

April 18, 2007

At a **budget work session** of the Southampton County Board of Supervisors held in the Board Room of the Southampton County Office Center at 26022 Administration Center Drive, Courtland, Virginia on April 18, 2007 at 6:30 PM.

SUPERVISORS PRESENT

Dallas O. Jones, Chairman (Drewryville)  
Walter L. Young, Jr., Vice-Chairman (Franklin)  
Carl J. Faison (Boykins-Branchville)  
Anita T. Felts (Jerusalem)  
Moses Wyche (Capron)

SUPERVISORS ABSENT

Walter D. Brown, III (Newsoms)  
Ronald M. West (Berlin-Ivor)

OTHERS PRESENT

Michael W. Johnson, County Administrator (Clerk)  
James A. Randolph, Assistant County Administrator  
Julia G. Williams, Finance Director  
Susan H. Wright, Administrative Secretary

Chairman Jones called the meeting to order.

Mr. Demetrios Peratsakis, Executive Director of the Western Tidewater Community Services Board (WTCSB), was the first to speak to their respective budget. He presented a brief PowerPoint presentation and distributed a hard copy of the PowerPoint, along with their quarterly newsletter. WTCSB provided the following mental health, mental retardation and substance abuse treatment and support services to children and adults:

- Emergency psychiatric & crisis management services
- Medical, nursing, and medication management
- Housing and complete residential support
- Counseling, anger management and substance abuse groups
- School-based services including counseling, tutoring and after-school
- Parent skill development workshops and education groups
- Jail based services
- Alcohol and drug free counseling and prevention services
- Community-wide youth initiatives

Mr. Peratsakis advised that since implementing the school-based services for students, grades had improved and absences and suspensions had decreased. He advised that the value of services provided to Southampton County citizens was \$660,500. For every \$1.00 invested, \$9.20 in services were provided. In FY 2006, 17,235 hours of medical treatment and support services were provided to Southampton County citizens. They were requesting funding this year in the amount of \$81,314, an 8% increase.

Ms. April Knight of the Western Tidewater Free Clinic spoke to their respective budget. She noted that Ellen Saunders was scheduled to speak tonight, but she was speaking instead as the new Executive Director. She advised that the Western Tidewater Free Clinic would provide quality non-emergent, medical, mental and dental healthcare to uninsured, low-income residents of the Franklin, Isle of Wight, Southampton, and Suffolk communities who were unable to access care through any other provider. The cost of health insurance was continuing to rise. The growth rate was more than 3 times the growth of worker's earnings and 2 ½ times the rate of inflation. Since 2000, premiums had increased 73%. Western Tidewater was the only area in Hampton Roads without a free clinic. There were about 2,233 residents in Southampton County without health insurance. About 58% of free clinic patients had one or more of the following chronic diseases:

- Hypertension
- Depression
- Diabetes
- Heart Disease
- Asthma
- Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease
- Other Chronic Diseases

Managing chronic illnesses would improve quality of life and decrease burdens on local hospital emergency departments. For every \$1 spent, free clinics provided \$5.41 in health care services to

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their patients. She advised that they elected and seated their Board of Directors on March 29 and they were actively working to secure a site for the clinic. Funds had been received for salaries, rent, and utilities. They were asking for funding proportionately. They were requesting \$10,000 from Southampton County for start-up funds and to be included in the annual budget.

Mr. David Taylor of the 5<sup>th</sup> District Community Corrections Program spoke to their respective budget. He advised that approximately 600 individuals were referred to them each year. They provided probation services to 442 probationers a month on average. They were requesting an increase in funding from \$3,295 to \$4,795. The funds would go towards \$15,000 needed to fund a much needed new position to free up the probation officers and allow them to perform their jobs more efficiently. Currently, there was a backlog of cases, probation officers did not have time to follow up with past probationers, and transfer cases could not be transferred quickly. The staff worked extremely hard. He thanked the Board for their support.

Mrs. Judy English, Director of Southampton County Social Services, spoke to their respective budget. Mrs. Phyllis Barnett passed out copies of their annual report for the Board members to review at their leisure. She also passed out their FY 2006 Budget Summary, which illustrated the economic benefits of Social Services, which Mrs. English would explain. Mrs. English recognized and thanked Mrs. Barnett for putting all of this together. Mrs. English advised that this was a different way of looking at Social Services. The pink blocks represented federal and state dollars, which totaled \$19,279,339. The blue blocks represented local dollars, which totaled \$326,418. The local draw down was only 1.66%. She stated that their budget was a very lean budget. The General Assembly approved 4% raises. They had one vacant aid position. There was an increase in office supplies and an increase in services provided to seniors.

Ms. Kathy Shea-Sword, Senior Attorney of Virginia Legal Aid, spoke to their respective budget. She advised that Virginia Legal Aid was a non-profit law firm that provided free legal information, advice and representation in civil cases to low-income individuals and families. Offices were located in Danville, Emporia, Farmville, Lynchburg, and Suffolk. In FY 2005-06, they were able to close 69 cases in Southampton County, which improved conditions for 187 men, women, and children. Clients must have incomes below 125% of the federal poverty level. Virginia Legal Aid helped parents obtain income support and custody and visitation for their children. They helped elderly men and women obtain health care and purchase medicine, and helped people with limited education and income avoid illegal or fraudulent sales schemes. They also assisted low-income families in obtaining and maintaining safe and affordable housing. She shared the following case study: When their client rented a mobile home, the landlord promised to make necessary repairs to the heating system, but no repairs were ever made. Their client made it through the winter using dangerous and expensive space heaters. Virginia Legal Aid filed action on their client's behalf in circuit court seeking repairs and money damages. To settle the case, the landlord moved their client to a new mobile home rent-free for six months and forgave all past due rent. She stated that Virginia Legal Aid did not charge their clients, so they must rely on other sources of funding. To help continue current service for Southampton residents, Virginia Legal Aid was seeking funding from Southampton County in the amount of \$3,120, a 4% increase.

Mrs. Stacey Bradshaw of the Chowan Basin Soil & Water Conservation District spoke to their respective budget. She advised that their mission was to provide technical, financial and educational assistance to the residents of Southampton, Greensville and Sussex Counties. They provided cost share assistance to landowners and agricultural producers to keep soil from leaving the farm and also to keep our streams and rivers free of sediment and nutrients. They received funding from 3 sources – the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), the localities in which they served, and an equipment rental program. She noted that the equipment rental program was more of a service to landowners and producers rather than a money maker for the District. She advised that they received cost share funding in the amount of \$452,000 for the current fiscal year from DCR. Of those funds, 62% had been allocated to agricultural producers or landowners in Southampton County. That equated to \$285,000 for practices such as cover crop, nutrient management plan writing, critical area seeding, a grazing land protection area, and split application of nitrogen on corn. They also collected 22 tons of tires this year, bringing the total number of tires recycled for Southampton County over the last 4 years to 102 tons. Education programs were still being offered, including providing materials to schools and conducting classroom presentations. They were requesting funding in the amount of \$7,280, a 4% increase.

Mr. Charles Turner, Superintendent of Southampton County Public Schools, spoke to their respective budget and presented a PowerPoint presentation. He acknowledged the staff and parents who were present in support of the budget. He advised that the mission of Southampton Public Schools, through the combined efforts of staff, students, families and the community, was to ensure a quality education in a safe environment that would prepare students to be successful

learners and productive citizens in an ever-changing society. Their focus areas were student achievement, school safety, facilities, technology, transportation, communication, and professionalism. All 6 schools were fully accredited. The dropout rate was one of the lowest in the state at 1.46%. The average County-wide student attendance this year was 95%. Factors influencing their progress were staffing, programs, facilities, community support, and parental support. He stated that they offered Advanced Placement online and satellite classes, Honors Chemistry, and Dual Credit History, English, and Science, whereby students could have college credits upon graduating. They were working on a Dual Credit Associate Degree Program, where a student could graduate from Southampton High School and receive an Associate’s Degree from Paul D. Camp Community College simultaneously. Several students attended the Appomattox Regional Governor’s School and Governor’s School for Gifted Arts in Norfolk. Regarding facilities, Southampton High School and Southampton Middle School were completely covered by security cameras. Nottoway Elementary and Meherrin Elementary were outstanding facilities. They were delighted that Hunterdale Elementary would be closing and a new Riverdale Elementary would open in 2008. He thanked the Board for that. Capron Elementary needed to come next – once Capron was addressed, they would be second to none in facilities.

Mr. Turner advised that their budget request was built on the premise of maintaining current programs and operations while being very conservative. Fixed costs over which they had no control were included. A significant factor in developing the proposed budget was the reduction in the amount of increase in state funding from the previous year. Their state funding increase was approximately 25% of what they received last year, which amounted to \$457,807, based on the Governor’s proposed budget. The school budget proposed the following:

- **Personnel and Salaries** – A 5% salary increase for teachers, a 4% increase plus \$1,700 for Instructional Assistants to reach a beginning salary of \$11,000, a 4% increase plus \$200 for bus drivers, and a 3% increase for administrators. The beginning teacher salary was proposed at \$36,604, an increase of \$1,544. The total personnel increase was \$795,646. This amount included one secondary math teacher. Attempts had been made to utilize personnel effectively through internal adjustments and elimination of personnel request.
- **Instruction Not Including Personnel** – Offsetting the mandated cost in special education continued to be a consideration. Fixed charges ran in excess of \$900,000 annually. In recent years, they had continuously tried to add new programs as needed, expand other programs as necessary and to do so constantly seeking improvements in all academic areas. They had accomplished this with very limited funding. They had been very conservative and creative. However, rising cost and additional requirements and responsibilities were making this approach virtually impossible for the future.
- **Fringe Benefits/Debt Service** – Fringe benefit increases were scattered throughout categories with a total impact of over \$400,000. Debt service decreased by \$73,005.
- **Transportation and Maintenance** – The cost of fuel would continue to be monitored. Utility costs would also continue to be monitored. A significant infrastructure need was funding for buses and cars. They operated 70 buses and 29 cars per day to transport students, totaling approximately \$6,000 miles per day and approximately 1.08 million miles per year. With their current investment, Southampton County Public Schools would still fall behind the replacement cycle outlined by the state Standards of Quality. Future budgets would need to continually concentrate resources in this area.

There were usual requests for repairs, however, the following supplemental capital budget had been developed to address site improvement areas:

SHS Football Field Light Replacement (36 Lights Estimated)	\$50,000
Career Tech-HVAC-Wigwam & Child Services (\$150,000 each)	300,000
SMS Auditorium Seating	175,000
Capron Elementary	525,000
Land Acquisition Cost for Capron Elementary	TBD

Mr. Turner noted that educational mobile units were not part of the supplemental budget this year – they put in 4 on their own. Also, the bleachers were not part of the supplemental budget this year. He thanked the Board for their role in SHS getting new, safer, and handicap accessible bleachers.

The Board took a 5-minute recess.

Upon returning to open session, the Board began budget deliberations.

Mr. Johnson informed that funding had not been included in the proposed budget for the Blackwater/Nottoway Riverkeeper Program, because a request had not been received when the budget was being put together. He asked the Board if they were interested in providing funding?

It was consensus of the Board to provide a lump sum appropriation of \$3,600 for them to utilize as they wished.

Supervisor Felts asked, regarding the Smart Beginnings Grant, what would happen if they did not receive the other appropriations? Mr. Johnson replied that he thought that if any of the pieces fell apart, the County would not provide its share of the funding.

Mr. Johnson informed that of the 7 speakers tonight, 3 were not fully funded. The WTCSB requested an 8% increase - we provided 5%, which was \$2,258 less than they requested. The Western Tidewater Free Clinic requested \$10,000 - we provided \$5,000. We provided an additional \$434,440, or 4% increase, for Southampton County Schools. However, the funding was still \$650,000 short of what they requested.

Supervisor Faison advised that the Western Tidewater Free Clinic was very important. He would like to see us provide \$7,500 of the \$10,000 they requested.

Mr. Johnson advised that not knowing where the Western Tidewater Free Clinic would be located concerned him. It may be in Suffolk or Northern Isle of Wight and transportation for Southampton County residents could be a concern.

Regarding Southampton County Schools, Chairman Jones commented that when we fully funded them in the past, they did not increase the salaries of their teachers and other personnel.

Supervisor Faison stated that we had a great school system. When they dispersed the money, they did not have enough to give raises. He did not think they wasted any money.

Chairman Jones asked Mr. Johnson how much surplus money the schools had? Mr. Johnson advised that they appropriated \$300,000 that they did not use back to them. He added that sometimes the gap between what they requested and what we provided was small and sometimes it was wide. He had never tried to get involved in looking at how the schools could save \$50,000 here or there. He wished we could give them what they wanted and more. Our job was to look at what we could afford.

Supervisor Wyche remarked that we needed to work within our guidelines. Supervisor Felts agreed.

Vice-Chairman Young advised that he was not aware, until his daughter told him, that teacher's assistants made only \$9,000/year.

It was noted that the schools could provide the proposed increases for 65 teacher's assistants for \$134,000. If it was a priority, they could trim somewhere to provide those increases.

Supervisor Faison advised that he would like to go with a 5¢ increase on the real estate tax rate, rather than the proposed 4¢, and provide the funding equivalent to the 1¢ increase (\$136,773) to the schools, since the funding we were providing was way lower than what they requested.

Chairman Jones advised that the salaries of Southampton County teachers had been on the same scale since he had been on the Board.

Vice-Chairman Young advised that he was not in favor of raising the real estate tax above the 4¢ that was proposed.

Mr. Johnson advised that continued discussion of the budget would be placed on the agenda at the regular session on Monday. If they were comfortable with advertising for public hearing after discussion on Monday, they could make a motion to do so. Otherwise, another work session was scheduled for next Wednesday.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:42 PM.