BOOK 40
Page 48-53

AMHERST COUNTY
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Board of Supervisors

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

MINUTES

April 21, 2026
Administration Building - 153 Washington Street - Public Meeting Room
Amherst, Virginia 24521
Meeting Convened - 7:00 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 April 21, 2026, at 7:00 p.m., the following members were present:

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:
Tom Martin, Chair
Chris Adams, Vice-Chair
David W. Pugh, Jr., Supervisor
Frank Campbell, Supervisor
Claudia D. Tucker, Supervisor

ABSENT: None

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

Chair Martin called the meeting to order at 7:00 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 Campbell and with the following vote, the Board approved the agenda.

AYE: Mr. Martin, Mr. Adams, Mr. Pugh, Mr. Campbell, and Mrs. Tucker
NAY: None
ABSENT: None

III. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

Supervisor Tucker led the Invocation and Chair Martin led the Pledge of Allegiance.

IV. Citizen Comment

Ronald Staton, District 5, addressed the Board regarding real estate taxes.

Mark Labadie, District 2, addressed the Board regarding private and public sector jobs and he shared other opinions.

Jacob Aliff, District 5, addressed the Board regarding concerns about the speeding on Woodland Drive and the safety of the citizens and children in that neighborhood.

Robert Adams, District 3, addressed the Board wanting to know when they would be adopting the tax rate for real estate.

V. Public Hearing

A. Budget Presentation

Tracie Morgan, Finance Director, gave the Board a presentation on the FY 2027 proposed budget. **(See attachment 1)**

The Public Hearing was opened.

John Marks Jr., District 5, addressed the Board with thoughts and concerns on the proposed budget. **(See attachment 2)**
Sam Bryant, District 1, addressed the Board regarding the proposed budget.
Mark Labadie, District 2, addressed the Board regarding the proposed budget.

The Public Hearing was closed.

The Board directed staff to bring back information on COLA options for employees ranging from 2%, 2.5%, and 3% as well as options on employees paying increases in their health insurance premium opposed to the county paying the 14.4% increase.

By motion of Chair Martin and with the following vote, the Board will convene on May 5, 2026, to consider approval of the FY27 O&M Budget and Capital Improvement Plan, and set the tax rate for real estate.

AYE: Mr. Martin, Mr. Adams, Mr. Pugh, Mr. Campbell, and Mrs. Tucker
NAY: None
ABSENT: None

B. Special Exception 2026-089 Mays & Nichols

Request by Jerry and Debbie Mays and Jason and Sarah Nichols for a special exception in the A-1, Agricultural Residential District. The purpose of the special exception is to allow a 'glamping' retreat (campground) that would include a shared bathhouse, pavilion, office structure, 15 canvas tents, and a common parking area and utilities. The property is located at 480 Emmanuel Church Road and is further identified as tax map number 49-A-5.

Conditions:

1. The campground shall be developed in substantial conformance with the **conceptual site plan submitted with the application.**
2. The campground shall be limited to **no more than fifteen (15) campsite structures**. Any expansion of the campground beyond **15 campsites** shall require further review and approval by the County.

3. The maximum occupancy of any campsite shall **not exceed one hundred twenty (120) days**, consistent with **Section 904.02 of the Amherst County Zoning Ordinance**.
4. All guest parking shall occur within the **designated parking area** shown on the conceptual plan.
5. Outdoor lighting shall be **shielded and directed downward** to minimize impacts on adjacent properties.
6. **A vegetative buffer shall be maintained along property boundaries** where practicable.
7. The development shall comply with all applicable **health department, fire marshal, and building code requirements**.
8. Any expansion of the campground beyond **15 campsites or additional structures** shall require further review and approval by the County.

The Public Hearing was opened.

James Mays spoke on behalf of the applicants.

Proponents: Mark Labadie
Opponents: None

The Public Hearing was closed.

By motion of Supervisor Tucker and with the following vote, the Board approved Special Exception 2026-089 with the listed conditions.

AYE: Mr. Martin, Mr. Adams, Mr. Pugh, Mr. Campbell, and Mrs. Tucker
NAY: None
ABSENT: None

C. Conditional Rezoning Amendment 2025-733 Jamey White

Request by Jamey L. White, P.E. – White Engineering & Design for an amendment to the proffers and master development plan associated with conditional rezoning 2021-206. The property is located at 2045 S. Coolwell Road and is further identified as tax map number(s) 148-1-7A and 148I-2-B-B.

Proffers dated January 22, 2026:
1. A formal site plan shall be submitted for review that is in general compliance with the submitted concept plan.
2. The developer shall work with Amherst County Planning, the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to develop a plan that protects on-site wetlands, streams, and downstream properties.
3. Screening trees shall be installed where existing tree growth is absent between the Violet's View development and nearby single-family homes along Patrick Court and Valley View Drive.
4. The maximum number of residential units shall be limited to 72.

The Public Hearing was opened.

Jamey White, the applicant, addressed the Board.

Proponents: Randy Jennings
Opponents: None

The Public Hearing was closed.

By motion of and with the following vote, the Board approved Conditional Rezoning Amendment 2025-733.

AYE: Mr. Martin, Mr. Adams, Mr. Pugh, Mr. Campbell, and Mrs. Tucker
NAY: None
ABSENT: None

VI. Consent Agenda

By motion of Supervisor Tucker and with the following vote, the Board approved the Consent Agenda for April 21, 2026.

AYE: Mr. Martin, Mr. Adams, Mr. Pugh, Mr. Campbell, and Mrs. Tucker
NAY: None
ABSENT: None

A. Minutes - April 7, 2026

It was moved that the Board adopt the minutes of April 7, 2026.

B. Letter to Senator Deeds

It was moved that the Board retroactively approved sending the attached letter to Senator Deeds.

VII. New Business

A. Board of Zoning Appeal Request

The Board's consensus was to leave the Ordinance as it currently stands.

VIII. County Attorney's Report

The County Attorney had no matter to discuss.

IX. Liaison and Committee Reports

A. Parks, Recreation & Cultural Development Board - Tom Martin

Chair Martin expressed condolences to the family of John Mann, who passed away on April 8, 2026, and directed staff to put together a Commemorative Resolution for his family. Mr. Martin reported that the Parks and Recreation Dept has a lot going on, including youth flag football, youth soccer, adult pickup soccer, Amherst County Employee golf league, several upcoming summer camps, basketball, second stage music camp, football, sports camps, and Brazilian soccer camp. He stated that the Amherst County Day and Easter Egg Hunt was a huge success. He also stated that some other upcoming activities are the Senior Luncheon, coming up on May 19th, the annual Batteau Festival on June 17th through June 20th, Christmas in July on July 11th, and Day in the Park at Mill Creek Lake on July 25th.

B. Agriculture Committee - Claudia Tucker

Supervisor Tucker stated that the Agriculture Committee is now a full board with no vacancies. She stated that the Ag Committee is working on their farm day, they have six different farms that they are going to ride to and look at and make a decision on which one will be selected for farm day, at present they plan to do just one and if it goes well they may do another one later this year. Mrs. Tucker said the committee is working hard on the fair as well and she thanked Leslie Sprouse for her hard work on obtaining sponsors for the fair.

X. Citizen Comment

Jacob Aliff, District 5, addressed the Board with thoughts and concerns over procurement practices and budgeting.

Mark Labadie, District 2, addressed the Board with thoughts and concerns on government being involved in real estate procurement and development.

XI. Matters from Members of the Board of Supervisors

Supervisor Tucker had no matters to discuss.

Supervisor Campbell asked Mr. Bryant how close the county was to completing the audit. Mr. Bryant stated that Mrs. Morgan and her staff have been working hard with a lady named Ms. Lindsay, who was hired through a partnership with VML VACO, which is the Virginia Municipal League and the Virginia Association of Counties. He stated that Ms. Lindsay has been working on reconciling the cash between the two different financial systems that the county is implementing. Mrs. Morgan stated that Ms. Lindsay would be in the Finance Department on April 22nd to meet and go over where she is at in that process as well as returning the following week to meet with the Treasurer and her staff. Mrs. Morgan stated that Ms. Lindsay has made it through FY25 as far as comparing the systems and providing entries and they will be meeting with the Treasurer to go over the reconciliation of each month to make sure that they all balance with each other and then at that time Mrs. Morgan can start compiling things for the audit.

Supervisor Pugh had no matters to discuss.

Vice-Chair Adams asked the Sheriff to look into the speeding situation on Woodland Drive.

Chairman Martin spoke about the policy on using the county logo and seal and several entities using them without approval, Mr. Popovich was asked to assist in notifying these entities a cease and desist letter until they have gotten approval.

XII. Closed Session

A. A closed session for the limited purpose of consultation with legal counsel retained by the Board regarding specific legal matters requiring the provision of legal advice from legal counsel related to authority of the Board of Supervisors related to School Board employees.

Chair Martin motioned to go into closed session and was approved with the following vote:

AYE: Mr. Martin, Mr. Adams, Mr. Pugh, Mr. Campbell, and Mrs. Tucker
NAY: None
ABSENT: None

Vice-Chair Adams motioned to come out of closed session and was approved with the following vote:

AYE: Mr. Martin, Mr. Adams, Mr. Pugh, Mr. Campbell, and Mrs. Tucker
NAY: None
ABSENT: None

B. A closed session for the limited purpose of consultation with legal counsel retained by the board regarding specific legal matters requiring the provision of legal advice by such counsel related to prospective business opportunities pursuant to Section 2.2-3711(A)(8).

Chair Martin motioned to go into closed session and was approved with the following vote:

AYE: Mr. Martin, Mr. Adams, Mr. Pugh, Mr. Campbell, and Mrs. Tucker
NAY: None
ABSENT: None

Vice-Chair Adams motioned to come out of closed session and was approved with the following vote:

AYE: Mr. Martin, Mr. Adams, Mr. Pugh, Mr. Campbell, and Mrs. Tucker
NAY: None
ABSENT: None

XIII. Certification of Closed Session

CERTIFICATION OF CLOSED MEETING

I move that the Amherst County Board of Supervisors certify by a recorded vote that, to the best of each Board member's knowledge, only public business matters lawfully exempted from the open meeting requirements of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act and identified in the motion authorizing the closed session were heard, discussed, or considered in the closed session.

Mr. Martin: AYE
Mr. Adams: AYE
Mr. Pugh: AYE
Mr. Campbell: AYE
Mr. Tucker: AYE

XIV. Adjournment

By motion of Vice-Chair Adams and with the following vote, the Board adjourned at 9:30 pm.

AYE: Mr. Martin, Mr. Adams, Mr. Pugh, Mr. Campbell, and Mrs. Tucker
NAY: None
ABSENT: None

Tom Martin, Chair
Amherst County Board of Supervisors

Jeremy Bryant, County Administrator

April 21, 2026 Comments to Board of Supervisors

concerning the proposed 2027 County Budget

Good evening, members of the Board and Staff my name is John A. Marks, Jr and I reside in the 5th District.

As I listened to the discussion concerning the 2027 proposed budget, and the things we just had to have, my thoughts went back to 2019 when I was told the county really needed to sell Winton Country Club and how beneficial that would be. Wrong. That turned out to be a certifiable disaster. Then in January of 2021 the county voted to close the landfill and ship waste to some outside landfill and save $250,000 a year. Wrong again. That little adventure cost the taxpayers a conservative $5 million dollar loss as another loan was required to dig a hole for cell #2. The final word on the Gateway Project is still out. I do know $579,000 of County funds has been spent on the project and as of 3/24/26 there is no commitment from the developer in terms of a Memorandum of Understanding, and no site plan provided, consequently there is no way to determine what will be built. In my opinion it was unprecedented and wrong for the County to get involved in a private development project.

I also believe the County's proposed 2027 budget is wrong. This budget requires a 49% increase in the basic tax rate, plus increases in property value because of the reassessment. Some citizens will experience as much as 80% increase in real estate taxes.

There has been no certified audit of County finances since 2024. In two months, fiscal year 2026 will be closed out. Without a certified audit there is no absolute handle on revenue and expenses, but even without that information this budget proposes to plunge ahead with a huge tax increase, and borrowing another $5,990,682, driving the County debt service to $58,985,522. Without a certified audit there are a lot of unknowns. For example, the proposed budgets for 2025 and 2026 removed $3,666,262 and $475,000 respectively from the unobligated fund, so without an audit we really have no idea if that money was spent, or what monies are actually in the unobligated fund. The Board should level fund this 2027 proposed budget until it has at least a certified audit of fiscal year 2025 completed, projected to be this year, to provide some accurate information. That data can then be used to provide a more accurate 2028 budget. Otherwise, this budget is a guess.