

**At a Special Meeting of the Sussex County Board of Supervisors  
Held in the General District Courtroom on  
Thursday, August 18, 2016 at 5 pm**

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT**

Keith C. Blowe  
C. Eric Fly, Sr.  
Alfred G. Futrell  
Susan B. Seward  
John A. Stringfield  
Rufus E. Tyler, Sr.

**STAFF PRESENT:**

Deborah A. Davis, County Administrator  
Vandy V. Jones, III, Deputy County Administrator  
John P. Woodley, County Attorney  
Shilton R. Butts, Assistant to the County Administrator/Deputy Clerk to the Board  
Deste J. Cox, Deputy Treasurer  
Andre M. Greene, Director of Community Development  
Kelly Moore, Accounts Payable Clerk  
Valarie Patterson Ricks, Lieutenant  
Eddie T. Vick, Public Safety Coordinator  
Monica J. Whitney, Permits Technician

**1. Call to Order/Determine Quorum**

The August 18, 2016 meeting of the Special Meeting of the Sussex County Board of Supervisors was called to order by Chairman Blowe.

**2. The Invocation**

The Invocation was offered by Chairman Blowe.

**3. The Pledge of Allegiance**

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all.

**4. Agenda Amendments**

Chairman Blowe added Citizens Comments to the agenda.

**5. Approval of Agenda**

ON MOTION OF SUPERVISOR SEWARD, seconded by SUPERVISOR FUTRELL and carried: RESOLVED that the Sussex County Board of Supervisors hereby approves the August 18, 2016 special meeting agenda adding Citizens' Comments to the agenda.

Voting aye: Supervisors Blowe, Fly, Futrell, Seward, Tyler

Voting nay: none

Absent during vote: Supervisor Stringfield

## **6. Closed Session**

Supervisor Fly made the motion, seconded by Supervisor Seward to enter closed session to seek legal consultation from the county attorney regarding the radio communication system. Chairman Blowe questioned whether the Board could enter Closed Session. County Attorney Woodley clarified that as long the closed session item was regarding the item on the agenda, the Board could enter Closed Session.

ON MOTION OF SUPERVISOR FLY, seconded by SUPERVISOR SEWARD and carried: RESOLVED that the Sussex County Board of Supervisors hereby enters Closed Session to seek legal consultation from county attorney regarding the radio communication system.

Voting aye: Supervisors Blowe, Fly, Futrell, Seward, Tyler

Voting nay: none

Absent during vote: Supervisor Stringfield

## **7. Return to Open Session/Certification**

ON MOTION OF SUPERVISOR SEWARD, seconded by SUPERVISOR TYLER and carried: RESOLVED that the Sussex County Board of Supervisors hereby return to Open Session; and,

FURTHER RESOLVED that the Sussex County Board of Supervisors hereby approves adoption of resolution for certification, to-wit:

WHEREAS, that the Sussex County Board of Supervisors convened a Closed Meeting on this date pursuant to an affirmative recorded vote in accordance with the provisions of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act; and

WHEREAS, Section 2.2-3712 of the Code of Virginia, as amended, requires a certification by the Board that such Closed Meeting was conducted inconformity with Virginia law.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Supervisors hereby certifies that, to the best of each member's knowledge (i) only public business matters lawfully exempted from Open Meeting requirements by Virginia law were discussed in the Closed Meeting to which this certification resolution applies, and (ii) only such public business matters as were identified in the motion convening the Closed Meeting were heard discussed or considered.

Voting aye: Supervisors Blowe, Fly, Futrell, Seward, Tyler

Voting nay: none

Absent during vote: Supervisor Stringfield

## **8. Communication System Discussion/Status**

Mr. Eddie T. Vick, Public Safety Coordinator, provided brief background information and an update of the radio communication system.

Mr. Vick advised that in 2011, the County was notified that the backbone of the current system was obsolete. The manufacturer no longer supported the system. Parts were no longer available. The Board approved staff to contract with Federal Engineering (FE) to conduct studies to determine what the best possible solution to address the radio communication system needed. Two (2) studies were conducted by Federal Engineering (FE) – the Department of Corrections (DOC) system and the STARS system (Virginia State Police).

The Board approved the County staff to pursue the DOC system. Since DOC had already procured the system, the County could just “build out” its capability for the County’s use.

There was discussion by the Board in reference to the selection of the DOC system versus the STARS system (Virginia State Police). Mr. Richard Martin, Federal Engineering, basically advised that one system had more capacity and coverage. Mr. Vick also advised that no other jurisdiction was on the STARS system at the time, although one (1) had just joined recently. Mr. Vick stated that the system required P25, Phase II; the STARS system wasn’t Phase II at the time.

Mr. Vick stated that the Board requested the County to look at the STARS system again. He stated that it would cost the County \$10,000.00 more to look at it a second time and take several months.

Members of the Board were concerned with why the County was being charged an additional \$10,000.00 for a project that was already being worked on by Federal Engineering as consultants. Mr. Martin advised that he could not state any specifics because he didn’t have documentation; however, Federal Engineering did study the STARS system again to see if they could make it work. He stated that the state didn’t want to move forward with this project. There was no frequency to build out the system. The system was a process of a slow upgrade. It also did not offer any autonomy for the County.

Task Order 3 allowed Federal Engineering to begin the process of developing the County’s specification and procurement strategies and negotiation of the best and final offer (BAFO) contract with the Harris Corporation. (Harris Corporation is the radio vendor for the DOC system.) Federal Engineering negotiated with the Harris Corporation on the County’s behalf.

Mr. Vick stated that after receiving the BAFO from Harris Corporation in December 2014, he found some discrepancies. One of the discrepancies was there were more radios than the actual number used. There were fifty (50) additional radios and a different model used. Old data from 2003 had been used in the BAFO. There were also several items that were

not included that needed to be addressed before the funding was approved by the Board. Mr. Vick stated that a memo was sent to the County Administrator and Mr. T. Robertson Blount, the Finance Director at the time, with the updated information. (The discrepancies are noted in a memo included in the Board packet.)

Mr. Vick stated that the Finance Department couldn't find any the documentation where there had been any money appropriated for Task Order 3. The County Administrator signed the order and returned it to Federal Engineering to begin the work. Since the money was appropriated, the invoices from Federal Engineering were being paid from the \$2,000,000.00 that was set aside for the radio system project in the FY2014/2015 budget. This condition created a shortfall of \$100,000.00.

There was concern from the Board of when the County was notified of the cost of the towers. (Mr. Vick advised that Harris Corporation was responsible for overseeing the structural analysis of the tower.) Mr. Greg Strader of Harris Corporation stated that Harris Corporation received the report dated April 29, 2016 from the engineering firm. He stated that it was at this point, the findings were discussed with Mr. Vick to see if the County wanted to take the next step to look at doing a modification design—what would it take to strengthen the tower. Mr. Strader stated that they were given clearance to talk to the engineering firm on a strengthening design. Mr. Strader received the Modification Design Report from the Engineering firm June 2, 2016. The report was taken to a tower company. The tower company advised that the modification design the engineering firm provided could not be done. Mr. Strader stated that it is recommended to build a new tower. He stated the estimated cost for a Self-Supporting tower would cost approximately \$325,000.00; a Guyed Tower would cost approximately \$200,000.00.

In summary, Mr. Vick stated that work will continue to be done at the other sites. Mr. Vick estimates that this project will take about six (6) months. Mr. Vick stated that the current radio system is failing. He should be able to provide a close cost in a couple of days. He advised that money has been spent. A lot of the equipment is in the warehouse. There are a couple items that hasn't been done.

Mr. Vick wanted to go on record stating “we’ve already gone way pass, overdue on what is need to do here. I encourage you not to do this. Because there is no Plan B. There is no way to overcome this. There are no more parts; there is no more fixing to this system than we have”.

*The Radio Communication System background information is included in the Board packet for the August 18, 2016 regular Board of Supervisors meeting.*

*Mr. Stringfield entered at 6:40 p.m.*

## **9. Citizens' Comments**

Comments were heard from Milton Moore (Wakefield District) regarding letting the old tower pay for the new tower instead of tearing down the old tower.

**10. Adjournment**

ON MOTION OF SUPERVISOR FUTRELL, seconded by SUPERVISOR TYLER and carried: RESOLVED that the Sussex County Board of Supervisors hereby adjourned the August 18, 2016 Special Meeting of the Board of Supervisors at 6:55 p.m.

Voting aye: Supervisors Blowe, Fly, Futrell, Seward, Stringfield, Tyler

Voting nay: none

DRAFT