

**COUNTY OF HENRICO, VIRGINIA
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
SPECIAL MEETING
April 25, 2023**

The Henrico County Board of Supervisors convened a special meeting at 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, April 25, 2023, in the County Manager's Conference Room, Administration Building, Henrico County Government Center, Parham and Hungary Spring Roads, Henrico, Virginia.

Members of the Board Present:

Frank J. Thornton, Chairman, Fairfield District
Tyrone E. Nelson, Vice-Chairman, Varina District
Patricia S. O'Bannon, Tuckahoe District
Daniel J. Schmitt, Brookland District

Member of the Board Absent:

Thomas M. Branin, Three Chopt District

Other Officials Present:

John A. Vithoulkas, County Manager
Andrew R. Newby, County Attorney
Tanya N. Brackett, CMC, Assistant to the County Manager/Clerk to the Board
Michael Y. Feinmel, Deputy County Manager for Public Safety
W. Brandon Hinton, Deputy County Manager for Administration
Monica Smith-Callahan, Deputy County Manager for Community Affairs
Cari M. Tretina, Assistant to the County Manager/Chief of Staff
Steven J. Yob, Deputy County Manager for Community Operations
Benjamin A. Sheppard, Director of Public Relations

FEMA Partnership Update

Rob Rowley, Director of Emergency Management, joined by Police Lt. Kevin Howdyshell, informed the Board they had been invited to participate in new training with members of FEMA. This will allow the County to have access to federal funds for training and FEMA gets the use of our personnel. Mr. Rowley stated the County will get reimbursed for their expenses, and FEMA will cover overtime expenses. Lt. Howdyshell stated the benefit of training with FEMA is they will come here and offer the training to our staff at no cost. Mr. Thornton noted this is a new tool in the training box.

Division of Police Update

Eric English, Chief of Police, updated the Board on efforts of the Police Division in the community. He provided the Board crime statistics, comparing recent years against a five-year average. He gave an update on St. Luke's Apartments. Since Police have increased their presence, arrests are up. Police have increased their community engagement with the residents and are seeing positive changes and outcomes.

The Chief next provided data on firearms that the Division has taken so far this year. Mr. Nelson asked the difference between “recovered” and “confiscated.” Chief English stated when they confiscate a gun it is usually during a traffic stop or an arrest. When they find a gun, it is usually when they respond to an incident and happen to find a weapon. The Manager asked the Chief to review the 1st quarter numbers on how many weapons they have found. The Chief stated they have recovered 250 guns within the first three months.

Chief English reviewed updated technology, including the use of license plate readers and new body worn cameras. Chief English also reviewed NIBIN, which can help solve firearm crimes. The Police Division has recently expanded its mental health initiatives to include a mobile response team, consisting of a Mental Health clinician paired with a police officer, who respond to emergency calls for persons in crisis. The Division currently has one team covering a limited number of days of the week, but the Chief plans to expand this program over the course of the next several months. He noted the Marcus Alert legislation requires Henrico to submit a plan for a collaborative framework designed to improve response to behavioral health emergencies by January 2024, with implementation by July 2024. Chief English stated the Division is working with Henrico Mental Health and our many County partners to design a framework that not only meets requirements in this law but exceeds it.

Chief English reviewed School Resources Officers (SRO) program. The Division currently has 42 authorized SRO positions but only 34 positions are filled. He reviewed what schools the SROs are assigned to, and noted the Division is looking to add an additional four officers to our SRO complement via our Encore Program and internal movement of personnel.

The Chief concluded by showing the new uniform and grooming policy the Division has implemented.

Mr. Thornton applauded the Chief for what he was doing. He asked if there was a plan to train more citizens who have a background in working in our school systems and with children to maybe come back and help within schools. Chief English stated he has seen some models that incorporate working with citizens and would be willing to work with HCPS on this concept. Mr. Thornton also asked why the Chief was using a 5-year trend instead of a 3-year trend. The Chief explained he gets a longer view of things when he does a 5-year trend, and that provides a better idea of why things are happening the way they are and how things have changed.


Return Surplus Real Estate Tax Revenues to Taxpayers

Sheila Minor, Director of Finance, briefed the Board on several Finance items on the agenda for the 7:00 p.m. meeting. She explained the Board would hold a public hearing on 2023 real estate, personal property, and machinery and tools tax rates. The Board would also consider the approval of the operating and capital annual fiscal plan for FY2023-24 and the allocation of the car tax relief for tax year 2023. Mrs. Minor reviewed the current proposed tax levies and shared with the Board a graph showing the assessed values from 2006 to present and the permanent tax rate reduction for vehicles, real estate, and other items. Mrs. Minor noted this will be the second year the County will be returning real estate surplus to taxpayers, and she noted the Finance department continues to work on the REAP program for a tax freeze for eligible seniors for 2024.

Prior to the agenda review, Ben Sheppard, Director of Public Relations, shared with the Board that his team had updated the Board's webpages and made them more interactive with relevant information and photos pertaining to what is happening in each of the districts. The information will be updated and maintained on a daily basis, especially pertaining to townhalls and meetings or any information the Board would like to be added.

General Meeting Agenda Overview

Ms. Tretina briefly reviewed the agenda items for the 7:00 p.m. meeting. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:44 p.m.



Chairman, Board of Supervisors
Henrico County, Virginia