March 18, 2025

County of Greene, Virginia

THE GREENE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MET ON THURSDAY, MARCH 18, 2025, BEGINNING AT 4:30 P.M. IN PERSON IN THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATION BUILDING MEETING ROOM AND BY ZOOM VIDEO COMMUNICATION

Present was:	Steve Catalano, Chair
	Marie Durrer, Vice Chair
	Davis Lamb, Member
	Francis McGuigan, Member
	Tim Goolsby, Member
Staff present:	Cathy Schafrik, County Administrator
	Kim Morris, Deputy Clerk
	Jim Frydl, Director of Planning and Zoning
	Melissa Meador, Director of Emergency Services
	Dan Chipman, Finance Director
	Cooper Lane, Senior Financial Accountant
	Terry Beigie, Grant Writer

RE: GENERAL BUDGET DISCUSSION

Mr. Catalano said that the Board had to make decisions tonight to come to a budget to be advertised. Ms. Schafrik introduced a balanced budget proposal that included a two-cent real estate tax reduction and a 50-cent personal property tax reduction, as well as the changes that Board requested at previous budget workshops. Ms. Schafrik provided detailed explanations of revenue projections, potential funding sources, and budget cuts, highlighting approximately $1.7 million in potential revenue from sources like real estate and personal property tax receipts, and a surprisingly low 3.6% health insurance premium increase. She presented a list of potential budget cuts and offered flexibility for the board to make adjustments. She recommended putting unallocated funds in a contingency account to maintain financial flexibility. She also included recommendations such as exploring ways to establish dedicated funds for capital improvements and rural preservation, always emphasizing the board's ability to maintain control over financial decisions.

Mr. Catalano asked about the increase in contributions to the volunteer fire departments, which Ms. Schafrik confirmed was a 3.27% increase. He said that he was concerned about ensuring fairness in funding, especially after one fire department transferred its non-transport EMS responsibilities to the county EMS department. Mr. Catalano suggested that if one department is no longer buying renewable supplies, since the county will now purchase them, the other fire departments should receive additional funding to maintain equity. He proposed either giving the other two departments an extra $3,000 each or finding a way to balance the funding. Ms. Meador suggested either giving each fire department the $10,000 as before or moving the funds to the medical supply line item.

Mr. Catalano questioned the Water and Sewer salary line items. He noticed that unlike other departments, the Water and Sewer salaries were broken down into multiple line items: sewer operator salaries, sewer maintenance salaries, sewer administration salaries, and similar categories for water operations. Mr. Chipman explained that this detailed breakdown was due to the complexity of the department, with administrative and operational sides for both water and sewer. Some salaries are even split between two departments because employees work across multiple areas. Mr. Catalano wanted to confirm the accuracy of these line items, adding up the total salary amounts. After review, they confirmed the total salary amount for Water and Sewer was $1,512,891, which did not include overtime at that point.

Mr. Catalano began the discussion regarding the capital improvements budget. They agreed to fund the Sheriff's Office renovation project, the lower courtroom HVAC and safety project, the repair to the landfill tipping floor, vehicles for the Sheriff's Office and schools following current rotation policy, the ambulance equipment and the replacement of the obsolete server for the current financial operating system. A significant point of discussion was the IT system upgrade. Mr. Catalano suggested postponing the full ERP system's appropriation until the team could reach a consensus, preferring to wait and appropriate real dollars instead of theoretical funding. They also discussed a potential dump truck purchase, with Mr. Hutka arguing it could save money on rentals, but Mr. Catalano was hesitant about the expense.

The Board discussed staffing considerations. They agreed to fund two EMS positions, two Sheriff's Department positions (one deputy and one dispatcher), one sewer operator and one water operator, a part-time victim witness position and two part-time parks and recreation positions.

Mr. Catalano raised concerns about significant increases in salary line items for solid waste, properties and maintenance, animal shelter administration, and the Commonwealth attorney's office that appeared to exceed the standard 3% raise. Ms. Schafrik and Mr. Chipman explained these variations were due to several factors. For animal shelter specifically, the increases resulted from converting part-time positions to full-time which allowed them to add health insurance for positions that previously did not have coverage. Mr. Chipman clarified that their budgeting process involves taking a snapshot of current salaries, which can include mid-year position conversions, changes in health insurance plans and adjustments for full-time versus part-time status. The increases were not simply across-the-board increases but reflected actual changes in staffing and benefits. Mr. Chipman said that he would look into each of these situations.

Mr. Catalano said that Mr. McGuigan had said something to the effect of money that is left over and above the reserve policy limit would drop directly into the capital improvements fund. Ms. Schafrik proposed two key ideas including that 40% of unreserved fund balance be allocated to capital improvements and that we create a "Preserve Rural Greene" fund to support future initiatives. Mr. Catalano was supportive but wanted to ensure the Board of Supervisors maintained control over these allocations. He emphasized that while they liked the concept, he did not want automatic transfers to happen without board approval. Mr. McGuigan suggested making the process somewhat automatic, with the board having the ability to overturn decisions, to demonstrate fiscal responsibility and intent. Ms. Schafrik clarified that the process would require a public hearing and necessitate a board vote to allow flexibility for changes and to be part of the financial policy to provide transparency in fund allocation. The current reserve policy sits around 25% of the budget. They discussed potentially adjusting this percentage to provide more flexibility for capital improvements while maintaining fiscal stability. The board agreed that any fund allocation would be done through a formal resolution at the end of the fiscal year, ensuring the current board's intent is memorialized while allowing future boards to make adjustments as needed.

The Board agreed to put the rest of the unallocated funds into the contingency line item until such time as they decide to assign them.

RE: ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned.

Steve Catalano, Chair
Greene County Board of Supervisors

Cathy Schafrik, Clerk
Greene County Board of Supervisors