

AGENDA

Board of Supervisors
County of Prince George, Virginia
Regular Meeting: March 10, 2020
County Administration Bldg. Boardroom, Third Floor
6602 Courts Drive, Prince George, Virginia

Regular Meeting

Business Meeting

7:00 p.m.

***Public Hearings Will Be Heard at 7:30 p.m.**

CALL TO ORDER

Roll Call

INVOCATION

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO U.S. FLAG

PUBLIC COMMENTS

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

ORDER OF CONSENSUS

C-1. Draft Minutes – February 24, 2020 Special Called Meeting; and February 25, 2020 Regular Meeting Minutes.

C-2. Resolution; Appropriation (\$11,929.07 Insurance Recoveries – Police Vehicle Replacement).

PRESENTATIONS

SUPERVISORS' COMMENTS

COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR'S COMMENTS

REPORTS

VDOT Secondary Six-Year Plan – Crystal Smith [MOVED TO MARCH 24]

District 19 – Jennifer Tunstall, Executive Director

James River National Wildlife Refuge – Cyrus Brame, US Fish & Wildlife Services

Biosolids Application – Julie Walton and Angela Blount

TABLED ITEMS

ORDER OF BUSINESS

- A-1. Resolution; Proposed Revisions Prince George County Personnel Policies; Section 12.1, entitled *Employee Performance Review*.
- A-2. Resolution; Proposed Revisions Prince George County Personnel Policies; Section 170.1 Through 170.3, Entitled *Expense Reports and Purchase Cards/Accounts* and Section 100.1 Through 100.8 Entitled *Travel*.
- A-3. Resolution; Proposed Addition Prince George County Personnel Policies; Section 330.1 Through 330.14, Entitled *Non-Travel Food and Beverage Purchases*.
- A-4. Resolution; Adoption of the Prince George County Solar Energy Facility Siting Policy.
- A-5. Resolution; Authority to Advertise a Public Hearing for an Effective Real Property Tax Increase – Equalized Rate Consideration.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

- P-1. Public Hearing; Ordinance to Amend “The Code of the County of Prince George, Virginia”, 2005, as Amended, by Amending § 82-313 and 82-595 to Modify Requirements Related to Payment of Utility Connection and User Fees.

ADJOURNMENT

Board meeting format: Closed Session Meeting at 5:00 p.m., followed by a Business Meeting at 7:00 p.m. with Public Hearings being heard at 7:30 p.m. **Visit Prince George County website for information www.princegeorgeva.org.**

MINUTES
Board of Supervisors
County of Prince George, Virginia

March 10, 2020

County Administration Bldg. Boardroom, Third Floor
6602 Courts Drive, Prince George, Virginia

MEETING CONVENED. A regular meeting of the Board of Supervisors of the County of Prince George, Virginia, was called to order at 7:02 p.m. on Tuesday, March 10, 2020 in the Boardroom, County Administration Building, 6602 Courts Drive, Prince George, Virginia by Donald R. Hunter, Chairman.

ATTENDANCE. The following members responded to Roll Call:

Donald R. Hunter, Chairman	Present
Alan R. Carmichael, Vice-Chairman	Present
Floyd M. Brown, Jr.	Present
Marlene J. Waymack	Present
T. J. Webb	Present

Also present was: Percy Ashcraft, County Administrator; Betsy Drewry, Deputy County Administrator; Julie Walton, Deputy County Administrator; and Dan Whitten, County Attorney.

Invocation. Mr. Brown gave the Board's invocation.

Pledge of Allegiance to U.S. Flag. Mr. Carmichael led the Pledge of Allegiance to the U.S. Flag.

PUBLIC COMMENTS. Chairman Hunter announced that anyone wishing to come before the Board may do so at this time. He noted that this was the time for unscheduled general public comments. He opened the public comments at 7:05 p.m.

William Steele (County Line Road). Mr. Steele stated that many citizens do not agree with the proposed Solar Energy Facility Siting Policy. He stated that the Board and Staff will have ample time to discuss this matter but the public only has input during the public comment period. He asked that the public be given more time to speak. He asked the Board not to accept the policy as written and return it back to the Planning Department for a total rewrite. He stated that it does not reflect public input as it states. He stated that the policy is full of ambiguous language with no regard on the impact to the community. He suggested that there is no research to reflect the figures and the policy is a distortion of facts.

Mary Jo Tyson (15303 Arwood Road). Ms. Tyson presented the Board with a handout.

Larry Mitchell (16200 Arwood Road). Mr. Mitchell stated that he supports Mr. Steele's comments. He would like to see the community be included in the review of the solar energy policy.

Candide Hamilton (15101 Pleasant Circle Drive). Ms. Hamilton agreed with Mr. Steele. She stated that the residents were not given the opportunity to hear or speak about the solar energy proposal. She too does not understand where the numbers come from. She stated that the Board should give the citizens an opportunity to speak about it before they make a decision.

Sherry Odett (3711 Rives Road). Ms. Odett lives next to the Rives Road solar farm. She stated that she does not understand how the Board could have approved something like that 50 feet off of her property line. She stated that it has affected her property value. She also said that she understood there was supposed to be a tree-line buffer and she came home one day and all of the trees were cut. She does not believe it would have been approved if it were next to one of the Board members' homes. She pleaded with the Board to help her fix this problem. She does not understand how it even got to this point. She asked the Board to consider all of this and not move forward with a 50-foot buffer on future projects.

James Rovinski (11600 Centennial Road). Mr. Rovinski stated that he does not understand why the County is destroying farmland and allowing these solar energy facilities that do not benefit the County.

Anna Fraraccio (15315 Arwood Road). Ms. Fraraccio stated that she has multiple objections to the solar facility policy as it is written. She stated that she would like to know where the policy came from because she does not feel like anyone here has an expertise in solar facilities. There is currently a nationwide debate about the safety and environmental factors of a solar facility. What makes Prince George exempt from these issues? She stated that she does not understand the rush. She does not want to see all of this go up before due diligence is done. She suggested that the Board take some time to investigate further by hiring a mutual third party experienced in green energy. Much of the policy is vague and open to multiple interpretations. There is nothing specific in the policy about loss of property value. She stated that there are wetlands all around her house and the language regarding wetlands "being avoided to the greatest extent possible" needs to be more specific. She stated that she is not opposed to landowner rights, however she is imposed if it impends the rights and safety of other County citizens.

John Doran (15311 Arwood Road). He stated that he nor his neighbors were ever given a chance for public input on the solar energy facility policy.

Carolyn Curtindale (9434 Springfield Lane). Ms. Curtindale stated that she lives in the country and does not want to see a solar farm there.

Tina Chacuzio (15311 Arwood Road). Ms. Chacuzio stated that she took two years to find her house before moving to Prince George and does not want solar panels at her back door.

Mr. Lee Thacker was unable to attend the meeting and sent his comments in support of a solar facility policy prior to the meeting. He stated that the plan provides for clear direction of how Solar Farms should be constructed to maintain rural setting that the citizens all enjoy. The plan calls for acreage limits to avoid the farms overpopulating the County. He stated that there is no Cadmium or toxic chemicals in the panels used today. He stated that solar farms provide a significant annual tax revenue without any demand for increase county services. He called it a win win situation.

There being no one else to speak, Chairman Hunter closed the public comments period at 7:28 pm.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA. Mr. Carmichael made a motion, seconded by Mr. Webb, to adopt the agenda as presented. Roll was called on the motion.

On roll call the vote was:

In favor: (5) Hunter, Webb, Brown, Waymack, Carmichael

Opposed: (0)

Absent: (0)

ORDER OF CONSENSUS. Mr. Carmichael requested that Item C-1 be extracted. Mr. Carmichael made a motion, seconded by Mr. Webb, that the consensus agenda be approved as amended. Roll was called on the motion.

R-20-033

C-2.

RESOLUTION; APPROPRIATION (\$11,929.07 INSURANCE RECOVERIES – POLICE VEHICLE REPLACEMENT)

BE IT RESOLVED That the Board of Supervisors of the County of Prince George this 10th day of March, 2020, does hereby authorize the following increase of funds within the 2019-2020 Budget, such line items increased as follows, which monies shall be expended for purposes authorized and approved by the Board of Supervisors of the County of Prince George:

<u>FUND/ORGANIZATION</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
<u>Expenditure:</u>	
0100-03-100-0601-44200 General Fund: Police	
Automotive Motor Pool	\$11,929.07
 <u>Revenue:</u>	
0100-40-507-8206-341111 General Fund; Insurance Proceeds	\$11,929.07

On roll call the vote was:

In favor: (5) Hunter, Webb, Brown, Carmichael, Waymack

Opposed: (0)

Absent: (0)

SUPERVISORS COMMENTS

Mr. Webb thanked everyone for coming out and voicing their opinions.

Mr. Brown stated that whether they all agree or disagree, it is very important to hear everyone's opinions. In addition, he mentioned that he is scheduled to have a major eye surgery next week and may be not out and about for a little bit.

Mrs. Waymack stated that the coronavirus is here and we should be vigilant.

Mr. Carmichael asked everyone to keep Floyd Brown, Sr. in his prayers.

Chairman Hunter echoed Mr. Carmichael's comments.

COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR COMMENTS

Mr. Percy Ashcraft presented the Board with his report of upcoming dates and updates.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

P-1. Public Hearing; Ordinance to Amend "The Code of the County of Prince George, Virginia", 2005, as Amended, by Amending § 82-313 and 82-595 to Modify Requirements Related to Payment of Utility Connection and User Fees. Mr. Frank Haltom, County Engineer, stated that amendments to Chapter 82 are recommended to clarify requirements to pay water and sewer connections fees for existing uses along newly constructed water and sewer lines. The proposed amendments will not require a single-family home that is operating to connect until such a time the existing individual water supply system is no longer adequate to serve the premises. At that time, the property owner must connect to the available public water supply.

Chairman Hunter opened the public hearing at 7:38 p.m.

Mr. William Steele (County Line Road). Mr. Steele stated that there should not be a connection fee and it should be extended to everyone.

Ms. Mary Jo Tyson (15303 Arwood Road). Ms. Tyson asked why they would mandate that someone cannot build another well on their property.

Mr. John Doran (15311 Arwood Road). Mr. Doran stated that if anyone is going to be made to connect, then they should be allowed to do it for free.

There being no one else to speak, Chairman Hunter closed the public hearing at 7:41 p.m.

Mr. Brown asked Mr. Haltom if a citizen has a right to fix their system if it is cheaper than connecting to public water. Mr. Haltom stated that would be the pleasure of the Board. However, the Health Department and the State are trying to reduce the number of wells and private septic systems. Ultimately, it would be up to the Health Department to decide if their alternative system is adequate for a sewer system and they would probably not allow them to drill another well. Mr. Brown made a motion, seconded by Mr. Webb, to table the matter to

March 24 to allow for more clarification on adequate systems or repairs. Roll was called on the motion.

On roll call the vote was:

In favor: (5) Hunter, Webb, Brown, Carmichael, Waymack

Opposed: (0)

Absent: (0)

REPORTS

District 19 – Ms. Jennifer Tunstall, Executive Director of the District 19 Community Services Board, stated that District 19’s mission is to improve the quality and productivity of the lives of individuals who experience, or are at risk of experiencing, mental disabilities and/or substance abuse. They are licensed by the Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services to provide mental health, intellectual/developmental disability, substance abuse and prevention services to the citizens of the cities of Colonial Heights, Emporia, Hopewell, and Petersburg, and the counties of Dinwiddie, Greensville, Prince George, Surry, and Sussex. A volunteer Board of Directors provides oversight to District 19. Interested citizens are appointed by each of the participating localities for terms of three years. District 19 CSB offers Mental Health (MH), Intellectual/Developmental Disability (ID/DD), and Substance Use Disorder (SUD) services. They also offer emergency services for people in crisis, early intervention services for young children, and prevention services to reduce risk and promote wellness. In FY19, they provided direct services to 5,474 individuals. Ten percent or 533 people were served in Prince George County. District 19 CSB finances its work through a combination of public and private sector funding. Funding comes from federal, state, and local entities. District 19 serves a high volume of individuals that are uninsured. Service fee revenue comes primarily from Medicaid, but also from other sources. District 19 began accepting some commercial insurances for services in February 2019. Sections 37.2-509 and 37.2-611 of the Code of Virginia establishes the minimum local matching funds requirement reciprocally at 10 percent. The FY20 State fund contribution to District 19 was \$8,324,232. The FY20 local matching funds requirement was \$854,273. The FY21 State fund contribution to District 19 is \$8,510,923. The FY21 local matching funds requirement is \$900,243. State fund contribution is based on current “known” funding allocations. This amount can change throughout the year when the State allocates additional funds for specific purposes. District 19 is very appreciative of the partnership and support from Prince George County. The amount requested from Prince George for FY20 was \$110,562. The minimum FY21 request is \$117,374. STEP-VA is a long-term initiative designed to improve the community behavioral health services available to all Virginians. All 40 CSBs in Virginia are statutorily required to provide all STEP-VA services by July 2021. In compliance with STEP-VA, District 19 has implemented Same Day Access. The implementation of STEP-VA services improves access, increases quality, builds consistency and strengthens accountability across Virginia’s public behavioral health system. The funding that was allocated to provide this new mandated service is not sufficient to cover the cost of operating the service. The SDA program operates in Petersburg, Emporia, and Hopewell/Prince George. Individuals receive assessments for services from Licensed staff, on the same day that they come to the clinic to initiate services. The two objectives of the primary care screening and monitoring are to ensure that any child diagnosed with a serious emotional disturbance and receiving ongoing CSB behavioral health service or any adult diagnosed with a serious mental illness and

receiving ongoing CSB behavioral health service will be provided or referred for a primary care screening on a yearly basis. Also to screen and monitor any individual over age 3 being prescribed an antipsychotic medication by a CSB prescriber for metabolic syndrome following the American Diabetes Association guidelines. The objective of this step is to ensure high quality, evidence/-based, trauma-informed, culturally-competent, accessible behavioral health services that addresses a broad range of diagnoses and considers an individual's course of illness across the lifespan from childhood to adulthood and support complementary system wide initiatives such as behavioral health redesign, Addiction and Recovery Treatment Services (ARTS), Families First Prevention Services Act, and DJJ Transformation. This step aims to ensure high quality services that address critical community needs and helps close gaps in access to foundational outpatient services. Funding was allocated to each CSB to add two new MH Therapy positions for this STEP-VA. One position for adult services and one position for children's services. Additional "needs" based funding was provided to CSBs that will support two more positions and potentially tele psychiatry hours. D19 will have two of these position at the Petersburg clinic, one in Hopewell/Prince George, and one in Emporia. Recruitment for these positions are underway. Mr. Brown pointing out that he noticed a lot of the funding goes out to salary and benefits. Ms. Tunstall stated that they have approximately 230 employees spread across nine localities. They are required to have individuals licensed to provide counseling and services that require higher credentials and degrees. They do the best that they can do to keep up with the competition of neighboring counties that cannot afford to pay their staff more. Mr. Brown asked who is serviced in the "other category." Ms. Tunstall stated that is emergency cases and services. Chairman Hunter asked if that meant that inmates at Riverside were considered in the "other" category or Prince George. Ms. Tunstall said that she would verify that and get back with them.

James River National Wildlife Refuge – Mr. Cyrus Brame of the US Fish and Wildlife Services stated that the James River National Wildlife Refuge consists of 4,400 acres. It was established in 1991 to provide habitat for the American Bald Eagle. It supports grasslands, marsh, mixed hardwood and pine dominated forests. There are 568 refuges throughout the United States that consists of 150 million acres of land and water and includes a habitat for hundreds of threatened and endangered plants and animals. National Wildlife Refuges are the only system of federal lands established specifically for habitat conservation. Management actions are biologically driven and based on sound, peer reviewed science. They are also an excellent place to connect with nature. Seventy-five percent of National Wildlife Refuge are open to the public. The 1997 National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act established priority uses for refuges. Uses must be compatible with the mission and the purpose of the individual refuge. There are over 53 million visitors annually to the National Wildlife Refuge System. Economic impact translates to \$3.2 billion. Of that, 83% spent by visitors from outside the community. The James River National Wildlife Refuge supports the Endangered Species Act, passed by Congress in 1973, to create a way to monitor the health of plant and animal populations. The Refuge also protects the American Bald Eagle, among other species of concern and keeps common species common. Non-native plants displace native grasses and trees that possess important food and nesting value to animals. In an effort to reduce invasive plants and encourage a wide diversity of native plants species, prescribed burning can be used in several habitat types. Healthy habitats help animals by providing sufficient food, water, resting and nesting areas. Deer management program at the Refuge helps control deer populations,

encourages a strong herd, and involves the public in nature-related recreation opportunities. Beginning the end of April nature trail access is open without advanced reservation for self-guided. Limited Interpretive nature tours and programs are offered. Some of the future public use projects include expanding the Trail System: multiple phases within a 240-acre section, enhance hunting opportunity, develop an MOU to expand its partnership with the County Parks & Recreation Dept., and to acquire tracts for habitat value and public use. Some of its conservation partnerships include VA Master Naturalist, Old Dominion Appalachian Trail Club, Richmond Audubon Society, Center for Conservation Biology at VCU, and the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries.

Biosolids Application – Ms. Julie Walton, Director of Community Development, and Ms. Angela Blount, Environmental Program Coordinator, presented to the Board some information that was recently received by the County as an adjacent landowner notice from the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) for a Virginia pollution abatement permit. Ms. Blount stated that the permit is for Recyc Systems, Inc. for an operation across from Temple Park on Route 156. The notice has a public comment period that the County would like to take advantage of from February 14 to March 20. If DEQ received at least 25 comments, then they will open up a public comment hearing for this particular project. Ms. Blount said that is very important because it pushes the timeframe of the application back. Right now, the County could be looking at an application starting as early as May. Ms. Blount gave a little background on biosolids, which consists of small solids and some liquids that come from the sewage treatment plants. They are not considered biosolids until they go through a process, which makes them a fertilizer that is very beneficial to the farms. This is an approved method through the Federal and State governments. This particular permit is going to encompass two different areas. Fields 1 and 2 are owned by the same property owner and are off of Tavern Road. The particular notice that the County received is for the field on Prince George Drive (Route 156) directly across from Temple Park. This particular application is land applied meaning it will be applied directly to the land and not cultivated into the soil. They will observe the 200-foot buffer from the other side of the road. Ms. Blount stated that according to Parks and Recreation, there will be a number of activities during the summer months. Staff would like to submit formal comments showing concern for timeframe of the land application. It is the County's desire to work with the landowner as well as Recyc Systems to try to choose a timeframe that will not interfere with any of the activities planned at Temple Park from early Spring until early Fall. Ms. Blount asked the Board if they have any concerns that they can include in their formal comment to DEQ. Mr. Brown stated that he has a lot of concerns. He said wind has no buffer and the smell will go directly over to Temple Park. He stated that he also has huge concerns on the other permits on Tavern Road. He wanted to know if the County was allowed to comment on those as well. Ms. Blount stated that citizens do have a right to comment to DEQ. Mrs. Waymack asked where these biosolids come from. Ms. Blount stated that her understanding is that most of it comes from Blue Plains, Maryland. Mrs. Waymack also expressed a concern about contaminants. Ms. Blount assured her that they are tested by the DEQ prior to disposal on the property. She clarified for Mr. Carmichael and Mr. Webb that DEQ dictates this in the end, the County has no authority. This is why it is very important to get those comments in.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

A-1. Resolution; Proposed Revisions Prince George County Personnel Policies; Section 12.1, entitled *Employee Performance Review*. Ms. Corrie Hurt, Human Resources Director, stated that Staff has revised the personnel policy entitled Employee Performance Review to incorporate changes that are a result of the job-specified evaluations for all employees. The essential duties are part of the job-specified evaluations and there is an “other performance” measure tab that captures the employee’s communication, time management, ethical behavior, attendance and respect in the workplace. The scores changed with the new evaluation which created the need to change the score of “three” to say “meets expectations” since that is no longer a score of three on the new evaluations. Mr. Webb made a motion, seconded by Mr. Brown to approve the resolution as presented. Roll was called on the motion.

R-20-034

A-1.

RESOLUTION; PROPOSED REVISIONS PRINCE GEORGE COUNTY PERSONNEL POLICIES; SECTION 12.1 ENTITLED *EMPLOYEE PERFORMANC REVIEW*

WHEREAS the Prince George County Personnel Policy Manual has been reviewed by staff and it has been recommended that the policy entitled *Employee Performance Review* be reviewed and considered for revision in the County’s Personnel Policies;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Supervisors of the County of Prince George, this 10th day of March, 2020 does hereby amend the Prince George County Personnel Policy by approving a revision to the policy entitled *Employee Performance Review* as requested.

On roll call the vote was:

In favor: (5) Hunter, Webb, Brown, Carmichael, Waymack

Opposed: (0)

Absent: (0)

A-2. Resolution; Proposed Revisions Prince George County Personnel Policies; Section 170.1 Through 170.3, Entitled *Expense Reports and Purchase Cards/Accounts* and Section 100.1 Through 100.8 Entitled *Travel*. Ms. Betsy Drewry, Finance Director, stated that the Board of Supervisors received information at its February 25, 2020 work session related to administrative policy updates for expense reports and purchase cards. These changes center around improved documentation, restricting purchases related to apps and i-cloud storage, restricting purchases related to gifts and gift cards, restricting purchases related to expressions of sympathy and concern, and improving the approval process. Mr. Webb made a motion, seconded by Mr. Brown, to approve the resolution as presented. Roll was called on the motion.

R-20-035

A-2.

RESOLUTION; PROPOSED REVISIONS PRINCE GEORGE COUNTY PERSONNEL POLICIES; SECTION 170.1 THROUGH 170.3, ENTITLED *EXPENSE REPORTS AND PURCHASE CARDS/ACCOUNTS* AND SECTION 100.1 THROUGH 100.8 ENTITLED *TRAVEL*

WHEREAS the Prince George County Personnel policy has been reviewed by staff and it has been determined that existing policies entitled *Expense Reports and Purchase Cards/Accounts AND Travel* require modifications;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the Board of Supervisors of the County of Prince George this 10th day of March, 2020, does hereby amend the Prince George County Personnel Policies by revising the policies entitled *Expense Reports and Purchase Cards/Accounts AND Travel* as requested.

On roll call the vote was:

In favor: (5) Hunter, Webb, Brown, Carmichael, Waymack

Opposed: (0)

Absent: (0)

A-3. Resolution; Proposed Addition Prince George County Personnel Policies; Section 330.1 Through 330.14, Entitled *Non-Travel Food and Beverage Purchases*. Ms. Drewry stated that the Board of Supervisors received information at its February 25, 2020 work session related to administrative policy addition for non-travel food and beverage purchases. This policy addition focuses on providing guidance and imposing limitations on the use of public funds when making food and beverage purchases when not in a business travel status. Since February 25, the Section 330.5 entitled Board of Supervisors Meetings has been completed based on feedback received. Additionally, Section 330.1 “Policy Exclusion” section has been expanded to include meals provided for jurors. Chairman Hunter stated that he has concerns with Sections 330.2 and 330.5. He does not believe those amounts are appropriate for anything feasible. Mr. Brown stated that he is fine with those amount. The Board should not be afforded anything more than the employees and Staff. Mrs. Waymack stated that she does not believe \$3.00 is enough for any meeting attendee. It is very limiting. Mr. Carmichael agreed and stated that this would be for any meeting, event or program. Mr. Carmichael would like to see what was spent in the past and have it continue to be the same amount. It should be business as usual. Mr. Carmichael made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Waymack to postpone this item to April 14 for Staff to come back with an average of what was spent in the past. Roll was called on the motion.

On roll call the vote was:

In favor: (3) Hunter, Carmichael, Waymack

Opposed: (2) Webb, Brown

Absent: (0)

A-4. Resolution; Adoption of the Prince George County Solar Energy Facility Siting Policy. Ms. Julie Walton, Director of Community Development, stated that the Planning Commission and Staff recommend the adoption of a Solar Energy Facility Siting Policy to provide guidance to property owners, business owners, and County residents with the acceptance of Special Exception applications for Solar Energy Facilities. The policy will also give guidance to Staff, the Planning Commission, and the Board of Supervisors when evaluating requests for solar energy facilities. The policy was developed with public input from community meetings for planned or proposed solar projects, independent citizen inquiries, and public hearings for proposed solar energy facilities. When asked for clarification, Ms. Walton confirmed for Mr. Carmichael that every applicant has to come before the Planning Commission and the Board for approval of a special exception for a solar farm on a case by case basis regardless of a policy or not. This policy is an internal policy, not an

ordinance, for the Planning Division to review those applications and make recommendations to both the Planning Commission and the Board that are consistent and uniform and protect objectives of the County in looking at these facilities. The purpose of the policy is to set guidelines to be used by applicants when selecting sites and developing plans, to be used by staff, Planning Commission, and Board of Supervisors when evaluating requests, and to establish an upper limit on the total acreage of approved facilities in the County. This policy sets objectives and standards for all proposed solar developments; leads to consistent, uniform review of projects. It addresses separation from adjoining properties; landscaping requirements. It protects natural resources. It establishes a desired upper limit on total acreage of approved facilities in the County devoted to this type of use. Ms. Walton requested that the Board consider 4%. It provides a guide for staff review of proposed projects; provides a standard for the Board's consideration when reviewing a project request through the Special Exception Process. It provides for increased public notice for solar facilities. This policy does not "allow" or "approve" solar facilities (proposed projects must go through the Special Exception Process). It does not restrict a property owner's right to apply for Special Exceptions. It does not modify provisions of the Ordinance related to solar facilities; is used in conjunction with the Ordinance. This policy protects and enhances agricultural, cultural, and recreational resources. It protects, maintains and improves the quality of the natural environment. This policy establishes an upper limit on the total acreage of approved facilities in the County. Other items addressed in the policy include fencing, lighting, set-backs, heights, minimum acreage, landscaping, screening and buffers between adjoining properties. It also addresses development standards such as operations, roll back taxes, decommissioning, and coordination with the local emergency services. It also places stipulations on the Special Exception process, including a pre-application conference with staff at least 30 days prior to submitting an application, a community meeting with property owners within ½ - mile of the project prior to the public hearing with the Planning Commission, and providing additional documentation. Under current Ordinances, as a Special Exception, solar farms are permitted in A-1, R-A, B-1, M-1, and M-2 Districts and by-right in M-3 District. Mr. Brown stated that he is about transparency. He feels like they need to get input from the citizens on this policy. He also asked for clarification from the County Attorney that this would be just a guideline because they cannot put a hard limit on the acreage. Mr. Whitten agreed that is correct. He also expressed concern about the Rives Road project and how it ended up being not what they expected and why it did not come back before the Board if the site plan had changed. He believes that some of the language in the policy should be more direct and he would like to see a public hearing on this policy even if it is not required. Mr. Webb agreed with Mr. Brown. Mrs. Waymack stated that she is not against clean energy. However, 4% of glass fields will be too much for Prince George County. Mr. Carmichael stated that the policy is just a guideline for Staff to use. It only bounds the applicants coming into the office. It does not affect the Board's final decision. Mr. Walton agreed. Chairman Hunter stated that he is very interested in hearing the public's input on this. Mr. Carmichael asked what will we gain from a public hearing. Mr. Brown stated that it does not need to be a public hearing. It can be a citizen group to work with Staff. Mr. Brown just wants to set the bar higher for the applicant. Mr. Carmichael stated that they don't have to meet Mr. maximum and still come before the Board for a special exception. Mr. Brown stated that he understands that but it still sets the standard for any future Board. Mr. Webb made a motion, seconded by Mr. Brown, to postpone this item to April 28. Roll was called on the motion.

On roll call the vote was:

In favor: (5) Hunter, Brown, Webb, Waymack, Carmichael

Opposed: (0)

Absent: (0)

A-5. Resolution; Authority to Advertise a Public Hearing for an Effective Real Property Tax Increase – Equalized Rate Consideration. Ms. Drewry stated that the County Administrator proposed the Fiscal Year 2020-2021 budget at the February 25, 2020 Board meeting and recommended no increase in the Real Property Tax Rate of Personal Property Tax Rate. The Board received preliminary information on an increase in assessed real property values at its pre-budget work session on December 16, 2019. The Board received updated information at its budget work session on March 7. The assessed values (excluding new construction and improvements) have grown by more than 1%. Estimated FY2021 assess values, net of new construction and improvements, have grown by 7.3% over 2020 values. The equalization rate would be 80 cents (a 6 cents reduction from the current 86 cents rate). If the assessed value increases by more than 1% (excluding new construction and improvements), the County must reduce tax rate so that revenues are less than or equal to 101% of prior year levies or the County may increase the tax rate after advertising and holding a public hearing with notice of the “effective tax rate increase.” There is no recommendation to lower the tax rate 80 cents, and the proposed budget proposed keeping the real property tax rate of 86 cents. Staff is requesting the authority to advertise the public hearing to meet the 30-day advertising requirement and to be able to conduct the public hearing on April 14, 2020. Mr. Carmichael made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Waymack to approve the resolution as presented. Mr. Brown stated that he is will support the advertisement of 86 cents because they can always still come down. There are a lot of people struggling with what they are paying today. Mr. Webb agreed with Mr. Brown Roll was called on the motion.

R-20-036

A-5.

RESOLUTION; AUTHORITY TO ADVERTISE A PUBLIC HEARING FOR AN EFFECTIVE REAL PROPERTY TAX INCREASE – EQUALIZED RATE CONSIDERATION

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED That the Board of Supervisors of the County of Prince George this 10th day of March, 2020, does hereby authorize the advertisement of a public hearing to be held on April 14, 2020, for an Effective Real Property Tax Increase – Equalized Rate Consideration.

On roll call the vote was:

In favor: (5) Hunter, Brown, Webb, Waymack, Carmichael

Opposed: (0)

Absent: (0)

ADJOURNMENT. Mr. Webb moved, seconded by Mr. Carmichael, to adjourn. Roll was called on the motion.

On roll call the vote was:

In favor: (5) Hunter, Brown, Webb, Waymack, Carmichael

Opposed: (0)

Absent: (0)

The meeting adjourned at 9:36 p.m.

[Draft Minutes prepared March 18, 2020 for consideration on April 14, 2020; adopted by unanimous vote.]

Donald R. Hunter
Chairman, Board of Supervisors

Percy C. Ashcraft
County Administrator