

At the **budget public hearing** 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 May 19, 2003 at 7:00 PM.

SUPERVISORS PRESENT

Reggie W. Gilliam, Chairman
 Eppa J. Gray, Jr., Vice-Chairman
 Carl J. Faison
 Dallas O. Jones
 Charleton W. Sykes
 Ronald W. West
 Walter L. Young, Jr.

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 Gilliam called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. After the *Pledge of Allegiance*, Supervisor Faison gave the invocation.

Chairman Gilliam announced that tonight's public hearing was regarding the budget for fiscal year 2004 (beginning July 1, 2003 and ending June 30, 2004). He then opened the public hearing for public comment.

The synopsis of the FY 2004 annual budget, inclusive of the associated tax levies and utility fees is as follows:

**SOUTHAMPTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA
 FY 2004 PROPOSED ANNUAL BUDGET**

FY 2004 REVENUE ESTIMATES

<u>REVENUE FROM COUNTY SOURCES</u>		<u>BUILDING FUND REVENUE</u>	
General Property Taxes	\$11,126,988	Utility Tax – Electricity	\$464,000
Other Local Taxes	760,583	Utility Tax – Telephone	250,000
Permits, Fees, Licenses	95,250	Rental of Property	60,556
Fines & Forfeitures	434,069	Building Fund Carryover	804,616
Use of Money & Property	95,000	TOTAL REVENUE/BUILDING FUND	<u>\$1,579,172</u>
Charges for Service	99,461		
Miscellaneous Revenue	641,170	<u>REVENUE FROM THE COMMONWEALTH</u>	
TOTAL REVENUE/COUNTY SOURCES	<u>\$13,252,521</u>	Non-Categorical Aid	\$159,652
		Categorical Aid	2,825,846
<u>OTHER COUNTY SOURCES</u>		Other Categorical Aid	360,835
Transfer/General Reserve	\$811,560	School Aid	11,384,234
Transfer/Building Fund	200,000	School Aid/Cafeteria	15,000
School Funds (School Food)	542,625	School Aid/Sales Tax	2,274,244
School Funds (School Operating)	2,000	Public Assistance	1,645,978
TOTAL REVENUE/ OTHER COUNTY SOURCES	<u>\$1,556,185</u>	TOTAL REVENUE FROM THE COMMONWEALTH	<u>\$18,665,789</u>
		<u>REVENUE FROM FEDERAL SOURCES</u>	
<u>E-911 REVENUE</u>		School Aid/School Operating Fund	\$11,500
Transfer from E-911 Reserve	\$46,976	School Aid/Federal Programs	1,375,041
Wireless 9-1-1 Grant	38,328	School Aid/School Food	500,000
E-911 Revenue (Telephone Surcharges)	100,000	TOTAL REVENUE/FEDERAL	<u>\$1,886,541</u>
TOTAL REVENUE/E-911	<u>\$185,304</u>		
		TOTAL REVENUE/ALL SOURCES	
<u>ENTERPRISE REVENUE</u>			<u>\$40,411,034</u>
Water Services Fees	\$271,704		
Sewer Services Fees	725,376		
Other Fees/Connections	38,442		
Note Proceeds – Series 2003	2,250,000		
TOTAL REVENUE/ENTERPRISE FUND	<u>\$3,285,522</u>		

UTILITY FEES

	<u>FY 2003</u>	<u>PROPOSED FY 2004</u>	<u>PERCENT INCREASE</u>
WATER			
Monthly Residential Flat Rate	\$18.50	\$24.50	32%
Monthly Commercial Flat Rate	varies	varies	32%
Monthly Commercial Base Rate	\$20.50	\$27.10	32%
Monthly Commercial per 1,000 above 5,000	\$2.50	\$3.00	20%
SEWER			
Monthly Residential Flat Rate	\$26.50	\$35.50	34%
Monthly Commercial Flat Rate	varies	varies	30%
Monthly Commercial Base Rate	\$26.50	\$35.50	34%
Monthly Commercial per 1,000 above 5,000	\$2.50	\$3.00	20%
Narricot Industries per 1,000	\$1.07	\$1.07	-

Mr. Leland H. Beale, Jr., President of Citizens for Responsible Government, addressed the Board. He advised that after 10 years of coming before the Board, as of their next meeting, he would no longer be president of Citizens for Responsible Government. He thanked the Board for the courtesy they had extended his organization over the years. He complimented the Board and staff for presenting a balanced budget and stabilized tax rate. He advised that he was cleaning out some files last night and came across one of their first letters to the Board asking for a copy of the proposed budget, and the Board's letter in response to their request. It stated that he could get a copy of the proposed budget for the cost of \$1.00 for the first page and \$0.50 for each page thereafter, for a total of \$204.00. It also stated that he could get the proposed budget and look at it, provided he would return it within 24 hours. Mr. Beale stated that he got the proposed budget and finally got it copied and returned within 24 hours. That was back in 1994. Today they could purchase a copy for \$50 and it was worth every penny. They purchased 2 every year and there was no hassle. So, things do change. He commented that it had been a real ride for 10 years, but all good things must come to an end.

Mr. Arthur B. Harris, Jr., Mayor of Branchville, addressed the Board. He thanked Public Works for aiding in cleaning up their area by keeping the dumpsters clear. (That area was one of the areas that received damage from a severe hailstorm on May 9.) He advised that he was sure the Board was in receipt of the Branchville Town Council's letter on their feelings about the utilities management plan study, so he would talk about the \$2,335,900 expenditure estimate for the Route 671 utility extension. A couple of months ago, the Town of Branchville requested a utility extension that was estimated at \$180,000, and the Board pointed out to them that it would take a \$6 million investment to pay it back in 5 years. He noted that in using the same math and including the 30% share agreement, but not including the debt service, it would take \$111,233,333.33 plus the debt service to pay the \$2,335,900 back in 5 years for the Route 671 utility extension. He stated that an investment of that size would "put all their pennies in one pocket." Furthermore, if it did not work out in 5 years, the water and sewer rates would have to double even the proposed rates in order to cover the debt. He thought an investment of that size, in that location, and at that time was a gamble. Only 3 miles away on the other side of the Blackwater River in Isle of Wight County, was a large water tower, 2 railroad systems, and plenty of highway infrastructure already in place, but they lacked a 5-lane highway. (A portion of Route 671 in Southampton County would soon be widened into a 5-lane highway; 2 lanes each direction and a turn lane). He did not understand how that highway was being built when the County's top priority for the last 6 years had been the Courtland interchange (Route 58 overpass project).

Mr. Harris advised that the Board needed to consider how to "put pennies in other pockets" and consider the infrastructure and demographics of the County. He once thought that Branchville was the only Town in Southampton County that was getting old, but according to the 2002 census, it was the entire County and State. In just a few years in Southampton County, persons age 65 and over would exceed the number of school children. One thing they both had in common was they did not go far away from home without someone else taking them. Thus, the Board needed to look at the infrastructure of the County such as the location of the stores. He stated that there were all kinds of distribution centers along Route 460 from Petersburg on down. Southampton County was in a prime location for a distribution center, but if they "put all their pennies in one pocket", they would not be able to help anyone on Route 460. He pointed out that Drewryville, Capron, and Courtland all had a railroad and a 4-lane highway (Route 58). He thought it would be a mistake for the County to make

the \$2,335,900 investment for the Route 671 utility extension at this time. He advised that they thanked the Board for their deliberations and trusted they would do the right thing.

Mr. Terry L. McPherson, new resident of Southampton County from Chesapeake, addressed the Board. He stated that he wanted to talk about the proposed water and sewer rate increases. He had learned that Southampton County had one of the highest, if not the highest, rates in the State. He advised that if the rates increased, he would be paying more on a flat rate basis than he ever did in Chesapeake, even in months when his bills were the highest due to water leaks. He did not think he ever paid more than \$55 or \$58 for a monthly bill. He stated that he did not understand why the County did not use the polling system and poll the meters that were already installed. He asked why the rates needed to be so high? Was it to support expansion that may not come? Was it to maintain the systems? He noted that he had received letters twice in the last 4 months pertaining to heavy metals and/or lead in the water. The County was publicly admitting that there were problems with the water, yet was expanding the system for something that may not be. The residents should be able to connect to the County's water system and expect high quality water they could give their children and the elderly. That should be a primary concern, particularly in light of Mr. Harris' comments about our aging community. He stated he understood that the County needed to expand the business and tax base, but asked what would be the attraction for businesses if the County did not have quality water?

The Board recessed the public hearing until 7:30 PM. (The **legal advertisements** announcing tonight's public hearing appeared correctly in *The Tidewater News*, indicating that the public hearing would begin at 7:00 PM. However, there was a **news article** in *The Tidewater News* indicating that tonight's public hearing would begin at 7:30 PM. Therefore, the Board chose to recess the public hearing until 7:30 PM to allow those that may arrive at such time an opportunity to express their opinions.)

Regarding other business, Mr. Johnson announced that the County's emergency operations plan provided that as County Administrator, he would also serve as the director of emergency services, and would have the authority to declare a local emergency, subject to concurrence by the Board of Supervisors within 14 days of that declaration. He stated that on the evening of May 9, 2003 at approximately 5:00 PM, a severe thunderstorm producing large hail went through an area of the County about 6 miles wide and 20 miles long, from the Western end down to the Southside in the Boykins and Branchville areas. The initial damage estimate exceeded \$6 million and between 650 and 700 households were affected in some way. They had forwarded the damage estimate to the State Department of Emergency Management, whose officials had come down and reviewed the local estimates and concurred with them. FEMA staff was expected to arrive in the area on Thursday (May 21, 2003). Should they find substantial uninsured damage, there could be a request for the President to declare Southampton County a federal disaster area, in which some federal aid would then be available for uninsured losses. He asked the Board to consider the declaration and adopt the proclamation to keep the process alive until the FEMA staff arrived on Thursday:

The declaration is as follows:

DECLARATION OF A LOCAL EMERGENCY

WHEREAS, the Emergency Operations Plan for Southampton County, Virginia provides that the Director of Emergency Services, with the consent of the Southampton County Board of Supervisors, is the constituted legal authority for implementing the Emergency Operations Plan and declaring a local state of emergency; and

WHEREAS, the effects of a severe thunderstorm on May 9, 2003 presented a condition of extreme peril of life and property which necessitates the proclamation of the existence of an emergency.

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY PROCLAIMED that an emergency now exists throughout Southampton County;

IT IS FURTHER PROCLAIMED that during the existence of said emergency, the powers, functions, and duties of the Director of Emergency Services for Southampton County, Virginia shall be those prescribed by law and the ordinances, resolutions, and approved plans of Southampton County in order to mitigate the effects of the emergency;

IT IS FURTHER PROCLAIMED that, in order to carry out the effect of this proclamation, funds shall be appropriated from the county's unappropriated fund balance to cover reasonable operational costs of emergency services pending further report to the Board of Supervisors as deemed necessary to cover the expected scope of this emergency.

This proclamation shall be subject to confirmation by the Board of Supervisors at its next scheduled session on May 19, 2003 in accordance with the provisions of § 44-146.21, *Code of Virginia*.

EFFECTIVE, this 9th day of May 2003 at 7:00 PM.

Michael W. Johnson
Director of Emergency Services

Attest: _____
J. Waverly Coggsdale, III
Assistant County Administrator

The **proclamation** is as follows:

At a meeting of the Board of Supervisors of Southampton County, Virginia, held in the Southampton County Office Center, Board of Supervisors' Meeting Room, 26022 Administration Center Drive, Courtland, Virginia on Monday, May 19, 2003 at 7:00 PM.

PRESENT: Reggie W. Gilliam, Chairman
Eppa J. Gray, Jr., Vice-Chairman
Carl J. Faison
Dallas O. Jones
Charleton W. Sykes
Ronald M. West
Walter L. Young, Jr.

IN RE: Declaration of a local emergency

Vice-Chairman Gray moved:

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors of the County of Southampton, Virginia does hereby find as follows:

1. That due to the occurrence of a severe thunderstorm with large hail on May 9, 2003, the County of Southampton is facing a condition of extreme peril to the lives, safety and property of the residents of Southampton County.
2. That as a result of this extreme peril, the proclamation of the existence of an emergency is necessary to permit the full powers of government to deal effectively with this condition of peril.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY PROCLAIMED by the Board of Supervisors of the County of Southampton, Virginia that a local emergency now exists throughout the County of Southampton; and

IT IS FURTHER PROCLAIMED AND ORDERED that during the existence of said emergency, the powers, functions, and duties of the Director of Emergency Services and the Emergency Services organizations and functions of Southampton County, Virginia shall be those prescribed by law and the ordinances, resolutions, and approved plans of Southampton County in order to mitigate the effects of the emergency.

In order to carry out the effect of this proclamation, funds shall be appropriated from the county's unappropriated fund balance to cover any reasonable operational costs of emergency services pending further report to the Board of Supervisors as deemed necessary to cover the expected scope of this emergency.

Seconded by Supervisor Young.

Voting on the item: Yes - Reggie W. Gilliam
 Eppa J. Gray, Jr.
 Carl J. Faison
 Dallas O. Jones
 Charleton W. Sykes
 Ronald M. West
 Walter L. Young, Jr.

 No - None

A COPY TESTE:

Michael W. Johnson, Clerk
Southampton County Board of Supervisors

May 19, 2003

Chairman Gilliam re-opened the public hearing at 7:30 PM. No one else desired to speak, thus he closed the public hearing.

Mr. Johnson advised that per the statute, the Board had to wait at least 6 days after the public hearing to consider the budget. The budget would be considered at the Board's next regular meeting on Tuesday, May 27, 2003.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:35 PM.

Reggie W. Gilliam, Chairman

Michael W. Johnson, Clerk