

THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS HELD A MEETING ON THE 26th DAY OF APRIL
IN THE YEAR TWO THOUSAND TWO OF OUR LORD AT THE WHITE HOUSE
RESTAURANT, PROVIDENCE FORGE, VIRGINIA AT 9:15 A.M.

IN RE: ROLL CALL

Julian T. Lipscomb	Present
Rebecca M. Ringley	Present
James H. Burrell	Present
Dean E. Raynes	Absent
W. R. "Ray" Davis, Jr.	Present

Chairman Davis re-convened the meeting, which had been continued from April 25, 2002.

IN RE: DISCUSSION WITH CONGRESSMAN ROBERT C. SCOTT

The Board members met for breakfast with Congressman Robert C. Scott, U. S. Representative for the Third District of Virginia, at the Congressman's request, to discuss issues involving New Kent County.

Topics of discussion included terrorism, tax cuts and the budget deficit. Congressman Scott reported that the U.S. could have paid off the entire national debt with the budget surplus that existed prior to August of 2001. Since August of 2001, the surplus has disappeared and the Government is now spending Medicare dollars. He indicated that since September 11, there has been no fiscal responsibility, and there is risk of spending all of Medicare and Social Security. This will be a big problem with the Baby Boomer population approaching and reaching retirement age. He indicated that he cannot see the present Congress balancing the budget. The present administration is focused on tax cuts, which will result in an out-of-balance federal budget for the foreseeable future, which will, in turn, result in cuts in discretionary spending, including health care and education.

There was some discussion about federal funding for Homeland Security. Congressman Scott reviewed the problems arising from the fact that Governor Ridge has no cabinet status and no budget authority, and therefore is not required to testify in front of Congress. However, he reported that everyone recognizes that local personnel would be the first on the scene at any disaster and it is his opinion that somewhere in the neighborhood of \$30 billion will be budgeted for Homeland Security. Unfortunately, it is not yet known exactly how those funds are going to be distributed.

Mr. Lipscomb expressed his concern that education dollars are being budgeted for higher education, and not for local schools. Congressman Scott reported that the President's education bill does have significant funding for K- 12, but also calls for an increase in tests. It is his opinion that testing does not improve education, and borrowed an old farmer's phrase "you don't fatten a pig by weighing it". He indicated that there are programs proposed to upgrade teachers in math and science.

There was also some discussion about funding for IDEA (education for the disabled). Congressman Scott indicated that the federal government had pledged to pay up to 40% of IDEA, and although it has not yet reached that mark, increases each year are bringing it closer. The challenge is to put “new” money into the IDEA program, rather than money that is deducted from other programs, such as Title 1 (education for the disadvantaged). He did report that the IDEA is a favorite project of Senator Jeffers.

There was also discussion about the recent changes concerning the Immigration and Naturalization Service. Congressman Scott reported that one dysfunctional agency has now been divided into two: one for enforcement and one for services. He does not believe that this change will save any money and will most likely cost more, and unfortunately, no one is focusing on the problems that exist within the agency.

Congressman Scott also reported on the corporate loopholes that exist and the recent repeal of the alternative minimum tax, which is retroactive for 15 years, resulting from the present intense focus in Washington to reduce taxes for the top 1%. He reported that the inheritance/estate tax is being phased out over nine years, but scheduled to be reinstated in the 10th year, although President Bush has recommended that it be deleted permanently. He understands the plight of family -owned farms and closely-held businesses, but this group makes up only 2% of those who are subject to inheritance/estate taxes and some exemption could be made for them. Congressman Scott reported that the taxes being lost from the tax cuts for the top 1%, is twice what is needed to make Social Security secure for 75 years.

There was also discussion about a national health care program. Congressman Scott reported that the choices are either fund such a program, or give the country’s multimillionaires their tax cuts and loopholes. He agrees that U.S. employers who pay for employee health care premiums are at a competitive disadvantage with companies from those countries who have national health care programs. He also warned that, with the present deficit, there is little hope of having Medicare prescription coverage. He said that the reality is that those with money have access to health care and have the mindset of “I’ve got mine”. He also reported that if the tax cuts were frozen where they are now, there would be plenty of money to provide Medicare prescription coverage.

There was discussion about the high speed rail and funding for local airports, as well as the Virginia Water Project. Problems with the I-64 rest areas in New Kent were also discussed.

Congressman Scott assured the Board that he would do what he could to get his district as much funding for Education and Transportation as possible.

IN RE: ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:37 a.m.