

An adjourned meeting of the Board of Supervisors of Albemarle County, Virginia, was held on March 29, 2023, at 3:00 p.m. in Room 241 on the Second Floor of the Albemarle County Office Building, 401 McIntire Road, Charlottesville, VA 22902.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Mr. Jim Andrews, Mr. Ned Gallaway, Ms. Beatrice (Bea) J.S. LaPisto-Kirtley, Ms. Ann H. Mallek, Ms. Diantha H. McKeel, and Ms. Donna P. Price.

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 3:01 p.m. by the Chair, Ms. Donna Price.

Ms. Price said Albemarle County Police Officers Dana Reeves and Andy Muncy were present at the meeting to provide their services.

Ms. Price said that Item 4 had been added to the agenda, which was From the Board: Matters Not Listed on the Agenda, authorization for the Chair to sign a letter of support for a school construction assistance program grant application revenue commitment.

Agenda Item No. 2. Consent Agenda.

Item No. 2.1. Schedule a Public Hearing to Consider the Adoption of an Ordinance to Modify the Real Estate Tax Relief for the Elderly and Disabled.

Ms. Price said that she was going to pull Item 2.1, a public hearing to consider the adoption of an ordinance to modify the real estate tax relief for the elderly and disabled. She said that she had a question as to whether there would be an upper-dollar limit on the expense or the cost to the County on this as opposed to it being an unlimited appropriation or grant of authority.

Mr. Jeff Richardson, County Executive, asked if Ms. Nelsie Birch could answer that question.

Ms. Nelsie Birch, Chief Financial Officer, said that there was no cap at this time. She said that by increasing it from \$200,000 for net worth up to \$250,000 in the public hearing notification only was so that they could docket it on the 19th when it would be before the Board anyway, so they would have the ability to look at income and net worth as options. She said that it was currently estimated at \$125,000 of cost to the County if they increased the net worth to \$200,000 to \$250,000, which was in addition to the already \$125,000 cost to increase the income level.

Ms. Birch said that at this point in time, given the complexity of trying to put in an administrative cap, they continued to work with the County Attorney's Office to determine what they were allowed to do. She said that there would be an answer before the public hearing so that those legalities of caps were understood, but at the moment, there was a funding strategy that gave staff comfort that the net worth and the income limits could both be increased.

Ms. Price thanked Ms. Birch for her answer. She asked if there were any other questions about this item from Supervisors. Hearing none, she asked if there was a motion.

Mr. Andrews **moved** to schedule a public hearing to consider the adoption of an ordinance to modify the Real Estate Tax Relief for the Elderly and Disabled.

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

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

Agenda Item No. 3. Work Session: FY 2024 Operating and Capital Budget.

- Workforce Stabilization.

Mr. Andy Bowman, Chief of Budget, said that this was the fifth budget work session so far in the year's budget process, and the first part of today's work session would be focused on workforce stabilization. He said that they would discuss field investments and anything else the Board wished to discuss in the second half.

Mr. Bowman said that the \$12.5 million increase in the FY25 budget included the market increase, increase in health insurance, increases for positions in police, social services, and other areas, as well as the \$1.4 million for implementation of classification and compensation study. He said that this topic would be discussed in depth today, as well as the four objectives of strategic plan goal 6. Ms. Kristy Shifflett, Director of Performance and Strategic Planning. She said that the items to be discussed today were related to strategic goal 6, under workforce and customer service. She said that they would discuss

the compensation implementation plan, the staff development and wellness programming, the modernized business systems, and office space planning.

Ms. Shifflett said that the vision for the County included workforce and customer service, and the workforce was wrapped around the ability to progress every single one of the other strategic plan goals. She said that as the Board was aware, the stability of the workforce would be important in the ability to progress the strategic plan. She said that to solidify the importance of this work and the commitment to employees, they would remember that at the August 24 work session, the Board spent time discussing the County employees, and there was a presentation about the five generations at work from Dr. Antoinette Allen.

Ms. Shifflett said that they would hear about some of those trends today, about how they were not only a changing workforce and landscape in their generations and community, but also post-pandemic, the world at work was different, and they were having to adjust and modify the way that they were used to working, but also be able to protect their employees and provide them a great place to work.

Ms. Shifflett said that displayed on the slide was an image from the International County Management Association, which called out all of the things that went into the complexities of workplace culture. She noted that it was rarely one thing. She said that they would hear about the theme today, they would hear about comp in class, but it was also about performance management, opportunities for growth, and leadership and management training. She said that they created a new HR (Human Resources) Department, and the Board was very supportive in giving them the ability to have a local government-focused HR.

Ms. Shifflett said that doing so had allowed them to not only do a system, but also had allowed them to focus on their employees and their workforce's needs, the benefits they needed to carry, and the data they had been able to pull based on that work. She said that the HR Department had worked very hard in the past year, and all new staff had been hired in the department, who were now just hitting their one-year anniversary this month. She said that they would discuss the work they had done and the intentionality of the organization to improve their HR work.

Ms. Shifflett said that while this was a budget work session, today was not just about new funds and new opportunities, but about what they intended to do with the current staff, current work planning, and current funding strategies that they already had in place so that they could identify and share the intentionality to put staff and funding into action for their workforce.

Ms. Shifflett said that Gallagher consulting company had performed an outside study, and they would review the results and recommendations today.

Ms. Shifflett said that this was focused on the \$1.4 million in the budget request for strategies to implement this and would include a new pay scale based on market data and would talk about identified positions. She said that they would discuss throughout this process the ability to implement this in May of this current year because funding was currently available to do so. She said that while they wanted to ensure they were at market and taking care of their staff and being competitive, performance management processes were important as well.

Ms. Jessica Rice, Deputy Director of HR, said that she began working with the County in March 2022 and had just reached one year and had been intimately involved in this project since day two. She said that she would present all of the results and recommendations of the Gallagher study.

Ms. Rice said that they first presented objectives to Gallagher on behalf of the County and its staff, which were listed on the slide. She said that these objectives were to primarily set a foundation for the County to be able to set a baseline for where the salary should be, reflective of the market.

Ms. Rice said that they were tasked with conducting a comprehensive total compensation analysis and review to look at how competitive they were with some of their competitors in the public and private sectors, as well as universities. She said that they were also tasked with analyzed the classification of positions, and the system as a whole, and how they were slotting them into different pay grades, assigning salaries, and hierarchies and reporting structure, again in comparison to other local governments and public sector organizations handled these same types of functions.

Ms. Rice said that they looked at the pay scale and salary structure to see if it reflected the same things observed in other localities and if it made sense for the work that they were doing. She said that finally, they also asked them for tools and guidance on how to sustain the work once completed. She said that with so much money put towards the project and recommendations, they wanted the HR Department to be able to carry it forward for years.

Ms. Rice said that the compensation and classification study in this particular project had two components, the first piece being a compensation study that strictly analyzed data from many different sources, and compared salaries, pay structures, and philosophy to the data. She said that the other part was a classification assessment, which was a part that perhaps had not been previously assessed in depth. She said that in this segment, they analyzed the positions, their job titles, if they were classified correctly, how the recording structure operated, and if there was internal compression.

Ms. Rice said that for the compensation study, there were two ways that data was collected for the data analysis. She said that the first one was through a custom survey, and they had identified 23

organizations to be the County's competitive market. She said that displayed on the slide was a list of cities and counties, as well as UVA, that were localities that most closely represented their size, the work that they did, their recruiting pipelines, and their function.

Ms. Rice said that these entities were also their neighbors, and of the 23 on the list, responses were received from 20 of them, with three who chose not to participate. She said that UVA, Augusta County, and Chesterfield County also declined to provide information. She said that the list had changed from a narrower focus that had been utilized in the past, and they had identified that there were people coming and leaving from places all over the Commonwealth.

Ms. Rice said that Gallagher used published data collections to help them match positions with competitive positions in both public and private sector positions. She said that throughout the process, Gallagher benchmarked 191 positions of the County, which represented 94% of the workforce. She said that this covered the spectrum of all departments and leadership levels, and it was very high when looking at the holistic picture of being able to match and do assessments for an organization to be able to pull that much data down.

Ms. Rice said that during the assessment, Gallagher reviewed the pay scale and positions using a best practice in their work, other organizations, and the organization World at Work, an international association that dealt with total compensation, which was both pay and benefits.

Ms. McKeel said that the School Division had used that.

Ms. Rice said yes. She said that in the assessment of where the County stood compared to all the data they were looking at, they utilized this philosophy where they were compared to the market, and if they were within 5% of the market salary, they were highly competitive. She said that within 10% was considered competitive and went farther down from there.

Ms. Rice said that on the current slide, circled in red in the blue section was the County position salaries that were compared to the market, and when they looked at the custom survey and the benchmark positions from the published data together, they found that they were actually highly competitive, 0.72% off what the market was saying for positions overall. She said that there were some over and under, so this number was an average. She said that in the green section, the data was about the pay scale itself, where the midpoint of pay grades were 6.17% off, which was under 10% and considered holistically competitive.

Ms. Shifflett said that they already reviewed the public safety pay scale, and this was only applicable to County government positions that were not on the pay scale for public safety. She said that the chart was also indicative of the increases that staff had received over the last year. She said that if they had not implemented the salary increases over the last year, the number would have been worse, but they were happy to see that because of the Board's commitment to staff, it had allowed them to stay more competitive.

Ms. Rice said that the pay scale shown on the slide was what Gallagher returned with as their recommendation for the County to move forward. She said that there were some differences between this, first being that they had identified the importance of having a pay scale that was structured equally and evenly between pay grades and the spread from minimums and maximums. She said that they set up a structure so that they had the same distance between pay grades, and the minimum and maximum had the same percentage apart, which was not the way the scale was prior to these recommendations.

Ms. Rice said the first three pay grades were a 40% spread apart, and the first three pay grades were for entry-level positions, and the minimum for the first grade was equal to \$15 per hour, which was where the scale started. She said that each midpoint in the pay grades was an 8% increase from the one prior, so that when they were put into a different position or promoted or the workload had expanded, they were able to see a real difference as opposed to a 1.5% increase.

Ms. Rice said that they had looked at the concept of broadbanding for their department head group, and that provided latitude for the County Executive to be able to negotiate for the leaders who had experience and who had specific and hard-to-find skills so that they were not locked into these individual steps.

Mr. Gallaway asked if the data on slide 15 was based on just the positions at 80% match or all positions.

Ms. Shifflett said yes.

Mr. Gallaway said that he would be interested to hear some examples of unmatched positions. He asked if the 0.72% and the -6.17% was focused on the 80% that matched.

Ms. Rice said that was correct. She said that the 80% match was taking a look at the job descriptions and what these essential functions were that were listed in the job description. She said that Gallagher did not benchmark it against any other positions in the market, survey or published, unless at least 80% of those essential functions were the same, because if they did, the job was too different, and they were not able to compare them to each other.

Mr. Gallaway asked if the 80% match did not include public safety.

Ms. Rice said that it did not.

Mr. Gallaway said that the County employees, minus public safety, minus 20%, were represented on the slide. He asked what the number of positions was.

Ms. Rice said that there were 191 positions that they were able to match.

Ms. Shifflett asked what their current headcount was.

Ms. Rice said that it was about 640.

Mr. Gallaway asked if there were about 30 or 40 positions not included.

Mr. Andrews said that the 80% was how well the job functions matched, not how many people there were.

Mr. Gallaway said that he had done the math wrong. He said that of the number of employees included, they were only able to match 80% of that.

Ms. Rice said no. She said that they were able to match 94% of the remainder.

Mr. Gallaway asked how many positions were missing from the chart.

Ms. Rice said that she did not have a number available currently.

Mr. Gallaway said that it should be a dozen or another small number. He asked to see the next slide.

Ms. Rice said that it was the scale.

Mr. Gallaway said that paygrade 25, \$31,500 was \$15 an hour and \$44,000 was probably \$22 or \$23. He said that he would caution against, just because the number was low of the unmatched positions, to not think about how they were paying for those positions, because it got lost in the data. He said that they should be conscious of what they had learned from this and what they had learned from the matched positions and still apply it to all positions.

Mr. Jeff Richardson, County Executive, said yes.

Ms. Rice said that this was grounding them in their compensation philosophy and application, so learning from this and applying this all the way across.

Mr. Gallaway asked if the total organization was about 600 before taking out public safety. He asked about the number without public safety.

Ms. Rice said that it was around 640.

Mr. Gallaway said that that was after taking out public safety.

Ms. McKeel said that public safety included police, fire rescue, ECC (Emergency Communications Center), and the Sheriff's Office. She said that those were outside of this study.

Ms. Rice said that those were uniformed officers and sworn officers from the Sheriff's Office and Police Department (PD), and uniformed firefighters, and ECC (Emergency Communications Center) was the 911 dispatchers.

Ms. McKeel said that the classified people in this study were not uniformed or sworn officers. She said that World at Work was a great model for the School Board, and she recalled they had targeted regional data that was not always applicable. She said that they were looking at a totally different market for this study but using the World at Work model.

Ms. Rice said that was right. She said that the last time this work was done, the competitive market did not even include the City of Charlottesville, so staff and Gallagher looked deeply into the true market. She said that to not look at what these local entities were doing would be a mistake.

Ms. McKeel said that UVA and Chesterfield had not responded. She asked what the third County was who had not given data.

Ms. Rice said that it was Augusta County.

Ms. McKeel asked if \$15 per hour was the minimum pay for everyone.

Ms. Rice said yes, that was the minimum on the scale.

Ms. McKeel said that she appreciated the broadening of the model to give the County Executive the flexibility in certain positions.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley clarified that public safety included police, sheriff, ECC, and fire rescue.

Ms. Rice said yes.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley said that if the positions after public safety were about 640 positions represented, and 94% of the match.

Ms. Rice said that 94% of those 640 they were able to match.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley said okay. She asked if they could not match 191 positions.

Ms. Price said that was the public safety pay scale.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley asked if on the compensation classification if Gallagher did anything with step increases for longevity.

Ms. Rice said that was included in the upcoming portion of the presentation.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley said that it was mentioned in this study that there could be flexibility for extra work or extra skills.

Ms. Rice said that if one took a different position that had more responsibilities, it was a promotion, then they would move up in the pay scale because that was how they classified positions, and realizing an 8% increase was much better than a 1.5%, which may have been previously with the old scale. She said that they set that apart so that it would be in place as people moved around and were promoted and took on more responsibilities.

Mr. Andrews asked to see slide 12. He said that he could see why Charlottesville and their geographical neighbors were included for competitors. He asked what non-geographic considerations went into the decisions, such as housing.

Ms. Rice said that cost of living was considered. She said that the County had a pipeline to college within it, and with close proximity to it, they felt that they should look in other areas where they had a similar situation. She said that localities such as Roanoke were doing the same type of work with a city and a county and a large university there, so that was seen as something to benchmark against. She said that they also looked at areas where military bases and other things were located. She said that they also looked at scope of service, or how many citizens were being served in this organization.

Ms. Shifflett said that the size of the organization was considered.

Mr. Andrews said that reading this material, it was that jobs matched 80% of the duties, and his understanding were that if they were able to benchmark 191 positions, which was types of jobs, that encompassed 94% of the workforce, if that was 640 people, then that was about 38 positions that they were not able to benchmark this way. He said that on slide 16, the first three wage spreads were 40%, which did not surprise him, then it jumped to 60% and then suddenly jumped back to 40% at pay grade 30.

Ms. Rice said that she would have to review the information and determine whether that was a typo or something else.

Mr. Andrews said that the pay grade 30 spread should only be 40%.

Ms. Shifflett said that she believed that it was a mistake and should be 60%, because the 40% was only at the beginning of the scale. She thanked Mr. Andrews for catching that. She said that one of the things they wanted to do with employees was to build trust in how they were being compensated and how those decisions were being made. She said that they appreciated this very specific and even spread, because their current scale was not like that, where there was a lot of choice between the pay ranges. She said that they wanted their staff to be able to see what it would mean to them and be able to translate that as well.

Ms. Mallek asked if there were some departments with more unmatched positions than others, and if that was a continuing issue.

Ms. Rice said that there were some departments that were significantly off market, which she would discuss as part of the proposal for placing current staff within the system.

Ms. Mallek said that what was mentioned about extra work and extra responsibility resulting in significant increase was a great incentive to employees.

Ms. Price asked why the pay grade began with pay grade 25.

Ms. Rice said that during the work of this process of working with staff and the consultant, it was so that they could clearly see that there was no relation between this scale and the old scale.

Ms. Price asked what DLB stood for in the bottom left-hand corner.

Ms. Rice said that DLB stood for department leadership band.

Ms. Price said that it appeared that every starting position's pay grade was higher than the one before except that 28 was less than 27, and 31 was less than 30.

Ms. Price said that she presumed that part of the presentation on steps would reflect that while every employee and every position was valuable, there was a maximum value for positions.

Ms. Price said that on slide 15, the first red circle looked good because they were a positive 0.72%, but with the last three rows, they were negative in every one of those. She said that she saw this as something that was not good, because while the range of plus or minus 5% or 10% kept them within a category, every single one of those was negative, so she was not satisfied with that being the outcome. She said they want to have a better workforce, and not be in the bottom half of the compensation.

Ms. Price said that she wanted to see with the steps how they would address the difference between across-the-board pay raises of the exact same amount versus targeting the value. She said that there was a maximum value for positions, and there should be recognition of the different values at certain levels that would continue beyond the value at a different level or position of employment, also tying into wage compression.

Mr. Andrews said that the red-circled number was for base pay. He asked if, when they were talking about salary and range, they were talking about people what they actually earned, which was affected by their experience in that position.

Ms. Rice said that the base was the actual salaries of their current staff. She said that the term "base" made it confusing, but it was the salaries that stood today. She said that the salary range they were talking about were the pay grades of the old scale. She said that Chair Price had referenced the negative numbers, which were reflective of the current scale, and indicated that they were still competitive but were under.

Ms. Price said that she was not pleased with the actual base 75% column either, where they were way below, and indicated that they brought people in at a more competitive wage, but as they got more experienced, they were losing leadership because they were not paying at the upper scale to keep them. She said that it was not good for an organization to lose their leadership because they were not paid a sufficient salary to stay. She said that that level of hierarchy turnover was as critical as the overall turnover within an organization and potentially more so because of the leadership.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley said that UVA was not included in this study.

Ms. Rice said that they did not want to participate.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley asked if there was any idea of UVA's schedule or salaries at all. She said that UVA was the employer of those qualified professionals who the County could not retain. She said that there should be some way of finding out, because they were losing people who were experienced.

Ms. Rice said that some related information could be accessed readily, as they followed the state's HR, or DHRM (Department of Human Resources Management), and the pay scales and positions were also available from the state. She said that what must be requested either through staff or through FOIA (Freedom of Information Act) was the actual individual salaries of their employees.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley asked if that information could be utilized by staff or by Gallagher.

Ms. Rice said that they could not, because what Gallagher was comparing were actual salaries of individual employees.

Ms. McKeel clarified that this chart showed where they were right now, but not where they wanted to go.

Ms. Rice said yes.

Ms. McKeel said that UVA provided a lot of flexibility to their department heads.

Ms. Shifflett said that not only was the 75% column calling out potential leadership, but it was also experienced staff, so someone stayed in the same job for a while, but more competitive people were brought in and they were no longer able to keep up.

Ms. Price thanked Ms. Shifflett for that additional point. She asked if there were any other questions. Hearing none, she asked Ms. Rice to continue her presentation.

Ms. Rice said that the proposal from Gallagher had two different things that needed to take place, first setting up the scale and aligning the pay grades to what was reasonable in the market, setting a structure for the campaign. She said that the second part to it was where do they place the positions on the scale. She said that once they put this together and recommended it for the County, the midpoint annual on the scale was reflective of the market, and the minimum and maximum were outside of what the market reflected.

Ms. Rice said that in thinking about their positions, they did not necessarily want them to be on the minimum, even for someone walking in the door, because they were not in a situation where they were paid at market value, and they struggled with recruiting as they had. She said that from a methodology, that was what was happening in the County. She said that they were hiring to the bottom of the pay grade and then having them work their way up. She said that what had been presented was a shift in the way that they thought and did things, and instead they were aiming as close to that midpoint or market value as they could get and afford within reason.

Ms. Rice said that what Gallagher presented was that their staff who had the experience, skills, and education should be considered competitive in the market, which was plus or minus 10% of that midpoint. She said that the recommendation was to come in at 90% of market and do an adjustment for people who had been in position for time in seat to alleviate the compression issues currently faced. She said that was a recommendation from a philosophical perspective.

Ms. Rice said that from that point, what would happen was that in future years, they would begin looking at pay for performance, so they would work up the pay grade instead of up the steps. She said that the recommendation would be to place the positions at 90% of market, 90% of midpoint of the pay grade they were slotted into because of what the market data showed, and then do a time in seat adjustment of 2% every year they had been in their position, with a cap. She said that salaries would then be as close to market as possible, and there was an opportunity for employees to receive pay for performance in future years.

Ms. Mallek asked how bonuses would be distributed, and whether they would be affected by the proposed cap.

Ms. Rice said that she did not understand the question.

Mr. Doug Walker, Deputy County Executive, said that in the past for individuals who were at the top of the scale, when there was a cost-of-living adjustment that did not also include an adjustment to the scale, those employees would receive a one-time equivalent that would not add to their base.

Ms. Mallek clarified that otherwise those employees would not receive the raise.

Ms. Rice said that was correct. She said that proposed were different types of different compensation, and there was a cost-of-living adjustment applied to everyone, which was not based on any type of merit or evaluation, and this made the entire scale move so there would not be a cap-out for that. She said that there were then merit increases, which were based on performance, and the scale did not move when they did those and was a great opportunity for people to move up through the pay grades and realize they were rewarded for hard work.

Ms. Shifflett said that if the position stayed the same, one of the things they were focused on in this process were positions and the requests of the job description, which gave the opportunity for high performance to move across that pay scale and to move into the maximum without needing to move the job position up the scale. She said that in the past it had been challenging to move across the scale without moving up, so there was a constant need to reevaluate the role to reward that high performance. She said they wanted to focus on performance management and the merit pay to do that, versus if that position was truly graded, that position had that value assigned to it and did not change.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley asked if she was at pay grade 31, she had the potential of moving from \$46 thousand to \$74 thousand.

Ms. Rice said that was right.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley said that if she moved up, that would be a different position.

Ms. Rice said exactly.

Ms. McKeel said that their job descriptions would be critical. She asked if they would be looking at and rewriting them.

Ms. Shifflett said that there was a lot of work done over the summer, and the organization who did this work before Gallagher began looking into their positions, and all of their employees reviewed their job description, their department leadership reviewed their job descriptions with them and validated that essential function work that Gallagher used to compare positions. She said that they made sure that was refreshed and accurate to what the employees were doing today.

Ms. Shifflett said that they found that some of them were very old and people were not performing those descriptions, so they wanted that opportunity to know that when they were updated, they were accurate for employees and representing the work that they were doing before going out and benchmarking the market.

Ms. Shifflett said that mentioned on a previous slide was that there were over 400 job descriptions, which was not normal. She said that it spoke to how customized they were making each position, which spoke to their difficulties in benchmarking, and related to the importance of the job description being about the position and the essential function of the role, and not the individual's

performance.

Ms. McKeel asked what number they went to after the 400.

Ms. Rice said that it was around 160. She said that they now had a matrix that would show an employee their individual title and their departmental responsibility, but when they went out into the market, they would be benchmarked against this title or this position. She said that they also had a plan for where their hard-to-fill positions and at least half of the organization would be reviewed annually, and some would be every other year. She said that that was a big component to this, because this was a snapshot in time, and if they could not maintain it –

Ms. Price said it was worthless.

Ms. Rice said that was right.

Ms. Price said that the work done by Ms. Coltrane, Ms. Rice, and other staff since creating the HR Department was very impressive. She clarified that there was a maximum value per position, and everyone should get an across-the-board cost of living increase but separate from that was what was being described on the performance-based increases.

Ms. Rice said that using this methodology, they had proposed 199 employees who would receive a pay increase by fusing this methodology internally. She said that they would be brought up to market salary or a competitive range of their position. She said that of those 199, 137 of them were paid by the hour and were non-exempt, and of the 199, they spanned 20 departments. She said that the average increase for these employees was 9.8% for a competitive salary for the market. She said that this methodology allowed them to target some of the people who were brought in at lower pay grades and make this a place where they wanted to stay and continue to grow.

Ms. Shifflett noted that it also related to some of the areas with retention challenges and vacancies.

Ms. Rice said that they had struggled in a lot of areas, and recruiting and retention was at the forefront of that, which was why they were discussing workforce stabilization today. She said that being able to recruit better-qualified candidates by paying a market salary and filling vacancies quicker, and also having people not leave.

Ms. Rice said that society today was very much salary-driven, because people would leave a job for an extra one or two thousand dollars a year, so this was very important. She said that the other thing that this process had addressed was internal equity. She said that there had been people who had been at the organization for a long time and brought in and started working under an old pay philosophy, so they now had the opportunity to adjust for some of those things. She said they had new employees who had started in the same position and were making more than someone who had been there for 10 years.

Ms. McKeel said compression.

Ms. Rice said exactly.

Ms. Rice said that they had the ability to lay out developmental and promotional opportunities, and after this work was done, there was a 2.0 that happened, which was the performance management and career ladders. She said that these would probably be in grade steps that they could hit by getting different certifications, especially in the Community Development Department (CDD) and some other areas.

Ms. Rice said that the total compensation framework was not only about pay, but the survey looked at the benefits of holidays, vacation time, and stipends. She said that this was so that when an employee understood a total compensation package, they could fully assess where the best place was to work.

Mr. Gallaway asked if the actual study would be provided to the Board.

Ms. Rice said that a final report would be put together from Gallagher that would be provided to the Board. She said that it was currently in draft form but would be completed within the next week or two.

Ms. McKeel requested that those minor corrections to the numbers be made prior to that finalization of the document. She said that one of the things they would be looking at going forward would be the career ladders and the certifications and working all of that out.

Ms. Rice said that this was a multiyear project that they were taking step by step, because the organization had to all be on pace together as they moved through this.

Ms. McKeel asked if they would hear more about the May startup.

Ms. Shifflett said yes.

Mr. Andrews asked what was being done to help staff to understand the process.

Ms. Rice said that beginning tomorrow, the majority of today's presentation would be presented to staff so that they would understand the results, the recommendations of Gallagher, and the plan for implementation was, along with how that affected people individually. She said that those communications would begin in mid-April when department heads would let them know if they were part of the 199 receiving a pay increase or whatever that looked like. She said that they would soon have a full understanding of how this affected them.

Ms. Shifflett said that with the Board's approval, they would adopt this pay scale, which would allow them to place people on the scale. She said that what was happening next was communication and changed management effort with staff, which would be with leadership of the organization who knew their employees best, but every employee would have a change made for them. She said that while not every employee would be getting an increase, they would have a potential new job title based on the job description work being done, or would be placed on a different grade number, so they all must understand the new pay scale.

Ms. Shifflett said that if the Board approved, they would move forward with increases for the 199 and with the communications. She said that they had not yet done that with staff because they sought Board direction first. She said that by asking for this in May, it would be asking for the Board's approval to use FY23 funding to begin the process now.

Ms. McKeel asked if there was an amount available in the current budget to fund that.

Ms. Shifflett said that she had worked closely with the budget team to secure funding to begin making those changes in May. She said that she recommended doing this to separate the difference between comp and class adjustments and the 4% recommended in the budget for the COLA (cost-of-living adjustment).

Ms. Price said that for the 9.8% average for the group, she took it to be the mean.

Ms. Shifflett said yes.

Ms. Price said that it would also be helpful to know the range so that they could visually see what the impact of this was, and it would also help to see categories that would be receiving more or less. She asked for clarification about what needed to be approved today.

Mr. Richardson said that what they needed the Board to do today was to vote to accept the classification and pay study from Gallagher through the presentation today with an effective implementation date of May 6.

Ms. Price asked if that was all that was needed today.

Mr. Richardson said that he believed so.

Mr. Gallaway asked what the timing of approval was here. He said that they had the as-now for slide 15 with percentages, and they had what it would be for the pay grades, but he did not see the before for the pay grades or the after for the other slide. He clarified that they got a red line to see what the before was and what the new version was, but they got the before on one and the after on one. He said that he assumed the approval would come at a different point, and he presumed that the study would show him all that. He said that he was not opposed to the recommendation as a minimum, but he would like to see more information from the study to know whether it was enough.

Mr. Richardson said that he was unsure if he understood. He said that in looking at the Gallagher recommendations, they recommended with the new pay scale that all employees be within 90% of the new midpoint of the new ranges. He said that to see if they went far enough, they measured to see if they were within the 10% competitive range. He said that for the reason as to why they did not go the remaining 10% to be right at midpoint, it was because they could not afford to implement it with the funding in FY23 and FY24.

Mr. Gallaway asked if that was except if there was some change in revenue.

Mr. Richardson said yes. He said that once they got within the plus or minus 10%, they decided as a team that from an affordability and implementation standpoint, that was close enough with what they had recommended and what the cost was. He said that that was also considering everything else in the realm of the study and what Ms. Shifflett would be next discussing.

Mr. Gallaway said that on slide 15, the percentages were current. He asked what these numbers would look like under the recommendations. He said that he understood the affordability, but he understood that what was recommended was currently budgeted with the proposed budget, but as they knew, the proposed budget could be altered by the Board of Supervisors, and they then had to make decisions about how to achieve things. He said that he was not opposed to making this a minimum, but it sounded almost like they were locking it in instead of saying what the new slide was based on the recommendation.

Ms. Shifflett said that for the May implementation, they were looking to move forward with right-sizing for those 199 and writing that change. She said through the rest of the budget process, there was still their ability for the 4%, which was the increase happening as of July 1. She said that they were asking

that in May, all of the identified positions that were under market and not competitive would be caught up. She said that all of their employees would be right-sized on that pay scale, and they would have the July 1 implementation of the recommended and proposed 4%.

Mr. Gallaway asked if they could still discuss that.

Ms. Shifflett said yes. She said that before they moved into the April and May timeline, they could make sure that they had this information updated based on the new scale.

Ms. McKeel said that there was a timing issue about getting with staff, which was why staff was requesting direction today.

Ms. Shifflett said yes, and that they had worked on this study for a while, so employees had been waiting to hear the results. She said that going through the time and attendance project and their ADP payroll project, as much as they could help staff see what their paycheck looked like with each change and separate this change from the 4% COLA was better and more transparent communication.

Ms. McKeel said that they had not finished the benefits yet, so before they took a vote, they should discuss that.

Ms. Price said that she agreed. She clarified that they did need to take a vote on the implementation of the 199 employees for a May effective date.

Ms. Shifflett said that what she would be discussing with benefits was not about any funding changes, and she did not know if it would impact this decision.

Ms. Mallek asked if this chart would be impacted by the 4% in July, in addition to the new structure.

Ms. Shifflett said that was right. She said that they would be moving all employees and would be adjusting that scale. She said that with each cost-of-living increase, they adjusted that starting pay forward.

Ms. Birch said that in addition to needing to prepare staff, direction from the Board was sought because they were committing FY24 funds. She said that the \$1.4 million allocated for workforce implementation in the budget was used up faster when starting earlier.

Ms. Shifflett said that other than pay, employees cared about having autonomy in their work, their ability to have growth opportunities provided for them, and the health and wellness of working in their workforce. She said that when they were discussing workforce stabilization with the Board in the fall, Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley had asked if they could ask employees what they wanted. She said that she took note, and the organization surveyed 472 employees to ask them about their prioritization around HR benefits and around new programs. She said that they listed out all of the benefits offered to staff, and they wanted staff to rank the items in order of the most importance to them.

Ms. Shifflett said that the highest valued benefits were medical and dental insurance, leave program, life insurance, and retirement. She said that there were themes in comments about the lack of knowledge around HR benefits and feedback on the quality of service. She said that she was somewhat surprised at the lack of knowledge around the benefits, because they had just had open enrollment, and she knew the HR Department had spent a lot of time communicating the benefits through the new system. She said that even with the push to communicate options, they still had work to do to ensure their staff were clear about the options and what they meant to them.

Ms. Shifflett said that the highest priorities of staff were quality-of-life, , an increase in holiday schedules, and more training and professional development opportunities. She said that many national surveys stated that people wanted to see their opportunities for growth and development in their work.

Ms. Shifflett said that it was not always about a promotion, and may be about different experiences, about expanding their knowledge and skillset. She said that their staff matched that, and they also wanted to see that. She said that they prioritized certification programs, increased tuition reimbursement, and also talked about the opportunity to do department- or organization-wide training. She said that the reason for professional development was due to challenges faced by departments when attempting to bring all staff together because they were always open.

Ms. Shifflett said that they also had a section on longer-term priorities, which were items for which they wanted to be fair and set expectations properly, and that they would not be able to launch these things right away but wanted to see their interest. She said that changes to leave programs was one of the things they asked for patience on because they had a new HR Department, a new system, and classification and compensation system information that they wanted to get back, so while they were committed to analyzing those leave programs, they had to keep it as a long-term priority.

Ms. Shifflett said that also noted were work schedules and office hours, modernized systems and process, and more robust discount programs. She said that discount programs would include access to services in the community or provided by the County and the possibilities for expanding that access through events and activities.

Ms. Shifflett said that before the Board today was work that had already started and was intended to continue into FY24. She said that the HR benefits would have leave programs reassessed, Ms. Rice would be leading the benefits team in analyzing the data from Gallagher, and with the new HR, there was potential for staff to be offered different opportunities. She said that they were working on a benefits fair for the fall, during which vendors would talk to staff about the benefits that were provided before the next open enrollment so that they were able to clarify the offerings so everyone could make informed choices.

Ms. Shifflett said that the HR and Finance and Budget staff were both involved in the 457(b) deferred compensation plan, when a study completed by Bolton recommended this plan with low-cost options to employees. She said that the Board of Supervisors appointed a deferred compensation committee, and those recommendations came forward in April. She said that they were now using a new vendor to offer this additional option for their staff.

Ms. Shifflett said that there was no increase in the budget this year for tuition reimbursement because the data indicated that they were not using those funds as well as they could, so there was already adequate funding based on prior usage and trending. She said that the work that they needed to do now was to build awareness and connection to the staff so that they knew it was available as a resource to them. She said that the program would be tracked this year to see if the funds could be used and were applicable for their staff. She said that it was related to community college and college courses.

Ms. Shifflett said that the HR Department had launched and lead a regular new hire orientation, which allowed them to focus on policies and compliance as well as their benefits enrollment, as well as indoctrinating staff into the culture, mission, vision, and values. She said that the management and leadership training program was being led by the performance and strategic planning team, and the focus was building strong, competent, skilled, and compassionate managers in the organization.

Ms. Shifflett said that they had spent a lot of time building that programming, and department heads helped coach and train on some of their expertise and skillsets. She said that they wanted to make sure that their supervisors and managers were coached and supported, because it was a difficult job when they were often managing external customers and internal processes at the same time, along with budget, staff development, and work planning. She said that also proposed for training was looking outside of the organization to partners for additional offerings and certifications.

Ms. Shifflett said that for employee wellness, they were doing an RFP (Request for Proposal) and moving forward with employee focus groups around a potential employee health clinic, with the goals of enhancing overall health of employees and their families, removing barriers to dedicated quality health and wellness services.

Ms. Shifflett said that the community had faced challenges with getting doctor's appointments or getting prescriptions at pharmacies, so this would be of benefit to their staff. She said that it would also help manage the rising healthcare costs, which gave them ability to look at their financial responsibilities and the healthcare fund, so the employee healthcare clinic could be a great solution to help them balance that.

Ms. Shifflett said that also proposed was researching the mental health and cardiometabolic health of employees through EAP (employee assistance program) usage data, medical claims, and pharmaceutical cost drivers, and this would allow them to see what their staff needed. She said that the most critical areas of concern were for employees with stress, anxiety, and medical conditions such as diabetes, hypertension, and cholesterol. She noted that these issues were also tied to the employee health clinic proposed.

Ms. Shifflett said that quality of life could be directly connected to financial wellness and stress, so they were looking at providing services for staff that were helping coach them on different financial challenges, debt management, retirement, and home ownership. She said that they would attempt to provide resources for their staff that were more robust than what was offered today.

Mr. Gallaway said that the benefits fair seemed like a good idea in the fall, because people often did not understand the open enrollment process that occurred during that time period. He said that anything else that could be done ahead of the open enrollment period would be beneficial. He said that he appreciated seeing the acknowledgement of financial wellness.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley asked if there were any opportunities for employees to have flexible hours so that there would be increased hours for the community to access some of the services.

Mr. Richardson said that that was exactly the type of issue that they would look at as it related to office hours. He said that their department heads paid close attention to the accessibility of services to the community. He said that listening to both staff needs and public access needs was necessary, and they may return in the future of FY24 with adjustments for the public and the Board to consider to best match the needs.

Mr. Andrews asked if the management and leadership training program included management of the public, in a sense of understanding the challenges faced as employees who interfaced with the public in ways that private sectors did not.

Ms. Shifflett said that was right.

Ms. Mallek asked if the vendors mentioned for the benefits fair were the insurance companies who provided the policies.

Ms. Shifflett said yes.

Ms. Mallek said that she had connections to a VACo (Virginia Association of Counties) group for Nationwide and could provide contact information if necessary. She said that she was glad about the certifications, such as the C3 certification through PVCC (Piedmont Virginia Community College) that the state provided 60% of the funding for. She said that the healthcare clinic sounded like it would be a great opportunity for interns and residents from medical schools who were looking for places to do their in-service.

Ms. Price said that she appreciated that they were asking the staff. She said that they must always consider the community, clients, and customers, because they were a government entity providing a service. She said that they should have a calendar of events so that people would know when a department would be closed, so whatever the schedule for the process was could not be detrimental to the community.

Ms. Price said that during the pandemic, there had been a voiced frustration from the public about being able to only communicate via email with County staff members who were working remotely. She said that face-to-face interactions were an important way for community members to come to the County and work with people who were dealing with their issues.

Ms. Price said that they must take great care when rethinking the work schedules and office hours so that they were still able to provide their services. She said that defined benefit programs had many people who did not qualify, so that did not help a lot of people, but under defined contribution, it provided people make contributions, and if there was no defined benefit, then there was no benefit.

Ms. Price said that she was also concerned about legacy costs that may be left with the organization by creating a great retirement system with lifetime costs that came later. She said that she was more of a fan of defined contribution, which was what the 457(B) plan appeared to be. She said that they must ensure that any healthcare services, either physical or mental, were kept confidential and not reported back to their employers.

Mr. Richardson said that it had been a positive step in the organization to move to ADP and it was much easier to understand and track because it was more modern and employee-friendly. He said that it had allowed people to access necessary information much easier than before.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley asked if there were health benefits for retirement or if everyone went on Medicare.

Ms. Rice said that there was a health insurance credit available for people who had worked for a certain period of time if they were under the age of 65, and if they were retired and at age 65, they would go to Medicare.

Mr. Walker said that the County offered what was called a VRIP program for employees eligible for full retirement who had at least ten years of service with the County. He said that that would provide for continued contributions by the employers to the retiree for up to five years or until they turned 65 and were eligible for Medicare, or an age-equivalent cash contribution. He said that retirees between the ages of 60 and 65 who had ten years of service received that benefit from the County.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley said that with Medicare, there was potential to have an expanded secondary healthcare for employees who had been there for 25 years or more in order to receive health benefits that complemented and paid the difference from Medicare.

Ms. Birch said that retirees would also be pursued in the plans for the healthcare clinic, so there would be an option for there to be access to care at a cost differential that would be more beneficial than going to a private provider.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley asked if the retirees served would be employees who had been there for a certain number of years.

Ms. Birch said that those were policy considerations that would have to be reviewed during the process.

Ms. Price said that she would be concerned about the legacy costs.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley said that it also led people to stay there for their careers.

Ms. Shifflett said that they believed that modern systems were important for their customer service and employee retention, and their employees also validated that they cared about that as well. She said that she would discuss the process and systems work before them, and also about return on investment information about core systems.

Ms. Shifflett said that she would review three modernization processes being undertaken by departments currently, with the goal of validating their staff choices and intentionality around bringing

these skills, project management, changed management, and technical skills invested around the County.

Ms. Shifflett said that the first item was the mobile inspections app, which was a great improvement during the pandemic when inspectors in the CDD were able to go to an app on an iPad and review those inspections on-site and their inputs would be uploaded when they returned to the office. She said that this was also an improvement because they were able to get assignments for the day through the same process, rather than coming into the office to pick up papers for the assignment.

Ms. Shifflett said that a lot of effort went into working on the CAMINO system, a Community Development application system that allowed the very paper-based, drop-off in-person process for applications to be put online, and their development community had appreciated the ability to do all of that from their office. She said that a lot of work went into process improvement when simplifying the steps, but this was necessary to match those best practice systems, and staff had to spend time to make those improvements.

Ms. Shifflett said that the housing electronic settlement project was a collaborative effort of the Department of Finance and Budget, Social Services Department's housing unit, and the IT Department to automate the payments to vendors for the housing voucher program. She said that this was formerly a manual process that also had to be sent through the mail, which was delaying the payments to the housing vendors and causing problems for the housing division and social services.

Ms. Shifflett said that the core systems modernization was a five-year program that was in the Capital budget and operating costs. She said that the Human Resources Information System (HRIS) was implemented last year, and the areas that were seen as a return on investment included data consolidation of four different systems into one system. She said that they also had launched self-service of employee information and benefit plans so that staff could make their own changes and make self-service requests. She said that there was a return on investment because employees had clarity about what systems to use and how to use the system in less steps to gather information.

Ms. Shifflett said that they had also improved their data quality. She said that previously, there was a tremendous manual effort in HR and Finance to report on the same data, and the old system was not intuitive and created levels of risk for the organization due to the dependence on long-tenured staff who spent years building workarounds. She said that an audit of every employee's salary, deductions, and benefits took place through the HRIS implementation, and they crosschecked with every vendor to make sure records matched.

Ms. Shifflett said that moving from a paper-based system to an automated one showed them that there were errors. She said that there were 170 employees that needed corrections on the final validation report. She said that now that they had this data in one system, with reporting capabilities unlike what they had before, they could control auditing services and reviews in all areas and had built a level of confidence in the data. She said that they were better-positioned to find those errors if they did exist before they were processed and before impacting employees.

Ms. Shifflett said that it was identified that they were at high risk of falling out of the Affordable Care Act compliance without a new system, and now that they had ADP, they could monitor compliance on a monthly basis, with system controls in place to quickly identify and correct noncompliance issues, thus eliminating real financial and regulatory compliance risk. She said that they also surveyed the staff after enrollment, and overall, the experience and communications involved was a positive and supported process.

Ms. Shifflett said that for the cost of their HR system, they were able to save money on the system because they had already implemented the ADP payroll. She said that there was \$66 thousand out of the budgeted \$2 million saved, and because they had saved that money on the HR system, they would be able to move forward with the increased community development costs.

Ms. Shifflett said that the best way to identify the return on investment was to have data before beginning the project and identifying the goals they wanted to achieve. She said that the goals of the new community development system were listed on the slide. She said that they were still in the procurement process for this but hoped to launch the project soon.

Ms. Shifflett said that they were looking to automate and integrate the processes between the divisions of community development. She said that they were integrating systems such as real estate, GIS (Geographic Information System), document management system, and intake, so that data could move across the organization efficiently.

Ms. Shifflett said that this system would also require reengineering and processing of the workflows. She said that they would be looking at the best practices, and that was why they were looking at technology that understood the community development function as the County provided this public service. She said that it was also essential that this system be user-friendly and that had citizen self-service interfaces and the ability for the community to submit and monitor their applications.

Ms. Shifflett said that Mr. Lance Stewart, Director of the Department of Facilities and Environmental Services (FES) spoke about the space planning and strategies at the last work session, and she wanted to note that this was a connection to the intentionality of goal 6 and their workforce.

Mr. Gallaway asked if survey respondents specifically mentioned their physical spaces.

Ms. Shifflett said that they did. She said that it did not rise to the top and was more in the middle. She said that the items discussed today were the top four.

Mr. Gallaway asked if it was talked about.

Ms. Shifflett said yes.

Mr. Gallaway said that he thought that they all needed to do a better job of showing how they captured and repurposed funds such as the savings from the HR used to cover the CDD work. He said that that was an example of being efficient in their organization, and \$66,000 would give them tremendous value in completing that related work. He said that this process must be made more public so that the repurposing and reallocation of saved funds was understood. He said that it was necessary to show people how they operated every day to find revenues that were finite and what they did with that.

Mr. Gallaway said that he wanted to know where some of the high-human touch paired with antiquated systems resulted in unnecessary costs. He said that if they did their job for people to be more effective and efficient in what they were doing, then the level of service climbed, and if the service climbed, they could do more within the timeframe and it became easier to add extra holidays into the schedule.

Ms. McKeel said that a lot of the frustration voiced by the community around Community Development had been because staff had had to utilize workarounds, so the use of this updated technology helped staff to work smarter and was overdue.

Mr. LaPisto-Kirtley said that she was in favor of making the organization as efficient as possible in order to be competitive with UVA for employment, and that could be achieved through that technology and modernization. She said that she fully supported what was brought before the Board today. She said that a lot of people did everything on their cell phones, so the services of the County should be accessible and user-friendly on mobile platforms.

Ms. Mallek said that she was glad staff would be able to have less frustrating and more efficient systems to use for their jobs.

Ms. Price said that they should ensure that the typical consumer user could find the new systems easy to work through. She said that 170 employees with errors was approximately 20% of their workforce, so to be able to correct that and no longer have that degree of inefficiency was incredible. She said that enhanced IT security was essential, as were the investment in the infrastructure, systems, and their employees.

Mr. Bowman asked if the Board could authorize the County Executive to take the next steps to implement the classification and compensation study, with the official approval of the pay scale to come back before the Board of Supervisors as part of the adopted budget in May.

Mr. Rosenberg asked how that addressed the immediate changes to the salaries of the subset of employees.

Mr. Bowman said that for the May 6 implementation date, when they adopted the budget, they would ask the Board to approve the pay scale effective May 6 and another pay scale effective in July.

Ms. Price asked if Mr. Bowman and Mr. Rosenberg could draft that language prior to the Board taking an action.

Mr. Richardson asked if the Board would like to take a brief recess between work session topics.

Non-Agenda Item. **Recess.** The Board recessed its meeting at 5:24 p.m. and reconvened at 5:30 p.m.

Agenda Item No. 3. Work Session: FY 2024 Operating and Capital Budget, *continued*.

Ms. McKeel asked if they should make the motion.

Ms. Birch said that the motion was ready for the previous action.

Mr. Gallaway **moved** that the Board authorize the County Executive to take the steps necessary to implement the recommendations of the Gallagher compensation and classification study, with recommended compensation adjustments for staff identified in the study as compensated at less-than-market, to be effective May 6, 2023, with the new pay scale to be presented to the Board for consideration at its meeting on May 3, 2023.

Mr. Andrews **seconded** the motion.

In further discussion, Ms. Mallek asked what the two dates in May were for.

Ms. Birch said that May 6 was when the beginning of the pay period began, and May 3 was when the pay scale would be adopted.

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

AYES: Mr. Andrews, Mr. Gallaway, Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley, Ms. Mallek, Ms. McKeel, and Ms. Price.

NAYS: None.

Ms. McKeel asked if information could be provided at the next work session about including in the budget for this coming year, beginning on July 1, an increase in the stipends paid to Boards and Commissions members. She said that there were nine who had not received adjustments to those stipends for more than a decade.

Ms. McKeel asked if staff could look at the increase in stipends for what they took and what the classified would be taking in the way of increases. She said that later in the year, they could come back and look at this holistically, but the Board of Architectural Review, Board of Zoning Appeals, and the Planning Commission had not had stipend increases in longer than ten or fifteen years.

Ms. Price clarified that proposed now was an adjustment comparable to what everyone else would be getting, but as a second step, there must be an adjustment due to the time since the last adjustments to those stipends had been made.

Mr. Richardson said that they would return on the 19th.

Ms. Price turned the floor over to Mr. Richardson.

Mr. Richardson said that staff was requesting feedback from the Board on any items that the Board had flagged for things that should be brought forward on the 19th. He said that he had noted that they should revisit Biscuit Run Park and the FY24 budget, and what they had in terms of filled investment for the FY24 budget, and that if the budget moved forward as recommended with no further revisions, the Board would understand what the results of that would be.

Mr. Doug Walker, Deputy County Executive, said that they would be using their current level set position to analyze the direction the Board would like to go in regard to Biscuit Run Park, excluding the fields, acknowledging in FY23 that there was \$5.2 million appropriated to begin the work. He said that the design and construction of phase 1A, including the Route 20 entrance, the paved access drive, trailhead parking, and restrooms would be the primary outcome of that phase.

Mr. Walker said that included in the FY24 budget as proposed was phase 1B, the \$2.9 million proposed for bridges, boardwalk, greenway connector, maintenance building, and a maintenance facility for the eastern district maintenance crew. He said that the total investment at this point, \$10.5 million, reflected in the CIP (Capital Improvement Plan) would include investments in the outyears as well. He reiterated that all of this excluded fields.

Mr. Walker said that this was also included in the FY24 budget in order to accomplish what was currently anticipated to be two grass fields at Biscuit Run. He said that \$97 thousand was included in FY24 for design, and if the Board approved that as part of the FY24 budget, staff recommended appropriating \$254 thousand additional in FY23 funding in order to have funding available to proceed with that design in FY24. He said that this would position the Board for construction beginning in FY25 and the succeeding years. He said that the total cost of two fields at Biscuit Run as proposed in the CIP with some design funding in FY24 and using some FY23 appropriated money was \$3.8 million.

Mr. Walker said that his last slide referenced what happened since last summer with the ongoing process of maintaining their current grass fields. He said that the slide shown gave a snapshot of what had been led by the Parks and Recreation Department, including development of an athletic field use and allocation policy, working collaboratively with public schools and with community user groups who used the fields.

Mr. Walker said that they also collaborated with the public schools when beginning discussions of the current and future field needs and upgrades with a projected timeline. He said that they reduced the number of playing hours from 34 hours per week to 28 hours per week, reducing total play for practices and games by 312 hours at Darden Towe.

Mr. Walker said that a significant piece of that was made necessary to take a piece of a field at Darden Towe offline for the playing season in order to do an in-house rehabilitation of the field. He said that there was no additional maintenance money that was added in order to accomplish improved field maintenance work, they used what was allocated in FY23. He said that the same was generally true for FY24, with some increases associated with changes in best management practices, but not an overall increase in field maintenance.

Mr. Walker said that having been involved in some of the conversations with user groups and Parks and Recreation, there was a very concerted effort to work in conjunction with the users to better manage how the fields were used, and how decisions were made about inclement weather, and who got

access to which fields.

Mr. Walker said that the level of communication and coordination between Parks and Recreation and user groups had improved dramatically. He said that it had not increased the number of playing fields, and there was now one less, but staff had done a good job mitigating the current field number in order to maximize quality play over the course of the year. He said that that level was set to where they were with respect to FY24 and with what had happened over the course of the year.

Mr. Gallaway said that he was fundamentally opposed to approving money for new athletic fields somewhere else when they had not made decisions on the Darden Towe fields. He said that if they had to take a separate vote, he would request that the Board do so to allow him to vote no to putting fields in at Biscuit Run Park. He said that that money should be invested in Darden Towe, and the Board had to discuss what those solutions were.

Mr. Gallaway said that they had a plan that did not reduce the capacity of the whole system but improved and increased capacity of the whole system, so to spend \$4 million on two fields that would not increase the capacity or durability was an erroneous use of money. He said that there were alternatives, he would like the money to be invested in the Darden Towe fields and used to increase the overall capacity of their entire athletic field system. He said that two fields out at Biscuit Run did not do that, but replaced the one field that was out, and if other fields were taken offline, there would be four years until the fields were to be rehabilitated properly.

Mr. Walker said that there was an intention to take another field off next year.

Mr. Gallaway said that that meant they had a net gain of one field for four years, presuming they could keep up with the quality of maintenance in the current field system. He said that they had not done a good job of maintaining the quality of the current grass fields, and when they were talking about \$ 2, 3 or 6 million to invest money, he wanted a way that increased capacity, increased usage, and increased durability of their fields to meet the needs of the current users that lived there. He said that he was not looking to bring in sports tourism, but their own residents to use the fields. He said they had an option that increased playability, longevity, and capacity that they did not take, and he was not approving any fields anywhere else until that was solved at Darden Towe in the urban ring.

Ms. McKeel said that she agreed with Mr. Gallaway, and that there must be a system for parks, and the fields at Biscuit Run and at Darden Towe must be a part of that system. She said that staff had great recommendations in prior years to start that process, but they had not taken that advice. She said that Darden Towe was much more accessible to her constituents and in the urban ring. She said that the one existing field had to be taken offline when it rained, and that also limited the use. She said that there was a new product for turf fields that had more grass and less plastic and may be an option to look at.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley said that she agreed that they needed more fields and should encourage the building of more fields and pocket parks in the urban ring. She said that the product that Ms. McKeel mentioned was a combination of grass and artificial turf, so the environmental issues had not been remedied, but the new product may be worth investigating for a future park or fields. She said that there were still concerns for the environment due to the PFAS (polyfluoroalkyl substances) netting and turf that was embedded within the natural grass. She said that they did not know enough about it, and she did not want to stop progress on Darden Towe.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley said that she recalled from last year that they were about \$300,000 per field to rehabilitate each grass field at Darden Towe. She said the fields had not been maintained and the base needed to be redone. She said that it needed an overhaul of natural grass, which came with a long life expectancy and a low cost. She said that the maintenance for fields had not been done to the depth that fields were taken offline during rehabilitation.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley said that she would like to ask Ms. Birch and Mr. Richardson to work to find funds for four fields to be done correctly at Darden Towe. She said that she did not know if Biscuit Run's fields would be different from those, because that was something the Board had to decide. She said that she was in favor of coming back and looking at this, getting four fields for Darden Towe now, as Biscuit Run would take a few years to get fully developed.

Mr. Andrews asked if the 34 hour to 28 hour per week reduction, for a total of 312 hours, was over the 52 weeks of the year.

Mr. Bob Crickenberger, Director of Parks and Recreation Department, said yes.

Mr. Andrews said that there were likely some weeks that were less heavily used because of the weather.

Mr. Crickenberger said that there was a demonstration that the fields were used almost 52 weeks of the year, much more heavily during certain times of the year than others.

Mr. Andrews said that he saw the \$2 million for base work for two natural grass athletic fields, and other things talking about restrooms, entrances, design, and things that would go into improving Biscuit Run before having any types of fields at all. He said that he did not necessarily disagree with that recommendation, as it looked promising. He said that his appetite for turf fields at Darden Towe had not really changed, but if there were ways that they could improve the field or new products that they should

look at, they should take the time to look at that.

Ms. Mallek asked if the base work included a lot of heavy equipment because the geography required a lot of work to create the fields, and if that was why it was more expensive than what other communities were paying to put in fields.

Mr. Walker said that it did reflect the topography and site conditions to make it suitable for level playing fields.

Ms. Mallek said that that should not be attributed to natural grass or something else but should be contributed to that specific thing.

Mr. Walker clarified that it would be to create a flat area for a field.

Mr. Crickenberger said that they should consider that Biscuit Run had no infrastructure, which created the large increase in the difference in cost. He said that additional parking, road extension, stormwater, and restrooms were needed.

Ms. Mallek said that she would be interested in learning what could be achieved with more investment at Darden Towe in addition to the work at Biscuit Run. She asked if they were just resting and not doing other things, or if they were doing anything first that would speed up the recovery process. She said that she was not interested in going back to the discussion that they had, and one of their leading soccer advocates in the County said that their focus was now on getting fields of any sort built in the County and not arguing about the type. She said that this was a strong way for them to come together to get these improvements.

Ms. Mallek said that she would be in favor of enhancing what they were doing at Darden Towe to recover if resources were available. She said that it was important for all of their parks that when a game was not happening, there needed to be a surface that could be used by people who wanted to do activities that were not organized team sports, and those kinds of activities were not suitable on artificial turf due to the heat, plastic, and the germs.

Ms. Mallek said that she knew that regulation on PFAS was coming soon, and one of the latest discussions was when communities put in a known source of PFAS contamination and it became a problem in the water, it became a liability issue. She said that she would not be in favor of making that investment to put their community and finances in that kind of jeopardy in addition to all of the people who used Rivanna drinking water downstream.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley said that at Darden Towe, there were four regulation soccer fields and a smaller field. She said that making those four fields whole would cost \$1.2 million, and if they did it with artificial turf it would be \$4 million. She said that perhaps they could do natural grass at Darden Towe with more time out at Biscuit Run, but still get it done.

Ms. Mallek asked if the Darden Towe process Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley was proposing would be done over multiple years.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley said no. She said that they should get it done and Biscuit Run would take a few years to be completed. She said that she did not want to sacrifice anything, and playing fields in their community was too important to wait.

Ms. Price said that she was briefly enamored by the concept of sports tourism in Albemarle County until learning about the actual costs associated with that, which were not only having year-round fields, but fees and hundreds of volunteers needed. She said that a session she attended at VACo in recent years dissuaded her from supporting the funding of that type of a program here. She said that she wanted to have fields for their own community, and when they had fields for just their community and not for large tournaments, they would be more flexible with things like weather delays, because there would not be so many other people who were there, and they could just shift the game a few days if they had to.

Ms. Price said that she was much more flexible today on the issue of the fields as she just wanted to build fields for the community and get it done. She said that she supported what was being proposed with working on the fields at Darden Towe as grass fields, she supported building grass fields at Biscuit Run, starting with two and ending with four, and she supported looking for increased funding to their Parks and Recreation Department, which was about 3% of the total budget. She said that she supported both what was being done at Darden Towe and at Biscuit Run and said that it was time to just build the fields.

Mr. Richardson asked if there were four votes from the Board to continue to move forward with the plan at Biscuit Run. He said that Mr. Gallaway had indicated he was unsupportive of this plan.

Mr. Gallaway said that was correct.

Ms. Price said that the floor was open for a motion to support the plan proposed on slide 30.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley asked for clarification as to if this were voted on if that would anyway impede if the Board decided four grass fields at Darden Towe.

Mr. Gallaway said yes. He said that that was \$4 million to go to Darden Towe.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley said that it was not \$4 million, it was \$1.2 million.

Mr. Gallaway said that the current way of the budget, that money was budgeted to that project. He said that if they did something in addition to it, that money had to come from somewhere else.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley said that was what her question pertained to.

Mr. Gallaway said that money should not be programmed until they figured out that question, because the investment at Darden Towe had to be decided before this plan was.

Mr. Richardson said that he was unsure if a formal motion and work session were necessary on the budget specific to what they would do a final decision on May 3, because this was in preparation of April 19 and how they would come back and make adjustments for the Board, either finding additional money to go elsewhere, such as fields, or anything they wanted to do in terms of analyses. He said that they could go back to Darden Towe and do that first if preferable.

Mr. Gallaway said that if this money would be programmed and go out to there before money was programmed to Darden Towe, he wanted the opportunity to vote against that.

Ms. Price said that she understood.

Mr. Gallaway said that it seemed to be out of order to decide on this issue before deciding on issues related to Darden Towe.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley said that it would be beneficial to give direction to Mr. Richardson to say that if they were interested in both, they could find those monies to bring back on April 19 to make a final decision on.

Mr. Richardson said that the plan for Biscuit Run was clear in the budget, but going back to Darden Towe, there were four fields, a smaller field, maintenance, and best practices occurring. He asked if the Board would like things in addition to what was at Darden Towe right now brought back to be considered on April 19.

Ms. Mallek said that she would like to know.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley said yes. She asked if that would be bringing Darden Towe up to snuff.

Mr. Walker said that it would be a more thorough rehabilitation of the existing fields at Darden Towe beyond what had been done currently to improve overall maintenance. He said that that information could be brought back to the Board if there was interest from the Board in making that consideration.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley said that the condition of those fields should be brought up to that level for natural grass.

Ms. Mallek asked if the pertinent information could be provided with her as soon as possible prior to the work session.

Mr. Richardson said that they would look at increased levels between today and April 19. He said that if there was consensus among the Board, they would bring back funding strategies to keep a balanced budget.

Ms. Price asked if the Board was supportive of both improvements at Darden Towe and fields at Biscuit Run.

Mr. Richardson said that the Board could stay silent on Biscuit Run and only give direction on whether work should be done for increased renovations for Darden Towe and if a funding strategy should be provided. He said that if they wanted to do the same for Biscuit Run, they would take that into concert as well.

Mr. Gallaway said that in order to have a successful system of fields, there had to be a plan for how they were maintained that enhanced the capacity in their entire County. He said that they had argued over the environmental issue of the material of the fields, but the issue was really about what they could do to improve the quality of the fields at Darden Towe while improving the quality all around the County.

Mr. Gallaway that he did not want to invest money anywhere if the quality of the fields degraded to the point that they were now, and he did not want to put fields into a system that were not able to support the current inventory of fields. He said that he was not interested in investing \$4 million and then having the hours or capacity reduced.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley said that they could do both. She said that they could increase the budget percentage for the parks, because the Board and the citizens wanted more parks in the County. She said that that had to be part of it, but she was unsure of if it could be done now. She said that currently, they should have Darden Towe and a plan for Biscuit Run, because she would like to do both.

Mr. Andrews said that he would like to do both, but there was a limited budget and how they funded that and what could be scaled back without sacrificing quality was a decision he was not well-briefed enough right now to make.

Ms. Mallek said that she was in favor of increasing investments in parks due to the high demand for outdoor recreation spaces that the County saw during the pandemic. She said that she was in favor of renovating Darden Towe, and that she would ask the information already developed about fee schedules that were never adopted in 2016, because these may provide a significant amount of money to go towards maintenance for those things. She said that she was supportive of doing whatever brought the information needed to improve Darden Towe.

Ms. Price said that she appreciated Mr. Gallaway's remarks that there should be a focus on the system rather than the field surface type. She said that she would like the improvements at Darden Towe, the improvements at Biscuit Run, and the expansion of capacities within the entire parks system.

Mr. Richardson said that he believed staff had adequate direction from the Board. He said that they would return with information for next steps at the April 19 work session, where they would also look at cost considerations and strategies for how to afford that within the context of the budget recommended today.

Mr. Walker said that no reference would be made to artificial turf material in the information that came forward. He said that they were focused solely on grass material and how to invest in grass fields at Darden Towe and over time in the system.

Mr. Bowman said that on April 19, they would bring back information on fields, additional information on the Tax Relief for the Elderly program for an ordinance the Board would be considering that evening, and the third item was the Boards and Commissions compensation. He asked if there was anything else the staff could do to assist the Board on April 19.

Mr. Gallaway said that he had additional questions about his own understanding of the adding of FTEs (full-time equivalents) for their three main policies, including Housing Albemarle, for which there were two pages; where one seemed more specific to policies, and one seemed more specific to the day-to-day programs and grants. He said that he had questions for Ms. Dimock and Ms. Pethia related to the housing policy, Housing Albemarle, and how effectively they were moving that along relative to the FTEs programmed to it.

Mr. Gallaway said that if the intent was to have the conversation about finding room to add manpower to get that policy working quicker than it was currently, he had interest in that. He said that he would like to have this conversation with the entire Board at some point, which was why he initially requested the FTE analysis.

Mr. Bowman said that staff was available to answer questions, but he noted that they were over the scheduled time of the work session.

Mr. Gallaway asked what Ms. Pethia's title was on the sheet.

Mr. Bowman said her title was Housing Program Manager.

Mr. Gallaway said that 100% of her time was not spent on the Housing Albemarle policy.

Mr. Bowman said that was correct.

Mr. Gallaway said that his questions were to get into the minutiae of the actual percentage of time being allocated to the policy, because it seemed that there was only one FTE, Ms. Pethia, who dedicated 60% of her time to Housing Albemarle, and even with a new FTE working at 60%, there was still only 1.2 total FTEs dedicated toward the policy goals. He said that in contrast, for Project ENABLE, there were four FTEs who were doing a good job with the resources they were putting into that department.

Mr. Gallaway said that the Housing Albemarle policy was an urgent and high priority that required them to look at the staffing of the policy. He said that he was concerned that there was not manpower behind the vote he made for Housing Albemarle and his own policy initiative. He said that he would like to have that conversation before the budget cycle was out.

Mr. Bowman said that he would share more information at the April 19 work session to specifically find not just the housing program but the allocation of resources to that policy.

Agenda Item No. 4. From the Board: Matters Not Listed on the Agenda.

Item No. 4.a. Authorize the Chair to Sign a Letter of Support for a School Construction Assistance Program Grant Application Revenue Commitment.

Ms. Price said that the draft letter had been forwarded to the Board. She asked if there was a motion.

Ms. LaPisto-Kirtley **moved** the Board to authorize the Chair to sign a letter of support for a school

construction assistance program grant application revenue commitment.

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

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

Item No. 4.b. Other Matters.

Mr. Andrews said that the Housing Summit had been a great event.

Ms. Price said that she was on the Virginia Council on Women, and she was invited to a reception at the Governor's Mansion in honor of Women's History Month. She said that it was a nice affair at which the Governor spoke and recognized the Lieutenant Governor, who was the first woman of color to hold the office in the Commonwealth. She said that the First Lady, Suzanne Youngkin, gave detailed remarks, completely away from the podium and any notes, so it was impressive how she was able to list facts about women in Virginia's history.

Ms. Price said that it was sad to lose someone locally to another office. She said that Mr. Matthew Lawless had been the Scottsville Town Administrator for the past five years, and last night they announced that he had recently been hired as the Town Manager in Shelburn, Vermont. She congratulated Mr. Lawless on his new leadership position and thanked him for his service to the community.

Agenda Item No. 5. From the County Executive: Report on Matters Not Listed on the Agenda.

There was no County Executive report.

Agenda Item No. 6. Adjourn to April 5, 2023, 1:00 p.m., Lane Auditorium.

At 6:19 p.m., the Board adjourned its meeting to April 5, 2023, 1:00 p.m., Lane Auditorium on the Second Floor of the Albemarle County Office Building, 401 McIntire Road, Charlottesville, VA 22902. He said opportunities for the public to access and participate in the meeting would be posted on the Albemarle County website on the Board of Supervisors home page and on the Albemarle County calendar and that participation would include the opportunity to comment on those matters for which comments from the public would be received.

Chair

Approved by Board
Date: 02/19/2025
Initials: CKB