

An adjourned meeting of the Board of Supervisors of Albemarle County, Virginia was held on March 11, 2024, at 3:00 p.m. in Room 241, Albemarle County Office Building, 401 McIntire Road, Charlottesville, VA 22902. The meeting was adjourned from March 6, 2024.

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEMBERS PRESENT: Mr. Jim Andrews, Mr. Ned Gallaway, Ms. Beatrice (Bea) J.S. LaPisto-Kirtley, Ms. Ann H. Mallek, Ms. Diantha H. McKeel, and Mr. Michael Pruitt.

ABSENT: None.

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

Agenda Item No. 1. Call to Order. The meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m. by the Chair, Mr. Jim Andrews.

Mr. Andrews said Albemarle County Master Police Officer Garnett Riley and Officer James Lawrence were present at the meeting to provide their services.

Mr. Andrews turned the meeting over to Ms. Judy Le, School Board Chair, for introductions.

Ms. Judy Le, Chair of the Albemarle County School Board, said that she was joined at the table by Vice Chair Kate Acuff, and that School Board Members Chuck Pace and Graham Paige were in the audience. She said also present were Schools staff members: Superintendent Matt Haas, Rosalyn Schmitt (Chief Operating Officer), Helen Dunn (Public Affairs and Strategic Communications Officer), Jennifer Butler (Deputy Public Affairs and Strategic Communications Officer), Maya Kumazawa (Director of Budget and Planning), and Josiah Black (School Board Attorney).

Agenda Item No. 2. **Work Session:** FY 2025 Operating and Capital Budget.

- Albemarle County Public Schools. (*Judy Le, Chair, School Board*)
- Health and Welfare (*pgs. 137-202*)
- Parks, Recreation, and Culture (*pgs. 203-212*)
- Community Development (*pgs. 213-224*)
- Non-Departmental (*pgs. 225-236*)

Mr. Andy Bowman, Assistant Chief Financial Officer, said that this was the second budget work session regarding the County Executive's FY25 recommended budget. He said that the agenda consisted of two items: first, hearing from Public Schools about their operating requests and allowing the Board time to engage with them. He said that following this, a break was recommended before resuming in the General Fund, continuing from where they left off at the public safety chapter on Wednesday.

Ms. Le said that she appreciated the opportunity to present where they currently stood with their funding request. She said that following the presentation, members of their School Division staff would be available to address any questions the Board may have. She said that this was a needs-based request, focusing on maintaining services for their students, as well as continuous improvement.

Ms. Le said that as they wrote in their recent letter to the Board, they emphasized that public service involves collaborative efforts for community betterment. She said that they were very fortunate to have a partnership with a Board of Supervisors committed to enhancing the quality of their public schools, not only in terms of infrastructure but also student opportunities. She said that thriving communities nurture thriving students, and they appreciated the Board's support of this vision.

Ms. Le said that they would like to personally thank the Board for recently endorsing their appeal to amend their capital request and increase funding for their two critical projects: a new southern feeder pattern elementary school and high school center 2. She said that the partnership would help them address capacity needs and foster student success amidst growing enrollment and aging facilities.

Ms. Le said that their capital improvement plan faced challenges but also knew that they had the support of their Board of Supervisors. She said that they sincerely thanked the Board for their partnership. She said that today, they presented a needs-based funding request featuring a significant gap of \$13.3 million due to ongoing budget development and pending state revenue numbers. She said that they had plans for potential expenditure reductions should they be necessary.

Ms. Le said that they would discuss the reasons behind this funding gap but emphasized that their primary focus was to communicate that all budget decisions thus far had aimed at maintaining current service levels and fostering an upward trajectory for learners and employees. She said that their Strategic Plan guided their funding requests, as it embodied their vision, mission, values, and goals, which informed every decision they made. She said that they strived to align their budget decisions with strategic goals that prioritized student well-being, community support, and resource distribution for positive change in outcomes.

Ms. Le said that while their Strategic Plan guided their budget decisions, they also took into account the valuable feedback and guidance from their recent instructional audit. She said that one recommendation involved using a planning tool called a theory of change to identify strategies, actions, and resources that could facilitate change and bring about desired outcomes. She said that this process included reflecting on the various roles of the people in their School Division and the influence of those

roles on student success.

Ms. Le said that they were still creating their theory of change, focusing on the idea that each person played an important part in transforming the words of their Strategic Plan into actions that positively affected student learning. She said that it was their collective ownership, commitment, flexibility, and accountability that powered their Strategic Plan and made it come to life.

Ms. Le said that the budget development process was an example of their Strategic Plan in action. She said that they had five primary budget goals: to develop a budget that advances the School Division's mission; to provide a plan that supports competitive benefits and salaries and reflects market adjustments; to develop a responsive and systematic approach to operations that reflects best practices and ensures long-term financial stability; to present budget proposals that align with the School Division's Strategic Plan and the School Board's policies; and to incorporate metrics such as logic models and performance measures into their management and decision-making tools. She said that whether they were facing decisions large or small, these were the operating principles they looked to for the students.

Ms. Le said that one of the most vital components of their budget development process was community engagement. She reiterated that they each played an important role in transforming their Strategic Plan and positively impacting student learning. She said that that played out in their budget development process, which included a variety of ways for students, staff, families, and community members to participate and provide input. She said that in turn, they used that feedback to determine priorities and develop strategies in building their annual budget.

Ms. Le said that before diving into the numbers, she wanted to provide a quick update on the employees and students of ACPS (Albemarle County Public Schools). She said that their greatest resource was and would always be their dedicated staff members. She said that this year, ACPS employed 2,792 employees, half of whom were teachers. She said that administrators, including their principals, assistant principals, and central office leaders, made up just 6% of their workforce. She said that classified staff, including all non-teacher and non-administrative positions such as teaching assistants, bus drivers, custodians, and office associates, made up the remaining 43% of their workforce.

Ms. Le said that 69% of their teachers had at least a master's degree and 24% of their employees were people of color. She said that the average age of their employees was 45 years and they had served their division for an average of 8 years. She said that in Albemarle County, 64% of employees resided; 12% lived in Charlottesville City, while the remaining 24% lived in surrounding counties. She said that this school year, their 2,792 employees served more than 13,800 diverse learners in preschool through 12th grade.

Ms. Le said that 42% of these students were children of color and 1,800 students, or 13%, were eligible for special education services. She said that nearly 4,200 students, or 30.4%, were economically disadvantaged, meeting the income eligibility criteria for free or reduced-price school meals. She said that over 1,600 of their students, or 11.9%, were English learners as their first language was not English and they participated in a special program for learning English. She said that their student body was internationally diverse, with representation from 100 counties of origin and speaking 76 home languages.

Ms. Le said that regarding the funding gap, there was a significant dip in state funding in FY25. She said that although their funding request grew by a modest 5% between this year and next, state revenues decreased by over 11%. She said that the state used the local composite index (LCI) to determine each school division's ability to pay education costs with local funds. She said that LCI was calculated using three indicators of a locality's ability to pay: the true value of real property, weighted at 50%, adjusted gross income, weighted at 40%, and taxable retail sales, weighted at 10%.

Ms. Le said that when their composite index increased, the state estimated that their County could take on a greater share of education spending using local numbers, resulting in less funding provided by the state. She said that for the 2024 to 2026 biennium, their LCI had been calculated at a higher rate, leading to the state shouldering less of the burden for education costs in Albemarle County. She said that applying their new, higher LCI to state funding for the current school year would have resulted in approximately \$10 million less from the state. She said that the higher LCI calculation was a primary reason for the drop in state funding they anticipated for FY25.

Ms. Le said that provided was a snapshot of anticipated revenue from all sources, stating that they were budgeting for a 5.3% increase in local revenues and an 11.2% decrease in state funding. She said that this equated to more than \$8 million less from the state, while federal revenues remained steady at just over \$600,000. She said that in total, this amounted to a 0.7% increase in recurring revenues, or \$1.85 million.

Ms. Le said that in the current fiscal year, they had applied \$2.2 million in one-time revenues. She said that they were not currently budgeting for the use of one-time revenues in FY25; however, it was still under consideration. She said that as a result, they were facing a 5% increase in expenses and a revenue stream that was approximately \$350,000 less than their current operating budget. She noted that state revenues were based on the Governor's proposed budget from December but that they were expecting a new, improved funding forecast from the state.

Ms. Le said that their 5% expenditure increase totaled just under \$13 million and included the elimination of one-time expenditures from FY24, baseline adjustments in the form of mid-year compensation changes that were applied in January, as well as some technical and non-discretionary

changes. She said that these included a projected increase in health care costs for FY25, which they had discussed, inflationary increases in operating costs, and a transfer to BrightStars to offset the decrease in state funding for the program while also expanding the number of preschoolers they could serve.

Ms. Le said that the largest portion of expenditure increase was divided into five proposals with the allocation totaling \$10.4 million. She said that these proposals were not aimed at bringing them closer to meeting the goals of their Strategic Plan; rather, they were necessary to help them maintain current levels of service. She said that in regards to maintaining services, she wanted to briefly highlight that public schools today took on more responsibilities than ever before to address the social, emotional, mental, and physical needs of their community's children.

Ms. Le said that over time, the role of public schools had evolved to absorb an increasing number of responsibilities previously handled by families, society, and government. She said that health and physical education, school transportation, fine arts, school meals, preschool, after-school programs, family life, and the list goes on. She said that they assumed these responsibilities because they understood that they were essential for students to learn and thrive, and they were uniquely positioned and committed to providing every student with this level of support.

Ms. Le said that the proposals included in their funding request may not be ambitious but were necessary based on the learning expectations of schools and the services they were responsible for providing. She said that each year, their proposals, with five included in this request, represented the highest priorities for the division.

Ms. Le said that as a part of their budget development process, they collaborated with students, staff, families, and community members to create a list of priorities that reflected the most significant needs and desires of their school community and set them on a path toward accomplishing the goals of their Strategic Plan. She said that unfortunately, funding constraints limited what they could realistically address and left them with unmet needs.

Ms. Le said that in alignment with their commitment to produce a needs-based funding request, they were forwarding five proposals for FY25 that helped them offer a competitive and equitable compensation program, meet the growing needs of their early-age learners and students with disabilities, ensure ongoing and equitable access to their social-emotional supports, and serve the academic needs of their most at-risk learners. She said that she would now pass the conversation over to Vice Chair Acuff to discuss those proposals further.

Ms. Kate Acuff, Vice Chair of the Albemarle County School Board, said that she would be providing more details about the five proposals. She said that the 3% compensation increase they proposed at a cost of \$5.7 million emphasized the importance of sustainable wages, competitive pay, and standardized increases for all staff. She said that their priority was to ensure that their employees could adequately support themselves and their families.

Ms. Acuff said that more than three-quarters of their employees lived in either Albemarle County or Charlottesville City, where the cost of living was among the most expensive in the state. She said that sustainable wages were not enough, they must also make their wages competitive to attract, hire, and retain exceptional employees, maintaining their position in the 60th percentile of their market. She said that they had also prioritized internal equity by standardizing increases that provided all employees with equal opportunities for income growth.

Ms. Acuff said that two of their proposals, totaling just under \$500,000 each, focused on additional staffing to serve their growing English learner and special education populations. She said that over the past 10 years, as shown in the chart on the left, they had experienced significant changes. She said that the number of English learners they served had increased by 48%, and as a percentage of their total student population, English learners had grown from 8.3% to 11.9%. She said that unpredictable increases in this population were evident, as they had enrolled more than 100 additional English learners since their September 30 count.

Ms. Acuff said that they had also seen substantial growth in the number of students with disabilities served in their special education programs. She said that compared to 10 years ago, they now served 33% more students in these programs, and the percentage of students with disabilities had increased from 10.1% to 13% of their student population. She said that growth in this area did not just occur year-to-year; between September 30 and December 1, they gained an additional 125 students. She said that these populations not only increased in number but also experienced shifting needs.

Ms. Acuff said that adding five Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs) would enhance their service to the growing English learner population, providing necessary support for instruction that aligns with the division's ongoing equity work. She said that many of these students, lacking language skills, have also faced inconsistent or absent education facilities. She said that likewise, significant and unpredictable increase in special education students is marked by a rise in medically complex needs. She said that five FTEs requested to boost special education staffing would address growth, academic needs, and the increased medical complexity of special education students.

Ms. Acuff said that regarding social and emotional support, before COVID, ACPS recognized the importance of students' social and emotional health and added a few staff positions. She said that with one-time pandemic relief funding, 24 schools received a Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) coach starting in the 2021-2022 school year. She said that these professionals help equip students with

essential skills for conflict resolution, academic focus, self-awareness, emotional regulation, and stress management while also providing support during crisis situations.

Ms. Acuff said that as Federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding lapses, their FY25 funding request proposes maintaining these supports in the operating budget and to move to a differentiated staffing model to allow them to provide additional SEL coaches at schools that demonstrate need. She said that this proposal adds \$2.7 million to the FY25 request.

Ms. Acuff said that in the aftermath of COVID-19, national studies show that students continue to struggle with increased levels of stress, depressive thoughts, and anxiety. She said that Albemarle County is not immune to this issue. She said that the Virginia School Survey of Climate and Working Conditions demonstrates both the prevalence of mental health issues among students and the importance of effective and accessible mental health and social emotional supports in schools. She said that to ensure student learning, social and emotional needs must be met.

Ms. Acuff said that SEL coaches operate within a tiered continuum of mental health and social emotional support. She said that tier one focuses on early intervention and prevention services integrated into instructional materials and school activities. She said that at this level, SEL coaches work alongside Student Safety Coaches and School Counselors.

Ms. Acuff said that the tiered model offers increasingly intensive and individualized levels of support in tiers two and three, where more extensive services are provided by social workers, the Department of Social Services (DSS), Region Ten, special education teams, school psychologists, and licensed therapists. She said that last year, there were 24,000 interactions involving direct services to students or support for families accessing basic needs in the community and consulting with parents on attendance issues. She said that this year, over 20,000 interactions have already been surpassed.

Ms. Acuff said that the last area of the proposal was intervention services. She said that intervention services was another area impacted by shifts in federal grant funding as well as inadequate financial assistance from the state. She said that these shifts, a euphemism for a loss in state or federal funding for these 10 positions, resulted in their funding request including just under \$1,000,000 to maintain current levels of direct intervention support provided to students by reading specialists and reading and math interventionists.

Ms. Acuff said that their proposal also involved taking this opportunity for restructuring their staffing formulas to allocate intervention services according to school size and need. She said that the proposed model addressed the loss of six response to intervention FTEs and the loss of Title I support for four reading specialists by adding 10 Intervention FTEs to the operating budget.

Ms. Acuff said that literacy intervention services were necessary across all grade levels, as indicated on the chart by the orange dotted line representing anticipated needs based on research. She said that the blue bars showed the number of ACPS students who scored in the high-risk band based on literacy screenings conducted for grades K-3, 6, and 9. She said that the green line represented the number of students who failed their Reading SOLs in the previous year.

Ms. Acuff said that they could not afford to lose ten FTEs due to lost grant funding; local costs must be absorbed to provide instructional support for students in need. She said that she assumed that, although she had not seen the data, the intervention for math would be a similar figure. She said that these five needs-based proposals totaling \$10.4 million account for 80% of their 5% expenditure increase.

Ms. Acuff emphasized that community engagement was vital during the annual budget development process. She said that this budget season, they consulted with multiple advisory groups, conducted a community survey, hosted listening sessions with students and staff, and accepted public comments at School Board meetings. She said that one outcome was a list of priorities reflecting the needs of their school community and the aspirations of their Strategic Plan. She said that while they could not fund all of these, they would focus on the five bolded items that were the most critical to maintain their current levels of service during this challenging budget year.

Ms. Acuff said that in summary, their funding requests totaled \$272,900,085. She said that their spending plan could be viewed in multiple ways, such as the chart on the left of the slide, which organized total expenditures by department. She said that 71.7% of their expenses were categorized as school-based, allowing them to trace them directly to specific school locations. She said that this category included classroom teachers, classroom support staff, principals, counselors, office staff, security assistants, school nurses, and custodians.

Ms. Acuff said that administration made up 5.8% of this budget, which included executive services, human resources, professional development, community engagement, communications, strategic planning, fiscal services, and safety and security. She said that the chart on the right displayed the summary of their total spending by expense type. She said that almost 86% of their expenditures went toward people in the forms of benefits, salaries, and other wages.

Ms. Acuff said that another way to look at the funding gap was through the graph, which currently showed a funding gap of \$13.3 million that separated them from their ability to maintain current levels of service. She said they were proposing a 5% increase in expenditures; however, based on the Governor's proposed budget, their funding stream was shrinking. She said that the preliminary funding gaps were being presented today, and it was not their final budget. She said that it was a necessary part of the

budget development process that was not complete, and they looked forward to receiving updated funding numbers from the state mid-month, anticipating they would help them close this gap.

Ms. Acuff said that if revenues did not improve enough, they had identified multiple options for addressing the funding gap. She said that they may apply one-time revenues, make deductions, reduce the timing or the magnitude of their proposals, or use a combination of these options. She said that their approach to addressing any funding gap would involve a plan for both revenues and expenditures.

Ms. Acuff said that for revenues, they expected to see updated state budget numbers later that week. She said that the early numbers from the house amendments and the senate amendments had a range of \$1.7 million to \$6 million, and that they were hoping for an amount in the \$4 to \$5 million dollar range. She said that they might consider applying some one-time revenues as well.

Ms. Acuff said that with respect to closing the funding gap on the expenditure side, five options for finding ways to trim expenses were under consideration. She said that the exact magnitude and pattern of trimming would be a function of the revenue gap. She said that in April, when the School Board balanced the budget, they would always look for efficiencies and revisit their efforts, considering other areas in their work.

Ms. Acuff said that they may consider reducing their operating expenses by deferring replacement cycles for furniture and technology equipment in areas that did not directly impact instructions. She said that secondly, they would work with departments to adjust the budget and account for areas where they had under-spent or recalculate what they needed to spend. She said that they could re-audit organizational structures and programs for efficiency and effectiveness.

Ms. Acuff said that then it becomes significantly more difficult as they would have to reduce the number of budgeted positions. She said that this would not typically mean layoffs, but would mean they would have a hiring freeze. She said that any central office or department-based reductions would match or exceed any school-based reductions. She said that such reductions could necessitate an increase in class sizes, which they knew was unfavorable for students and was not supported by the community.

Ms. Acuff said that as a last resort, they could modify their proposals to decrease costs, such as adjusting the timing or amount of their compensation increase or reducing but not eliminating the number of FTEs proposed.

Ms. Acuff emphasized that their needs-based funding request focused on maintaining current levels of service in alignment with their Strategic Plan. She said that their expenditures were growing by a 5% rate while their revenue stream was shrinking primarily because of decreases in state funding.

Ms. Acuff said that the \$13.3 million funding gap they presented was preliminary, part of the budget development process, and they were awaiting updated revenue numbers from the state that they expected to be above their current projections. She said that they had plans and options for addressing the funding gap. She said that prior to adopting the budget on the 25th, they would engage in critical conversations. She reiterated, as Ms. Le mentioned at the beginning of the presentation, that they valued the Board's partnership and appreciated the full support of Albemarle County taxpayers.

Mr. Andrews asked if Board members had any questions.

Mr. Pruitt said that he would like to clarify the meaning of "new hires." He said that he recognized there were several FTE positions being hired but was curious about the distinction between churn, filling long gap positions, and the new FTEs as they related to the new hires.

Ms. Acuff said that there were 252 new hires.

Mr. Pruitt said that 252 new hires for that size of workforce was striking to him. He said that he was trying to make sure he was establishing the appropriate context for this figure.

Ms. Acuff said that they routinely hired about 200 to 250 teachers every year.

Mr. Pruitt asked if that was speaking mostly to the 12% non-retention rate. He asked if there was an element of churn in there.

Mr. Haas said that it was also due to growth in the general student population and in special populations.

Mr. Pruitt said that on Slide 12, he understood that the local bump was larger than their bump in assessment growths and he wanted to clarify if this difference was mainly attributed to other revenue sources they were delivering. He said that regarding the 5.3% increase in local revenues compared to their assessment growth for the year, he asked if it was because this captured additional tax revenue streams that they had increased.

Mr. Bowman said that there were a couple of factors to that. He said that he would begin to answer but invited Ms. Kumazawa to fill in. He said that in the local category, both the local transfer from the General Fund and any other local sources were included. He said that the second significant factor related to that was that last year's budget process when the Board of Supervisors approved directing some funding one-time to capital. He said that it would be available for ongoing operations in FY25. He

said that based on this strategy, it was one of the primary reasons, if not the primary reason, that the growth was larger than the 4.1% assessment. He said that this was because some of the ongoing growth was invested in capital in FY24 and was now in ongoing operations.

Ms. Kumazawa said that the transfer constituted the majority, with a 5.6% increase on its own. She said that there were other local school revenues amounting to \$2 million. She said that any changes to that would also be reflected in that same line.

Mr. Pruitt said that in Slide 18, regarding the broader discussion regarding SEL coaches, it appeared to be a significant element of the budget changes. He said that he wanted to ensure that they possessed as much data as possible. He said it sounded like they had some basic information from a program evaluation and that there were in excess of 20,000 interactions. He asked if there were any additional program evaluation data or insights available from individuals associated with the SEL coaches that provided focused on interaction frequency and areas for improvement.

Mr. Haas said that at this meeting and this level, he did not have more granular information, but a good way to sum it up was that it was numbers of interactions.

Ms. Acuff said that they had a Director of Mental Health and Wellness, and she knew that Miles Nelson was collecting data. She said that she had seen information regarding Tier 2 and Tier 3 services, including the number of services provided as well as the breakdown in terms of diagnostics and informal diagnostics. She said that Miles Nelson continued to gather this data since it was ongoing. She said that they had received feedback from counselors and principals at schools; however, there was no formal evaluation of these services yet. She said that the data included utilization statistics for Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 services, along with information on what the help looked like.

Mr. Haas said that slide 19 primarily highlighted the point being discussed. He said that they had found that whenever they increased counseling services for students, they were quickly utilized by the student body. He said that he believed, based on the data they have analyzed, that they were the number one place where students would interact with a counselor. He said that they even offered tele-counseling now and provided a private space for students to meet with their own counselor during school hours. He said that in comparison to the community resources available, this aspect constituted only a small fraction.

Mr. Haas said that when discussing options with families over time, contacting Region Ten or another agency had proven difficult to secure services. He said that, however, at their school, a student could access a counselor or an SEL coach, and they knew they would be available the following day, so they were very reliable and dependable. He said that this related to when Ms. Lee discussed the fact that they possessed a unique position to address these types of student needs and did not have to disrupt their academic schedule to access these resources.

Mr. Pruitt said that he was a little confused about the word "referral" on the graphic. He said that his immediate assumption was that it meant a referral to a CSB (Community Services Board), which seemed unlikely due to the scale of it. He asked if that was representing individual referrals to CSB services.

Ms. Acuff said that it could also refer to therapists. She said that they had a range of places that they referred. She said that sometimes they were referred to Social Services for similar support. She said that anecdotally, she was the executive director for Partners for Mental Health, which partnered with the County on the HART (Human Services Alternative Response Team) program as a co-responder. She said that the other day, a teenager was locked in the bathroom, not wanting to go to school and threatening suicide. She said that they called 911 and the Police responded first.

Ms. Acuff said that the HART team came, but then their social-emotional coach and school safety coach arrived. She said that because they had relationships with this student, the student talked to them. She said that the student had to be hospitalized in a residential facility. She said that the needs were real and predated COVID-19. She said that with the SEL coaches and school counselors, they were the biggest provider of mental health services for children in Albemarle. She said that she knew that there was more data and could see what they had.

Mr. Pruitt said that he appreciated that. He said that to he was acknowledging his own ignorance on this matter. He said that it seemed there must be standard KPIs (Key Performance Indicators) in this field, which they would include in the output section of a theory of change chart; however, he did not know what that was and he did not see that data. He said that it was challenging to understand without that information.

Mr. Haas said that they discovered that in Section A of their budget notebook, all proposals included logic models discussing their outputs. He said that throughout the year, they held meetings with proposal owners, and they underwent a review process. He said that they assigned colors based on their status: green for healthy proposals, yellow for those struggling, and red for potential discontinuation or lack of success. He said that although the SEL coaches were initially considered green in terms of access, as Ms. Acuff discussed, they scored them yellow due to weak and unclear metrics in their initial logic model. He said that to address this, they reevaluated their assignment process.

Mr. Haas said that notably, during the pandemic, they provided one coach for every school regardless of size or need due to federal funding. He said that through ongoing reviews of ambiguous

results, they established a more specific results based on factors such as baseline social-emotional learning data from elementary students via the DESSA (Devereux Student Strengths Assessment), student referrals, attendance, and other measurements. He said that this led to assigning coaches differently based on school size so that larger schools now have more coaches allocated and smaller schools will have a baseline of one.

Mr. Haas said that additionally, they considered other data such as attendance, chronic absenteeism, student discipline referrals, DESSA scores for the school, and panorama survey results for climate when assigning SEL coaches to the schools. He said that this assignment was based on specific outcomes at each school. He said that moving forward, with the upcoming budget cycle, they have tighter data and stronger measurements, and they had higher expectations for the interim outcomes. He said that they will use existing surveys like the Panorama to measure the success of the program.

Mr. Haas said that it was noted that since the funding was federal and one-time in nature, it should be considered a pilot project. He said that if the program was not effective or did not provide access to students, it would probably be discontinued. He said that initially, they anticipated consistent state funding; however, recent changes in adjusted gross income locally have affected their budget for the next two years. He said that consequently, they were prioritizing this initiative by reallocating resources and adjusting their budget accordingly.

Mr. Pruitt said that he truly appreciated the deep dive they let him have into this, as the issue likely resonated with his peers as well. He asked, regarding slide 20, if there was a change in federal policy or did a school cease to be classified as Title I that prompted the decline in Title I funding supporting those positions.

Ms. Acuff said that she believed it was a change in the school category.

Ms. Maya Kumazawa, ACPS Director of Budget and Planning, said that funding typically stayed flat year to year while their costs increased for compensation and benefits. She said the last few years had been steady due to carryover, but next year would be the first where that money was not there.

Mr. Haas said that it was showing the true cost of it.

Mr. Pruitt said that on page A23, which featured a comprehensive chart illustrating budgetary changes year by year for departmental categories, it became apparent that there had been an almost 20% increase in administration. He said that this was primarily due to staffing expenses, such as benefits and salaries. He said that his assumption that this rise was attributed to the numerous positions classified under administration, but he did not actually know if that was true.

Ms. Kumazawa said that it was a great observation, as the category included not only administrative roles but also attendance and health positions. She said that the proposal they were discussing regarding mental health had 27 FTEs, and those would fall into that category.

Mr. Pruitt asked if this was similar to the SEL positions.

Ms. Acuff said that they were not department either, they were state functions.

Mr. Pruitt said that mentioned in the mitigation plan was shifting one-time revenues. He said that he would like to understand more about what was meant by that. He asked what pools they potentially identified as sources.

Ms. Kumazawa said that one-time could be projected use of fund balance from the operating budget, so any savings they might make this year could be applied. She said that they could also look to their special revenue funds to see if there was any fund balance there that may be able to be applied.

Mr. Pruitt said that previously they discussed various methods to mitigate and offset any ongoing shortfalls following by the review by both the General Assembly's and the Board of Supervisors. He said that it would be beneficial to have an estimation of potential savings from implementing these strategies. He asked if they had those estimates available.

Mr. Haas said that they did, but they did not have them here. He said that they had been examining several scenarios: dire, moderate, and successful, considering the current state, the House version, and the Senate version. He said that, among these options, they had considered non-personnel reductions such as furniture replacement cycles for kindergarten and other classrooms to replace dilapidated furniture with more suitable options for students.

Mr. Haas said that this was an example of a one-time solution. He said that they had also looked at prolonging the replacement cycle for certain machines in their technology budget. He said that also, across-the-board percentage reductions in departmental budgets had been analyzed, allowing each department to reevaluate their budget and achieve different percentages of savings.

Mr. Haas said that the second approach involved identifying areas with low-hanging fruit. He said that however, this could be challenging as it may reveal additional expenses, such as the \$600,000 contribution from the federal government, which accounts for 1% of their budget, while also imposing numerous mandates. He said that they must also consider the costs associated with running the school and catering to students' needs. He said that they could find areas where they had been underspending

and might need to allocate additional resources, but they might also find areas for cost saving, such as not filling vacant positions.

Mr. Haas said that regarding organizational structures and program effectiveness within departments, they had been actively working on various initiatives to improve efficiency. He said that since they did not expand the central office and departments as rapidly as the school staffing over the past five years, during the pandemic and subsequent period, they allocated more resources to the schools. He said that as a result, their class sizes were currently smaller.

Mr. Haas said that instead of increasing departmental budgets, they redirected those funds towards the schools. He said that they had no plans on adding anything, their goal was to address staffing issues with their existing workforce. He said that for instance, they were exploring possibilities within one department for employees to assume roles in another, such as a community engagement specialist transitioning to the instructional department as a math coach or lead math coach. He said that this allowed them to tackle the same challenges without expanding their team.

Mr. Haas said that they were also establishing a pool of frozen positions to achieve significant savings, estimated at around \$1 million annually. He said that these positions would primarily be those that did not directly interact with students or support them at the school level. He said that their intention was not to maintain all these positions frozen throughout the entire year but rather to evaluate openings as they occurred and reprioritize from the pool of frozen positions to ensure they were efficiently allocating resources without hindering their ability to support schools.

Mr. Haas said that reducing the number of budgeted positions based on new revenue was another option they could consider, and they could take another look at those proposals. He said that the big things to change related to compensation and class size, because those constituted a significant portion of their budget.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley said that she appreciated discussing the 0.5 class size reduction ratio. She asked what the current ratio was in the schools.

Mr. Haas said that for elementary, it was 18 to 1, middle was 20 to 1, and high school was 20.4 to 1.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley said that it was impressive to have such low ratios.

Mr. Haas said that it was a very high priority for the community.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley said that she appreciated that they were addressing English learners and students with disabilities, which was a very positive development.

Ms. Acuff said that those populations totaled 25% of the entire student population.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley said that she also appreciated that they were supporting the school SELs with coaches rather than going to Region Ten or other outside agencies. She said that the most impact to children would be what they could receive at the school site, where they felt safe and had trust.

Ms. Acuff said that they were doing a lot of prevention work by embedding supportive services into the school.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley said that what was achieved when assisting children in leading healthy, happy lives and learning translated to better outcomes for adults in the long run. She said that she preferred these efforts taking place within school premises rather than elsewhere. She said that regarding the FTE staff on page 18, she would like to confirm that they were indeed included under administration.

Ms. Acuff said yes.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley said that when reviewing page 8, there were 11 new hires for administrators. She asked if they were central office administrators or if those were FTEs for emotional support coaches.

Mr. Haas said that those new hires for administration were in the current year. He said that they had not hired the other positions yet because they were technically in a grant fund.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley said that she was referring to the 11 new hires.

Mr. Haas said that those were not newly created positions but were newly hired personnel.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley said that she appreciated the clarity that they were not new positions, but were existing positions that had recently been filled. She asked what the ratio for administrators in schools was.

Mr. Haas said that one notable resource was the staffing standards found in the back of the notebook, specifically G5. He said that he was proud to say that their comprehensive staffing standards now included ratios for every position within the school system, including administrative positions, teaching positions, and specialty areas like physical education. He said that as a result, to accurately answer such a question, he would need to refer to these standards for verification.

Ms. Le said that she could send that information to the Board members.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley said that she was primarily interested in the administrative aspect. She said that she believed that certain schools had principals, a position necessary for all institutions; however, they also had assistant principals despite having very low enrollment numbers.

Mr. Haas said that they reviewed their staffing standards annually, and during the review two years ago, feedback indicated that many school needs were not being met. He said that this included the expanding responsibilities of schools, and the SOL testing and other required assessments. He said that initially, a portion of an FTE was assigned for testing purposes; however, this often led to school counselors or principals taking on additional tasks. He said that smaller schools requested having an assistant principal to alleviate these issues.

Mr. Haas said that their findings showed that assigning a full-time assistant principal was highly effective. He said that for instance, schools like Red Hill and Scottsville have implemented this change with positive results. He said that this role has reduced the administrative burden on teachers and increased supervision of instruction through walk-through observations. He said that school safety has also improved. He said that although this change had led to administrative growth, they had focused the growth on the schools rather than adding administrators to central staff.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley asked if there had been any central staff increase.

Mr. Haas said that different numbers had been kicked around for the number of central staff over the past five years. He said that this report from a couple of months ago provided data from 2019. He said that in that year, there were 2,396 total staff members, with 2,013, or 84% being school-based. He said that now, in 2024, the number of school-based staff had increased to 2,289, accounting for 85.1% of the total staff, so it had a growth of 1.1%.

Mr. Haas said that the central office staff also saw an increase, from 112 in 2019 to 126 currently; however, it still constituted only 4.7% of the total staff. He said that it had grown just like the other positions in the County. He said that in contrast, operational staff had slightly decreased due to rightsizing in the Transportation Department. He said that although the central office staff's numbers had grown, its percentage of the total school system employees remained the same.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley asked if the proposed FTEs were strictly school-based.

Mr. Haas said that there were no proposed additions to the central office at this time.

Ms. McKeel said that she was pleased to observe an increase from 13% to 24% and 36% of individuals from underrepresented ethnic backgrounds within the employee demographics. She said that this significant progress demonstrated a positive shift in diversification throughout their system.

Mr. Haas said that he appreciated the acknowledgment because the previous year had seen a significant achievement with a 2% increase. He said that for many decades prior, the percentage had remained around 11%. He said that he commended the Human Resources (HR) Department for their diligent efforts and the principals for actively supporting paraprofessionals in obtaining certifications through the newly adopted teacher programs by the state.

Mr. Haas said that this initiative had not only increased the diversification of their staff but also welcomed local community members, who were former students and school employees with college degrees, to become teachers. He said that as a result, he said that they had seen many individuals enter the teaching field. He said that their focus was on fully staffing the schools. He said that at the beginning of this year, the vacancy rate stood at less than 2%, significantly lower than the pre-pandemic rate. He said that there were no vacancies in special education this year.

Ms. McKeel said that it was very impressive. She said that historically, they would have never heard that. She said that on a similar note, she was wondering what the situation was with substitute teachers and how they were handling that.

Mr. Haas said that he appreciated the question because there was not as much information in the provided documents about substitutes. He said that last year, they talked about a lot of things they were trying to do to settle that down. He said that one significant change was enhancing pay for substitutes.. He said that another initiative started a few years ago involved school-based substitutes who were assigned to schools based on their size. He said that they have a staffing standard for that.

Mr. Haas said that moving forward, Dr. Kaiser and the HR Department analyzed data at the schools, focusing on fill rates. He said that they assigned additional permanent subs to schools with lower fill rates, aiming for a more balanced distribution. He said that although issues surrounding substitutes persisted, their community had been proactive in supporting schools. He said that many parents and community members volunteered, either on a daily basis or once a week.

Mr. Haas said that having permanent subs had helped reduce the stress level of teaching staff by providing consistent presence and familiarity within the school environment. He said that consequently, teachers could rely on these substitutes, which had contributed to a decrease in concerns regarding substitute availability. He said that he was sure that the Board of Supervisors received emails about it like

other situations. He said that on the schools' end, the situation had calmed down, and they had not heard anything.

Ms. McKeel said that she could recall when principals would come in during the mornings and make 20 phone calls but could not find anybody, so this was wonderful news.

Mr. Haas said that the last thing he would say about that was that they had centralized the substitute budget. He said that when they reviewed it, they discovered that schools were annually planning their substitute budget and exceeding it, spending from other categories. He said that this was possible due to the zero-base system. He said that to address this issue, they implemented a centralized budget initiative last year. He said that as a result, funds are now allocated centrally through the central office, rather than coming from school funds.

Ms. McKeel said that regarding the 181 administrators and 6%, there was focus on this topic because it was the number one question raised by community members. She said that they constantly heard that they were bloated and needed to address the administrative staff. She asked for clarification as to who was included in the administration. She said that it had been alluded to earlier that it did not always include what was expected.

Mr. Haas said that he believed it was appropriate for Ms. Kumazawa to address this particular issue since she had devoted significant time to studying it. He said that he understood the community's concerns regarding central office and departmental staff because when they think about schools, they did not think about staff doing that work. He said that acknowledging the importance of their behind-the-scenes staff members was important. He said that they must remain accountable to the community for positions outside the school.

Ms. McKeel said that they had just presented their budget, and she had already received two comments from the community.

Ms. Acuff said that administration constituted 5.8% of the total budget. She said that this includes Executive Services, Human Resources, Professional Development, Community Engagement, Communications, Strategic Planning, Fiscal Services, and Safety and Security.

Ms. McKeel asked what positions would be a part of Safety and Security.

Ms. Acuff said that they had school safety coaches.

Ms. McKeel asked if school nurses were included in that category.

Ms. Acuff said that school nurses were now in the school budget.

Ms. Kumazawa said that the 181 positions included principals, assistant principals, central office, directors, and assistant directors. She said that there were 63 principals and assistant principals in total, which were included in the 181.

Ms. McKeel said that they had discussed the state, and not knowing where they were, and it was understandable that there may be uncertainties regarding specific funding. She asked if there were any dramatic new mandates that they were facing that they were unsure about. She said that she did not hear any mandates mentioned and was curious because sometimes there were a lot of them.

Mr. Haas said that in terms of funding, most mandates from the state were unfunded. He said that previously, when discussing this with the Board, they had not raised anything as of major concern.

Ms. Acuff said that one of the additional costs was approximately \$300,000 for pre-K. She said they ceased funding it in the manner they had previously but also expanded the positions and slots for them. She said that this change resulted in a budget impact of around \$300,000.

Ms. McKeel said that she appreciated Mr. Pruitt discussing the SELs because she believed they were all attempting to understand that topic. She said that her understanding was that one-time funding from the pandemic, as it were, from the Feds, was used in a pilot format to determine its effectiveness in improving the social and emotional well-being of children. She said that this approach made sense since initially, one-time funding could be concerning; however, this usage demonstrated a more strategic allocation. She said that she really appreciated that clarification.

Ms. McKeel said that that CSBs referred to Community Service Boards, which were state-wide entities, as many people may be unaware of their scope. She said that theirs was Region Ten, which had been pivotal in addressing various issues. She said that when she was on the Discipline Committee, they frequently referred numerous families to Region Ten. She said that although they provided valuable assistance, the waiting periods could be lengthy.

Ms. McKeel said that she would like to highlight a recent JLARC (Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission) study that shed light on the functioning of CSBs. She said that the study was conducted last year and proved to be quite informative. She said that in the interest of addressing legislative priorities, she proposed they consider incorporating JLARC recommendations in their upcoming legislative packets for greater community benefit. She said that this would particularly help her with the regional jail, as well as Schools. She said that adding this item to their list seemed appropriate.

Ms. McKeel said that she appreciated the presentation of a needs-based budget, highlighting their requirements and strategies. She asked Mr. Bowman to provide an overview of the funding distribution for the public. She said that she would like to know if he could explain the allocation details when discussing a total amount of \$12,977,000.

Mr. Bowman said that there was a formula established by the Board's financial management policies that distributed funding to School operations, County Government operations, and the shared debt and CIP. He explained that every new net dollar of shared revenues, primarily tax revenue, allocated the first 10% to capital and debt. He said that the remaining 60-40 split, which equated to 54% for School operations and 36% for County Government operations.

Ms. McKeel asked how exactly the \$12 million would be funded.

Mr. Bowman said that the initial school gap, which was currently at \$13.3 million, would likely change in the future. He said that if they were to fund this entirely through increases from the real estate tax rate following a split, it would require an additional 8.6 cents on the tax rate. He said that another option would be dedicating pennies entirely to School operations, which the Board could choose to do differently from the current formula. He said this would necessitate an additional 4.6 dedicated pennies. He said that the figures provided here offered the Board a general perspective on the potential changes and requirements involved.

Mr. Gallaway said that he was certain that they had engaged in direct advocacy to the General Assembly regarding the funding gap and the loss. He asked them to provide a summary of their actions, their outcomes, and the feedback received from those efforts.

Ms. Helen Dunn, Albemarle County Public Schools Public Affairs and Strategic Communications Officer, said that in the proposed budget, one significant addition was Amy Laufer's inclusion of a hold harmless as a member request. She said that this addition would amount to approximately \$14 million over the biennium, which would be amazing. She said that they were currently awaiting news on whether it would be signed. She noted that the forecast suggested that some additional work must be completed before the signing process.

Ms. Dunn said that fingers crossed, that was one of the things that they pushed hardest for, that she added "hold harmless" directly for Albemarle County, based on the LCI. She said that it can be said that this addition was made primarily for their benefit. She said that they had actively engaged in advocacy efforts related to the proposed budgets. She said that at present, they would make calls and continue advocating for the current budget presented to Governor Youngkin, hoping for his signature. She said that this was another objective they would work towards as part of their broader goals.

Mr. Gallaway asked if the decisions made on the previous Thursday are yet to be seen in terms of their impact on the Governor.

Ms. Dunn said yes.

Ms. Acuff said that during their meeting with the legislators, they requested the inclusion of the hold harmless provision; however, they also sought a minimum requirement to be notified earlier in the budgetary process when the LCI was released. She said that this was necessary because they only received notice of it after the budget development had already begun. She said that unfortunately, they could not gain access without some legislative action.

Ms. Dunn said that addressing the longer-term concern would be an ongoing process they would need to tackle in the coming years. She said that there were numerous differing approaches suggested by their legislators. She said that each individual lawmaker had a unique idea about what would be most effective, such as considering a three-year cycle instead of the current biennial one, or using an entirely different calculation or formula for determining funding. She said that in the past, there have been legislators who refused to touch the LCI. She said that as they may recall, this has occurred on multiple occasions. She said that JLARC suggested that it was a good calculation, but that there was a need to address the significant fluctuations.

Ms. Acuff said that there were major fluctuations, and it also disregarded the specific needs of the jurisdiction. She said that no adjustments were made based on the needs of the disabled or their English-learning populations.

Mr. Gallaway said that regarding slide 27, either during a budget presentation or a School Board work session, it was mentioned that department budgets typically involve taking the previous year's budget as a base and then constructing the budget for the following year. He said that in this case, if he began with \$10 million, he immediately used this amount as the foundation for creating his department budget. He asked if number two would just be an annual exercise of creating the department budgets.

Mr. Haas said that it was a myth that they took last year's budget, removed it from the binder, and placed it on a new shelf for the current year and start from there. He said that instead, they started from scratch each time, with previous years' spending serving as a reference for understanding departmental needs. He said that this information underwent a thorough review process to adjust the budget accordingly, even though it was baseline. He said that adjustments were made based on what happened the year before.

Mr. Haas said that the Virginia Department of Education encumbered almost all of their spending, leaving only a slim margin of local dollars. He said that they were diligent in ensuring that these limited funds were allocated appropriately to departments.

Mr. Gallaway said that he had heard that it was the expenditures that it was built upon from the previous year. He said that a 10-year trend line for Public Schools and baseline department budgets was provided, indicating a steady increase of 3% to 7% annually. He asked if they would track what the budgets might have been if this exercise was happening.

Mr. Gallaway said that he believed that they had discussed this when he was on the School Board, and they should acknowledge where efficiencies have been found and realized. He said that if department budgets increased by 3% to 7% annually and had that information, they would have grown at a higher rate, such as 4% to 8%.

Mr. Haas said that if they had matched inflation, they would have grown much more than that.

Mr. Gallaway asked whether they tracked the actual realized savings to help tell that story.

Mr. Haas said not to his knowledge.

Mr. Gallaway asked what one student being added to a class to increase the class size would cost or save them.

Mr. Haas said that according to Ms. Kumazawa, \$3.3 million was allocated.

Mr. Gallaway asked if that was a total figure and not based on adding a different number to different school levels.

Mr. Haas said that they typically tried to keep class sizes small in K through 4 if possible, but one across the board would be \$3.3 million.

Ms. Mallek said that she was grateful for the presentation, as it had addressed many of the questions others had raised. She said that several of her own questions had already been answered. She said that she would like to ask a general question based on the information she had heard during the discussion, as well as from various sources such as phone calls and grocery stores. She asked whether there were any budget takeaways regarding improving children's reading skills. She said that she assumed that it was instructional in nature but requested more information.

Mr. Haas said that the process of adopting a new reading curriculum for elementary schools, based on the Virginia Literacy Act, was initiated this year. He said they considered various elements and relied heavily on teachers' input to select HMH McGraw-Hill as the curriculum for elementary schools. He said that the funding for this curriculum was encumbered within the current departmental budget for instruction but would not appear as a separate initiative in the budget.

Mr. Haas said that also in the current year's budget, they adjusted staffing standards to accommodate reading specialists at all secondary schools and strengthened reading specialists and interventionists at the elementary level. He said that this was achieved by reallocating resources based on demographics, ensuring transparency in budget allocation. He said that the concern regarding the use of differentiated staffing for various subjects had been addressed, making it clear that interventions were specifically targeted towards reading and math.

He said that the support section now provided a clear distinction between reading specialists at elementary schools, which was not evident before. He said that this change highlighted the combined efforts of increasing reading specialists and adopting the new curriculum, both supported by professional development funding encumbered within their current budget.

Ms. Mallek said that during the upcoming budget year, there may be increased funding for personnel focused on assisting individual children within the buildings, specifically specialists. She said that regarding professional development, it was essential continually, not only limited to homeroom teachers but also involving professionals who were capable of providing such support.

Mr. Haas said that was correct. He said that they had been examining the classroom level across various schools, focusing on how they utilized the reading specialist. He said that in some instances, such as Albemarle High School, which had a larger student population and staff, there were four reading specialists present. He said that these specialists did not typically meet with individual students due to the school's size. He said that instead, they conducted trainings for staff members and collaborated with teachers to enhance their interactions with pupils. He said that for students categorized as tier three, the reading specialists tended to work more directly with them.

Mr. Haas said that conversely, in smaller elementary schools like Murray Elementary, a single reading specialist could effectively work one-on-one with children. He said that their observations indicated that the most successful strategies involved the reading specialist integrating into the classroom setting while the teacher conducted lessons, functioning as an integral part of the instructional team. He said that this approach had yielded the most promising outcomes.

Ms. Mallek said that hopefully, success at lower levels leads to better outcomes in high school and beyond. She noted that many of them carried the scars from their own experiences in elementary school, particularly in language classrooms where they struggled to understand the content.

Ms. Mallek said that these memories had never faded, and they provided a perspective on the challenges faced by students. She said that considering this context, she asked whether there was a correlation between proficiency in reading and the social-emotional stress that had been mentioned. She said that if students feel pressured to perform at the same level as their classmates, their anxiety levels may increase. She expressed interest in exploring this relationship further.

Ms. Mallek said that she appreciated the efforts being made for school subs, as she too was a school sub for ten years. She said that knowing the children because they were there all the time was such a great benefit for the substitute teacher and for the children and cut that anxiety a little bit.

Ms. Mallek said that as for the state budget, they could only wait and see when the Governor would address this matter.

Ms. Mallek said that she remembered, and she understood the challenge regarding class size due to the 2010 recession, which led to adjusting the number of students in certain classes, such as basic English at high schools, which reached around 40 students per class. She said that she understood that the situation may seem complex and not easily understood.

Ms. Mallek said that she appreciated the efforts made to clarify the budgeting process and the increased accountability in raising the standards.

Ms. Mallek said that if the budget was passed, there would be a 3% increase from the state, which they must match in order to receive it. She said that she had heard from David Blount or someone else involved that if there is a lower amount locally, the state will prorate the funds instead of zeroing them out, which was an improvement compared to previous years. She said that this was not an option they had before, so she expressed her thanks for bringing this to their attention. She said she would ask Mr. Richardson to remind her of what he was proposing for local funding as well.

Mr. Andrews said that most of his questions had been answered, but he would briefly touch on a couple of points that remained unclear. He said that referring to slide 8, the staffing, and the combination of staffing needs, new positions for service equivalency as well as the student-teacher ratio. He said that during the entire discussion, he had combined the information. He said that while analyzing the numbers, there were 250 new hires with an 88% retention rate. He said that 88% of the 1,407 teachers, 10% would be 140, but they still had 90 new hires. He said that these were not teachers that would change the student-teacher ratio, and he was unsure where these numbers fit in with the teachers.

Ms. Kumazawa said that those were new individuals in the same roles; however, this did not refer to new positions.

Mr. Andrews said that the 88% retention rate suggested a smaller number, which was the point he was confused about.

Mr. Haas said that that was where growth was factored in. He said that this year, they were looking at adjusting their growth projections since last year they did not meet their growth projection, so there would be a reduction overall with the teachers they had in the County. He said that last year when they budgeted, they budgeted for growth. He said that additionally, they budgeted for growth in special areas such as special education services, EL services, and other unique instructional positions. He said that therefore, this encompassed more than just addressing turnover; it also included growth.

Mr. Andrews asked if this applied to classified staff as well. He said that approximately 20% of those employees were not retained, but the number of hires was 375, so it would be 240. He said that it was a big gap there.

Mr. Haas said that it was essential to have the numbers in front of them before discussing further. He said that he was the second or third Board member to ask about this, so he would like to provide specific information for them.

Mr. Andrews said that he was just playing with the numbers on it. He asked how the additional English-learning, special education, socio-emotional support, and intervention specialist positions fit into this categorization.

Mr. Haas said that they did not fit in here for this year. He said that those positions would be in the teacher category.

Mr. Andrews said that he was looking at the 24,000 school-based referrals, with 20,000 interactions so far this year.

Ms. Acuff clarified that those were interactions within the building and were not referrals out. She said that those were tier two or tier three level. She said she thought that two years before, they had 500-600 referred out in tier three services.

Mr. Andrews said that the given number was significant and raised concerns. He said that he was

attempting to understand it by considering the context of 24 schools with approximately 20,000 interactions during this year, spanning over 100 school days. He said that they had around 10 interactions per day. He said that he wanted to ensure that he had accurately understood this information.

Ms. McKeel said that absenteeism, or truancy as they used to call it, in schools post-pandemic had been a challenge. She asked if Mr. Haas could discuss how the school system was addressing this issue.

Mr. Haas said that he would summarize the situation currently by stating that they had experienced significant success in addressing this issue. He said that they now used a newer term for this generation, and they call it "chronic absenteeism", referring to a student missing 10% of the school year, which equated to approximately 17 absences for a student to be considered chronically absent. He said that the state tracked this metric as one of the indicators used for their accreditation.

Mr. Haas said that beyond accreditation, when children attended school, numerous positive outcomes came from that. He said that there was a lot of research that showed regular attendance not only benefited an individual student, but also their peers in the class.

Mr. Haas said that they had implemented various strategies this year and last year, but most of them were functions of the SEL coaches. He said that they did a lot of that work. He said that they built relationships because the students who tended to miss school were also students that had trauma or had unresolved social-emotional issues. He said that another way to put it was that these students were not coping with not being at their house.

Mr. Haas said that the SEL coaches formed relationships. He said that the school counselors were the bedrock of the work that went on, and this had not changed their role. He said that at the elementary school level, there was a lot of overlap in the roles of counselors and SEL coaches, and at high school, they saw more of an academic focus of counselors, but they still worked a lot with these kids.

Mr. Haas said that their proactive approach to promote regular attendance demonstrated the importance of a teacher or another adult asking a student to come to school and letting them know that they were missed when they were not there. He said that they had been following a practice involving texting rather than phone calls or emails, using messaging services that translated into the preferred language of families. He said that the primary return on investment was one-on-one interactions with families, building relationships, and principles of getting out and visiting homes.

Mr. Haas said that this year, their Office of Community Engagement had implemented a new mandate for all schools to host four family nights, three of which were academic nights, and one was of their choice, so it could be a cultural celebration or an arts celebration. He said that the main areas of concern for school performance were reading, math, and science, so family nights had been organized to help parents understand the competencies students were learning and the significance of quizzes or assessments that came home. He said that several events introduced families to new reading curricula.

Mr. Haas noted that positive feedback had been received, with community nights attracting large numbers of families engaging with staff in activities like read alouds. He said that the shift from a punitive approach to a positive relationship with families had significantly improved school performance. He said that comparing the numbers from last year to this year showed a positive trend, and their schools were doing an excellent job implementing these practices.

Mr. Andrews asked if there were any further questions from Board members.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley said that regarding the 20,000 interactions over 181 school days, she would like to know if that figure included referrals to the principal, especially at the elementary school level.

Mr. Haas said that he did not think that it included referrals to the principal. He said that they would track that information down to confirm.

Mr. Gallaway said that in the spirit of the shared goals between both the School Division and Local Government, the Schools presented a needs-based budget, while the County Executive presented a balanced budget. He noted that certain initiatives from previous years or decisions made by the County Executive would not be funded as a result. He said that a 1% COLA (cost of living adjustment) increase amounted to approximately \$916,000. He said that the total value of unfunded initiatives would be around \$5 million to \$6 million.

Mr. Gallaway said that before discussing staff positions, such as Fire and Police, he suggested acknowledging that achieving a budget this year would require discipline from all parties involved. He said that even if the state fully funded these initiatives, there would still be a gap of about \$5 million or \$6 million worth of initiative. He said that this figure was similar to the amount the County had identified as a gap for their initiatives prior to a pay increase.

Mr. Gallaway said that being mindful of the fact that while overall property values in the County had increased by 4%, in many neighborhoods and districts, they had risen by more than 13% to 15%. He said that as a result, revenues continued to climb at a rate that was not normalized.

Ms. McKeel said that the Supervisors could provide the School Board and Superintendent with a link to the information Mr. Richardson had presented regarding the County's unfunded initiatives.

Ms. Mallek said that to add to Mr. Gallaway's remarks, in addition to the unfunded positions, there would be things that were postponed that some of them may want to accelerate to meet community needs that had been around for a long time. She said that this would lead to discussion moving forward, and lots of pain.

Recess. The Board recessed its meeting at 4:44 p.m. and reconvened at 4:53 p.m.

Agenda Item No. 2. **Work Session:** FY 2025 Operating and Capital Budget, *continued*.

Mr. Andy Bowman, Assistant Chief Financial Officer, said that today's work session would focus on General Fund expenditures, continuing from where they left off on Wednesday. He mentioned that with about an hour scheduled, they would cover as much as possible without rushing discussion and that if they could not address all items, they would be carried over to Wednesday's work session.

Mr. Bowman said that he had some proposed modifications to their budget calendar based on the Board's feedback from last week, aiming to support the Board in their timeline and decision-making process. He said that the next meeting would take place on Wednesday, March 13, in the same room. He said they would discuss the Sheriff's funding request, Fire Rescue staff service proposals not included in the budget and address any other questions the Board may have. He said that following that, they would continue into CIP discussions or any other General Fund matters if needed. He stated that any to-be-determined or continued items could be addressed on Monday, March 25.

Mr. Bowman said they had studied the calendar and the advertising dates, and that they could push back the advertising date for the proposed tax rates and budget from March 25 to March 27, and staff will recommend that to allow more time for Board deliberation. He said that this adjustment did not change the content or order of discussions over the next few days. He emphasized that their focus remained on supporting the Board and addressing their priorities while adhering to the timeline for tax rates.

Mr. Bowman said that before they broke for the day, he would ask the Board for direction on areas they would like them to explore in more detail, like the Sheriff and Fire Rescue. He reminded them that they would present information at a summary level, with more detailed information than was provided in the County Executive's presentation and less than the budget document.

Mr. Bowman said that they would pause many times after each chapter to allow for any items the Board wished to discuss, such as changes in the budget or more general information requests. He said that as previously mentioned by the Board, any unaddressed questions and answers would be posted on the website, with the initial batches already available and provided in the agenda. He said that with this in mind, he would now pass the presentation to Deputy Chief of Budget Ryan Davidson, who would continue to outline the General Fund expenditures.

Mr. Ryan Davidson, Deputy Chief of Budget, said that they would be continuing discussion on General Fund expenditures, specifically focusing on the health and welfare section found on page 137 of the FY25 recommended budget document, which was approximately \$30.1 million for the upcoming fiscal year. He reminded them that the chart on the left would show the percentage of the total General Fund budget for each larger functional area, representing 7% in this case, and the chart on the right demonstrating what makes up that percentage and how much of the total functional area each component constitutes.

Mr. Davidson explained that for health and human services, this portion of the budget accounted for about 85%, with some contributions to their regional and nonprofit community partners. He said that in the area of Social Services, there was an increase in the Local Government transfer to the CSA (Children Services Act) of approximately \$400,000 due to recent trends of service levels and increased complexity of cases in the CSA. He said that one FTE (full-time equivalent) had been added to the budget for a CSA coordinator position in FY25, which would be offset by about 33% state revenue and future reductions to the local transfer for improved compliance with CSA requirements. He said that this ensured better cost alignment and efficient spending.

Mr. Davidson said that emergency assistance funding was another area where funding was brought in-house in FY24 to replace the United Way Pathways Program, providing similar assistance for urgent, one-time financial needs. He said that the FY25 budget maintained this program at level funding compared to the current year.

Mr. Davidson said that they also addressed the Office of Broadband Affordability and Accessibility in the recommended budget. He said that in FY25, they would achieve universal broadband, with no additional funding but rather focusing on completing existing initiatives. He said that out of the approximately 38,000 total passings required to fully service Albemarle, only around 6,100 remained, which were expected to be completed in FY25.

Mr. Davidson said that the Office of Equity and Inclusion was not about seeking new funding but rather utilizing existing resources more effectively and efficiently. He said that a part-time temporary position, the Inclusion and Health Equity Program Manager, had been converted to a regular part-time position in a cost-neutral manner during FY25, aligning with previously identified goals.

Mr. Davidson said that regarding the Strategic Plan goals and objectives of housing, the Housing Program Coordinator, previously funded on a two-year basis from the Housing Fund, had been moved into the General Fund, providing a more permanent funding stream for this position and its related programming. He said that additionally, \$2 million of otherwise unobligated FY24 funds was recommended to be transferred to the Housing Fund at the end of FY24 to support one-time housing initiatives that aligned with the County's strategic and housing goals. He said that any remaining balances in the Housing Fund at the end of the fiscal year would be re-appropriated into FY25 for expected programming, with a projected reserve of approximately \$4.7 million going from FY24 into FY25.

Mr. Davidson said that the County partnered with various regional and non-profit community agencies to provide health and human service programming throughout their community. He said that the FY25 budget contained approximately \$4.5 million in contributions to these nonprofit partners, which would continue the programming. He said that further details on these programs would be discussed in the upcoming slides.

Mr. Bowman said that he would discuss the ABRT (Agency Budget Review Team) process, which was an acronym for the Agency Budget Review Team. He said that this team consisted of volunteer community members and staff who evaluated human services nonprofit agency requests. He said that they used a set of criteria to assess programs by these agencies and determine evaluations ranging from exemplary to full range.

Mr. Bowman said that in June 2023, County staff, led by Chief Human Services Officer Kaki Dimock, presented an Albemarle Human Services Needs Assessment. He said that this report analyzed data on community needs and emerging areas of concern, identifying four priority areas: family homelessness, adolescent mental health, community safety, and navigation for seniors.

Mr. Bowman said that, in light of that report, the Board approved some process changes in July 2023. He said that the new approach prioritized funding for human services agencies that closely aligned with the four identified emerging needs areas. He said that these agencies may also be subject to performance agreements and contracts to increase accountability. He said that additionally, the Board removed the precedent of capping new programs at 50% of the request, allowing for greater funding allocation than in recent history.

Mr. Bowman said that this was not about eliminating the ABRT program, but rather to augment it. He said that the focus would be on first investing funds into the areas that would move forward the Board's strategic goal on human services based on which areas would make the biggest difference, and then supporting remaining existing ABRT agencies based on their program evaluations.

Mr. Bowman said that in the next slide, the focus was on recommended funding for this year for the human services priority area and ABRT. He said that a sum of \$100,000 was allocated for a community safety contingency to tackle issues like gun violence in the community in partnership with UVA and the City of Charlottesville. He mentioned that discussions regarding this funding were ongoing since the City's budget was released last week. He said that staff planned to present a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors on how the \$100,000 would be applied. He said that several applications had been received for the use of this funding. He said that knowing it was an underdeveloped area, staff would identify the funding and there would be a future step for allocating it.

Mr. Bowman said that applications for the other three areas were received but were not included in this presentation as they appeared on the unfunded list mentioned by Mr. Gallaway earlier. He said that the remaining ABRT, because the funding was intended to go there secondarily, the exemplary and solid-rated programs received level funding.

Mr. Bowman said that fair-rated agencies also received level funding but with a condition before funds were released to them each quarter: they must submit quarterly reports to ensure any issues in their applications were on track. He noted that there was a typo in the budget book where the agencies for Central Virginia Community Justice, On Our Own, and Sexual Assault Resource Agency (SARA) were not identified. He said that these programs were still level-funded, and they would submit quarterly reports to maintain responsiveness to findings in the review before funding was released.

Mr. Bowman said that no new programs were recommended in ABRT, and the focus remained on allocating funds to human services priority areas first. He said that with this, he concluded staff comments on the health and welfare chapter and yielded to the Chair for any questions or comments.

Mr. Pruitt said that initially, he would like to seek further clarification on the community safety element of the \$100,000 program mentioned. He asked whether that was because they received a lot of specific applications or if they already had a rough decision about how to use that. He asked if the opportunity arose either after deciding to allocate those funds and had related proposals coming in during the solicitation process, or was it mandated by a legal requirement. He said that essentially, his question pertained to the sequencing: did they already have the opportunity developed and merely needed to advertise it, or did the need arise suddenly?

Mr. Bowman said that it was not related to a legal requirement. He said that the discussions with UVA and the City had been ongoing for an extended period. He noted that the purpose of these talks was primarily to demonstrate their commitment to their partners, indicating their intention to secure funding in order to maximize its impact. He asked if Ms. Dimock would like to add any further points to this

summary.

Ms. Kaki Dimock, Chief Human Services Officer, said that the timing of the Community Safety Working Group was not as ideal as they had anticipated when advertising for the Community Safety Priority Area. She said that their intention was to receive immediate implementation recommendations from the group, which would inform their assessment of the applications. She said that since this work is ongoing, the contingency enables them to revisit it and utilize the recommendations to evaluate the submitted applications or request additional applications. She said that the objective was to support community safety initiatives, and that such opportunities with the City and UVA to fund substantial projects were rare. She said that these funds could be used to expand capacity or develop new interventions, and they chose to hold onto the money until that work was done so that they could maximize the impact.

Mr. Pruitt said asked if it was fair to assume that this set aside did not specifically imply a total of \$100,000 dedicated to a particular partnership, so it could still involve various partners in the collaboration.

Ms. Dimock said absolutely. She said that were interventions or proposals that aligned with the recommendations, and they all fit well within the original recommendations from the Community Safety Working Group. She said that the Implementation Group would determine the sequence of actions and that had not been done yet. She said that it was possible that one application may make itself available for the larger pool of money, but they all were suitable interventions for the community.

Mr. Pruitt said that in general, he was excited about the increased emphasis on Strategic Planning and how they deployed their ABRT resources. He said that he was glad to see this focus return to the budget, a topic he had discussed with constituents. He noted that the historical approach did not convey a sense of full strategic control over how these very important services were deployed. He said that he appreciated the more concentrated approach staff had taken, as it had provided him with valuable insights. He said that he would like to thank the staff for their work on this version.

Mr. Pruitt said that regarding page 142, under DSS (Department of Social Services), the total budget of direct assistance listed current actuals consisting of three elements. He said that he was unsure if that primarily fell under programmed federal funds or if it involved entirely local programs for direct assistance.

Ms. Dimock said that she believed this encompassed state funds, primarily via CSA. She said that they allocated and spent these resources. She said that numerous direct assistance programs connected individuals in need with the appropriate funding sources, which they oversaw. She said that unlike those instances, this specific funding originated from their Finance Office and purchases were facilitated through their department.

Mr. Pruitt said that upon reviewing the document, he discovered that Human Services is a department with numerous federal programs that use it as a pass-through. He asked if, in this specific table, he could locate whether he was searching for a more detailed view of these federal funds. He said that as he examined the document, he realized they were included under revenues and expenses in the big pie charts.

Ms. Dimock said that the DSS Advisory Board's annual report highlighted a significant figure: a staggering \$168 million. She said that this amount represented funds leveraged through DSS for the community, encompassing various benefits such as Medicaid.

Mr. Pruitt said that he was intrigued when the LAJC Legal Aid Justice Center) community organizer discussed the eviction reduction fund, recognizing its potential for a significantly large impact per dollar spent. He asked if they could identify the exact number of individual disbursements made, as this information would be valuable because each disbursement represented a family that had been prevented from eviction. He said that providing such figures could help them assess how the fund might grow or change in the future.

Ms. Dimock said that they collected data regarding the number of callers and individual clients during the call period, as well as household size and composition. She said that they recorded the amount of money provided and whether it was for a shut-off notice or an eviction notice. She said that their primary eligibility criteria were these two factors. She said that furthermore, they prioritized cases based on the presence of children in the client's household or if there was a medically fragile individual present. She confirmed that they could provide all this information.

Mr. Pruitt said that in eviction prevention, there were cost savings experienced by both the locality and other public services or organizations. He asked if they had information regarding specific cost savings attributed to eviction prevention for the locality. He said that he knew this was a complex data analysis situation.

Ms. Dimock said that they would be capable of extrapolating based on data utilized at the national level; however, they did not possess such information for themselves. She said that although they may have prevented an eviction in September, they could not guarantee what would occur for residents in October because they could not come back to their source. She said that they might achieve some temporary savings across the community in September, but unless they secured a continuous source of assistance for families, this may not be a long-term solution.

Mr. Pruitt said that he would like to clarify and requested Ms. Dimock to correct him if he was mistaken. He said that his understanding was that they currently dispersed eviction prevention funds, primarily to families who were able to keep up with their current payments but had an existing debt. He said that for example, if an individual experienced a catastrophe and fell \$2,000 behind on rent, which is approximately a month and a half of payments, they could make the necessary rental payments but could not address the accumulated arrears and thus faced eviction.

Ms. Dimock said that the preference was for this emergency assistance program not to be a poverty solution program. She said that drawing the distinction may be challenging and uncomfortable, but it was essential to understand that the program aimed to address short-term issues rather than be long-term solutions. She said that in the case of the September-October example, a short-term insight was employed.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley said that she wanted to discuss slide 7, which outlined the completed and remaining passings for the universal broadband. She said that there were a total of 6,100 homes to be completed in 2025. She asked if all passings would be completed prior to 2025.

Ms. Dimock said that the rolling deadlines for existing grants anticipated that by the end of 2025, only a few individuals would remain, likely in remote categories. She said there was a concern known as the "donut problem," where early broadband implementation left three houses unconnected in the middle. She said significant efforts would be required during the last six months to identify these remaining individuals. She noted that the lack of economies of scale in this process necessitated strategic work to include them. She added that both Firefly and Bright Speed had some of those houses on their lists of folks to get connected.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley said that they had heard different numbers that may not be able to have service, but that the current information suggested that all individuals would have access.

Ms. Dimock said that they were dedicated to universal service and problem-solving any issues related to unfulfilled commitments, such as those "donut holes." She said that in the past, they had encountered situations where providers agreed to serve 100 households but only served 98. She said that it was their responsibility to track these discrepancies and resolve them by the end of the year.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley asked if those 6,100 homes may be part of the "donut hole" issue.

Ms. Dimock said they certainly were. She said that she was in the middle of one, so her own address was included in that statistic.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley said that she had assumed that the 6,100 figure referred to people with three-mile long driveways at the top of a mountain.

Ms. Dimock said that it was a little bit of everybody. She said that some specific areas, like Keane and Esmont, had primarily been tackled through previous grants. She said that there were villages in that pool and not just one-offs.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley said that regarding the housing fund, they were considering allocating \$2 million for the upcoming fiscal year. She said that currently, it was mentioned that there was a remaining balance of \$4.7 million that would be transferred.

Mr. Davidson said that that projected number at the end of the year included the \$2 million, which will be transferred during the current fiscal year. He said that consequently, the anticipated \$4.7 million would carry over to the following fiscal year.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley asked if the budget proposal was for \$2 million.

Mr. Davidson said yes.

Ms. Dimock said that the current pipeline contained applications totaling \$3.6 million for that \$4 million.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley asked how gun safety was addressed in these categories.

Mr. Bowman said that it was a component of the community safety contingency.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley asked for clarification regarding navigation for seniors.

Ms. Dimock said that regarding the human services needs assessment, there were two primary areas and pieces of data were examined in the assessment. She said that the first concerned the number of calls received by the adult protective services (APS) unit that did not involve protective service issues but rather seniors or individuals connected to seniors seeking guidance on senior services. She said that they may be unaware of the resources available at JABA to address their concerns, leading DSS staff to spend a significant amount of time coaching and supporting these non-traditional clients. She said that this consequently strained the overworked staff responsible for traditional clients as well. She said that to alleviate this burden, it was necessary to shift that work back into the community rather than relying on APS.

Ms. Dimock said that the second area highlighted a considerable number of seniors, or their friends and family, who were unaware of where to begin seeking assistance. She said that they shared stories of not knowing whom to contact for help, resulting in financial and emotional errors while navigating the complex senior service system. She said that as a result, the need for navigation support for seniors was identified as an emerging requirement for the grant process.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley asked if it also included the Center, which could maybe reach out.

Ms. Dimock said that it could; however, the Center did not apply for those funds.

Ms. McKeel said that last summer, when they approved the priorities including homelessness, adolescent mental health, community safety, and navigation for seniors. She said that during their discussions, including Mike's input, they had focused on community safety. She noted that it was unclear whether this topic was considered as a general area or a specific one among the four priorities mentioned. She said that staff were discussing the allocation of the \$100,000 and exploring how to utilize it effectively. She said that it might involve addressing one or more of these four priority areas. She said she sought clarification to better understand the situation.

Ms. Dimock said that during the ABRT process, they sought applications aimed at resolving or addressing community safety concerns, and they received several applications pertaining to this issue.

Ms. McKeel said that when discussing community safety, it was part of the listed priorities of homelessness, mental health, community safety, and senior navigation. She asked if Ms. Dimock if she was talking about community safety specifically.

Ms. Dimock said that they solicited applications for all four priorities. She said that along with the community safety issue, there was a parallel process involving the Joint UVA City County Community Safety Working Group. She said that this group would develop a set of recommendations for implementation, and remarkably, \$100,000 was available for this process, potentially combining funds from the City, UVA, and an additional source to create a greater impact on community safety.

Ms. Dimock said that the hope was that these various elements would influence each other and contribute to the budget decision-making process. She said that as such, the \$100,000 was proposed as a contingency in the budget, awaiting the completion of the Community Safety Working Group's recommendations. She said that the goal was to maximize and amplify the impact by incorporating funds from other sources.

Ms. McKeel said that the clarification was helpful as she previously struggled with the concept of "community safety" in relation to the other priorities, such as homelessness, adolescent mental health, and navigation for seniors, but she thought she understood it better now. She said that she appreciated the explanation and added that they would likely learn more about this topic in the future. She asked if Ms. Dimock could provide an estimated timeframe for when they would be hearing about this.

Ms. Dimock said that she was unsure, but she was optimistic that it would be sometime this year.

Ms. McKeel said that she wanted to thank staff for this work with the new look they were using and how they were tightening it down. She said that she really liked the idea of involving some partners with quarterly reports for more information, and she liked how they all parsed things out and approached them differently that year. She said that she truly appreciated their efforts.

Mr. Gallaway said that his first question, although not of high priority, would be greatly appreciated if they could get back to him. He said that it was a question he should have posed last year. He said that upon examining the various ABRT categories, he noticed four categories pertaining to OAR (Offender Aid Restoration); two of these came online this week. He said that while attempting to track the funds, he encountered difficulties in practice and then realized that they ought to separate these three other lines. He requested any available information regarding the history of when and why these lines were broken out.

Mr. Davidson said that previously, entries with zeros in FY23 were considered part of the overall ABRT contribution. He said that they examined the services provided and determined that they held a more contractual nature. He said that as a result, they were moved from the ABRT process to the staff review process. He said that the issue at hand was primarily data-related, as they aimed for consistent tracking across years. He said that by separating those entries, they avoided confusion regarding contributions. He said that he could go back and look at how long they had been funded.

Mr. Bowman said that Mr. Davidson's observation concerning the math was correct. He said that if they examined the ABRT, specifically the OAR line for FY23 to FY24, the figure dropped from \$205,000 to \$178,000. He said that this was not a reduction in funding for those programs; rather, it recognized that some should be broken out. He said that each year, they reviewed the categorization with their staff to ensure agencies were following the appropriate process, whether it was ABRT or another process.

Mr. Gallaway said that he struggled to understand the math.

Mr. Bowman said that they could provide a follow-up to give more clarity.

Mr. Gallaway said that he would appreciate that, because it clearly was but he was not looking at it properly. He said that in the list of unfunded items, two DSS positions were mentioned: a human service navigator and a senior human service worker, both specific for HARTS (Human Services Alternative Response Team). He said that the description stated that these positions would receive a 33% reimbursement from the state. He asked whether the costs listed in the unfunded items already accounted for this reimbursement, so it represented the County cost, or if they were before the reimbursement.

Mr. Davidson said that it would be before the reimbursement.

Mr. Gallaway said that a senior human service for HARTS had a total cost of \$107,599, which included both ongoing and one-time expenses, and that 33% of that would come back if that were funded. He asked if it was correct that 33% of the total one-time cost, which amounted to \$105,000, would be returned.

Mr. Davidson said that was correct.

Ms. Mallek asked about the unfunded list, and the emergency assistance program. She said that they were contemplating putting public dollars in because the federal dollars were done. She asked where the capacity to distribute the funds would come from without the presence of the person whose position was vacant.

Ms. Dimock said that last year, they had graciously funded a human services navigator position as part of the human services priority. She said that this individual had been responsible for screening calls and distributing funding.

Ms. Mallek clarified that that position would continue to exist, and the one in the unfunded list was different than what Ms. Dimock just described.

Ms. Dimock said that was correct. She said that they imagined them to be doing different things.

Ms. Mallek said that was good news. She said that regarding the ABRT list, she asked if procedurally, there was a specific number of years when one or several experienced poor analysis but were still carried along. She asked about the point at which this would end. She said that considering that significant amounts of money, \$25,000 annually, were allocated to initiatives with fair results or with little to no data provided. She expressed concern over how many projects did not receive funding yet were known to provide food assistance.

Ms. Mallek said that organizations like Loaves & Fishes came to mind; their application was exceptional and served a substantial number of families. She said regarding the ABRT list, she requested gaining more insight about how that was sorted out. She emphasized that when reviewing the data, it was important to focus on County residents served by County taxpayer dollars rather than the overall. She said that for organizations that only served 13% or 15% of Albemarle residents did not meet what she believed their standard should be for services.

Ms. Mallek said that in the application process, there should be questions related to agency staff turnover rates to ensure funded organizations had a stable workforce capable of fulfilling their responsibilities. She said that high staff turnover could negatively impact an organization's effectiveness, and it would be beneficial to gather information on this aspect for future evaluations. She emphasized the importance of supporting agencies who were capable and willing and acknowledging the hard work of those involved in non-profits who contributed significantly. She requested a thorough analysis of how organizations carried out their responsibilities.

Mr. Bowman said that in response to a few questions raised by Ms. Mallek, they did not have a specific question on turnover rate, but they did have a few questions regarding organizational health to ensure they had sound operations. He said that they examined the application annually, factoring in changes within the labor market. He said that the first question about what happens when funding is withdrawn, no one scored there, but there was a four rating. He said typically when someone scored a four, there were significant consequences in their recommendation for funding. He said that they had not defunded or reduced funding with many contingencies in recent years; however, agencies on notice for fair ratings tended to improve over time. He said that consequences increased when ratings dropped below fair.

Ms. Mallek said that in regards to the jurisdiction of origin for the clients, she would like to know how that influenced the rating.

Mr. Bowman said that the ABRT team considered that piece of data. He acknowledged that he was uncertain about the specific scoring methodology in the rubric. He said that they assured that the evaluation process ensured proper representation and service to the County residents.

Ms. Dimock said that they maintained a beneficiaries list, requiring them to review their previous year's beneficiaries by zip code. She said that they specifically provided a zip code and map overlay to verify whether they were City, County, or other beneficiaries. She said that following this, they had to report at the end of the year how closely they approached the initial estimate. She noted that for numerous organizations, they possessed data for six or seven years, if not more.

Ms. Mallek said that she understood the difficulty regarding the zip codes, as 22901 extended as far as White Hall, which could be quite confusing. She said that she was glad to have the map overlay for clarification. She asked how they determined organizational health if not asking questions about staff.

Mr. Bowman said that they were required to provide an audit, and there were some questions regarding their board and executive structure. He said that unfortunately, he did not have the complete list of questions. He asked if Mr. Davidson could provide more details.

Mr. Davidson said that there was also an audit in which various aspects of financial health were examined, including the diversification of funding to avoid relying on a single source. He said that both operational reserves and capital reserves were considered as well.

Ms. Dimock said that they also had client feedback surveys about their performance and operations.

Ms. Mallek asked if a 990 form was also included.

Mr. Bowman said yes.

Ms. Mallek said that this had been an issue for many entities, as they had not submitted one for four or five years. She said that she hoped that, considering the current state of the Postal Service, they would consider transitioning to electronic checks. She said that for instance, agencies required to submit reports quarterly should do so electronically. She mentioned that the Charlottesville Band, previously funded at \$16,000, had its funding reduced to \$8,000 during the recession. She said that despite this, they continued their performances. She said that sending four \$2,000 checks and one that got lost in the mail seemed unnecessary. She said that to ease the burden on staff and ensure smooth operations, she requested that they take these factors into account moving forward.

Mr. Bowman said that that was a good example that as they head into the financial management system to ask what those processes and best practices were, and how they may do them differently. He said that they were not there yet, but in anticipation with that system going online, it presented a good opportunity to examine those processes.

Mr. Andrews said that he was slightly confused by the presentation method sometimes in the book when it had a list of expenditures of a group of potentially zero requests of organization that then appear elsewhere, and then there were some for contractual services and they are listed again. He said that he wished there was some way to mark those that received funding in other ways so that they did not associate the zero with the organization receiving nothing, because they did in fact receive something through a different process.

Mr. Bowman said that staff would take that feedback into consideration.

Mr. Andrews said that some people looked at this information and asked why they did not do something, but they in fact had done it in another location. He said that the painful issue of this year's budget was that it was flat, and that was frustrating. He said that recognizing the four priority areas they had, he expressed hope that this was just a base illustration, and that come next year they could start to focus on them the way he thought they intended to.

Mr. Bowman said that he would mention that they had covered health and welfare, and their director of JABA (Jefferson Area Board for Aging), Marta Keene, was present. He said that he did not anticipate further questions or concerns at this time; however, she was, of course, welcome to stay.

Mr. Davidson said that the budget for the parks, recreation, and cultural area was approximately \$11.9 million, 3% of the General Fund. He said that within this budget, 43% was allocated to the Parks and Recreation Department. He said that the remaining 57% went to their community partners.

Mr. Davidson said that within the Parks and Recreation Department, \$90,000 worth of increases were related to operational costs, including improving athletic field maintenance, additional contract services for field maintenance, sprigging, repairs, improvements to irrigation systems, and extra supplies such as grass seeds and fertilizers. He stated that moving forward, there was a focus on implementing the CIP, particularly approving and commencing projects like fields in Darden Towe. He said that as these new fields came online, additional operating costs would be incorporated to maintain them at a higher level.

Mr. Davidson said that another CIP project being discussed was the development of an urban pocket, which involved identifying its location and beginning design and construction processes. He said that more detailed discussions about this project would take place during the CIP work session. He said that staff time, capacity, and resources from various departments, including Parks and Recreation, Facilities, as well as the County Attorney's office, had been dedicated to this project.

Mr. Davidson said that finally, Biscuit Run, leading phase one improvements to open Biscuit Run. He said that those were a few of the highlights with their Parks and Recreation Operating Department.

Mr. Davidson said that looking at some of the notable changes to their parks, recreation, and culture regional partners, for the library, no changes to services were occurring; they were merely covering the County's share of existing services. He said that this included increases in compensation,

health insurance, and minimum wage phase-in for the final year, similar to the challenges faced by other regional partners.

Mr. Davidson said that the contribution to the Convention and Visitors Bureau (CACVB) was increasing by approximately \$186,000, based on their regional agreement that considered the actual transient occupancy tax revenues from the most recent completed year, which was FY23. He said that for simplicity's sake, around 30% of the prior year's actuals were being used as a benchmark for allocating funds.

Mr. Davidson said that in contrast, criteria for the cultural, arts, and festivals agencies differed from the human services agency, which continued into FY25. He said that eligibility requirements remained unchanged; staff had revisited this process in collaboration with the Board in July 2023, and the Board had approved some process modifications.

Mr. Davidson said that previously, agencies were scored by a team of staff from five different departments using 13 criteria, and funding was prioritized based on their scores. He said that this approach has now shifted focus to determining eligibility and qualification without undergoing detailed scoring after the agencies demonstrated that they met the minimum requirements for consideration.

Mr. Davidson explained that the process involved categorizing agencies into four areas: smaller local cultural agencies, larger programs attracting visitors, arts-focused, and recreational or educational opportunities. He said that larger programs with a significant economic impact had historically received more substantial funding than other agencies in this process, so acknowledging these notable differences between these categories and funding accordingly.

Mr. Davidson said that the third changes aimed to create consistent funding tiers within each category, providing more consistent and equitable distribution of funds for smaller local cultural programs, for example. He said that staff had made progress, and although they did not get all the way there in FY25, they had improved from the previous year. He added that work continued to refine this approach.

Mr. Davidson said that the last one spoke to a concept similar to the ABRT agencies being considered, where funding focused on qualifying agencies, whether they had been funded before or not. He said that there was less emphasis on the existing and more on the new County funding.

Mr. Pruitt said that it was very exciting to hear that they were opening Biscuit Run. He said that it was a significant achievement that he did not want to overlook. He said that he understood that this Board had previously litigated this issue at length, but he needed clarification on the matter. He said that they mentioned the increase in operating costs for fields and the addition of new fields. He asked if he should anticipate continuous budget increases over several years.

Mr. Davidson said that as part of their discussion, they could examine this in more detail when they analyzed their capital budget since they considered operational impacts during that process. He said that regarding the Darden Towe field rebuilds, one was completed each year for four years. He said that with these new fields coming online, a different level of maintenance would be required, including irrigation costs, seed maintenance, and other expenses. He said that these costs would not reach the \$90,000 per year level shown on that slide, as it represented a system-wide view of improvements. He said that instead, each subsequent year will bring smaller incremental costs, which they would reassess during the remaining three years of the current plan.

Mr. Pruitt asked if he was referring to the remaining three years of the current Darden Towe CIP plan.

Mr. Davidson said that they would examine it for each of the four fields as they brought them online.

Mr. Pruitt said that he wanted to clarify that in the unfunded list, they did have half of a trail crew technician, which appeared to be half an FTE. He said that he was aware that they recently advertised for a trail crew technician. He asked if this position was meant to expedite the process of bringing trails online. He said that he assumed it was primarily related to the areas with significant trail development needs.

Bob Crickenberger, Director of Parks and Recreation, said that it was yes to both. He said that it was not only to assist them in the trail building capability like Biscuit Run, but also to assist with the over 80-some miles of trails and greenways they currently maintained.

Mr. Pruitt said that he wanted to know if this was projected to be a timeline-impacting item. He asked if he examined the three-year plan for the remaining elements of the Biscuit Run, whether there were any expected shifts if they did not have the requested full complement of trail technicians.

Mr. Crickenberger said yes, it would.

Mr. Pruitt thanked Mr. Crickenberger for the information. He said that he also wanted to address the fact that, although he thought he knew the answer to this but would still like to verbalize it: his understanding was that when discussing the JMRL (Jefferson Madison Regional Library) budget, there was a significant request for their downtown facility. He said that his current understanding was that this major ask was not captured in the operating budget and had not yet been incorporated into the CIP. He

said that he wanted to confirm whether this was accurate.

Mr. Bowman said that it was not part of the operating budget. He said that on Wednesday, it would be included in the CIP with design in year three and construction in year five under some conditions. He said that several things were happening, and they would discuss them in more detail, including the City coming along in their agreement, the need for a placed fundraising plan, and other aspects. He said that they would cover these topics more thoroughly on Wednesday.

Mr. Pruitt said that he usually did his reading day by day, so he had not had the chance to read his materials for their Wednesday discussion. He asked what additional operating costs they should anticipate as a result of that initiative being implemented in future years.

Mr. Bowman said that it would be beyond the five-year period; that was something they would be at the earliest stages at with evaluating the libraries.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley said that she was very excited about the progress made with Darden Towe.

Mr. Gallaway said that he had no questions, but he was endorsing the fact that they would be reevaluating the field maintenance of Darden Towe annually to ensure proper funding was allocated for this purpose. He said that the Board did commit to maintaining both the lifespan and quality at a certain level through the decision they made over there. He noted that if costs changed, that commitment remained in place because that was voted on then. He said that he would appreciate the budget updates to stay informed about any changes in those costs.

Ms. Mallek said that she did not have any questions but would like to applaud two things. She said that she was grateful for the proposal for staff in Parks and Recreation because, for the past 50 years, only six people had been handling the workload of 20. She said that she was pleased to see more individuals on the ground everywhere to help with field maintenance. She said that regarding field maintenance, the lack of it for so long had been an issue, but any improvements in this area would be noticeable. She said that she agreed with Mr. Gallaway's sentiment that they must do the right amount of work to ensure proper care.

Mr. Andrews said that they had discussed the possibility of Charlottesville increasing its transit occupancy tax. He said that regarding the calculation of how this increased revenue would be allocated, he would like to know specifically the portion assigned to the CACVB.

Mr. Bowman said that in the current regional agreement, the CACVB received 30% of the prior year's funds for the initial 5% of the tax.

Mr. Davidson said that moving on to community development, they were examining the \$17.6 million allocation, which constituted approximately 4% of the General Fund budget. He said that this amount primarily comprised the Community Development Department (CDD), followed by Regional Transit Agencies at roughly 39%. He said that additionally, it included the Economic Development Office (EDO) and other Community Development agencies. He said that with regard to CDD, there were no significant changes to report.

Mr. Davidson stated that as previously discussed in the first work session last Wednesday, the focus was more on continuing existing initiatives rather than introducing new or additional funding. He provided examples of such initiatives, including the continuation of AC44 and ordinance updates currently underway. He said that regarding their discussion of the Financial Management System project under the core system modernization initiative when they addressed the administrative portion of the budget, their Chief Financial Officer, Mr. Jacob Sumner, would now discuss the community development aspect of the core systems modernization.

Mr. Jacob Sumner, Chief Financial Officer, said that last Wednesday, they initiated a discussion regarding their core systems modernization project. He said that today, he would expand on that conversation as they delved into the community development section of the budget. He said that although he primarily served as the financial officer, he was filling in today for their Chief Operating Officer (COO) who typically led this area. He said that he had been provided with thorough notes by their COO.

Mr. Sumner said that for several years, they had discussed with the Board the necessity to not only update their software that underpinned their daily operations but also significantly overhaul them. He said that this initiative was known as their core systems modernization project. He said that preparations for implementing the two new systems in FY25 were well underway. He said that today, they would focus more on the community development system, which would be launched in FY25 with a modern technological platform that offered increased transparency for their customers.

Mr. Sumner said that the new system would feature various dashboards, such as those displaying permit information, plans, inspections, invoices, and licenses all in one place, and they would also include requests for inspections and the ability to pay fees all in one place. He said that additionally, customers could upload attachments and make corrections to their applications. He said that a fee estimator was also included. He said that the system would provide accessibility options such as a translator and screen reader for residents who required them.

Mr. Sumner said that staff in CDD had worked towards achieving a 70% reduction in processes with the aim of enhancing processing efficiency and staff retooling by merging similar workflows. He said

that this was expected to lead to a decrease in the overall training requirements for both staff members and community individuals. He said that consequently, the technical platform would undergo a significant transformation, necessitating substantial change management for their employees and the community.

Mr. Sumner said that all technological advancements drew best practices from an extensive pool of functional expertise, ensuring that the procured technology was built with a well-defined development process in mind. He said that nevertheless, each system was unique. He said that it was crucial to understand the intricacies and unique exceptions related to their County code and policies since CDD processes were based on that code, which was unique to Albemarle County.

Mr. Sumner said that the system that they currently procured was highly configurable, allowing them to incorporate their code requirements without reprogramming or customizing the entire system, thus ensuring flexibility. He said that this configuration process necessitated guidance from subject matter experts who also handled their daily routine workload without interruption due to this ongoing project.

Mr. Sumner said that this project also required dedicated resources from Community Development, Information Technology, and Performance and Strategic Planning to fully capitalize on the benefits offered by the new system. He said that a comprehensive training program was being developed to ensure effective staff training, connecting departments, developers, and builders, and establishing communication strategies for all stakeholders who would be affected by the new system.

Mr. Davidson said that moving onto the community development area, they would examine their EDO. He said that this was another area that was focused on continuing previous initiatives rather than seeking additional funding. He said that for the EDO, there were no significant budget changes; however, he wanted to emphasize two areas. He said that the first was the updating of Project ENABLE, which concerned work plan advances rather than new funding. He said that the second area was for Rivanna Futures, for which there was a minor increase in the General Fund, as shown in the feds' budget.

Mr. Davidson said that these funds would cover two aspects: approximately \$50,000 to maintain ongoing grounds, property maintenance, and other routine operating expenses related to that property; and the Economic Development Fund's plan to cover the estimated FY25 expenses for the Rivanna Futures project at around \$700,000. He said that these expenses included further master plan analysis, property project management support, and similar tasks.

Mr. Davidson said that he would spend a moment discussing their Regional Transit. He said that he wanted to clarify that the amounts listed on the slide did not pertain to changes in service or service levels but rather the continuation of existing services and service levels. He said that for Charlottesville Area Transit (CAT), they had budgeted an approximately \$599,000 increase in County contributions for existing services in FY25. He said that the increase was based on the five-year plan that CAT had shared with the County for FY25.

Mr. Davidson said that the FY25 recommended budget amount was based on the five-year plan for FY25, which considered the multi-year funding plan leveraging federal pandemic relief funding to offset service costs or potential revenue reduction losses. He said that this plan also lowered locality contributions for both the City and County by utilizing these dollars. He stated that the County's contribution was reduced to approximately \$500,000 at that time and had gradually increased each year to its current level.

Mr. Davidson said that during the release of the County Executive's recommended budget, the City was still in the process of balancing their budget and having discussions and deliberations with their departments, including with CAT. He said that the final CAT budget amount in the City budget for the County's contribution was approximately \$84,000 higher than what they were showing. He mentioned that the timing for CAT differed slightly from the usual annual schedule; however, this was no different than how they handled any other regional partners during their budget development process and their work with their boards.

Mr. Davidson said that as a result, staff would return to the Board at a later work session with the adjustments for all changes in the County's contributions to regional partners, whether it was CAT, safety partners, or public works partners, along with a plan to account for them and any other adjustments the Board may have discussed with staff as they progressed through the process.

Mr. Davidson said that in the upcoming fiscal year, the MicroCAT program received full funding of approximately \$1.7 million, marking a significant increase of \$1.5 million from the FY24 budget. He explained that the FY24 budget contained the remainder of the County contribution to fund the first year of the pilot program, a grant contribution the County committed to. He said as part of that program, the County committed to two years of funding of this project. He said the first year was heavily grant-funded with a smaller County contribution, and the second year was 100% on the locality.

Mr. Davidson said that with this in mind, the current budget figure reflected the second year's 100% locality funding obligation. He said that at present, the Board faced no budget or programmatic decisions regarding this matter. He said that however, as the program progressed, potential discussions may arise concerning its continuation or service level adjustments in FY26. He said that the Board would then revisit these topics.

Mr. Davidson said that for other regional transit partnerships, he mentioned that JAUNT had experienced a minor decrease of approximately \$251 compared to last year's figures. He said that this

fully funded the regional transit partnership (RTP) and Afton Express programs at \$25,000 and \$7,090 respectively.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley said that she was very excited about MicroCAT, as there were so many benefits of the initiative. She said that with over 8,700 individuals signing up since October, it seems likely that this program will significantly transform the situation. She said that she hoped it would continue, and she knew Ms. McKeel as Chair of the RTP was spearheading all these things, and it was great to see something like this happening. She said that with so many living in the rural area, it would enable transportation to happen.

Ms. McKeel said that she wanted to ensure her understanding of the situation moving forward, particularly regarding the transition from the RTP discussion where both the City and County convened and discussed possibly forming an authority. She said that as they approached this stage, it had been the intention for the RTP to become a part of the authority as it would no longer be necessary.

Ms. McKeel said that she wanted to confirm that they did not overlook any necessary funding during the transitional period between the partnership and establishing the authority. She said she would like to know staff's thoughts on this matter. She noted that it seemed they might be waiting for further details regarding costs before proceeding, but she would like to hear staff's perspective.

Ms. Ann Wall, Deputy County Executive, said that the City, County, and TJPDC (Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission) staff had their first meeting and established a scope of work for the group. She said that this included determining the budget required for the regional transit authority (RTA). She noted that the process was still in its early stages. She said that a regular schedule of meetings had been set up to discuss these issues further. She said that once they could clearly identify the budgetary needs of the RTA, they would return to the Board and the City.

Mr. Gallaway asked how the CAT increases take into account the City's current situation with collective bargaining and increases in costs.

Mr. Davidson said that the \$84,000 in additional funding he mentioned included the allocation for the collective bargaining aspect. He said that this amount covered the County's portion of their services as well.

Mr. Gallaway asked if that increase was specific to that particular issue.

Mr. Davidson said that he would have to review the information to confirm, but he believed that yes, it was. He said that the majority of the increase was directly related to that, but the \$599,000 addition was based on their five-year plan. He said that they revisited this figure and considered collective bargaining as one factor among others. He said that they presented the final amount, which was approximately \$680,000.

Ms. McKeel left the meeting at 6:01 p.m.

Mr. Gallaway asked if the \$599,000 included the possibility for collective bargaining, but it was not explicitly stated. He said that within this amount, there could have been a proposed salary adjustment anyway. He noted that collective bargaining now specified the process. He said that the \$84,000 difference was the additional amount beyond what was initially included in the \$599,000 package.

Mr. Davidson said yes, that was an accurate summarization.

Mr. Gallaway asked how the \$84,000 adjustment related to this process.

Mr. Davidson said as they had done in the past, they would address similar issues during work sessions by maintaining a list of budgetary adjustments made by the Board. He said that they would provide them with potential solutions for these adjustments. He said that currently, there was no scheduled work session to present the adjustments for discussion; however, they planned to work through these today and on the 13th, and then potentially on the 25th would be that opportunity to come back with some of those.

Mr. Gallaway said regarding the items on their list of unfunded priorities, it helped him to ask some questions in order to better understand and prioritize them in his mind. He said that specifically, regarding the Economic Development Fund, it stated ongoing costs; however, these costs would be directed towards the fund rather than the department.

Mr. Bowman said that was correct.

Mr. Gallaway noted that the fund in question had a balance of approximately \$2 million or slightly less. He said that the projects being worked on involved this larger amount, not the \$250,000 mentioned earlier to support the office.

Mr. Davidson said that as part of the five-year plan, they had considered additional ongoing operational funding for the office. He said that they had envisioned an annual increase of \$250,000, gradually increasing over time. He said that this \$250,000 represents a continuous yearly transfer to that fund. He said that consequently, it would not be allocated to the department; instead, it would be directed towards the fund on an annual basis.

Mr. Gallaway said that this approach would help fulfill whatever the specific objectives were for the fund.

Mr. Davidson said that was correct.

Mr. Gallaway asked what was lost by not doing the additional \$250,000 right now. He said that staff had made the decision due to budget constraints and prioritization of other matters that it would not be funded right now.

Mr. Bowman said that as a long-term strategy, the Board had primarily invested one-time funds in the Housing and Economic Development Funds. He said there was interest from the Board in incorporating more ongoing funding to ensure stability in case one-time funding was unavailable. He said that this would help with long-term planning that could potentially impact both funds.

Mr. Bowman said that the current allocation made it difficult to determine a clear strategy, as the \$250,000 allocated for the project did not represent a significant contribution. He said that instead, staff would focus on developing a long-term strategy with a blend of revenues in the fund to prepare the County for future opportunities. He said that by doing so, the County could avoid reprioritizing funds and have resources readily available in either the Housing or Economic Development Fund.

Ms. Mallek said that in several sections across multiple chapters, the discussion revolved around funds from the Water Resources Fund, amounting to \$2.2 million due to the increased value of the penny. She asked if there were specific criteria determining which positions could access these funds. She said her question was really whether this funding was allocated for repairing underground pipes and other long-standing issues or if it was distributed among numerous departments' staff. She asked how she could obtain this information.

Mr. Davidson said that he could provide a more detailed breakout of what was involved in that. He said that as part of their transfer, it was based on the dollar amount of point seven cents of a penny. He said that this amount gets transferred to the Water Resources Fund. He said that they had various positions dedicated specifically to water resource activities within their Facilities and Environmental Services Division (FES), some within CDD, and some at regional partner agencies.

Mr. Davidson said that staff had compiled a list of these positions and calculated how much needs to be transferred back into the General Fund to cover those costs. He said that the remaining balance, whatever is left over after that, goes into the Water Resources Reserve Funding for potential capital or operating expenses. He said that it would come back to the Board for their decision on how they would like to use that funding.

Ms. Mallek said that she had guessed it had referred to Greg Harper's team of stream health and water quality personnel, the Rivanna Conservation Alliance, and Stormwater Conservation District. She said that those were in addition to the other items such as replacing pipes.

Mr. Davidson said that was correct.

Ms. Mallek said that she understood what was said about the timing of the information to come about the bus from CAT. She asked if they had been receiving the detailed budget information from the City in a timely manner. She said that even if decisions had not been finalized yet, she asked whether they had been given the background that they had struggled to get in the past.

Mr. Davidson said yes.

Ms. Mallek asked if she understood correctly that this was the last year that they could consider cutting fees for MicroCAT. She said that this year, it was required to be no fee, and then next year they could consider implementing fees or stopping altogether.

Mr. Davidson said that was correct.

Mr. Andrews said that they had one section left to cover but had exhausted their time for this work session.

Mr. Bowman said that it would be a comprehensive discussion since he wanted to dedicate time to discussing tax relief. He said that they could pick up this topic on Wednesday. He said that some issues have been resolved on the spot; however, he had not heard of any specific topics of interest for the Board other than the Sheriff and Fire Rescue from the first work session. He said to please let them know if he misheard or if there was anything on the Board's mind. He said that this information would help them plan the work session on March 25 more effectively, ensuring a thorough examination of the proposed budget in support of the Board's objectives.

Mr. Richardson said that he would like to take the opportunity to recognize Mr. Mike Murphy, who represents JAUNT in person today as its interim director. He said that he was grateful for his presence there and his leadership since he stepped in as the interim director during the December period. He said that Mr. Murphy's contribution was valued, and he expressed his gratitude for his assistance to the county in such a short timeframe. He said that additionally, Mr. Sumner serves on that board and spends significant time on their work since his appointment to that board.

Agenda Item No. 3. From the Board: Matters Not Listed on the Agenda.

There were no additional comments from Board members.

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

There was no report from the County Executive.

Agenda Item No. 5. Adjourn to March 13, 2024, 3:00 p.m. Room 241.

At 6:10 p.m., the Board adjourned its meeting to March 13, 2024, 3:00 p.m., Room 241. Opportunities for the public to access and participate in this meeting are posted on the Albemarle County website on the Board of Supervisors home page and on the Albemarle County calendar. Participation will include the opportunity to comment on those matters for which comments from the public will be received.

Chair

Approved by Board
Date: 06/18/2024
Initials: CKB