

VIRGINIA: AT THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE TAZEWELL COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS HELD DECEMBER 2, 2025 AT FOUR O'CLOCK P.M. IN THE TAZEWELL COUNTY ADMINISTRATION BUILDING, 197 MAIN STREET, TAZEWELL, VIRGINIA 24651

PRESENT: AARON GILLESPIE, CHAIRMAN  
KYLE CRUEY, VICE-CHAIRPERSON  
ANDY HROVATIC, MEMBER  
CHUCK PRESLEY, MEMBER  
SHANNA PLASTER, MEMBER  
C. ERIC YOUNG, COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR  
STEPHANIE RUSSELL, EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT  
MEMBERS OF THE PRESS:  
JIM TALBERT, RICHLANDS NEWS PRESS  
WARREN HINKLE, THE VOICE

ABSENT: NONE

---

## MINUTES

Chairman, Aaron Gillespie, called the regular meeting to order and presided with all members present.

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

The Chairman 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 Chairman called for any additions/deletions to the agenda.

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 approved the revised December 2, 2025 agenda with additions/deletions approved by the Board, 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 Plaster, seconded by Supervisor Hrovatic 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 November 6, 2025 meeting. A copy is available in the County Administration Office, 197 Main Street, Tazewell, Virginia 24651.

### **CONSENT CALENDAR**

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 Consent Calendar. 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.

**1. 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:
- C. Consider ratifying poll to pay Dave White \$8,036.00 for 160 hours of compensatory time accrued in 2025 for emergency management of President's Day Storm and recovery, evaluation of flood relief applicant's properties in 2025 and completion of the Cavitts Creek bathhouse in 2023
- D. Consider ratifying poll to approve \$3,449.00 from contingency to purchase zoom conference hardware for boardroom

**Consent Calendar Items  
December 2, 2025 Meeting**

<b>Source</b>	<b>Check #</b>	<b>To Acct</b>	<b>Amt</b>	<b>Description</b>
Natasha Hunt	5036	73010-1150	\$250.00	Payroll reimbursement
David Welch & Helen Welch	111	035600-8109-15	\$100.00	TCSO - Project Lifesaver Donation
Anthony Ball	33750	43020-1150	\$56.43	Refund – overpayment of fines
Natasha Hunt	5037	73010-1150	\$250.00	Payroll reimbursement
CMCS	250310	31020-1150	\$1,163.12	Reimbursement for overtime for CITAC officers
County of Bedford	9203290	31020-8101	\$6,899.00	TCSO – reimbursement for ICAC equipment
Joyce Johnston	8682	73010-3099	\$42.12	Library Donation
Fort Maiden Spring Chapter NSDAR	1289	73010-3099	\$100.00	Library Donation

### ***Robert's Rules of Order***

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 approved the suspension of Robert's Rules so the Board could more easily move about the agenda.

### **SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS**

#### ***AEP – EMS Donation Presentation***

Representatives from the Appalachian Power Foundation presented a check for \$35,000 to the Board on behalf of the EMS Department for the Lifepak monitor grant.

County Administrator Eric Young reminded the Board that Barry Brooks had requested three (3) Lifepak monitors back in June; Mr. Brooks explained at that time that these monitors were crucial, due to the long drives from people's homes to the hospitals. Mr. Young stated that these monitors provide continued life support activity and send the readings and information to the receiving hospital in real time before the patient arrives. Mr. Young said the budget could only support purchasing two (2) Lifepak monitors, so this donation is a tremendous help in making sure all of our ambulances have the same equipment to service the citizens of Tazewell County.

The Board also expressed their gratitude for the donation and gathered for pictures with the representatives from AEP.

### **RECESS – 4:15 pm**

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 approved a recess until 6:00 pm.

### **RECONVENE – 5:55 pm**

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 reconvened the meeting.

### **DEPARTMENT REPORTS**

#### ***Engineering – Kenneth Dunford***

##### ***Cedar Bluff Transfer Station***

Mr. Dunford advised the Board that the drilling had provided some good news from the Geotech; we did hit rock but it wasn't bedrock, it was basically boulders and fill. Mr. Dunford stated this should make the excavation easy when we get to that point.

County Administrator Eric Young reminded the board that originally the bids came in really high since they thought they would have to hammer the rock, so I suggested to Mr. Dunford that we get separate estimates for the excavation and the construction and that way we may get a better deal.

#### ***Richlands School Drainage Issue***

Mr. Dunford reported to the Board that construction had begun on the project, weather permitting we should have the pipe in between Roma and Pizza Hut with the pump by next week and hopefully be able to open up the pipe and let some of the water out. Mr. Dunford stated that this was a phased project, with this first phase being

completed to keep the school from flooding this winter. Mr. Dunford notified the board that the second phase will take place in the spring and will consist of installing the drainage structures and the pond.

County Administrator Eric Young stated that this was great news due to possible flooding anticipated in January and February. Mr. Young continued that the remainder of the grant money will be used next year for the retention pond, using the pond as a place to divert the water if needed.

### ***Roads***

Mr. Dunford advised the Board that inside their packet he provided a draft list of drainage projects which the engineering department recommends for the orphan roads, along with corresponding maps of the roads. Mr. Dunford continued that he picked one or a small grouping of roads from each district. Mr. Dunford stated the list was based on the amount of calls we have received on these roads and the money we have available, although estimates will take longer to procure.

County Administrator Young questioned if Sparrow and Starling would be considered as the same project?

Mr. Dunford responded that yes, Sparrow, Starling, Shamrock and Songbird are grouped together for the sake of this project.

Supervisor Cruvey spoke on the desperate need for these roads in particular in the Yards/Falls Mills area due to the drainage issues and flooding problems for the residents.

Administrator Young advised that we are able to use coal severance tax money on the drainage project and Mr. Dunford agreed.

Mr. Dunford stated since we are unable to do a lot of construction in the winter months, we can take that time to go through and create estimates and then report the data to the Coal Severance Committee and discuss next steps.

Supervisor Hrovatic expressed his excitement over the drainage project, since the last 7 years have been devoted to fixing and paving all of the roadways this next step will ensure all of our hard work.

### ***Doug Clark***

Mr. Dunford introduced Doug Clark to the board, explaining that Mr. Clark was denied a building permit since his property is designated as in a flood plain. Mr. Dunford continued that Doug Clark is requesting a variance for placing a building in the flood plain; the building will be used for storage of a boat with no electricity to the building in addition to having a gravel floor. Mr. Dunford concluded that due to the ordinance, the Board would have to grant the variance, since it is in a flood plain.

County Administrator Eric Young inquired if DCR would have issue with granting a variance and Mr. Dunford replied he did not believe so.

Supervisor Cruvey asked if there had been recent flooding in that area?

### **Doug Clark - 1760 Wardell Road, Cedar Bluff, VA 24609**

Mr. Clark responded that there had been no recent flooding, even with the last big flood we had the water would have had to raise another 10 feet to the yard and another 4 feet to even reach the spot where the building would be located.

Upon motion of Supervisor Hrovatic, seconded by Supervisor Crucey 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 granted a variance to Doug Clark of 1760 Wardell Road, Cedar Bluff, for purposes of building a storage building on his property in a flood plain, being parcel #157B 01 001 A.

***Bear Wise Grant Program***

Mr. Dunford advised the Board due to limited funding and other qualifying factors the County did not receive the grant. Mr. Dunford continued that Brad Gibson did a great job on the application and I have asked him to follow-up to see why we were denied and what was approved with the grant funds.

**SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS**

***CART Resolution***

Supervisor Hrovatic read a short Resolution highlighting some of CART's (Richlands Area Citizens for the Arts) accomplishments and history.

Upon motion of Supervisor Hrovatic, 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 resolution for CART.

***Ginger Branton***

Supervisor Plaster presented a Resolution for Ginger Branton.

Upon motion of Supervisor Plaster, seconded by Supervisor Hrovatic 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 for Ginger Branton.

***Nolan and Caden Edwards***

The Chairman tabled until the January 13, 2026 meeting.

***Citizen of the Year***

Chairman Gillespie requested this matter be moved to Board Concerns.

***Aaron Gillespie***

Supervisor Crucey presented a Resolution for Aaron Gillespie for his many years of service as a Board of Supervisor.

Upon motion of Supervisor Crucey, 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 resolution for Aaron Gillespie.

***Andy Hrovatic***

Supervisor Plaster presented a Resolution for Andy Hrovatic for his many years of service as a Board of Supervisor.

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 approves a resolution for Andy Hrovatic.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE/FINANCIAL/COUNTY PROJECTS UPDATE**

### ***Consider ratifying Airport Authority By-Laws***

Administrator Eric Young advised the Board that the Tazewell County Airport Authority is in the process of financing a new hangar and we are preparing documents for a bond closing. It was discovered that there were two (2) sets of by-laws, so the Airport Authority met and adopted the former; a copy of which is in the packet, and by the statute this Board would have to approve those by-laws, Mr. Young concluded.

Upon motion of Supervisor Hrovatic, 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 approves the Airport Authority By-Laws as adopted by the Authority as presented. A copy of which is available at the County Administration Office, 197 Main Street, Tazewell, Virginia 24651.

### ***Adopt resolution amending certain enterprise zone incentives***

Administrator Eric Young called the Board's attention to the Enterprise Zone Incentives inside their packets. Mr. Young stated that the Town of Richlands wanted to amend their incentives to offer additional local incentives funded by the Town and including these in our application increases our chances of being awarded an Enterprise Zone by the State. Mr. Young stated we are asking that these incentives be adopted and incorporated into our Enterprise Zone Ordinance.

Upon motion of Supervisor Presley, seconded by Supervisor Hrovatic 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 adopting and incorporating the incentives into the Enterprise Zone Ordinance. A copy of which is available at the County Administration Office, 197 Main Street, Tazewell, Virginia 24651.

### ***Consider surplus of 2014 Ford Explorer (VIN#1FM5K8B82EGA38647) over 200k miles, needs complete exhaust, traction control issues***

Upon motion of Supervisor Gillespie, seconded by Supervisor Presley and adopted by a vote of 4 to 0, with all members present and Supervisor Cruey abstaining, and all others voting in favor thereof and no one against the same, the Tazewell County Board of Supervisors hereby approves to surplus the 2014 Ford Explorer, VIN #1FM5K8B82EGA38647.

### ***Updated Personnel Policy***

The Chairman deferred until the January 13, 2026 meeting.

### ***Job descriptions***

The Chairman deferred until the January 13, 2026 meeting.

### ***Consider donating ambulance to EO***

The Chairman deferred until the January 13, 2026 meeting.

### ***FOIA Policy***

County Administrator Eric Young reminded the Board that our current FOIA policy states we do not charge for the first ten-dollars (\$10.00) of documents requested. However, we are getting sweeping requests from public interest groups all over the country which require a lot of time and cost, Mr. Young added. Mr. Young requested that the first \$10.00 exemption only be applied to Tazewell County residents only.

Upon motion of Supervisor Presley seconded by Supervisor Hrovatic and adopted by a vote of 4 to 1, with Supervisor Cruvey voting against and all other members present and voting in favor thereof, the Tazewell County Board of Supervisors hereby approves limiting the first ten-dollar (\$10.00) fee waivers for FOIA requests to Tazewell County residents.

***Repeal Law Library fee charged for certain court filings***

Mr. Young notified the Board that after speaking with Erica Galloway earlier this evening, it was confirmed that the library and the Tazewell County Bar Association are still working through the details on this matter.

The Chairman deferred until the January 13, 2026 meeting.

**PUBLIC HEARINGS**

***Public Hearing for an Ordinance to rename Mutter Road as Lawson Lane***

Chairman Gillespie opened the floor for public comments.

Chairman Gillespie called a second time for public comments.

**Kim Lawson – 118 Mutter Road**

Ms. Lawson stated after speaking with the Engineering Department, there is already a Lawson Lane, so the name change will need to be listed as Lawson Drive.

Chairman Gillespie called a third and final time for public comments.

County Administrator Eric Young advised the Board that we have received a Petition as required by the Ordinance, to change the name of Mutter Road to Lawson Drive. Mr. Young continued that the Petition will need to have legal review to make sure all of the residents on Mutter Road are accounted for, so I request if this Petition is approved, it is approved pending legal review. In addition, Mr. Young said the person requesting the name change is responsible for purchasing the sign, at a cost of \$50.00.

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 adopt the Ordinance with amendment that the name be changed to Lawson Drive and that the name be changed contingent upon legal review of the Petition and payment of \$50.00 by the Petitioner to cover the cost of the sign.

**ADMINISTRATIVE/FINANCIAL/COUNTY PROJECTS UPDATE**

***Christmas Eve***

County Administrator Eric Young explained to the Board that he had been inundated with inquires as to whether the Board would consider giving the first half of the day off on Christmas Eve. The Personnel Policy states we have half the day off in the afternoon, Mr. Young clarified.

Upon motion of Supervisor Cruvey, 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 giving County employees a full day off for Christmas Eve this year.

***Flood mitigation grant update***

Mr. Young provided an update on the flood relief grant, stating we have received a total of 46 applications; of those, 27 applications have been forwarded to DHCD; 11 have been approved by DHCD and they are still considering the remaining 16 applications. Mr. Young went on to say we have 3 that we are holding here; 1 is an appeal, 1 new application we received this week; and the remaining application has some questions which need to be answered before we can move forward. There have been 16 applications denied, Mr. Young said.

Mr. Young clarified that the flood relief program is still ongoing and if anyone had major damage or was a total loss due to Helene or Winter Storm Jett, they may be eligible for DHCD funds.

Mr. Young stated that the County had been awarded a grant from DHCD in the amount of \$597,000 to purchase generators for the PSA for the water and sewer pump stations.

Mr. Young further stated that The Natural Resources Conservation Service through USDA, have contacted us and approved us to apply for \$180,000 in grants to remove stream obstructions.

Mr. Young advised the Board he would need a motion to ratify a poll for an application to DCR for \$750,000 for the design of the Raven Flood Mitigation.

Upon motion of Supervisor Plaster, seconded by Supervisor Hrovatic 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 ratifying the poll for an application to DCR for \$750,000 for the design of the Raven Flood Mitigation.

Mr. Young also advised the Board that as part of the ongoing countywide flood mitigation flood program which RES has been running; the second part being implementation funding to DCR on the County's and Town of Bluefield's behalf for seven million dollars (\$7,000,000) to construct a dentition facility. Mr. Young concluded that he would need a motion to ratify that poll as well.

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 ratifying the poll to apply to the DCR for implementation funding to construct a dentition facility.

***Sludge agreement with the Bluefield Sanitary Board***

Mr. Young stated the County has a sludge agreement with the Bluefield Sanitary Board since they treat the PSA's sewer at a discount and we treat their sludge at the landfill. Mr. Young further stated that the previous agreement was we would treat it at \$24.00 a ton, adjusting for inflation over the last three years it's now at \$27.36 a ton. We are asking for a 12-month extension on that agreement, since we will probably be dealing with West Virginia American Water next year instead of the Sanitary Board, Mr. Young said.

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 approves the 12-month sludge agreement with the Bluefield Sanitary Board, at a rate of \$27.36 per ton.

***Consider request to release TASK allotment from 4<sup>th</sup> quarter FY25***

Mr. Young advised the Board that TASK is requesting a \$2,700 allotment from fiscal year 2025. Mr. Young explained that the unclaimed funds from FY25 were rolled over into this year's budget and this money was included in the roll over since it was not requested in the fiscal year 2025.

A conversation ensued between the Board as to whether pay the amount six months after the end of the fiscal year 2025 or refer the request to the Budget Committee to pick up the payments in fiscal year 2026.

Upon motion of Supervisor Cruely, 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 paying the TASK allotment of \$2,700 from contingency.

**PUBLIC HEARINGS**

***Public Hearing for an Ordinance to provide modern firefighting services to the residents of Tazewell County by reorganizing the fire departments and companies operating in the County***

Chairman Gillespie opened the floor for public comments.

**Eric Whitesell – 5254 Thomson Valley Road, Tazewell, VA**

Mr. Whitesell, speaking on behalf of the Tazewell County Farm Bureau, spoke in opposition to the Ordinance. Mr. Whitesell was concerned with the ISO rating which insurance companies rate each property due to their response times for fire. Mr. Whitesell explained that every insurance company will come in and re-rate everyone's classifications due to the fire response times and cause insurance premiums to increase for many residents.

County Administrator Eric Young answering Mr. Whitesell's concerns, along with Supervisor Gillespie, both agreed to send the Ordinance to our ISO contact to clarify if any rate changes would occur to resident's premiums due to the Ordinance.

A discussion ensued between the Board members regarding the ISO rating and any changes which may happen due to the proposed Ordinance.

**Barry Brooks, Emergency Management Coordinator for Tazewell County**

Mr. Brooks stated he has been working with our ISO representative. Mr. Brooks further stated this Ordinance would actually help since we aren't closing any fire stations and the fact that we are increasing the entire departments' training and their equipment.

Chairman Gillespie opened the floor a second time for public comments as it relates to this Ordinance.

**Fred Harman – 3289 Witten Valley Road, Tazewell, VA**

Mr. Harman spoke against the Ordinance if it would in fact cause the ISO rating to change. Mr. Harman said the Ordinance was vague, questioned the budget of the proposed changes and also questioned fire response times mainly due to weather conditions.

Supervisor Gillespie stated that Mr. Harman had also sent a letter to him, which the County Administrator has a copy of and I request the Mr. Harman's letter be submitted into the record. A copy of which is available at the County Administration Office, 197 Main Street, Tazewell, Virginia 24651.

**Fred Lawless (Former Burkes Garden Fire Chief)– 4230 Gose Mill Road, Tazewell, VA**

Mr. Lawless spoke in favor of the Ordinance due to aging equipment, the increased training firefighters will be receiving, the ages of current volunteers and the opportunities for paid positions.

Chairman Gillespie opened the floor a second time for public comments as it relates to this Ordinance.

**Elizabeth Bennett – 108 Desert Rose Drive, Tazewell, VA**

Ms. Bennett spoke about her confusion regarding the Ordinance, since she has not personally seen the Ordinance. Ms. Bennett further spoke of her experiences while volunteering and questioned where the money was going to come from to pay for everything? Ms. Bennett requested that the Ordinance be stopped until it can be fixed instead of fixing everything later.

Chairman Gillespie opened the floor a third time for public comments as it relates to this Ordinance. The Hearing was closed.

County Administrator Eric Young said he wanted to answer Ms. Bennett's question regarding the funding. Mr. Young responded that the Food and Beverage Tax and 100% of the casino revenue will pay for the paid employees and the new equipment, approximately 2 million dollars in total from the two new revenue streams.

Supervisor Presley stated he has had many meetings with the Fire Chiefs and volunteers regarding what was needed equipment wise. This Ordinance is to help the citizens and to get help for the volunteers, it's not to hurt anyone or take anything away.

Supervisor Gillespie spoke on inflation issues which the county may face next year and if the revenue streams are guaranteed in the future. Supervisor Gillespie then discussed possible amendments to the Ordinance as suggested by himself, Mr. Whitesell and other citizen comments.

County Administrator Eric Young advised the Board that the effective date for the Ordinance is July 1, so we can move ahead with approving the Ordinance with any amendments needed. Mr. Young also responded to Mr. Whitesell over his concerns with the language in Article I, page 3, paragraph 6 and clarified that is only for the paid stations which we are only having one paid station. Mr. Young stated he would be happy to update that language if a motion was presented.

Upon motion of Supervisor Hrovatic, 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 approves amending the language in Article I, page 3, paragraph 6 of the proposed Ordinance to state that, "the Administrator is authorized to establish fire stations for Tazewell County Fire Department".

County Administrator Young, went on to say that in Article II we can amend that to add a paragraph 13 that says "the Company shall maintain a fire station in each district".

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 approves amending the language in Article II of the proposed Ordinance, adding a paragraph 13 that says “the Company shall maintain a fire station in each fire district”.

Administrator Young then stated he recommends that the Fire Chief Association pick the Chief as opposed to this Board and under Article II, paragraph 4 of the proposed Ordinance, add two subsections: a subsection A, “the County Administrator with the advice and consent of the Fire Chiefs Association, shall present to the Board by no later than March 8, 2026, a proposed method for selection of the Administrative Fire Chief which shall include annual input from the membership of the Tazewell County Fire Company and the Fire Chiefs Association, the Board shall consider and may adopt such method by resolution; subsection B, the Board shall appoint the initial Administrative Fire Chief prior to the effective date hereof for a initial term expiring January 31, 2027, thereafter the Board shall appoint an Administrative Fire Chief each year at its organizational meeting”.

In addition he recommended to amend paragraph 3 of Article II of the proposed Ordinance, by adding, “the County Administrator with the advice and consent of the Fire Chiefs Association, shall present to the Board by no later than March 8, 2026, proposed amendments to said by-laws which provide for the election of a Treasurer, the selection of an official depository bank, a process for the creation of accounts and requiring multiple signatures of officers thereof for checks drawn on company accounts. The Board shall consider and may adopt a proposal by resolution”.

Upon motion of Supervisor Presley, seconded by Supervisor Hrovatic 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 amending the language under Article II, paragraphs 3 and 4 of the proposed Ordinance, as proposed by the County Administrator in addition to the redlined version changes presented by the Administrator.

Supervisor Gillespie then questioned if the Fire Chiefs had voted on the Ordinance? Barry Brooks replied, that yes everyone had seen and voted on the Ordinance and it passed along with the by-laws.

A heated discussion followed between a member of the audience regarding the by-laws and Ordinance. The Bishop Fire Chief claimed he had not been provided a copy of the by-laws. Chief Brooks said all Chiefs had been given a copy and voted to approve it.

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 adopting an amendment to the recitals section of the proposed Ordinance; that “the Board desires to provide well-ordered, modern, cost efficient, fire protection services to the residents of Tazewell County that will lead to the improvement of the County’s ISO rating”.

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 hereby approves adding an Article VII of the proposed Ordinance, stating “the Fire Chiefs Association and the County Administrator will meet and review the by-laws annually”.

Upon motion of Supervisor Hrovatic seconded by Supervisor Presley and adopted by a vote of 4 to 1, with Supervisor Cruey voting against and all other members present and voting in favor thereof, the Tazewell County

Board of Supervisors hereby approves the Ordinance as amended and further moves to submit the adopted Ordinance to ISO for review. Supervisor Cruely stated he opposed the Ordinance because many amendments had been made without the public having notice to review them.

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 to meet on December 15, 2025 for a recessed meeting at 3:00 for any ISO issues, to discuss the Jonah User Agreement and conduct attorney interviews.

### **BREAK - UNSCHEDULED**

Chairman Gillespie stated that there is a need for a brief recess for ten (10) minutes.

Upon motion of Supervisor Gillespie, seconded by Supervisor Cruely and adopted by a vote of 5 to 0 with all members present and voting in favor thereof and no one voting against the same, the Tazewell County Board of Supervisors hereby moves to recess for ten (10) minutes.

**Break – 8:35 pm**

**Reconvened – 8:58 pm**

### **CITIZEN COMMENTS - SCHEDULED**

There were no comments.

### **CITIZEN COMMENTS - UNSCHEDULED**

Chairman Gillespie having opened the floor for citizen comments, as no one spoke.

### **ADMINISTRATIVE/FINANCIAL/COUNTY PROJECTS UPDATE**

#### ***Self-insured Fund***

County Administrator Eric Young recalled to the Board that the County was once a self-insured health insurance fund for a few years and then went back on the Local Choice. Mr. Young said that when we switched plans, we still had a responsibility on any claims for services performed but bills not yet received. Mr. Young continued by reminding the Board that a significant amount of money was set aside to cover these outstanding claims (tail coverage), in the amount of \$250,000. Mr. Young advised the Board that the time has passed for any other claims and there is a remaining balance of \$54,033.64 in that fund. We must use the left-over funds for health insurance but we could use it for the employer share on premiums going forward or we can pay a portion to the employee share, Mr. Young said.

The Board discussed an appropriate ratio for applying the funds to health insurance premiums. The Board concluded they should be applied on the same proportions between employees and the employer as they were collected.

Upon motion of Supervisor Hrovatic, 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 distributing the remaining \$54,033.64 of the health insurance fund as follows: 80% to be applied to the employer share for the upcoming health insurance premium and 20% applied to the employee share of the health insurance premium going forward on a per capita basis.

### ***Hunting at the Bluestone***

Administrator Eric Young informed the Board that he has received several phone calls from the public requesting permission to hunt at the Bluestone. Mr. Young said Dave White had suggested to him that maybe we do 3 or 4 permits per year through a raffle or lottery so everything was fair, with the proceeds benefiting the Animal Shelter.

Supervisor Gillespie replied he believed that to be a great idea, but the only issue I would have is possible liability issues since we have a hiking trail at the Bluestone.

Administrator Young stated we could limit the hunting to only certain areas, possibly above the hiking trail.

Supervisors Gillespie and Plaster suggested possibly closing the trail certain days of the year for hunting.

Supervisor Hrovatic proposed only allowing archery for purposes of hunting.

Supervisor Cruvey echoed Supervisor Gillespie's concerns with liability and suggested having the hunters sign something.

Administrator Young agreed and replied anyone would have to sign a waiver before they could hunt. Administrator Young stated he would have to discuss this request with the IDA since ultimately it is their property, but I will convey the Boards' suggestions.

### ***Consider approving CPROP Grant for Cavitt's Creek***

Administrator Young stated we were awarded a grant through CPROP (Cumberland Plateau) for building a beach at Cavitt's Creek, in the amount of \$100,000. Mr. Young further stated in order to receive the funds, I need to have the Grant Agreement approved and signed.

Upon motion of Supervisor Gillespie, seconded by Supervisor Hrovatic and adopted by a vote of 5 to 0 with all members present and voting in favor thereof and no one voting against the same, the Tazewell County Board of Supervisors hereby moves to approve the CPROP Grant Agreement for Cavitt's Creek in the amount of \$100,000.

### ***Consider surplus of 1987 Spartan Gladiator (Fire Truck – VIN# 159AT6D01HC185217)***

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 to surplus the 1987 Spartan Gladiator VIN # 159AT6D01HC185217.

## **Appointments**

### ***Tazewell County Fire-Rescue***

The Chairman directed that this matter be deferred to the January 13, 2025 meeting.

### ***Planning Commission***

The Chairman directed that this matter be deferred to the January 13, 2025 meeting.

### ***Tourism***

The Chairman directed that this matter be deferred to the January 13, 2025 meeting.

### ***Library Board of Trustees***

Upon motion of Supervisor Gillespie, seconded by Supervisor Hrovatic 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 moves to reappoint Karel Ryan to serve on the Library Board of Trustees.

***Tazewell County Airport Authority***

Upon motion of Supervisor Plaster, seconded by Supervisor Hrovatic 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 appointing Brian Edwards to serve on the Tazewell County Airport Authority for the Northwestern District.

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 moves to reappoint Bruce Remines to serve on the Tazewell County Airport Authority for the Eastern District.

***Social Services Board***

The Chairman directed that this matter be deferred to the January 13, 2025 meeting.

***Tazewell County Public Service Authority***

The Chairman directed that this matter be deferred to the January 13, 2025 meeting.

***Tazewell County Recreation and Parks Facility Authority***

The Chairman directed that this matter be deferred to the January 13, 2025 meeting.

***Coal and Gas Road Improvement Advisory Committee***

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 moves to appoint Curtis Breeding as the BOS Representative for the Coal and Gas Road Improvement Advisory Committee.

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 moves to appoint Andy Hrovatic to the Coal and Gas Road Improvement Advisory Committee.

**SUPERVISOR CONCERNS**

***Supervisor Plaster***

Supervisor Plaster explained she had a citizen contact her regarding the Homestead Exemption. Supervisor Plaster continued that the Homestead Exemption is when you reach a certain age you can receive a reduction for your real estate taxes or in some states the taxpayer will receive a rebate. Supervisor Plaster stated the citizen was planning to come tonight but due to the weather she did not attend, but I expect her to be at future meetings to discuss this matter.

County Administrator Young replied that the State of Virginia gives an exemption of \$75,000, on the value for a home you live in; if you are over a certain age and meet the income guidelines. Administrator Young also stated that Veterans can also qualify for an exemption.

***Supervisor Presley***

Supervisor Presley stated that next Tuesday he is traveling to Pulaski to meet with their Administrator. I have heard great things on how they focus on their local businesses. Supervisor Presley invited the Board and County Administrator to accompany him.

County Administrator Eric Young stated he would like to go and also take Ashley Harris with the IDA possibly since she could also benefit by attending.

Supervisor Presley advised the Board that he had met with Buddy McGlothlin who will be running the James River.

Bryan from AASC spoke about the signage down in Richlands.

Supervisor Presley said he had also met with representatives from Bluefield University and Southwest Virginia Community College. Mr. Presley stated they are currently working on their degree programs and trying to get the students who complete their first 2 years at Southwest to transfer over to Bluefield University to finish their four-year degree.

Supervisor Presley also spoke on his VaCo trip particularly regarding information he obtained on data centers and the possible problems which plague them especially since we are located in the PJM District (which is our 13-state grid). Mr. Presley said he believes this is something we should discuss with AEP, since they are making a billion dollars off of these data centers currently. Mr. Presley informed the Board of his trip in January he is going to Fairfax County to speak with people who bring in the data centers and invited anyone who wanted to attend with him.

Administrator Young replied he would like for Tim Danielson with the IDA to attend with Supervisor Presley.

***Supervisor Hrovatic***

Upon motion of Supervisor Hrovatic, 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 donating \$12,500 from the Western District Fund to the Town of Cedar Bluff for the purchase of a fire truck.

Supervisor Hrovatic also stated it has been a pleasure serving on the Board of Supervisors and if he can ever help in the future, please do not hesitate to contact him.

***Supervisor Gillespie – Citizen of the Year***

Supervisor Gillespie suggests having one citizen per District; possibly four or five different categories that we base the judgement on, such as service to the community, time in the community, service on boards or committees, or maybe how their profession has benefited the community.

Supervisor Gillespie stated it has been a pleasure and honor serving on the Board of Supervisors.

County Administrator Eric Young thanked Supervisors Hrovatic and Gillespie for their service and expressed his appreciation for all of their hard work and dedication to Tazewell County.

**EXECUTIVE/CLOSED MEETING – 9:48 pm**

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, the Board enters into an Executive/Closed meeting and invites all persons necessary to conduct business in this session, pursuant to Virginia Code Section 2.2-3711.

Due to Supervisor Cruey’s work commitments, he left the meeting at 9:48 pm.

- Executive/Closed Meeting - Pursuant to Virginia Code Section 2.2-3711**
- ▶ A( 3) Property acquisition in North Tazewell
  - ▶ A( 3) Property acquisition in Baptist Valley
  - ▶ A( 1) Personnel County Attorney
  - ▶ A(29) Contract negotiations with PSA and Pure Salmon on water user agreement
  - ▶ A( 8) Legal consultation regarding the Bristol Transportation District Regional Improvement Commission
  - ▶ A( 8) Contract negotiations re: Republic Landfill Construction Contract

**RETURN/CERTIFICATION/REPORT OF ACTION – 12:06 am**

The Board of Supervisors returned to public session and Supervisor 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 votes hereby recorded.

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

- Ayes: Five (4)
- Nays: None (0)
- Absent: One (1)
- Absent during vote: None (0)
- Report of Action: Two (2)

**ACTION FOLLOWING EXECUTIVE SESSION**

***Purchase the former B&W Auto Property***

Upon motion of Supervisor Gillespie, seconded by Supervisor Presley and adopted by a vote of 4 to 0, with Supervisor Cruey being absent from the vote and all others voting in favor thereof and no one against the same, the Tazewell County Board of Supervisors hereby moves to purchase the former B&W Auto property in North Tazewell, Virginia for \$325,000.00, to be paid from contingency, for use as a Fire Station, in accordance with the contract for purchase presented in executive session and made an exhibit to my motion and that we authorize the Chairman to execute said contract. I further move that the cost of the purchase be paid from contingency and included among the costs for which we may reimburse the County from proceeds of the anticipated April 2026 bond financing for the Leachate Tank, Fire Station and public water and sewer projects, as described in the reimbursement from public financing resolution approved earlier this year.

***PSA not to award contract for construction of the water and waste water improvements for Project Jonah***

Upon motion of Supervisor Presley seconded by Supervisor Hrovatic and adopted by a vote of 4 to 0, with Supervisor Cruey being absent from the vote and all others voting in favor thereof and no one against the same, the Tazewell County Board of Supervisors hereby moves to ask the PSA to not award the contract for construction of the water and waste water improvements for project Jonah until project Jonah executes the User Agreement discussed in executive session and supplies the security for their performance thereof as described in the agreement.

**ADJOURN**

Upon motion of Supervisor Plaster, seconded by Supervisor Gillespie and adopted by a vote of 4 to 0 with Supervisor Cruey being absent from the vote, and all others voting in favor thereof and no one against the same, the Tazewell County Board of Supervisors hereby recesses until Monday, December 15, 2025 at 3:00 pm.

A copy teste:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Kyle Cruey, Vice Chairman

  
Charles E. Presley, J.C.

