

**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
ADJOURNED MEETING  
APRIL 20, 2011**

At an adjourned meeting of the Board of Supervisors of Floyd County, Virginia, held on Wednesday, April 20, 2011 at 7:00 p.m. in the Board Room of the County Administration Building, thereof;

PRESENT: David W. Ingram, Chairman; J. Fred Gerald, Vice Chairman; Virgel H. Allen, Case C. Clinger, William R. Gardner, Jr., Board Members; Daniel J. Campbell, County Administrator; Terri W. Morris, Assistant County Administrator; Kayla W. Cox, Administrative Clerk.

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. with the reading of the handicapping statement.

The Opening Prayer was led by Chairman Ingram.

Chairman Ingram led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Agenda Item 4 – Consideration of location change for Board meeting.

On a motion of Supervisor Clinger, seconded by Supervisor Gardner, and unanimously carried, it was resolved to move the April 20, 2011 Board of Supervisors meeting to the Floyd County High School auditorium, to begin immediately upon Board's arrival.

Supervisor Clinger – aye  
Supervisor Gardner – aye  
Supervisor Allen – aye  
Supervisor Gerald – aye  
Supervisor Ingram – aye

Chairman Ingram called the Public Hearing to order at the Floyd County High School auditorium for the proposed FY12 budget and tax rates.

The County Administrator read the advertised notice for the public hearing and gave the following brief synopsis: The anticipated revenue from all sources for the fiscal year 2012 County budget is \$29,873,667. Local funding (excluding revenue under the County's solid waste program) is estimated to be \$12,613,960; local funding for the public schools is proposed to be \$7,073,032; which represents about 56 percent of local funds. The budget for next year is proposed to increase by \$850,381, a 2.9 percent increase. School funding from the State has decreased due to student enrollment not reaching the number previously anticipated. Additionally, Federal stimulus funding for the school system during the upcoming year will decrease. State funding for Constitutional Offices, including the Sheriff's Department, has been cut during the last several years. Unfortunately, these decreases are not going to be restored by

the State; so if additional resources are going to be put into public safety and/or other areas then we are going to have to fund these needs locally. As you know, the proposed budget (as advertised) calls for a \$0.05 increase in the real estate tax rate and a \$0.75 increase in the personal property tax rate. With this increase, the County's real estate levy would be \$0.52 which would be less than most of the other counties in the region and state. Since 2006, the County has been borrowing funds in order to have enough cash available to pay its bills during much of the budget year. This borrowing is commonly referred to as Tax Revenue Anticipation Note (or TRAN financing). We have had to arrange to borrow \$3 to \$3.5 million during each of the past several years. This debt financing has been necessary due to the fact that Floyd County does not have an available fund balance capable of covering all of our expenses during much of the year. The budget proposal for next year establishes a "Budget Stabilization Fund" for the first time. This fund is needed in order to move the County in a direction of self-sufficiency, where annual borrowing is not necessary. An initial deposit of approximately \$272,000 would be made into this account. The additional revenues proposed as a result of the tax increases would also fund additional public safety personnel. The Sheriff has indicated that he needs additional staff in order to address increasing drug and crime problems in the County. As such, the Department would get two new deputies, as well as a new vehicle and equipment. Floyd County Public Schools would receive an additional \$375,000 in local funding if the budget as it is now proposed were to be approved by the Board. This amount is less than the amount requested by the School Board. As stated earlier, local funding of \$7,073,032 would go to public education. Fire and Rescue would see some funding restored. They would go back to the amount of local funding prior to cuts made in the current year. Offices such as the Commonwealth's Attorney, Registrar, Commissioner of the Revenue and others would also see funding restored or increased for items such as part-time staffing. The Library, Health Department and Recreation would also see small increases. In just about every instance, the additional funding proposed for the various departments would help restore, at least partially, cuts that have been made during the last couple of years. The exception is public education where the amount of local funding has not been decreased in the past. The proposed budget does incorporate a 3 percent increase in compensation for County employees for fiscal year 2012. This increase is subject to modification and will be discussed further by the Board of Supervisors. Overall, in terms of the budget planning currently taking place, please keep in mind that the Board of Supervisors has not finalized anything regarding the proposed budget. The amounts developed thus far, and as advertised, are estimates and have been provided for informational purposes only. Following your input, the Board will have further discussions and make any final adjustments to the proposed budget prior to its adoption. The budget as adopted will cover the period of July 1, 2011 through June 30, 2012.

Chairman Ingram declared the Public Hearing open for comments from the audience.

Mr. Dan Vest – I'd like to thank the Board, first of all, for holding this meeting at a time when a lot of people can come, rather on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the month, in the morning. I think it is great to get the public involved. It allows a lot of good public participation and I think it is great. Basically, what I want to say is, that your proposed tax increase may or may not be justified. However, your customer does not know. Based on a lot of the Floyd Press articles and things like that, there are a lot of questions out there. I think a lot of those questions could be resolved with more transparency, particularly a lot of the County entities that do not have

budgets by line item specifically. We all could make an informed decision if we had this, as well as some astute Supervisors. Secondly, debt. How much debt does the County have? I know in Title IX, we assumed a \$14+ million debt some years ago, has that been paid off or not, I'm sure it hasn't. One thing that Mr. Campbell brought up was solid waste disposal. That's a huge amount of money to be paying. Are there any user fees that could be applied for the people actually using this the most. It does not seem fair, say, for my 89 year old mother to be paying the same price for trash disposal as a contractor. That's not right. Next thing, why doesn't the County have user fees for people actually using the services? The trash disposal, County facilities, we use these facilities a lot for tournaments and things like this, the school system, everywhere, are user fees properly applied for these things? That's our property, we should be getting something back from that, especially for people out of town. I personally do not believe it is fair nor ethical for elderly people, as I said before, to support these facilities that they do not use. Bottom line, justify your budget if there is nothing to hide. Thank you.

Mr. Mike Varner, Burks Fork District – You fellas have got a tough job. The whole county, not a one of us, want to pay more taxes. We're pretty stressed but also realize that not a one of us want to be broke into by a criminal, not a one of us want to lay down at night being afraid because we don't have enough law enforcement and not a one of us want our children to grow up and go out into the world being a leader, without an education. Many of us were blessed with good solid teachers and leaders. We're here because we're concerned, I am, my heart is heavy. I feel like sometimes that I'm stressed with the taxes and things but we don't have the revenue, we don't have these things. I know that there is some cleaning up that could be done. My wife and I could probably live to be better stewards with our income, I know the School Board could, I know the Board of Supervisors, the police department and all others that are affected, but this is an investment for the future. I like to get out and do some recreation occasionally, but we manage to do what we really want to do sometimes, we have to sacrifice. I'm thinking about the future down the road. I understand from some of the officers in the Sheriff's Department, they've had 11-12 officers that came and went through the classes, did all the training, and went to another County because they get paid \$10,000 more a year. I realize that some people make \$7-8/hour. I realize that we pay a lot of taxes and some make \$40-50,000/year in salary but we have to consider what's best for the future. We start our school teacher's salary, we have a pretty good starting package but we're not able to give an increase. Many of us here tonight haven't had an increase in salary, but still, there are some things that we really need to consider. We need to consider the future of this County, we want our children to have good teachers, we want good facilities and I don't know how to run a school board, I don't know how to run a Sheriff's Department, I wouldn't know how to run the garbage pickup, I don't know how to do those things, but we have people that can. Thank you. May the Lord bless you.

Mr. Jesse Lawrence, Locust Grove District – A number of things to discuss, I've been over this budget and I've spent the last couple of days looking over the school board budget. Just trying to get a better understanding of what is going on. I don't think anybody is going to argue about the safety issues and we certainly need to do more funding of that along with a few other things. But the fact is, after also learning about the amount of money that we owe and has been borrowed and has gone on for the last five years, we're in the same shape that the country is in, we're broke. It has got to stop somewhere. I am not convinced in my own mind that we've

done enough scrubbing of some of the budget information. I contend that the School Board budget is the major problem because it represents 80-85% of the total budget. And having looked at that, I conclude a couple of things, we've been having a lot of money come to the County through the schools and other things over the last couple of years from Brother Obama's stimulus program and now that's stopped. I've almost come to the conclusion that we're trying to just continue down the road at the same level. We're asking the County to backfill those funds as well as additional funds. In looking at the School Board, they're asking for \$800,000 and some additional funding and I hear somewhere that there is an additional \$400,000 or so to be added to that for raises and so forth, which I'm sure, some people deserve raises. But I also see in here that it seems like when we give a raise, we give it to everybody, there's no differentiation. We give a bonus, we give it to everybody with no differentiation. Everybody is the same, everybody has contributed the same and my experience says that is not a fact. I think that needs to be scrubbed. We've got three board members for the school board that are coming up for election this year, I think they're going to have a little problem before it is all over with, some of them have been there for 15-20 years, maybe we need some change and fresh ideas. We've also got some supervisory positions that are coming up. When it gets to election time my friends, it is going to be tough. And the two of you that voted against this increase, I applaud you. The other three, we'll see you at election time.

Mr. William Dooley, Indian Valley District – I have a 150 acre cattle farm that I took over from my father-in-law, who is on a fixed income. If he had it today, he'd have to sell it, he couldn't pay the taxes. Ya'll have got my place assessed at over \$1 million, I've had it on the real estate market for six months, I can't even get offered \$100,000 for it. I've had to cut corners, cut budgets and do without, I can't see why some of the others here in Floyd don't have to do it. I can't understand why that every time you need money, you go to the landowners, come up with some reason, and want to raise the taxes. If something ain't worth what you've got it assessed with now, how can you ask more? If the teachers ain't had a raise in three years, how come five of you sitting up there can't find out where the money's going? If it is taking all this money to run the schools, every one of you sitting up there knows it is hard times. There is not enough money in Floyd to run Floyd, but then when something wants to come into Floyd, all five of you will vote against it. I think we need to vote and put all five of you out and put new faces and new ideas on the market. All of you have a tough job, I don't say you don't, I don't believe I could do it, but I don't believe I could do no worse. But it is time for some changes in Floyd. I've been living here for 20 some years and I'm ready to pack up and get out tomorrow. For the simple reason that there is nothing in Floyd. I've got a 20 year old boy that said the other day that said, Dad, do you realize that there is nothing in the Town of Floyd for a kid to do? I mean it is ridiculous. The Sheriff's Department, there is no reason that they can't get a new patrol car a year. Where's all that money going? Put it out on paper and let the people that are paying see where their money is going instead of just saying we need more money, we want you to pay more money, it is ridiculous. I'll tell you, my wife thinks Floyd is a good place to live, it used to be. I think it has got pretty bad. You talk about tourism, if I come off the Blue Ridge Parkway for tourism, what am I going to look at, where am I going to go? One or two little stores up here. If you want to buy a gift for a family member, where are you going to go? If you want tourism, put in a fun park, a swimming park that would draw people in with money instead of asking people like from me, now you cut and do without but you give me more money

to stay in Floyd. That's all I have to say but I'll be the first in line to vote every one of you out when it comes time.

Ms. Molly Cox, Indian Valley District and Librarian at Floyd County High School – I would like to congratulate you for the public service that you supply to the County and for all the hard work that you all do. I think that you are due a certain amount of respect that I don't believe you are getting right now. Times are tough and I know that. I know that when I go to the Jesse Peterman Library. Because Jesse Peterman Library is always busy. Who are the people at the Library? They are the people that don't have computers at home because they can't afford them so they go there to use them. There are people that go there that can't afford to go to Christiansburg to watch a movie, so they get a DVD. They go there because they can't afford to buy books at a bookstore so they go to the library. They go to take computer classes to increase their skills so they can get a job. They go to the library to do a job search. They also bring their families there for the free programs. They go to the local genealogy room to study about their families. They use the meeting room, one of the few in the County that is used by everyone from the Literacy Volunteers to the Tea Party. Do you know that 40% of the people in Floyd County have a library card? That's not just newcomers, it is also those with deep roots in Floyd County. It also helps the children of Floyd County. We have a wonderful high school library, I think, but we can't afford to buy multiple copies of popular books and can't afford to buy all the things that the students need. I send an e-mail to the public library and they send books to me. The students can go to the public library after school, at nights or on weekends. Last year, the public library lost 10% of its budget, that is \$20,000. Because of that, they had to cut library hours, they lost a position, and bought fewer materials. Like the school system, they did not give their staff raises. Well, you might say, times are tough and we all have to make amends, I agree. But I do think a small increase will put the library back where they belong. It could reinstate the hours and help the citizens of Floyd County that need your help. I understand that people are on a fixed income but there are also a lot of people like me, that a 5 cent tax increase we would pay about \$50 more per year. We could find ways to economize over a year to pay that increase. As for personal property tax, we will make more because my husband has made the decision to keep every car he's bought in his life. As citizens, I think we should be able to pay a little more taxes to help support institutions that help all in Floyd County, the Jesse Peterman Library.

Mr. Jeffrey Founds, Little River District – I'd like to thank you tonight for your service, I know your job is hard, this is a difficult issue. I've been a Floyd County resident for 23 years. Like many people, I have to commute out of the county to make a living. I don't really need to tell you folks what the cost of gasoline does to a family budget and to businesses in the county. I know the road ahead is difficult for all of us. Essentially the County budget is like a family budget, you've got to manage it. What I question is, although it may be painful, you may not be able to grow right now nor add certain services because things are still very difficult right now. I think that the tax increase that you're asking for is excessive. I believe the personal property tax, not only on a family budget but small businesses in the county, I think it is a burden. These small businesses, we need them, not only for tourism, but for employment. Floyd is very unique in that way. It is a different kind of place and a lot of us like living here because it is different. It concerns me that we're getting to a point that we're going to over-tax and not be able to have small businesses operate. We won't have ones that want to locate here because of the taxes being too high. Mr. Vest, when he first spoke, he mentioned transparency. I think that is an

important point, especially with the highest levels, that is where it needs to start. The highest levels of government in any county, school board, are their travel budgets transparent, are their bonuses transparent, are there areas that could be cut or eliminated? I don't know, I'm asking you. You gentlemen know a lot more about it than I do. I'd like to see us take a second look at areas where we can cut before we go with what I consider is an excessive tax increase. Thank you.

Mr. Larry Scott, Courthouse District – I appreciate this opportunity to speak with the Board of Supervisors and my fellow citizens. If you take the increase of heating costs for the winter, the cost of air conditioning for the elderly in the summer, which they do need, add to this the sharp rise in food costs and gasoline, which will no doubt be \$5/gallon by the end of this year, add any additional medical costs this year to these and those on fixed incomes will not be able to pay their bills this year. If you increase taxes, there will be a larger of people/families on food stamps or they will suffer from lack of necessities. The least we can do at this point is not raise taxes or give raises to people who are fortunate to still have jobs here in Floyd. All Floyd County are our people, not just the school system. Let's work together and make Floyd a place to be really proud of. This will also require a dedication to sacrifice from all of us. Thank you and a special thanks to my Courthouse representative to standing against this tax.

Ms. Kamala Bauers, Little River District – I am a property owner in Floyd County, I'm also the owner of two businesses in the County. I want you to know that I do support a tax increase. I'm concerned about the support that our social services, library, teachers, law enforcement is receiving and I think that the amount of tax increase that you're requesting is reasonable to other areas surrounding us. I think that we need to invest in our community and think about where we're going to be in the future, as well. I'd like to see the County government research and look into grant opportunities. That's free money that's being given to other localities because we're not going after them. Sometimes you have local residents willing to assist with matching funds. I really appreciate the opportunity to work with local government to find other resources that may be available to our community at no cost. I do support, and really love this County. I support our farmers, agriculture is a very important of our community and I would like to see a way for our farmland to stay farmland so any assistance that we can give our farmers is appreciated as well. Thank you.

Mr. Weston Thomas, Indian Valley District – I appreciate the opportunity to speak to you tonight. I live in Indian Valley and have lived there for approximately five years. I work for the Floyd County Public School system for approximately six years. I'm not here today to speak on behalf of the schools, nor on behalf of the taxpayers of this County. I'm here today to talk to you about a voice that is not going to be heard and that's the voice of the children of Floyd County. I am not going to waste your time by throwing figures at you because I'm sure that you've looked at them for weeks and weeks and you know them. I'd simply like to pose a few questions for contemplation before you make your decisions. Are you willing to give the children of this County a chance? Are you willing to give them the chance to acquire the skills necessary to dive headfirst into the sea of madness that we call the global economy? Can you at the end of the day look a constituent in the eye, a single parent who works her fingers to the bone just to make sure that her child's life is better than the one she has, can you look her in the eye at the end of the day and say that I'm willing to give your child a chance to be successful? Thank you.

Ms. Penny Earnest, Indian Valley District – I am the Willis PTA President and a parent of a 10 year old son. I wanted you to thank you for all the hard work that you do. I know making decisions about the budget and tax rates is hard. But since there has not been a tax increase since 2006 and County departments such as schools and the police have had large cuts, we need to help them. If we don't increase them, we face major problems. Without an increase in revenue to this County, we will have problems. We like to go out of our County and spend our money in big businesses in other Counties and give them an increase in revenue such as Walmart, Barnes and Noble, restaurants, the malls, movies and aquatics. Opposition to big businesses here has not allowed our County to grow. Personally, I would like to see aquatics here where the kids would have a place to play and have fun. Of course, not as big as the one in Christiansburg. And it would solve some issues that we have with our kids like they need to have a place to go to, we have some obesity problems with our kids, that should have some impact. Bringing in more businesses will create more jobs and bring in more revenue for our County. But for now, even though I would hate to see a tax increase myself, I'm agreeing with the tax increase. Without it, we will continue to fall backwards, we will lack adequate State required education for our children. Having them fall behind and not being able to get into college and not being able to get jobs themselves. If there is any doubt about the school budget, talk to our School Superintendent, Dr. Arbogast. He will sit down with you with the budget for the school year and show you where every penny is spent. He did it for me when I saw him when someone told me about misappropriated funds. Without appropriate funds, crime will continue to increase. Look at all the findings of crystal meth in this County, we need to be able to protect the citizens of Floyd County and especially our children. The Fire Department and Rescue Squad need adequate funding to continue to help people of Floyd County. Who do you think you will be able to call for help when we can no longer afford them? Every department is needed to make this County run smooth. I agree with the tax increase when it comes to my child and my family's safety, I'm willing to pay the extra 5 cents and the extra 75 cents in personal property tax. Thank you.

Ms. Mary Beth Lanier, Little River District – I'm going to reiterate what Molly said about the Jesse Peterman Library. I want to thank the Supervisors for over the years, supporting the library. I'm certain that you realize the Jesse Peterman Library is one of the crown jewels of our County. However, our budget was cut last year by a considerable amount of money and in so doing, we had to trim six hours from our open time, we had to eliminate a position and I just wanted to point out a few statistics, that Molly also did. 48% of the County residents hold library cards and are patrons. We service, on an average, 32 people per hour. That's a lot of people using the library. So I would like to ask you to please reinstate our budget, put back the \$20,000 that you took out last year. Thank you so much.

Ms. Phyllis Huff – had left the meeting, did not speak.

Mr. Carl Kempa, Locust Grove District – I'd like to commend the Board on what they do, it is a thankless job, but I'd also like to commend Clinger and the other one that stirred up the pot a little bit on the school budget. I think this is an area that needs to be looked at, it is the biggest expenditure in the County. I think we need to look at cutting the school budget, in my opinion. My kids are home schooled, not knocking public school necessarily, I don't believe in

it. My kids are home schooled, I get no breaks. I've run some numbers myself and talked with people in the schools, \$2-3,000/child, like I said, I could put my kid in the best private school in Roanoke for less than it costs in the public schools. On this increase, one speaker said it was excessive, we're talking a 22% increase in the personal property rate. My vehicle alone would go from \$839 to over \$1000 for two vehicles, not counting what the State pays. I own a small business with several vehicles and trailers, that doesn't count what I have to pay on them. I think we need to hold the line, cut the budget; I have to do it myself with my business. You can't just get a 22% increase in my income with a snap of my fingers. I just think we need to cut and hold the line. That's my opinion and I'm sticking to it.

Ms. Susan Mayorga, Case Manager for Brain Injury Services of Virginia - I work in the New River Valley satellite office that serves Floyd County. I'm here to ask for your approval of the budget request of \$2250 for Brain Injury Services of Southwest Virginia. This is just a small percentage of the cost of providing case management to traumatic brain injury survivors in Floyd County, of which there were six that were served this past year. Ours is a unique service that meets the individual needs of traumatic brain injury survivors and their families to ensure their safety and well-being in their community. We work to facilitate re-integration into their families and communities and to optimize their service potential by helping them find a role to participate in that community. We do this by linking them with resources, such as that wonderful library of yours. We also do it with brain injury education and with strategies to help compensate barriers due to the traumatic brain injury. So many brain injury survivors are isolated from their community and they need help with direction, focus and strategies to re-enter their families and communities. One way that we have worked to connect survivors is through an internet based program that was piloted with New River Valley clients. This is in the process of coming back on-line again. It is a wonderful means for survivors reaching out to each other despite rural distances and transportation issues. We're only the only organization exclusively focused on the needs of people living with brain injury in our communities. I ask you to please consider supporting them by approving the budget request for Brain Injury Services of Southwest Virginia. There is no cure for brain injury but there is hope. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Mr. Greg Locke, Burks Fork District – Let's cut to the chase. Everybody that wants this tax increase, raise your hand. Man, listen to them crickets. It is pretty obvious why we're all here. I don't begrudge any of these worthy cause, education, I don't begrudge any of them. We just have it. You want raises for County employees because they haven't had one in three years. Well, the Social Security Administration says I don't need a raise because the cost of living hasn't gone up in those three years. We all know that it is a load of horse hockey. But, that's the cards that we're dealt. And I'm afraid that's the hand that you're going to be dealt because we can't give you what we don't have. I'd like to address the police issue. I live 16 miles from here. The only crime that the police are going to be in time to prevent at my house is starvation. That's why we all have guns because we know that they can't be there in time to help. Anything short of having a couple of mini police stations, there's no answer for that. This is it, we live in the country. I called the Sheriff's Office today and wanted to talk about the drug situation. I asked if there was an anonymous tip line that teenagers or people who are around these drugs all the time, could call. It doesn't exist. I asked if there was a reward plan for anonymous tips, it doesn't exist. They are not going to listen to a uniformed cop telling them not to do drugs but

they might be afraid of their peers turning in for a cash reward. The only money that gets spent in that way is productive and produces a conviction. I'd like to see something like that. I checked some statistics. 30% of Floyd's population is over 55 years old, 15% is over 65 years old. Not coincidentally, 15% make less than \$15,000/year, 25% of this County make less than \$25,000/year and these are combined household incomes, probably for the most part, both people working. We're just not an affluent community. The services, police and everything else, is really focused on the Town of Floyd, not on the County of Floyd, because that's where it is. The rest of us move here knowing what we're getting into, we moved into a rural area and we don't want to support a tourist trap town that really doesn't affect our existence at all. It is nice that people who own businesses support the tax increase, because they have more money, we don't. Just don't have it. From what I read in the paper, Danville is raising theirs 10 cents, Montgomery County 1 cent, Carroll County no raise, Floyd 75 cents. What's wrong with this picture? I don't think anybody that votes for this has to worry about being re-elected. Thank you.

Mr. Bobby Huff, Courthouse District – I've got something I'd like to say, we're here tonight for the budget. I think every household in this County needs to run their budget, see where they're at. I've got it right here, what I make, I'm not ashamed to tell you what I make. I make probably more than a lot of people do in this County but there's a lot of people that make a whole lot more than I do too. I make \$480/week before anything comes out, the Federal government gets a third, that's back to \$350 before I ever get started. It costs me \$60/week to go to Christiansburg to make this money. So it is down to \$290. It costs me \$50/week for my electric bill, does everybody in this room got one of them? So I'm \$240 now. Ok, I got to eat lunch over there because I can't go out to eat, so I try to go as cheap as I can, \$5-6/day, I don't know many people who can eat lunch cheaper than that, that's \$30, so I'm back to \$210. Just to live in this County, to drive my car and to live in the house that I've worked all my life to pay for, costs me \$40/week, that's with no increases, so I'm to \$170 now. I got a heating bill that I have to go through every six months, that's about \$1200 for six months, that's pretty cheap compared to what some people have, so that's another \$100/week, so I'm to \$70/week now. I ain't bought no food, I ain't bought no health insurance which I do not have by the way, with my employer. I have not sent my kids to school. I have not paid no car insurance, I have bought no groceries, house insurance, nothing. I know that everybody in this room is pretty much in that situation. If you sit there and figure your budget up, I don't have a problem with people making money and paying money. If I can pay it, I don't mind doing it. But it is impossible for 90% of the people that works in this County, to pay and live. I keep everybody saying the children. Well, I've got to have some money to send my children to school. I'm not against kids, I have two kids. If you can't support your kids because of the fact that you're broke, how are they going to benefit? I know that you all say that you ain't had no tax increase but I had a reassessment, I don't know how many other people in this County had one. Our properties went up 30-40%, somewhere along the line you got a raise right there and now you're wanting another one. You have got to live within your means, not just what you want. That's all I got to say.

Mr. Lloyd Akers – passed – his comments had already been stated by others.

Ms. Lee Chichester, Burks Fork District – My comments today are in favor of the tax increase. I think our local government has done an excellent job in dealing with unfunded

mandates that come down from the General Assembly and also with other obligations that we benefit from like emergency services, law enforcement and teaching our children, without having increased our taxes in six years. I think the time has come for all of us to ante up for our share of these services and I feel that the local government should provide them. I'm lucky enough to have a local job and like most of the workers in this County, I could go elsewhere to earn more. But I stay because I love this community. It is a community that traditionally offers a helping hand to its neighbors, it is diverse but still close knit. These are important values to me. Our Supervisors are our neighbors. Sure, we elected them to serve our interests but I personally think they are doing a good job of it. I want the job they do to continue, and I don't see any way that they can continue if there is not a tax increase. I don't see any places where cuts can be sanctioned or where County government is guilty of excessive spending. If anything, the unfunded mandates that trickle to our localities from Richmond have created situations where the expenditures are required by law but yet there is not sufficient income to cover those expenses. Like everything in our world today, the costs continue to rise. I think it is a shame when someone's voting record or the jargon supplied by some talking head living in another state or the capital R or D on someone's voter registration card, trumps the thoughtful consideration for the common good for Floyd County's future. I don't have any children in the school system, but I know that Floyd County's Public School education is one of the best starts on a life to a contributing citizen to our community, that you can get in the State. These young people, your sons, daughters and grandchildren who are in our public schools are tomorrow's supervisors, business leaders, work force, our neighbors and our employers. Support for at least keeping our school system on level footing would be nice, even better would be support for improving the education for our future citizens. This can only happen if we all pay into a system that is designed to be evenly spread among us stakeholders that own property here because we want to live here and raise our children here, and help our neighbors here. I'm proud to be counted as one of those people who support a tax increase so I can continue to depend on my government and neighbors, each one of us to support our community's sustainable future. Thank you.

Mr. J. E. Bolt, Burks Fork District – my sentiments are like a lot of the previous people that have spoke against this tax increase. I know that up our way that people's budgets are strained as things is with gas prices going up, light bills going up, along with everything else that you use from day to day. These are rising but the income to support that is not. It is placing a burden on the taxpayer more than they can bear and keep up with, it seems like. You know, I would say, I don't know if we have more of a spending problem or a revenue problem, that's something that needs to be looked into. That's all I have to say, thank you.

Ms. Sally Godwin, Indian Valley District – I think what I have to say is more about the spending. I don't agree with the tax increase. I've spoken to some people about the way the money is spent. I think if you talk to teachers, I know a lot of it is going to the school budget, I have talked to teachers who say that things like smart boards, some of them are \$9000/each and some of them are not even being used. They aren't beneficial, I don't understand why we spend so much money on things like that if they're not beneficial. The teachers aren't being able to decide where the money is spent so the students aren't benefitting by the money by the money that we spend out of our pocket to put into their budget. I don't understand that, why don't teachers have a say-so when they are the ones who teach our children? Other things like the parents who do fund drives and save the box tops, where does that money go? Some of the

parents that I've talked to have raised hundreds and hundreds of dollars for equipment that's supposed to be replaced for the playgrounds and it has never been replaced. The same equipment is still there and has been there since they were kids, I want to know where that money is going. But the budget, you know, you're still getting more money to replace these things but the parents are still raising money to replace these things and it is not being done. So why are we still getting more money in when they're getting the money in outside of the budget? These are just extra excess funds that are coming in. So I'm just curious as to where all this extra money goes when it comes in. Are there not other places that you can cut money from? I think it is more about the spending than where you have to get money from. I don't think we need more money coming from us, we need less money being spent like you're spending. When I married my husband he was buying lattes at Starbucks. Well, I went out and bought a \$15 coffee maker and we cut our coffee budget to less than half. I think if I was to walk through some of your offices, I could cut your budgets to less than half.

Mr. Rob Bonsignore, Little River – agree with all the ones here that think that we shouldn't have a tax increase, that is very important. We have a real spending problem in our country. Kids, I think that money is not what's going to teach our kids. The homeschoolers have a tremendous way of teaching their kids without spending a lot of money. I'm 65 years old. When I was a kid I was taught a lot better. I think if you look at how we educate our kids in this country, we have a real problem. The money is not doing the job. That's all I have to say and I agree with everyone else that didn't want a tax increase. Thank you very much.

Ms. Rose Cherrix, live in Floyd now for four years. I'm on the special education advisory committee. Mr. Thomas, I applaud you, you went right to the point. I was handed something when I came in and I want to read it. Virginia's Constitution requires the State to ensure that an educational program of high quality is established and continually maintained for all children of school age. When I moved here, I homeschooled for many years, I still do. But I also have some special needs children and they are both in the Floyd County schools. Before I moved here, I put my child in an autistic school, they didn't have any where I was. They actually had a school meeting of all the teachers when I came here. This is the most awesome special needs program that is anywhere in this State. I've been to Radford University and the clinician there said she went to Radford University because there are just a couple of children that each person works with. You can't cut the teachers or the aides. You cut the aides, one of my autistic children, the aide knows how to read him, who can tell when he's ready to have a breakdown, and you take him out of his life, then you're affecting him. He has had excellent teachers. Like I said, I home school but I know this school system also. You take these teachers away from these children that they have grown to love, who have taught them well, if you take any of them out of it, you're hurting the kids. I'm here to tell you, some people know me and know where I come from, they know that I fight for my kids, no matter what it takes. When it comes to the schools, you better work that money so they can meet the needs. I'm not afraid to speak out, I never have been, I fight for my kids and everybody else's kids. I've done it before on a national level and I'll do it again. Do what it takes, don't lose the schools, none of the teachers, none of the aides.

Mr. Joe Montague, Little River District – I have been here for 45 years, this is one of the nicest places that I've ever lived. I think you have a lot to work with here, but you've got to

work on it. Basically the problem that we have now is that both the School Board and Board of Supervisors is confusing necessary with nice. I spent 45 years here, out of that time, I went back and forth 160 miles/week to one place and 1000 miles/week to another place to earn my living so I could stay here. I came here to substitute old time conveniences that work for modern conveniences that don't work and I've pretty well succeeded in doing that. I've got things that I need to do and you have things that you think you need to do or want to do. I've got things that I want to do, if I can't afford to do them I don't do them. If you can't afford to do them, you shouldn't do them, because you depend on us. Basically, I'm going to draw a biological parallel here. Public employees are parasites, this is not a nasty word. What I mean by this is that you depend on us, we're the host and there are beneficial parasites and harmful parasites, we're trying to keep you from being destructive parasites. You're doing a good job of doing the other things. I started the Tea Party here and I have a lot of people here with me. I talked to them about this thing. We had one woman make a comment about the mandates from Richmond and Washington. The Tea Party has been working on that and will continue working on that. We're going to help you keep Floyd as vibrant and environmentally safe, and an economical community. What we're up against now, particularly with the School Board, you want to increase the school board funds. Just eye-balling this stuff, we had 20 fewer students come into the school system. Through creative accounting, the School Board claims that this is a loss. That is not a loss, they are students that we don't have to educate. Now you don't shut the furnace off or close the rooms, but you don't have to provide funds for them. That amounts to about \$180,000. You've got 59 teachers listed and 70 teachers budgeted for, the difference between that is 10 teachers at the minimum salary that's \$35,000 times 10, that's \$350,000. \$350,000 plus the \$100,000, that's \$450,000 plus the \$180,000, that's \$630,000. Ok, now, I went to the school board meetings, I went to the Supervisors' meetings, I'm here at this hearing. At the School Board meeting, they absolutely decided that they were going to give the school employees, 330 of them, \$775 bonuses. Times the 330 of them, that's \$600,000. So here's money that you've appropriated, why? You both need to go through your budgets and find out what's essential and what isn't. I'll help you do this, but just do it.

Mr. Jack Wall, Little River District – I own a couple of businesses and some property in Floyd. I don't think that we sometimes reflect on the fact that Floyd is one of the leanest operated Counties in the State of Virginia, has been for years and years. County government and the County workers, they deal with a very limited amount of money. Our County workers are very efficient. All of our operations here, our school system, our Sheriff's Department, and everything else that you look at, they've been operating and particularly recently, operating on really bare bones amounts of funding, particularly with the cuts that we've had over the last few years. That was necessary, we had to make some tough choices. We can't operate on deficit spending and can't operate on the no money going back into programs to protect some of the expenses that come up. I understand that everybody has expenses but we as taxpayers have to take some responsibility and make sure that the services that we need are funded. The increase that we're talking about is modest, I know it is a real problem for a lot of people. But, unfortunately, we're in this situation with no other choice. The State put us in this bind. My point of view, it would be much more preferred if we had the State government that through the income tax would increase taxes and give more State contributions to the local government, because that is a fairer way to tax. Obviously raising property taxes and personal property taxes is not really a fair tax situation. We're in the boat that we're in right now. We don't have a lot

of industry in Floyd so it does come down to a few simple things. I think the budget as proposed is reasonable. I particularly appreciate the inclusion of rainy day funds because I think we've been irresponsible here in Floyd in not having done that in the past because we need that when things happen. Things are picking up a little bit but we've got to work together to get these things together. We're starting from such a base level of funding and support for these institutions that we just can't afford to not provide a little bit more. Things like the one-time bonus that will be given to teachers, that is being done so we're not raising the pay scale, but being careful. I think it is a very careful and considerate budget. Without it, we're really under a lot of stress. We've got the best Sheriff's Office of anywhere. Floyd County has amazing officers. They are really stretched, we've got to support them and provide resources that they need to do their jobs. It is a big job and it is an important job. Thank you.

Mr. Gary Bobbitt – I have taught here at Floyd County High School since 1978. If you had me, raise your hand. Somewhere I have a paddle with some names on it. I remember a couple of years after I started teaching, I was promoted to Assistant Science Department Chairman with full knowledge of all the money that the science department had to spend to buy necessary goods for the students. To my recollection it was \$850 to supply approximately 600 students to 800 students, depending on who you're counting that needs the money, it comes out to about \$1/kid. Last year, I had the greatest science department budget of all, it was \$1800 with a 20% hold because we were not sure of the funds. In the whole time since 1978, we've doubled what was being appropriated for the science department to spend for students. This little apparatus right here, some people remember that I shocked a few people with it. I use it to illustrate how ions help conduct electricity through solutions, how to get a good giggle out of some people. It is a modern piece of equipment, some people may recognize it, it is the crank out of an old telephone. It has been used for a few years. Matter of fact, I had to take it apart yesterday because I was getting ready to use it and it was rusting up a little. Age tends to make us rusty. I needed some numbers, when I teach I want children to realize information. I checked real quick on the discrepancy that I think rural school systems have, and that is school bus transportation. Just in a quick check, I found out that Montgomery County's is \$148/student per year to transport those children to school. The State of Virginia, in all its wisdom, does not differentiate between Counties in transporting children to school. Floyd County doesn't just spend \$148/student/year, they spend \$280/student/year. Does the State of Virginia give us more money for that? I don't think so. Granted, Montgomery County does have a little more money, their tax rate is \$0.74/\$100, I think everybody heard what Floyd's proposed rate is. Yes, people in Floyd may have a tighter budget but if you were here Saturday, you found that over 60% of the people in Floyd leave the County to go to work. The point that I'd like to make is, in this high school we do not require less of the students, it is not easier to take a class at Floyd that will cost them less, they do not require the students to have a lower score on their SOLs because they are from Floyd, and teachers don't have to drive a shorter distance, they don't live beside the school in Floyd, and a police officer, the bullets don't go slower in Floyd County.

Ms. Kimberly Ingram and this is Ava Tanner – we are both elementary art teachers in Floyd County. As all of you know, we live in a County that is rich in the arts. To cut the music and art programs would not reflect what our County is known for. The arts in our school systems would be the first to go and of course art is all about the children. The arts generate self esteem. Ava and I both have students that excel in our classrooms but not always in the

academics. Art helps to develop higher order thinking skills and it opens doors to creativity. America and Floyd County need more creative thinkers. Art education is not just about drawing. Art education enhances history by studying art from countries such as Mali, Africa, Greece, China, Egypt and the importance of American crafts. I could go on and on with the things that we do that enhance the history with art. Math and art work well together as well. We teach the children about symmetry and if they don't get it in the math classroom, they can get it in ours. Geometric shapes, the little children are learning about geometric shapes and patterns and are piecing it all together with us. In the science area, kinetic energy, we can make mobiles to finally make them understand what it is all about. Life cycles, pictures and drawings of that. Personal art projects are a wonderful way to get students writing in English. If children struggle in academic areas, the arts pull it together. Please help to keep the arts in our schools by supporting the tax increase.

Ms. Judy Weitzenfeld, Courthouse District – Mr. Campbell and the Board of Supervisors, thank you for this opportunity. This is a really hard time for everybody. I work in human services but I'm not here representing my employment, I'm here representing myself. I'm in the Courthouse District but I have lived in the Burks Fork District. Just last week, I was with a lady in her 70's who recently applied for food stamps and she asked me to guess how much she got a month. She did receive food stamps, she'll get \$16/month and she's totally strapped. But I'm using that point just to illustrate that in human services, the Federal government and the State governments have left us behind. They're leaving it up to localities to take care of our own. These are hard times for everyone. At any rate, I hope that our elected officials continue to be strong in doing what is necessary to keep our community solvent. I support the tax increase.

Ms. Sharon Claubaugh, Little River District – I too would like to thank you for moving the meeting to accommodate the crowd and for your service as well. Do I want a tax increase, no, I doubt any of you want one either. But I think we do not have a choice in order to move this County forward. I too would like to be a voice for the children. I don't believe the current financial crises happened overnight and it is not going to disappear overnight either. The situation was not caused by one person and their salary nor will this salary balance the County budget. I'm willing to bet that the request to the school system to verify their compliance on certain tax documents is going to cost taxpayers money, money that we cannot afford to keep wasting. I think it is past time to begin to move forward. Your printed budget in the paper shows you allotting \$19,708,959 to the public school fund. Approximately \$13 million is from State and Federal revenue and \$7 million from the County. It costs about \$11,708/year to educate a public school student in Virginia. With enrollment in Floyd County at 2016, that comes to \$23,603,328, almost \$4 million more than you have in your budget. Therefore, I feel strongly that the taxpayers of this County are getting a great deal on their public education. As a parent, I urge you to not reduce funding to our school system and I appreciate that you've given additional funding. If you think the cost of investing in our children, teachers and school administrators, as well as keeping our schools accredited is expensive now, wait until you see the cost if you don't. As the old saying goes, if you think education is expensive, wait until you see how much stupid costs.

Ms. Debbie Snellings, Courthouse District – I also teach special education at Check Elementary. I wanted to speak to you tonight about when I was in the workroom at school, I

looked on the bulletin board and I found a letter to the editor that said exactly what I wanted to say. So, instead of recreating the wheel, I am going to read what a teacher from Franklin County wrote. It is from K. A. Young, it says everything that I feel. I am your child's teacher. I don't think you really know me. Please allow me to introduce myself. I am your child's teacher. I have a family and I pay the same taxes you do. I have a mortgage, pay sales tax, go to the grocery store and try to give my children whatever they need to be successful. My car is more than 10 years old with thousands of miles on it. I get to work between 7 and 8 am and I leave the work place between 3:30 and 7 pm. If I work with an extra-curricular activity like coaching, drama or band, I sometimes don't get through the door at my home until after midnight but I'll be there for your child at school the next day because I love my job and I love the children whom I try to teach each day. Sometimes I have to pay extra bills for medical expenses like for a spouse with cancer or my own multiple sclerosis. Sometimes I lose my spouse during a school year but I come back to work and hide my pain so that your child can have my best. Divorces occur in my family just as they do in yours and sometimes I get left behind to raise my children alone. In spite of my struggles, I come to work every day because your child is depending on me for stability and consistency. Often it is not the standards of learning materials or the conjunction of a verb that your child gets from me but maybe it is a smile, a pat on the back or the language we share and the laughter we share when he tells me his best joke. I cannot miss work without someone being brought in to take my place and usually when I have to miss, I have to make extensive plans so that my students can continue their learning experience with a minimum of interruptions or instability. When I'm able to return, I must grade what they've done in my absence, while also fixing whatever wrinkles may have occurred because of my absences. I must quickly determine what has or has not been accomplished while I have been out and try to pick up where the children have left off rather than where I've left them. Please think of me as a real person who laughs, cries and worries over your child's struggles. I've worked hard to help our County to look as good as possible when Richmond or Washington or prospective business leaders evaluate our performances. Please remember that I want to help not hurt. I do not seek salary help because I'm greedy but because I have children of my own to feed. Thank you.

Ms. Diana Sutphin – I am the President of the Floyd County Education Association. I am here today to make a plea to this board to support the school children of Floyd County increasing funding to our schools. We believe that this is such an important goal that we support increasing taxes if it is necessary to achieve it. Because of our excellent program and our high test scores all schools in the county are fully accredited by the State of Virginia and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. The teachers of Floyd County are clearly giving our school children the skills and knowledge they need to meet Virginia's high standards. And yet, here we are, again, for a third year with a possibility of having frozen salaries. I believe the citizens of Floyd value education. I further believe that this Board values education. The key word in those statements is "value". The word "value" suggests a high return for the money we spend. Here in Floyd we get those high returns in the form of well performing schools. But even the best value in the world eventually calls for more investment to prevent those returns from diminishing. Teachers are using fewer supplies in the classroom. Class sizes are increasing. I am not a business expert, but I know that if prices of the items you need to run a business continue to increase and the funding coming in is decreasing, then the business is in jeopardy. The children of Floyd County need and deserve a top notch education. But if this

trend of not paying education professionals the basic salaries they need continues, all of us will feel it, but our children will suffer the most. If you continue not to fund our schools sufficiently, then our County will have trouble keeping highly qualified and trained personnel to teach the children in our classrooms. And, make no mistake, our children are the future of Floyd. As measured by our local composite index (the number the State uses to measure how much a locality can afford to pay for schools) Floyd County ranks 73 out of 132 counties. About mid-way. And yet, of the benchmark teacher salaries paid at 0, 5, 10, 15, 20, 25 and 30 years of teaching experience, our best state ranking is 99 out of 132 for our beginning teachers. And the ranking for teachers with 15 years of experience is 128 out of 132. Only 3 other localities in Virginia pay teachers at that level a lower salary. From another perspective, while all Virginia localities spend more on schools than the absolute minimum required by the Standards of Quality, some localities spend much more than others. Some localities exceed the minimum by more than 200%. The average percentage by which Virginia localities exceed the SOQ minimum is over 69%.

Ms. Stacy Janney, Little River District – I am categorized as a 10 month employee but my thinking and planning does not stop for the two summer months that the kids get out of school. I am in and out of the school building during the summer months for meetings, unpacking my classroom, otherwise it would not be presentable on the open house night for my students and parents. I work during the summer months to plan my pacing guides, to make unit presentations, read professional resources and review SOLs for the upcoming school year. I enter my classroom each morning about 7 am and do not leave until about 5:30, carrying a 15-20 lb. bag of papers, books and a laptop. I say goodbye to a 1<sup>st</sup> grade and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade teachers that always seem to still be working there every evening as I leave. When I get home, I spend an additional 2-3 more hours with my laptop preparing for the next day. I was once asked a rhetorical question – why do you do more homework than your students? I had no answer. On the weekends, I spend another 5-6 hours on differentiating my lesson plans for the following week. This year, I spent over \$1000 on professional resources, learning centers, storage containers, books and more books, SOL resources, student and classroom supplies. Not because I had the extra money but because my students needed those things. Teachers' classroom funds were cut from \$350 to \$150 two years ago but the need did not go away or decrease, it actually increased. With the downward economy I too have those bills that need to be paid. I have to pay those increasing gas prices. Please allow me to be able to spend that little extra on my students to reinforce the SOLs. When we studied fractions this year, we learned by eating fractions. Who bought the food? Me. The kids loved it and 19 out of 20 students mastered it just like that. One student needed a little bit more practice but he also mastered it within a week. We need additional money for classroom supplies, level books (that means students that are reading on different levels), SOL resources to challenge and remediate our students. Students are not on the same level even though they are in the same grade. They are our future. We need our instructional assistants in the classrooms, we need money for remediation before our test scores fall and we get in trouble. Floyd County has to keep the highly qualified and dedicated teachers that they have and be able to attract the same qualities for new teachers to Floyd County to be able to meet the specific needs of all the students in Floyd County public schools.

Mr. J. C. Holden, Locust Grove District – I think if we stick around long enough, we will find out what stupid is. I have a question for you folks. Have you all asked Brother Obama for

help, does he know you all are having this problem? I heard him this morning, he said he would take care of you. Maybe we just need to make a call. He said he was going to make change, but you all need folding money don't you? We've been talking about the kids. I was a kid one time, right here. Rudolph Marshall was a school teacher that taught us government, how the Constitution worked, and if you didn't have it, you didn't spend it. If you didn't have the best clothes, you wore what you had and come on to school, looked everybody in the eye and went on. He taught us not to go in debt and we had teachers that taught us if you went in debt, what interest was. All I've heard here tonight is teaching the kids how to go in debt, borrow money and just keep on going in debt. We need to teach them to slow down and maybe look to God for their source. I know that is not a popular thing to say but he's my source, not you folks, thank God for that. But anyway, there is a lot of stuff other than the schools that's causing us problems. One of the biggest is every EPA, everything they come up with, you all seem to buy into it. Except for two of you that the Tea Party talked to and you decided maybe that wasn't a good idea, maybe the Tea Party is the good idea. We know that we have to do without when we don't have it. There's an old saying, when in doubt do without. If you don't know you're going to have it, don't spend it yet. Seems like everything that I heard here was we ain't going to spend this just yet, but we want to know that we've got it to spend. I know one thing, if I've got it to spend, I'm going to spend it, if I don't, my wife will. Now, I have a problem with Dan Campbell there. I believe instead of transparency like Paul said in the Bible, he's looking through a glass darkly. Because I understood when Mr. Clinger asked him to have the IRS come in and inspect or audit our Superintendent of Schools, that he didn't want to mess up his reputation. I think that has been taken care of a long time ago. But the thing about this that bothers me is, he's asking for money tonight to pay for these programs and all, and yet he doesn't know where it is going when he gives it to the School Board. Look like you need to find out where it is going. I understand that if enough of you vote, you can override that and get the IRS to check it out. But I really think the Attorney General's office is the one you need to look to, because some of this stuff is not above board. Anybody that's been around here or had any dealings with him knows that he is a very arrogant, I am God type person and this is my School Board and I will run it. Well you can stop the running of it, stop funding it. The kids will not go hungry, Grandma will not go hungry, they are not going to throw Grandma out on the street, the kids will learn a lot the few days at home than they do at school if they know why they're home and why they're being taught this way, so they'll know how to be adults that are responsible when they're sitting in the position that you gentlemen are in. I just want to say one thing that a lot of people don't know about, some of the stuff you do about, but there is \$20,000 septic systems coming down the line, mandatory. Charles Poindexter said that the purpose was that the Federal EPA said if you don't adopt these \$20,000 septic systems for everybody in the State, then we're going to shut down the public schools, we're going to stop your funding. What they should have done is what they did in Wisconsin, they let the people take care of that and stand the line. You need to hold the line here. We need to stop that type stuff and I just want to tell Mr. Clinger that we appreciate him in the Tea Party, being transparent with us and next election you have some help coming.

Mr. John McEnhill, Indian Valley District – I appreciate the service of the Board of Supervisors, we may not agree with all of you, but at the end of the day I respect you and appreciate your commitment. I am one of those that will be impacted by the proposed increase, I'm not happy about it, but I support it. I feel that we need to maintain our core services such as

law enforcement, fire and rescue, waste management, our excellent school system, and everything else that this County does. I don't think it is fair to compare a local government budget to a household budget. Such things as unfunded mandates and legal requirements need to be kept in mind. Our population has increased and prices are going up, so I can understand that the taxes need to go up. I also see the effects of the cuts that the Board has made over the last several years. I feel it is important to support the people that work for the County. They are our families, our friends and our neighbors. I do not think it is realistic to borrow money in order to have lower taxes. I support the tax increase.

Mr. Robert McNab, Locust Grove District – there has been a whole lot of dead horse beating going on. A lot of people are getting tired of it. What you need to try to do is cut the budget. One thing that I've looked at is that you need line item veto on the school board budget. You probably can't do that. But that needs to be considered. Sports is one that I recommend be cut. That is flush. The other thing that I hear a lot of people talking about is law enforcement, how dangerous it is. What David Ingram does is more dangerous than any police officer. You need to consider that. The other thing with the law enforcement deal is, I majored in criminal justice. There used to be a deal where you had auxiliary police officers and you could serve in different counties, and that could be done at a very reduced cost. Maybe they need to consider something like that. That's all I have to talk about.

Mr. Charles Whitney, Indian Valley District – Mr. Chairman, Members of the Board, fellow citizens, the hard working teachers – this has been an interesting participation event. I'm grateful that you're holding it in a room large enough to accommodate. I'm surprised that with the size of the school budget, that they haven't gotten a better sound system. But, maybe there were other priorities. Now, quickly, the school system issues that I'm listening to are not uncommon. First off, there are not 134 Counties in Virginia, must be including cities. Floyd does all right, go Buffaloes. We all do a lot less in a rural area, Richmond seems to overlook places west of northern Virginia and Tidewater and I think you all are doing very well with what you have. But I think that the school system is a little top-heavy and in middle management as well. Those are the government expenses that are usually last to go and could most easily be best afforded to let go first. Nothing against those that actually get in the trenches and teach the children. But too many levels of administration are a problem. I spent 25 years working for government. Government is horrible for doing anything that makes sense. As the fiscal year would wind down, they would say, well, what do you all need? We've got to spend money so we'll get more. The computers that we spent money on, people used as paper weights. Numerous things, well, let's get some electric pencil sharpeners, who wants a fan, it was ridiculous. Accountability is a good place to start because I know it is hard for families to make budgets. We're a long way from anywhere that we might need to go here in Floyd. The other thing that really needs to be addressed is to properly and seriously take care of the needs of the Sheriff's Department in this County. If you go from the Carroll County border to the Roanoke County border, you're going to lose lives out there if you're in a hurry to protect and serve. What Sheriff Zeman and his team manage to do with as few as they have is admirable. I really think riding around in old cars puts everybody in danger and that certainly includes the deputies. I just ask you all to be accountable. Transparency is a word thrown around a lot these days and it doesn't mean much. The English language has been damaged badly. All I'm asking is to be

honest and forthright, account for things and do what is truly best. You can't please everybody but you've got to try to account for that money that you've already been given.

Ms. Jennifer Bunn, Indian Valley Elementary School teacher – I have a few of the children's voices here with me. I taught 5<sup>th</sup> grade at Indian Valley Elementary for 11 years, then I moved to Library Media Specialist, where I've been for the past 3 years. I have letters from kids who've written me, not from a request on what is happening with the budget, but these were letters that were written some time ago. I think the libraries are important. Students can visit almost every day the library, many times to read or check out a book. The library has fun activities such as the Book Fair, where you can buy books and other items. The Book Fair is important because it is a different way for students to enjoy books and learning. Dear Ms. Bunn, I write because I want to thank you for putting your time and hard earned money into the Book Fair. When I first walked in the Book Fair door, I was amazed and kind of scared. I was a little frightened of the gorilla that looked real. The ferris wheel was cool because it had wonderful colors on it. I loved all the amazing books that you had. All the hard work you put into Book Fair made me speechless. I love Book Fair. Thank you Ms. Bunn. I write to tell you how great you did on the Book Fair. Thanks for setting up the Book Fair, it was outstanding. I love the ferris wheel. You're doing a killer job. I think every school should have a library. All students need a place to read and relax, teachers and faculty need a place to sit and dive down deep into a story. Book fairs are a kid's dream. Thank you for the Book Fair. I'm writing you Ms. Bunn because I know you took a lot of your own time fixing up the Book Fair for us and getting us excited about reading, I love the book I got, it was called I Survived the Shark Attack of 1916. I have more letters but less time to read them. But I want you to know that I'm one of them that is fighting for the kids in these trenches. I put my heart and soul into teaching, as all the teachers at Indian Valley. I want you to know that the library is more than a place to come check out a book, sit down, be quiet and get out. I don't do that. I teach my students about the value of books, the freedom of speech which is being exercised here tonight, freedom of press, copyright laws, technology for them to do projects and conduct research. I assist the teachers in collecting resources they need to help their students understand topics in the classroom. I also provide fun activities to encourage reading such as joining my library club, attending field trips, flying kites that they've made for reaching their reading goals, and petting a pig from Connecticut that loves to listen to a good book as much as they do. If funding for our schools is not priority, then the library program that it is now will suffer and the students will suffer the consequences. The students are the future of Floyd County and the United States. They will have to compete for scholarships and jobs against students from other counties. All of you in this room are their role models. What you value, they will learn to value. It is my hope that you will show these kids they will not be denied the very best education that Floyd County has to offer.

Mr. Lauren Yoder, Locust Grove District – I want to thank each one that has come out, it has been a long evening and thank you so much for each one of you who has stayed. This is a very important thing that we're doing, letting our Board of Supervisors know how we feel. I'm very glad to see so many of us here. Thank each one of you all for what you're doing, this is a very hard year. There have been some hard years and I want to thank you for your willingness to serve. I had written down a few things that I wanted to say, some people have already touched on them so I'm just going to speak from the heart this evening. There are several things that I've been wondering about. I've picked up, as each one of you can do, a school board budget that is

available. The Board of Supervisors, their County budget is available. I encourage each one of you to go get a copy, read it, find out what they're doing with it. We can always disagree on the amount of taxes that we pay, the amount of money that is going to each one. But it is very important that each of us understand it if we're planning on being involved. And I hope each one of you stay involved. One of the suggestions that I have expressed to the Board in the many times that I've been to the board meetings, I've tried to go to every one, I miss one once in a while. My concern, and one of the ideas that I have, is a zero based budget. This means that at the end of each budget session, instead of tacking onto the existing budget and adding onto that, find out if we can't start with a zero based budget and find out what each department needs and start from there. I don't think we need to set a tax rate until we know what we're going to spend. A lot of that hasn't even been determined yet. One other thing that I've been concerned about in reading through the school budget and I know this doesn't affect the Board of Supervisors, but they have some control over it, is the amount of money that is actually getting into our classrooms. School supplies have been cut, teachers aren't getting raises, yet the school budget is going up. Why is that? Where is the money going? It is pretty hard to find out on some of this. If we look at elementary education, just going through the budget that I received, the amount that is budgeted for teachers vs. the amount that we're actually receiving, they don't match up. There's hundreds of thousands of dollars there that doesn't make sense to me. I've talked to some people, I need to talk to some more, the numbers aren't there. Some of the money might be able to go for teacher pay, some for school supplies in the classroom. I think we have a great system of teachers and students. The school system is doing great. I applaud each one of you for that. I think this budget needs to be gone through line by line and we've elected these gentlemen here and the school board to do just that for us. We need to stay on them and encourage them as this budget session goes on. Thank you very much.

Ms. Shelia Bower, Little River District – most of you know who I am, I just wanted to say that I know that you all have a very, very hard job to do. But, I've lived here all my life except for seven years when I moved to Richmond. I tell you what, I never thought that Floyd County would be such a wonderful place to live until I lived there. The crime rate is awful. I really, really truly believe that we cannot cut the police department. That is very important here. We've got a lot of people moving from out of state into here and we definitely want to keep our neighborhoods safe. Our police department is really doing a great job. I really don't want to move back there because Floyd County is a wonderful, wonderful place to live. The other thing that I would like to touch on is our teachers. The teachers have a really hard job to do. You've got aides that help these teachers, they are very important. There is too many children in a classroom for one teacher. Please don't cut there also. I've got a grandchild that will be going to kindergarten in the fall. It breaks my heart to know that these teachers do a really good job and a lot of that money comes out of their own pockets. My daughter is a teacher but she teaches in Hillsville. A lot of her money comes out of her own pocket to feed children that don't even have breakfast. She supports them. A lot of the people in Floyd County don't realize how much these teachers do for our own children. I know that we need to get the money somewhere but what about, instead of raising taxes on the land, how about increasing it on meals tax, what about the people that tour Floyd County, is there something that could bring in money from there? I mean, I work really hard and so does everybody else in this room. It breaks your heart that you work all your life trying to get ahead, have a nice home, have land, and to never be able to enjoy because you're going to be working all your life to pay taxes on it. But that's the only thing that

I can think of, add to the meals tax and get the tourists. Normally I don't say anything because I'm a quiet person. Thank you for listening to me tonight.

Ms. Leslie Tawney, Little River District – seems like if funds are running low, everybody says raise taxes. As Shelia said, it is time to look at tourists, add to taxes for food and drink, even tax the alcohol. The school can't be cut. I have two children in the school system. I went to Montgomery County, I wouldn't send my kids to Montgomery County if it was the last school on earth. But I tell you, Ms. Janney and Amanda Morgan have put in more time with my daughter than any other place in a town. My son has had extensive surgery. Mr. Thomas has gone out of his way to make sure that my son has homebound teachers and that he had the supplies that he needed. Just this week, my son's Kindergarten teacher ran out of paper and you'd think she had to beg, borrow and steal to get paper. I mean, you know, these people are doing all they can do. But right now I'm strapped, I can't pay extra taxes. I'm paying \$1400 a month in COBRA, I have a house payment, my husband has been unemployed for a year, I've been unemployed for seven months. I go to school and I see this stuff and these teachers take way more out of their pockets than they ever should. They are not compensated for it. I know the School Board asked for more money but who is getting this money? Who is getting these raises, it is not the teachers, they definitely deserve more than what they're getting. I just wish, you know, instead of raising taxes that we could look at other alternatives because Floyd is a great community and great place to live. Like I said, I lived in Blacksburg and I wouldn't go back. Thank you.

Mr. Elmer Underwood, Indian Valley District – First thing that I want to tell you all is that I got a red truck out yonder and I got six rails on it. I think I need four of them. You know what they used to do with fence rails? I don't think I have to tell you. You all want to raise taxes, raise taxes, that's all you hear. What about all these bonuses ya'll giving, or somebody's giving them. Give them bonuses to someone else. One fella I know, he cut his men back, he's on the school board, but he don't mind approving a big bonus for somebody. I don't think that's right. I think you all should be able to check some papers and be able to do something about that. Furthermore, about the Sheriff's Department, if they'd done something 15 years ago when I was going to something, we wouldn't have all these damn drugs in Floyd County. Wouldn't nobody listen to me. I think they ought to be able to do something about that in the Sheriff's Department. Furthermore, they won't even come when you call them half the time. That's about all I have to say about it. I think you need to get your broom out and sweep the other way instead of under the table.

Mr. Bruce Taylor, Indian Valley District – I just moved into Floyd County a few years ago so I'm not familiar with the background. I just wanted to comment on the people that talked about the children, Sheriff's Department and all the great needs that are there. They are bona-fide needs. However, the condition of the country was pretty well defined in our last election. We elected a Congress to cut taxes, that was overwhelmingly done. I don't know how you gentlemen feel about this but when we're broke and don't have money to spend, all of the great needs have to stand by until we get the money. It is a simple process. It is just impossible for me to believe that we can address all the needs if we don't have the money to do it. I stand as a Social Security recipient. A gentlemen up here told us that there is no increase in the cost of living, we all know that's not true. It is still a puzzle as to how you gentlemen can sit there and

allocate this money when the country doesn't have it, the Federal government doesn't have it, the State government doesn't have it. These mandates that come down, you gentlemen need to tell them that we can't comply with them, we just can't do it. There is no way it can happen. You need to talk to the representatives up in Richmond and the ones in Washington and tell them you can send all these mandates, but if you don't send money, they can't be executed, we can't do it. The local people are doing as much as they can here. Like I said, I don't have a lot of knowledge of Floyd County's history, I'm just talking from the heart. That's all I have to say.

Ms. Sharon Oestreicher, Indian Valley District – my husband and I both teach here in the County, I teach at Willis, he teaches at the high school. I am here tonight for the kids as well. Our children are going to have to compete in a world economy where the top 10% of the Chinese children outnumber all of our children. The top 10% of Indian children outnumber all of our children. Our children have to be trained like they've never been trained before or they're not going to be able to compete in the world economy. This is serious. We've all got to give up our cigarettes, pop or whatever it is we have to do to come up with this \$50 a year in what it is going to cost us in real estate taxes. If we don't I'm ashamed of you all.

Ms. Sarah Landis, drama teacher here at high school – I just thought I'd speak up for a group that I don't think has been represented and that has been in discussion a lot here at the high school for the last few weeks and that is new teachers. This is my second year at FCHS and I love your children. I love working here. I know that in the next five years, I will have been married for three years and I'm going to start a family. Floyd County is a great place and I would love to stay. What I've seen and found in the way that morale has dropped, and from the amount of money that I spend on your children so that they can do plays, so that they have something that is safe to jump around on as a set. I don't know if that's in my future. This tax increase, if you approve it, I feel more solid about that future, I feel more solid knowing that there is a community that is doing everything they can to support me and their children. If you want to see how far \$50 can go, please come back here tomorrow night at 7:00, same room, and see your children performing *The Crucible*. Their costumes and all the sets were done with \$50 and these two hands. Also, if you like, I give audience etiquette lessons for free. Thank you.

Ms. Norma Conner, Locust Grove District – I have been listening to all of this tonight. I have one question for everybody. 50% of our people are senior citizens that live in the county. I want to know how many can live on \$1000/month or less and pay high light bills, oil, doctor bills and have groceries on the table. I've heard people say, ok, kids come to school without breakfast. A lot of these kids don't get but one meal a day. I know, because I work at Calvary Baptist Church giving out food. A lot of the citizens does not have the money to support the taxes. We need to look at these buses. We run these buses to school to bring the children to school. We run them buses back to the house and they sit there all day, or the bus drivers are out here paying their bills and running over town and going to the grocery store and everything else. We need them buses parked at the bus garage so when the kids get out of school, the buses won't have to travel 13 miles back to school to pick up their kids. We used to do this when I was in school. The bus driver left his car at the school, he picked it up when he delivered the kids to school in the mornings, he drove his car home, he brought his car back to the school, picked up his kids and delivered them home, and kept the bus overnight and started his route the next morning. We need to look at that instead of raising taxes and putting these senior citizens out of

their homes because they can't pay their taxes, you're going to sell it, and then where will they be? They'll be out here for their children to let them move in with them, if they can't pay the taxes on their home, they won't have any place to put them. Ya'll need to think about a lot of things. Thank you.

After no further comments from the audience, the Chairman declared the Public Hearing closed and thanked the audience for attending the meeting.

On a motion of Supervisor Clinger, seconded by Supervisor Allen, and unanimously carried, it was resolved to adjourn to Wednesday, April 27, 2011, at 7:00 p.m. in the Board Room of the County Administration Building.

Supervisor Clinger – aye

Supervisor Gardner – aye

Supervisor Allen – aye

Supervisor Gerald – aye

Supervisor Ingram – aye

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Daniel J. Campbell, County Administrator

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David W. Ingram, Chairman, Board of Supervisors