr. Pruitt requested to make a friendly amendment to Ms. Mallek's motion; amend the language on page 16 to retain the final sentence and to add a consecutive sentence that states "in a citizen-initiated AC44 Comprehensive Plan amendment process, a property owner shall not make changes that would add land to the development area from the rural area."

Ms. Mallek said that in her view, the old process had consistently shown that the requests were always to bring development into the growth area. She said that history had consistently shown that the Comprehensive Plan must be updated first, as this allowed for a legitimate zoning change and avoided the potential for costly and time-consuming litigation. She said that it would be interesting to see if they could secure four votes to add Mr. Pruitt's proposed sentence, as this would likely alleviate her concerns, given her 20 years of observing this process from the audience.

Ms. Mallek supported the amended motion, and Mr. Andrews seconded the amended motion.

Mr. Pruitt clarified that his proposed amendment was, rather than delete the final sentence of the comp plan prior to the appendix (Implementation Chapter, page 16), to add another sentence to read as such: property owner-initiated amendments to ACC44 may not include additions to the development area. He further clarified that the intent was to permit property owners to ask for changes to the comprehensive plan as part of a request, but it was not within an individual property owners' power to request an expansion of the development area.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley said that the last sentence suggested that the County may consider revising the process to include property owner-initiated amendments to AC44. She said that she did not see a problem with the way it was currently written because it implied that the County may explore this option. She said that she did not understand how land would be transferred into the development area unless it was a specific property owner's property.

Mr. Pruitt said that today the Board received a letter from the Wood family's LLC, commending them on the AstraZeneca project and also asking them to consider expanding the development area. He said that the Wood family had land in his district that was adjacent to the development area and were very interested in it. He said that they made it clear that they were interested. He said that this was a complicated question for the public and the community.

Mr. Pruitt said that he did not think it would be appropriate for the family to request it unilaterally and initiate the process. He said that his proposed sentence made it clear that an owner-initiated process like that could not be done. If the County was to expand the development area, it would have to be initiated by the Board at some point in the future. However, the Comprehensive Plan made it clear that the County would not be expanding the development area at this time.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley asked if, in that case, a Supervisor from that district would have to initiate it, not the property owner.

Mr. Pruitt said that the County took the idea of expanding the development area incredibly seriously and it was historically a third rail. He said that he thought this statement treated it seriously because it said that a citizen who owned land did not get to override the serious line that the County had drawn in the sand by proposing an expansion of the development area. He said that this was mainly just clarifying what their future policy on this issue could look like.

Ms. Mallek said that it was also thinking about how it operated before it was eliminated.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley said that her understanding of how it was currently written was that the County may look at revising the process to include owner-initiated amendments. She asked if Mr. Pruitt was saying that the property owner would come to their Supervisor and the Supervisor would initiate the amendment.

Mr. Andrews said that he did not think that was what Mr. Pruitt was saying.

Mr. Pruitt clarified that the main point he wanted to make was that they frequently had zoning map amendments, and this opened the possibility that in the future, ZMAs may also require compliance with the Comprehensive Plan. He said that they had had ZMAs in the past that were not in perfect alignment with the Comp Plan, but they had decided that was acceptable in some circumstances. He explained that this process would allow citizens to request that the ZMA be brought into compliance with the Comp Plan.

Mr. Pruitt said that he wanted to clarify that it was not intended to be used as a means for individual property owners to circumvent the Comprehensive Plan and pursue development that may not be in the community's best interest. He said that while it could be interpreted that way, it was not the intention. He said that they had not yet created the necessary policy, and he did not believe they would have the necessary votes to create a policy that would allow for such use. He said that this process was essentially establishing a boundary now, rather than waiting until they created the policy in six months, as people wanted to hear this statement now.

Ms. McKeel stated that she was supportive of the current language staff had written in the Comp Plan, so she would not be supportive of Mr. Pruitt's amended motion. She said that she would trust staff to work on the policy and bring it back to the Board. She said that she was not supportive of Mr. Pruitt's proposed change.

Mr. Gallaway asked for clarification from Mr. Herrick that the current language included in the Comp Plan did not commit them to doing anything. He asked if the sentence was removed, they could still pursue the process.

Mr. Herrick confirmed that was correct. The statement was merely a declaration of the Board's current intent, but it did not impose any binding obligations. He explained that the Board had the flexibility to choose whether to consider Comp Plan amendments, with or without this statement being included in the Comp Plan document.

Mr. Gallaway noted that he had never voted on a "may" sentence before. He said that he did not mind whether it was included or not because it ultimately did not dictate anything. If they wanted to reexamine this process, they could do so. If they did not, that was their prerogative, whether or not it was stated here.

Mr. Andrews said that the motion currently did not include removing the statement but rather adding a clarifying sentence.

Mr. Gallaway replied that he understood; however, clarifying it may actually make it more confusing by confounding it. He reiterated that he understood the desire to make people comfortable with the proposed change, and they had often attempted to alleviate people's fears by using redundant statements. He said that this seemed like a language-related issue that he could support if it was meant to alleviate people's fears, but he wanted to clarify that it would not dictate whether or not the Board would do something currently stated. He said that if they took out the sentence, they could still do it.

Ms. Mallek said that as Mr. Herrick said, this was a statement of intent, and that was her main issue with it.

Mr. Gallaway said that there were a lot of “may” statements in the Comp Plan, especially in the Housing Chapter, that he did not fully understand when he read through the document. However, he did not plan to make motions to address all of them, because all of those “may” statements could happen in other ways and did not have to be delineated in here. He said that he was baffled as to why they were scrutinizing this “may” statement.

Ms. McKeel agreed with Mr. Gallaway; she could think of a multitude of items that she did not fully agree with or understand in the document.

Mr. Gallaway said that they had gone through a process, and they had discussed it. In fact, he had even felt self-conscious during the last meeting because he had missed a previous work session to review the details. He said that he was going through a lot of information and felt a bit guilty about it, as he felt like everyone else had already completed the necessary iterations. He said that it was fine that it was here and in front of them now, but he wanted to say that he was concerned about the implications of not including it in the original document. He said that he did not like the idea of removing the sentence and never doing it despite initially stating that they would do it; but if they took it out and then did it, they would be criticized for doing something that was not expressly included in the Comp Plan.

Mr. Gallaway said that he was not feeling strongly about this matter, as it did not dictate the action of this Board. He said that if they decided to move forward, staff would provide a work plan, and they would prioritize it relative to other priorities. He said that if it became a priority that warranted revising their policies, it would go through the usual process, and they would address it in the same manner as any other revision. He said that he did not believe that his vote for or against this item would impact the outcome.

Ms. McKeel called the question.

Mr. Andrews clarified that the question was not to remove the language, but to add the sentence that Mr. Pruitt had read. He called the vote on the motion to include Mr. Pruitt’s proposed sentence.

Roll was called and the motion carried by the following recorded vote:

AYES: Mr. Andrews, Mr. Gallaway, Ms. Mallek, and Mr. Pruitt.

NAYS: Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley and Ms. McKeel.

Mr. Gallaway clarified that just because they had added that provision, it did not mean that they would completely avoid taking up that process, or vice versa.

Ms. Mallek said that she would request that staff consider that when they bring this item back to the Board, to explain how a request such as this would work in terms of scheduling and processing. She emphasized that the issue when this citizen-initiated process was active 10 years ago was that these amendment requests ended up dominating staff’s workload in order to process them in a timely manner, and other work suffered for it. She said that she looked forward to hearing what staff came up with as a solution.

Mr. Andrews asked if Board members had any further comments before they took a vote on approval of the AC44 update.

Mr. Gallaway stated that he appreciated the time and effort that had gone into this process. He said that as an observer in the previous iteration, he had now participated in this process for the first time. He said that he wanted to acknowledge the hard work and diligence of the staff who had worked on this plan. He said that based on comments he had heard, he believed this plan was realistic. The Board had taken a brave approach in discussing subjects that had not been previously allowed to be brought up. He thought the willingness of the Board to have discussions was important, prudent, and good planning.

Mr. Gallaway said that similar to the singular “may” statement, the plan did not commit them to anything, but it did acknowledge that they needed to do the proper thing and prepare and plan. He said that as he had mentioned earlier, he had some concerns about certain aspects of the plan and the prioritization of certain items; however, that was the nature of their work, and this was why they had six Board members with different perspectives. He said that the fact that they had a lot of different folks providing comments was a good thing.

Mr. Gallaway said that as Ms. Mallek had said, if not everyone was happy, and everyone was a little disappointed, and that was when they knew they had done their job. He said that he felt that this plan did not prevent them from pursuing his priorities and the things he would like to see them do over the next several years, and it moved them forward in considering new ideas and not just maintaining the status quo. Given the growth in their County, they needed to properly address how to deal with it. He hoped that other CACs would share their thoughts in a similar manner.

Mr. Gallaway said that he knew that his CAC may have a unique perspective due to their location, and he appreciated that. He said that he would also like to thank the community members who had submitted action items and objectives. Additionally, he would like to commend his Planning Commissioner, Nathan Moore, for his role in incorporating the seventh Big Move regarding community connection and community belonging as an element into the Comprehensive Plan. He said that Mr. Moore’s innovation and advocacy were instrumental in this matter, and he was thrilled that his idea

received strong consensus and was included in the Comp Plan.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley stated that she was deeply grateful to the staff for their outstanding work on this Comprehensive Plan. She said that this was her first time working on the Comprehensive Plan and hoped it would be her last time, as well. However, she was extremely impressed with the quality of this document. She said that it was well-organized, easy to understand, and she appreciated the use of color coding to help illustrate key points. She said that almost all of the things she wanted to include in this plan had been incorporated, so she was very happy.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley stated that she wanted to express her respect for this Board, as she had listened to their discussions and ideas and found their contributions had been invaluable. She said that she appreciated the fact that some of them had a wealth of experience, while others brought fresh perspectives. Their ideas, arguments, and discussions had been truly helpful. She said that they had been able to balance the need for flexibility with the need for a clear vision of the future. This plan had enough flexibility to allow them to adapt to changing circumstances, while still providing a solid foundation. She said that she was fully supportive of this plan and the staff's hard work in creating it.

Mr. Andrews said that he wanted to express his gratitude and appreciation for the staff's efforts. He said that his goal was not to hold a short meeting tonight, and he wanted to ensure that all voices had the opportunity to be heard on this matter. He said that while he may have had some differing opinions on some of the material, he did not believe they warranted discussion at this time. He stated that he was also pleased with the document as it stood.

Mr. Barnes thanked the Board for their participation in this Comp Plan update process. He stated that he worked with the County back in 2000 through 2003, after which he worked in the private sector. He commended the discussion on this Board, and he agreed with Mr. Gallaway that they had been brave in how they had tackled some tough issues. He said that he believed the document was strong and would be well-served in the next 20 years. He thanked the Planning Commission for providing valuable feedback. He also thanked the citizens, including those from non-governmental organizations (NGO) and advocacy groups, as well as average citizens, who had contributed to making the document stronger.

Mr. Barnes said that additionally, he was grateful to his staff, particularly Ms. Swartzendruber, who had been instrumental in this work and whose leadership and organizational skills had been key to their success. He also thanked Ben Holt, James Wilkinson, David Benish, Tori Kanellopoulos, Jodie Filardo, and Bart Svoboda for their leadership and support. He said that their efforts had been crucial to producing a high-quality document. Finally, he thanked the community for their support and encouragement. He hoped that the Board would vote in favor of the document.

Ms. Mallek **moved** that the Board of Supervisors adopt the Resolution to approve CPA 2021-02 and to adopt a Comprehensive Plan, as revised on October 15, 2025. Ms. McKeel **seconded** the motion.

Roll was called and the motion carried by the following recorded vote:

AYES: Mr. Andrews, Mr. Gallaway, Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley, Ms. Mallek, Ms. McKeel, and Mr. Pruitt.
NAYS: None.

**RESOLUTION TO AMEND AND APPROVE CPA 2021-02
AND TO ADOPT A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

WHEREAS, *Virginia Code* § 15.2-2223 requires that the Albemarle County Planning Commission (the "Planning Commission") prepare and recommend a Comprehensive Plan for the physical development of Albemarle County and make careful and comprehensive surveys and studies of the existing conditions and trends of growth, and of the probable future requirements of the County and its inhabitants; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission has prepared the Albemarle County 2044 Comprehensive Plan ("AC44") with the purpose of guiding and accomplishing a coordinated, adjusted, and harmonious development of Albemarle County that will, in accordance with the present and probable future needs and resources, best promote the health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity, and general welfare of the inhabitants of Albemarle County, including the elderly and persons with disabilities; and

WHEREAS, on September 30, 2025, the Planning Commission held a duly noticed public hearing as required by *Virginia Code* §§ 15.2-2204 and 15.2-2225 and adopted a resolution recommending amendments to and approval of AC44; and

WHEREAS, *Virginia Code* § 15.2-2226 authorizes the Albemarle County Board of Supervisors to adopt the Comprehensive Plan after having received the recommendation of the Planning Commission; and

WHEREAS, the Comprehensive Plan identified as CPA 2021-02 proposes to amend the Comprehensive Plan in its entirety by restating the County's values and vision that guide the Comprehensive Plan, and its policies, goals, objectives, and strategies for growth management, natural resources, historic, cultural, and scenic resources, economic development, the Rural Area, the

Development Areas, housing, transportation, parks and recreation, greenways, blueways, and green systems, and community facilities and services; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission's recommended amendments were fully considered by the Board of Supervisors; and

WHEREAS, on October 15, 2025, the Board of Supervisors held a duly noticed public hearing on CPA 2021-02; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors has carefully considered the discussion and recommendations of the Planning Commission, the studies, analysis, and other information provided by County staff, and the information and comments provided by the public in its robust public engagement, which included numerous in person and virtual community meetings, public lunch and learns, work sessions, and public hearings held by the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors concludes that adoption of CPA 2021-02 will guide and accomplish a coordinated, adjusted, and harmonious development of Albemarle County that will, in accordance with present and probable future needs and resources, best promote the health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity and general welfare of the inhabitants of the County, including the elderly and persons with disabilities, including the amendment attached hereto.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that, upon consideration of the foregoing, and for the purposes articulated in *Virginia Code* § 15.2-2223(A), the Albemarle County Board of Supervisors hereby approves CPA 2021-02 with the amendment attached hereto, and adopts the October 15, 2025 final draft of the Albemarle County Comprehensive Plan, AC44, with the amendment attached hereto, as the Albemarle County Comprehensive Plan, effective on and after January 1, 2026; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Board of Supervisors authorizes County staff to include the amendment attached hereto, and correct any grammatical, spelling, punctuation, formatting, or organizational mistakes in the October 15, 2025 final draft of the Albemarle County Comprehensive Plan, AC44, that do not change the substance of the text approved by the Board when the final version of the adopted Comprehensive Plan is being prepared for posting on the County's website and printing.

* * *

AMENDMENT

1. The following sentence is hereby added to the end of the "Comprehensive Plan Amendments" section on page Impl-16: "Property owner-initiated amendments to AC44 may not include additions to the Development Areas."

The final adopted Albemarle County 2044 Comprehensive Plan is on file with the Clerk's Office.

Agenda Item No. 17. From the Board: Committee Reports and Matters Not Listed on the Agenda.

Mr. Pruitt stated that he often shared his experiences and observations from visiting and engaging with the community in his own District, but he wanted to share that he had a fantastic time recently in Mr. Andrews' District at the Batesville Apple Butter Weekend. He said that it was an absolute thrill to connect with the people, learn about the history of the event, stir the large cauldron, and purchase a comical amount of apple butter. He said that he also had the opportunity to connect with the Ruritans in that community, and it was a real excellent time.

Mr. Pruitt said that on a somber note, he wanted to share that Ms. Mozell Booker, a highly influential figure in this region, tragically passed away at the end of September. He said that she was the first Black woman to serve on the Board of Supervisors in Fluvanna County, representing Fork Union for over a decade, was an incredibly accomplished woman, and he learned earlier this week that she had passed away. He knew that the community was still reeling from this loss, as she continued to be a deeply influential figure throughout Central Virginia, particularly for the Black community in Fluvanna. He expressed his condolences and said that his heart went out to that community.

Ms. McKeel thanked Mr. Pruitt for recognizing Ms. Booker, who was a feisty and wonderful individual who brought great ideas to the table. She said that she would be deeply missed.

Ms. Mallek agreed that Ms. Booker was a determined and successful woman who was truly wonderful. She said that she wanted to share with each of the Supervisors for future consideration a draft proclamation for Operation Green Light that the County could consider at a future meeting and then forward on to NACo.

Ms. Mallek stated that they had heard today from Sophie Massie about the impacts of sewage sludge on rural area drinking water, and heard this evening from Stuart Overbey that it was ultimately up to the County to maintain the authority they had for a testing and monitoring ordinance to protect their citizens. She said that each of them had also received a draft paper copy of a group of citizens in the

Samuel Miller and White Hall and Scottsville Districts, who had been working on for about a year. She said that this would be brought to the Board for consideration in the future, but was unsure of the timing in terms of the Community Development Department's workload.

Ms. Mallek said that she welcomed Mr. Herrick to provide comments about this draft legal document. She said that now that the Comprehensive Plan was adopted, she was eager to reduce the gaps in public information that existed for Albemarle County residents, since the County did not currently require testing or reporting for PFAS, although they did have the authority to do so. She noted that future buyers of land and their neighbors with wells, along with the community at large, needed this information. She said that many acres affected were located in the White Hall and Scottsville Districts, with thousands of acres in White Hall and many more in Scottsville, and some in Samuel Miller as well.

Ms. Mallek said that the White Hall District lands were on steep slopes, which drained into the South Fork Reservoir, an important water source for everyone in the urban ring via Buck Mountain Creek. She said that the land in the Scottsville District may be flatter, but the constituents of the sludge remained in the soil and were carried by rain into Totier Creek and the James River, which was the source of other people's drinking water. She said that she was pleased to see that the EPA was retaining the PFAS framework for drinking water but was discouraged to hear that it was no longer being carried forward for the sludge, at least during this administration. She said that it was ultimately up to the County to do what they could, and she would look to Mr. Herrick for any additional comments or suggestions.

Mr. Herrick said that he would be happy to address the legal requirements for adopting an ordinance, if that was something the Board wished to pursue. He said that he was not aware of whether Mr. Richardson, Ms. Wall, or Ms. Filardo might have specific concerns regarding the operational lead time required for such an ordinance.

Ms. Mallek said that she was also open to leaving this idea on the table, and when people had a chance to present information, they could revisit it at a future meeting.

Mr. Herrick said that to adopt an ordinance, there would need to be an advertisement, and the Board typically held a public hearing on that. He said that this process could be initiated if the Board was interested in pursuing it, and the required legal lead time would require approximately a month. He said that this did not address the operational lead time that staff would need, and it was contingent on whether the Board as a whole was willing to have staff pursue this matter.

Ms. Mallek said that at an upcoming meeting, they could have a more in-depth discussion about whether the Board was interested in having staff continue to work on this project. She said that she did not anticipate immediate action, but she did not want to let it languish for another nine months. She said that therefore, she thought it would be beneficial to continue bringing it up for consideration.

Mr. Pruitt said that he was excited about the possibility of moving forward with this ordinance. He said that on Saturday, he would be meeting with sludge people, and he was aware that they had to follow the ordinance. He said that from his experience, a proposed ordinance could sometimes take longer to implement than expected, even if it was a straightforward one. He said that he was recalling their previous terror hoax threat ordinance, which still required some time despite being a relatively simple proposal. He said that he would be eager to get a sense of how quickly they could move forward with this issue, now that more time was freed up, and how much time was saved by having a draft prepared by the community.

Ms. Mallek said that it was basically a copy of the Fauquier County ordinance that had been in place for 20 years, which was a good starting point.

Mr. Gallaway reported that at the beginning of the month, the TJPDC meeting, they received a report from the Blue Ridge Cigarette Tax Board, which was the annual Fiscal Year 25 report. He said that to recap, the original members of the Board were Albemarle, Augusta, Fluvanna, Greene, Madison, and Orange, and the City of Charlottesville. He said that in December 2021, the Town of Madison joined, followed by Rockingham County in July 2024, and Mount Crawford in January 2025. He said that additionally, Rappahannock County joined on October 1.

Mr. Gallaway stated that for Fiscal Year 25, the total gross revenue collected by all jurisdictions was \$3.3 million, with 8.7 million packs of cigarettes sold. He clarified that this represented an increase, but also included additional jurisdictions in the total. In Albemarle County, they were the second leading pack seller, with approximately \$2 million in revenue. He said that Augusta County outsold them, with \$2.3 million in revenue. He noted that Augusta County may not be taxing at the full rate that Albemarle was, which could contribute to their higher revenue. Their allocation was \$746,000, after the PDC covered administrative costs. He also said that the Commission was expecting other jurisdictions to consider joining the collaborative in the future.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley asked if they could raise the cigarette taxes more, or if it was a set maximum.

Mr. Gallaway replied that the rates that Albemarle and the City of Charlottesville had were currently at the maximum.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley commented that in order for them to raise the tax higher, they would have to change state law to allow it.

Mr. Andrews said that he had no reports but would like to add his support to considering a biosolids ordinance, as mentioned by Ms. Mallek and Mr. Pruitt.

Agenda Item No. 18. Adjourn.

At 8:11 p.m., the Board adjourned its meeting to November 5, 2025, 1:00 p.m. in Lane Auditorium, Albemarle County Office Building, 401 McIntire Road, Charlottesville, VA, 22902.

Chair

Approved by Board
Date: 03/04/2025
Initials: CKB