

At a budget workshop meeting of the Southampton County Board of Supervisors held in the Board Room of the Southampton County Office Center, 26022 Administration Center Drive, Courtland, Virginia on April 22, 2015 at 6:30 PM.

SUPERVISORS PRESENT

Dallas O. Jones, Chairman (Drewryville)  
Ronald M. West, Vice Chairman (Berlin-Ivor)  
Dr. Alan W. Edwards (Jerusalem)  
Carl J. Faison (Boykins-Branchville)  
Glenn H. Updike (Newsoms)  
Barry T. Porter (Franklin)  
S. Bruce Phillips (Capron)

SUPERVISORS ABSENT

OTHERS PRESENT

Michael W. Johnson, County Administrator (Clerk)  
Lynette C. Lowe, Deputy County Administrator/ CFO  
Amanda N. Smith, Administrative Assistant

OTHERS ABSENT

Julien W. Johnson, Jr. Public Utilities Director  
Richard E. Railey, Jr., County Attorney  
Beth Lewis, Director of Community Development

Chairman Jones called the budget workshop to order.

After the Pledge of Allegiance, Supervisor Faison gave the invocation.

Chairman Jones states Mr. Johnson I will turn it over to you.

Mr. Michael Johnson states I don't have anything planed Mr. Chairman. As you know, you have had the first draft for a couple of weeks. We had the department presentations last week. We can go through this any way you would like. Some years we have gone department by department; some years you all have looked at it much broader than that. So, I am open to your direction as to how you would like to look at it.

Chairman Jones states alright gentlemen, what do you want to do here? You want to try to go through each item? They have it to the bare bones.

Supervisor Porter states I have gone through it pretty thoroughly and basically each department is getting roughly the same amount of money they got last year. In most cases they have additional expenses that they have to absorb within those funds. I don't see any areas where we could cut any significant money. As I have mentioned to some of you, the only department that is getting less money this year than in the past is the schools. They are getting significantly less. I have been through what they have done and they have real cuts. They have cut programs and they have cut teachers and they are asking for more money than we have in our draft budget. If they don't get that, then they will be cutting four more teachers. I know it is a big pill to swallow, as I mentioned I am willing to raise taxes one cent in order to give them another \$150,000 so they only have to cut one more teacher instead of four more teachers. I would like to find the money somewhere else but I can't find the money anywhere else. I know it is not real popular; it is not popular with the board; it is not going to be popular with people who pay taxes, but I think it is the right thing to do.

Chairman Jones called on Supervisor Faison.

Supervisor Faison states I certainly heard what Mr. Porter said and I agree with it. I don't see where we can find any more money in the budget in our present situation. As I was saying a while ago, the schools are more impacted than any other department that we work with. That is because

so much is being cut from the state funding they receive. We need to do something for our children because unless we do something for the children now it is going to impact the future of this county. What Mr. Porter mentioned about the one cent raise in taxes, I would go along with that.

Chairman Jones called on Supervisor West.

Supervisor West states I am going to take the opposite side. I know we use the argument over and over that it is going to impact the children's future, and it does to some degree; the teachers and the programs. If you assume that we are on top right now with the school programs and the school financially needing this additional money. I was impressed with the reduction from \$851,832 to \$198,543. However, we do not have the cash available. It is not coming in through new taxes. It is not coming in through any new revenue; sources other than the fact that you have to go directly to the tax payer. Tax payers in general have been quiet to me. However, when I say something they say well I know you are going to raise the taxes. It is always the same source. Last year we were able to fund everyone in their request and unfortunately we increased taxes two cents. Like I said, I didn't like that but none of the less we saw a need for the people with Fire and Rescue. But, tonight if the schools were able to reduce the request from \$851,832 to \$198,543 I am hoping and asking the Superintendent and the Finance personnel there to reduce more in a way that is less impact. I mentioned the last time John, and I think I read an editorial today in the paper. You said surely fund the schools and surely find \$200,000 that can be given to the schools. I mentioned last time about volunteerism. I hope you will volunteer. I hope you are going into the reading programs. I hope you are there for the neighborhood and helping out in that way. I hope you are a citizen that is willing to help out and willing to give back to the community instead of just saying cut something else and give it to the schools or do it some other way. There are many ways that we can help the schools. Volunteers are very important in the schools. Will that solve the problem? I don't know, but I am not inclined to give one penny or increase the budget one bit tonight.

Chairman Jones called on Supervisor Updike.

Supervisor Updike states I have been through and have looked at every single number and every single item in here. I have several questions I would like answers too. The first one is the county audit; you quoted and said you had bids for five years contract for \$20,000. Under here, and I don't have the page number, it is \$36,000. Why is there a significant increase if we already have a contract?

Mr. Michael Johnson states let me double check that. I don't think it is a significant increase.

Supervisor Updike states you said the cost last year was \$20,000...

Mr. Michael Johnson states I don't think I said it was \$20,000.

Mrs. Lynette Lowe states no it was like \$27,000.

Supervisor Updike states well if it was \$27,000 now it is \$36,000.

Mrs. Lynette Lowe states no it is not \$36,000. Do you know what page you are looking on?

Mr. Michael Johnson states \$30,500; page 30.

Mrs. Lynette Lowe states the piece of it that went up; the state is making everyone have a VRS audit also, and that additional cost that you are seeing is for that piece of the additional audit that has to be done.

Supervisor Updike states okay.

Mr. Michael Johnson states the budget last year was \$28,000. So, it is \$2,500 higher than that.

Mrs. Lynette Lowe states and they quoted us a steady price for all five years; the price will not go up any as far as the \$28,000 Mike is talking about.

Chairman Jones states Mr. Updike what is your other question?

Supervisor Updike states it is just minor details. Most of the services that are provided like Head Start, Senior Citizens, and all of these other things people are coming in and asking funds for, they are basing it on the population; but I am looking at the services provided to the County citizens. The percentage of services that we get out of it is a lot less than the amount of funds they are requesting. I have been here three years, and they are good programs, but each time Head Start states they are going to bring more to Courtland and the surrounding areas; that has been three years and each year they make the same comment. I am concerned that these organizations are not doing a very good job. But, the services we get from these organizations; the percentages are way down.

Supervisor Porter states which ones are you talking about specifically?

Mr. Michael Johnson states Head Start is the Children's Center showing on page 30. You funded them at \$6,000 last year and \$6,000 again this year.

Supervisor Updike states I am not talking about the increase or decrease, I am talking about the actual services that are provided to the County people; the one that was here at the last meeting planning to expand in Southampton.

Mr. Michael Johnson states you are talking about Smart Beginnings.

Supervisor Phillips states that and the clinic is what I think he is talking about.

Supervisor Updike states the clinic too.

Supervisor Porter states as far as the clinic we never give them anywhere near what they want. They want like \$38,000 but we give them around \$9,000. I think we get the value from that \$9,000.

Supervisor Faison states with those programs, I think a lot of what you have said is just your perspective. I have worked with a lot of kids that these programs impact and I know as far as the Free Clinic a lot of those kids use that Free Clinic. They just don't have the money for insurance and they don't have the money to go to the doctor. So, that makes a big difference in the lives of the kids that I work with. As far as Head Start, I can see where they certainly reach out to a lot of kids in the County. So, I think those organizations are doing a good job.

Supervisor Updike states I didn't question what they are doing. I am questioning their services in relation to their budget in the amount of their request. I can't do anything about it this year but I think it needs to be looked at further. Another area is the Water and Conservation Services request. I think we are not getting our fair share of return on investment. Forestry is also in that same category.

Mr. Michael Johnson states Forestry is mandated.

Supervisor Updike states well the only thing I know that we get out of it is a listing of the vegetable growers in the County.

Mr. Michael Johnson states well they did a cost share on all of the oil recycling containers that are at our lease sites. That came through Soil Conservation.

Chairman Jones states alright do you have something else?

Supervisor Updike states yes; I would like to request that you review money like for the County Fair; I think that money should be earmarked for a youth program. I think we have \$4,500 or something like that.

Mr. Michael Johnson states \$4,275.00.

Supervisor Updike states I am rounding the figures off. I can't remember all of those figures. I think it should be earmarked for the youth. The fairgrounds get revenue from the gates. Anything for the youth, they have to go out and beg and still can't get sufficient funds. I think that money should be earmarked for the youth programs.

Supervisor West states well that is a personal choice.

Supervisor Updike states well I can ask for your consideration. I am just asking it to be looked into and thought about.

Chairman Jones states alright, you have anything else.

Supervisor Updike states under Cooperative Extension I noticed you have educational expenses. The state provides the expenses for education and training. To me this is a duplicate. I think it is about \$300 but nether-the-less I don't think it is necessary. It is already being subsidized by tax payers. Before they can go any place or use the County's money, they still have to get money from the state.

Mr. Michael Johnson states it is \$750.00 which I think represents our 1/3 share; the state and the federal picks up the other 2/3 out of a total budget of about \$2,300.

Chairman Jones states alright do you have something else?

Supervisor Updike states I will thumb through it some more.

Chairman Jones states while you are thumbing through, we will go ahead. He called on Supervisor Edwards.

Supervisor Edwards states I thought about this a lot and I agree with Mr. West. There are some things about the process that has upset me for a couple of years; the process of trying to establish a football dynasty again. They had a chance to hire a coach at \$6,000 a year; a very good coach. What we have now we are paying over \$80,000 a year if you look at insurance and everything else. That is two teachers. Now what are you going to do? Do you want a football dynasty or do you want to teach school. I have talked to teachers over there and the teachers say we don't need more teachers. We need more free time to teach. They are filled up day after day after day with busy work. Four teachers is not going to make any difference; any difference at all. I think they need to go ahead and say we are down four teachers, we are going to make up the difference, we are going to have to do some things differently, and hope things are better next year. You can't keep going with this; I need four more teachers. The teachers are not the problem. They have an 80, 90, \$100,000 football program over there that nobody is saying anything about. That really gripes me. They had a good coach for \$6,000 and everything the gentlemen get, I don't care how good he is, and I have nothing against him personally but that is two teachers.

Supervisor Porter states I don't like that either but the funds to pay that coach doesn't come out of our funds. It is grant money and consequently even though I may not like the fact that they pay that guy that much, it doesn't affect any money we give them or any money they get from the state. That is not really... that is kind of an extraneous matter to go with. One other thing, it is not that they need four more teachers; they don't want to cut four more. There is a difference when you are cutting teachers and adding teachers. They are not adding any teachers. They are trying to avoid cutting four more teachers.

Supervisor Edwards states well I think we have to take a stand somewhere. I am just as much for education. I spent 2/3 of my life in school somewhere and I know education is important but if we keep letting the state knuckle us under year after year; nobody knows about it; nobody writes about it; nobody complains about it. All we do is knuckle under and say okay here are four more teachers. Where is the end going to be? It has to get to a place where something breaks. Believe me if they get rid of four more teachers it is not going to be any different over there. It is not going to be any worse. I talk to these teachers every day. I talk to English teachers, I talk to the Agriculture teacher, and I talk to the teachers that are engaged in sports.

Supervisor Porter states and I talk to the Math and Science teachers and they are stretched. Having been a math teacher, I can empathize with them and I think we are shirking our responsibility if we let them cut any more teachers than they absolutely have to cut.

Chairman Jones states is that all?

Supervisor Edwards states that is all. I have spoken my piece. I think they can do perfectly well

with whatever cuts they have just like the rest of us; just like any business does. It happens to you, it happens to me every year. It happens to everybody here who is a farmer or in business. If you have to make a cut, you have to make a cut. You have to do what you have to do. Every year, if you are a poor farmer you can't just keep throwing money at it and hoping that you are better next year. I don't think cutting four teachers is going to have one hill of beans to do with the quality of education.

Supervisor Porter states it is cutting four more teachers. They are already cutting six I believe.

Supervisor Faison states when teachers are cut you have the same number of students. You have fewer teachers teaching the same number of students. We talk about how swamped the teachers are now with work; if we cut four of them out, those students have to be redistributed among the teachers that are remaining. It is just a greater burden and something is going lacking and some of us going lacking is what can be offered to these students. If we don't do something for our students they will be our problem later on.

Chairman Jones called on Supervisor Phillips.

Supervisor Phillips states the Average Daily Membership has fallen by what number? Was it 150? The Average Daily Membership has fallen and it is expected to fall again this year.

Supervisor Edwards states so if it is falling why do you need more teachers?

Supervisor Phillips states bingo.

Supervisor Edwards states you were just telling me about the classes and what he said just hit me too. If your number of students are falling why do you need more teachers? Where is the rationale there? Where is the sense there? They have less in each class, but are saying I need more teachers.

Supervisor Porter states they have already cut six and now they are standing to cut four more. They have already cut a bunch of teachers.

Supervisor Edwards states if the population is falling they may need to cut four more teachers.

Supervisor Phillips states there are additional cost coming in. We are going to have to replace all of the voting machines. That is going to cost us \$35,000 this year over a five year period. We are still funding the school buses which was a hole that the school board has gotten into and couldn't seem to get out of. We have put money back in the reserve.

Supervisor West states we didn't put money back; we didn't take any out.

Supervisor Phillips states not this year but last year we did. My daughter-in-law teaches at Capron. I talked to school teachers and this Cortez math program, if I have ever heard anything that they don't like it is that. It is a boondock. Now, they have cut that out of two schools this year already.

Supervisor West states for what reason do you know?

Supervisor Phillips states well I really don't. It seems like we are trying to analyze how the school board runs.

Supervisor Edwards states many of the teachers say they can't teach it.

Supervisor Phillips states because the answer is in the program; when they go into the math lab the answers are wrong. The children do the problem right and put in the right answer the machine tells them they are wrong. When they try to correct it... talk to a math teacher anywhere in the system. You will get an ear full; it is like pushing a button then step back. We have the pay scale study still pending. Our employees are waiting with some hope for a pay raise. I am not sure where we are going to find that. It may have to be in the next year's budget. Again, I am not going to speak on all of the concerns that I feel, but I don't see the money and I am not in favor of raising taxes. Did you ever come up with the number on the...

Mr. Michael Johnson states I can tell you the state estimate for FY 2016 is 2536. Dr. Parrish has

gone back and adjusted that number up by 38 students with full confidence those students will be in the system in September next year. We have factored that additional state revenue in for those 38 additional students to an ADM of 2575. Now, I don't have it right in front of me but my recollection was your FY 2015 budget had approximately 113 more.

Supervisor Porter states the actual number for this year is 2607.

Supervisor West states what is the state's payment for each student?

Supervisor Edwards states 2607 is what actual number?

Supervisor Porter states 2607 is the actual ADM for the current school year. Not budget; we budgeted approximately 2700.

Supervisor West states so 7 times 4 could be 280,000...

Supervisor Porter states it is \$6,000 per student.

Supervisor Phillips states but if the students are not in the school? I am trying to understand where those numbers... Average Daily Membership is... the number of students in the schools is what generates the number of teachers that are necessary to teach. Correct?

Supervisor Porter states it is a step function. For instance, if you get 15 students you need a teacher. You don't need another teacher until you get to 30. Once you get to 45 you need another teacher. You have a teacher teaching anywhere between 15-30 kids depending on the class, but once you get to 30... and in some of the lower grades the number is 22 or 23 that you have to add another teacher. But, looking at high school if you have 28 kids in the class with one teacher and say four of those kids left because you raised tuition, you still need that teacher. You don't lose a teacher because those four kids left. That is what has happened.

Mr. Michael Johnson states to get back to your question Ronnie the extra 38 students generated an average of 5460.41 per student in additional state aid.

Supervisor West states thank you.

Supervisor Updike states let me ask another question. It concerns me that we are jacking these numbers up and down. There is going to be a shortfall if we don't reach those expectations. I would much rather go with the state's estimate and you have extra for the schools than to expect a bigger payout from the state and you never get it. That is about \$150,000 short of money.

Mr. Michael Johnson states but that is a different direction than you gave them the night of your retreat.

Supervisor Updike states I realize that.

Supervisor Porter states the thing with it is the way they arrived at the extra 38 students; they actually went back and looked at who is graduating, and who is coming into kindergarten and first grade and tried to get a number that they felt like was a good number.

Mr. Michael Johnson states they actually have gone to daycare providers and asked how many kids they will have starting kindergarten next year.

Supervisor Porter states the reason they are comfortable is because the state thinks what happened to our schools last year, having 100 kids leave because we raised out of district tuition, is going to continue this year. So, they factored in another 100 kids leaving not realizing why they left. They don't look at why they left they look at the trend. I feel like the state has underestimated the ADM because they have given improper weight to these 100 kids that left due to tuition increases. We are not going to have another 100 students leave this year because of tuition increase.

Supervisor West states well I am going to go back to what Mr. Updike said. I agree with what you said and I am not saying we put the pressure on the schools to adjust their numbers; however, at the end of the day they felt that it was important to do to try and get this thing to work from

\$851,832 to \$198,543. With that being said, I think we as a board would have to guarantee that minimum number. Whatever it is; 2638 or whatever that number is. I would think we would have to guarantee our part of \$5500 for each one of those students if it is under that number.

Supervisor Updike states that is what I am saying.

Supervisor West states I would be willing to do that as a guarantee to say that is a minimum. But, what I am not saying if you have more than that guaranteed ADM that you have to give that back. No; I am saying if there is a time for an adjustment you can add a program or you can change something. You have the additional money because you have more kids. That is your money. Now, I am going to go back to what Mr. Porter and I had talked about a time or two. In the past, I think some of these ADMs were underestimated over the years under prior administration; not this board, school board. That being underestimated, at the end of the year there was a windfall of money left over where it came in from the states that was kept out of our knowledge from September, October, until coming back to the board and saying can we get that \$1.3 million; can we get this or get that. I am saying that was part of the surplus that was built up in there. I am trusting the schools to do the right thing and I think she told us the truth. I don't think she is fudging, cutting, or doing anything else. My only issue is are we going to increase the taxes because I see it \$152,000 is one penny and \$198,000 is the number that she needs; \$37,000 is the number we have to add to the \$198,000. So, now we are at \$235,000 and approaching two pennies and now you are talking \$300,000 and that is just in case something else comes up. We are between a rock and a hard place; a catch 22. I still don't like to go to the tax payer because I hit him last year for two pennies. We said, and please correct me Mr. Johnson because I am not trying to use your name un-carefully. An average house in Southampton County is valued at roughly \$150,000. Is that correct?

Supervisor Phillips states yes roughly.

Supervisor West states so you are affecting the tax rate increase...

Supervisor Porter states \$15.00.

Supervisor West states \$15.00 no, that would be on \$100,000.

Supervisor Porter states no it is \$15.00 on \$150,000. It is one cent on \$150,000 and that is \$15.00.

Supervisor West states yes you are right. I am sorry, but that is what we are asking from each person.

Supervisor Porter states the average person.

Supervisor West states the average person. Obviously the better the house, the more expensive and so forth. It is a matter of do you want to have an increase or not? Mr. Updike you can look and find \$300.00, \$200.00; you can find a thousand here and a thousand there but it takes 198 of them to get that \$198,000. We either do it or we don't.

Supervisor Updike states I agree with that but the thing of it is these things that I have mentioned is cumulative over the years. An amount of \$300.00 over 10 years you are looking at \$3,000.00. You have to look at every penny because when times are tight each department... travel expenses, education, fees, etc. In times like this it is not time to travel to conventions and things like that. It is time to reduce it.

Supervisor West states that is not our position to tell someone how to spend their money. Years ago this board gladly went to Homestead in the fall and we enjoyed the experience of meeting other Supervisors in other counties and people that were in situations similar to ourselves. Well, we had a negative input to come onto the board three years ago and it has become an embarrassment to say where have you all gone; you don't show up to anything; you don't go to any of these things. It becomes, in a nice way of saying things, an embarrassment for Southampton County because we didn't participate because we had to cut every penny; squeeze every penny. You are wasting your money. You are doing this and you are doing that. I hope we have gotten passed that Mr. Updike. I want us to get passed that, but I want to say tonight I haven't heard you say should we give a penny to the schools. You have kind of gone all around it. Are you yay or

may on the additional one penny for the schools? That is what I want to hear from you.

Supervisor Updike states it is a nay.

Supervisor West states it is a nay.

Supervisor Edwards states the one thing in this country and in our government we have this idea of and habit of if there is a problem throw some money at it and that will fix it. Sometimes you have to stop throwing the money. Whatever the problem is, they need to fix it. There is a problem here that they need to fix and throwing money at it again is not going to fix it. It will be the same problem next year and the year after that.

Supervisor Porter states I think your metaphor is misplaced here Dr. Edwards because the problem is a money problem. It is not a problem that needs to be addressed like discipline. It is not a problem that needs to be addressed like performance. It is a money problem and that is what we are dealing with. It is something you either have to add money to or cut money from and you can't approach it like you are trying to in your metaphor.

Supervisor Updike states the money problem is this. You have heard it before and this is my socialism showing. I think the administration, the workers, and the teachers should be on two different scales and to give a cross the board 3% salary increases. Dr. Parrish probably gets \$154,000 and a school teacher making \$40,000 will get \$1200.00. She will get four times as much as a school teacher and the cost of living like food, gas, and housing is almost identical. The system needs to be changed. Where is the money going to? It is going to the higher paid officials.

Supervisor Porter states Mr. Updike we have no control over what your issue is there and the fact that I don't believe if they give a 2% increase it necessarily goes to the Superintendent. I believe that she has a contract that specifies her salary that has to be voted separately by the board. The only raises the teachers are getting are the ones specified by the General Assembly which is going to be 1.5% starting January 1<sup>st</sup>. It is totally funded by state revenue. We can do nothing about that and we get no benefit from it. We are not giving any money for teacher raises or anybody raises.

Supervisor Updike states that is not the question. The teachers get no raises; you want to give it to administration. I want to give it to the teachers.

Supervisor Porter states that has nothing to do with our current dilemma. We are wasting time talking about that.

Chairman Jones states there is nothing we can do about that.

Supervisor Updike states there is always something you can do about it.

Chairman Jones states no you can't do anything about that.

Supervisor Porter states unless you want to give the school system more money and say give it only to the teachers; you want to raise the taxes a nickel and just give the teachers a raise and not give the principals or anyone else a raise.

Supervisor Updike states if they change the system I might would consider that.

Chairman Jones states alright what are we going to do?

Supervisor West states I am ready to make a motion.

Chairman Jones states alright has everybody had their say? Is everybody satisfied?

Supervisor Porter states before you make your motion I would like to make my motion because I am sure my motion will be defeated. I want to go on record saying, I would like to propose that we publish the budget as presented plus one additional cent tax increase with the money going to the schools.

Supervisor Faison seconded the motion.

Chairman Jones called for the vote. Supervisor Porter and Supervisor Faison voted yes. Supervisor West, Supervisor Updike, Supervisor Edwards, and Supervisor Phillips voted no. The motion did not pass.

Chairman Jones called on Supervisor West.

Supervisor West made a motion for the proposed budget to go to public notice and public hearing advertising the budget as already presented with the same facts and figures you have given us; 77 cents and no tax increase this year.

Supervisor Edwards seconded the motion.

Chairman Jones called for the vote. Supervisor West, Supervisor Updike, Supervisor Edwards, and Supervisor Phillips voted yes. Supervisor Faison and Supervisor Porter sustained. The motion was passed.

Mr. Michael Johnson states we had a workshop scheduled next Wednesday night based on our calendar as the deadline to finalize the draft budget. Since you have reached consensus already, my assumption is you want to cancel next Wednesday's meeting.

Supervisor Edwards states yes. The next meeting will be...

Mr. Michael Johnson states you have a regular meeting next Monday and the budget hearing is not until May 18, 2015.

Chairman Jones states May 18, 2015 is the public hearing at the High School?

Mr. Michael Johnson states yes sir.

Mr. John Burchett states Dallas are you going to give me a chance to say something?

Chairman Jones states yes sir come on up. We will hear you.

Mr. John Burchett states I appreciate it. I hear what you all are saying. Ronnie, first I will address what you addressed to me. The volunteers that go to the schools are great; fantastic. But let me tell you what, you can take 100 John Burchetts and put them up there and it wouldn't make one decent teacher. It is a great supplement and it helps the kids know that somebody cares about them. It does not work as far as replacing teachers. Now, Bob Parker's wife before they pulled their kids out of public schools and put them in private school, she was there every day. She spent all day there and that was great. She was a big plus.

Supervisor Phillips states was she like a teacher's aide?

Mr. John Burchett states no. I don't think she got paid if that is what you mean. She was there all day long. Every time I was there she was there. That kind of person volunteering, yes. But if you take 100 John Burchetts.... It is just cold hard facts.

Supervisor West states you don't know that Mr. Burchett. You could go to the library and read to these children one on one. Take 30-45 minutes and go read to them.

Mr. John Burchett states how many days did you go?

Supervisor West states pardon me?

Mr. John Burchett states how many days did you spend?

Supervisor West states just one.

Mr. John Burchett states I wouldn't even mention it if that was all I did. I wouldn't even have mentioned that. You went and had your picture taken and that was great and I appreciate that but I wouldn't use that. But anyway, Dr. Edwards I want to address what you said. I really can't believe it. You think you can take eleven teachers out and it not make a bit of difference. I think you have

lost touch or forgot.

Supervisor Edwards states I am not following your numbers. I don't know where you are getting your numbers from.

Mr. John Burchett states Dr. Parrish came up at the last meeting and stated seven teachers and another person and now you are saying it will take four more. That is what Barry said; four more teachers without any increase. That is a total of eleven. I can't even fathom how you could think it wouldn't hurt anything. But that is what you are saying. There were a lot of complaints about the school board and concerned citizens and there were some changes made on the school board. Mr. Worsham and Dr. Modlin were the last two. There was another one too.

Supervisor Phillips states Jim Pope.

Mr. John Burchett states yes Jim; I have talked to Jim and Mr. Worsham but I haven't talked to Dr. Modlin. These people spend a lot of time and they are all concerned. I know Mr. Worsham he was down on the school board. Now, if you talk to him he said they worked hard on this budget and he has changed his attitude the way he felt about Dr. Parrish. He said she is a top notch administrator and as far as her pay; you can pay a Superintendent \$60,000 a year but what are you going to get. You are talking about administering a \$30 million budget and you are going to complain because she gets \$135,000 a year. To me, I want a top notch person spending \$30 million of my money. The new members and the members that were already there worked hard on this budget and to me you are not supporting them. I can't quite understand and I am going to make this quick because I am ready to go home too. A few simple things; I can't understand why you won't even consider what I came up with and I am glad you didn't because if you had of done it you would have already taken this money and wouldn't be able to do it now. This \$200,000; the three garbage days. If we took one of those days out, a 12 hour day would save \$78,000. If you don't want to take one day, split the days up. Have them open from 7 am to 11 am and from 3 pm to 7 pm. You can have that every day and still save 1/3 of the budget. We can't do it every year but we can give the school board a little time to decide on what they are going to do. When you have enrollment dropping there will be cuts every year. The other place I think we could get the rest of the money; I look at this every year and it makes my blood boil; the detention in the Sheriff's department and they get every penny they ask for. I look through the budget every year and it goes up. If my math is right based on what I have been told what the average inmate population is which is about 100 is \$31,000 a year. I look at the list of employees. I think there is 36 or 40. There are a bunch of deputies that are detention officers. There are always people leaving. If we just cut two of those positions that would save two teachers. If we just level funded the detention and not give them any extra money including this \$38,000 in the building fund for the cafeteria. Let them go one more year without a new stove or whatever they are doing. I don't know what they are doing.

Mr. Michael Johnson states they are fixing the roof. I don't think it can pass accreditation.

Mr. John Burchett states that is another thing. How much money are we going to keep pouring into that place to keep it up to standard for the state? Chesapeake or one of those cities just closed one of their facilities and had to go with the Regional Jail because they couldn't pass state accreditation. If you go to the Sheriff and tell him you are not going to give him any more money; you will have to make it with what you have. I don't know why you won't even think about it. You will cut eleven teachers without even batting an eye, but you won't cut anything from these guys that aren't worth a darn.

Supervisor Edwards states you don't have any idea how many teachers they need, but you are telling me we are cutting eleven teachers. That is what bothers me. You have no idea either.

Mr. John Burchett states no I don't.

Supervisor Edwards states okay so how can you make a judgement then.

Chairman Jones states gentlemen calm down.

Mr. John Burchett states we have to go by what they tell us. We have to have some faith in what they say. What are you going to do when the scores are down because they can't teach them? Dallas, I know you don't vote but I would like to hear what you think?

Chairman Jones states I am for the schools period. I have always been for the schools and I am still for the schools. If it was a tie, I would have voted for the school.

Mr. John Burchett states I want to see you guys vote against it. Don't make it unanimous that you passed this budget. Make it so I can say only these two supported the schools. Please don't pass this thing unanimously because that means all of you are for it; for the huge cuts that are being made. One more quick thing; the School Board and Dr. Parrish are going to have to make some hard decisions. Like the football program; Barry I didn't know it was funded by grants. I did not know that. Do we need three elementary schools? I tell you what with facilities there will have to be some hard choices if enrollment keeps going down. When they start cutting them out of your district I think you are going to hear some people complain; especially if you cut the football program. But, anyway, I appreciate it. I will be up there on May 18<sup>th</sup>. I won't say a whole lot because it is a done deal.

Chairman Jones states what you said about the three that wasn't for the budget. It wouldn't make any difference because it has passed because four people voted for it. Regardless of how we feel it was still passed by the board; period.

Mr. John Burchett states right but a 4-3 vote means everybody doesn't agree.

Chairman Jones states we don't agree all of the time but if four says yes than it is yes. Anyway you go with that it is still the board that does it.

Mr. John Burchett states alright well I appreciate it.

Chairman Jones states alright and thank you. Mr. Vick do you have anything?

Mr. Joe Vick states thank you all for the work that you do. I also want to thank you for taking the lead with cleaning up the Nottoway River. That is something for those of us that live on the river is a great concern. I do appreciate all of the work that the Sheriff department has done. I do have to agree with John on the detention budget. I have been looking at that for years. We spend a quarter of a million dollars to feed prisoners in Southampton County; just to feed them. It could be to the point of getting out of hand. I don't know. I haven't compared it to other areas. It does seem like a good amount of our Public Safety expense is holding prisoners. That may be something to ask the Sheriff to look at. I think John also has a point too about recording the votes 4-3. It is an election year as you all may suspect. People may be interested in that. I don't think there is anyone here to report the votes. Last thing I would say is at your next public hearing expect to hear a lot from the schools. You guys have a hard job.

Chairman Jones states alright gentlemen anything else before we close.

Supervisor West states I am going to repeat one thing that Mr. Johnson said. If we raise the tax rate one cent tonight we don't have to continue and we could vote it down but we can't increase it at the public hearing without another public hearing. It's .77 cents; if we keep it there and we have a public hearing and there is a convincing argument in any way that you want to increase it you can't do it at that time. We have to come back to a work session and re-advertise it for a public hearing to go to .78 cents.

Supervisor Porter states let's not play games. If you don't have any sincere belief that you are opened minded enough to consider the .78 cents, let's not play charades. Let's not do that.

Chairman Jones states alright any other comments? Now is the time. We are not going to meet again until May 18<sup>th</sup>.

Supervisor Faison states I have nothing to say.

Chairman Jones states Bruce do you have something to say. It looks like you have something on your mind.

Supervisor Phillips states I am going to get with Mike. I think the numbers for the teachers... I want to make sure that is a good number. I don't remember Dr. Parrish saying eight.

Mr. Michael Johnson states what she showed you last week in her presentation on page 14 at the top. She told you they had already made these reductions; seven elementary teacher positions and one secondary teacher position which are a total of eight. She has already cut out of the budget one custodial position, one information technology technician position, made reductions to the instructional program, technology department, and the operations department. If you flip back to page 13, at the bottom she showed you what those numbers equate to.

Supervisor Phillips states I see that. It is a real tool to use your numbers and equate it into teaching positions. That really jerks at your emotions. It was school buses. You can't send your children up and down the highways on buses that are going to break down. We have funded the school buses and we are funding them again this year. I believe \$198,000; like I said this Math program, every person I have ever talked to in the school system talks about it. They talk about the football program. They are going to have football. If we had the money I would be more than happy to put it there.

Chairman Jones states alright anything else? Anybody have a change of heart?

Supervisor Updike states I don't have a change of heart but I want to make it clear that this budget is not for July through November. It is for the year. It is not for six months until after election. I don't want to see on November 10<sup>th</sup> everything thrown out the door.

Mr. Michael Jones states the budget is set. Your tax rate is set and your revenues are coming in.

Chairman Jones states when has that happened Mr. Updike? The only thing that we have done is stuff that we had to do.

Supervisor Updike states you didn't have to do it.

Chairman Jones states okay if it is raining in your house every day are you going to let it stay that way?

Supervisor West states Mr. Updike I don't think it is a political election issue. Forgive me but I am still stuck on the fact that even with \$1.3 million we still gave a two cent increase last year on the tax rate. That affects the average person. There are a lot of people that are struggling in this County. It is getting more and more difficult to pay out for tax bills and the \$200 waste management fee. It affects people in a bad way. I just think there isn't but so much water that can be dug out of an old well and if you keep on going to the same well it is going to run dry. We are all looking at a couple of things that are coming up. Next year you are going to get less money from Enviva and less money from AMAC. You are going to get less and less. How are you going to make up the shortfall unless you have new business?

Supervisor Porter states that is the key Mr. West. I think we don't look down the road enough to where we can continue to market and entice new businesses to come. In order to do that, we have to provide the right environment, the right facilities, and the right situations. I don't think everybody on the board and in the county feel that way. We have all of this not in my backyard mentality; let's put it somewhere else. If we don't change our attitude; you are talking you can't afford it, we won't be talking about a .78 cent tax rate. In ten years we are going to be talking about \$1.50 tax rate if you don't have real duration in your industry. If you have to wait until you are hit with \$1.50 tax rate to get that point across it is going to be a sad situation. You are exactly right; the only way we can keep the taxes at the current level is to get more industry. We are moving towards being business friendly but we still have too many people who say I am business friendly if I don't have to participate. That is not going to work. Everybody has to work together. We have to lead by example on this board and we have to show we are open to businesses because they are our life line.

Chairman Jones states alright, any other comments before we close. Okay, so we are all set for May 18<sup>th</sup>. That will be our public hearing. We still have our regular meeting on Monday night. If there is nothing else this meeting is adjourned.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 7:39 p.m.

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Dallas O. Jones, Chairman

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Michael W. Johnson, Clerk

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