

At a Special (Budget Work Session) Meeting of the Board of Supervisors
Held in the Social Services Conference Room on
Thursday, June 4, 2020 – 5 p.m.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

C. Eric Fly, Sr.
Marian D. Johnson (remote)
Debbie P. Jones
Wayne O. Jones
Susan M. Seward
Rufus E. Tyler, Sr.
Steve White, Tie Breaker (remote participation)

STAFF PRESENT

Larry Hughes, Interim County Administrator
Mark Flynn, County Attorney
Deste J. Cox, Treasurer
G. Reid Foster, Public Safety
Ernest Giles, Sheriff
Kelly W. Moore, Director of Finance
Vincent Robertson, Interim Commonwealth's Attorney
Cecil Stainback, Animal Control Officer
Shilton R. Butts, Assistant to the County Administrator/Deputy Clerk

Item 1. Call to Order/Determine Quorum (5:00 p.m.)

The June 4, 2020 Special (Budget Work Session) meeting of the Sussex County Board of Supervisors was called to order by Chair Seward.

Item 2. The Invocation

The invocation was offered by Supervisor W. Jones.

Item 3. The Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited by all.

Item 4. Agenda Amendment

Chair Seward requested to add under Item 6. General Budget Discussions and Items, Crater Health District.

Item 5. Approval of Agenda

ON MOTION OF SUPERVISOR TYLER, seconded by SUPERVISOR D. JONES and carried: RESOLVED that the Sussex County Board of Supervisors hereby approves the June 4, 2020 Special (Budget Work Session) meeting agenda inclusive of adding under Item 6. General Budget Discussions and Items, Crater Health District.
All members present voted aye.

Item 6. General Budget Discussions

Crater Health District

Ms. Roxanne Marr-Shears, District Administrator for Crater Health District, and Dr. Hart were present.

There was inquiry as to why the Sussex Health Department had been closed since the COVID-19 Coronavirus; what current services the Sussex Health Department provides; and, is there a statutory requirement of whether the County has to fund a local health department.

Dr. Hart, Director of Crater District Health Departments, stated that he understands the concerns of the Health Department being closed. Dr. Hart stated that when the pandemic started, Crater Health District, as many other multi-jurisdictional districts, had to look at and realign their services in order to be able to respond to the pandemic. Dr. Hart stated that Crater Health District had to move in the direction of closing some of the buildings. He stated that although the building had been closed, services have still been available for the residents of Sussex County. Immunizations, Maternity Care, Environmental Health, Family Planning, FTI, and OB Services have been maintained and available to the residents of Sussex County, just not at the Sussex Health Department building. He stated that because they are a multi-jurisdictional district, they have other locations that residents are able to go to. They had to streamline their locations in order to be able to respond to the pandemic. He stated this is an unprecedented, new time. This is a process that many other multi-jurisdiction districts had to do in the Commonwealth of Virginia to be able to respond to the pandemic. He stated it should be taken in to consideration that there was limited staff. They had to make sure they had appropriate staff to respond. Their Emergency Operation Center had to setup for the district which is located at the Petersburg Health Department. Their Incident Command Team has been setup in order to respond to the pandemic.

He stated Crater Health District has been very active in Sussex. The Epidemiologist has been working with the long-term health care facilities and Sussex 1 and 2 State prisons. The Emergency Coordinator (Chief of Planning and a member of the Incident Command Team) has been actively working our Public Safety Department. In terms of planning and personal protective equipment (PPE), the Emergency Coordinator has been working with the long term care facilities to ensure an emergency plan and a process is in place.

Dr. Hart stated that per State Code, all localities are required to maintain a local health department.

Ms. Marr-Shears stated that some of the services that are rendered for Sussex are the Women Infant and Children (WIC) program and Vital Administration and Statistics. Services for receipt of Marriage, Birth and Death Certificates are still available.

Ms. Marr-Shears stated that the Hopewell and Prince George Health Departments are the alternative locations for services for Sussex residents.

Dr. Hart stated that, at this time, they have focused on their response to COVID-19. They don't have an exact timeline of reopening. It will depend on how things move forward, in terms of reopening Virginia. They have been focusing on a Containment Plan, as there may be a spike in COVID-19. The Containment Plan has three (3) components: (1) Testing, (2) Contact Tracing, and (3) Support Isolation. He stated that, at the present time, he could not give a specific time of when the Sussex Health Department will be reopened.

There was inquiry of was and how the Sussex citizens were notified of the Sussex Health Department being closed.

Ms. Marr-Shears stated that the Health Department closed in the middle of March when a lot of the government agencies were closing, to include Sussex. She stated that Crater Health did not send out a massive press release because they didn't know when they would reopen. She said a notification was sent to let the Department of Social Services know that the Sussex Health Department was closed and signs were placed on the Sussex Health Department doors to redirect the citizens if they had any questions or concerns to the Hopewell and Prince George Health Departments. She stated that a message was recorded on the Sussex Health Department phone system with information which provided phone numbers and time of who to call about the facility or services.

There was inquiry as to what criteria was used to keep the Hopewell and Prince George local health departments open and close the Sussex Health Department.

Dr. Hart stated that they had to look at those areas where there was a large volume of services and had to make a tough decision in terms of how to redirect their efforts to do the outreach. They had to look at the areas that they had increased volume and traffic in order to be able to respond to the pandemic.

There was inquiry of which health departments in the Crater Health District were closed. Dr. Hart advised that two local health departments were closed—Surry and Sussex. There was inquiry as to if and where Sussex's staff were deployed. Dr. Hart stated that some of the nurses were a part of different teams. Some of the nurses are a part of the COVID-19 Communicable Disease Testing program. Other nurses are responsible for nursing home screenings.

Ms. Marr-Shears stated that in closing Sussex and Surry, when the issue started, they started to see a large increase in numbers in dense areas.

There was discussion of services at the correctional facilities and nursing homes.

There was discussion of if a local health department is closed, the consent of the local governing body was needed. There was discussion of none of the Board members were not notified. There was discussion of the budget for services.

There was discussion of notification to the County. Ms. Butts noted that conversations referenced were held after someone had called regarding the health department being closed. Emails had been checked. An email was received on the day of and during the Board meeting (May 16th).

County Attorney stated that the County is operating under Agreement at §32.1-31. There are a group of services that the local health department provides under that agreement. An agreement can't unilaterally withdraw services and expect the other side to continue providing funding. He stated that it seems to him that the next step would be, in order to continue, that the County Attorney would talk to the State Health Commissioner's Office to make sure everybody understands the rules and have County Attorney Gore to contact the State Health Commissioner's office. He noted that it is important to the County, should a family need immunization records, an environmental permit, etc., it could be tough on a poor family to have to go out of the County to obtain those services.

There was discussion that the budget will be adopted in two (2) weeks and there is a deficit. There was also discussion that the County doesn't know when the Sussex local health department is going to be reopened. The funding in the budget needs to reflect what the citizens are being served at the local Sussex health department, because the County has the agreement. This needs to be pursued further.

There was discussion of concerns with the Health Department visiting local businesses in Sussex, and some of the citizens are not wearing masks when entering the businesses. The Health Department are telling businesses they are not enforcing wearing masks. It was noted that some of the businesses have customers from out of state. There was discussion of how does an employee make a customer wear a mask especially when an employee has asked a customer to wear a mask and the customer becomes violent.

Interim County Administrator Hughes stated that there were regular communications from Crater Health District's Incident Command Team. Almost every day, updates were received of cases and what was happening.

Dr. Hart spoke of information included in reports sent out. He stated that they had to look at how they continue to provide services to eight (8) localities, respond to COVID-19 and function with reduced services. They had to be strategic with how to function in this new public health environment and preserve life. If they had to do it again, they would do it differently, because now they will have some experience. It was not to be spiteful or egregious, Crater Health District was trying to figure out the best course of action on how to respond to the health situation of COVID-19. He asked that all of this be taken in to consideration in the decision of reducing the budget.

There was inquiry of whether the local Sussex Health Department could open one (1) day a week.

There was discussion of how would reducing the budget affect the health department once the pandemic is over.

Crater Health District was requested to provide the County with the number of services provided by category in the first five (5) months of 2020 and the first five (5) months in 2019 by calendar year.

Budget Discussions

Interim County Administrator Hughes reviewed Administration's recommendations for the budget adjustments.

- Proposed to lease purchase Sheriff's vehicles instead of buying the vehicles.
- Eliminated renovations in the Department of Social Services.
- Proposed removing one (1) administration position and consolidating with planning position.

There was discussion of adjusting Animal Control positions. There was discussion of recommendation of increasing FY21 budget by \$30,000 for an additional position with funding from additional landfill revenue. The FY22 budget would return to the two (2) full time Animal Control Officer positions.

Building and Grounds Department

There was discussion of contracting lawn care services. There was discussion of inmate labor with certain skillsets for services was visited.

There was discussion of skillset with some of the workers. There was discussion of identifying work that needs to be done.

There was discussion of the Board allowing the County Administrator to handle what needs to be done by staff.

A Finance Committee meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, June 10, 2020 at 9 a.m.

Blackwater Library

There was discussion of the increase with Blackwater Regional Library request for funding. There was discussion of the number of books checked out in Waverly and Wakefield. Discussion of whether increase in circulation was E-Books. There was discussion of having the county attorney reach out to Isle of Wight attorney and Southampton County attorneys. There was discussion of no library in Stony Creek. Bookmobile comes to Social Service Department.

Miles B. Carpenter Museum

Chair Seward recommends reducing funding to Miles B. Carpenter Museum to \$1,500.00.

Virginia's Gateway Region

It was noted that Virginia's Gateway Region's funding will be reduced by half, which is at the Virginia's Gateway Region's request.

Jarratt Senior Citizen's Center

Supervisor Tyler stated that Senior Citizens from the Stony Creek and Jarratt side has requested \$5,000. He is asking the Board for funding. Their funding was zeroed out through the Crater District Area Agency on Aging (CDAAA). There was discussion of funding Stony Creek/Jarratt Senior Citizens the \$5,000--\$2,000 from Miles B. Carpenter Center.

Waverly Pool (SCYARA)

Mr. Reid Foster, Public Safety, stated that Vice Chairman Jones asked him to visit the Waverly Pool to see if it was worth repairing. Mr. Foster stated that his first concern with safety is the fence is down and the pool is full of water. It needs to be secured. He stated that someone had already started to take down the Kiddie Pool. The Building is not secured and needs a lot of work done. As far as the main pool, it's full of water. The water is probably six (6) to eight (8) inches. The whole top layer of tile around the pool is starting to fall off. A lot tiles will probably have to be replaced after it's drained.

There was discussion that the County has funded the pool for three (3) years and kids had not been in the pool. In last year's budget, there was discussion that there would be no funding if the pool wasn't opened.

Mr. Williams Ricks (President, SCYARA) stated that a detailed list was provided to the Board of the things that had been done. Lighting had to be replaced in the pool. Some of the Board members of the pool (SCYARA) were concerned about safety which is the reason the pool didn't open. He clarified that the Waverly Pool is an entity of the Sussex County Youth and Adult Recreational Association (SCYARA). Monies received are not just used for the pool.

SCYARA would like to remain as a part of the FY21 budget, because there are other things SCYARA can do. Any monies received can help with their Capital Improvement. Funding received last year was used for Capital Improvements—replaced filtration system, tiles, coping stones—not for anything else. If they can't open, they won't request the money. At this time, they cannot or won't be able to open due to the Governor's Executive Orders. .

There was inquiry of the estimated costs to fix the lights. Mr. Ricks stated that the estimated cost to fix the lights was \$4,500. There was inquiry as to when was the last time the pool was opened. Mr. Ricks stated 2017. There was inquiry of the price to open the pool. Mr. Ricks stated \$65,000.

There was inquiry if SCYARA would have had the \$4,500 to open the pool, would they have been able to open. Mr. Ricks replied yes. Mr. Ricks stated that \$23,000 was raised by SCYARA last year.

Supervisor Tyler recommended that SCYARA meet with the Finance Committee at the meeting scheduled for Wednesday, June 10th at 9:00 a.m. and provide an itemization of what the pool needs,

how much it cost, how much in funding they are projected to raise and when it is projected to have the pool open. Mr. Ricks stated that he will advise his Board of what has transpired. He will bring the same spreadsheet that had been provided. Mr. Ricks was asked to bring his latest audit. He stated that he gave his latest audit to the Board.

Mr. Ricks stated that \$25,000 went into the filtration system and supplies were bought. Supplies are secured. It was recommended to have the pool sandblasted and refinished, which is the big ticket item along with the lighting. They are seeking funding from others as well. They are applying for grants.

There was discussion of a conversation of the consideration of turning the pool over to a private entity and letting them rehabilitate the pool. Mr. Ricks stated that he had responded that he couldn't speak for the Board and stated the conversation that was had from his point of view.

There was general consensus on items presented to the Board from County Administration, funding Senior Citizens (Jarratt/Stony Creek), funding \$30,000 for Animal Control position, reduction in Virginia Gateway's Region funding by half at their request; and reducing Miles B. Carpenter to \$1,500.

Item 7. Citizens' Comments

- Vincent Robertson (Interim Commonwealth's Attorney) – Introduced himself to the Board; will be running in the November election.

Item 8. Adjournment

ON MOTION OF SUPERVISOR W. JONES, seconded by SUPERVISOR TYLER and carried: RESOLVED that the Sussex County Board of Supervisors hereby adjourned the June 4, 2020 Special (Budget Work Session) Meeting at 8:13 p.m.