

VIRGINIA: AT THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE TAZEWELL COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS HELD MARCH 5, 2024 AT FOUR O'CLOCK P.M. IN THE TAZEWELL COUNTY ADMINISTRATION BUILDING, 197 MAIN STREET, TAZEWELL, VIRGINIA 24651

PRESENT: ANDY HROVATIC, CHAIRPERSON
AARON GILLESPIE, VICE-CHAIRMAN
KYLE CRUEY, MEMBER
CHUCK PRESLEY, MEMBER
SHANNA PLASTER, MEMBER
C. ERIC YOUNG, COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR
CHASE D. COLLINS, COUNTY ATTORNEY
SUSAN JEWELL, EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT
MEMBERS OF THE PRESS: JIM TALBERT, CLINCH VALLEY NEWS/PRESS; WARREN HINKLE, THE VOICE

ABSENT:

MINUTES

Chairman, Andy Hrovatic called the regular meeting to order and presided with all other members present.

Supervisor Presley led The Pledge of Allegiance to the United States flag followed by the invocation given by Supervisor Gillespie.

Chairman Hrovatic welcomed those in attendance and citizens who were participating by conference call. Citizens were able to call in and participate in the meeting by calling (425) 436-6388 and entering the access code 836650.

AGENDA APPROVED AS AMENDED

The Chairperson called for any additions to the agenda.

County Attorney, Chase Collins, requested to add an item to Executive Session: A(29) 2024 Mowing Contract Award.

Upon motion of Supervisor Gillespie, seconded by Supervisor Cruey and adopted by a vote of 5 to 0, with all members present and voting in favor thereof and no one against the same, the Tazewell County Board of Supervisors approved the addition of an item to Executive Session: A(29) Mowing Contract Award.

Upon motion of Supervisor Gillespie, seconded by Supervisor Cruey and adopted by a vote of 5 to 0, with all members present and voting in favor thereof and no one against the same, the Tazewell County Board of Supervisors approved the March 5, 2024 amended agenda with

additions/deletions, a copy of which is available at the County Administration Office, 197 Main Street, Tazewell, Virginia 24651.

MINUTES APPROVED AS WRITTEN

Upon motion of Supervisor Cruely, seconded by Supervisor Presley and adopted by a vote of 5 to 0, with all members present and voting in favor thereof and no one against the same, the Tazewell County Board of Supervisors hereby approves the minutes from the February 6, 2024 meeting. A copy is available in the County Administration Office, 197 Main Street, Tazewell, Virginia 24651.

CONSENT CALENDAR

Upon motion of Supervisor Gillespie seconded by Supervisor Cruely and adopted by a vote of 5 to 0, the Tazewell County Board of Supervisors hereby approves the items listed in the table and the Warrants as presented in the "Consent Calendar", which is attached to the agenda. The County Administrator is authorized to issue warrants in accordance with this action and said warrants shall be converted to negotiable checks by the Treasurer of Tazewell County, Virginia.

Consent Calendar

(All items on the consent calendar are considered to be routine matters. The following items may be enacted by one motion, with the concurrence of the Board of Supervisors, a member may request that an item be removed for further discussion)

- A. Approval of Warrants
- B. County Departments - Transfer the following amounts from the Contingent Expenditures and Grant Account No. 91050-7041 to various department accounts as shown on the attached table

A copy of the consent calendar is attached to these minutes.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Engineering – Kenneth Dunford Library

Mr. Dunford advised that he received an acceptable quote from Cornerstone Construction in the amount of \$98,788.42 for the installation of posts, repair of columns and to repair a wall, which is within the project budget. Mr. Dunford announced that the work should begin approximately 28 days after the contract is signed asked that the Board approve a contract for the same pending legal review.

Upon motion of Supervisor Presley, seconded by Supervisor Plaster and adopted by a vote of 5 to 0, with all members present and voting in favor thereof and no one against the same, the Tazewell County Board of Supervisors hereby approves a bid from Cornerstone Construction in the amount of \$98,788.42 for completion of the library repair and reconstruction, such contract pending legal review.

Orphan roads

Mr. Dunford announced that the list of orphan roads is complete and the plan is to pave 60 roads if bids are within budget, which would leave approximately 40 remaining roads to pave next year, which would complete the paving cycle.

Upon motion of Supervisor Plaster, seconded by Supervisor Presley and adopted by a vote of 5 to 0, with all members present and voting in favor thereof and no one against the same, the Tazewell County Board of Supervisors hereby authorizes Mr. Dunford to prepare bids for advertisement for a company to pave 60 roads on the orphan road list. A copy of the list is attached to these minutes.

CST meeting

Mr. Dunford advised that at a recent CST meeting, VDOT requested the amount of \$62,000.00 of which \$30,000.00 would be used to repair a drainage issue at Amonate and the remaining \$30,000.00 would be used to repair a sinking pipe on Rt. 67. Supervisor Plaster stated she was familiar with the issue and the work is much needed.

Upon motion of Supervisor Plaster, seconded by Supervisor Cruvey and adopted by a vote of 5 to 0, with all members present and voting in favor thereof and no one against the same, the Tazewell County Board of Supervisors hereby approves a resolution to award VDOT the amount of \$62,000.00 from CST funds, whereas \$30,000.00 would be used to repair a drainage issue at Amonate and the remaining \$30,000.00 would be used to repair a sinking pipe on Rt. 67, said resolution pending legal review.

Upon amended motion of Supervisor Plaster, and amended second by Supervisor Cruvey and adopted by a vote of 5 to 0, with all members present and voting in favor thereof and no one against the same, the Tazewell County Board of Supervisors hereby approves a resolution to award VDOT the amount of \$62,000.00 from CST funds, whereas \$30,000.00 would be used to repair a drainage issue at Amonate and the remaining \$30,000.00 would be used to repair a sinking pipe on Rt. 67 and to also authorize the Chairman to sign the resolution, said resolution pending legal review.

AMENDMENT TO AGENDA

County Administrator, Eric Young, requested that an item be added to Executive Session: A(1) Personnel in Administration.

Upon motion of Supervisor Gillespie, seconded by Supervisor Cruvey and adopted by a vote of 5 to 0, with all members present and voting in favor thereof and no one against the same, the Tazewell County Board of Supervisors approved the addition of an item to be added to Executive Session: A(1) Personnel in Administration.

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

Reassessment presentation

Don Thomas of Wingate Appraisal Service of Roanoke, Virginia described the assessment process his company was hired to conduct for the Tazewell County general reassessment. He answered questions regarding the dramatic increase in property values throughout the county.

Supervisor Hrovatic asked why commercial property values didn't increase as much in comparison to residential properties. Mr. Thomas explained that there were much fewer sales of commercial sales in the county so there really isn't enough data to make changes in commercial reassessment. Supervisor Hrovatic also asked if the 25% gap is the largest he's come across. Mr. Thomas explained that Tazewell County is far from being in the worst shape when it comes to reassessment changes.

Supervisor Cruey asked why raw land values increased so drastically. Mr. Thomas responded that there was a large number of vacant land sales in the county, which set the pace for higher reassessment of vacant parcels. He also explained that each for each parcel with a home on it, approximately 20% of the value is land value.

Supervisor Cruey asked how Wingate went about viewing/evaluating a parcel if there was no access to it, such as a locked gate or aggressive animals. Mr. Thomas stated that they have to use common sense whether or not to enter a property and they also try to abide by any instructions that might be on the property card, such as a request to call ahead to be let into the property. Supervisor Cruey asked for clarification regarding how they verify the number and condition of buildings that are on each parcel. Mr. Thomas stated that they take the existing property record and compare that to what's actually on the property. A visual inspection is done and they take a photograph with a date stamp for each property and that because of the number of parcels, they can't spend an extended period of time at each parcel. He said his company also uses a market study and projection during the process.

Supervisor Gillespie asked if Tazewell County properties are compared to properties in other counties/localities to arrive at the reassessment values. Mr. Thomas explained that real property sales over the last several years is the benchmark used to drive the reassessment process. He stated that this information is available on the Tazewell County GIS mapping service in an overlay and that all properties in Tazewell County were only compared to other Tazewell County properties.

Supervisor Presley inquired regarding the benefit of conducting more frequent reassessments. Mr. Thomas responded that the county would need to compare the cost versus the benefit of doing so.

Supervisor Gillespie asked if there are similar sized counties that conduct more frequent reassessments. Mr. Thomas confirmed that there are similar sized counties that conduct reassessments more often than Tazewell County.

Supervisor Cruey asked what other localities in Virginia that Wingate does reassessment in. Mr. Thomas named several Virginia counties in which they have done reassessments: Highland County, Bedford County, Rockbridge County, Dickenson County.

Supervisor Cruey asked if counties similar in size of Tazewell County are seeing similar increased in property assessment. Mr. Thomas stated they just completed a reassessment in Southampton County, which is a slightly smaller county and that county experienced 25% change. Mr. Thomas gave assurances that the increases are not just specific to Tazewell County.

Supervisor Hrovatic asked if there was an average increase on residential properties in the county. Mr. Thomas stated the amount varied between locations in the county.

Supervisor Cruey asked about increases in the Pocahontas area and whether those increases were related to more businesses being in that area. Mr. Thomas stated that the trailhead certainly is a boost to the area but there are multiple reasons for the increase.

Mr. Thomas stated that Wingate gives their best effort toward accuracy and also declared that because his employees are simply human, mistakes are bound to be made and they take steps to correct any mistake that is brought to their attention.

Mr. Young thanked Mr. Thomas for the quality work done by Wingate.

Joey Carrico – legal aid request

Mr. Young explained Mr. Carrico’s request for a letter/resolution or funding in support of their application to the Regional Opioid Abatement Authority to help fund a legal aid position to help persons released from incarceration to navigate fines and other personal issues to assist them in getting reestablished in the community.

Upon motion of Supervisor Plaster, seconded by Supervisor Presley and adopted by a vote of 4 to 1, with all members present and Supervisor Cruey voting against the same, the Tazewell County Board of Supervisors hereby approve a letter/resolution of support for Southwest Virginia Legal Aid for a program to assist persons recently released from incarceration to navigate fines and other personal issues to assist them in getting reestablished in the community.

Opioid abatement funding request

Mr. Young asked that this matter be addressed a bit later in this meeting, when Mr. Cole could be present.

EXECUTIVE/CLOSED MEETING – 4:55 pm

Upon motion of Supervisor Gillespie, seconded by Supervisor Cruey and adopted by a vote of 5 to 0, with all members present and voting in favor thereof, the Board invites all persons necessary to conduct business in this session and enters into an Executive/Closed meeting, pursuant to Virginia Code Section 2.2-3711:

Executive/Closed Meeting – Pursuant to Virginia Code Section 2.2-3711

- ▶ A(29) Contract negotiations with Lusk Disposal for solid waste disposal rate
- ▶ A(29) Contract negotiations regarding Bluefield College scholarship program
- ▶ A(29) Contract negotiations regarding SWCC scholarship program
- ▶ A(29) Contract Negotiations regarding ADA Trail at Cavitts Creek
- ▶ A(29) Contract negotiation regarding landfill construction rock claim
- ▶ A(5) Potential new business: MM
- ▶ A(29) Evaluation of 2024 mowing bids
- ▶ A(1) Personnel in Administration

RETURN/CERTIFICATION/REPORT OF ACTION – 6:30 pm

The Board of Supervisors returned to public session and Chairman Hrovatic read the following certification:

**CERTIFICATION OF
EXECUTIVE/CLOSED MEETING
TAZEWELL COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

WHEREAS, the Tazewell County Board of Supervisors has convened an executive/closed meeting on this date pursuant to an affirmative vote and in accordance with The Virginia Freedom of Information Act; and

WHEREAS, 2.2-3711 of the Code of Virginia requires a certification by the Board of Supervisors that such executive/closed meeting was conducted in conformity with Virginia law; NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Tazewell County Board of Supervisors hereby certifies that, to the best of each member's knowledge, (i) that only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements by Virginia law were discussed in the executive/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 by the Tazewell County Board of Supervisors. The Chairman called for a roll call vote with the following vote hereby recorded.

The Chair called for a roll call Vote on the Certification:

Ayes: Five (5)
Nays: None (0)
Absent: None (0)
Absent during vote: None (0)
Report of Action: Seven (7)

ACTION FOLLOWING EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Chairman asked if there was any action following Executive Session.

Special Waste Disposal

Upon motion of Supervisor Gillespie, seconded by Supervisor Presley and adopted by a vote of 5 to 0, with all members present and voting in favor thereof and no one against the same, the Tazewell County Board of Supervisors hereby approves the adoption of a regulation requiring that, if a person/entity desires to dispose special waste (as that term is defined in the Tazewell County Code of Ordinances), that said person/entity must contact the Tazewell County Landfill and provide 24 hours' notice prior to disposing such special waste.

Rock removal claim

Upon motion of Supervisor Plaster, seconded by Supervisor Presley and adopted by a vote of 5 to 0, with all members present and voting in favor thereof and no one against the same, the Tazewell County Board of Supervisors hereby agree to pay the amount of Three Hundred and Four Thousand Dollars (\$304,000.00) on behalf of Tazewell County, Virginia to Republic Services, Inc., in full and final resolution of the Four Hundred Sixty Five Thousand Nine Hundred Ninety One Dollars and Five Cents (\$465,991.05) rock removal claims on Landfill Phase 5A

construction, submitted to the County by Republic in Change Order Request Number 30917875 and Pay Application Number 3, contingent upon the following actions:

- (1) Republic would present a revised Pay Application Number 3 for all work completed as of September 30, 2023, **excluding** any compensation for rock removal;
- (2) The County would pay the revised Pay Application Number 3 in its entirety;
- (3) Republic would submit a new Pay Application for removal 52,650.33 cubic yards (CY) of rock, for the amount of Three Hundred and Four Thousand Dollars (\$304,000.00);
- (4) Upon receipt of the new Pay Application, the County would pay One Hundred Four Thousand Dollars (\$104,000.00) to Republic for rock removal; and
- (5) As soon as Republic has completed and certified the construction of the new split cell, Phase 5A(1), the County would pay the remaining Two Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$200,000.00) to Republic.

Cavitt's Creek Park

Upon motion of Supervisor Cruey, seconded by Supervisor Presley and adopted by a vote of 5 to 0, with all members present and voting in favor thereof and no one against the same, the Tazewell County Board of Supervisors hereby authorize a change order payment of \$5,000.00 to T&L Construction for construction of an additional 325-foot ADA compliant trail at Cavitt's Creek Park.

DHCD Flood Relief Program

Mr. Young explained that, as a part of the DHCD Flood Relief Program providing flood relief funds in relation to damages caused by the July 2022 flood, the county will be reimbursed for administrative time spent working on the project. He also said key staff had assumed extra duties to perform this additional work.

Upon motion of Supervisor Cruey, seconded by Supervisor Presley and adopted by a vote of 5 to 0, with all members present and voting in favor thereof and no one against the same, the Tazewell County Board of Supervisors hereby authorize a public hearing in April 2024 for the purpose of authorizing a stipend for administration of DHCD Flood Relief Program in the amount of \$5,000.00.

SWCC Tuition Assistance Program

Upon motion of Supervisor Cruey, seconded by Supervisor Gillespie and adopted by a vote of 5 to 0, with all members present and voting in favor thereof and no one against the same, the Tazewell County Board of Supervisors hereby agree to terminate the Memorandum of Understanding, pursuant to Section 11 therein, between the Board and Southwest Virginia Community College, effective June 5, 2024 and for Fiscal Year 2024-2025, regarding the Tazewell County Tuition Assistance Scholarship Program for Tazewell County high school classes of 2024 onward; however the Memorandum of Understanding would remain in effect through fiscal year 2024-2025 for current Southwest Virginia Community College students who are graduates of Tazewell County high school classes of 2023.

Mowing contract 2024

Upon motion of Supervisor Presley, seconded by Supervisor Plaster and adopted by a vote of 5 to 0, with all members present and voting in favor thereof and no one against the same, the Tazewell County Board of Supervisors hereby approves the award of the 2024 mowing contract

to PM Lawn Care and Landscaping, LLC, the sole bidder, in accordance with the bid submitted and direct the County Attorney to draft a contract to that effect.

Bluefield University Tuition Assistance Program

Upon motion of Supervisor Plaster, seconded by Supervisor Cruey and adopted by a vote of 5 to 0, with all members present and voting in favor thereof and no one against the same, the Tazewell County Board of Supervisors hereby agree to terminate the Memorandum of Understanding, pursuant to Section 11 therein, between the Board and Bluefield University, effective June 5, 2024 and for Fiscal Year 2024-2025, regarding the Tazewell County Tuition Assistance Scholarship Program for Tazewell County high school classes of 2024 onward; however the Memorandum of Understanding would remain in effect through fiscal year 2024-2025 for current Bluefield University students who are graduates of Tazewell County high school classes of 2023.

CITIZENS COMMENTS – SCHEDULED

Robert Carlson, 1142 Lake Witten Road, North Tazewell, Virginia – requested changes in the solar ordinance, citing health risks to the public.

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

Southwest Virginia Legal Aid

Joey Carrico, Executive Director for Southwest Virginia Legal Aid, described the project his organization hopes to fund to assist individuals with civil difficulties after being released from incarceration due to substance abuse.

The Chairman spoke about the Tazewell County Opioid Committee and informed Mr. Carrico that arrangements can be made for him to address the Committee regarding funding in addition to the support resolution passed earlier in this meeting.

Harm Reduction Mobile Unit

Randall Cole from the Appalachian School of Pharmacy asked for a letter of support for a mobile harm reduction unit and described the service to be offered by the mobile unit.

Upon motion of Supervisor Hrovatic, seconded by Supervisor Presley and adopted by a vote of 4 to 1, with all members present and Supervisor Cruey voting nay, the Tazewell County Board of Supervisors hereby approve a letter of support for the Harm Reduction Mobile Unit instituted by the Appalachian School of Pharmacy.

CITIZENS COMMENTS – SCHEDULED

Sarah Duncan, Raven, Virginia – spoke in opposition to the proposed Moss 3 mega-landfill project in Russell County, Virginia and asked for a letter from the Board to the Russell County Board of Supervisors in opposition to the same.

UNSCHEDULED CITIZEN COMMENTS

Angie Gillespie, Clinch Mountain Road – spoke regarding the need for internet and cell phone services in the Thompson Valley area.

Laura Mollo, Richlands, Virginia – spoke in opposition to funding requests made to the Board. Mr. Young explained that the funding requests are not pet projects that the Board requests to fund; instead, the requests are sent to the Board from outside sources seeking donations.

ADMINISTRATIVE/FINANCIAL/COUNTY PROJECTS UPDATE

Springville Fire Station

Upon motion of Supervisor Presley, seconded by Supervisor Plaster and adopted by a vote of 5 to 0, with all members present and voting in favor thereof and no one against the same, the Tazewell County Board of Supervisors hereby ratifies a previous poll approving the Springville Fire Station design contract with SEH for a preliminary design not to exceed \$20,000.00.

Earmark grant applications

Mr. Young informed the Board that Merchant McIntyre has flagged three (3) possible grants that would benefit the county: (1) manhole replacement in the Town of Richlands to prevent raw sewage backing up in the water treatment plant when it floods; (2) the clinic project in Tazewell which will provide a facility for doctors whose tuition was paid by The Tazewell Foundation who pays for students to attend medical school with the stipulation they return to the area to practice; and (3) Warhawk Park playground equipment in the Carline area of Tazewell.

Mr. Young explained that, since the County has applied for and received several earmark grants already, the manhole project may need to be applied for and administered by the Town of Richlands.

Upon motion of Supervisor Gillespie, seconded by Supervisor Plaster and adopted by a vote of 5 to 0, with all members present and voting in favor thereof and no one against the same, the Tazewell County Board of Supervisors hereby approves applying for three (3) grants as suggested by Merchant McIntyre: (1) manhole replacement in the Town of Richlands; (2) the clinic project in Tazewell; and (3) Warhawk Park playground equipment in the Carline area of Tazewell and authorizing the County Administrator to execute applications for the same.

Budget update: consideration of enacting ordinance for 2024 real property tax levy

Mr. Young explained the status of the county budget, highlighting several areas of change, such as an increase in the amount of funding required by TCPS and a decrease in the county's cost for housing inmates at the SWVRJA. He also explained that if the tax rate remains at the current rate, the county budget is facing a \$1.7m to \$2.4m deficit.

The Chairman commented that, based on the potential deficit of \$2.4m, he didn't feel that a decrease in the real property tax rate would be appropriate, but perhaps adjustments in personal property rates would be possible.

Mr. Young agreed, that with agreement of the Commissioner of the Revenue, an adjustment in the ratio of personal property rates would be beneficial to the citizens. Mr. Young recommended a public hearing to set the rate on personal property at 80%. He stated his belief that this form of tax relief would be more beneficial to the residents than a real property tax cut.

Upon motion of Supervisor Gillespie, seconded by Supervisor Plaster and adopted by a vote of 5 to 0, with all members present and voting in favor thereof and no one against the same, the Tazewell County Board of Supervisors hereby approves holding a public hearing to reduce the personal property tax ratio for personal vehicles.

The Chairman made a motion to keep the real property tax rate at its current rate. The motion was seconded by Supervisor Plaster. The Chairman called for a vote.

Supervisor Gillespie suggested reducing the rate. He acknowledged the County Administrator's concerns that previous boards had cut the tax rate but not made budget cuts to offset the revenue loss, undermining the County's financial position. Supervisor Gillespie suggested lowering the rate, then make targeted budget cuts.

Supervisor Hrovatic pointed out that the County is currently \$1.7m to \$2.4m in the red and dropping the rate now would only bring about an increase to fill that gap.

Supervisor Plaster added that she feels cuts are being made as much as possible and it hurts to make those cuts, but those cuts are necessary to meet the bottom line. Supervisor Plaster stated that she was against raising the rate.

Supervisor Cruey stated if spending is kept under control, rates won't need to be raised in a few years. He stated that the citizens, particularly the elderly, are concerned about being able to pay for the things they need. Supervisor Cruey spoke in favor of decreasing the real property rate to provide relief and didn't feel a decrease in the personal property tax rate would be beneficial.

Supervisor Presley stated that Fire and EMS hasn't been properly cared for in past years and that Tazewell County can't continue to have the cheapest tax base of surrounding counties and still provide services. He stated that the County owes the Town of Bluefield approximately \$100,000.00 per year for fire services for the time he had served on the Bluefield Town Council, none of that money was ever received. Supervisor Presley added that fire services are still provided to the Northern and Eastern districts and being able to get that money would be a win because the Town of Bluefield doesn't have to provide it, adding that the firefighters continue to respond because of the caliber people they are. Supervisor Presley continued to explain that it's better to keep the current rate for the next couple of years, then take another look. He advised that several EMS departments need major equipment purchases and explained that a recent large fire event exhausted the fuel budget for several departments. He requested better funding for EMS departments and stated his desire for the real property tax rate to remain the same. Supervisor Presley suggested making cuts, then seeing if we could cut the tax rate.

Supervisor Plaster asked about any exemptions that might apply to the real property tax rate.

Eric Young stated he and Mr. Collins have been working on a revised elderly exemption ordinance and he will be asking for that immediately following the vote on the real property rate.

Mr. Collins advised that the Commissioner of the Revenue provided some figures regarding elderly exemptions, explaining that the number of qualifying applicants has decreased, somewhat due to assets being too high to qualify. He stated that by expanding the parameters of

the exemption, more people might qualify, therefore helping to offset the increase in real property tax amounts.

Mr. Young advised the Board can go ahead and vote to advertise to hold a public hearing to expand those exemptions.

Supervisor Gillespie stated that the Board would need a motion to advertise the amendment to the current ordinance and the implementation of an amended ordinance subject to a public hearing.

The Chairman called for a vote on his motion.

Upon motion of Supervisor Hrovatic, seconded by Supervisor Plaster and adopted by a vote of 3 to 2, with all members present, the Tazewell County Board of Supervisors hereby approves that the real property tax ordinance with the rate at \$.58 per hundred in value.

Upon motion of Supervisor Gillespie, seconded by Supervisor Plaster and adopted by a vote of 5 to 0, with all members present and voting in favor thereof and no one against the same, the Tazewell County Board of Supervisors hereby approves holding a public hearing to expand the guidelines for elderly tax exemptions.

The County Administrator stated that, in the event more tax relief can be given based on the situation of the budget, a ratio adjustment could be made to personal vehicle taxes.

An inaudible citizen comment as made to which Supervisor Gillespie responded regarding redistricting.

Wireless Service Authority update

Mr. Young advised he attended the recent WSA meeting and updated the Board on Point Broadband expansion in areas of the county in need of internet service. He advised that GigaBeam, the previous internet provider in the Tannersville area has been replaced by Point Broadband with the exception of four customers and there are still approximately 60 customers in Thompson Valley that are still served by GigaBeam.

Supervisor Gillespie provided updates from a community meeting in Tannersville and Thompson Valley.

Supervisor Cruet spoke about an internet provider company that might be an alternative to unserved areas of the county and offered to provide contact information to Mr. Young.

A Thompson Valley resident spoke regarding lack of internet and cell phone service to their area.

Jewell Ridge Fire Dept water line issue

Mr. Young announced that the water line issue has been determined to be within the fire department building. He explained that the PSA will replace the outside line but some materials cost of approximately \$2500.00 will be necessary to repair the problem inside the building.

Upon motion of Supervisor Plaster, seconded by Supervisor Presley and adopted by a vote of 5 to 0, with all members present and voting in favor thereof and no one against the same, the Tazewell County Board of Supervisors hereby approves a donation in the amount of \$2500.00 from Northwestern District Capital Improvement funds to the Jewell Ridge Fire Department for the repair of plumbing at the fire department building.

Consider surplus of TCVFD 2006 Expedition (VIN 1FMPPU16506LA14852)

Upon motion of Supervisor Gillespie, seconded by Supervisor Plaster and adopted by a vote of 5 to 0, with all members present and voting in favor thereof and no one against the same, the Tazewell County Board of Supervisors hereby approves the surplus of TCVFD 2006 Expedition (VIN 1FMPPU16506LA14852) pending consideration of use by Administration.

Upon motion of Supervisor Cruey, seconded by Supervisor Plaster and adopted by a vote of 5 to 0, with all members present and voting in favor thereof and no one against the same, the Tazewell County Board of Supervisors hereby approves the surplus of TCVFD 2006 Expedition (VIN 1FMPPU16506LA14852) pending consideration of use by Administration.

Consider surplus of TCSO 2011 Explorer (VIN 1FMHK8B8XBGA84249)

Upon motion of Supervisor Gillespie, seconded by Supervisor Plaster and adopted by a vote of 4 to 0, with all members present and Supervisor Cruey abstaining, the Tazewell County Board of Supervisors hereby approves the surplus of TCSO 2011 Explorer (VIN 1FMHK8B8XBGA84249) pending consideration of use by Administration.

Consider surplus of TCSO John Deere backhoe

Upon motion of Supervisor Gillespie, seconded by Supervisor Plaster and adopted by a vote of 4 to 0, with all members present and Supervisor Cruey abstaining, the Tazewell County Board of Supervisors hereby approves the surplus of TCSO John Deere backhoe pending consideration of use by Administration.

Consider approving emergency procurement for installation of 911 communications tower on Morris Knob

Mr. Young announced that the primary 911 communications tower on Morris Knob was destroyed in a windstorm last week and diligent efforts are being made to maintain first responder communications. He shared that Gigabeam offered to sell the county a tower for \$10,000.00 and that the cost of installation is estimated at \$48,000.00.

Mr. Young requested a special procurement exemption to be able to obtain the tower and its installation as quickly as possible, which will begin on Monday, March 11, 2024.

Upon motion of Supervisor Presley, seconded by Supervisor Gillespie and adopted by a vote of 5 to 0, with all members present and voting in favor thereof and no one against the same, the Tazewell County Board of Supervisors hereby finds there is an emergency circumstance with respect to the tower and hereby approves a special procurement exemption to allow a timely purchase and installation of a 911 communications tower on Morris Knob.

The County Attorney announced that a notice of award must be published in a local newspaper of general circulation, posted on the eVa website and a resolution adopted stating that GigaBeam was the sole source for the tower and Mobile Communications, Inc. of Winston-Salem, North Carolina.

Mr. Young asked that the situation report from the Virginia Department of Emergency Management regarding a local state of emergency with respect to public communications in Tazewell County and the quote from Mobile Communications, Inc. be made an exhibit to the motion. A copy is available at the Tazewell County Administration Office, 197 Main Street, Tazewell, Virginia 24651.

Supervisor Gillespie recognized Mr. Young and the first responder community for their teamwork in getting the communications tower situation under control so quickly. Mr. Young replied that TCSO worked very hard to get the situation under control. Supervisor Cruey thanked everyone that had pitched in to help.

Consider Resolution supporting Dollar General Store expansion in Pocahontas

Supervisor Cruey read a resolution that was passed by the Pocahontas Town Council supporting the expansion of the Dollar General Store in the Town of Pocahontas, asking for a similar resolution from Tazewell County to indicate support for the expansion. The expansion would include the addition of fresh produce and meats.

Upon motion of Supervisor Cruey, seconded by Supervisor Presley and adopted by a vote of 5 to 0, with all members present and voting in favor thereof and no one against the same, the Tazewell County Board of Supervisors hereby approves a resolution of support for expansion of the Dollar General Store in the Town of Pocahontas.

Outside Funding Requests:

Legacy Hospice/Palliative Care funding request

Upon motion of Supervisor Gillespie, seconded by Supervisor Plaster by a vote of 5 to 0, with all members present and voting against the same, the Tazewell County Board of Supervisors hereby **denies** a funding request from Legacy Hospice/Palliative Care.

Tazewell Little League Baseball/Softball, Inc. funding request

Upon motion of Supervisor Cruey, seconded by Supervisor Presley and adopted by a vote of 4 to 0, with all members present and Supervisor Gillespie abstaining, the Tazewell County Board of Supervisors hereby **denies** a funding request from Tazewell Little League Baseball/Softball, Inc.

Dorothy White/Southern Graces Catering, LLC funding request

The Chairman ordered this matter deferred to the April 9, 2024 meeting pending further exploration of the purchase of advertising by the County for this event.

Diamond Dawg Baseball, Inc. funding request

Upon motion of Supervisor Gillespie, seconded by Supervisor Plaster by a vote of 5 to 0, with all members present and voting against the same, the Tazewell County Board of Supervisors hereby **denies** a funding request from Diamond Dawg Baseball, Inc.

Tazewell Football Booster Spring Banquet funding request

Upon motion of Supervisor Gillespie, seconded by Supervisor Presley and adopted by a vote of 4 to 0, with all members present and Supervisor Cruvey voting against, the Tazewell County Board of Supervisors hereby approves waiving the rental fee for Nucholls Hall for the purpose of the Tazewell Football Boosters Spring Banquet.

Brain Injury Services of SWVA funding request

Upon motion of Supervisor Gillespie, seconded by Supervisor Plaster by a vote of 5 to 0, with all members present and voting against the same, the Tazewell County Board of Supervisors hereby **denies** a funding request from Brain Injury Services of SWVA.

Pocahontas Easter Egg Hunt funding request

Upon motion of Supervisor Gillespie, seconded by Supervisor Plaster by a vote of 5 to 0, with all members present and voting against the same, the Tazewell County Board of Supervisors hereby **denies** a funding request from the Town of Pocahontas for an Easter egg hunt.

SonShine Preschool Trike-a-Thon funding request

Upon motion of Supervisor Gillespie, seconded by Supervisor Plaster by a vote of 5 to 0, with all members present and voting against the same, the Tazewell County Board of Supervisors hereby **denies** a funding request from SonShine Preschool for a Trike-a-Thon.

THS Baseball funding request

Upon motion of Supervisor Gillespie, seconded by Supervisor Plaster by a vote of 5 to 0, with all members present and voting against the same, the Tazewell County Board of Supervisors hereby **denies** a funding request from THS Baseball.

Appointments:

Library Board

The Chairman directed that this matter be deferred until the April 9, 2024 meeting.

Fire/Rescue Board

The Chairman directed that this matter be deferred until the April 9, 2024 meeting.

New River Highlands

The Chairman directed that this matter be deferred until the April 9, 2024 meeting.

Workforce Initiative

The Chairman directed that this matter be deferred until the April 9, 2024 meeting.

Equalization Board

The Chairman directed that this matter be deferred until the April 9, 2024 meeting.

SWCC local board

The Chairman directed that this matter be deferred until the April 9, 2024 meeting.

CMCS

Upon motion of Supervisor Gillespie seconded by Supervisor Hrovatic and adopted by a vote of 5 to 0, the Tazewell County Board of Supervisors hereby reappoints Jared Smith to serve on the CMCS Board.

CIFA

Upon motion of Supervisor Hrovatic seconded by Supervisor Presley and adopted by a vote of 5 to 0, the Tazewell County Board of Supervisors hereby appoints Kyle Cruey to serve on CIFA.

Enterprise Zone

Upon motion of Supervisor Plaster seconded by Supervisor Hrovatic and adopted by a vote of 5 to 0, the Tazewell County Board of Supervisors hereby appoint Kyle Cruey to serve on the Enterprise Zone committee.

LEPC

Upon motion of Supervisor Plaster seconded by Supervisor Presley and adopted by a vote of 5 to 0, the Tazewell County Board of Supervisors hereby appoint Aaron Gillespie to serve on the LEPC.

SWVRJA

Upon motion of Supervisor Cruey seconded by Supervisor Gillespie and adopted by a vote of 5 to 0, the Tazewell County Board of Supervisors hereby appoint Shanna Plaster to serve on the SWVRJA.

BOARD CONCERNS

Supervisor Presley

Town of Bluefield Bridge

Upon motion of Supervisor Presley, seconded by Supervisor Hrovatic and adopted by a vote of 4 to 0, with all members present and Supervisor Cruey voting against, the Tazewell County Board of Supervisors hereby approves a donation in the amount of \$92,500.00 from Eastern District Capital Improvement funds to the Town of Bluefield’s Downtown Improvement Plan.

Due to inability to clearly hear the motion and vote, the County Attorney called for a roll call vote as follows:

- Supervisor Gillespie: aye
- Supervisor Cruey: nay
- Supervisor Hrovatic: aye
- Supervisor Presley: aye
- Supervisor Plaster: aye

GHS AED

Upon motion of Supervisor Presley, seconded by Supervisor Cruey and adopted by a vote of 5 to 0, with all members present and voting in favor thereof and no one against the same, the Tazewell County Board of Supervisors hereby approves a donation in the amount of \$3600.00 from Eastern District funds to Graham High School for the purchase of two (2) AED units.

Small business promotion

Supervisor Presley announced plans for a business meeting at Bluefield Town Hall on April 3 at 6:00pm. He encouraged other towns to organize a similar event, which is aimed at making businesses aware of grant and loan funding opportunities available to them.

Supervisor Plaster

RHS Wrestling building

The Chairman directed that this matter be deferred until the April 9, 2024 meeting.

Supervisor Cruely

Supervisor Cruely announced that there was a heavy turnout for primary voting today at the polls.

Supervisor Gillespie

Supervisor Hrovatic

None

OTHER BUSINESS

Airport

Supervisor Hrovatic announced that Jerry McReynolds has retired from service as the airport manager and is being replaced by long-time airport assistant manager, Jim French.

Supervisor Gillespie praised Mr. McReynolds and Mr. French for their service to the airport.

Local state of emergency

Mr. Young explained that due to the damaged tower on Morris Knob, 911 communications has been considered under a “local state of emergency” and that the Board has the authority to extend that status for a period of 14 days to allow for replacement/repair of the damaged tower.

Upon motion of Supervisor Gillespie, seconded by Supervisor Plaster and adopted by a vote of 5 to 0, with all members present and voting in favor thereof and no one against the same, the Tazewell County Board of Supervisors hereby approves extending the local state of emergency for a period of 14 days to allow for replacement/repair of the damaged tower.

ADJOURN

Upon motion of Supervisor Plaster, seconded by Supervisor Gillespie and adopted by a vote of 5 to 0, with all members present and voting in favor thereof and no one against the same, the Tazewell County Board of Supervisors hereby adjourns until April 9, 2024 at 4:00 pm.

a copy teste:

Andy Hrovatic, Chairman