



BOOK 39
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AMHERST COUNTY
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Board of Supervisors

Claudia Tucker, Chair
District 2
Tom Martin, Vice-Chair
District 1
David W. Pugh, Jr., Supervisor
District 4
Chris Adams, Supervisor
District 3
Drew Wade, Supervisor
District 5

MINUTES

May 6, 2025

Administration Building - 153 Washington
Street - Public Meeting Room
Amherst, Virginia 24521
Meeting Convened - 3:00 PM

County Administrator
Jeremy Bryant

County Attorney
Mark Popovich

I. Call to Order

At a regular meeting of the Amherst County Board of Supervisors held on May 6, 2025, at 3:00 p.m., the following members were present:

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:

Claudia D. Tucker, Chair
Tom Martin, Vice-Chair
Chris Adams, Supervisor
Drew Wade, Supervisor

ABSENT:

David W. Pugh, Jr., Supervisor (Arrived at 3:34 pm)

STAFF:

Jeremy S. Bryant, County Administrator
Mark Popovich, County Attorney
Kristen Freeman, Clerk

Chair Tucker called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

NOTE: All Board of Supervisors' meetings are now being streamed live on Facebook and on YouTube.

II. Approval of Agenda

By motion of Supervisor Wade and with the following vote, the Board approved the agenda.

AYE: Mrs. Tucker, Mr. Martin, Mr. Adams and Mr. Wade

NAY: None

ABSENT: Mr. Pugh

III. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

Supervisor Wade led the Invocation and Vice-Chair Martin led the Pledge of Allegiance.

IV. Citizen Comment

John A. Marks Jr. addressed the Board regarding the Gateway Project. (See Attachment 1)

V. Consent Agenda

By motion of Supervisor Adams and with the following vote, the Board approved the Consent Agenda for May 6, 2025.

AYE: Mrs. Tucker, Mr. Martin, Mr. Adams and Mr. Wade

NAY: None

ABSENT: Mr. Pugh

A. Minutes - April 15, 2025

It was moved that the Board adopt the minutes of April 15, 2025.

B. Minutes - April 29, 2025 Budget Workshop

It was moved that the Board adopt the minutes of April 29, 2025 Budget Workshop.

C. Transfer from selling of Public Safety vehicles

It was moved that the Board approve the transfer of \$17,370.00 to Public Safety from the sale of vehicles revenue line.

D. Appropriation of Revenue- Commonwealth's Attorney

It was moved that the Board approve the appropriation of funds from the State Compensation Board in the amount of \$9,000.00 to the Commonwealth's Attorney budget as presented.

E. FY 25 Appropriation of Revenue - Sheriff's Office

It was moved that the Board approve the appropriation of funds as described.

F. Appropriation of Revenue - Amherst County Public Schools

It was moved that the Board appropriate the \$850,675.11 of additional revenue to the 2024-2025 School Operational Budget.

G. Appropriation of Revenue - Amherst County Public Schools

It was moved that the Board appropriate the \$1,889,674.29 of additional revenue to the 2024-2025 School Operational Budget.

H. Withdrawal from the School's Textbook Reserve

It was moved that the Board approve the \$375,000 withdrawal from the school's textbook reserve and appropriate the additional revenue to the 2024-2025 School Operational Budget.

VI. Old Business

A. FY26 Operating Budget, Capital Improvement Plan(CIP), and Solid Waste Fund Budget Adoption

By motion of Supervisor Adams and with the following vote, the Board adopted resolution 2025-4-R through 2025-7-R as presented.

AYE: Mrs. Tucker, Mr. Martin, Mr. Adams and Mr. Wade

NAY: None

ABSENT: Mr. Pugh

VII. County Attorney's Report

The County Attorney had no matter to discuss.

VIII. Liaison and Committee Reports

A. Planning Commission - David Pugh

In Supervisor Pugh's absence, Jeremy Bryant, County Administrator, reported that in April, the Planning Commission tabled a utility solar facility request so that the petitioner and adjoining property owner have time to work out concerns. He reported that the Commission is currently reviewing an overlay ordinance for the Blue Ridge Railway Trail that is intended to go to a Public Hearing in June for the Planning Commission. Mr. Bryant also reported that in May, the Commission has a Public Hearing for a short-term tourist rental of a dwelling at 156 Mountain Lake Trail as well as a Public Hearing for a vet clinic at 351 Peters Hollow Road. Additionally, Mr. Bryant stated that the Route 29 Business Beautification Committee, which is a subcommittee of the Planning Commission, planted over 2,000 daffodils along the interchanges in Madison Heights, they completed the first-ever Route 29 Business Beautification Committee annual report, approved staff to decorate the Madison Heights community sign during different seasons, and they are ordering new banners with different colors, and the committee is currently in discussions to expand its geographic area.

IX. Departmental Reports

A. Treasurer's Report

Joanne Carden, Treasurer, addressed the Board and stated that, as she recently presented in the Citizens' Academy, collections are very good right now. She said that the collection rate for Real Estate is at 98.72%, which covers Real Estate from years 2012-2024, and that Personal Property collections are at 96.76%, which also covers years 2012-2024. Mrs. Carden also reported to the Board that the textbook and cafeteria accounts both have over a million dollars in them and that she would suggest possibly moving some of that money into the Local Government Investment Pool, LGIP, to earn interest, as has been done for the County and Service Authority. Mrs. Carden also reported that from 2021 to 2024, the Treasurer's office received an accreditation certification from the state.

Supervisor Adams asked Jeremy Bryant to facilitate with Dr. Wells, Ms. Lukanich, and Mrs. McBride to see about the possibility of moving some of that money, and if there are any other creative ideas.

X. Citizen Comment

There was no public comment.

XI. Matters from Members of the Board of Supervisors

Chair Tucker stated that the Fair has been moved to September and mentioned there will be a livestock show at the Fair which will be a stepping stone to the Virginia State Fair for those kids.

Vice-Chair Martin had no matter to discuss.

Supervisor Adams had no matter to discuss.

Supervisor Wade had no matter to discuss.

Supervisor Pugh joined the meeting at 3:34 pm.

The Board recessed at 3:35 pm until 4:00 pm.

XII. Call to Order - Planning Commission

Chair Beverly Jones called the Planning Commission to order.

XIII. Joint Discussion with Planning Commission - 4 PM

A. Battery Storage

The Board and the Planning Commission held a joint forum to discuss battery storage facilities. ESG, a private company, attended the meeting to provide information to the Board and Commission.

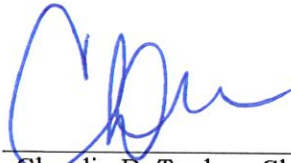
XIV. Adjournment

By motion of Supervisor Adams and with the following vote, the Board adjourned at 5:25 pm.

AYE: Mrs. Tucker, Mr. Martin, Mr. Pugh, Mr. Adams and Mr. Wade

NAY: None

ABSENT: None



Claudia D. Tucker, Chair
Amherst County Board of Supervisors



Jeremy Bryant, County Administrator

Gateway Presentation to BOS on 5/6/25

Good evening Madam Chair, members of the Board and Staff. My name is John A. Marks, Jr. and I reside in District #5. This evening I want to discuss the Gateway Project, and since I only have three minutes I will just touch the basic points, no details.

My records indicate the Gateway Project has been the subject of discussion with the Amherst County Board of Supervisors since at least November 22, 2022. The Gateway Project is the parcel of land in the area where State Route #210 intersects State Route #163(Old US 29).

The Board of Supervisors has committed 3.5 million dollars of taxpayer money to the project, one million dollars from the ARPA grant and 2.5 million borrowed by the Service Authority, with the anticipation that the Service Authority revenue from the project will support the long-term debt service, and if not, the County will provide the difference. This is based on a commitment from the BOS, and I quote the Support Agreement, "If at any time Revenues are insufficient or expected to be insufficient to make any of the payments referred to in paragraph 3 hereof, ACSA shall notify the County Administrator of the amount of such insufficiency and the County Administrator shall request a supplemental appropriation from the Board in the amount necessary to make such payment."

As I speak, I am not aware of a formal written commitment by the Developer as to when construction will start, what the project will consist of, the rate of construction and the anticipated date of completion, or if the project will ever materialize. Consequently, the

County has no way to determine at what time in the process, if ever, the project revenue will cover the long-term debt service.

Several important events will soon occur. First, the Service Authority timeline requires advertising for bids on 5/22/25 for force main and the pump station, with construction to start in three months. Second, by March 1st, 2026, permanent long-term financing must be in place for the 2.5-million-dollar loan, which I suspect will equal .01 on real estate tax rate.

I believe the key to successful completion of this project is a written commitment from the developer as to what he is going to do and when, along with a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Service Authority and the Developer, along with consequences for non-compliance.

I would urge this Board to temporarily halt work on this project, and in conjunction with the Service Authority make a thorough assessment of the project's status as well as a reassessment of the Board's position.

Thank you.