

CITIZEN'S BUDGET REVIEW COMMITTEE
Meeting Minutes – 3-1-2021
Holbert Building – Board of Supervisors Meeting Room

Members present:

Dawn Napper, Vice Chair (Battlefield)
Nicole Cole (Salem)
Kathryn Dennis, Chairperson (Chancellor)
Richard Thompson (Courtland)
Tim Bryner, Secretary (Livingston)
April Gillespie (Berkeley)
Scott Phelps (Alternate Courtland)

Call to order: 6:37 PM

Pledge: Richard Thompson

Moment of Silence

Determination of Quorum

Old Business:

Kathryn Dennis brought up the 11/17/20 minute for approval. Dawn Napper motioned to approve, and Richard Thompson seconded. This passed unanimously by the three that had been present at that meeting (Dawn Napper, Richard Thompson, and Kathryn Dennis).

New Business:

Kathryn Dennis mentioned she made up a skeleton for the presentation (for the Board of Supervisors).

Richard Thompson has an issue with considering increasing the ADVERTISED tax rate in the presentation. Kathryn Dennis motioned to keep that bullet because of the state mandated raises and uncertainty of revenue. The motion passed 4-2 with Richard Thompson and April Gillespie voting no.

April Gillespie asked what the tax was and a discussion went on about that and the advertised tax rate.

Kathryn Dennis proposed the Board of Supervisors, keep the advertised personal property and business tax rate the same as 2020; this passed unanimously.

Scott Phelps has questions about utilities samples and the increase to the library fund that Bonnie Jewell, Chief Financial Officer, had discussed.

April Gillespie wanted clarification on Tim McLaughlin's, Chancellor District Supervisor, motion to reduce business taxes; Bonnie Jewell discussed this matter and clarified that this was local funding, not CARES money that would be used to backfill. Richard Thompson then asked if this money could be used for transportation and a discussion ensued on this.

Dawn Napper brought up areas she felt potential cuts could be made to fully fund the schools' budget and Bonnie Jewell went over these suggested cuts and provided insight on these proposed cuts and if they were even possible; a little over \$7 million is one-time funding.

Dawn Napper asked about paying for cellphones and Bonnie Jewell advised the Board of Supervisors and employees in certain positions are supplied with cellphones.

Nicole Cole was in support of one-time funding to be used to support the budget for 2022 if reticent in raising tax rate in an election year. April Gillespie didn't recommend one-time funding for pay raises and spoke further on this and concerns about raising taxes and a discussion occurred on this; Nicole Cole furthered this discussion; Bonnie Jewell also mentioned the draw back to using one-time funding for on-going expenses from a credit rating perspective.

Nicole Cole recommended to use one-time transfers to support capital funding of projects and then discussion went on with Jewell on this and other funding on the slide dealing with Recommended Budget – Alignment to Strategic Plan.

Nicole Cole commented that the Board of Supervisors is responsible to fund FTEs not only for the county but also schools (referenced pg. 89 in the FY 22 County Administrator's Budget) and discussion occurred about this and she proposed schools' FTEs should be referenced with an asterisk within the county's budget.

April Gillespie stated if we put the budgets together, we would only need one board, as opposed to the separate boards required by state law.

Kathryn Dennis mentioned Ed Petrovitch, County Administrator, did a good job preparing a proposed budget. She did have concerns over the Sheriff's presentation to the BOS recently regarding increased narcotics use and prostitution in the county. She recalled that the Sheriff told the BOS he did not have the resources (narcotics detectives) necessary to mitigate these issues.

Kathryn Dennis asked about the VCR Trail and Route 3 bump out projects on page 101 for the FY22 recommended budget and some discussion occurred.

Some discussion came up about the new FTEs proposed on page 10 of the FY22 recommended budget.

Dawn Napper asked Dawn Shelley, Spotsylvania School Board Chair, about some of the proposed FTEs in the proposed school budget and where the need came from.

Nicole Cole proposed to reallocate the 1.1, 0.3, and 0.1 million dollars on slide 16 of the recommended budget power point and Bonnie Jewell provided insight on this.

Bonnie Jewell provided information on the effect a 5-cent increase on the real estate tax would be = \$117 per year on the average residential real estate tax bill.

April Gillespie brought up about raising taxes and how that is then coming out of paychecks.

April Gillespie's take on using one-time funds, could potentially hurt.

Scott Phelps asked about the partnership between the schools and Germanna and Dawn Shelley provided information in this.

Tim Bryner brought up the Evergreen study for schools and Dawn Shelley provided insight on this. Tim Bryner felt that the third year of Evergreen should be looked at in comparison to where employees are at now and address deficiencies where they exist.

Kathryn Dennis brought up raises for school administrators and Dawn Shelley provided insight on that and this went into a discussion of funding proposed school pay raises.

Kathryn Dennis asked about the effect on the budget from possible state funded positions getting a pay increase and Bonnie Jewell provided insight on this.

Kathryn Dennis had questions on refunding dual enrollment admissions.

Dawn Napper spoke to April Gillespie's comments on tax increase in relation to pay increases and spoke on the topic of pay increases and programs offered through the school system.

Nicole Cole supported the stance on the tax rate and supporting consolidating and parity between the county and schools; also spoke on lack of consistency of local funding.

Kathryn Dennis asked Bonnie Jewell if there were any undesignated funds in the proposed budget and Bonnie Jewell advised around \$2 million at the end of FY22 budget potentially.

Dawn Shelley spoke on the tax rate and that she doesn't ask for tax increases, unfair that the schools get blamed for tax increases, and spoke more on this matter.

April Gillespie noted have a needs based budget.

Bonnie Jewell spoke on Special Service Districts.

Motion to Adjourn:

Tim Bryner motioned to adjourn the meeting and Richard Thompson seconded. Meeting was adjourned at 8:50 PM. Passed unanimously.