

A SPECIAL BUDGET WORK SESSION OF THE NEW KENT COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS WAS HELD ON THE 14TH DAY OF APRIL IN THE YEAR TWO THOUSAND SIX OF OUR LORD IN THE BOARDROOM OF THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATION BUILDING AT 9:00 A.M.

IN RE: ROLL CALL

Mark E. Hill	Absent – arrived at 9:15 a.m.
David M. Sparks	Present
James H. Burrell	Present
Stran L. Trout	Present
W. R. Davis, Jr.	Present

The meeting was re-convened from April 12, 2006.

IN RE: OTHER BUSINESS

Prior to commencing business, Mr. Trout briefed the Board on two current projects of interest. He advised that the resolution for the John Smith Water Tour, adopted by the Board at its previous meeting, had been passed by the Planning District Commission. Mr. Davis inquired about New Kent's coordination with King William County. Mr. Trout advised that this was a national tour but New Kent, James City, King William, Charles City, and Hanover were focusing on including the local rivers as a part of the tour.

Regarding emergency preparedness, Mr. Trout advised that local public radio station WCVE had offered to coordinate with the emergency operation centers to broadcast emergency information during disasters such as hurricane locations, and after such disasters, would provide information regarding services in that particular county, such as where ice could be located. This would be coordinated through the local emergency operation center and most likely Chesterfield EOC or one of the larger EOCs in the area.

Mr. Trout also spoke about the Charles City County tourism map, a tear-off map proposed to include Charles City County on one side and New Kent County on the other, to be placed in various establishments throughout the counties. This would afford New Kent the opportunity to gain publicity, not only through the information center, but in other venues such as restaurants, hotels, etc. within the counties. Mr. Trout advised this project should be given consideration, and the production of the maps was being done by the Planning District Commission.

IN RE: REVIEW OF OUTSTANDING ISSUES

County Administrator John Budesky reported that, per the Board's earlier directive to go back and align the planning department's fees, changes were made by staff within the past 24 hours. Community Development Director George Homewood distributed the revised fees for review. He advised that the aligned fees put New Kent in the upper range of neighboring areas. In some instances, the fees were significantly above other areas, but not all. The proposals would assist in achieving 50% funding, but also placed New Kent's fees in the upper range. Mr. Homewood explained that in adjusting the fees, the costs for family subdivisions remained the same. With the recent ordinance change, the process was being used as intended, and staff did not feel it necessary to raise those fees. Subdivision fees were raised a

higher percentage than other fees, as currently subdivision submittals were driving the workload, and caused an increase in the overall workload of the rest of the department as related to land disturbance reviews, building permit reviews, etc. Site plans, normally resulting from commercial development more than residential, were raised a lower percentage than the average. Zoning fees remained in the median.

Mr. Trout questioned the cultural events program fees. He stated that theoretically the County would make money on these events through meals tax, tourism, etc., versus the other permits (i.e., zoning, etc.). Mr. Davis agreed, citing ticket sales at Colonial Downs as an example. Mr. Trout added the Farms of New Kent as another venue. Mr. Trout suggested the cultural events program fees be kept within the \$600 and \$300 range. The Board agreed with staff recommendations, excepting only that cultural events fees should not increase.

Mr. Burrell commented that the airport hanger currently had a waitlist, and in reviewing the fees, thought that the fee should be raised to be more in line with others and avoid turning someone away due to the waitlist. Mr. Trout stated that though New Kent's fees were lower, there were very expensive airplanes in them. Mr. Budesky stated that he had discussed this issue with the Airport Manager, and New Kent was actually not that much lower than the market rate. He added that New Kent made its money in the area of fuel, and rates were actually only about \$5 a month less than others. This was an encouragement for people to want to locate in New Kent because they could purchase their fuel there as well. Mr. Davis reiterated that there were only two corporate hangers that currently existed. Mr. Budesky added that two more corporate hangers were included in the proposed addition.

The Board agreed to the proposed fee changes, save the cultural events program fee changes.

Regarding the Assessor and support staff, Mr. Budesky advised the Board that in working with the Commissioner of Revenue, the Director of Accounting & Budget Mary Altemus and staff had been able to identify additional real estate tax revenue to help with some offset. He further explained that once all items on the list had been reviewed and discussed, staff intended to recommend to the Board that at least a one cent tax reduction had been identified. Mr. Budesky also advised that after much discussion, staff felt that it remained imperative to maintain support staff, mostly due to the number of notices and such that would need to go out. He explained that based upon Ms. Altemus' contact with departments in different localities who operate in many different ways, and discussions with Mr. Crump, it was believed that with a part-time person and a full-time Assessor, New Kent could assess all of its property every two years. Ms. Altemus provided handouts reflecting the various methods of handling the position and assessments. The Board focused on those localities with a similar number of parcels, as well as the systems used for the data base. Ms. Altemus reiterated that the last reassessment had established the data base. Mr. Budesky stated that with the real estate increase, even though this position had been added back in, the recommendation would still be reduced by one cent. Mr. Burrell questioned the salary ranges provided. Mr. Budesky replied that the salaries provided were based on last year's figures. He advised that it was crucial to get someone with credentials and experience, and he was concerned that if New Kent didn't pay a premium, it was going to get someone who required a fair learning curve, which would not accomplish the goal of why New Kent was trying to hire for this position. Mr. Davis noted that, in reviewing the information provided,

most of the positions fell under the direction of the County Administrator. Mr. Budesky responded that this issue could be worked out. Mr. Davis questioned how the responsibilities would be divided. Ms. Altemus and Mr. Budesky provided various scenarios based upon their findings as to how responsibilities could be handled. Mr. Budesky further stated that these were more operational issues, and regardless of how the responsibilities were divided, both positions were needed to make it work. If this route was not taken, the same funds would be needed in the same amount, but doing so would place New Kent on a four-year cycle rather than a two-year cycle.

Mr. Sparks inquired as to when the assistant would need to be hired. Mr. Budesky responded that the assistant should be hired very soon after the Assessor because the assistant would need to start entering the work of the Assessor, allowing enough time for the Assessor to account for the entire County. If approved, the position should be advertised on July 1.

The Board consented to reinstate the position request for the Assessor's Office.

Mr. Budesky stated that the Economic Development position was on the agenda only to inform the Board that the County intended to approach the EDA and request that it "pick up" the other costs. A meeting had been scheduled for next week, and this topic would be discussed. Mr. Davis inquired as to the opening date for the Visitors' Center. Mr. Budesky advised that the Center was scheduled to open on October 1. He also stated that there was an abundance of work available for this position. He indicated that office space would have to be identified to accommodate this position until the Center's completion. One option presented was to temporarily house the position in the offices currently occupied by Public Utilities.

Regarding the Executive Assistant position, Mr. Budesky reported that the position request reflected a two grade reduction due to the absence of human resources function.

Mr. Burrell questioned the HR position's function where safety was concerned. Mr. Budesky stated that safety and training would be a major part of the position. He credited Director of Public Utilities Alan Harrison's beginning progress on the Public Utilities aspects, but stated that New Kent was nowhere near where it should be regarding safety and training. Mr. Burrell stated that there were several things New Kent could do that weren't required, such as CPR training, etc.

Regarding Capital Projects, Mr. Trout stated that the issues regarding the Boardroom had never been resolved, specifically the minimum needs and related costs for each item. He emphasized the need to provide better audio/video primarily for those at home. Mr. Budesky advised that staff's consultation with the contractor resulted in revisions involving the screens that reduced the overall cost by an additional \$5,000. Audio and video costs totaled \$31,000, an estimated \$14,000 - \$15,000 to reconfigure the room, resulting in a total of around \$45,000. Maintenance Supervisor David Bednarczyk educated the Board on the proposed technological features, including projectors, remote control screens measuring 6 x 4, lighting, etc. with a quoted cost of \$31,892.

Regarding the room reconfiguration, Mr. Burrell asked School Superintendent Roy Geiger if the school's wood working shop could be utilized, creating a project for the students to work on. Dr. Geiger advised that he could check on this item. Mr. Budesky said the estimate provided reflected the use of County staff to complete the

project. Mr. Davis acknowledged the proposed project would benefit the citizens, both those attending and those viewing from home.

IN RE: PPTRA – Estimated Rate to be Used

Director of Finance Mary Altemus reported initial findings in regards to establishing a rate of tax relief to apply to PPTRA per the Ordinance adopted by the Board in December. Current calculations estimated the rate to be approximately 59%, but Ms. Altemus warned that the numbers were subject to change as the Commissioner of Revenue's office concluded the input of data. Ms. Altemus applied such rates to various scenarios to demonstrate the overall financial effect on the citizens. She acknowledged that although this change would prompt new bills for vehicles valued at \$1,000 or less that previously received 100% relief from taxes, all qualifying vehicles valued up to \$20,000 would now receive an equal percentage of relief.

IN RE: SCHOOL OPERATIONAL COMMITMENT

Mr. Budesky advised the Board that although the schools originally requested \$960,000, and later reduced their request to \$588,000, staff was proposing funding in the amount of \$400,000. There was discussion regarding the School Board's ability to provide cost of living and/or merit raises for school personnel based upon the County's reduced funding proposal. Mr. Budesky advised that the County provided funding, but it was the School Board's obligation to determine amounts for pay increases. The Board requested an overview of COLA increases approved for County personnel during their current tenure. Staff reviewed the histories and explained that the overall costs to the General Fund associated with merit increases for County employees amounted to \$35,000 per 1% merit, whereas the same merit increase for school personnel required almost three to four times that amount because of the greater number of school employees. There was general consensus among the Board members to approve staff's recommendation, designating responsibility for disbursement of such funds to the School Board.

IN RE: NEW HIGH SCHOOL

Mr. Budesky reported that until the final funding amount for the high school was established, the Debt Service amount could not be determined. Per the Board's request, staff pursued additional consultation with the architects for further pricing explanations in the hopes of identifying project savings. The architects furnished handouts and gave a presentation to the Board illustrating various construction methods and material options scenarios to support their recommendations. A lengthy discussion ensued regarding heating and cooling options relating to the types of systems, as well as the additional structural elements proposed to assist in heating and cooling the structure. Board members as well as the Director of General services articulated prior experiences and factual knowledge related to each of the options presented by the architect. Short-term versus long-term costs and effectiveness were compared for each option provided.

At 10:55 a.m., Mr. Burrell excused himself from the meeting due to a prior commitment. The Board agreed to postpone any requests for recommendations and final decisions until all members of the Board were present.

There was substantial discussion between Board members and the architects regarding methods of construction and structural components of the building relating

to roof slopes and overhead lighting options, both artificial and natural. Dr. Geiger as well as several School Board members cautioned the Board that elimination of some of the proposed architectural elements would also eliminate natural light sources, which could have negative psychological impacts. The Board then reviewed the various funding options and related tax rates and increases. Several Board members discussed their concerns regarding the financial burdens imposed upon their constituents as a result of this project.

IN RE: CONTINUATION

Mr. Davis moved to continue the meeting on Monday, 17 April 2006 at 5:30 p.m.
The members were polled:

Mark E. Hill	Aye
James H. Burrell	Absent
Stran L. Trout	Aye
W. R. Davis, Jr.	Aye
David M. Sparks	Aye

The motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 12:18 p.m.