

At a **public hearing** of the Southampton County Board of Supervisors held in the auditorium of the Southampton County High School at 23350 Southampton Parkway, Courtland, Virginia on April 20, 2004 at 7:30 PM.

SUPERVISORS PRESENT

Dallas O. Jones, Chairman  
Walter L. Young, Jr., Vice-Chairman  
Carl J. Faison  
Anita T. Felts  
Ronald M. West  
Moses Wyche

SUPERVISORS ABSENT

None

OTHERS PRESENT

Michael W. Johnson, County Administrator (Clerk)  
J. Waverly Coggsdale, III, Assistant County Administrator  
Julia G. Williams, Finance Director  
Cynthia L. Cave, Community/Economic Development Director  
Susan H. Wright, County Administration Executive Secretary

Chairman Jones called the public hearing to order at 7:30 PM.

He began by stating that the Board was shocked and deeply saddened by yesterday's passing of Mrs. Charleton Sykes. Mrs. Sykes was a strong voice for the Newsoms District on the Board for 24 years and 4 months and she would be sorely missed by all of them. She was a woman of deep conviction that dedicated much of her life to public service. The Board wished to publicly express its deepest sympathy to her family and recognize her many years of dedicated service to the people of Southampton County. It was appropriate and fitting that they convene tonight's meeting with a special tribute of silence and quiet reflection. He asked that everyone join him in a moment of solemn remembrance of Mrs. Charleton W. Sykes, devoted public servant and friend.

Chairman Jones announced that he had been presented with a roster of speakers who wished to speak to the matter at hand, which was consideration of an ordinance to lawfully permit the use of muzzleloading weapons during the prescribed open season for game species in Southampton County. Given the number of speakers and in the interest of time, he requested that each speaker be limited to no more than 3 minutes. He advised that the Board would solely listen tonight and did not intend to take any action this evening. All comments would be reflected upon and given due consideration when the matter was slated for final disposition at the Board's next regular meeting, on Monday, April 26, 2004, at 8:30 AM in the Southampton County Office Center. All meetings of the Board were open to the public and all interested citizens were welcome to attend.

The ordinance to be considered is as follows:

**BE IT ORDAINED** by the Board of Supervisors of Southampton County,  
Virginia that the Southampton County Code be, and hereby is, amended as follows:

**Sec. 10-26. Hunting weapons restricted.**

(a) It shall be unlawful to hunt with a rifle larger than twenty-two one hundredths of an inch (.22) caliber rim fire except rifles of a larger caliber may be used for hunting groundhogs between March 1 and August 31;

(b) ~~It shall be unlawful to hunt with a muzzle loading rifle at anytime;~~ *It shall be lawful to hunt with muzzleloading rifles during the open season for the hunting of game species and any special season for the hunting of game species with a muzzleloading rifle, as prescribed by the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries; provided, however, that the use of any such muzzleloading rifle shall be only from a stand located at least ten (10) feet in elevation above the ground, provided, however, that such requirement shall be expressly inapplicable to persons with a permanent physical disability or disabilities prohibiting the person*

*from using a stand located at least ten (10) feet in elevation above the ground. (For the purposes of this subsection, any person possessing a licensed medical doctor's written statement, based on a physical examination, declaring that such person has a permanent physical disability that prohibits the person from using a stand located at least ten (10) feet in elevation above the ground, may hunt with a muzzleloading rifle during such hunting seasons under the same rules, regulations, laws, and conditions that apply to other hunters using muzzleloading rifles, except that such disabled hunters shall not be required to hunt from a stand at least ten (10) feet in elevation above the ground);*

~~(e) — It shall be unlawful to hunt with a muzzle loading shotgun loaded with slugs or sabot slugs; and Any person violating the provisions of this section, upon conviction, shall be guilty of a Class 3 Misdemeanor and shall be punished accordingly.~~

~~(d) — Any person violating the provisions of this section, upon conviction, shall be guilty of a Class 3 Misdemeanor and shall be punished accordingly.~~

This ordinance shall be effective at 12:00 midnight April \_\_\_\_, 2004.

**State law references:** Authority for above section, Code of Virginia, §§ 29.1-100, 29.1-519, and 29.1-528.

Mrs. Teresa Birkhead, landowner in the Berlin-Ivor District, spoke in favor of muzzleloading in the County. She advised that she did not believe muzzleloading was a safety issue for our citizens, nor that it would reduce the number of trophy deer for hunters. She submitted copies of the latest 10-year trend casualty statistics and graphs from the International Hunter Education Association, which were based on hunting injuries or fatalities in the U.S., Canada, and Mexico. Page 16 reported that 2-party casualties involved shotguns twice as many times as all other hunting weapons combined. Page 19 showed that self-inflicted casualties involved a shotgun 39.33% of the time, rifle - 39.05%, handgun - 14.45%, other - 2.75%, and muzzleloader - 2.33%. Those facts did not support the rationale to forbid muzzleloading due to safety concerns. She understood that hunting clubs were concerned about safety, so she recommended that they create a bylaw in their own constitutions to forbid muzzleloading on their own land. But don't take away the rights of landowners, individual hunters, and still hunters. She advised that her husband and son hunted with hunting clubs in counties that had muzzleloading season, and those clubs still brought in trophy deer. She noticed at this year's Eastern Regional Game Show that trophy deer came from all areas of the region, including Southampton County. She was not convinced that muzzleloading season would limit a club the opportunity to get a trophy deer. She urged the Board to vote for muzzleloading season in Southampton County.

Mrs. Teresa Preston of the Berlin-Ivor District addressed the Board in favor of muzzleloading. She advised that today she was looking at Southampton County's website and there were goals listed. They were to educate, further our economy and tourism, and bring our County up to speed with the rest of the State in all important areas. She thought that supporting the game seasons and the revenues they brought in to the State was a good thing to do. It was a win-win-win. The County wins because trickles of local revenue would come in, the State wins because of the license revenues, and the landowners and hunters would have extra recreational opportunity. They paid taxes on this land. She looked at it as a constitutional right that was based in the law, *Code of Virginia*, effective January 1, 2003. She urged the Board to uphold their constitutional rights and to amend the local ordinance to conform specifically with the enablement granted by the State of Virginia.

Mr. George Gherkin, retired Wildlife Biologist and Registered Forester residing in Courtland, spoke. He informed that he was not a black powder/muzzleloader hunter, but he felt it was a shame that a man could not hunt deer with his black powder gun on his own land. He could assure that the black powder hunters were not going to have any effect on the total deer population. In his career, he had met all kinds of hunters and the black powder hunters he knew were a credit to the sport. He stated that if the Board had a problem with safety, they could require them to hunt at least 10 feet above the ground. Most everybody experienced with weapons could assure them that the black powder rifle was much safer than shooting with buckshot. He felt that they needed to consider this very seriously. The hunt clubs could control hunting on their own land. He thought a person who owned land or had permission to hunt on land should be able to use a black powder weapon.

Mrs. Diane Kropewnicki, addressed the Board. She stated that she and her family lived at 35437 Seacock Chapel Road in Zuni. They were landowners and operated a horse breeding farm. Her husband and son were responsible hunters and conservationists. Most of what she had heard in opposition to muzzleloading was based on emotion and conjecture and not fact. She wanted to share some facts she had gathered. In regards to safety, the 2001 North American Incidence Summary compiled by the International Hunters Education Association, which included all of NAFTA (U.S. Canada, and Mexico), listed 3 fatal accidents for muzzleloading, 2 of which were self-inflicted when falling from a tree stand. That compared to 30 fatal accidents involving shotguns, 7 of which were self-inflicted. There were 19 non-fatal muzzleloading accidents compared to 474 for shotguns. Dr. James Swan, author of *In Defense of Hunting*, regarding muzzleloading accidents, quoted, "There were 4 fatal accidents in 1996 and 2 in 1997 in all of NAFTA. At least half of these fatalities were due to falling out of tree stands, which is hardly related to the safety of the weapon. According to the National Safety Council, ping pong, tennis, and golf were far more dangerous than hunting with muzzleloaders." In Virginia in 2001, there was 1 fatal accident involving a muzzleloader and it was self-inflicted. She stated that the concern over the disappearance of the big bucks was also based on conjecture and emotion. On the *Boone & Crocket* website, there was an article about big bucks. It asked, why do some counties produce so many big buck entries? She quoted from the article, "Answering this question is difficult since so many natural and manmade factors come to bear. Still the relationship between record book entries and river systems is plainly evident throughout the country, especially in heavily farmed states. For example, in Iowa, the best deer counties were not the most heavily farmed, but tend to have a mixture of farm and forest cover associated with river bottoms." We all knew how many river bottoms there were in Southampton County.

Mrs. Kropewnicki reported that the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries had published the preliminary 2003-2004 deer harvest numbers. It stated that 235,944 deer were harvested, including 118,567 antlered males. Muzzleloading comprised 23% of the total deer harvest and archery comprised 8%. By far, the largest deer harvests were in counties that allowed muzzleloading – A clear indication that the deer harvest was not adversely affected by muzzleloading. *Field & Stream* published an article last fall called, "Wallhangers: A Guide to the 20 Best Places in the Country to Hunt True Trophy Whitetails in 2003." A portion of Virginia was listed as number 4. That location was the Shenandoah Valley with the best bets being Augusta, Rockingham, Shenandoah, Page, and Warren Counties, all of which allowed muzzleloading. The current state record for both typical and non-typical bucks came from that region. She informed that as a horse breeder, she knew that genetics and nutrition were the dominant factors in producing desirable physical traits in an animal. She quoted from the *Field & Stream* article she mentioned earlier, "Superior genetics, limestone laced soil, intense farming of corn, soybeans, and alfalfa" were contributing factors in the production of large antlered bucks. The genetics and nutritional factors that produced the large bucks in Southampton County would not change if muzzleloading were permitted. The right to hunt and fish was added to the State Constitution after an amendment was passed in November 2000, and subsequently, the General Assembly revised the wording regarding muzzleloading. She believed that the proposal before them would bring Southampton County into conformance with that revision and remove a barrier to her family's right to hunt with a muzzleloader on their property. If others did not want to allow muzzleloading on their property or within the boundaries of their hunt club, they had that right. But don't deny her family the right to hunt on their own land. She urged them to approve this change to allow muzzleloading in Southampton County.

Mr. Wayne Turner spoke against black powder/muzzleloading in Southampton County. He stated that he did not know where the thought was coming from that it would bring revenue into the County. We only had 1 hotel and 1 bed-n-breakfast. Also, the majority of the people were going to buy their hunting license and ammunition outside of the County in the City of Franklin or wherever. So he did not see where allowing muzzleloading would make a big difference in the revenue coming into the County. He referenced the leaflets he had presented the Board. He advised that blackpowder rifles were not like Daniel Boone rifles anymore. The rifle illustrated on the first leaflet was a 50 caliber, which would be used for deer hunting. Its velocity was 2,250 feet per second and would shoot faster than a 30-30 Winchester, which was one of America's top deer rifles. He strongly urged them to vote for no blackpowder season in Southampton County.

Mr. Robert Goodrich spoke. He stated that hunt clubs had a right to police themselves. They, as landowners, or if they leased land, had the right to be able hunt with muzzleloaders. The hunt clubs did not want them to hunt with muzzleloaders because they were scared that they were going to kill their deer. But, they could run their dogs across his property and the only way he could keep them off was to put up a fence. He did not think it was right.

Mr. Keith Silcott spoke. He advised that he was stationed in North Carolina and his home was in Shenandoah Valley, Virginia. He came to Southampton County to hunt because they had done a good job in generating a fine deer population. It clearly stated in the game laws that in Southampton County you could hunt small game animals with a muzzleloader. You could hunt everything but deer, bear, and turkey with a muzzleloader up to a 45 caliber. If you look at ballistics, a 45 caliber was normally 200 feet a second faster than your common muzzleloader. He was asking for the right to hunt on his property and the property he leased with a muzzleloader. It was a given right for the hunt clubs to run their deer across the land. All they were asking was to be able to sit on their land and hunt deer.

Mr. Beale Carter of Newsoms addressed the Board. He thanked Chairman Jones for the eloquent remarks he made about their Supervisor (Charleton Sykes). She had certainly done an outstanding job for this County for many, many years. He stated that he talked to her just last Sunday, 9 days ago. They talked at some length and she made it very clear to him that from what she had heard in the Newsoms District, she was very much opposed to legalizing black powder in Southampton County. That may be hearsay, but he felt like she would want them to know that. He informed that in 1947, he was at Virginia Tech and had some friends at Radford. This gentleman owned a black powder rifle that dated back to the Civil War. They went out behind his office on the banks of the New River. He had black powder and a 50-caliber bullet in the rifle. He noted that bullets were what were now being shot from black powder rifles. The gentleman set the elevation for 600 yards and G-shot a concrete bridge abutment in the New River downstream from where they were. He missed it by about 5 feet at 600 yards. The elevation was set right but the windage was a little off. That showed what black powder could do. Everybody he had talked to in his section, and apparently Mrs. Sykes also, were opposed to any legalization of black powder in Southampton County.

Mr. Will Haas of Zuni spoke in favor of passing the ordinance to allow them to hunt on their land with the muzzleloader. He stated that this had been kicked around for years and years and he thought the Board should finally bring it to an end and give them this sanctioned hunting season that the rest of the State allowed. He felt very infringed that he lived in Southampton County and could not use his muzzleloader; he had to go elsewhere to be able to use it. He encouraged them to pass the ordinance.

Mr. William Randall spoke. He advised that he lived in Mr. West's District (Berlin-Ivor). The State gave him the right to hunt in all sanctioned seasons on his own property, and the County took it away. He thought that was wrong. If any of the people here did not want to use this season on their land, so be it. But why should they be able to tell him that he could not use it on his land. Safety was not the issue; they knew it and he knew it. It was proven to be the safest form of firearm hunting in the State year after year. He told Mr. Young that he saw him looking at him. He stated that he had been by Supervisor West's home many, many times. He had a beautiful yard. He was sure that Mr. West would not feel very comfortable if the local garden club came along and told him that he could not grow azaleas in Southampton County – only the garden club could. But everywhere else in the State could. It was the same principal. He hoped the Board would see fit to rectify the wrong.

Mr. Patrick Boyle of Hunterdale spoke. He stated that safety had been addressed, especially when you put somebody 10 feet up a tree. In the hands of a qualified person, you could shoot any weapon at long range. Being up in a tree would put the projector of the weapon going down. The safe effective range of a killing shot with most muzzleloaders today was 150 yards or less. You did not see that kind of shot very often, even in Southampton County across a field. He advised that the deer in the State of Virginia did not belong to the hunting clubs or the landowners, but to all citizens of the Commonwealth. Every county in Virginia allowed muzzleloading except Southampton. Every county east of the Blue Ridge allowed hunting with dogs. There were deer killed in those counties with muzzleloaders and in front of dogs. There was plenty of deer to go around. He was sure that most farmers would not care how they were killed, as long as they were not bothering their crops. He thought the big issue came down to the landowners' rights. He did not regularly hunt with a hunt club, but did on occasion and enjoyed hunting with the dogs. But he also enjoyed being one-on-one with a game animal where it was a little quieter. He advised that the owner of the land he primarily hunted did not allow dogs on his property and that was his right. But it was also the right of the citizens in the community to abide by the laws of the Commonwealth, and that allowed muzzleloading in all counties except Southampton. He thought it should be up to the people who owned the land whether or not they wanted to hunt with dogs, a bow, muzzleloader, or shotgun. Statistics showed that shotguns caused more injuries. There were a lot of people who did not like hunting. The statistics for shotguns would probably support eliminating shotgun season a whole lot quicker than muzzleloading season.

Mr. Steven Raiford spoke. He advised that he was born in Southampton County and hunted all his life since he was a young boy. Everybody else had pretty much touched on all the pros and the cons. All of the neighboring counties had the season and he asked the Board to give it to them too.

Mr. Duane Preston addressed the Board. He stated that at a previous meeting, the question came up as to how many counties had elevated requirements for using the muzzleloading rifle. He informed that according to the digest published by Fish & Game, it was 6 counties, 2 of which had a handicapped exemption. He stated that he wanted to correct a couple things that were brought up tonight. First, the County ordinance had changed and there was no muzzleloading gun allowed in Southampton County that fired a single projectile, nor shotguns. Regarding the gentleman who spoke of the 600-yard shot at the bridge abutment, according to Remington and Winchester technical staff, buckshot went 660 yards. The range of a firearm was not a safety factor - it was how it was used. He advised that the style of muzzleload hunting was a single shot at a deer you had been watching. It was not a running deer with 3 shots as fast you could pull the trigger with multiple projectiles. You only had one shot and were not going to waste it. His reason for wanting muzzleloading in the County was that the voters of Virginia voted to amend the Constitution of Virginia. In 2002, it became a constitutional right to hunt subject to State regulations. A year ago, the *Code of Virginia* changed so that a rifle was identified in the administrative code used by Fish & Game. Muzzleloading rifles and shotguns were identified as separate entities. It also changed to allow the use of muzzleloading rifles and shotguns statewide. After which, the County made their ordinance more stringent than before, reducing the use of a slug in a muzzleloading shotgun or rifle for small game animals with a ball not to exceed 45 caliber. He did not know of any accidents with those firearms in Southampton County during the entire time that ordinance existed. He noted that the small game addition to not being allowed to use a muzzleloading gun during the general deer and turkey season was added without a vote, public hearing, or advertisement. His Constitution said he could hunt on his own land and the State law said he could use the gun. He stated that the ordinance being discussed would put them in a 10-foot elevated platform. If you shot at an animal that was on the ground and you were 10 feet above the ground, you would be shooting down into the ground. The range of the firearm did not matter. If you could not see the animal, you were not going to shoot at it. From an elevated platform, there was no safer way of firing a firearm at a game animal. He highly requested that they pass the ordinance and allow him to hunt on his property during a State sanctioned hunting season with a firearm sanctioned by the State. Hopefully he would not have to do this many more times.

Mr. K. P. Magette spoke. He passed around a bullet to the Board members. He advised that the bullet was given to him by a farmer living in Southampton County who had significant farming operations in Sussex. The bullet was taken from a deer killed by a muzzleloader in Sussex County. The projectile hit the deer in the shoulder, expanded, went through the chest cavity and lodged in its hindquarter. He could not identify the person who shot the deer by name, but he was a law enforcement officer who was well trained in estimating distances. He told the farmer that he killed the deer at a 300-yard clip. The farmer told him (Mr. Magette) that he knew people in Sussex County that routinely killed deer in excess of 350 yards with the modern muzzleloading rifle. They clearly were not the primitive weapons they used to be when muzzleloading was first introduced into the State. The farmer that gave him the bullet had farmed for many, many years, a lot of which had been in Sussex County. He told him that he had lost cattle to gunshot wounds, but had never lost any to shotguns - they had all been to high-powered rifles. He did not know if he was distinguishing between muzzleloaders or just high-powered rifles. He stated that he thought there was clearly a danger involved that needed to be recognized. They were extremely lethal weapons that killed at long, long ranges. He would certainly question if it were that striking of a difference in the trajectory of a bullet that was shot in excess of 300 yards even while being elevated 10 feet. He had been in the Army and knew a little about bullet trajectory and he just did not think it would change that much by a 10-foot elevation. He would also wonder if the County would assume any liability risk by requiring hunters to be 10 feet off the ground. Hunting from tree stands was a danger and most was done voluntarily on the part of the hunter.

Mr. Magette continued that advocates of muzzleloading complained of our county's uniqueness in the denial of this type of hunting. He acknowledged that we were unique in that regard, but unique was not always a bad thing. We were also very unique in that most of our deer hunting was done in organized, highly socialized groups. Also, in our region of Virginia, this county stood out beyond all others in terms of the quality of the deer hunting. When you said you had land to sell in Southampton County with good deer hunting, it meant something. Not because you put in the words "good deer hunting", but because of the reputation that Southampton County had for excellent deer hunting. The counties surrounding us in North Carolina and Virginia allowed muzzleloading and/or high-powered rifle use, and they did not have the quality of the deer that Southampton produced. Yet many of those counties shared significant areas of river-bottomed land just like Southampton. While it may be hard to pinpoint why our deer hunting was so outstanding, he thought the way in which deer were hunted in this County was a significant factor. He urged the Board to highly consider that. He stated that hunting was clearly an activity where the type of hunting that was done on one individual's land affected the quality of hunting on another individual's land. He thought this issue should be dealt with

on a majority basis. He felt that in the past meetings, it had been very clear that there was a strong majority of people in this community, including landowners, that did not want muzzleloading hunting brought into this county. He asked the Board to listen their constituents and vote accordingly.

Mr. John Rawls of the Capron District addressed the Board. He advised that he represented the adult residents of Southampton County who opposed legalizing black powder hunting. The Board had already addressed this issue on 3 or 4 occasions, and the Board, in their wisdom, had voted down the request each time. He hated to keep beating a dead horse, but since this issue was on the agenda again, the citizens of Southampton County who opposed black powder would once again express their concerns. He stated that the black powder rifle used today was nothing less than a high-powered rifle with the capability of killing at 300-400 yards. The modern muzzleloaders were a far cry from the primitive weapon that some would have you to believe. They could shoot a group within an inch or so at 100 yards and within 5 inches at 200 yards. A muzzleloader also had the velocity of approaching 2500 feet per second, which approached the speed of a high-powered rifle. During the black powder season, there would be fall turkey hunting, small game season, and the archery hunting season, all 3 taking place at the same time and overlapping, with none of the mentioned hunters required by State law to wear blaze orange. He thought the blaze orange law had probably prevented more accidental shootings than any other law on the State books. They already had 6-7 weeks of a gun season now. Black powder would allow 2 more weeks. Some areas in the county were sparsely populated with deer and they did not need to kill deer for 2 more weeks.

He informed that just recently, he was talking to a real estate agent about land prices. The realtor told him that the same land in other counties, such as Sussex and Greensville, would bring \$200-\$300 less per acre than the land in Southampton County. That was due to the quality deer hunting in Southampton County. Mr. Rawls noted that it appeared that only a small percentage of the population of Southampton County was requesting a black powder season. The majority of the citizens, for one reason or another, were not in favor of the early black powder season. Regarding economics, he advised that while black powder may bring some additional revenue, it would be very small. Most black powder hunters would be coming into the county from outside of the jurisdiction. They would buy their license, weapons, ammunition, clothing, and food before entering the county. At best, we would sell a few gallons of gasoline and a few snacks. He was one of the local citizens who spent a lot of money on dog tags and collars, veterinary fees, dog feed, and other supplies within this jurisdiction. At the present time, there were 5,640 dogs licensed in this county. It cost approximately \$160 a year to feed and take care of a dog, with veterinary bills, dog pens, shots, and dipping. That was not counting the \$10,000 that the dog owners were paying the county for licenses. Visitors would come into the county, take advantage of our precious natural resource, and go home. In doing so, they would contribute very little towards the economics of our county. He stated that many, many years ago, the Board of Supervisors had a vision not to allow high-powered rifles to be used in Southampton County because of its terrain - the land being flat. Although that decision was made many years ago, the land in this area was still flat. Just think of the houses and population expansion in the past 60 years. If rifles were dangerous 60 years ago, then surely they were dangerous today.

Mr. Rawls continued that some proponents of black powder had raised the issue that they should be allowed to hunt with black powder on their own land. He stated that there was not much that people could do on their own land anymore without being in the right zone and purchasing permits and licenses. For example, you could not build a dog pen, build a house, dig a well, put in a septic tank, put in a pond, or disturb wetlands on your own property. All of that was governed by the laws of Southampton County, the Commonwealth of Virginia, and the Federal Government. He advised that much tradition came through the type of hunting that took place in Southampton County and the majority of the citizens would like to retain that tradition. He had lived in Southampton County for 60 years. His children were raised and educated in Southampton County and now his grandchildren would be raised here. He had in his possession tonight, petitions signed by 554 citizens of Southampton County against black powder hunting. He asked the people opposed to black powder hunting to stand and show the Board that they were opposed. (The overwhelming majority of people present stood up.) When the Game Commission of Southampton County saw fit to give the bow hunter the early season, he was given it because he was hunting with a primitive weapon. The black powder gun was certainly not a primitive weapon and certainly gave the hunter a significant advantage. He thanked the Board for taking the time to hear what he had to say. He sincerely hoped that they would see what their forefathers did 60 years ago when they came to the conclusion that our county did not need rifles. (He received a round of applause.)

Mr. Curtis Drake spoke. He advised that to put things into perspective that Mr. Magette had covered, 300 yards was 3 football fields. That was a long ways. If you put someone up on a 10-foot platform, it

would enable that person to see a whole lot further, which would make it more dangerous. He stated that he was in the Capron District, was a landowner, and was opposed to it.

Mr. Gary Cross of the Berlin-Ivor District spoke. He stated that he was greatly saddened when he heard about Mrs. Sykes a while ago. She would be greatly missed. He advised that he heard the woman talking about the number of accidents with muzzleloaders versus shotguns. He was curious to know how many muzzleloaders there were out there shooting versus the number of shotguns. He was sure that when the automobile first came along, there were a whole lot more horse wrecks than automobile wrecks. He stated that one thing that had not been brought up was what was considered sportsmanlike conduct. He would like to think that this County was formed with sportsmanlike conduct. To sit out there and shoot at a defenseless animal at 300 yards, who did not even know you were around watching it, was not a sport to him. It was more like a terrorist or something. He did not get any sportsmanlike conduct out of shooting something defenseless. When he wanted to target practice, he would set up beer cans on the fence and shoot at them. Why couldn't he climb a tree with his 243 and shoot? Because it was dangerous.

He told Mr. West that he had always admired his yard. He watched him out there in the fall raking leaves and sowing grass seed. He did those things while he and others hunters hunted all around his property. He told Mr. West that he knew when he heard a gun blast, he did not pay it any mind. He felt perfectly safe. But from now on, if they passed this ordinance, when he heard that gun blast, he would be ok because he would have heard the shot. But he wanted him to look down the road to where his son lived to make sure his grandchildren were still pedaling their bikes safely around the yard. Standing in Mr. West's driveway, you could see at least 4 other property owners who would probably allow hunting from their land. He advised that safety had been pointed out, and he would like the Board to look at that very carefully. A person's rights had been eluded to also. He stated that you could not clean out a ditch on your own property, could you Mr. Young? You could not put up a chicken house without getting the right approval from the Board. You could not own land next to a high school if the county decided they wanted to build to expand, right Mr. Johnson? So what rights did they really have? The only thing that made him happy about living in the United State of America was that it was still controlled by local bodies of government like this. As the saying went, you've got to stand for something or you'll fall for anything. He hoped the Board would stand to oppose this.

Mr. Patrick Boyle asked if they were allowed any type of rebuttal? Chairman Jones replied no, this was a public hearing and they were there to listen to comments only. Mr. Boyle asked if he could give his comment? Chairman Jones stated that he had already been up. Mr. Boyle approached the podium and asked what kind of advantage a deer had when he was running 30 mph through the woods with a pack of dogs on him and with radio collars on the dogs so you knew exactly where they were and could follow them with your pickup truck?

Chairman Jones closed the public hearing and advised that they would vote on the issue at the Board of Supervisors' meeting on Monday.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:29 PM.

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Dallas O. Jones, Chairman

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Michael W. Johnson, Clerk