



MACHINE TRANSCRIPT • CORAGGIO CONSULTING

# Chesterfield County Board of Supervisors Meeting - April 8, 2026, Wednesday, April 8, 2026

Date Wednesday, April 8, 2026  
Place Chesterfield County Board of Supervisors, Virginia  
Length 1h 10m (video)

- Official meeting video (CivicClerk): <https://chesterfieldcova.portal.civicclerk.com/event/2024/media>
- Official agenda (CivicClerk): [https://chesterfieldcova.api.civicclerk.com/v1/Meetings/GetMeetingFileStream\(fileId=3972,plainText=false\)](https://chesterfieldcova.api.civicclerk.com/v1/Meetings/GetMeetingFileStream(fileId=3972,plainText=false))
- Official minutes (CivicClerk): [https://chesterfieldcova.api.civicclerk.com/v1/Meetings/GetMeetingFileStream\(fileId=4011,plainText=false\)](https://chesterfieldcova.api.civicclerk.com/v1/Meetings/GetMeetingFileStream(fileId=4011,plainText=false))

Machine transcript (speech-to-text) produced by Coraggio Consulting. Not an official county record. Names and numbers may be misspelled; check the video at the timestamp before quoting.

Speech-to-text: whisper.cpp, model large-v3-turbo. Produced 2026-10-24. Each paragraph starts with its time [HH:MM:SS] in the meeting video.

[00:01:10] Thank you, Jill. Good evening and welcome to the April 8th Board of Supervisors meeting. Madam Clerk. Mr. Chair, the first item on the agenda is certification of 15-day closed session pursuant to sections 2.2-3711A1 and 2.2-3712B Code of Virginia 1950 as amended solely for the purpose of interviewing candidates for the position of county administrator.

[00:01:37] We need a motion to certify that, to the best of each member's knowledge, only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements under the Freedom of Information Act were discussed in closed session to which this certification applies, and only such business matters identified in the motion by which the closed session was convened were heard, discussed, or considered by the board. We need a motion.

[00:02:00] Thank you, Madam Clerk. I hear a motion. Can I get a second? All right. Let's go ahead and please call Rawl. Mr. Engel? Aye. Ms. Schneider? Aye. Dr. Hilton? Aye. Mr. Carroll? Aye. Dr. Miller? Aye. Mr. Chair? Thank you. Thank you, Madam Clerk. At this time, I want to note that for the record that I have verified that all board members have received copies of the citizen comments on unscheduled matters

posted to the online comment portal. These comments are part of the public record and will be attached to the meeting minutes. At this time, I invite Dr. Hilton to give the invocation.

[00:02:39] Thank you. And we bow our heads. Lord, we thank you for today. We thank you for life, health, strength. We thank you for your hedge of protection that you built around us. We ask as we enter this meeting, you will bless all that's been said and done.

[00:02:56] Use everything that we do to benefit the citizens of the county. And we will give you praise and honor. These are all the blessings we ask in your name. Amen. We would like to call forward Deputy County Administrator Matt Harris to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

[00:03:15] Pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the republic for which it stands, one nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all. Item four, approval of minutes for the March 25th Board of Supervisors meeting.

[00:03:37] Thank you. Madam Clerk, board members, is there a motion to approve the March 25th minutes? So moved. Second. All right, all in favor? Aye. Item five, request to postpone agenda items and additions, deletions, or changes in the order of presentation.

[00:03:55] Staff has no requests. Item six, 15-minute citizen comment period on unscheduled matters. This time is designated for citizens to talk to the Board of Supervisors. It is not a time for dialogue with board members, and it is not a question-answer period. Those conversations can easily occur with individual board members outside of the board meeting.

[00:04:15] As a reminder, the board's procedures state no citizen shall speak on any matter of business that is a subject on the board's agenda for that day, and each speaker shall have three minutes to address the board. We have three speakers, if they'll please come forward and speak in this order.

[00:04:30] Carolyn Harrington, Ian Richards Karamarkovich, and Lauren Dixon. Welcome, Ms. Harrington.

[00:04:50] Good afternoon. How's everybody? Good. Good evening. I am Carolyn Harrington, President of the Chesterfield Metro Area Section of the National Council of Negro Women, Incorporated, fondly known in the community as CMASS.

[00:05:07] Thank you for the opportunity to introduce our organization. The National Council of Negro Women was founded in 1935 by Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune, an influential educator and activist, and for more than 50 years, the iconic Dorothy Heights served as its president.

[00:05:25] The Chesterfield Metro Area Section received its charter in September 2021 and held its official chartering and installation of officers on January 15, 2022. Since that time, we have remained committed to serving the Chesterfield County community through meaningful programming and outreach.

[00:05:45] Our section has hosted community recognition events honoring local leaders, health and wellness initiatives, voter education, civic engagement activities, youth educational support, and programs focused on financial literacy and economic empowerment.

[00:06:02] Specifically, we have done supporting the food bank, providing backpacks with school supplies, hats, gloves, socks to elementary schools, and I'm sorry, helped students to register to vote in all the local high schools in Chesterfield County.

[00:06:32] CMAS has recently hosted its first fireside chat in recognition of Women's History Month and Black History Month, which provided an opportunity for community dialogue, reflection, and shared history. Tonight, we have present some of our officers and some of our members, dedicated members who are working diligently to carry out the mission and initiative of our section.

[00:06:55] Through these collective efforts, CMAS continues to build strong partnerships and create opportunities that support families and strengthen our community. We are proud of the work accomplished thus far and remain committed to collaborating with the Board of Supervisors and any community stakeholders to continue making a positive and lasting impact in Chesterfield County.

[00:07:19] Thank you for this opportunity. And again, we look forward to continuing our work with all facets of Chesterfield County. And please do not hesitate to call on us on and when needed. And behind me, I just ask our members to stand and greet you.

[00:07:42] Yes. Thank you so much for having us tonight. Thank you, Ms. Harrington, for all the work that you do through the community. Good evening.

[00:07:59] My name is Ian Richards-Karen Markovich, and I'm a resident of the Bermuda District. I want to thank Supervisors Engel and Hilton for meeting with me to discuss our concerns about the flock safety contract and mass surveillance in Chesterfield County recently. This meeting was particularly meaningful given that Garrett Langley, Flock's safety CEO, has recently referred to groups like ours as terroristic organizations who are helping to normalize lawlessness.

[00:08:23] It's appalling to think that we'd work with this private company when they view concerned citizens as the enemy, yet that's exactly what this board of supervisors has agreed to sign off on. Whatever safeguards the state and county you've put into place aren't enough. As just one example, FLOC tells everyone who will listen that they don't own this data, that their customers do, that their customers have complete control over it.

[00:08:44] We've heard that from you, and we've heard that from the police department. To see that this isn't the full story, all you need to do is read FLOC's terms of service, which changed again in February after an update in December. Here's an excerpt directly from Section 4.1 on customer data.

[00:09:02] Customer hereby grants to Flock a limited, non-exclusive, royalty-free, irrevocable, perpetual, worldwide license to A, use and disclose customer data to provide the Flock services, and B, use customer data to support and improve Flock's product.

[00:09:21] As one organization has pointed out, that updated section has some significant differences. Notably, the word perpetual has been introduced, suggesting that their access to customer data continues even after a contract ends. It also adds subsection B, which grants Floc access to customer data to improve their product and replaces what had been section 4.3.

[00:09:43] What was in 4.3? Guardrails for training their machine learning algorithms, including language about de-identifying customer data. That provision is now gone, as is, by the way, an explicit statement that Floc Safety will not sell our data to third parties, which has been present as recently as December in these terms of service.

[00:10:05] In spite of these warnings, we continue to carve out money for surveillance programs, including a new drone-first responder program through Skydio. No, it's not Flock, but a simple search

reveals that these drones are AI-enabled with live feeds that can integrate directly into Flock OS.

[00:10:23] I'm asking you to stop taking this shady company at its word and read the fine print. Seek real answers from independent experts instead of relying on Flock's promises. We want these cameras out of our county. Thank you. Good evening.

[00:10:56] We're moving fast today. We're getting out early, huh? Well, hello. My name is Lauren. I am a resident of Bermuda District, and I just want to echo gratitude for Supervisor Hilton and Engel's time last week meeting with us to talk about our concerns about the FLOC contract. Thank you. I hold immense respect for you and every public servant that we have talked to through this whole process. I'm really proud to live in this county.

[00:11:25] However, I am restating our concerns once again about this FLOC contract and this mass surveillance that we have in our county. As we spoke last week, there has been a lack of transparency in this entire process. I do not know of any type of public education or town hall that we've had about this contract.

[00:11:48] And I didn't get an affirmative that we would organize one. I would like to have a community hearing to discuss the use of these license plate readers. Another consideration is that these license plate readers are tracking everyone, law-abiding citizens and shoppers and restaurant customers, et cetera.

[00:12:12] And in our petition, I'm seeing a lot of comments that say that people won't want to come to our county to spend their time or their money if they know that they're being surveilled. We also had a concern about the Fourth Amendment and how this private contractor is bypassing our Fourth Amendment rights to the privacy of our movements and our whole, established by Carpenter v. United States.

[00:12:39] A lot of people don't recognize that the Constitution is binding to government agencies, but not to private agencies. And so FLOC is exploiting a loophole where police can go and search that without any type of warrant, as well as FLOC using our data to train their algorithms, which we don't know what their algorithms are going to be used for next.

[00:13:04] How many people know about Pokemon Go, that fun game that we were recording our surroundings? Well, it turns out all of that user data was sold to a robotics company, and that data was perfect for training pizza delivery robots to deliver pizzas.

[00:13:23] And while Flock is not the same, it just raises the concern of we are a user, we're using this great service, and we perhaps are getting some type of benefit out of it, but we don't realize that we are the customer. We are the consumer.

[00:13:39] We are creating their next product. So I agree that public safety is important. However, I don't think that this is the way, and I hope that we do continue having a dialogue with the community, holding a public transparency meeting so that more people can educate about flock.

[00:13:58] Thank you. Item seven, new business. Mr. Harris. Mr. Chair, members of the board, we have a brief presentation.

[00:14:26] You've got to set the stage, and then you have a number of actions. After this, I won't go through any of this material again when we get to each one of the actions that we call, but just summary slides to

kind of set the stage for that. Big picture tonight, you are adopting your fiscal 2027 budget, all the pieces and parts associated with that.

[00:14:48] This process began in earnest really back in December, January time frame and culminated with your series of community meetings and the public hearing that we had in late March. Through all that period of time, we did collect in a conversation with you all in the community a handful, just a handful of changes to the operating budget, the general fund budget.

[00:15:12] We don't have any changes at this time to anything on the school side or in the CIP. It's quite possible with the states still doing their deliberations that there could be changes on the school side. I talked to their folks today. They don't have anything necessarily that they know about, but as we've done the last couple of years, if there are changes, we'll come back with those.

[00:15:34] On your CIP side, we may have some amendments again as we move forward, but we can bring those back as we have done in the last couple of years. But what you see on your screen here are the only changes that are being proposed to what was presented to you back in March, the county administrator's proposed budget.

[00:15:54] And I'll walk through these since it's just a brief list. The first one is just a sort of an in and out. These positions already exist today. These are to support the stop arm camera program that we have on school buses.

[00:16:10] So we had to put some folks in there to help, you know, go through that information and help with the administrative and sort of overhead duties associated with that. So it's paid for by revenue in that program. And just a note, kind of giving some of the tone here tonight, we don't, other than that \$156,000 you see on the screen, we don't budget any of the stop arm camera money.

[00:16:35] What will be collected over time will be set aside to purchase school buses, because again, the idea, as you all are well aware, is that that need for that program and these positions ultimately goes away as the behavior changes kind of kick in. But in the short run, we do need these to help facilitate the program.

[00:16:54] So it's a wash, revenue expenditure, and again, we will continue to monitor that as we move forward to see what the need is. Community enhancement, this is, yeah, yes, sir. Just to be clear, what you're saying is that in the event that the citizens start to follow that rule to not pass the buses anymore, that these positions have been made clear that they are subject to not being needed in the future if people start following, and we don't have to review as much of this.

[00:17:31] Is that correct? Yes, sir. Or there could be achieve efficiencies within there that you don't need all that. We would bring that back to you all. We need it at this time because we're still having a significant number of people in the county that um haven't understood or decided to follow the stop bar rules and just to make that clear when the bus stops the red lights come on the arm goes out the light the camera comes on if you pass the bus well the lights are flashing which is very dangerous then you and it's verified by one of

[00:18:06] these people then you receive a ticket in the mail and um the goal is not to collect revenues but to change bad habits yes sir that's correct well said and just to be clear what is the ticket do we know what the cost yeah 250 you're talking about the amount yeah the amount of the ticket 250 dollars i mean it's

important for the community to know what what ticket you're going to get yeah uh dr casey and well i'll defer to a board member first all right thank you dr casey i think

[00:18:42] it's important for me to understand why we did this we did a test program we have over 600 buses in Chesterfield County. Back in 2017, we did a test program. We put these cameras on 50 buses for three months. We had over 650 violations. It wasn't even close. Not like, oh, maybe they went through, maybe they did it. No, they blew right by a bus while they're dropping off and picking up someone's kid. So we moved forward with this program to protect children, quite frankly. I hope it goes broke. I hope that every single person in Chesterfield County gets an education and they

[00:19:18] decide not to go by a bus, like Mr. Engel just said, because you can't undo it if you hit a kid that's getting on or off a bus. You can't unring that bell. So I am very thankful for the previous board, because we put it in place in our last term, and this board for supporting it, because it's all about public safety. It's just really about trying to keep our children safe so they don't get hit. The most dangerous time a child goes to school is when they get on the bus and they go to school and when they come home from school.

[00:19:52] That's the most dangerous. So I hope we go broke, quite frankly, that we make no money whatsoever because that means that our children are safe. Thank you, Mr. Chair. You're very welcome. Ms. Schneider. I actually just saw someone yesterday do this exactly.

[00:20:10] I was at an intersection and they went right past, weren't even paying attention. So, yeah. Yep. Dr. Casey. Just as long as we're on the topic, I thought it just helped those in the audience as well. The Stop Arm Program, you know, We basically did not have to expend county funds for this.

[00:20:26] The vendor installed them all in there. And there's actually other amenities inside the bus from a technology and safety perspective as well. All of that stays with us regardless whether we collect one penny or not in any fines. And the positions are needed, again, because of the way the Code of Virginia is written and our enforcement is actually you have to have people review the footage to ensure that before something is sent out, in essence, that it is, you know, verified.

[00:20:55] And I like to think whoever's working on it now or whoever these two people are, they're going to be trained and qualified enough so that we could ideally redeploy them, ideally, at a time when the fines go down. Mr. Chair, follow-up. Yeah. It's a good point that you make, Dr. Casey.

[00:21:12] You know, we could utilize retired part-time police officers. I'm not sure who they're putting in the positions. But the other technology that's on the bus, you know, Before, if a school bus driver called out sick and we had to fill that route with someone who's not familiar with the route, it could have been a problem.

[00:21:32] And now if someone calls out sick and they have to put a different bus on it, the route's programmed into the computer in the bus so they know exactly where they need to go and exactly where they need to stop. It just makes it much more efficient and safe for the children. So it's great technology. Anyone else from the board?

[00:21:52] All right. Thank you. Mr. Harris? Item 2, again, reflective of some of the community feedback that you received. So these are contracted dollars that would be invested in the Community Enhancement Department to deal with a variety of community cleanup items, including sign removal.

[00:22:10] That's been a topic that's been before this body, as well as median cleanup. You heard some of the VDOT shortages that have arisen in that particular space. So it's the same vendor, fortunately, that can provide a number of these services.

[00:22:26] So there's no personnel, county personnel associated with this. It's just an increase to that existing contract to deal with some of those topics. And we'll continue to monitor the need for this moving forward. But we feel confident that there is enough work to justify the \$75,000 expense.

[00:22:44] Thank you, sir. I just want to kind of make a point. Let's start with Dr. Casey. Since we have time tonight, I would say the other point of this, similar to the prior discussion, is this \$75,000 were prepared to spend it. It goes without saying repeat offenders in this type of category are going to be wasting their money making signs and putting them in the ground if we pick them up soon thereafter.

[00:23:05] So even some preliminary discussions with the Home Builders Association of Richmond indicates that they are going to make even greater efforts to send out messaging to their folks that Chesterfield means business, and business means we're going to expend labor and cost to pick up these signs.

[00:23:22] Therefore, you know, they're encouraging their members not to put the signs on the ground in the first place. The signs aren't on the ground. We don't have to spend the monies on the crews. That's right. Mr. Carroll, then Ms. Schneider. Okay, Ms. Schneider. So this weekend, their favorite spot in front of the CTC at Hull was loaded with them again.

[00:23:47] And I don't think VDOT picked up garbage before they mowed the lawn on Hull Street. There's garbage everywhere right now. Mr. Chair, I mean, I think it's not just home builders that are doing this or real estate agents that are doing this.

[00:24:04] I think they're the biggest offenders. But there are a lot of small business people who are advertising power wars this, power wars that. I mean, all kinds of signs wherever you drive. And it's really about trying to get them to follow the sign. And the problem is most of these signs are put in the VDOT right away.

[00:24:21] That's the biggest problem, which is where they're not supposed to put them, including campaign signs. Not supposed to put campaign signs in the VDOT right away either. We're all supposed to follow those rules. Some do. A lot don't. So, you know, it is what it is. But maybe we'll make Chessfield a lot cleaner.

[00:24:38] I think Dr. Miller knows what I'm going to say, and the \$75,000, not one penny of it will be spent picking up campaign signs. That's right. Any other comments?

[00:24:54] And let's go back to what is the fine for if you put a sign up and it gets picked up by us? Do we know what that fine is? I think we have to go through the establishment of that process with you. We had talked about that before. what we didn't want to do is come in with a hammer all at once we wanted to just have the allocation there ideally through the messaging and hopefully just learn behaviors of people we don't have to create another law but if in fact we are extending and expending 75 000 per year it goes without saying we're going to design a fine structure to pay all of that ideally

[00:25:29] thank you any other comments for the board dr hilton yeah i know you you said this um when you started Matt but I think it's important to note that VDOT has some potential shortfalls in cutting grass

and so you know when citizens email us you know we'll email community enhancement and ask them to take a look at it and then you know try to work with VDOT as expeditiously as possible to get the grass cut in that area but if they fail to then Chesterfield County is a safeguard and it's unfortunate that we're having to do this but it's the roads really belong to VDOT

[00:26:08] and not Chustville County, and that includes the shoulders and the grass and all those areas. And so we're having to do this because the state has a shortfall, and it's no knock against the state, but we're having to spend additional funding just to make sure that our county is clean and presentable for residents and guests as they come to and from.

[00:26:32] So just want to point that out, that this is not something that I think has been done before. It was, you know, a discussion, you know, we had yesterday, I had with you, just about some of the emails that we're getting already, and grass is, you know, getting high now. We just really need to ensure that our county stays beautiful.

[00:26:51] So, just want to say thank you to my colleagues and staff for leaning forward and finding the money and the budget to do this so quickly. But I want to clarify, this money is specifically for signs. It's not necessarily for... just think of it this way you're buying hours with with a contractor that can do all of the things that you are talking about so trash grass everything similar to the the behavior element of the first item as if signed behavior you know that's Casey alludes to it doesn't it fades away and you don't have to do that the same contractor can help out with some of these temporary what we

[00:27:28] hope are temporary median clean up items so it's the same contractor it just works out that we can use that same line item to deal with all of these kinds of topics hoping that, again, in the first one, that it's a temporary thing that we can come back to revisit for your next budget.

[00:27:44] Okay. Yeah, Ms. Schneider. Joe, can you clarify? Can we work on getting something set before the July 1 for fine structure for the signs please so that we do have that in case we need it? I think what we should do is just educate you what the possibilities are in creating an ordinance. I do think that we're trying to go through the learned behavior process you can actually prosecute you know for illegal signage without even a fine structure but we just want to make sure we understand the population of signs that we are picking up and you can see who we may need to find and we need to follow up with those organizations but I think

[00:28:23] we can educate you to what what could be a default ordinance that could be ready to go within 60 days okay and and the only other thing too just want to make for clarifications as if we do get into the VDOT's business, there may be agreements that we need to execute with VDOT for the permissibility to go on their medians with equipment. We already have that permissibility for trash pickup, but there may be another criteria for equipment on their medians, you know, safety zones and things of that nature. And just from the point you raised earlier, I would suggest, you know, maybe we could work further with the district improvement teams of

[00:28:59] the Sheriff's Office and coordinate with VDOT when they are doing grass cutting if we need to go out there and help clear an area that's going to be cut so it's not cut and litter disperse. We just have to coordinate with VDOT for that and with the Sheriff's Office.

[00:29:16] Thank you. Mr. Carroll. One last point that I forgot to make on the stop arms. Some people have called me up and complained and said it's a violation of the Fourth Amendment for them to issue a

summons because they can make the argument that they don't have the right to face their accuser it's not true if you get issued a summons you can mail it back and say you would like a court hearing and then you have an opportunity to come into court where we'd be happy to play the video and the person who actually swore the warrant out or the summons will be there to testify to it so there is a process in place so that this is not a violation of anybody's constitutional rights and i just want

[00:29:56] make sure we made that point thank you sir just to add to that though if you do go to court to um fight the ticket and you lose then you actually get points on your record for um passing the bus but if you pay the fine um because the driver can't be verified then it's just a fine if you if you appeal and you win then you get no fine nothing but if you appeal and you lose then it does become points on your record because now they know who the driver was because you've identified yourself as the driver. Any other comments from the

[00:30:33] board? Mr. Harris? Yes, sir. Next one's an easy one is included in the the rest of this budget is the largest expansion of your senior tax relief program that we've taken in quite some time. It's adding in a full additional tier as well as expanding the existing ones. So the commissioner has requested that a part-time position that's already here, already filled, be converted to a full-time, small incremental cost associated with that. But you do see the creation of the full-time number, which is the purview of board

[00:31:11] supervisors. The next line is very typical for the amendment phase of the budget process. Two community contracts, went through the process, heard feedback, so adding those two in, the Mega Mentors and the VSU Summer Camp, which you have previously funded through your individual diff funds. We've been working with VSU. They've been responsive to convert that as part of their community contract process that they're already going through. They're already submitting for other funds, so we're getting them to roll all that into one, and that takes the pressure off

[00:31:50] of your individual funds. I think that's a win. The bulk of these items, other than the first line, are paid for by the next piece. It's, again, included with the rest of the budget. You're getting ready to hopefully approve. It does create this synthetic LEOS benefit for certain categories of public safety. We've already discussed that, but as we've gotten into it, it's now tiered up for a Jan 1 of next year implementation. That way it gives us time to go through and settle that up. So we built the budget just conservatively with 12 months. So we just

[00:32:28] pull back that six months that we won't be awarding the benefit. It will convert to a 12-month benefit for the next fiscal year, but we'll also have a better estimate on what that, or better hand on what the cost would be. So we pull that back to pay for all the items that are above it.

[00:32:44] It does leave a small difference there, the \$20,000, but we continue to refine other revenue estimates, machinery and tools. We believe we can have another \$20,000, not changing the rate, but just looking at the revenues that come in and then increasing our forecast for the next year.

[00:33:03] So between those two last items, everything balances out for an incremental increase to your budget of \$176,000. One other note down here, we are, there's been some interest from board members about increasing sports backers to create another local event.

[00:33:24] But instead of adding those dollars, we have just been able to carve that out of existing SVE monies to make sure that we can partner with them. They do that already for the Tacky Light Run. It's

been a big success in looking for sort of a companion event, perhaps in the summer, to keep that year-round interest for that group.

[00:33:45] They've been a good partner. So no new increase associated with that. And then last note on this slide, very quickly, is in this particular meeting each year, you approve, in the appropriations resolution, the relief percentage on the car tax bills that go out hopefully next week or so and then are due June 5.

[00:34:08] This is the bucket of money that the state gives. Again, that total sum has not increased since the late 90s. As you know, population and number of cars continues to increase. We spread it a little thinner every year just a sort of normal course of action but this year we are looking at it and we are recommending that you leave it at the 40% that it was for last tax year so that will be a nice complement to this 10 cent reduction that is included in the rest of your budget so that again that's embedded in your appropriate resolution that you're going

[00:34:43] to vote on in just a few moments Mr. Carroll yeah I think just want to go back to the item for the commission of revenue Matt so we estimate how much money in tax relief for senior and veterans this year there's a five million dollar increase but what's total almost 30 million dollars 30 million dollars and people need to understand how that works right so that's why it's important that to pay for this additional position but you know people from the community who qualify for this have to come in they have to produce documentation and paperwork to show that they actually qualify for the program and then it has to be processed through by the Commissioner Revenue's Office

[00:35:23] to determine whether they qualify or not. And if they do, then they get the tax relief. So there is a process that they have to follow. And so it can be labor-intensive at points. So it's why they need to add this person.

[00:35:39] And I think it's important for the community to understand how that process works. And the number, and when you say \$29 million, right, is that the number you said? It's inclusive of the veterans component as well, yeah. But that's essentially funds that we don't collect, essentially, right?

[00:35:58] We bill it all, but we don't collect it. But we don't collect it, right. So it takes away \$29 million from revenue that we could collect. That's correct. But we don't because of the program. And increasing that tier now with the fourth tier is going to keep even more people eligible, which creates more documentation, more paperwork.

[00:36:24] And I think it's important for people to understand, who may have missed it at the previous meeting, what that actually means and what that process looks like. And quite frankly, someone might be sitting at home going, oh, maybe I qualify for that. I need to put in for it. So I just wanted to make sure we clarified some of that.

[00:36:40] Thank you. Yes, sir. Thank you. Mr. Ingle. To that point, we've also raised the income threshold. So if you haven't qualified in the past, it's still worth checking into it. The smallest relief now is at 15%, but 15% of your overall taxes could be a good saving.

[00:37:01] So if you haven't qualified in the past and you think you may now, or you don't think you will, check anyways. You mentioned everything correctly, that these sports backers coming out of the S, V, and E, And you alluded to it not coming out of the general fund, which is correct, but you didn't really say where it's coming from.

[00:37:25] So for people that don't understand where that money comes from, can you explain that? Yeah, so the bulk of our SVE program department is funded by the hotel rebates that come back, and we reinvest those dollars in things that further tourism goals for the county.

[00:37:45] So, the creation of another, again, the best comparison is the Tacky Light Run. That's what we would look to sort of replicate the success of that, which is it brings a lot of folks. As you all know, you've been out there and seen that. So, it fills up hotels and restaurants and the like.

[00:38:02] So, looking to partner with sports backers, again, to create another one of those homegrown events. But it's a dedicated revenue source and used for those purposes. And that fee is paid for by those that spend nights in hotels, so our citizens, unless they're spending a night in a hotel, are not paying that fee?

[00:38:24] Yes, sir. And then the adjustment on the car tax, if we didn't raise it to 40% and we just used the state funds, what would that percentage look like? If we just used the state's funding formula for the car tax relief.

[00:38:49] I would suggest to you that we believe this is a conservative estimate of what that would cover. It comes down over time as the inputs into the program increase. We're always going to go high. We always want to make sure that it's \$41 million we receive.

[00:39:07] We want to make sure we award at least \$41 million. We're always going to be north of that line, but it does follow the approximate population increase. You don't even have to have more people. You just have more cars, more vehicles. My question is if we took the number of vehicles in the county and we divided it by the...

[00:39:27] I'm saying... Is it at 40% or would it actually be somewhere more like 33% to 34%? It would be lower than this, but not appreciably. That's my point is that it's an amount lower than this, and we've chosen to give some additional relief on the car tax by putting it at 40%.

[00:39:46] Yes, the board has used this as one of the many tools in your tax relief arsenal over the last several years. We've actually raised this when car values have done some weird things the last couple of years, but I think it's my message here is it's sort of back on that normal path. We are adding some padding here to make sure we at least give it away, but again, not you think of what you know of population increase over last year keeping it at 40% suggests you know exactly what you're saying that we have left some some headroom in that particular line. Yes sir. I just want to

[00:40:20] make it clear that we we are that is actually a tax relief to the citizens when we keep it at 40%. Yes sir. Dr. Casey. Again another good topic the reason why you can't be this complete science of it is because we it's the tax value book really for the 2027 year so we don't know that but to to mr harris's standpoint i'll applaud chesterfield county because there are some local governments i assume in the state of virginia that make assumptions of what that tax book is going and and maybe err on a higher growth value which would drive down the relief percentage because the state

[00:40:56] has been fixed at this amount for you know 15 to 20 years so so having said that chesterfield you know if we had to tell you exactly what last year's percentage was it's probably even a little bit lower than 40 percent and so we just don't want to err on the side ever of of because if we make the percentage too low then we really are making money on the people more than we are than than that the intention of the uh relief should be other comments okay mr chair oh dr

[00:41:30] Just one point, the tax relief goes for property tax on your house and land, and it also goes for a car in terms of if you're a veteran. Yeah, two separate things.

[00:41:48] Everything you said is right, sir. The senior relief and the veteran piece is on the real property. What we're just talking about here for the PPTRA is on your personal property or your vehicle, certain classes of vehicles. But that one person that's going to be in the assessor's office will handle both of those types of actions.

[00:42:09] So it will be on the car relief for veterans. If you're a 100% disabled veteran, that's what I was getting to. They'll work both types of property in terms of your car and your house and land.

[00:42:27] And they also do the same thing for vets, I mean, for the aging population. So I just want to point out that their workload is pretty heavy. That's my point, is that not only do they have to do property, your house and your land, but they're also doing a car if they're a veteran.

[00:42:49] So it's a pretty... It's a lift. Yeah, it's a lift. So I just want to just note that, you know, I'm glad she's getting some help with doing that. But I just want to point out, because I'm not sure if everybody understands that veterans get both types of relief based on state code, I believe.

[00:43:10] Yes, sir. Thank you. So you've got three separate actions that we'll call here in a moment. The first, which really approving the tax rate schedule. Then you'll deal with utilities and utility fees. And then lastly, the overall budget to include the CIP and the Community Development Block Grant Program.

[00:43:31] So you will have three separate votes momentarily. Last thing on here, this is an important one for any of you that were concerned that tonight was your last budget conversation for a while. We'll be back every month for the rest of your lives.

[00:43:52] But, you know, so we do have a variety of things that are still going on. Unfunded mandates, I think, has been a really prominent topic through this season. We've touched on here a little bit it is our intention to currently we have staff that are pulling together going through the catalog of unfunded mandates pulling out the ones that impact us the most we're pricing them up trying to take it out of just sort of a general conversation and make it more specific so that work is happening now and our goal is to partner with our citizens budget advisory committee who had a lot of good commonwealth experience there

[00:44:27] bring that to them and then bring that back to this body to again take it from that sort of high-level conversation, but sort of the specific impacts, as Mr. Carroll referenced in the disabled veterans component, to be able to really price out what the totality of those mandates is. So that work continues. I think that's one of our homework assignments from this season. You are going to have some public hearings as the normal course of business, as you've made modifications to the tax relief program, as we've discussed, as well as the B poll schedule. We'll bring those back, and in short order, probably even a May-June series for a set and hold. That's the normal

[00:45:05] process, but it does give leeway for the commissioner's office, which you have referenced, to make all of those changes for those things to go into effect for tax year 2027. We do expect, as I alluded to a little bit earlier, perhaps some CIP amendments at your May meeting to the existing plan, potentially to FY27, but certainly to the current year plan.

[00:45:29] So we'll be back with a conversation about that. Your normal year end happens in June. And then also you will have a board of supervisor action sometime in that general time frame, perhaps after the first of the fiscal year. Relating to that, again, that's synthetic LEOS for those job categories that are on the screen.

[00:45:49] And then as always, unfortunately, any potential state budget actions that pop up in the next week or so, we might have to deal with those. Hopefully, there's no downside impacts, but you never know. We'll see what happens. With that, I'm happy to take any questions you have. Mr. Chair. Mr. Engel. Can we see if we can work with schools to try to get the same type of unfunded mandate burden that they have as well? Because I think we need to advocate for all of that at one time. Yeah, Ms. Walker is already working on that. Thank you. Other comments from

[00:46:22] the board. Thank you. Madam Clerk. Item A is adoption of an ordinance establishing the annual tax levy on various classes of real estate and personal property. Board members, do I have a motion? I guess everybody's shy. I'll make it. Can I get a second? Second. All right. Any discussion?

[00:46:48] Mr. Chair. Mr. Engel. We have looked at this very hard, and it pains me that we aren't able to do more this year, but there's a lot of unknowns out there, and there's been with that uncertainty, I think that we're doing the best that we can. We've made the cuts that we could in other places, but if we do find that there is somehow a significant amount of money left at the

[00:47:23] end of the year, then we can still look at rebates to help offset that in the future, but at this time, even though it pains me, I'm going to move forward with the vote and work with everybody else. Mr. Chair. Yes, Mr. Carroll.

[00:47:41] I mean, I concur what Mr. Engel said. I mean, I think we've been fortunate over the last couple of years. Quite frankly, we've been able to cut the tax rate almost every year. And we've also cut the personal property tax rate, you know, first by 25 cents, 35 cents, I think. And then 25 and 10, I think 35 cents total. And I agree that if we look at having, and I don't like using the word surplus. Some people think it's a surplus and it's, I don't know if that's the correct term to use, right? So what

[00:48:15] happens in generally, you could have income that comes in through tax revenue that was unaccounted for. A couple of years ago, for example, we had a company wrote a check for \$7 million for a building permit. That was not something we were able to put in a budget. So when you have additional funds that come in like that where you have positions that you don't fund because you can't staff them, whether it's in the school side or if it's on our side. On the school side, it creates funds that are unused at the end of the year. On our side, it creates funds that are unused at the end of the year. And some people look at it and they go, well, that's a surplus. It's unspent

[00:48:55] revenue. It's really hard to look at how it was, I mean, it's not hard. We can show you the numbers on how it happened, you know, like I said, through vacancies or additional fees that were created or collected, I should say.

[00:49:12] But I do think it's something that we have done in the past. We actually would have, I think, had to create an ordinance to be able to do this a few years ago to do the rebate. So I would, depending on where we're at, I would entertain that as well, Mr. Chair. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Carroll. Any other comments from the board?

[00:49:29] I'd like to make a couple of comments, I'm kind of picking up on what Mr. Engel and Mr. Carroll said in that when we go through this process, it is a laborious, very challenging process. And we don't take it lightly. Obviously, we don't. And as Dr. Casey will say, you know, there are 100 levers that we can use to try to find ways of cutting taxes.

[00:49:51] And some of them are not as obvious. There are other localities that maybe their taxes are lower, but they're using some of the other levers to make that money back. So, for instance, you may not see it immediately, but when it comes to meals tax and those kind of things, you're paying this tax still.

[00:50:10] You are, unless you're coming into Chesterfield County for any time of the year and including restaurant week. But the truth is that the tax is still being paid. It's just coming in a little bit less, maybe, transparent. The other thing is true with utilities in that here in Chesterfield County, you're paying less money for utilities for water than you are in other localities.

[00:50:29] And a lot of that is a result of forward thinking of previous boards. So I'm grateful for utilities. I'm grateful for what the previous boards are done. So that could be another way. You could be paying more taxes, and you're not because of forward thinking.

[00:50:46] but also that's another lever that's lower than in other parts of the region. And another part of this is real estate. Remember that real estate taxes is specifically around those individuals that are homeowners. So you could be paying less on real estate.

[00:51:04] However, if we are lowering the real estate tax on for property owners or real estate owners, that also includes commercial real estate. and by commercial real estate means that those individuals are actually if you own apartments then you're actually making a bit of a boon because you're not going to turn around to lower the apartment taxes or the apartment rents and as a result that's just money in their pocket so a very fair way to do this is looking at property tax because almost everybody owns a car so it is a way of doing it in a very across the board way and that is something that we've talked about

[00:51:43] and come to that agreement. We would love to be able to lower the real estate taxes also, but looking at the big picture, especially from the geopolitical perspective, and we don't know what the state's going to do. We don't know what federal is going to do.

[00:51:59] We do the best we can, and we do that by looking and doing, you know, as best we can with the crystal ball and then figuring it out. And so we've spent a lot of time working with this. I want to commend Mr. Harris and your team for budget.

[00:52:15] I want to appreciate Melvin and all the work they've done as far as assessment is concerned. It's been a lift. It always is. It's the fourth time now that I've been through this, and I just want to commend this board. We've worked so well together to figure this out, and again, it's not easy.

[00:52:35] So I have a motion, and I have a properly second. Any other discussion? One other. Yeah, Dr. Hilton. You know, being new to the board, this is my first time going through a budget process. And I came in, I asked a lot of questions.

[00:52:53] It was a lot of sessions I had without you all, some with you all, but I know I held you all up because you all probably could have moved the meeting along quicker. But I just want to take a moment to, one, just thank the board for allowing me to ask as many questions as I did, and for staff, Dr. Casey, Matt, others, you know, just for taking the time to answer the phone on weekends and, you know, during

the day and also at night as I was kind of going through it, I have a pile about this high of spreadsheets and things that I went

[00:53:32] through and highlights that I made and notes that I made, and it just goes to show that, you know, this is more than just a part-time job, you know, that it really takes a lot of hours, not only of work to do, but also of learning and asking questions and actually going to departments. We had a citizen that came in and had some questions about the budget and being able to even talk about the police uniforms that, you know, the police are switching uniforms. And it's great that they are, they're switching, you know, uniforms because this is

[00:54:10] going to be cheaper and they need to refresh their uniforms. They need something that's more comfortable as they're out and about protecting us. And I could actually tell him that because I had talked to the police and they told me that it was in their budget and, you know, got to go see the new fire truck that came in, the replacement fire truck, and got to see the other new fire trucks that are, you know, going to fill our fire stations because, you know, we need to replace them every so often and understanding all of that was really great so I just want to just take a

[00:54:44] moment to say thank you to staff and to you all and to everyone who helped in my learning and to get me you know spun up on the process I feel really good headed into next year to do it again I feel good about being able to talk about it in public down to the you know the line item almost in some instances because of the conversations that I had and that's in part um you know from staff so just wanted just a moment of gratitude to say thank you mr chair sorry I have one other

[00:55:19] just clarifying statement um when you said you uh worked with you all it was each of us in two two and ones not all of us together yeah yeah just wanted to clarify that yeah yeah it was yeah And then staff realized that I needed to be alone, ask a bunch of questions, because I was probably holding you all up from going to other meetings.

[00:55:42] But, yeah, I just wanted to say thank you. You make a really good point in that with two two ones, remember, we can't have three of us at any one point. But what that means is great communication with the board. And we're all talking to each other, talking on the phone, trying to figure this out.

[00:55:58] but we're doing it in a way that is consistent with what the wall is or that Mr. Minks would come after us. But it just shows you that level of communication, Ms. Schneider. Oh, I wasn't tapping because I'm sorry. I thought you heard me tapping.

[00:56:15] So I was just out on a ride along yesterday with the police, excuse me, fire battalion chief. And they were, yeah, it is, it is. Well, I went on a police walk, a community walk after. So I was with both of them yesterday. So, but they were very excited to hear that starting in July, they will have their eight people at house 24 to make that a 24 hour, those 24 hour positions to give them full coverage there.

[00:56:45] So that was a great surprise to them. And I think that that's so important. We have like 80, I think they're coming up almost 84% of their calls are medic calls. And it's just so important to have that medic coverage.

[00:57:03] Right now, because of the volunteer services, folks are really, really falling back on their hours just because it's become so difficult to get all their certifications. It's up to them to do that.

[00:57:18] And so our firefighters are having to fill in those positions. And so then they close down at night. And so then that leaves some huge gaps. So this is a great opportunity for us to get that in the budget. and cover those gaps and cover our community.

[00:57:34] So thank you. Thank you, Mr. Senator. Dr. Merritt. Go ahead, Joe. I don't want to interrupt the great blow of the board, but I just want to make, just for a personal perspective, this is actually my last budget of 37 before an elected body.

[00:57:50] And just to give you a perspective, my first one for the fiscal year 1991 was a recession year. And in that budget, we were doing, this is in Hanover for disclosure, but I think Chesterfield faced the same pressures there were layoffs that year of government workers across all spectrums freezing of positions all the things you do during a recession and so uh you know that we really have not had that recessionary condition upon chesterfield or this region since 2008 to 2012 but um you know it was really hard as a new person coming in also at that point in time when we released the budget the county

[00:58:25] administrator and deputy county administrator were both terminated uh back to back uh so you know i I don't even know what a finance director should be doing, let alone those above me. So it was a very lonely process. So I feel like this is much more of a family atmosphere throughout. And what we're trying to do is be still mindful of the store, you know, mindful of the economic conditions.

[00:58:46] And then for the public's purposes, many of the financial update work sessions that you see on an agenda before the board for work sessions, we go through, you know, 15, 20 slides of various economic indicators up, down, and all around. Because, you know, a recession doesn't start, you know, on a certain day, you know, that we can see.

[00:59:05] I mean, you have to pay attention to it. It can happen at any point in time during the year. And, you know, am I only saving grace back in 1990 when I was preparing that budget? Because otherwise my position may have been vacated, but I was the only person who knew how to work the org chart software back then. And so I always told people, if you know the org chart software, you always present something to the leadership and governing body that your box always has to be in that org chart.

[00:59:30] So I'm glad we don't have to do that now. And I don't even know how the org chart software works anymore, so I'm still vulnerable. Hence the retirement. Thank you. Mr. Carroll. Mr. Chair, I think Ms. Schneider brought up a good point. You know, when you talk about staffing, you know, there are a lot of hours that are taken up right now on sheriff's deputies, police officers, and firefighters, and rescue personnel in many different ways.

[01:00:00] When you talk about having to sit with a psych patient for sometimes days waiting for a bed to become available or transporting a critical patient distance to get to a hospital and how long does it take to get that rescue squad back in service.

[01:00:16] When these new medical facilities open up in Chesterfield County, we are going to help with those calls for service with staffing time because we'll be able to get our people back in service a lot quicker. And what we've been trying to do as a board is look at the long-term, long-term health and safety of the community and how we can make that better.

[01:00:39] And quite frankly, bringing, working together to get these new medical facilities here is going to benefit not just the people and not just save their lives, but it's also going to help with our staffing levels

by being able to get people back in service quicker. So anyway, I think I just want people to understand we're not looking just today.

[01:01:00] We're looking 5, 10, 15 years down the road to what Cheshire County is going to look like. And that's the decisions that you have to make when you sit in these chairs. So thank you. You're welcome. Thank you, Mr. Carroll. We keep helping each other remember something else.

[01:01:17] Just to add to Mr. Carroll's point, we have the equivalent of six police officers 40 hours a week, 52 weeks a year, sitting with TDO citizens that are waiting on a bed, six police officers that can't be out doing other things because they're just waiting with somebody to have a placement for them to go to.

[01:01:42] And that system has also been broken by the state and needs to be fixed. Thank you. Any other comments? I just want to add in, I think what you're seeing, I just want to kind of call the public's attention to you're looking at a small snippet of the conversation that we've been having over the last months as we kind of it what ends up happening is we remind each other of all the conversations that we've had if I can kind of pick up on something that Ms. Schneider said which I think you were alluding to or just said straight up which is that we have volunteer

[01:02:20] emergency and fire that we don't have the kind of volunteers that we used to have and as a result then it means that we have to move toward having to hire folks to take up that slack and that is a challenge and I I mean I've been attending Forest Views yearly banquet which they are the volunteer for up in the Midlothian area and those numbers you know those folks are definitely getting older and there are new kids that are coming in but the numbers aren't like the numbers

[01:02:56] used to be and so I really want to put out to the community about how important volunteering is and how that supports us as a county if I could steal a line from JFK I really honestly believe that's not what the county can do for you but what you can do for the county and that is so important and we're going to be definitely celebrating volunteerism in our county as the year goes around but how important it is how can you get involved it's easy sometimes to stand in judgment and instead you know please get in touch with us about how you can get involved

[01:03:36] and support and that's what it's about that's what community is about and so we've spent a lot of time talking about that also. Any other final comments? No. Okay. So we have a motion. We have a properly seconded. All in favor? Aye. Anyone opposed? Madam Clerk. Fee is adoption of ordinance amendments relating to the Department of Utilities fee changes. Thank you, Madam Clerk. Board members, do I have a motion? So moved. All right. Can I have a second? Second. We've got a second. Any

[01:04:12] discussion. All in favor? Aye. Madam Clerk. Item C is adoption of the FY 2027 budget, FY 2027 to 2031 capital improvement plan, FY 2027 appropriations resolution, and the FY 2027 community development block grant, and the home investment partnership annual plan. Thank you, Madam Clerk. Do I have a motion? Then I will make that motion. So moved. I'll make that motion.

[01:04:45] can have a second? Second. Second. Okay. Any discussion? All in favor? Aye. All right. Madam Clerk? Item 8, 15-minute citizen comment period on unscheduled matters. We have no speakers. Mr. Chair, unless you have any closing comments, we can go to the adjournment. Thank you. Any comments? I just want to invite the board if there are any closing comments. Mr. Carroll?

[01:05:14] Mr. Chair, I know that I probably spoke way too much already tonight, So I apologize to the community for that. But I have to brag a little bit about this young lady down in Matoka. Kaylee Hodges is

a junior with Matoka High School, and she plays on the softball team down there.

[01:05:30] And she was the Gatorade Player of the Year for the country. Last night they presented her with a check for \$1,000, which she then presented to the Chesterfield Little League. But this was for stuff that she did when she was a sophomore.

[01:05:48] Last night she pitched another no-hitter, and they won their game 5-0. She bats 500. 500. She faced so far this year 44 players that she struck out 39 of them.

[01:06:05] This girl is, I think, J.C. Poma told me, and I think they read today, that she's ranked number three in the United States for softball players in her age group. Number three in the United States, here in Matoka.

[01:06:23] She struck out 39 out of 44. I wouldn't want to even stand next to the plate when she's throwing the ball. She's an amazing young lady. Her parents are extremely proud of her. The team works together tremendously. She also has a 4.5 GPA, and she volunteers in many ways in the community and many things down there.

[01:06:46] And so I just wanted to – I'm hoping I'm getting her after the season that we can maybe get her and her family to come before the board and give us an update on how the season went. Ms. Chair, but she is an incredible young lady, and I was honored to be there last night at that event. I don't know that we've, I mean, I was talking with J.C. Fulmer today.

[01:07:05] I don't know that we've, maybe one other athlete in the history of Chesterfield County that's had the level of success that she's had. Pretty amazing. Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you. Ms. Schneider. It's not as fantastic as that, but I was speaking at a Cub Scout meeting last night to 10-year-olds, and they asked, they were working on a government badge and they asked what, you know, some of the thing that I had done recently, I said, well, you know, last night we, I said, have you guys been to the new, or to Rockwood Park recently?

[01:07:37] And the one kid was, and he plays ball there and he had just played his, and his dad was just like, wow, those new baseball fields are awesome. So yeah, we had just had the ribbon cutting for all the new fields and they're amazing.

[01:07:53] And hopefully there'll be lots more kids out there playing ball when the rain comes and it's not so muddy because we have the turf fields now so that's awesome. Thank you Mr. Snyder. Any other comments? No. And what we're speaking to I think is about excellence if I could evoke Mr. Holland and how he would say you know here in Chesterfield County we work and strive for excellence and and to see it every day we get we're lucky in that we get to spend so much time in the community and we get to see excellence every day and that's what we

[01:08:31] strive for as a as a board and that's what we strive for as a community and of course as a county so um thank you all so um do i need a motion to madam clerk or do you want to read the uh what we're adjourning to yes sir i'll read that for you mr chair we need a motion to adjourn and convene a 15-day closed session at undisclosed locations pursuant to sections 2.2 dash 3711A1 and 2.2 dash 3712B code of Virginia 1950 as amended solely for the purpose of interviewing candidates for the position of county administrator. The board is adjourning to its

[01:09:10] regularly scheduled board of supervisors meeting on April 22nd, 2026 at 2 p.m. in room 502 of the county administration building where it will come out of the 15-day closed session and certify the closed session at the beginning of the meeting. We need a motion. Thank you, Madam Clerk.

[01:09:26] Can I get that motion? So moved. Can I get a second? Second. All in favor? Aye. All right, we stand adjourned.



Coraggio Consulting · aguyonx.com