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Albemarle County Board of Supervisors Public Hearing \u2013 Board\u2019s Proposed Budget, Wednesday, April 23, 2025

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[00:00:00] I'm pleased to call to order this meeting of the Albemarle County Board of Supervisors on the 23rd of April at 6 p.m. in Lane Auditorium. I'd like to note that at the TTS, we have Supervisor Mike Pruitt of the Scottsville District, Supervisor B. Lapista-Kirtley of the Ravenna District, Supervisor Diantha McKeel of the Jack Jewett District, Supervisor Ned Galloway of the Ryo District, Supervisor Ann Malick of the Whitehall District, and myself, Jim Andrews, representing the Samuel Miller District.

[00:00:24] The quorum is present. We're also joined by our County Executive, Mr. Jeff Richardson, our county attorney, Mr. Andy Herrick, our clerk, Ms. Claudette Borgerson, and our senior deputy clerk, Mr. Travis Morris. Also, let me please welcome Albemarle County Police Officers present, Master Police Officer Dana Reeves and Lieutenant Angela Jamerson. Thank you for your service here today and every day on behalf of the citizens and residents of Albemarle County for our safety and security. Our main agenda item for this evening is a public hearing to receive comments on the Board of Supervisors fiscal year 2026 proposed budget but before opening the public hearing I'm going to turn things over to Mr. Andy Bowman our assistant chief financial officer and Jacob

[00:01:04] Sumner our chief financial officer. Welcome. Good evening to the chair and the board and members of the public and thank you for the introduction. Before we open the public hearing I have a

summary of the proposed fiscal year 26 budget. I'll say if you've been to one of our community town halls or if you've been to the initial budget work session where the county executive presented the budget he's about 45 minutes where he's really gone in detail about everything the budget does the investments and why we've gotten there tonight I'm going to be more abbreviated in my approach where I'm really going to hit the highlights but certainly after the public hearing if the board has

[00:01:43] questions or would like to follow up on other items we can go and do those as well so again this is just a public hearing there is no action that is being requested by the board of supervisors tonight that action will occur on May 7th when the board of supervisors adopts and appropriates the budget Jacob Sumner, Chief Financial Officer. For the audience that may be joining us today for the public hearing, we do have a one-pager overview of the budget that's here at the sign-up sheet.

[00:02:20] And so if you would like to have that as part of in your possession for tonight, that is available at the sign-up sheet. Thank you. And to continue, thanks. Thank you. So I'd like to start these budget presentations about what is really the path behind us and the path ahead.

[00:02:38] Over the last two months, the board has invested a lot of time to this budget. This is the start of the 34th hour of a public meeting that we've had after all of our town halls and work sessions. And it is evident that the board of supervisors themselves invest a tremendous amount of their own time in the budget.

[00:02:54] We can see that from the depth and the breadth of their questions. We have on our website a lot of questions staff was unable to answer on the spot, but those are all posted there for transparency. Tonight is a public hearing on the budget. Next week will be a public hearing on the property tax rates.

[00:03:10] Those are two separate hearings due to Virginia Code that requires them to be held at two separate times. And then again on May 7th, we will request the board approve and appropriate the budget. As I walk through the highlights of the budget and where those investments are, we're going to orient a lot of this around the board's strategic plan that was adopted in the fall of 2022.

[00:03:32] Fiscal year 26, we have a third year of the board's five-year strategic plan that runs through fiscal year 28. And we've highlighted here where most of my comments tonight will be around the three goals on the left, safety and well-being, workforce and customer service, and education and learning, because those are some of the largest budget drivers where the new revenues are going.

[00:03:54] There are certainly efforts to move forward with existing funding, other actions that may be more implementing existing plans but really those first three on the left is where a lot of the comments will be focused. Before we look at the expenditure side it's appropriate that we look at the revenues. The budget is balanced as required by law for counties of Virginia and it is done so based on these proposed rates. The real property rate is an increase of four cents at 89.4 cents of \$100 in assessed value. I'll talk in a second about

[00:04:28] what those four cents do. Personal property is recommended at \$4.28 per \$100 evaluation. This is an increase to the rate where it was prior to the pandemic. The board and public may recall during the pandemic there was a surge in vehicle prices, in particular used car values. At that time the board of supervisors significantly dropped that rate 86 cents and over the last two years is phasing in that increase back to the pre-pandemic rate. Food and beverage and transit occupancy taxes are unchanged. To look a little closer at the real property rate of four cents, that is

[00:05:04] dedicated to go to the following areas, really with an emphasis on the quality of life and well-being aspects. First, in public safety, as we look at the impact of supporting existing fire rescue services as FEMA grants begin to be phased out, the county has leveraged, adding police officers, and the other support we have for our partners in public safety. There's additional funding provided for the public schools. By formula, the schools receive 54% of new revenues.

[00:05:34] This additional 0.4 cents, or \$1.2 million, is in addition to that. And finally, for the first time, the proposed budget includes ongoing funding for affordable housing. Again, \$1.2 million, which is equivalent to 0.4 cents on the real estate tax rate. In addition, there is some one-time money that I'll speak to in a few slides to really speak to the total investment in housing.

[00:05:56] So, this is the general fund revenues. While the overall county budget exceeds \$600 million, we really focus a lot of the board's discussion in our public presentations on the general fund. We do that for three reasons. It's where all tax revenue is received. It is the primary funding source of the public schools and the capital and debt program, as well as all local government services.

[00:06:19] And also, it is where the board of supervisors has the maximum amount of policy discretion. We can see in this donut chart that about two-thirds, a little more than two-thirds, of the revenues come from general property taxes, again, real estate and personal property. And we can also see, I'll highlight up in the kind of upper left, maybe around 11 o'clock, if you imagine the face of the clock, we have our federal revenue in that yellow piece at 2%.

[00:06:42] That is something we watch closely with the changing federal landscape. It's about \$9 million and is primarily funding the Department of Social Services or contributing to fund the Department of Social Services. Next, same chart in our balanced budget of general fund of \$480.6 billion.

[00:07:03] We can see the largest cost there is the transfer to schools at 45%. The next largest category is public safety, showing it again about 2 o'clock. If you imagine the face of the clock there, it's 16%. But more than these functional areas, I'll spend a little more time talking about the highlights of what this investment looks like in action.

[00:07:24] First, the county is committed to providing fire and police services to deliver the services the community expects. In recent years, the county has successfully leveraged federal grant funding from FEMA called the Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response. These are four separate grants that in total are leveraging \$12.7 million of federal funding.

[00:07:45] They are providing staff really across the entire system, the rural area, the development area, really in every direction. And it's really about supporting critical challenges we have, volunteer shortages, and the increasing demands we have for services. I should be very clear that the comment about volunteer shortages is not a comment on the volunteers themselves, as we've been served for decades by the volunteer system.

[00:08:08] I'll say it's much harder to be a volunteer firefighter now with training requirements, people challenged to live and work where they are in the same place, and a host of other factors. Nationwide, this is a trend that we are seeing. So as stations have requested supplemental staffing, the county has sought to supplement those faster through this FEMA grant strategy.

[00:08:27] As those grants are winding down, we need to be prepared to pick up those funds in order to maintain those services as calls grow. Looking next at the police department, there are six additional

officers included in the proposed budget.

[00:08:44] That is the highest increase to the police department since fiscal year 16. These officers would be assigned to patrol, which is really the backbone of the police department services, really looking across all shifts and augmenting those officers who are in the field. I should share that in addition to adding staff, we're also looking at the way we do business. In partnership with the police department and the fire rescue department, we're undertaking a comprehensive staffing study to really assess are we most effectively providing a public safety response that will review industry standards, best practices, and really make recommendations on the best way to assign and make sure that we're getting the optimal performance

[00:09:21] out of our those two departments in the field in the same way that we've looked at other departments in years I'll move next to community services the county really views a lot of our community partners both with other localities and the university is a force multiplier and what we can draw and there are 55 programs totaling 36 million dollars some of those are very large like the emergency communication center between the city the county and UVA the Jefferson Madison Regional Library, the Almar County, Charlottesville Regional Jail. A lot of those are also smaller non-profits. For example, I have a picture here of loaves and fishes.

[00:10:01] There's about \$1.6 million the county is providing through the human services funding process. It's an increase of about \$360,000 year to year to make sure that we are providing funds that can leverage the knowledge, the expertise, and the other funding leveraging of our community partners to support our regional social safety net. That is really also directed into our highest priority we're in need based on our human services needs assessment, and the process changes the board has supported over the past two years. That has resulted in this increased funding and the prioritization. I'd like to spend a moment talking about public schools. The ongoing operational

[00:10:40] funding is increasing \$14.3 million, or 7.3%. That comes after the last two years of about a little over \$27 million of operational funding, so continuing that strong operational support to support the various school needs. In addition to that, it is recommended to include in the proposed budget \$6.2 million in one-time cost to support the public school share of employee health care costs. Beyond the operating budget, I'll highlight in the capital plan, there are three new schools, two of which have broken ground, the Southern Elementary, New Southern

[00:11:16] Elementary School, and also Center 2, located at the Albemarle Journey and Greer Campus. Also in the plan, though not in construction and design until fiscal years 27 and 28, is a new elementary school in the northern feeding pattern. And the budget, or the CIP plan, not only addresses that school, but addresses the school board's request to expand that from a 500 student, now a plan 600 student, based on the demographic changes that they are seeing in projected enrollment. Next up, I'll highlight affordable housing. This is one of the areas supported by

[00:11:52] the increased tax rate. This is, again, the first time that there's dedicated revenue going to the Affordable Housing Investment Fund. And on top of that, ongoing funding, there's additional \$4 million of one-time investment that is included in the budget. For perspective, over the last five years, there's about \$17 million in local funding and ARPA funding that has been leveraged in this area.

[00:12:15] And beyond that, there's also been other federal pass-through community development block grants and other supports the county has leveraged. Next up is the slide for climate action and

environmental sustainability we have a team of staff in our Department of facilities and environmental services with an operating budget around half a million dollars to execute upon the climate action plan partnering with departments but we've also included that effort is not only climate action but also environmental state sustainability so water resources efforts the septic to sewer program funding with our partners are all included in that amount

[00:12:52] really continuing the work of the climate action program there is approximately \$200,000 remain in the climate reserve that would be recommended to carry forward if it's unused in the current year. And also the climate action works are not just the dollars, they also speak to the investments in transit, the work that we do in our facilities to make sure that they are energy efficient and all of the partnerships that FEZ works through.

[00:13:17] Next in economic development, which I should clarify for anyone in the public, those numbers in the upper right support the strategic plan goal that they are most closely to align with. There is about a little under \$1 million in one-time funding to add to the Economic Development Fund. Currently, the Economic Development Fund, I'm sorry, the Economic Development Strategic Plan is in the early stages of an update for the second Economic Development Strategic Plan.

[00:13:43] And a lot of this work of economic development is focused on the Rivanna Futures Project, as the defense industry is the second largest in the local economy. We have partnerships with Workforce Development, with PVCC, UVA, and our other community partners, as well as also looking at opportunities for redevelopment, like the Home Depot project at the site at Fashion Square Mall.

[00:14:12] Now to look at workforce and service delivery. The budget does include a cost of living adjustment of 3% for classified staff. This does also include the employer share for health care rates. This is a trend of a 24% increase that we've talked really about the county's experience in this fund.

[00:14:31] But I also wanted to acknowledge that the county has recently opened its second employee health clinic. This is a strategy that will not only provide a benefit in access and improved care, but can also be a strategy to really help flatten the increase we have seen in the last couple of years in the county's health care rates by treating things sooner and when they are less costly to do rather than ongoing and later.

[00:14:56] So also in workforce and service delivery, we're always looking at our operations to determine what can we do differently. So we have included in this budget, there are 11.7 full-time equivalent positions that are going to be eliminated. That is really a look at our reengineering efforts as we've put in new systems, as we've looked at our operations and processes.

[00:15:15] And really, as vacant positions have come up, what is the best and highest use of those positions, and how might we do things differently? So we have already to date realized \$1 million in the current fiscal year, and next year there would be another half a million dollars in fiscal year 26 that we would anticipate to receive or anticipate to capture.

[00:15:33] So this is more than a talking point. This is a real part of the budget process to balance. I would also add that that 11.7, that is just a decrease, full transparency with the additional six officers. Those are the only new positions. So the net change in positions will be down negative 5.7.

[00:15:52] Finally, I've talked about some of these examples sprinkled throughout the goals, but this is a look at our five-year CIP, some of the highlights of those new projects. I'll highlight the green bar in the

middle. There is the continued phases of Biscuit Run with the fields and other improvements at that park that has opened this year. Continuing the Dardentau athletic field rebuild, two fields are underway. The remaining two would be in fiscal year 26 and 27. An urban pocket park. And I'll highlight also, in addition to the new schools, the school board's request for school buses has been addressed and fully funded, and there is an increase in the school

[00:16:30] renovation funding that is provided in the CIP. It does not fully fund the school board's request, but it does provide an increase over prior years. So I want to take a moment just to recap of what has changed since the budget was originally recommended on February 24th. On March 19th, the board of supervisors endorsed these technical updates on the screen. I'm not going to walk through in detail, but the way I would classify this is every single one of these updates, if they were known in early February when the recommended budget finalized, they already would have been incorporated into the budget. It was really mainly a timing difference of information.

[00:17:04] We'll spend a little more time on the next slide. April 7th, the Board of Supervisors made a more substantial update, it's not technical, to allocate one-time funding from its Advancing Strategic Priorities Reserve, taking 1.2 of that amount and allocating that to the affordable, I'm sorry, the Albemarle Housing Investment Fund, and also \$200,000 to the general fund for the emergency relief program that is offered through the Department of Social Services.

[00:17:32] So these are not the final changes. These are what the board has directed staff at this time to the date. The board, of course, can continue to make amendments until the adopted budget on May 7th. So with that, that is a summary of about the 300-page document and, again, those 33 hours of public meetings.

[00:17:51] And if anyone read the two-pager while I was talking, hopefully you got a little context to the quick way because the most important part tonight is not myself. It's really forward to hear from the public and the board if they have any questions after the public or anything staff is here to support the board for any follow-ups we can address to support the board for that May 2nd adoption date.

[00:18:10] So at this time, I'll turn it over to Chair Andrews. Thank you. I appreciate the update. And we do have many of those hours of public meetings are recorded and available for the public to view at any time. Before we open the public hearing, I'd like just to go through the order for tonight for the board speaking.

[00:18:30] If there are any questions, Andy, Jacob, starting with Supervisor Prode. Thank you. I think I only have one question at this time, but it might be a little, I think you have these numbers ready.

[00:18:45] Can you walk the board and the public through basically all unassigned funds, I'm thinking our Advancing Strategic Priorities Reserve, and then you also know my bugbear with the other two funds, our operating reserves and our additional 2% reserves.

[00:19:01] Can you walk us through to the either nearest millionth or, as appropriate, to the nearest 100,000th, how much we have remaining in each of those funds? Sure. So I'll speak to this just through a couple different categories.

[00:19:17] So the first of which is the county's unassigned general fund balance. Under the board's financial management policies, the county holds 10% of its funds, really to meet cash flow needs and it's really also there for the event of it's not so much a rainy day fund I was thinking more of the hurricane

fund where if there was a acute kind of economic or natural catastrophe or something that took place that would allow the county to pay its bills to continue operations to not have to avoid any sort of short-term borrowing that number I believe is approximately 50 million I'm gonna say I'll need a little bit bigger range but

[00:19:53] I'll confirm that once or as my colleague mr. Sumner or mr. Davidson so that is that 10% that is really, really viewed as largely untouchable. On top of that, under the board's financial management policies, there is a 2% reserve, and that's equal to about, you know, between \$10 and \$11 million. And that exists, there's a little more flexibility there. So if there was a one-time circumstance or emergency where the board needed to buy itself time or just address a really unforeseen issue, that \$10 to \$11 million would be available as one-time

[00:20:28] funding to address a temporary disruption. So on top of that, there is in the CIP, we've talked before about the Advancing Strategic Priorities Reserve. After the board's direction on April 7th, there's about \$700,000 of one-time money that is really a waiting board direction on how that should be applied. Then as part of our operating budget in the general fund, there are funds that are available just really to manage throughout the year. We call this a reserve for contingencies where perhaps something comes in unexpected.

[00:21:04] Those tend to be much smaller. It's about a little under \$200,000 in ongoing funds and also the one-time portion I think is about \$300,000. I'm going to fact check myself on that one as well. Really, the reason I'm being so distinct in my clarification of what is ongoing versus one-time is the board knows well in the board's financial management policy is if you were to use one-time money for an ongoing expense, that would create a great fiscal challenge the following year when that one-time funding was not available. So those are the recaps. I'll ask

[00:21:37] are there any numbers I need to correct that I said out loud? All right, thank you, Mr. Davidson. As just one quick clarifying question to follow up on that, when we're looking at the reserve for contingencies and you distinguish between the ongoing and the one-time, is one part of the other is it that we have 300,000 set aside of which 200 of that could be used for ongoing or are they separate pots they are uh separate pots the total is around approximate number is around 500,000 a little under 200,000 ongoing about 300,000 one time understood thank you we have

[00:22:15] and I appreciate the uh the flexibility to use approximate numbers so thank you supervisor McKeel thank you for the presentation I don't have any questions I do want to thank you for the briefing sheet, the one pager that you all prepared for the public that are here tonight to be able to take home and look at. Thank you very much. I appreciate it. Supervisor Malek. Thank you so much. Each time we go through, it gets clearer and clearer. You mentioned, or perhaps I heard

[00:22:49] things said approximate to each other that weren't connected, going over to the three new schools and And then increases in operations. But there is no operational increase in staffing now in the fiscal year '26 budget for buildings that are hardly begun construction.

[00:23:09] That is correct. In fiscal year '27 is when we anticipate the Southern Elementary Center 2 would open. And the estimated operating cost from that from the public schools at this time is approximately \$2.4 million. But that would be expected to show up in the fiscal year '27 budget.

[00:23:25] That's all. Thank you. Supervisor Lupisto-Curtley. Yes, thank you very much for your presentation. You mentioned \$700,000, when you were going through the list, you mentioned \$700,000, and I was taking notes, and I didn't quite get that.

[00:23:43] Sure. So I'll go back just in time, just a little bit. On April 7th, there was about \$1.9 million remaining in the CIP Advancing Strategic Priority Reserve, that number at the top. At that time, the board directed staff to move \$1.2 million of that to the two items shown on the screen.

[00:24:03] And so of that original \$1.9 million, about \$700,000 still does exist and is available for the board for a future use, whenever that may be. Thank you. No other questions. Thank you. Supervisor Galloway. Yeah, similar question, just because I missed the note.

[00:24:18] For the reserve for contingencies, just say again what's the ongoing and what's the one-time amounts. Approximates, fine. Approximate to a little under \$200,000. ongoing and one time a little over 300,000 and thank you sorry mr. Davis and would you please a speak come to the microphone and correct me the more times I repeat it the more time I might get a little further off each time so thank you as your fact checking me sure sure Ryan Davidson deputy chief of budget so for the reserve for contingencies for FY 26 the the ongoing amount is approximately

[00:24:57] \$200,000. The one-time amount is approximately \$600,000. We're at approximately \$800,000. With the changes we showed above, we're at approximately \$880,000 total in the reserve for contingencies with that split being, I don't have the exact numbers in front of me, but \$200,000 in ongoing and about \$600, a little over \$600,000 in one time. Yes, ma'am.

[00:25:26] Thank you for the clarification. Yeah, that's very helpful, and I was going through our budget book and seeing how we've used this in the past, and it has been important to have there, but it's also helpful to note what that planning is.

[00:25:43] I'm sure I will have more comments after the public hearing and want to look at some of these numbers again, but for now, if there are no other questions, we can open the public hearing, And Vice Chair McKeel will read the rules and read off the names of our speakers.

[00:26:01] I will do that. I'll read the rules first. And we do have, Claudette, we have one person still. It's not noted here. I just want to double check. One person online, by phone. Okay. Sounds good.

[00:26:18] So during public comment hearings, oh, there it is. It was a sheet. I'm sorry. During public comment hearings, the board will acknowledge speakers addressing the item listed for public hearing. Speakers are limited to one appearance of three minutes per public hearing. Community members physically present for the meeting will speak first. Then those who are attending the meeting electronically will speak. For those attending electronically, the clerk will announce each speaker before it is their turn to speak. For in-person speakers, timekeeping is conducted through a timer and light system at the podium. The green light will go on when you begin speaking, which begins your allotted time. The yellow light indicates you have one minute to

[00:26:55] finished speaking, the red light indicates your time has expired, and you will be asked to end your comments. For community members who are attending the meeting electronically, timekeeping is conducted through a timer. The timer will commence when you begin speaking, and this begins your allotted time. You will be notified when your three minutes are up, and you are requested to bring your comments to a close. In order to give all speakers equal treatment and courtesy, the board requests that

speakers adhere to the following guidelines. When addressing the board, state your name and if you live in Albemarle County, your magisterial district. Address comments directly

[00:27:31] to the board as a whole. Any written comments or other supporting material may be given to the clerk. If making comments electronically, you may upload written comments through the e-comment portal or email your comments to the clerk. If representing a group or organization, you may ask other speakers to raise their hands in recognition. Speakers may not share any unused time with another speaker. Back and forth debate is not permitted. Do not speak from your seat or out of turn. All comments are live streamed, recorded, and published on the Albemarle County website.

[00:28:04] If participating by phone, press star nine to let us know you want, you're ready to speak. Then star six, if from a landline to unmute. If by Zoom, please remain muted until you are called on to speak. So with that, we have a total of 17 folks that have signed up to speak. And to keep this...

[00:28:30] There's more coming. A couple more signing in. So, okay, we'll have a few more. We'll leave that out. Okay. The number may change slightly. But to keep this moving and to keep it as efficient as possible, I'm going to call three names at a time. If the three folks whose names I call will just come and have a seat on either side of the front row and then it moves the process along a little quicker and we would appreciate it if you could do that so the first three people to come forward Diane Brown Towns Reverend Susan Carlson and Carolyn Crutchfield so if you'll come forward

[00:29:08] Diane Brown Towns you're the first speaker and will the other two folks come forward please and have a seat in the front. Welcome. I guess they're not here. All right.

[00:29:27] So, Diane, you're first. Would you like to come forward and speak? Okay. Diane, come on.

[00:29:43] The microphone is here if you can. Yes. And see if you can adjust the microphone so we'll be able to hear you clearly. Well, so she's Carolyn Crutchfield. Yes, ma'am. Okay. That's fine. I'm from the Whitehall District, 5732 Meadows Drive, Jose Rubino.

[00:30:04] Can you take the microphone, please? Thank you. All right. I'm sorry. I have Parkinson's, so I can't speak very loudly, but I enjoy the microphone immensely, so we're good to go.

[00:30:20] All right, I live in the Meadows, Crozet community of Crozet Meadows Apartments, and I've lived there for 10 years. I've seen a lot of things go down in the community, and not by the residents, but by the property managers.

[00:30:44] So I would like to say I'd like to see you sort of monitor their behavior because we have had 26, 27 property managers in the 10 years I've been there.

[00:31:06] So I'd like to see them more attuned to the community and not be dictators. I say it's progressively digressed down to a gulag.

[00:31:26] It's kind of frightening because we don't have any continuity in the policies they make. They arbitrarily come and make policies, and I think that's because we're low-income and they don't think we're smart enough to recognize when they're abusing us.

[00:31:48] We're an older community. We're past 62 and above. And we don't have the same needs as a regular multifamily. And I think there should be probably more recognition of our weaknesses as well as our strengths.

[00:32:12] I just got out of the meeting, coincidentally, today, where they told us that they treat us the same as everybody else. And I'd like to see that happen.

[00:32:29] So I'd like to see more control of the communities, low-income communities, that we build in this county so that we have choices so we can move from a place that we're not well suited for or that we don't agree with or whatever and have some place to move to.

[00:32:55] That's why we need low-income communities, just because I don't have the money or the ability to seek out something more beneficial for my lifestyle.

[00:33:16] And I think everybody deserves that. So thank you. Thank you. Thank you, Ms. Crutchfield. We really appreciate you coming. The next speaker is Diane Brown Townsend, or Towns, I'm sorry, Towns.

[00:33:33] I think she's not here. then Reverend Susan Carlson. Good evening my name is Reverend Susan Carlson and I'm a member of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Charlottesville and I am also living in the White Hall District and I'm one of the co-presidents of IMPACT. When I moved back to this area I was

[00:34:07] looking for a place to live and we found a home that was in the community of Albemarle County. If we didn't have some financial assistance from our deceased, hardworking, single mothers, we couldn't have afforded to move back here to Albemarle County.

[00:34:27] So we are among the privileged people, and we know it, who can afford to live here. But every single one of us know that there are many tens of thousands of people who cannot afford to live in this area, and they seek a place that has more affordable housing.

[00:34:46] Impact recently had our Nehemiah Action, where over 1,100 people came together because they all believe the need for \$10 million a year for affordable housing is something that we really need in this community.

[00:35:06] Several county supervisors were there that evening, and we were glad and are glad for their presence. We're disappointed, however, that once again the county has been unwilling to fund affordable housing at the level that it is needed to truly address our community's housing problems, some of which you have just heard.

[00:35:31] We're grateful that you as a board found additional money recently, both for the housing fund to provide a long-term solution and for the eviction relief fund also to keep people out of harm's way for a short term.

[00:35:53] Unfortunately, the housing crisis is ever increasing, and it's such a huge problem that's getting worse all the time. Just last year, the Housing Fund had requests for 20 million of project applications.

[00:36:11] We know that all of you as community leaders are here. You're in your positions because you want everyone in Albemarle County to have a decent place to live, a safe place. Affordable housing for everyone is a very fundamental community need.

[00:36:29] And if we don't address those very things, then how will we have it? The budget is not yet finalized. You as a board still have the power to get more money into the housing fund, and we boldly ask that you do so. Thank you very much. Thank you. Thank you. The next three speakers, Denise Zito, Reed Krobach, and Veronica Vitko. If you'll come forward, and Denise, you're up first. Good evening. My name is Denise Zito. I'm speaking as an Albemarle

[00:37:05] County resident, Whitehall Magisterial District, and as a member of Impact. I raised three children in Free Union, and they've all stayed close by. Two live near me in the county, one in Charlottesville. Recently, the eldest asked me, why are there so many people begging on the street corners?

[00:37:23] Why have I known? I didn't see that when I was a child growing up here. And I told them, well, we've had 40 years of underinvestment in housing. There are no affordable places for these people to go. If you had attended the Nehemiah action, you would have heard the director of the Haven tell us that it is a myth that people are unhoused because they have mental illness or alcoholism. Other cities have citizens with these problems, but they have funded their housing so that there are places for people to live. One of my own skeptical church members asked,

[00:38:01] why does an impact work with the private sector? Why always ask for government support? And I guess I would say, well look where leaving this to the private sector has gotten us. Renovation into luxury apartments. The city of Charlottesville stepped up to the problem and when a mobile home park near Carlton Road came up for sale, the city used their affordable housing trust fund to facilitate the purchase of that property and keep people in their homes. Now we have a similar case here in Albemarle when Cavalier Crossing, a set of apartments south of 64 came up for sale.

[00:38:38] If we had had this fund that we've been asking for for years, the county would have been able to purchase that property. Instead, that complex has been purchased by who knows who, and they are turning it into, yeah, luxury apartments. Just what we need, right?

[00:38:55] Where will those families go? My point, of course, is that the problem worsens the longer we wait. The experts with whom Impact have been working have explained that the best practice is for the county to solicit proposals in an annual competition for funded projects.

[00:39:13] Rental housing near the urban ring with public transportation. What you've proposed in this budget is not enough for the problem. I heard hurricane fund if all these people on the streets and sleeping in their cars is not a hurricane. I don't know what you would call it.

[00:39:30] So we urge you to do what it takes to provide these funds and start the process of better housing options for those who are not as rich of all of us sitting here in this room. Thank you. Thank you. Reed, Reed Krobach, you're next. You're welcome.

[00:39:48] And pull the mic up. There you go. Thanks. Members of the Board of Supervisors, my name is Reed Krobach, and I'm a 10th grader at Community Lab School here in Albemarle. I could be hanging out with my friends right now or maybe studying for the SOLs, but I chose to be here at a budget meeting to talk about climate change.

[00:40:07] As humans continue to burn fossil fuels, the world will change drastically, and people will suffer. Climate change is already increasing the severity of weather, and we are unprepared for the effects it will have on our beautiful county. My generation will likely inherit a world wracked with extreme weather and worsened injustices.

[00:40:27] To address the pressing issue of climate change, the county has set ambitious goals. A 45% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions from 2008 levels by 2030 and net zero by 2050. There are clear actions to support these goals outlined in the county's climate action plan, and they can have a significant impact.

[00:40:49] And yet these actions are not funded. The county's proposed budget for financial year 2026 includes nearly \$10 million for the Department of Facilities and Environmental Services, but almost all of this will go towards facilities maintenance, not climate change mitigation and adaptation. Additionally, no money has been allocated for the ever-depleting climate action funding pool.

[00:41:15] As a young person, I will either grow up in a world in which people sat by as climate change grew irreversible, or I will grow up in a world in which we took action. To address climate change and meet its climate goals, Albemarle County must allocate one million dollars in the annual budget for a Climate Action Plan Implementation Fund.

[00:41:36] The fund should be designated solely for the administration of the county's Climate Action Plan and the measures outlined in it. These include increasing the extent of sidewalks and bike lanes to reduce reliance on gas-powered cars, providing incentives for private renewable energy development, and increasing tree cover in urban areas.

[00:41:58] When properly executed, these actions and others outlined in the Climate Action Plan can make Albemarle a leader in the fight against climate change, but they require funding. The city of Charlottesville already includes \$1 million in their annual budget for climate action, and Albemarle must follow their example.

[00:42:19] Climate action isn't free, but it is essential. A \$1 million climate action plan implementation fund would help to secure a healthy environment for my generation and the ones that follow. Thank you. Thank you. Veronica?

[00:42:35] Good evening. My name is Veronica Vitko and I live in the Rivanna District. I'm also a junior at Albemarle High School. I'm here today to ask you to include a \$1 million climate action implementation fund in this year's budget. I know \$1 million sounds like a lot, but when it comes to protecting our future, my future, and the future of every young person in this county, it's the kind of investment we need to make. Right now, only about \$200,000 remains in the climate action pool.

[00:43:08] That is not enough. Not when we've committed to cutting emissions almost in half by 2030. Not when the climate crisis is already here. If we're serious about meeting our goals, about protecting the people who live here, we need to back that up with real, consistent funding.

[00:43:25] Climate change is not an abstract idea. It is actively changing the way we live. And yet, the budget this year puts no new money towards real climate solutions. How is that prioritizing the health and safety of our community? We know climate change is one of the biggest challenges we face, not just globally, but right here at home.

[00:43:45] It affects everything. And the longer we delay, the more difficult and expensive it gets. Climate action isn't a side issue. It has to be a part of everything. Transportation, housing, public health, schools. And funding it should be a non-negotiable part of our priorities.

[00:44:02] This fund would allow Elmira County to finally start making significant advances toward achieving the goals of the climate action plan. Other cities across Virginia, like Richmond, Charlottesville, and Alexandria, are already investing in climate action. Albemarle has the chance to lead, too.

[00:44:18] But that won't happen if we keep waiting for the right time. The truth is, there will always be other needs and other priorities. But climate change touches everything. Ignoring it will make all of these

problems worse. One million may seem like a big number, but compared to the cost of inaction, it's just a starting point.

[00:44:37] It's an investment in jobs, in healthier communities, in safer infrastructure, and in the future that so many other young people will inherit. I'm asking you, please don't put climate on the back burner again this year. Fund it like our future depends on it, because it does.

[00:44:53] Thank you. The next three speakers, Catherine Riley, Jane Colony Mills, and Savi O'Flynn. Catherine, you are first.

[00:45:13] Good evening, Board of Supervisors. My name is Catherine Riley. I live in the Rivanna District, and I'm a junior at Albemarle High School. In 2020, you made a call to climate change mitigation, the Albemarle County Climate Action Plan. You promised to work towards, and I quote, reducing greenhouse gas emissions in the community by 45 percent from 2008 levels by 2030, and to achieve net zero emissions by 2050.

[00:45:44] This is an admirable and impressive goal, but without funding, it cannot be achieved. Going net zero emissions in 2050 is out of the picture unless the county puts funding towards their promise. My community, the Climate Conscious Youth of Elmore, proposes an annual amount of \$1 million towards climate action.

[00:46:07] This will ensure that organizations working towards the funding needed to make a change will have that funding. Funding can go to electric buses, efficient building energy, solar power, protecting public lands, and creating a walkable community where everyone can get to where they need to without using cars that run on gas.

[00:46:34] This is not only important for our community now, but it affects generations after us. Your children and grandchildren will be impacted by the decisions you make in the next couple of years. With the major federal funding cuts to climate action, we need local legislators to step up and make a positive change in our community.

[00:46:54] I'm asking you, the County Board of Supervisors, to keep your promise and further it by funding an annual amount of \$1 million into the Albemarle County Climate Action Plan. Thank you. Thank you. Jane, you're next.

[00:47:12] Yes, ma'am. Good evening. I'm Jane Colony Mills. I live in the Whitehall District, and I'm the Executive Director of Loaves and Fishes Food Pantry in the Jack Jewett District. And I'm here to talk about Loaves and Fishes, but I'm also a big supporter of funding for affordable housing and climate action in Albemarle County. I want to thank Mr. Richardson, Mr. Bowman, and the Albemarle County Finance Staff for including Loaves and Fishes and our vital food services in the county's FY26 Human Services Budget and Capital Improvements Program Budget. Loaves and Fishes Food Pantry provides a week's worth of nutritious groceries each month to more than 10,000 individuals facing

[00:47:51] food insecurity. Our food distributions are customized to meet household size, dietary restrictions, and cultural preferences, ensuring that everyone receives food that truly nourishes. Notably, half of those we serve live in Albemarle County. Since 2022, the number of individuals relying on loaves and fishes for food has risen by 92 percent. In 2024, we distributed 2.8 million pounds of food to more than 128,000 people, including seniors, children, people with disabilities, survivors of domestic violence, and the unhoused. This dramatic increase underscores

[00:48:30] the urgent need for continued support and expanded capacity to meet our neighbors where they are with compassion and nutritious food. With 65% of our food being perishable, expanding our cold storage capacity is essential. Additional freezer space will allow us to store more fresh proteins, enabling us to respond to the growing demand with dignity and nutrition at the forefront.

[00:48:54] Last year, 33% of the food we distributed, more than 973,000 pounds, we rescued from local grocery stores and freight haulers, including food rejected by the Walmart Distribution Center in Zion Crossroads. This food rescue reduces food waste at the Ivan Materials Utilization Center, and any food not fit for human consumption is redirected to pig farmers.

[00:49:18] To better serve our diverse community, we offer Spanish language support at every distribution and Dari, Pashtu, and Arabic-speaking staff on Wednesdays and Thursdays. We also have a full-time dietitian who teaches live and online cooking classes, supports visitors with special diets, and introduces new foods through recipes and samples.

[00:49:38] If the county's budget is approved as proposed, this will be the first time Loaves and Fishes has received funding from Albemarle County, and we are deeply grateful to staff and the Board of Supervisors for this support. We'd also like to extend our heartfelt thanks to Albemarle County for proposing continued funding for MicroCat, a service that has been a gift for many county residents, making it easier for them to access our location on Lambs Road. Thank you for helping us better serve the community.

[00:50:05] Thank you. I couldn't see you back there, so I'm glad you're there. Hi, Saebo Flynn. I'm a Climate Justice Policy Manager with the Community Climate Collaborative, C3. I want to, I once again have to address the slide that we were shown earlier on environmental services and climate action, giving the impression that we are funding climate action to the tune of \$1.95 million.

[00:50:32] We are not. I've said this many times, as many of you have heard. we are funding climate action with the leftover funding of two hundred thousand dollars that was put in in financial year 2022 there is no new climate funding in this budget uh just have to point that out again um i have been asked by even members of this board and uh staff members in the county why i as an irish person would choose to live in the united states of america it is a difficult decision. This is not my home. This is not where I have my support network. This is,

[00:51:09] you know, it's challenging to live here. I live here and work here because I believe that the decisions that are made even on the local level in the United States of America have impacts that go far beyond this locality. The work that can be done if it is funded by implementing the objectives of the 2020 Climate Action Plan will have reaches beyond this county. I think you all know that, but I just want to state that as fact, as somebody who grew up elsewhere, we pay attention. Everyone in Ireland has heard of Charlottesville, obviously because of the horrific events of 2017. I would

[00:51:48] love for them to hear about Albemarle when I go back and talk about the work that I do and the work that I'm able to work with the county representatives to advance climate action funding in this county. There is a circular that has been going around that has been distributed with community members who are concerned about the absence of climate funding in this budget.

[00:52:10] I just want to point out for the board it notes that there are two full-time staff there's funding for two full-time staff for the climate action program. One of those positions remains unfilled Yes, there's

budget for it, but it remains unfilled. I'm asking you to seriously put the fire under the FES to make sure that that program gets filled and that we actually have the two climate program members.

[00:52:36] There are also a lot of bullets that just described the work of the climate program. Those are not separate budget items. Those are just describing the work of the funded climate program staff positions. I've been asked as well many times, like for examples of specific programs, The climate program has already done lots and lots of work on, you know, community-facing work.

[00:52:58] Energy efficiency, green building incentives, electrification grants, bridging funding gaps and leveraging resources. You can look to the city of Charlottesville and the work that they're already doing. You can partner with them. They're a willing and able partner. I ask you to fund climate action in this budget. Thank you.

[00:53:16] The next three speakers, Lila Castleman, Lexi Ryan, and Mel Obeer, if you'll come down front. And Lila, you're first.

[00:53:35] Welcome. Hello, my name is Lila Castleman, and I am here to ask Albemarle County to include funding specifically for climate action in their annual budget.

[00:53:51] When this county passed its 2020 Climate Action Plan, it was a truly inspiring and impressive event. It made Albemarle a leader in action to resist climate change. Unfortunately, I now feel as though the county has let its constituents down.

[00:54:07] The leadership that was demonstrated when the plan was first passed has failed to back up its goals with significant or sufficient action. When I wrote to supervisors to communicate my concerns, I was misinformed by a supervisor that two additional positions have been added to the climate program, which is not true.

[00:54:25] There are still only two climate program positions, and one of them has been vacant for months. The funding for climate action in this budget is only \$200,000, which is all that is left of the climate action pool last funded in fiscal year 22.

[00:54:42] This is nowhere near sufficient for attaining the greenhouse gas reduction goals stated in the climate action plan. Local greenhouse gases are still high and have not been significantly reduced since the climate action plan was adopted. In five years, the county has failed to continue funding the climate action that is increasingly necessary.

[00:55:02] The current federal administration can no longer be relied upon to provide any funding whatsoever for climate action. Devastating as it is, the responsibility to fight global warming now lies upon state and local governments, and we must do our part to protect our environment.

[00:55:19] Other Virginian municipalities have, for the most part, also struggled or failed to ensure sufficient targeted funding for climate action. Albemarle must be a leader, a trailblazer once again, and inspire other governments to fund crucial climate action. I understand that funding is scarce and that there are infinite other issues that require money.

[00:55:39] However, these issues will always be present. There will never be a right time to start funding climate change or a time where money is infinite or there are no other issues requiring funding. But this problem will not go away. Too much time has already been spent and too many climate-related disasters have already occurred.

[00:55:56] With this funding, we can prevent the hurricane, literal and figurative. Funding for climate action must be baked into every aspect of government, every department, every program. We can start with a specific climate action fund that is added to annually instead of just once.

[00:56:14] The time to fund climate action is now. I urge you to commit to saving our planet, to protect our country and people, and to fight for a world where future generations can live safely. Thank you. Thank you. Lexi? Good evening, everyone. My name is Lexi Ryan, and I'm a current resident living in Riot District, and I really appreciate the opportunity to speak with you guys today about something that affects the future of our home, and that is Albemarle County. We're fortunate enough to live

[00:56:53] in a beautiful and vibrant community, blossoming with trees and flowers everywhere. But as we know, climate is changing. We see it more as extreme weather, increased flood risks, rising temperatures, and shifts in our ecosystem. That's why I'm here to propose a dedicated \$1 million fund into the Climate Action Plan, not just reacting to its effects, but actively preparing for them and reducing our contribution to the problem. Other countries and cities, even in Virginia,

[00:57:27] are doing this. Not because they can afford to wait, but because they can't afford not to act. Climate action and everything that we've been trying to do has not helped, and it just gets worse. Even though it's not getting any better, this doesn't have to be a massive shift all at once. Even a small percentage of our discretionary budget set aside consistently each year could be the start of a long-term resilience and sustainability. Think of \$1 million towards

[00:58:02] climate action as an investment in our economy, in public health, and the lives of future generations who will call Albemarle their home. I believe our community cares, and I believe that with thoughtful planning, transparency, and local collaboration, we can rise to meet this challenge.

[00:58:19] Let's be proactive, and let's be responsible. Let's make Albemarle a model of what a community can do if it chooses to protect its future. Thank you for your time in considering this proposal. Thank you. Mel, you're up next. Hi. Good evening. My name is Mel. I live in Elmall County and I have since 1991 when my parents brought me down as a small child from upstate New York, drawn in by promises of good jobs and affordable housing, which they successfully achieved. They're

[00:58:58] living the dream in my childhood home in Hollymead to this day. I cannot do the same thing that they have done. I am raising my own family, and I'm living paycheck to paycheck. I have just finished my Master of Education at University of Virginia, and I am teaching at a private school for children with disabilities. I cannot afford to buy a home in Charlottesville. Charlottesville became a national story much to our chagrin in 2017 for reasons we'd rather forget. But what's happening here today has the potential to rewrite that story. This community has the chance to become

[00:59:38] known for something else, for standing up for dignity, for fairness, and for the belief that housing is a human right. I believe that this board has the opportunity to lead not only through policies but by acknowledging and addressing what so many people here are experiencing. I know many of you have spoken publicly about your intent to do all that you can and I appreciate that. I was at Nehemiah Action and appreciate everything you said but the scale of the crisis calls for more than intention. It calls for action that matches the urgency and the harm. At this point it is

[01:00:17] nearly impossible to live comfortably in this county as so many of us do without being deeply aware that so many others cannot and to recognize the responsibility that this awareness brings. That's

why I have launched a petition on change.org titled housing is a human right and I am asking the board to take three specific steps to establish a community-led emergency housing affordability task force, not one that focuses on landowners and developers, to publicly support

[01:00:54] lifting the state ban on local rent control, and to explore stronger tenant protections such as fair eviction standards and rent increased caps tied to cost of living. These ideas were not developed in isolation and they are not meant to replace any existing work. My hope is that you will see this as another angle at a much broader effort.

[01:01:18] Groups like IMPACT, who I greatly support, and Piedmont Housing Alliance and so many others are doing powerful work on this issue. This petition simply reflects one more way to contribute to that movement from a different perspective informed by lived experience.

[01:01:34] I also want to acknowledge that the ongoing conversation around IMPACT's request for 10 million in housing trust fund commitment is if you leave your comments with the clerk yes thank you for your time and we have four more speakers so rather than calling three i'm just going to call over all four i don't want one person left out so i believe this is todd cone

[01:02:00] michael monaco susan cruz and indigo mathan and todd you are first um we have additional signups Oh, there is one more. Sorry. Okay. We'll get to you in just a minute then. Todd, go ahead ahead.

[01:02:27] Hi, I'm Todd Cohn. I'm in the Rio District, and I'm here today on behalf of Indivisible Charlottesville's environmental group.

[01:02:43] We want to join with the many other organizations and groups in the area and urge this board to fully fund the county's climate action plan in the fiscal year 2026 budget.

[01:03:06] We know that climate change is a worldwide problem. It's far bigger than just our county, and that makes it tempting to just leave it up to the federal and state government. to deal with it. But our federal government is currently in the hands of a climate change denier who is unlikely to do anything about climate change and even seems to delight in promoting

[01:03:40] projects that make the problem worse. Our state government is divided and unable to make decisive actions on climate. And it appears likely that it will remain divided in the at least near future, although it may be divided slightly differently. So it is down to the local government.

[01:04:15] We don't have anybody else left. It's you guys. Don't let it be said of us in the far future that we wanted to do something about climate change.

[01:04:34] But we decided we just couldn't afford it. Thank you. thank you michael yes welcome good evening thank you and thank you county staff um for the presentation um i've told this board before that i am a resident of affordable housing i'm one of the few households that successfully purchased a designated affordable proffered for sale affordable unit um a rare breed now mall county as it turns out um so i'm keenly aware of what

[01:05:12] it means to uh both live in affordable housing and also be lucky enough to have threaded the bureaucratic needles and, again, own a home that gives me stability that other people don't have. At the same time, if I wanted to move somewhere else in Albemarle County, I'm happy where I am, but if I wanted to move somewhere else, I couldn't. I'd be looking at probably Madison, maybe Stanton. That's

about the radius I'm looking at, if I can think about what I can afford right now. The inflexibility of the housing market in Albemarle County is a problem at all levels. It's

[01:05:48] a problem for affordable housing. It's a problem for people who don't have the money to leave a place they don't want to live anymore. But it's a problem everywhere. It puts pressure on the housing market. It contributes to what Mr. Bowman alluded to earlier about people not being able to work and live in the same place as a volunteerism deficit contributor. All of these problems are interconnected. You know, when we talk about the greenhouse gas emissions goal, reducing by 45%, well in 2018 52 percent of greenhouse gas emissions in the county came from transit came from transportation when people have to drive from out of the county to work when they have to drive

[01:06:25] from madison from stanton from orange louisa that creates greenhouse gas emissions and that's not a problem that can just be solved by sort of hoping we can build some more vehicle chargers we have to have more housing here in now mal county again at every level from the most subsidized affordable housing to market rate housing. Otherwise, this puts the pressure on the housing market that creates the incentives for things like the evictions or forced relocations at Cavalier Crossing. This is an issue of justice all up and down. It underpins everything in the budget, and I would urge the board to consider doing everything in their power to further fund the

[01:07:03] affordable housing fund this year, next year, and years into the future. Thank you. Could you please repeat your name again? I'm sorry. My name is Michael Monaco. I'm in the whitehall district susan cruz susan there you go welcome hello good evening members of the albemarle county board of supervisors my name is susan cruz and i am the executive director of the community climate collaborative c3 but most importantly i'm a mom and i have lived in this community for 26 years six years ago i came before you on behalf of thousands of charlesville and

[01:07:42] albemarle county residents dozens of local businesses and non-profit organizations asking the board to set leadership goals for climate action. I was proud that the board unanimously voted to set climate goals at the highest standard, a 45% reduction by 2030 and carbon neutrality by 2050. At the time, at that time in my public comment, I shared with you that my eldest child, Evan, would be 40 years old by 2050, roughly the same age I was when I was coming before you to ask to set those goals. He was nine at the time. My youngest child, Sebastian, Sebi, was just

[01:08:18] six years old. Albemarle's climate work got off to a strong start as the county worked to complete its climate action plan, its resiliency plan, expanded its climate team, and dedicated funding to implement the climate action plan. I was proud of this board, including some of you who were serving at the time. Folks, I'm here to tell you that we are no longer on track. The county's own greenhouse gas emissions tell the story better than I can. While initially the county was rapidly reducing greenhouse gas emissions, we have since plateaued with emissions virtually unchanged

[01:08:55] between 2019 and 2022. More alarming is that the gap from where we said we'd be at this time and where we are is widening every year. Additionally, the county climate team has a position that remains unfilled. The initial funds set aside for climate action implementation have largely spent and the remainder are insufficient to accelerate the action needed to get us back on track. C3 has earned the broad support of this community. More than 90 percent of our budget is

[01:09:30] funded by individuals, private foundations, and local businesses. They count on us to hold you accountable. That is why we are here advocating that the board reinvest in climate. Doing so will make

abundantly clear that climate action plan implementation is a top priority for the board, not just on paper, but in its budget. We have been disappointed throughout this process that the board and staff have attempted to claim that funding for street sweeping, recycling, and other components of facilities management and environmental services are in fact climate initiatives. Either the county is trying to put a pretty face on their failures or the county has

[01:10:08] serious misunderstanding of what climate action implementation looks like. You've heard from the kids tonight. I'm telling you on behalf of my kids, tomorrow we're delivering 1,000 climate activity kits to fourth graders in this county. Please, it's time to do the right thing for these kids and their future. Thank you. Indigo Mathan. Yes. Hello, my name is Indigo Mathan. I live in the Rio District and I'm a junior at Albemarle High School. I'm here today not just as a student but as a young member of our community who is deeply concerned about the future we're shaping, both for my generation and the ones that follow,

[01:10:45] on the issue of climate change, and specifically in our local community. There was a huge loss in federal funding for environmental sustainability with our country pulling out of the Paris Climate Agreement and many other climate action programs. But I'm here tonight to ask you to recommit to the climate action plan with \$1 million.

[01:11:02] The drafted budget listed future projects on environmental services, which are important but do not highlight the need to reduce our emissions because the climate crisis isn't on pause neither can we be investing in climate action means investing in economic sustainability and long-term viability it means incentivizing community co-benefits and future proofing our economy it means helping families save money through energy efficiency and it means giving people especially young people hope i know there are always budget pressures especially this year but i believe we cannot afford not to invest in climate action the cost of doing nothing is so much higher. So I'm asking you, please don't step back from climate leadership.

[01:11:42] Keep pushing forward. My generation is ready to do our part, but we need your partnership. Thank you. And we have one more speaker, Martha Donnelly. And you're going to probably need to adjust the mic.

[01:12:01] I'm Martha Donnelly. I'm a resident of the city, 1446 Rugby Avenue. I'm a graduate from UVA and the class of 75 is a landscape architect and came back to Charlottesville, seven years ago now to a very beloved place. Anyway, in just listening to all these young people talk, I was just so very, very impressed with their commitment to the seriousness of funding climate action. And I don't know the original document in 2008 that the county had

[01:12:39] committed to, but the previous speaker just talked about 45% fossil fuel reduction, greenhouse gas emissions. And my question is this, is that doing the math, it seems that we should be 77% accomplished by now, because we've only got five years left. And I'm wondering if there's any way

[01:13:11] to know how close we are to having, being at 77%. Does anybody know? No. Okay. I think that would be a good thing to know because they're asking for a million dollars and it seems as if in my guess is that it probably should be more, not less. So that's really my point is to ask for

[01:13:43] some sort of math associated with what they are asking for and what we need to achieve the goal in 2030. Then secondly, wearing an adjoining hat, I guess I should say, I've been working with a team to promote our region as a biophilic region, and the city council just approved that

[01:14:16] concept on Monday, and we hope that the county will follow suit. And in that way, I think these two similar goals, one of bringing nature more centrally into our environment of our homes and lives, and reduction in climate change can work together. Thank you. Thank you very much. And the person that we had that wanted to speak, not in person, but he's not come back. Okay, so I just

[01:14:56] want to make sure. So we're done. Thank you. No other speakers? Nope. Then I will close the public hearing. Thank you all for speaking. We will continue to discuss. You're welcome to stay, but if you do leave, please leave quietly. Board, it's now a chance for us to discuss, And we'll start in order again with Supervisor Pruitt.

[01:15:21] Thanks. I thought you all wanted to stay to see if you win. That's right. Hear the discussion. All right. So I recognize that many members of the public have probably heard me say this previously at Nehemiah with impact.

[01:15:41] But I think it's important that we think about the budget in terms of the possible, right? And we've been, at this point in the budget cycle, heavily constrained in the realm of the possible. So I say this for the public who's still with us. We are no longer able to advertise or adjust the tax rate higher, right?

[01:16:01] Our total amount of revenues that we can work with is limited. There are members of this board, I'm one of them, who would be in favor of a higher tax rate in order to meet the \$10 million ask. 30 cents on personal property and 1 cent on real property would get us there.

[01:16:17] if that was dedicated to housing entirely. That being said, we are also constrained by the theory of the possible by our own respective beliefs, right? A lot of these things have already been, frankly, hashed out by votes, and we know where people lie. The board is probably sick of hearing this, but I will say it for the benefit of the audience.

[01:16:35] I have a very strongly held personal theory about what we do with money that we have collected through taxes on behalf of the people, which is that money is, for the most part, for spending. it is for spending on the needs that confront us immediately, it is not for having, it is not for holding in abeyance, other than for the purposes directly necessary. I think we can maintain fiscal solvency with 11% in reserve, so I personally would have our reserve, our 2% reserve cut in half, and our advancing strategic priorities reserve zeroed out, set aside the reserve for

[01:17:10] contingencies, which we do use, right? For example, when we ameliorate blight, that has to come from somewhere. That is a cost. We do that from the Reserve for Strategic Contingencies. I don't think that is a reserve that is appropriate to touch. That being said, we also know how everyone on this board would vote on that. In fact, we've had votes on that. So those are largely constrained by the theory of the possible. That being said, as we look at what is in front of us and what we think can still be accomplished, I do think there is a tiny bit of wiggle room that we might still

[01:17:46] have available um and i was speaking you know i'm going to give credit i was speaking with supervisor jim andrews and he drew attention to something that had been lost on me the connection had been lost on me um we are a year into the resilient together plan that we are working on collaboratively with the city of charlottesville at this point and with uva um we have just finished our kind of development of priority objectives and we're going into a community design process and we have no money to implement that with because after we do the design process we are going to be implementing solutions that we decide on collaboratively with our city and university

[01:18:23] partners and we have two hundred thousand dollars to contribute to that pot where the city we know is bringing a million and they I mean UVA can bring whatever the heck they want but that to me strikes us as not being a good partner we had pulled down a sizable EPA grant to assist us with this. And that has vanished because we have a feckless and unreliable administration.

[01:18:47] I think that reaches the standards of some level of emergency. And I would be willing to support an additional transfer of \$300,000 from the Advancing Strategic Priorities Reserve, an unallocated fund that is within the board's sole discretion and was created by the board, to the Climate Action Program to specifically help fill this gap that has been created by the federal government kind of taking the rug out from under us.

[01:19:16] I state that now. I want us to have the opportunity to go around the horn before I put that to a motion. Thank you. Supervisor McHugh. Sure. Just for clarity, and I guess you're going to bring it back up in a few minutes, but you said \$300,000 from the...

[01:19:33] The Advancing Strategic Priorities Reserve, that's the one with \$700,000. That is not the Reserve for Contingencies. I want to make sure. Supervisor Provo is correct, and I'll say the precise amount remaining in that is \$693,705.

[01:19:49] So there would be adequate funding there for one-time use of \$300,000, as Supervisor Provo mentioned. Yeah, and that was what I was clarifying. And this is discreet from the Reserve for Contingencies, which is the one that's broken into reserve in one time. This one is entirely just a pot we made five years ago or something. This is the one-time pot.

[01:20:04] Yes, that's correct. And I will say just to, and you can correct me if I'm wrong, but we did, I think the grant you're talking about was for \$460,000 that we lost because the federal government pulled it back, I believe.

[01:20:22] I don't know if we had used any of that yet. I don't think we, we had not used any of it, but I think it was for \$460,000. A relatively small portion, in the tens of thousands, not a very large portion. Yeah, but it was for \$460,000 that's gone. Correct, approximately. Since you referenced it, I just wanted to make sure the public understood.

[01:20:41] So that was a blow, no doubt about it. Could I ask staff to just address a couple of the, if you all don't mind, some of the concerns that we heard from the public? Because I think we need to clarify the two full-time staff members that we've been talking about and some of the other items that we had.

[01:21:07] So if you could just help us with that, perhaps I was confused. I want to make sure that nobody's confused and we all understand clearly where we stand on those two positions, right? And some of the other issues, perhaps, that we heard. Sure. So I'll start. There are two positions.

[01:21:23] One of those currently is filled. One of those is vacant. That is vacant, but that is not part of the eliminated positions that we have that are vacant as part of the budget. So I can't speak to specifically where that is in the process. I would need to follow up with our Human Resources Department. But that is a, the two positions remain part of the budget, and obviously we'll be, the funding is there once that position is filled.

[01:21:47] Okay. Do you, was there anything else that you heard from the public that you'd like to address? I mean, I'm just offering the. Not in particular, unless the board, I'd be happy to elaborate on anything that

would help the board. I just wanted to give you an opportunity. Thank you. All right. Thank you very much.

[01:22:03] I think, I really want to say I appreciate everybody that came out tonight. Climate change and affordable housing are certainly critical issues for our community. And so just to thank you for being here, and thank you for staying. And we'll have more discussion, so I'll let everybody else have their share.

[01:22:23] Supervisor Malek. Thank you, and thank you, everyone. I think this is going to be important going forward. I look forward also to the benchmark on the greenhouse gases, which I think we've been – we sort of dropped the ball after 2008 when we established the first benchmark, and nothing ever came back to it because of the recession.

[01:22:44] So I hope that that's going to be coming forward pretty quickly. I guess I'm very interested in much more specific information about where extra money would go because I've seen in the write-ups of where previous money went, gardens and things like that, which is nice, but it's not getting any kind of lasting environmental return, greenhouse gas return in the same way that increasing our funding for weatherization for

[01:23:19] our low and moderate income residents to make their houses more sustainable safe so that they can stay in them that is almost a climate and a affordable housing goal combined and a certainly a quality of life goal for them so in order to really support a transfer of this money i would need to know more about or establish a report back or some other definitions before money goes out the door of where it's going to go, and I know that I've raised this for many

[01:23:59] of the community funding projects all throughout the budget process, so that's sort of where I am right now. I'm not closed-minded to it, but I don't feel like I'm just willing to hand over \$300,000 and say go spend it on something because I want to make sure that there be really valid accomplishments made with that money, with any of the money that's spent today.

[01:24:22] But some of our programs have a whole lot more detail and rigor with them than others, and I'm looking for rigor in all of them. Thank you. Thank you. Supervisor LePiestro-Kirtley. Thank you very much. I would also be in favor of taking the \$300,000, I guess it would be from the Board Reserve, another way, the strategic board reserve.

[01:24:47] My caveat is also what Supervisor Malik mentioned, and I would like to make sure that staff will invest in the best place to see savings in greenhouse gases. So we have done some projects, which I think add to what we're doing regarding climate change, but I think the thing we should be focused on is reduction of greenhouse gases,

[01:25:14] And I would like to know what are the best, where it would be the best place to put that money, the best outcomes to reduce greenhouse gases so that it's not just we don't purchase it, maybe purchase another street sweeper, which would be nice.

[01:25:34] But I want to make sure we reduce the greenhouse gases and use that money for that purpose. Thank you. I want to echo my fellow supervisors in saying thank you to all those who came out tonight to give public comment on the budget. I guess I would start with a question of Supervisor Pruitt, who introduced the idea.

[01:25:53] Are you saying specifically that this money would be used specifically for that grant? No, I raise that as kind of a talking point. It would be realistically put through the Climate Action Fund, and the Climate Action Fund is used for a variety of things.

[01:26:09] We've used it for individual community grants, but this seems to my understanding, the resilient together process from all the material that has been put out on it is that it's going to, frankly, take the same shape as our previous community climate grants, but with a more public and integrated kind of design process with these upcoming design options that have been already discussed.

[01:26:31] so it would be through the climate fund generally but i believe frankly the climate fund and the resilient together fund are kind of walking hand in glove it is not clear to me that there's a strong difference in how that would be executed although i turn to mr richardson and anyone else in the staff who might correct that apprehension well i would um i think the last speaker made a good point if we're going to check things on math and have measurables then how we program dollars

[01:27:06] should be done the same way, which is, I believe, what Supervisor Malik's point is. It'd be real easy to sit up here and support this and just call it, and for political reasons, but what's the highest and best use of the \$300,000? I think your source for where the dollars are coming from is appropriate because climate action and things that we would do towards that would be a board strategic reserve. So I have no issue with the dollars coming from that fund. I've stated publicly that if we had to the tune of a million extra dollars where I would be directing those funds, it would be to the Affordable Housing Investment Fund, not to Climate Action Fund.

[01:27:46] So I don't want to be sounding like I'm contradicting myself here. But if we have \$700,000 in a board strategic reserve and staff came to us in October and said, we have this climate initiative, and they felt that it was a high and best use to actually get at the emissions reductions planned, I would suspect this board would be supportive of that. So if we want to earmark those dollars from the Strategic Reserve for such a plan, but put a tentative requirement, or not tentative, but put a requirement on it that it's contingent on, like Supervisor Malik

[01:28:25] suggested, that it came back to this board so we could decide and discuss if it was highest and best use of those funds, then I could be in favor of that. I had made some comments when we voted on the climate action plan. I was one of the members then who voted on it. And one of my concerns about the plan was identifying actual action steps that we could take to not just achieve the objective we were stating, but also was a way that said we are being responsible with your dollars, right?

[01:28:57] I don't want to do nice. Frankly, people can do nice on their own. We need to fund these things and use these dollars in a way where I can say, well, this is something that is critical to the points that were made. But folks also need to realize we pay for sidewalks and bike lanes and these other things through other ways. We have a way that transportation gets funded in this state, and this fund is not used for any of that and wouldn't be and won't be. If it's about how we are, you know, some comments have been made about our facilities and environmental services piece.

[01:29:32] I remind us that, you know, students initiated us to be the first county school division in this commonwealth to begin a lease with a solar company to put solar on our roofs. We were the first. Wasn't our idea. Can't take claim for it. It were Albuquerque High School students coming and doing what these very students did, a project-based piece that got the policymakers to go, you know what, that's a great use of time.

[01:29:55] It was cost-effective, and it achieves a goal that we were starting to talk about back then. So I appreciate what the city's doing and what these other cities are doing, but are they really using their dollars in a high and good use way? So I'm happy to support.

[01:30:10] If you end up taking a motion, I would do that, but I would just simply ask, and I don't think that has to be part of the motion, is that the staff would have to recognize that the dollars would come back to us and we get to decide, is that appropriate use? And we can, at least we're accountable to our electorate to say, we think these dollars could go to achieving what we've stated in our climate action plan.

[01:30:32] Now, the last comment I'd make on it is that there's things that are said about where we stand. It came up in my town hall as well. I didn't know. I had to say I don't know the answer relative to where we're at in achieving our own goals. I don't recall a report or having that sent to us.

[01:30:50] So I would think in the meantime, and we certainly have plenty of time because this fiscal year is, you know, we still have months in this fiscal year, where we may need a better understanding ourselves of where we stand, how we measure it, actionable goals, how they're measured, and then what we think we could do to determine an actual impact we could make with those dollars. Because again, and I'll finish with what Larry stated, I'm just not interested in doing something that sounds nicer for political purposes. Thank you. Thank you. I am very much in favor of this because of the existential nature of climate change

[01:31:28] and what we can do to try to do something about it. And I think that in the absence of any kind of assured funding, we end up with decision paralysis and don't get anywhere. So I think it's a very good move to try to look at the strategic reserves as an opportunity to make sure that there's funding available to do something.

[01:31:48] And even with the \$300,000, we'd be only at half of a million, not a million dollars that people are requesting. We have LEAP weatherization. We have energy efficiency programs. The city has e-bike vouchers that can't be participated by the county because we're not part of that. We talked about EV structures.

[01:32:07] We talked about solar power, but power purchase agreements, which is the way we first got into it, it's probably not the most efficient, effective way to do it, but it takes capital upfront costs to be able to put solar on without doing a power purchase agreement. So I think there are many things that we could be doing to reduce greenhouse gases.

[01:32:25] That's not to say that I don't think we're doing a lot. I do think that we're doing a lot to help mitigate some of the effects of climate change, which is why we need additional professional firefighters and safety and security, because we know that there are going to be extreme events that will challenge our community.

[01:32:43] But I also think that we're responsible to try to meet the goals that were set in the Climate Action Plan. And to do that means that we're going to have to put a little more funding into trying to find ways to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions. And we do that with a lot of different tools. And I hope that by having funds specifically set for that, we can start to make progress more quickly.

[01:33:06] So I need clarity now. Sure. Because after I spoke, then someone else said that they would want the money to go to fund this thing with the university and just more planning. And I'm not going to support that. So if that's what this is being proposed for, then I'm going to withdraw my support.

[01:33:24] I want to support improvements to our buildings, to other people's buildings, to reduce the greenhouse gases on transportation and buildings, which are the two largest percentages of contribution of emissions. University can fund planning groups and that kind of thing.

[01:33:45] The county is contributing \$20 million and more in revenue sharing to the city. That is a great source of a lot of this planning operation, if that's what they choose to do with it. But the combination of weatherization, which achieves the greenhouse gas reduction and saves county taxpayers due to the reduction in operations costs.

[01:34:09] I mean, the green roof up there cost \$6 million to put in all those years ago, but it's paid for itself. And this was the first ENERGY STAR building in the county, and it right away was achieving a 50% energy reduction even 15 years ago. So there are great ways that we have had success.

[01:34:26] We need to do a better job of telling the story of what we are doing and where we are going. But the Cool County membership should be able to provide us ways to quickly catch up on the benchmark idea. Yes, we were out of that for a number of years, but we've been back in for at least six.

[01:34:43] And there should be a whole lot of data that is generated from that that we should be able to get our report back on. And I would disagree on the secure futures, solar things. Having the panels out there and having somebody else put them in and take the tax write-off for the first eight years while we get the energy savings is a way to get things on every rooftop we have rather than trying to fund everything ourselves, which makes it take forever.

[01:35:11] So anyway, that's what I have to offer. Thank you. Just to add – oh, I'm sorry. Were you pointing – Go ahead. Supervisor McKeel. I was just going to add that I always enjoy listening to what my fellow supervisors say, And I certainly agree that I would support.

[01:35:27] Having said that, I do agree that it really is important that we identify and it comes back to us. But I want to just remind folks, too, that emissions from transportation make up half of the county's emissions.

[01:35:45] Transportation is a huge part of our issue problem. And we have just two months ago approved a regional transit authority. And I know things tend to move very slowly, but that authority is going to give us the ability to create a much more robust transit system to really get people out of their cars and onto buses and to serve the community in a transit way.

[01:36:14] So I'm looking forward to that work, but it seems like it does take a long time. But it is coming, and that will definitely help. We're meeting right now, the Regional Transit Authority, we're meeting trying to figure out how we're going to pay for this, and that's going to need more taxpayer dollars.

[01:36:39] But we're going to be coming to you because we really need to get these emissions from transportation down and get cars off the road and people around in our community in a safe way. But I just wanted to take the time to remind folks that we are – it's been slow, but we're there, and we have that authority now, so we just have to figure out how we're going to implement it.

[01:37:05] Thank you. Yes. Supervisor Lopisto Carter. Yes, I do agree. I'm the type of supervisor, so I want to see deliverables, and I want something. If we're giving, we already have \$200,000 in there, we're giving another \$300,000. I want to see what can be accomplished with that half million dollars regarding climate change to reduce greenhouse gases.

[01:37:28] And that's what I would like staff to come back to us with how this can be accomplished so that we can make that decision. I understand what Supervisor Pruitt is saying, but once you get into maybe working with others, depending on if they're really interested in working with this or not, or if it's just a money hole that is going down the tube and we're not really seeing deliverables, I want to see deliverables regarding greenhouse gases and see what we can do.

[01:38:03] And I am supportive of this as long as we do have that ability to see what can we do with that money. And then hopefully that will generate additional funds for the following year. Jeff, I saw you leaning in. Would you like to say something? I did see you leaning up in a couple of times.

[01:38:22] Not ahead of the board at the appropriate time, Mr. Chair. I don't know. I thought everybody was. I was planning on speaking again. I'm sorry. I didn't realize that. I just was watching from my viewpoint, Jeff leaning in. I'm just going to briefly comment that I agree that Supervisor Malik said telling the story and where we're going is extremely important.

[01:38:44] And part of, I'm not saying that the funding is for that, but things like the Energy Resource Hub and the ability of getting communication out to our community outreach, design of projects, and understanding what they can do as well is part of the process of bringing our greenhouse gas emissions down.

[01:39:04] I certainly don't think that's where all the money should go, but I do think that's an important part. And I support those, and those are separate from the other things we were talking about. That's not part of the resiliency thing at all. That's something that LEAP is doing with the city and the county. So it's already hitting the streets, so that's great.

[01:39:22] Mr. Richardson. At the appropriate time, Mr. Chair, the staff is prepared to take direction. It feels like, based on the discussion, that there's energy with the board with four or more folks that are saying they'd like to see the staff come back with consideration of an additional \$300,000, making that Climate Action Fund for next year \$500,000.

[01:39:43] With a focus on greenhouse emissions, staff will be back in front of the board two more times on this budget. One is next Wednesday, and the other is on May the 7th. So if that is the final direction tonight from the board, I'll need to have an opportunity to speak with staff, and then we will be able to respond back to the board as to how quickly we can get that back to the board.

[01:40:07] Next week, there is no action that's expected from the board. It's just a public hearing. The other thing that I wanted to mention to the board as well is our strategic plan has the SPEAR report, and the SPEAR report is scheduled to come before the board in August. And that has 220 performance metrics that are tied back to performance across all areas of the strategic plan with measurables and where we are. And the board is familiar with that because you received that report this past August and so that that will be in rhythm uh just after the close of the fiscal

[01:40:46] year to be back in front of you uh and we can certainly pinpoint uh any of the six areas any of the six strategic goals that the board has an interest in to spend as much time on that as the board needs thank you appreciate that um i guess the question then is whether we need a motion formally to address this 300 000 or whether that's sufficient direction i would suggest a motion just to clarify the direction for staff. Thank you. Sir President, would you like to make a motion? Sure. Can I make some closing remarks? I know I just kind of spun the top and we all

[01:41:21] played with it. You love spinning the top. You should bring a top. I want to just say I don't actually in any way disagree with my peers on the need for maybe additional details on how this is going to be used, I tell advocates frequently. I'm put in a quite challenging position if I'm going to be supporting something that does not have the asks particularized and that I can't point to the specific projects. I do want to, because I perhaps made the mistake of invoking the specific resilient together planning process, I do want to clarify the dollars are not spent on

[01:42:00] the act of planning. We're currently in the design page, and I'm just, I mean, this is Yeoman's work. I'm going to read from Engage Albemarle. We are currently in the design phase. During the design phase, we will engage with community members, partner organizations, and government staff to develop resilient strategies and actions.

[01:42:18] This outcome of this phase will be the primary strategies for each entity, as in the three partners, climate adoption phase. There's a decide phase where you look at those strategies. Then I'm going to go to do. Implementing the newly adopted plans will include committing local funds and submitting grant applications to fund specific projects.

[01:42:39] I think that sounds like the part of this that we also do want to see, not saying we can't receive reporting before that, but I would assume that once that has happened, we will have a look at that. And frankly, everything does begin and end with the board. We can delegate, but that will still come back to us, and I think that's perfectly proven.

[01:42:57] That being said, I don't think we should bind our hands to not say that we're committing this funding now. So all that being said, understanding we're going to have an additional report in the coming weeks and that further down the line we will have additionally the metrics established by this. I would like to move that the board reallocate \$300,000 from the Advancing Strategic Priorities Reserve to the Climate Action Fund.

[01:43:22] Second. We have a motion from Supervisor Pruitt, a second from Supervisor Lopesto-Kirtley. If there is no further discussion, then without objection, call the roll. Ms. Mallett? Yes. Ms. McKeel? Yes. Mr. Pruitt? Aye. Mr. Andrews? Yes. Mr. Galloway?

[01:43:37] Yes. Ms. Lapista? Kirtley? Aye. Thank you. Thank you all. Is there anything further relating to the budget matters? If not, we're at matters from the board. Are there any additional reports by the board on any other matters?

[01:43:53] Supervisor Pruitt? Yes. Thank you. So I apologize, board. I would be remiss. It is Eastertide. And on Sunday, in his final message before being called home, Father Francis, Christ's vicar on earth, said, what a great thirst for death we witness each day.

[01:44:26] How much contempt is stirred up at times toward the vulnerable, the marginalized, and the migrant. Everyone on this board, and I imagine most members in the audience, are aware that yesterday there was a seizure of two Albemarle County residents at the Albemarle County General District Court by Immigrations and Customs Enforcement. They did so inside the courthouse, not inside the courtroom. We at the county have made a statement through County Executive Jeff

[01:45:03] Richardson and our Chief of Police, Sean Reeves, noting very clearly that we have a policy of non-collaboration with ICE, and that Elmore County did not have a role in our government capacity in this incident. Additionally, earlier today, the public might not have seen this yet, but Sheriff Chan Bryant

released a statement clarifying that she does not, in her interpretation, have the authority to stop without the express direction of the judge, does not have the authority

[01:45:36] to stop people from accessing a public space, that these two ISA agents did identify themselves and present documents to the bailiff before being entered to execute their duties. So it is potentially legally above board.

[01:45:53] We also have heard reports that they did not identify themselves or provide identification documents to the people who they detained. I will leave that to lawyers who are more specialized in that to determine whether or not that is appropriate within the bounds of legal acceptability.

[01:46:10] That being said, I think there are two things that we need to, as a county, note as we consider what our ongoing kind of obligations morally in this circumstance are as the national climate devolves and as this comes to our doorstep.

[01:46:26] First, we know this administration to be fundamentally untrustworthy on this issue. They have revoked visas and green cards without cause, process, or recourse, including at least one in Albemarle County of a UVA student.

[01:46:46] They have illegally rendered residents out of the country. They have detained U.S. citizens, and they have repeatedly lied to the public in public statements that often contradict what they have affirmed under oath in court. So, while I would like to be comfortable that these men were taken for a legally justifiable reason, it is increasingly challenging for us to take actions from the federal government at their word.

[01:47:12] And secondly, I would suggest that the process of seizing people in a courtroom is fundamentally bad policy and it makes our community deeply unsafe. There are lawful and appropriate and good reasons that a wide range of folks, citizens and not, including illegal immigrants, have before the courts in this country.

[01:47:36] I, as a lawyer, represent people in national origin discrimination cases. I cannot ethically bring those cases right now because that would involve me taking a plaintiff into a place where they might be seized. There are people who are going to be defendants of a crime who we want to be able to hold accountable for violating our laws, who are going to go to ground and flee rather than stand trial.

[01:47:59] There are going to be people who are victims of a crime, who will go to ground and flee rather than asserting their rights. There are going to be people who commit fraud against members in our community, who commit civil tort violations against members of our community, and those people will not be able to seek redress because they will not be safe in our courts because of the actions of this administration.

[01:48:20] So while this may have been legal, and ICE may have the authority to seek this, I think we should say very clearly, I say very clearly, that it is also morally despicable and bad policy, and I hope that we can continue to use every tool in our power on this board to make sure that these kinds of behaviors from the administration do not continue to grab a foothold in our county, and that we are able to continue to make sure that we do not have ice committing these kinds of acts in our community. Thank you. Thank you. Supervisor

[01:48:58] McHugh. I don't have any any reports tonight. Thank you. Supervisor Malek. Thank you. Supervisor Pruitt's comments remind me of when Steve Sellers had been on the job a week and I invited him to come to the Whitehall District, the Whitehall Community Building Town Hall that January, and And it was during less contentious than today, but pretty hoppy time with various people who were concerned about immigration then.

[01:49:33] And he explained in different words, but the exact same tone that Chief Reeves had used in that no one can be protected and safe if everyone in the community doesn't feel safe in coming forward to ask for help, to give evidence, to participate in law enforcement.

[01:49:54] and it just completely overwhelmed the room. Everybody was just, oh, well, I never thought about it like that before. So I found that to be really important and was very reassured by the comments that the police chief made recently.

[01:50:13] The couple of announcements I had are trivial in comparison, but I'm going to make them anyway. I will share around this flyer. Fire ants were found in Hollymead Town Center area. Really? And they are vicious and horrible.

[01:50:29] There are pictures in this flyer of the mounds. And if you poke the mound, they will come after you. So very serious thing there. We all need to do our best to share that information out. I'm going to put in my newsletter tonight because I forgot. On the weekend, the drug take back on Saturday from 10 to 2 at numerous locations.

[01:50:52] And the deer folks at the Whitehall Virgents are having their plant sale on Saturday, which is a very popular event, and beautiful perennials and trees dug from your people's gardens and shared that with the community for \$10 and \$5.50 for Mother's Day presents for children to give their moms.

[01:51:13] So that's all I have for today. Thank you. Thank you. Supervisor Lopisto-Kirtley. I will say that personally I feel very comfortable with the stance that our police chief, Sean Rees, has taken regarding this issue.

[01:51:29] And they have come out clearly stating that they're not cooperating. They don't do that with ICE. And I feel that our, hopefully, things, at least from the county side, I know that the sheriff, elected sheriff, gave a statement of exactly what happened and how they identified themselves and everything.

[01:51:54] I think that this is not good for all of us. This is not good for the county. I agree with that. But I do have faith in our police department that they will continue to do what I feel is right, and I think what is the philosophy of the board.

[01:52:11] Thank you. Thank you. Supervisor Galloway? Thank you. I concur with the remarks made by our supervisors related to the events yesterday. I would simply add that while I certainly understand, and we are here to be supportive of our residents here locally, that you must reach out to your federally elected officials.

[01:52:31] and your state representatives, and the direction of that correspondence needs to be at the federal level, nonstop and continuing. We will remain here, like I said, to be supportive and control what we can in our local jurisdiction, but I just don't want it so easy for folks to get splintered if we start to focus on each locality, starts to focus on this issue as it like it's a local issue when it is it is triggering at a much

[01:53:10] higher level and the focus needs to be there as well so I please just call on those who I found it disturbing myself to reach out at that level to gird our federal representatives into having the initiative to do what they can with their fellow federal representatives if anything can be done otherwise we have to take care of the matter ourselves in about four years when we have the opportunity to do so. I just wanted to quickly call out, just since I didn't want to be outdone

[01:53:42] by Supervisor Pruitt reading from Project Enable, but from our own climate action plan under implementation, which is number one, the first three items, develop unambiguous and concrete targets for all actions in this plan using SMART goals. B, quantify each action in terms of estimated costs and benefits. D, or C, I'm sorry, evaluate each action in terms of potential effects on social equity. We haven't talked about that and when this comes back, but when we put our

[01:54:17] climate action plan, just like we're doing with AC44, we're looking at that comprehensive plan update through the lenses of climate action and equity. So I would say that when those come back forward and we think of highest and best use of dollars, that we remember our own climate action plan, and 1C says evaluate each action in terms of potential effects on social equity.

[01:54:40] And then D says prioritize actions with consideration of the cost, benefits, and effects on equity in order to best allocate limited staff, financial, and community resources. So, you know, I don't want to, I was calling this out as others were during our comments, but it's stated in our climate action plan that that is what we must do.

[01:55:00] So I'll just want to make sure that when it comes back, I'll be looking at it through those points. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you for the comments on the situation in our courthouse. I appreciate the comments very much, and I understand our Commonwealth Attorney also made some comments in recognizing the chilling effect that this could have, and I certainly do hope that we will always look to measure outcomes, and unfortunately that also requires resources, So I appreciate that we'll fully staff that office and have the people making the calculations

[01:55:38] and otherwise doing the inventories that are necessary for us to understand our progress. Thank you. Yes, Supervisor of the Supervisor. And again, thank you all for coming out tonight. We really do appreciate it. We appreciate all of your comments. And yes, thank you so much.

[01:55:57] Thank you. Board, with that, I'll turn to the county executive, Mr. Richardson, if he has anything further for this evening. Then with that, we will adjourn to April 30th, 2025, at 6 p.m. here in Lane Auditorium.

[01:56:15] Opportunities for the public to access and participate in this meeting are posted on the Albemarle County website, on the Board of Supervisors' homepage, and on the Albemarle County calendar. Participation will include the opportunity to comment on those matters for which comments from the public will be received. Thank you, and good night.



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