

VIRGINIA:

At a recessed meeting of the Washington County Board of Supervisors held Thursday, March 10, 2011, at 6:00 p.m., at the County Administration Building in Abingdon, Virginia the following were present:

PRESENT:

Dulcie M. Mumpower, Chair
 Odell Owens, Vice Chair
 Phillip B. McCall
 Nicole M. Price
 Kenneth O. Reynolds
 Joseph C. Straten

Mark K. Reeter, County Administrator
 Lucy E. Phillips, County Attorney
 Mark W. Seamon, Accounting Manager
 Naoma A. Norris, Recording Clerk

ABSENT:

Thomas G. Taylor

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Ms. Dulcie M. Mumpower, Chair of the Board, who welcomed everyone in attendance. Ms. Mumpower noted that Supervisor Tom Taylor had a previous commitment and would be unable to attend the meeting.

2. Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance

Supervisor Kenneth Reynolds gave the Invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Approval of Agenda

On motion of Mr. Reynolds, second by Mr. Straten, it was resolved to approve the agenda as presented.

The vote on this motion was as follows: (6-0)

<i>Mr. McCall</i>	<i>Aye</i>
<i>Ms. Mumpower</i>	<i>Aye</i>
<i>Mr. Owens</i>	<i>Aye</i>
<i>Ms. Price</i>	<i>Aye</i>
<i>Mr. Reynolds</i>	<i>Aye</i>

Mr. Straten *Aye*

4. Public Hearings:

a. Public Hearing pursuant to Section 15.2-2506 of the 1950 Code of Virginia as amended for the purpose of permitting public comment upon the Requested & Recommended County Operating Budget for Fiscal Year 2011-2012

Ms. Mumpower provided a statement concerning the purpose of the meeting for the benefit of the audience and commented about the work the Board of Supervisors has completed on the Requested & Recommended County Operating Budget for Fiscal Year 2011-2012. In addition, she reviewed the various challenges and funding issues the Board faces in establishing a County Operating Budget for FY 2011-2012. She explained the Board is working hard to make the best decisions possible for the citizens of Washington County.

Ms. Mumpower opened the public hearing to receive comment upon the Requested & Recommended County Operating Budget for Fiscal Year 2010-2011.

The following individuals addressed the Board:

Mr. Jim Sullivan, Superintendent, Washington County Public Schools addressed the Board and provided remarks on the status of the revised budget projections for the FY 2011-2012 School Budget. The deficient in the revised budget is \$1,239,344. The updated projections include a projected elimination of eight positions. To-date there have been twenty positions identified to be terminated in FY 2011-2012 through attrition. These eliminations are in addition to the fifty-five positions previously eliminated in the last few years of the budget crisis. Reductions in staff cannot continue without negatively affecting the school system such as increasing the size of classes. Mr. Sullivan clarified that no layoffs to staff have occurred. The reductions in staff have been through attrition. He further explained that for the third year there is no increase in employee salaries proposed. Mr. Sullivan addressed needs such as maintenance of school buses to assure safety and purchase of supplies and materials. He stated the school system is in a survival mode, and more local funding is needed to maintain a high quality educational system. Mr. Sullivan asked the Board to give priority to funding education.

Mr. Todd Christensen representing the Southwest Virginia Cultural Heritage Commission addressed the Board and thanked them for their past support of Heartwood, The Crooked Road and Round the Mountain. Mr. Christensen asked the Board to reconsider the proposed reduction in funding that supports the efforts of Heartwood, Crooked Road and Round the Mountain, as well as other tourism related marketing. He explained these organizations are all centered in Washington County, and all 19 counties that will be a part of Heartwood were asked to contribute a like amount. It would be good if Washington County would fund the full amount of the request. Mr. Christensen asked that the proposed reduction in funding be restored.

Mr. Jack Hinshelwood, Executive Director, The Crooked Road, addressed the Board. Mr. Hinshelwood explained full funding from Washington County is critical and will go a long way in encouraging support of initiatives in the County.

Mr. Ed Clark representing the Washington County Education Association addressed the Board and requested an additional \$640,000 in local funding for Washington County Schools. Mr. Clark addressed

the issues relating to reduction in funding to the school system and the loss of staff positions. He stated that should the funding situation continue to decline education will suffer. Experienced educators will leave, and young teachers will not be attracted to Washington County. The county will end up with a second class educational system. Mr. Clark further stated that good public school systems are the bellwether for good communities. Decisions made today will have an impact for years to come and in future generations. Mr. Clark said he is very proud of Washington County Schools.

Dr. Ron Proffitt, President, Virginia Highlands Community College addressed the Board and thanked them for providing funds to the college, and explained the request for FY 2011-2012 is for level funding. He further explained the College has been struggling with staff reductions; however, enrollment increased in both 2009 and 2010 while maintaining the same level of staff.

Mr. Richard Macbeth addressed the Board and discussed issues pertaining to the proposed salary increase for county employees. Mr. Macbeth questioned why a raise is proposed for all county employees except those within the school system. He stated his appreciation that no tax increases were proposed.

Ms. Jan Rainero with Bristol Historical Association addressed the Board and asked for the County's financial support to restore the Robert Preston House. Ms. Rainero clarified the location of the house is in Washington County. Funds for this project have been received from the Virginia Tobacco Commission, Appalachian Regional Commission and a large corporate donor in the County. However, there are only sufficient funds to purchase the property with an option to buy more land in the future. Ms. Rainero stated without some level of financial assistance from the County it will be difficult to obtain funds from local businesses, and urged the Board to provide the Bristol Historical Association with financial support for this project.

Mr. Buckey Boone, Member, Washington County School Board addressed the Board, and thanked them for their support of Washington County Schools. The continued support from the County enables the school system to have great successes. Children are learning to read in early years like never before. High School students have the opportunity to take advanced classes and some are graduating with college credits providing a head start on their college careers. The art programs are increasing. Mr. Boone encouraged Board members to visit Washington County School's website to read about the exciting things that are happening. He acknowledge the recommended increase in local funding to the school system in FY 2011-2012 recommended by the County Administrator, and asked the Board to consider more than the recommended amount. Mr. Boone explained that over the last ten years, the Board of Supervisors has increased local funding to the schools by 23%. Unfortunately, inflation has increased by 24%. If the County is to continue providing quality education, funding must keep up with inflation. The school system managed to endure the state/federal cuts without employee layoffs. However this was done so on the backs of the school employees as they have not received a salary increase in three years while their workload has increased. Mr. Boone stated that the school system could not continue with the fiscal down span without negatively affecting education, and asked the Board to make education a priority.

At this time, Ms. Mumpower recognized the teachers in attendance at the public hearing.

Ms. Jill Jessee member of the Washington County Education Association and the Virginia Education Association addressed the Board. Ms. Jessee commented about the five year salary plan for teachers, and asserted the plan is now at a standstill. She talked about the inequity in salaries of teachers across the state. Many of the counties in this region that are poorer than Washington County are paying their

teachers better. Ms. Jessee encouraged the Board to provide additional funding to Washington County Schools.

Mr. Jason Breeding addressed the Board and explained that he is a teacher in the Washington County Public School System. Mr. Breeding talked about the importance of a quality educational system to the community. He spoke of the valuable contributions teachers provide to the community by giving extra time to participate in extracurricular activities. Mr. Breeding noted that the Washington County School System is the largest employer in the County with these employees clocking more than 1 million hours in 2009-2010. Mr. Breeding asked the Board increase funding to the school system.

There being no further comments, Ms. Mumpower declared the public hearing closed.

Ms. Mumpower thanked those that addressed the Board, and thanked the teachers for attending the public hearing. She commended the teachers for all the contributions they make to the children of Washington County.

5. Adjourn or Recess

On motion of Mr. McCall, second by Mr. Straten, it was resolved to recess the meeting to 6:30 p.m. for a third worksession on the County Administrator’s Requested & Recommended County Operating Budget for FY 2010-2011.

The vote on this motion was as follows: (6-0)

<i>Mr. McCall</i>	<i>Aye</i>
<i>Ms. Mumpower</i>	<i>Aye</i>
<i>Mr. Owens</i>	<i>Aye</i>
<i>Ms. Price</i>	<i>Aye</i>
<i>Mr. Reynolds</i>	<i>Aye</i>
<i>Mr. Straten</i>	<i>Aye</i>

Prepared by:

Naoma A. Norris, Recording Clerk

Approved by the Washington County Board of Supervisors:

Dulcie M. Mumpower, Chairman