

VIRGINIA:

At the work session joint meeting of the Board of Supervisors and Charles City School Board held at the Charles City County Government and School Board Administration Building thereof on **Wednesday, June 3, 2015 at 6:00 p.m.** in the 239th year of the Commonwealth and the 381st year of the County.

PRESENT: Board of Supervisors:
Gilbert A. Smith, Chairman
Floyd H. Miles, Sr.
William G. Coada

School Board:
Helen Payne-Jones
Steve Fuhrmann
Martha Harris
Preston Adkins
Barbara Crawley

Gilbert Smith opened the work session meeting thanking everyone for coming out and to direct questions or comments to the Board of Supervisors or School Board.

Helen Payne-Jones called the School Board meeting to order.

David Ledbetter, 16530 The Glebe Lane, Charles City, VA., thanked the Boards for holding the forum and for their service to the community. He stated it is great to see some results from the recommendations from the Decide Smart Study. He thinks the IT Department as well as Financial Services & Management should be consolidated. A lot of savings can come from these areas as well as others. He would like to encourage the Boards as savings are made to increase the budget for the schools, pass all the savings on to the schools. He stated he hopes that in the years ahead the Board of Supervisors will work closely with the School Board and the Superintendent to develop a five-year plan for the operating budget for the schools, to which the Board will be committed. This will allow for planning for growth and spending on the schools from pre-programs to adding additional course offerings and extra-curricular activities for students to enrich every student experience, he believes this will attract students from within the community as well as attract new couples to the community. He hopes this plan includes steady increases in the financial support to build a stronger school system.

Linda Maines, 7511 Lewis Tyler Lane, Charles City Va., stated she has concerns about the Fire Department. Mr. Richard Johnson's house on Adkins Road burned down and it seemed like there was a lack of urgency about the situation. Charles City Volunteer Fire Department was called but due to no one being available Henrico had to be called. She wanted to know if the Board was aware of the situation and what can be done to raise community awareness. She stated successful volunteer programs take collaboration, the communities around us that have paid fire fighters they should use us as a training ground, we should be collaborating with them. She wanted to know could we ask business owners to sponsor employees to be part of the Charles City Volunteer Fire Department program; is there a need to re-evaluate fund raisers; can we ask churches to get involved; information on volunteering for the Fire

Department needs to be placed on the County website. She stated if you are interested in volunteering there is nowhere that gives you the opportunity.

Gilbert Smith thanked Linda Maines for her suggestions. He stated there are only about currently seven active volunteers on the Fire Department that are representing 7,000 people. The Fire Department has done dinner sales, and churches make contributions throughout the year. In December, churches raised money for the Ms. Charles City Volunteer Fire Department contest. The problem is getting the citizens involved. The majority of the people on the Charles City County Volunteer Fire Department have full time jobs. They are not in the County during the day. Linda Maines asked if we could reach out to our high school to get volunteers. Gilbert Smith stated there are two things the Board is considering, they are in discussion with a neighboring county considering ways on how to support each other and they are looking at getting an in-house price on what it would cost to provide individual gear, training, and equipment the County needs; the main thing is we need volunteers. Gilbert Smith encouraged Mrs. Maines and anyone else that wants to be involved to come out to their monthly meetings. The meetings are held the second Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m., at the Adkins Road Fire Station.

Helen Payne-Jones stated the School Board will take the information in reference to getting high school children to volunteer and respond back in an appropriate way. Steve Fuhrmann stated Bridging Communities has discussed this issue; the issue is whether there are sufficient students who are really interested in this program. There is a slight glimmer of hope through the Bridging Communities which is a group from King and Queen, King William, Middlesex, New Kent and Charles City. Martha Harris stated she has looked into grants for rural areas for fire department training and money is available. She is a certified grant writer and she is willing to write a grant. Bill Coada stated Preston Adkins has brought up getting a training class for the high school at a couple of the School Board meetings. He hopes it comes to fruition.

Almeda Tyler, 7601 Adkins Road, Charles City, VA., stated for years she has been working for officials, each election year, getting signatures in the County. She cannot understand why she cannot bring the petitions into the County buildings to get signatures.

Gilbert Smith stated the Board of Supervisors made that decision. He stated he had petitions out and he did not ask any employees that lived in his district to sign his partition while they were at work. Bill Coada stated the policy only applied to County employees while they were at work. Floyd Miles stated the intention was there should not be a disruption of a person doing their job to get a partition signed.

Gilbert Smith stated we will now have dialogue between the Board and School Board about topics of interest.

Helen Payne-Jones stated the Decide Smart effort is collaboration between the School Board and Board of Supervisors to try to find areas in which to combine services whenever possible to provide a more effective and cost efficient way to provide services to the County.

Steve Fuhrmann stated one of the things that might be useful is to reaffirm membership of the group and recommit ourselves as two Boards to work as diligently as possible to continue to find areas of consolidation. The Decide Smart sub-committee consists of Zach

Trogdon and Bill Coada representing the Board of Supervisors and Helene Payne-Jones, Dr. Gaston and himself representing the School Board. He stated they have been meeting monthly for some time. One of the biggest things that has been done in consolidation is the consolidation of servicing all vehicles, starting July 1, 2015, in the school bus garage to include school vehicles, all county vehicles, and all sheriff vehicles; will be hiring one additional mechanic. Secondly, ground services will be done by county staff with county equipment starting July 1st. The schools will be doing a contract for the maintenance of mulching and planting of trees. Steve Fuhrmann stated they are in discussion and considering the repeat of the survey that was done a year and a half ago with school and county staff.

Bill Coada stated it has been a joint effort and he expects great things to come, a lot will happen this year. He also stated Mr. Miles has been working with Social Services and they are on board to get their cars serviced at the garage as well. The more the School Board and Board of Supervisors can do together the more can be saved.

Floyd Miles asked Dr. Gaston if he knew when the interviews for the Mechanic position are going to be held. Dr. Gaston stated it should be within the next two weeks.

Bill Coada stated as for reaffirming membership to the committee he has enjoyed being on the Decide Smart Committee and plans to continue to be on the committee. The Board of Supervisors agreed.

Martha Harris stated as far as membership, the School Board will decide who will continue to be on the committee at their School Board meeting.

Preston Adkins stated Decide Smart is a joint venture; all decisions are made by both parties and cleared by both parties before the final outcome is done.

Helen Payne-Jones stated the next topic of conversation is to decide if the School Board and Board of Supervisors will continue to have joint public meetings and discuss ideas on how and how often the meetings will be conducted.

Gilbert Smith stated he is willing to meet anytime as long as there is an agenda. Helen Payne-Jones stated she is in agreement of having an agenda, as the meetings should have a purpose. One of the things that came to mind is that as we go into the budget season to take a look at some things that can be incorporated into the budget, what the budget looks like, etc.

Steve Fuhrmann stated his preference would be to set up quarterly meetings; if there is nothing to discuss then the meeting can be cancelled. Gilbert Smith stated his only concern about blocking out dates for meetings is he may be able to have arranged another meeting on that date, but find out later that the meeting is cancelled. Helen Payne-Jones stated maybe the Boards should meet twice a year, semi-annually, schedule another meeting between now and December 31st. Bill Coada suggested getting with the Finance Director to find out what is a good time frame to discuss the budget. Preston Adkins suggested to let sub-group from Decide Smart decide when the two Boards need to meet. Bill Coada stated the Decide Smart Committee decided to put blinders on and stay focused on the task until it is accomplished so they would not be going in different directions. After discussion of why it would not work for Decide Smart to come up with the dates for the Board of Supervisors and School Board joint meeting, Gilbert Smith suggested Dr. Gaston, Zach Trogdon and Michelle Johnson, Finance Director, get together and come up with a date to talk about Budget; if the School Board wants to

discuss another date before then they can share that date and that will be two dates the Boards can possibly meet. Steve Fuhrmann suggested not wait too long before the next meeting date.

CLOSING REMARKS

Floyd Miles stated concerning the Charles City Volunteer Fire Department way back when it got started mandatory training was not required, you could go to the in-house training and become a fireman. Now you have to have Fire Fighter Training 1, 2 and 3. Fire Fighter Training 1 is required by the state and it is suggested you have Fire Fighter Training on 2 & 3. With the restrictions required by the state it calls for a lot of training. Most of the fireman works a full-time job, so it is hard, until people, especially the young people come out and volunteer. The County will be lacking as far as covering for fires during the day. The worst time we do not have coverage is from 6am until 6pm. Even if we have paid firefighters it will not get rid of all our problems, paid firefighters have their issues as well. He encourages everyone to keep coming out to the meetings so they can hear you and address the issues.

Bill Coady stated a lot of good stuff is going on in the County right now due to the two Boards sitting here, the Finance Director and Department heads. He thanked everyone.

Preston Adkins stated he wanted to echo what Floyd Miles said about the Fire Department. He has been on leave for the last seven years taking care of his mother. With the rules and regulations from the state, if you do not have the training, you cannot go into a burning structure. If you do, it can come back and hurt the County as well as the fire department. For Fire Fighter 1 training you are looking at 200 hours of training, seven years ago the cost of training for one fire fighter was almost \$3,000.00. When you go to training you are there with paid fire fighters as well as volunteers; everyone put the fire out the same way.

Martha Harris reiterated grants are out there for firefighting she has done some research; she is willing to collaborate with the Fire Department Board and write a grant.

Steve Fuhrmann stated he has a comment as a citizen on the fire issue, it took almost a decade before we fully staffed EMS services and two tax increases. He thinks we need to start considering hiring 1 or 2 paid fire fighters in the County. He thinks we as citizens can do a better job in having all of our fire prone items maintained in our home. Steve Fuhrmann stated as a School Board Member the relationship between the Boards and Board members compared to past years is quite phenomenal. The changes are dramatic and very satisfying, and he hopes the collaboration and cooperation continues.

Barbara Crawley stated the County has to prosper. She is glad that this meeting is happening and we can sit at the table to discuss any issues.

Helen Payne-Jones stated she thanked Zach Trogdon and Gilbert Smith for making this happen and look forward to future meetings and getting something productive out of it.

Dr. Gaston gave an overview of high school graduation on Friday, May 29th. The class of 2015 had a graduation of 100%. Preliminary scholarship dollars were well over \$510,000.00 collected; they are still verifying the dollar amount. The class applied to 77 colleges and universities and was accepted to 70 which gave them a 92% acceptance rate. This is the first time in 20 years a student was accepted to the US Military Academy of West Point.

Gilbert Smith stated he appreciated the School Board accepting the invitation to have a joint meeting. He thanked the public for coming out and having dialogue with the Boards. The Board of Supervisors recessed until Thursday, June 11, 2015, at 7:00 p.m.

Helen Payne-Jones motioned the School Board meeting was adjourned. Motion was approved unanimously.