

**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
REGULAR MEETING
MAY 27, 2014**

At the regular meeting of the Board of Supervisors of Floyd County, Virginia, held on Tuesday, May 27, 2014 at 7:00 p.m. in the Board Room of the County Administration Building, thereof;

PRESENT: Case C. Clinger, Chairman; Virgel H. Allen, Vice Chairman; J. Fred Gerald, Joe D. Turman, Lauren D. Yoder, Board Members; Daniel J. Campbell, County Administrator; Terri W. Morris, Assistant County Administrator.

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

At 7:00 p.m., the Chairman called for the Public Hearing on the proposed FY15 budget and tax rates. He opened the hearing for public comments.

Susan Icove, Locust Grove District – I am here tonight to thank you guys for Community Action’s support. I just came here to say that and to say that we’ll be using your allocation towards helping us with the second Headstart classroom which we so desperately need. I know you’ve had a tough year and I thank you for all that you’re doing.

Amber Burnette, not a resident of Floyd but I teach at Floyd Elementary School – First of all, thank you for allowing me the opportunity to speak to you this evening. I’m speaking of course, as an educator and prospective resident of Floyd. I’m one of four 4th grade teachers at Floyd Elementary. Although I will not pretend to understand a fraction of what is involved in this budgetary process, I would like to help shed some light on the effects some recent decisions will have on some citizens who should matter most. Last year, my current students were forced to learn in over-crowded classrooms. The class sizes were not conducive to quality teaching or learning. From their perspective and using their words, these conditions were and I quote “not fair, noisy, smushed, we couldn’t move around or do fun things, my teacher seemed stressed out because she couldn’t help us individually”. Worst of all, one of my students said he dreaded coming to school last year. How much more frightening of an account do we need before we all agree class sizes have a direct correlation to student success? As 3rd graders, 58% of the students passed their math SOL last year. Neither the students nor the teachers are to blame. Considerable research has been conducted regarding class size in public schools. A recent review of this research conducted by Northwestern University concluded that increasing class sizes will harm not only children’s test scores in the short run but also their long run human capital formation. Money saved today by increasing class sizes results in more substantial social and educational costs in the future. The students were not prepared academically or socially for 4th grade. This year, our current configuration of students was divided amongst four teachers rather than three. The task before us at the beginning of this year was great but together we met the needs of our learners and were proud to hand off the fruits of our labor to our fellow colleagues, the 5th grade teachers. We took the group that had a 58% pass rate last year to an

83% pass rate. In my class alone, six of my students who had failed last year passed their math SOL this year, three of which scored in the advanced range. We've experienced many other successes as well but math is celebrated most as those skills were weakest when first meeting our students. I'm not standing before you today asking for personal gain in any way. Adding a fourth 5th grade teacher will not benefit me personally however I forged a bond with the students I currently serve and care about their welfare far beyond this Thursday when they'll graduate from my classroom. They were handed an insurmountable disservice as 3rd graders. I am sickened at the thought of this particular group of children facing the same injustice as last year. The proposed dollar signs that have the center of such scrutiny have faces attached to them. I look at these faces each day as I give them every ounce that I have to give. I realize my time with them is limited and my goal is to help foster their academic maturity and to instill a lifelong love of learning. The next time a decision is made I ask that you think of Ashton, Maggie, Lily, Peyton, Lizzie, Easton, Isaiah, Kesla, Olivia, Rachel, Henry, Skyler, Ethan, Christopher, Cooper, Josiah, Trevor, Camden, Leigh Lou and Todd. If we do not advocate for them we cannot expect anyone else to.

Abigail Vass, Little River District – I'm a junior at FCHS but also a freshman in college. This has been made possible by dual enrollment program through New River Community College and is also scheduled for my senior year. I'm a junior and I have two required classes left and I'll graduate from high school with an advanced diploma. I'm almost ready, two classes. Aren't we supposed to have at least three a semester? But what else is there for me to do? Choir, I've taken it every year I've been there. Culinary, I'm a Junior Master Food volunteer which is a program of young people who teach healthy eating way to younger children. Horticulture? In college I'm going to major in psychology and criminal justice so how does that apply? AP and dual enrollment on-line classes. I've taken those taught at the high school and I'm not a visual learner. I don't read things and automatically add that to my knowledge. I'm a tactile learner. I learn by doing, by having a person physically teach it to me. So what do I do? There is nothing left for me to do at the high school other than do my two classes. I cannot be considered a full-time student unless I have three classes per semester. But the classes I'm going to take through New River will make me a full-time student. So, I leave. I can one take a semester at the high school and go to college, the big world. I'm 16. No matter how bad kids say they want to leave the high school, there is still a part of them that says no, I'm not ready to do this on my own, I want to stick around for my senior year. But I can't. I don't get to enjoy C lunch with my friends, I don't get to see pep rallies, I don't get to be a mentor, I don't get to enjoy walking down the halls having a conversation with someone I haven't spoken to in a while. Why? Because I will be gone. I will be at college or at work. It is not that our teachers and faculty members don't want me to enjoy these simple things. It is the fact that they cannot provide me with the classes and help that I need because of lack of money. Now you want to give us less money? I'm not the only junior with this problem. Several of my friends are in the same predicament. In fact, there are sophomores that are worried because of this exact problem. So what choices do they have now? Will they have to leave like I do because there is nothing left for them to do?

Andrea Beland, Courthouse District – I graduated from FCHS in 2010 and I just graduated two days ago from Hollins University with a Bachelor of Arts in music. \$36,000 made the difference for me to be able to attend Hollins University vs. not being able to go to the

college that had the programs that I desperately needed to achieve my goals. That \$36,000 alone came from my voice scholarship and I owe that scholarship to Mrs. Smith, who is the choir director at FCHS. Because of her outstanding teaching style and what she gave to me in discipline, I was able to achieve that \$36,000 scholarship that allowed me to attend the school of my dreams. While at Hollins University I also studied arts management and achieved a certificate in that as well. While studying for the certificate, I have had to learn about the importance of the arts in communities and economics, the lives of the average Joe on the street. I had to read many studies about arts and how they affect the brain and how they affect cognitive learning. I am here to beg you in your considerations to please keep the arts in our schools. A study done, I don't have the name of the university, a neurological study on lawyers, doctors, people with no job in the arts, but had an art background vs. those who did not. When compared, those who had an arts background used both sides of their brain to problem-solve. Those who do not have an arts background use one side of their brain. If you take the arts out of the schools you are effectively killing half of your students' brains. I know that budgeting is a difficult issue, I understand that you have a very large load on your shoulders and I respect everyone on this Board for the job that you do for our community. But, speaking as somebody who went to college because of the arts, who had a 3.6 GPA graduating because she always had that choir background as well as theatre. I had my disciplines, I had my abilities in music, art and theatre to achieve those higher grades and to always have something to do besides the mundane of math and history. It kept me going, kept me going to something besides the core classes that keeps me coming back. It gave me something to do after school. I'm just asking you as somebody that this affects, as well as my sister and family, and many other girls who attended my college, to please keep the arts in school. My last point on this would be that every college that I've applied to wants to see some kind of involvement in extra-curricular activities, be it sports, music, art, any of that. If you take this from our schools, you are setting our students up to fail in trying to get into college. Thank you.

Sandra Beland, Courthouse District – I am a resident and property owner in Floyd County. I have one daughter who graduated from FCHS and just graduated from Hollins and I have one daughter who is currently at FCHS and also plans to pursue a 4-year degree. The school is more than academics, it is where you determine who you are, your interests and forms your future goals. Everyone has a God-given talent and needs the opportunity to expand those capabilities. In a small community such as ours, the school system is a fundamental pillar in this personal decision. I personally support the expansion of the arts in our school system and the current music and theatre that exist have been successful due to the parental and community support. Classes in the arts and sports programs help all students especially those who are not academically strong to feel a sense of achievement and build their self-esteem. These programs also teach the students much more than the skill they are learning. It teaches them effective team work, it expands their attention and their focus, teaches them goal setting and how to create the steps to achieve their goal, perseverance, leadership, discipline, helps them to understand their own strengths and weaknesses and also helps them to appreciate the strengths of the other students. These are things that you don't get in a normal classroom setting. Removing funding for any of these programs would deny the students having a well-rounded background which is required for them to be accepted at a university. It would also leave us with a school system that is not competitive with other school systems which would result in lower median incomes and lower property values for the County. I am a founding board member of the Radford Child

Development, Inc. created to bring high quality educational child care to Radford, Virginia. I have been long disappointed that there is no full-time preschool for our children and have always been told by the administration that there is no budget money available to extend it to all students. A child's educational opportunities begin at birth. We have no program in Floyd County to serve all our children, not even one that we can pay for ourselves. By not fully funding our educational needs you are not saving money. You are limiting our children's futures and the quality of life in our community. In addition, I feel the decision not to raise taxes this year to wait until next year will coincide with the new property assessments will create an unneeded surge of financial burden on the property owners of this County. A small increase such as the \$0.02/\$100 that has been suggested would help to fund the County's educational needs as well as help soften the financial hardship landslide that may be created by increasing assessments and taxes in the same year. Thank you.

Gary Kuiken, Courthouse District – I've been a physician now in this town for 37 years. I'm just a simple man but I have some concerns about what I've been reading in the paper and I'll be the first to admit that I don't understand all the intricacies of the budget. But my concerns when I read that our buses are unsafe and there is not enough money to maintain them and repair them and I think about the kids being transported to away games and other activities. If there is an accident and we lose students, do we say well, that's just one of the consequences of not repairing our buses because of lack of money? Then, I think about our students who are going to college and how they need extra-curricular activities to get into college and I read about how these are going to be cut because of lack of money. I could have sent my son to a private school but I elected to put him in the public school because I support Floyd County and I want the best for him to get to college. Now, I'm disturbed because it may impair his future in getting to college without the things that he needs in the public school system. To be honest with you, I'm not going to be able to work forever, I may retire some day. We've tried to recruit physicians to the County and the first thing they ask if what kind of school system you have. I want to be able to tell them that we have a good school system but right now, I can tell them that we tried our best but what does it sound like when you don't get money appropriated for the things you need? What's the most important thing in this County? It is our youth. What is the future of the County? It is the youth of the County. You want a prosperous, productive County, you have to take care of your youth. I think to deny them the educational experience that they deserve is a great disservice. So I ask you to please in consultation with the Superintendent, to consider carefully how this money is being appropriated. Think about doing the best for our youth. Thank you.

Peggy Kesler, Locust Grove District – I have been before you all several times trying to emphasize what I think we need for this County. There are a lot of words that I've been putting through my brain that I'd like to say but they could not be printable at this point. The disgust and the extreme disappointment that I have with this Board, what you've done with our budget for our County as well as education. To me, it is like you are anti-education. Mr. Yoder has seemed to be trying to put some things in place but he's not had the support from anybody else on the board which is frustrating. What you've done so far by not funding what we needed to continue for this coming year, as many have stated, you have devastated our children that is in our educational system. You'll end up having higher teacher ratios to students, you're not going to have teachers available, you're going to have more students to teach, you're not going to have

the materials that we need for educational needs, the safety of our buses, you've already had one warning. What is it going to take, is it going to take a tragedy for you to wake up and realize that we have to take care of our children, not only the educational end but the safety end as well. Are they going to have to start failing, test scores start falling, is our school accreditation going to start being a problem before you start waking up? But you know what, you've gotten behind and you're not going to be able to ever catch up. I've been through board meetings over the years with my children and you never did this and you never did that and you try to catch up, and then you say well it will be much for the people to bear. Well you know what, we as citizens of this County can bear a whole lot more than what you're willing to admit for us to do. Yes, we have retirees but we also have other people coming into this County. As Dr. Kuiken was stating, the first thing anybody wants to know, the very first thing, is what type of educational you have for your children. Any parent wants to go where it is the very best. I hear our numbers are down, maybe some of that has already gotten out. People don't want to move to the County because they feel like they are not getting the support they need from the Supervisors. I urge you to please look at what you are doing to our children and to this County, it is not just the education that needs it, there are other areas in this County that needs it as well. Please look at it. Take your thoughts away from everything else and consider what you are doing to our County and our students, particularly our education. You've really devastated our next class coming in for the 14-15 year; they are going to have a hard struggle. I know, I have a child that had to have a little extra help. I had the teacher tell me that she didn't have time to deal with her. I got the help she needed, it wasn't within the school system, but I made sure she got the help she needed. I could have pulled her out and put her somewhere else, like Dr. Kuiken considered, but I didn't. Then we're talking about the schools being so over-crowded that maybe they can go to another school. Now, what do you think? That is like moving a child from one area of the County to another County. The people that they've been involved with, the children, the students and then that is devastating on top of that. Again, I just urge you to fully listen and listen to us and look at what you're doing to our children. Thank you.

Kamala Bauers, Little River District – I'm just going to repeat some of what you've already heard but I also want to talk about being creative in how we solve this problem. My favorite thing about living in Floyd is that we do things a little differently here. So, why don't we continue to do that? Why don't we have a conversation and open this up to solve some of our problem instead of just repeating that we don't have enough? I recognize the budget is tight, I think you guys all work very hard, I don't think there is a person on this Board that doesn't care about the students in this County. What I think is happening is a feeling that there is not enough, not enough money for all the things that are needed. Education as being very important. The safety of our police department and all that, we've got a lot of needs. We've also got a really amazing community that will step up and help if you allow them into the process. We have an amazing Superintendent of Schools and incredible School Board that is working with very little. I would like to see some working together instead of at cross purposes. Yes, we have a small budget but we have a lot of opportunities here. It is true that all of this is connected. If you don't have good schools, you will not have economic development. People will not put their businesses in places where they don't know if their children will be well educated. That's just true. Good education is fundamentally related to economic development. I agree with the arts in the schools. We have a tremendous community of artists and musicians; we need to include them into our process. I guess what I want to say to you is how do we do this differently? I don't

believe that there is not enough. We do have people moving into the community with a little more resources. We have really serious issues, we have buildings that are fifty years old and above that we're not even talking about. We cannot get through year by year. Where is the long term planning? Where are we going to be 10, 15, 20 years from now? Where is the planning? Let's just not talk about, let's take this as an opportunity, this so-called crises we're having, right now to look at our opportunities for the future. I really think we can do it, we've got a great community here, let us help. Thanks.

David Kuiken, Courthouse District – I am a Freshman at FCHS and you know, I could have gone to a private school but I chose to stay at the public school. For, if nothing else, not only my friends but the marching band. It is a wonderful extra-curricular experience. The arts are important. How are we to compete against other schools? It is going to be really not as fun, not as loud, not as musical. And, the money that has been allotted to our school, there is not a lot of it, but sometimes it can be spent on things that are not necessarily necessary. People might think oh we need that but we may not really need that compared to something else that we might really need. Another thing, teacher buy-outs, the helping of a teacher that is more experienced and is therefore paid more, to retire, so maybe the school district can get a fresh out of college teacher that is not as experienced, not as skilled in the classroom, because they don't have as much practice, so they can be paid less. If you make all of our quality teachers leave, that is affecting the quality of my education which I really don't think is very productive, now is it? Thank you.

Allan Vass, Little River District – one thing that I do know is that both boards, School Board and Board of Supervisors, have a great task before them. I wind up like a lot that has been said here and agree with a lot. Leaves a lot of questions as to what needs to be done and what can we do. I thought about the issue that we've talked about with the buses. We were blessed with the gentleman who drove the bus, who had the accident and did all he could do and was a great prevention. Let's look at that in a different perspective. What if he had been because of his faulty driving? I would say that Dr. Harris would probably have relieved him of his duties. Most likely. All the jobs that I've ever seen if you put someone in a detriment like that, they would get rid of them. With that thought in mind, what about when we run is faulty equipment? I rode a school bus on a field trip a month ago. That bus company quit making in 1997, it was a 1994 model. I was privileged to be able to go to Bland County to a ministry that we work with, met some people there in their school system. One of the things that they did with their school system was they put in place that they buy two new, or those that have been reconditioned that are in usable shape or decent shape. She is a 35 year principal, when she retires they may not replace her but buses will be there. Think about the great liability. I guess the thing that I would like to see more than anything is for the School Board and the Supervisors begin to not see each other as a board that is for or against, take down the walls between us and sit down and talk out what needs to be done and what needs to be accomplished. Here's a question I will leave with you – when or how many times have you went with the School Board representative in your district, whether it is Locust Grove, Burks Fork, Little River, Courthouse, Indian Valley, how many times or maybe this is a start, that you went together to go look at the school which you represent and see what the needs are? Thank you.

Michael Kolvic, Little River District – I just want to point out firstly that some people are not here, they went to the school. People were expecting this meeting to be at the school, adults and kids alike, missed it because of miscommunication. Representing the school, we don't have as many people here as would have been here. The students were involved in advertising this and they can tell you more about it. Somehow it is not connected. We all need to be kept abreast. I agree that it should be very public and we should make it more of a conversation for all of us. I am a parent with my last kid who is going to graduate in three years. Then I'll be done with kids in school but I'm standing here saying that the school system is important even if I don't have kids in school. The school system is the heart of this town and I want to see it strong and healthy. So, that's all that I can tell you is that I want to see the money put where it needs to go and the highest priority is the school system.

Jack Wall, Little River District – I just think that part of the money problem is, we know that nobody likes to raise taxes because we have people in the County who have a lot of property but don't have much income or are on a fixed income so I understand the issue about not raising property taxes. But, we do have other alternatives. This County has a lot of wealth here, we have a lot of successful restaurants and businesses in the County and I know that there has been some work put into trying to get a meals tax for the County which has conservatively been estimated at \$350,000/year for meals taxes. We have a lot of restaurants in the County. Floyd has just a postage stamp of a town, so almost all the activity occurs outside the town and that's where the big restaurants are that bring in the revenue that could be taxed a little bit to get that kind of money coming in. It is only a start and not the final answer but if we had this years ago, I think some of the things like degradation of buildings and services, of things that are going downhill in our County because of lack of government support, that's a problem that we could have done a better job with. Need more planning and understanding that a meals tax that is going to tax people that have money to go out to eat, people that come into the County. We have a lot of folks coming from Roanoke and other places that come to eat in Floyd that benefit our County. It is one of those things that you can get a big benefit from doing and something that does not hurt that much. We've got to get smart and figure out how we can be creative in some of these other areas and work together on more planning. Hopefully we will see some success. I believe that this could be put up for a vote although it is preferred that we get it done through the General Assembly being asked to allow us to have a meals tax for the County. It is an easier way to go because it is a good chance that a referendum would not be supported by the citizens. We've got to keep on trying and try to get the revenue we need. Thank you.

Kelcie Sapp, Locust Grove District – I realize you're probably thinking I'm 17 and why do you really care what I have to say? But, no I don't pay property taxes but I wouldn't mind paying a meals tax because I do go out to eat and it's not a big thing. But I am a student at our school and lucky for me I graduate in 5 days so anything that gets cuts is isn't really going to affect me. But I have a lot of friends at school and a lot of people that will be affected by that and we just need money. For one, the bathrooms are gross. They are literally falling apart. Two, we have classes that have like 35 people in them which is literally impossible to actually learn anything. And three, we just don't have the options. I have friends from Auburn, Christiansburg and Blacksburg and compared to their options, we have nothing. It is just kind of unfair that someone the same age as me can have a bazillion more choices and options in what they want to do at school than I do. And so, I'm not saying this so much for me because I'm

done with my time in Floyd County schools but for the people that are still here, I just wish you would consider the money that you're giving to the schools because we need a lot more of it. It can benefit a lot of people. I realize that you all have a tough job and a lot of things that you have to do but it would just be nice if it could be a little more considered. Thank you very much.

After no further comments from the audience, the Chairman declared the Public Hearing closed.

Agenda Item 3 – Approval of month-end disbursements.

On a motion of Supervisor Allen, seconded by Supervisor Gerald, and unanimously carried, it was resolved to approve the month-end disbursements as presented.

Supervisor Yoder – aye
Supervisor Turman – aye
Supervisor Gerald – aye
Supervisor Allen – aye
Supervisor Clinger – aye

Agenda Item 4 – VRS Employer Rate Resolution for FY 2015-2016 biennium. Mr. Campbell presented a draft resolution for the Board's consideration. He noted the certified rate from VRS is 10.93% for the employer share. There is an alternative rate of 10.53% but the risk remains that payment would have to be made at a later date. The certified rate comes from the actuary which is the rate recommended by staff.

On a motion of Supervisor Yoder, seconded by Supervisor Allen, and unanimously carried, it was resolved to adopt the resolution for the VRS Employer Rate for the FY 2015-2016 biennium with the certified rate of 10.93% as presented (Document File Number _____).

Supervisor Yoder – aye
Supervisor Turman – aye
Supervisor Gerald – aye
Supervisor Allen – aye
Supervisor Clinger – aye

Agenda Item 5 – Copier for the Commonwealth Attorney's Office. Mr. Campbell reported that her staff continues to research this matter. With some of the bids that they are receiving, the costs for a different copier should equal what they are paying now for a lease and copy costs. No action is needed at this time from the Board.

Agenda Item 6 – Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints request. Mr. Campbell presented a tax exemption request from the church's corporate office. In 2003, the process was changed by the General Assembly to return to a local government approval process. The process requires an application that comes from the Code of Virginia with eight questions for the requestor. Their responses were received as requested. Since the process change, Floyd County has had only one request which came from the Historical Society, which was denied by the Board at that time. Would require a public hearing and for them to provide any further information as requested by the Board. Their estimate of economic impact to the County would

be \$4000, which we have not verified. Question to the Board is whether you want to schedule a public hearing and have the draft ordinance in place or would you like to consider it further? The Board can establish additional criteria above what is listed in the Code if you desire. There are a significant number of tax exempt entities in the County, mostly churches and cemeteries or religious affiliates. Every request comes to you separately with an ordinance required for each request.

On a motion of Supervisor Gerald, seconded by Supervisor Turman, and unanimously carried, it was resolved to approve preparation of a draft ordinance for tax exemption from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints for review at the next meeting.

Supervisor Yoder – aye
Supervisor Turman – aye
Supervisor Gerald – aye
Supervisor Allen – aye
Supervisor Clinger – aye

Agenda Item 7 – Robinson, Farmer, Cox & Associates audit engagement letter. Mr. Campbell reported that field work will begin at the end of June with the new firm as contracted by the Board at the last meeting. Early in the process, this form of letter is received from the audit firm which outlines their objectives, County responsibilities in terms of conveying information and working cooperatively, limitations of review (sample information as opposed to viewing all transactions), procedures, assignment of personnel to provide information. Historically, only the County Administrator has signed the letter but this year they are requesting that the governing body also sign it. The letter is outlined similar to previous years.

On a motion of Supervisor Yoder, seconded by Supervisor Turman, and unanimously carried, it was resolved to approve the audit engagement letter with Robinson, Farmer, Cox & Associates as presented, and authorize the County Administrator and Chairman to execute same (Document File Number _____).

Supervisor Yoder – aye
Supervisor Turman – aye
Supervisor Gerald – aye
Supervisor Allen – aye
Supervisor Clinger – aye

Agenda Item 8 – Old/New Business.

No items were brought before the Board.

On a motion of Supervisor Allen, seconded by Supervisor Yoder, and carried, it was resolved to adjourn.

Supervisor Yoder – aye
Supervisor Turman – aye
Supervisor Gerald – nay
Supervisor Allen – aye
Supervisor Clinger – nay

Daniel J. Campbell, County Administrator

Case C. Clinger, Chairman, Board of Supervisors