November 29, 2022

County of Greene, Virginia

THE GREENE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS HELD A RETREAT ON TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 2022, BEGINNING AT 9:00 A.M. AT THE HOLIDAY INN EXPRESS LOCATED IN RUCKERSVILLE, VA

Present were: Marie Durrer, Chair
Dale Herring, Vice Chair
Steve Bowman, Member
Abbey Heflin, Member
Davis Lamb, Member

Staff present: Brenda G. Garton, County Administrator

RE: OPEN MEETING

The meeting was called to order 9:00 am with all five Board members present.

Following the call to order by Chair Marie Durrer, the Interim County Administrator reviewed general logistics and the Board agreed upon ground rules for the retreat. The Board conducted an exercise where they identified Greene County's biggest issues and reasons progress is blocked.

Regarding the County Administrator search, the board discussed reviewing applications as received, interviewing candidates, interview questions, whether a County Administrator Position Description was desired, characteristics and qualities desired in the next County Administrator, and the RFQ (Request for Qualifications) for a County Administrator search firm. The Board would like the Chair to call a meeting on December 7 at 3:00 p.m. to hold a Closed meeting regarding the county administrator search and to review applications received to date. The Board requested that the Interim County Administrator address whether or not applicants meet the minimum qualifications. Ms. Garton discussed ICMA ethical constraints.

Ms. Garton gave the Board an update on the RSA transition, the status of new hires, and the potential timeframe for the transition. The Board discussed whether help might be needed for the title work and easements.

The Board and the Interim County Administrator discussed the Sheriff's overall requests for pay adjustments for his staff, the recommendations which will be made on bonus or salary adjustments at the December 13 meeting, whether a bonus or salary adjustment recommendation will be likely, and various constraints on the total cost.

Board members discussed issues related to the planned pay study, including the RFP (Request for Proposals) due date, the county administrator's interview committee, funding for the study, funding for the implementation of recommendations, and changes needed to ensure equity is maintained after the study is implemented.

Under long-term financial management issues, the Board discussed the need to know in advance when there are large capital expenses expected in upcoming years, the need to plan for upcoming expenses, the need for additional financial detail, operation budget vs. long-term capital management budget, the need to set aside funds which earn interest at the highest rate possible, the potential need for a budget analyst, the possible need for certain capital projects in the near future (e.g., school, 911 Center, radio system replacement, public safety building, water and wastewater projects), improved communication with the Treasurer, better maintenance of infrastructure, earmarking certain sources of money (e.g., cigarette tax) for capital purposes, and whether a Board Finance Subcommittee might be useful.

With regard to budgeting, the board discussed the need for a work session in October to establish budget priorities, the budget process being more transparent, time spent on effectiveness of programs, the lack of training for staff on budgeting, the need for better information on revenues, the desire for more detailed discussions with department directors regarding their budget requests, the need to consider new budgeting software that is compatible with the school district, a 5-year replacement cycle for software and computers, hiring a consultant to assist in creating a better budget document, whether or not zero-based budgeting might help, using program budgeting to evaluate the effectiveness of programs, the need to make sure a budget request includes all of the costs associated with a new position (e.g., a new Sheriff's Deputy should also include the vehicle, radio, training, and equipment), and budget presentations from all departments.

The Board discussed a need to consider what type of action takes up the most time in Board meetings, e.g., Special Use Permits. It was suggested that a joint Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors meeting might be helpful.

Capital improvements planning needs to involve planning for the financing of known, upcoming projects. Funds could be obtained from the cigarette tax or a layer of the property tax. The possibility of a fund for new vehicles was discussed. With regard to the fleet management program, it was discussed that there needs to be mechanics with special training to repair ambulances and other emergency vehicles.

The Board discussed the facilities study that was done several years ago; space needs of the Sheriff; the EMS building already being overloaded; and the administration, schools, and social services spaces being inadequate. The inadequacy of facilities maintenance in the past was discussed and it was suggested that a work session just for space planning and facilities maintenance might be a good idea.

In a discussion about vision and strategic planning, the Board anticipates the presentation of the Comprehensive Plan in January or February. A vision for Greene County is needed, and the Zoning Ordinance needs to be revised to fit the vision. A performance-based Zoning Ordinance was suggested. The desire for economic development that brings clean industry and jobs, which also require water and sewer service, was discussed. There is a great potential along the Rt. 29 corridor, including building higher. There is a need for a commercial complex, rather than individual businesses with access directly off of Rt. 29.

With regard to growth dynamics and economic development, Board members expressed a desire for a sense of community guided by the zoning ordinance and the comprehensive plan; otherwise, the county is at the mercy of the developers and the people who own the land. A Main Street-type development for Ruckersville, with access roads, interconnectivity, and walkability might be feasible.

Board members indicated that the strategic plan should be examined at least every two years, if not every year, and priorities should be conveyed to the County Administrator each year.

Stanardsville has shown improvement due to the streetscape project, the facility behind the county's administration building, and events planned in town. Citizens say that Ruckersville needs a sense of identity. Many people who live in Ruckersville do not go to Stanardsville. The potential for a recreation center and activities in the area behind the Visitor's Center was discussed. Pocket parks and a satellite county office in Ruckersville were discussed. Board members expressed a need for better geographic and demographic information, as data is needed to make good decisions.

The need for Board members to be able to attend the VACo New Supervisors Orientation and a staff orientation for newly elected Board members was discussed.

The Comprehensive Plan was discussed, including that it might be too detailed, that the Comprehensive Plan should be from a 20,000 ft. level, and whether the Planning Commission had received much public input.

The need for a change in the Zoning Ordinance in order to create a change in the way the county looks was discussed. Issues related to complaint-driven zoning enforcement, road maintenance, tourist lodging being allowed in too many zoning categories, the impact of HOAs (Homeowners Associations), and the potential for a special tax district were discussed.

A joint meeting with the Economic Development Authority was suggested so that the Board can discuss and provide guidance to the EDA. The cost of land, perks offered by the county, the school system, and the available workforce impact businesses' decisions to relocate.

The desire to get a legislator to support allowing Greene to use some of the transient occupancy tax for public safety was discussed.

Public Safety Needs were discussed, including the difficulty recruiting volunteers, the potential to need to hire firefighters, the proposal to recruit and retain volunteers, the extensive time and cost to volunteers for training, the huge financial impact if the county has to create a paid fire department, the Sheriff's need for more staff and more space, the increase in demands for law enforcement and emergency response when new developments are added, the high cost of a piece of fire apparatus, the need for a County Public Safety Building similar to the one that Orange County recently built, the need for a new fire facility in Ruckersville, the need for EMS satellite locations, grant applicants and grants received, the need for the county to fund some expenses for the volunteers so that they don't need to spend time on fund-raising, the need for a public safety training facility and firing range, and the need for a new 911 center.

The County Administrator discussed that the County Administrator has 16 direct reports, in addition to coordinating with 3 other county officials who do not report to her and with five constitutional officers. The standard number of direct reports in different functional areas is 7-8. It was discussed that the Department Directors need goals and metrics, performance evaluations need to be performed on a regular basis, and there is no reward for performance, which can take the form of awards or recognition, not just salary.

Issues discussed regarding Human Resources included the desirability for pay twice a month instead of once a month, the need to revise personnel policies, the need for staff training, reclassifications that should have been done when responsibilities changed, and the need for exit interviews.

Ideas about the Board agenda and rules of order were discussed, including staff sending the Board a list of upcoming agenda items, obtaining sample agendas from neighboring localities, holding more topical meetings, and holding a meeting in Ruckersville re the RSA transition,

With regard to communications, Board members discussed the need for better communication amongst Board members and the possibility of joint meetings with the School Board, Planning Commission and Economic Development Authority.

The Board would like to use some methodology to estimate the amount to budget for the pay study implementation if the pay study is not completed in time to provide a figure for next year's budget.

The Board requested that the Interim County Administrator focus on the following items and issues: staffing and reorganization, the pay study, the RSA transition, the County Administrator search, the budget process and finance, the capital improvements plan, and setting up a meeting with the Treasurer and Commissioner of the Revenue in January or February.

RE: ADJOURN

The Board adjourned at 4:09 p.m.

Marie C Durrer

Marie Durrer, Chair
Greene County Board of Supervisors

Brenda G Garton

Brenda G. Garton, Clerk
Greene County Board of Supervisors