

At a Special Virtual Meeting (Budget Work Session) of the Board of Supervisors  
Held on Thursday, February 25, 2021 – 7:30 pm

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT**

Marian D. Johnson  
Debbie P. Jones  
Wayne O. Jones  
Susan M. Seward  
Rufus E. Tyler, Sr.  
Steve White, Tie Breaker

**BOARD MEMBER ABSENT**

C. Eric Fly

**STAFF PRESENT**

Richard Douglas, County Administrator  
John Broderick, Public Schools – Director of Finance & Business Operations  
Deste J. Cox, Treasurer  
G. Reid Foster, Public Safety Coordinator  
Jeffrey Gary, Director of Public Works  
Ernest Giles, Sheriff  
William Hagy, Director of Social Services  
William R. Jenkins, General Registrar  
Shilton R. Butts, Assistant to the County Administrator/Deputy Clerk

**Item 1. Call to order/Determine Quorum (8:00 p.m.)**

The February 25, 2021 Virtual Special meeting (Budget Work Session) of the Sussex County Board of Supervisors was called to order by Chairman Seward.

**Item 2. Agenda Amendment**

There were no agenda amendments.

**Item 3. Approval of Agenda**

The agenda was approved by general consensus.

**Item 4. Budget Discussions**

a. Circuit Court

Mr. Gary Williams, Circuit Court Clerk, requested fairly significant salary increases for staff. County Administrator Douglas stated that there was no documentation in justifying the need and feels that it needs more vetting.

There was also a request for cabinets.

b. Commissioner of the Revenue

The Commissioner of the Revenue had no capital improvement item requests.

c. Commonwealth's Attorney

There was no capital improvement requests from the Commonwealth's Attorney provided.

d. General District and Juvenile & Domestic Relation Courts

County Administrator Douglas stated that the General District and Juvenile & Domestic Relation Courts are requesting bathroom upgrades in the amount of approximately \$4,500.00.

e. General Registrar

Mr. Jenkins stated that his proposal included the purchase of one (1) more voting machine. The cost for the voting machine is \$8,000.00.

Mr. Jenkins stated that the rules will be changed where in-person voting in the office will go into one (1) machine. The mailed in absentee vote and the ones that come in after the election until Friday at 12:00 noon, has to go into another voting machine. He stated the General Registrar's office, at this time has only one (1) spare voting machine. If the office has to use two (2) machines, he would not have a spare machine.

Mr. Jenkins stated that this requirement was something new that just came up this year. There was inquiry as to why the change was made.

f. Public Schools

Mr. John Broderick, Director of Finance and Business Operations for the Public Schools, stated that the school division had not requested any capital improvement funds since the funding of the new elementary school in 2013. Mr. Broderick stated that, however, the high school was built in 2001. They have been doing some repairs to the left rear section of the roof for the last five (5) years. They are in need of replacing a section of the high school roof, if possible. They are in the process of gathering quotes from roofing companies. It's projected to be more than \$100,000. He was not sure how much more. He stated that they are in need of assistance in repairing that section of the roof, which is the schools only capital improvement request at this time.

There was inquiry of when students would be returning to school. Mr. Broderick advised that they were working towards returning students to in-person school. He discussed some things utilized to return students to school safely.

There was inquiry of warranty and how many years on the roof and metal, angled roof.

g. Sheriff's Department

There was discussion of funding for the Sheriff's request for a one-time capital improvement funding for the purchase of a surface and airborne virus reduction system. The system is provided by Maven Security Technologies, which is a sole source service and costs \$55,900. The cost includes 3-year Sail Filters, project planning, and site survey placement. Sheriff Giles stated that the purchase of the system is for the health and safety of inmates and staff. The system will eliminate any potential threat of virus.

There was discussion of the Sheriff's request of a one-time capital improvement funding for the implementation of the E-Ticket Program. This program is provided by their CAD vendor. The ID Networks cost \$30,000.00. The price includes the software, hardware and installation. Sheriff Giles stated that this program will pay for itself. Sheriff Giles noted the safety quality and time savings this program offers to the deputies. There will be a recurring yearly maintenance fee of \$2,700 which will be paid from their operating budget.

It was noted that if this funding request is approved, a resolution will need to be adopted by the Board in regards to fees the Sheriff's Department may charge for traffic summons.

County Administrator Douglas asked that the Treasurer show a revenue of \$30,000 that will offset the \$30,000 funding for the E-Ticket Program.

There was discussion of the January 1, 2022 mandate of Emergency Medical Dispatch [General Assembly HB 727 (2020)] across the state of Virginia. The grant has to be completed by March 15, 2021. Sheriff Giles stated that he spoke with the Coordinator of the Emergency Operations Division, Mr. Rich Troshak. Mr. Troshak advised that the program total is approximately \$40,000.00. However, if the grant is awarded, eighty percent (80%) will be paid. The local funding would be twenty percent (20%) of the grant. Also, if awarded, this grant for rescue squad assistance will be received prior to January 1, 2022.

County Administrator Douglas also discussed the need for additional dispatch staff that had been previously discussed. There was a permanent relocation of a field position to dispatch. County Administrator Douglas stated there will be a position allocation in the budget.

h. Social Services Department

Mr. Will Hagy, Director of Social Services, stated that there were five (5) capital improvement item requests for the Department of Social Services.

Mr. Hagy stated that his first item is carpet for the secured area in the Social Services building. He stated that this request was a part of capital improvement submitted in last year's budget as part of the building's improvements. However, the carpet wasn't done. The cost is \$14,188. This cost estimate includes all aspects of new carpet installation, labor costs, and the disposal of the old carpet. The new carpet will address safety in regards to the ripples and bunching in the services

and eligibility hallways which creates a tripping hazard for community members coming in the Department for service.

The second item is for new flooring in the lobby. Mr. Hagy stated that it was his understanding that the building update had been provisionally approved for the FY 20/21 budget but was removed due to COVID. The cost for this project is \$7,045.00.

The third item is included to make the Board aware of an In-Home Services Specialist. The Family First Prevention Act will take effect during FY 21/22. VDSS has created a new position classification and provided funding to LDSS' to assist with the implementation of the Family First Act. In-Home Services Specialists will be tasked with providing the intensive services required of the Family First Act. SDSS has been allocated \$58,788 to hire an In-Home Services Specialist. This position does not require a local match, so it will come at no cost to Sussex County.

The fourth item request is salary increases for staff. This request reflects the amount that are the County's costs for the increase in salaries proposed in both the Virginia House and Senate Proposed Budgets.

#### Virginia House Proposed Budget:

- Increases the minimum salary levels that are below the new minimum thresholds by 20% for services staff at 15% for all others.
- Provides a 3.5% salary increase for state supported local employees
- Maintains the 1.5% one-time bonus to be delivered September 1, 2021

#### Virginia Senate Proposed Budget:

- Increases the minimum salary levels that are below the new minimum thresholds by 20% for services staff at 15% for all others.
- Provides a 3% salary increase for state supported local employees
- Maintains the 1.5% one-time bonus to be delivered September 1, 2021

Mr. Hagy stated that costs to bring the five (5) staff that fall below the new minimums would be \$883.77.

Mr. Hagy stated that the House proposed a 3.5% salary increase and the Senate proposed a 3% salary increase for salaries for a total cost of \$4,988.86. He stated that this a worst case scenario. It may be money that the State provides. If not, it would come at a 15.5 match rate that has been already been built in the Administrative Line Item budget.

Both the House and Senate propose a 1.5% increase in staff to address the compression that would result in upward adjustments of minimums. This would be a cost of \$2,457.57. He stated that this is a worst case scenario. It may be money that the State provides.

The fifth item request is for the Angel Tree which is a County-wide project coordinated by SDSS to provide holiday gifts to children in the community and gifts for the elderly. This will be a cost of \$3,000.00.

There was inquiry of what did the \$3,000 include. Mr. Hagy stated that approximately 119 young people were served. The adults on the adult services caseload were served as well, which is approximately 40 adults.

i. Treasurer

The Treasurer had no Capital Improvement item requests.

There was discussion of the Budget Work Session schedule. County Administrator Douglas stated that the next meeting would be next Thursday, March 4, 2021 for discussion of revenue to include the landfill and Courts revenues.

There was discussion of need of revenue sources for radio system maintenance and NG911 which is a recurring cost. County Administrator Douglas stated that the Board may want to consider a tax increase.

There was discussion of the Virginia Department of Corrections and their payment in lieu of taxes. It was recommended to send a letter.

County Administrator Douglas stated that a budget will be provided to the Board at that meeting; however, it will not be balanced. It will provide a comprehensive list of the first cut of the revenue and expenditures of major items for discussion.

There will also be a Special Meeting (Budget Work Session) for outside agency requests at the end of March.

There was discussion of the amount of shortfall for the budget. There was an estimate of a \$600,000 gap in the budget. There was discussion of submitting a budget amendment to VDOC.

There was inquiry of whether there was an increase in the General Registrar's salary. There discussion of teachers and State employees' salaries and the County's responsibility.

Item 5. Citizens' Comments

There were no citizens' comments.

Item 6. Adjournment

ON MOTION OF SUPERVISOR TYLER, seconded by SUPERVISOR W. JONES and carried: RESOLVED that the Sussex County Board of Supervisors hereby adjourned the February 25, 2021 Special Meeting (Budget Work Session) at 9:10 p.m.

Voting aye: Supervisors Johnson, D. Jones, W. Jones, Seward, Tyler

Voting nay: none

Absent: Supervisor Fly