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Loudoun County Board of Supervisors, FY 2026 Budget Work Session, Thursday, March 13, 2025

Date Thursday, March 13, 2025
Place Board Room, First Floor, Government Center, 1 Harrison Street SE, Leesburg, Virginia
Length 1h 54m (video)

- Official meeting video (county, Granicus): <https://loudoun.granicus.com/player/clip/7905>
- Meeting page: <https://loudoun.granicus.com/player/clip/7905>

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Speech-to-text: whisper.cpp, model large-v3-turbo. Produced 2026-10-11. Each paragraph starts with its time [HH:MM:SS] in the meeting video.

[00:10:35] me on please. Thank you. Well, good evening supervisors, good evening staff, and good evening Loudon. I'd like to call to order the March 13, 2025 Loudon County Board of Supervisors budget work session. Board members, for this last work session, I want to stress the importance of this being the time for us to offer changes, additions, and deletions to the budget. Board members should try to offer all desired members and ask questions you have during the work sessions. Please only we offer motions that you intend to support so that we can be efficient with our limited

[00:11:12] time during each session. In addition, if you'd like to offer motions on items that do not appear in your proposed budget, please work with staff prior to the work session to assure your motion is accurate and accomplishes your intended result. When we get our final vote on April 1st, we will not have time and we will be able to make large scale changes to the budget during the meeting, and the vote on the budget could be delayed if there are substance changes that were not discussed and voted upon during the work session. Supervisors, are a lot of motions on this dais and and maybe a couple of discussions we could be here for a long time i am going to beg you this is me begging please please unless you think you absolutely

[00:11:51] have to say it you know thank you can everyone please join me for the pledge allegiance the united states of america and to the republic for which it stands one nation under god indivisible liberty and justice for all is miss brixman on the line is she has she

[00:12:23] joined us virtually i'm here madam chair can you hear me i can hear you i can present to code to virginia code section 2.2-3708.3 and the board of supervisors rules of order supervisor brixman requested to participate in this meeting by electronic communication a physical quorum of the board supervisors is present in the board room and the board has asked to make arrangements for voice of supervisor brixman to be heard by all persons in the boardroom she has made this request within the required time frame and the accounting attorney determined that her request meets the

[00:12:59] qualifications to participate remotely the board will record in his minutes that supervisor brixman participate remotely from her home in sterling due to personal reasons um supervisor brixman before i go to miss burke on so we can do the um the tote board update it's my understanding that you'll be with us only for about an hour correct yes thank you for accommodating me this evening i'm sorry i said yes ma'am and thank you for accommodating me yeah so and that's my question i i we did talk today but between today and now i think three or four more motions have hit this

[00:13:37] day as i i do want to know what it what it was you wanted to take part what discussion you want to take part on and so i can make sure that happened before you left after making after ms burke gives the tote board update it is the it is lcps um is that what you wanted to do or something else or what was your burning intent um i would just be interested well i don't know any other motions that have come through since supervisor glass's motion and supervisor kirschner's motion and my motion motion yeah i gave you my motion okay yeah i mean i don't i think supervisor

[00:14:17] kirschner and supervisor to crony's motions will take a while i might put this in the committee as a whole so we can just talk these motions through and then figure out how to do that so that's going to take a while um so i i it was my understanding earlier that you did want to see the lcps discussion correct uh yes that's fine okay all right miss burke would you like to give us any updates on the toe board or anything else just to summarize that the action the straw votes the board has taken throughout the work sessions have resulted in \$9.1 million of changes from the county

[00:14:55] administrator's proposed budget. Should you choose to take all of those reductions through the real property tax rate, it would sit at 80 cents, which is a cent and a half below the homeowner's equalized rate. At that real property tax rate, there's \$455,000 available for allocation.

[00:15:15] should you choose to keep the tax rates consistent with what was in the county administrator's proposed budget so at 80 and a half cents and the personal property tax rates as proposed you could choose to contribute more to the revenue stabilization fund however right now the board has taken no straw votes that affect the revenue stabilization fund row 28 is just shown for illustrative purposes thank you ma'am before i call up um dr spence um miss willoughby and

[00:15:48] is vice chair donahue here oh there you are vice chair donahue um loud and you can't see the audience probably but if you could see the audience every um department head and and some of their staff are here with us tonight i'm gonna say this now because sometimes i say this at the end of the meeting and half the people are gone and we've argued and we're cranky and all those things. So let me say it while we're still fresh. When I say I don't believe there's a better county government staff than Loudoun County government staff, I'm not joking. And because I have been one in other counties and I'm very involved in the National Association of Counties and I see other counties doing

[00:16:27] things, I really think I have some some facts by which to speak. County employees are public servants in every way. You might not get the emails or you may not get to cut the ribbons or break grounds,

but the service you all render is impeccable.

[00:16:51] And I know that many of you can take all of your skills, your talent, your passion, and your education to the private sector and probably make a good deal more money, but you choose to do this because you believe in public service. And your employees and the employees of the county choose to do this because they believe in public service.

[00:17:10] And so on behalf of this board, please go back to your staff and please express our deep appreciation for the work that they do every single day. We get to be in the paper, sometimes that's not that good, but we get to do that part.

[00:17:30] But you all are the ones that make this county tick. And by all subjective measures, we are a phenomenal county, if not the best in the country. So thank you to all of you, and thank you to your line staff.

[00:17:46] With the school board, please come up. I'm sorry, not the school board, the school administration. Please come up. Well, no, and you're coming up too. And Ms. Donahue, you're coming up as well.

[00:18:08] Their motion is part of the wrap-up motion at the end, but I didn't know if they had anything they want to add or if there are any questions for for LCPS before we do the before we do the wrap-up motion and they are part of the wrap-up motion good evening and thank you for coming over we do appreciate it dr. Spencer you'd like to introduce the people who are with you at the table and then if you have anything you'd like to add that we didn't talk about when we came to your house we'd love to hear it thank you chair Randall I appreciate that sitting to my left is School Board Vice Chair Ann Donahue Mrs. Mansfield sends her greetings and her regrets that she couldn't be here. She's out of town, but we are capably

[00:18:45] representing the school board this evening with our vice chair, and then to her left is Sharon Wilby, our chief finance officer. Nothing to add further other than we appreciate the terrific conversation we had in our last joint session about this budget, and we're happy to answer any questions that you have. Thank you. Thank you for coming, and Ann, as the at-large member of your board, I know what a hard job that is to represent every single child in this county, so thank you so much. Subvisors, do you have any questions for LCPS staff or Vice Jo Donahue? Ms. Bricksman?

[00:19:21] Thank you, Madam Chair. If I might just take a minute, I was thinking, I spoke with you earlier today thinking about making a motion about a question, an answer to an LCPS question that came today about school meals um and and debts that um have been occurring for families in need excuse me in need um i spoke with my school board counterpart actually subsequently and we uh agreed that um the schools are also identifying and a little bit fearful that there may be

[00:19:57] especially with what's happening on the national level that there may be um more need upcoming but But what what we have decided and, you know, without objection, I think that we'll be able to do this is to bring that topic to the joint committee to discuss how the county might further support should those needs surface in the upcoming months.

[00:20:20] If you don't mind, I know what you're talking about because I know what you're talking about. But I don't think anyone that doesn't know what you're talking about has any idea what you just said. In the question packet, I had asked, I believe it was myself, maybe some, I think it was me, asked about school

meal debt, and if we are still offering free meals like that we did during COVID, LCBS, that money ran out in 2023, and then they did identify \$160,000 meal debt in 2024.

[00:20:55] The schools have managed to be able to clear that debt, but it's my understanding from school board member Chandler that they have fears that this school meal debt might be a continuing problem that will be exacerbated by what's going on at the national level with the federal government.

[00:21:17] So I spoke also by text with Supervisor Glass, and she does not have an objection to bringing this topic to Joint School Board so we can kind of flush it out. I just wasn't – I didn't know enough tonight to make a motion because I see \$400,000 sitting there.

[00:21:32] But I think that we can work something out and have a fuller discussion about it at Joint School Board. Wonderful. Does that make sense? That did – yeah, that was great. Thank you. Anybody else for LCPS? The only thing I have, and I think we don't know this yet, is we are getting a sense right now of what cuts might be made to the Department of Education.

[00:21:59] It is my understanding that they were, the entire department was not working in the building yesterday, and now they were back at work today, and there could be a significant cut to the Department of Education. We don't know what that means for the federal money you all receive.

[00:22:18] We don't know what that what that would mean for the transfer if we were needed to make up that difference We don't know any of those things yet I'm going to ask that throughout the year and I know dr. Spence you and mr. Hemstreet talk on a regular basis about these things We don't just do budget. We'll start budget in in March and finish in April. We start budget It's almost an all-year process Ms. Donahue, you and I, it's going to be important to talk as the at-large members of the school board and the county.

[00:22:51] And I think maybe a lot more things of, well, I won't say more substantive and more weighty, but maybe more substantive and more weighty will come to the joint committee to have those discussions as well. My only thought right now, Dr. Spence, is from what we understand, some of those, well, let me ask you like this.

[00:23:11] is your federal money earmarked in such a way, like this, when we send money, when we do a transfer, we do a transfer, and you all spend it how you believe is appropriate, we do a transfer. When you get federal money, is it the same thing, or do you have money that is earmarked for kids with special needs? Do you have money that's earmarked for Head Start? Do you have money that's earmarked for ESL? And how does that work for LCPS?

[00:23:41] Or is it just the federal government gives you money, you do what you want to with it? How does that work over there? No, thank you for the question, Madam Chair. It is the former. It is earmarked specifically. Generally speaking, all the federal dollars come with a specific purpose.

[00:23:57] So, for example, impact aid is for military-connected children, and to support them, Title I dollars come in, and to support schools which have a higher proportion of low-income students. Child nutrition funds, as you know, come to us to subsidize the free and reduced lunch program.

[00:24:13] So each of the federal funds that we receive generally have a specific purpose attached to them. So then if the funds come in and it's directed, if fund cuts are directed to that purpose, you then have to cut that free and reduced lunch or you have to cut something and then it comes from the general fund?

[00:24:32] Or how would you, what would you do? Yeah, that's the question, that's the contingency conversation that we are having right now. We would either have to absorb that in the operating budget by making additional cuts to the operating budget or absorbing it within the operating budget, or identify other sources of revenue.

[00:24:53] Okay. All right. Well, we would take up your budget in the final budget wrap-up. I don't think there would be any issues at all, not any that I have heard from this dais, And if there were any issues and I haven't heard them yet, then somebody would be in big trouble because we're going to finish this tonight.

[00:25:10] So thank you all, and thank you very much for what you do for our kids every single day. You guys do a magnificent job. Thank you. Thank you. Okay. Supervisors, I actually ask the Come With Attorney to come back and talk to us.

[00:25:27] And I didn't mean to create a panic upon that ask, but I didn't. But I believe I did make a little bit of a panic. Would the Comments Attorney's Office please come to the table?

[00:25:43] The reason I asked the Comments Attorney to come back is because it felt like I couldn't be here on Monday, and for that I apologize when we had the Comments Attorney. And it felt like what happened was more of a comma or an intermission than the whole story for me.

[00:26:00] So when I saw that the indictments were up, I don't care where you all sit. there's one open right there there is a seat oh unless that's you're not giving me much confidence right now because i mean i'm not litigating now i know i know there we go they're standing up they're standing up there we go all right um when i when i hear that there's more indictments i you know then i think you guys are doing the job you need to do when i heard there were more

[00:26:37] um plea bargains i didn't know what that meant i know what plea bargain is obviously but i didn't of what you're plea bargaining. And so I'm not sure if more plea bargains mean what I was hoping they meant, which is for first-time offenders, for nonviolent offenders, I am hoping that there are more people who are going to diversion programs. I am hoping there are more people who are going to the specialty court programs. I personally believe that we put the specialty

[00:27:11] court programs in for first-time offenders, and I was hoping I would see more of that. So I didn't know what was happening in the plea bargaining. So that was my first question. My second question, and one that was really, really important for me is, I can imagine how frustrating it is if you all think that there is somebody who probably should be given another type of diversion program and it wasn't available.

[00:27:41] A lot of times when we're in the budget cycle, one thing we're also doing is trying to figure out what we should be asking for for the General Assembly for next year. And what we know is so many programs were cut at the General Assembly level.

[00:27:58] I didn't know, and I still don't know, what you all have at your disposal for people with mental health issues, for people that I don't know what you have to work with. And so help me understand what you're working with so that we know when the time comes what to ask for for the General Assembly.

[00:28:16] So those are my questions. What do plea bargains look like and what do you need for diversion programs? You got to turn your mic on, sir. There you go. There was an issue that came up this afternoon that two experts in the field have been worked on, Elizabeth and Nicole.

[00:28:38] I'm going to turn it over to them because part of this was an issue that really was not an issue but i'm going to let them talk about that so just very briefly um i had made a comment in response to one of y'all's questions about diversion programs and i want to be very clear the word diversion is a legal term of art meaning it is a very specific program so when i off-handed said i would like to robustly do this diversion like juvenile program now that we've lost some of our funding for our jcsu we no longer have as a robust of a diversion program

[00:29:15] because of state funding that was a misspeak on my part this is we have identified county services it is an accountability program so let me respond to say that our office is working with county services um for a juvenile accountability program it is not diversion um when you ask the question that's so interesting because you say you said a legal term of our in my and my ears heard with the therapist's ears and the version is actually an appropriate term and for how I heard that.

[00:29:46] Yes ma'am and that's why I think when I responded the way I did I was communicating to somebody who understood and unfortunately I got a little bit of a back flack about that but to be clear we as a team and thank you to Mr. Anderson for giving me the support to identify local services so we can fill that state gap now that we don't have as a robust of a technical diversion program we are currently identifying county services so that we can refer children away from coming in the front door of a courthouse if there are those county services available. Identifying that program

[00:30:22] and then figuring out a way to refer juveniles to that program obviously is a goal of mine. As far as other diversion-like programs that we have, we do also have specialty dockets. Our office robustly refers people to those specialty dockets. First offense? Pardon me?

[00:30:37] First offense? Yes, first offense. Anybody who would qualify within those dockets. Now, ultimately, first offenders very typically are going to be eligible for a deferred finding. There is a new statute, 192298, colon two, whereby people are getting deferred findings. So somebody who is eligible for a deferred finding is very unlikely to say, hey, I want to sign up for this really robust and vigorous drug treatment program. They would rather take that deferred finding. So the people that we're finding in our specialty dockets are folks who have probably been through the process multiple times and this is really the the treatment of last resort so that we are not

[00:31:16] funneling these people into the jail system. And I think for me that is my unrest because specialty dockets really shouldn't be the treatment of last resort because I mean I want them to very early on go through the very robust drug I understand I understand your hands are tied to some degree which is really unfortunate because because and you all know this the most dangerous thing is for a person who is um using or doing these things to to to say things like oh I can do a bit right or I could do this again or I you know I I walked I mean you don't

[00:31:55] want to have that and in my opinion especially when someone's using and and operating a vehicle In my opinion, a vehicle is a dangerous weapon when someone's under the influence. Yes, ma'am. So I wanted those courts to be in place for a first offender.

[00:32:16] But I understand that at this point, that's not even your option anymore, which is very unfortunate. So then how robustly are you using your specialty courts? So our specialty courts, so we have two specialty courts in our general district court. that is our veterans' docket as well as our behavioral health docket, and our circuit court is where we have our recovery treatment program.

[00:32:34] Each of those dockets have their own parameters, their own types of charges that can be accepted, who are the candidates that they're looking for. Ultimately, they all have to be Loudoun County citizens, and many times we have an international airport, we have the Leesburg Premium Outlet, we have, you know, we are on the corridor between West Virginia and Maryland, so we have many people, unfortunately, coming to Loudoun County committing crimes who may be otherwise eligible for those dockets, but are not eligible because they are not Loudoun County residents.

[00:33:02] The very first training I received when I started as a prosecutor in this office was a sit-down with all of our specialty dockets to learn about what those parameters were. Mr. Anderson put on that training so that all of the new attorneys in our office understood what resources we had in our community and how we could direct our fellow accused citizens into those programs to avoid the active jail time, and we are doing that robustly.

[00:33:29] Now, those numbers fluctuate up and down at various times, and those are factors that maybe we have control over, but there are a lot of factors that we have no control over. We very recently met with our GDC judges because they are getting referrals from us, and they're getting referrals from Defense Council, but there are other active members in the community that they are not seeing the referrals from that they would like to increase those referrals to.

[00:33:52] So, again, this is a coordinated community response. We are trying to get everybody to buy in. You certainly have buy-in from this table. Trying to get a broader buy-in is what we're looking for. I think those are very important programs. We worked really hard to get them in place, and I don't want to see – I mean, I know Mr. Anderson worked hard to get them the first time, and then boards after that took them away.

[00:34:17] My very first term, we put them back, and I don't want to see them go away again because they're not being used. they're going to get used judge judge chair randall sorry i'm used to being in a courtroom chair randall they are going to be used and we would absolutely uh ask for this board support we are trying to put together a behavioral health docket in our jdr court amen there is desperate need we can show you the numbers so whatever support you can give us mr anderson and i are meeting with our chief judge pamela brooks and the 16th to pitch to pitch that april 16th to to pitch that to our General Assembly. Any support that you can give us, please. But certainly the

[00:34:53] support is here at this table. Okay. All right. Does anyone else have any questions? Ms. Bricksman? No, ma'am. Thank you. Wonderful. Mr. Kirshner? Yes, thank you. And thank you for coming back. I know the chair was making you sweat. So it's good. I don't really get to make, I don't get to, I'd like to say I make prosecutors sweat as a defense attorney, but I don't think that's necessarily true, but this is one time the chair got to do it. Anyway, just a quick couple of questions of follow-up on this. I know under the previous administration, we were not having, we increased a whole bunch of, I think up to 50 in the drug court, circuit

[00:35:30] court, drug court. Have we seen that grow at all? Have we been able to utilize that as much? So I will tell you, we don't have the, or at least I did not bring the exact numbers in our drug court program. We have two attorneys who fully staff our drug court program every week on a weekly basis. I did that on a temporary basis when I first started.

[00:35:50] Again, our numbers in the drug court program will go up and down based on the charges that are coming in, as well as somebody's success in the program. And so ultimately, I can't tell you right this

minute, Chair Kirshner, there are exactly 32 people. I got promoted. You're your honor and I'm chair. Sorry, but I, so I can't tell you that exact number, but I can tell you that we are not only staffing the recovery treatment program, absolutely, but we're actively referring people to that program. And it's not critical to our budget process, but I'd love to see what those numbers are because that'd be real helpful to, you know, kind of know, because I

[00:36:28] think we're funding or we have the ability up to 50. And so that's what that was actually the question I asked. Did I miss that? I thought I was listening the whole time. Sorry. If I missed it, I obviously was distracted.

[00:36:49] The powers that be that create the parameters of who is eligible for that program are not entirely sitting at this table. I understand. No, I appreciate that. The second question is, I know since Judge Welsh has retired, how has the Veterans Docket been operating? Part of one of the reasons we went and met with the judges very recently in the GDC was to make sure that we are getting more referrals into our veterans program.

[00:37:08] Our behavioral health docket is doing awesome, numbers-wise. Our veterans docket is where we would like to see some improvement. Great. Glad to hear it. Thank you. Ms. Glass. Thank you, Madam Chair. And Chair Kirshner. That's not even funny.

[00:37:25] That's not really not funny. I'm not even having a good time with that one. Unless, you know, you want to call me Governor Randall, then we can have a very good time with that. your honor randall thank you for mentioning that and when you were talking about the the um the veterans docket do you all um interact with other organizations to um i'm thinking of non-profits churches to um to bring folks in that may be able to um be a part or you know

[00:38:02] be able to you know use the the docket so supervisor glass thank you so much for that um in fact that was the precise conversation in that meeting that we have with the judges were what community resources can we use as referral sources to include places of worship um and and other uh mental health behavioral health services um ultimately at the end of the day if somebody is in court and they're being referred to to the docket it is going to have a prosecutor's signature and a defense attorney's signature on that order going to the judge

[00:38:38] but that does not mean that other referral sources can't come to us and say hey Ms. Lancaster I think this person would be an excellent candidate you should consider it and so part of that meeting was not necessarily to get buy-in from the commonwealth attorney's office or defense counsel but rather to get buy-in from our community partners and that did include places of worship so we are actively seeking that and yes they can come to us and say i i my it's elizabeth.lancaster at lotten.gov please reach out okay um we will happily refer those on to the people covering those cases okay um i have another question um one of the departments came in and they had spoken

[00:39:15] about um different um different cultures that are coming in that may need um translation spanish other um other translations in our communities what are you all doing regarding that so we are limited uh unfortunately obviously we are statutorily and constitutional office but created by statute so we are limited from that perspective there are 139 languages spoken in louden county public schools so there are obviously an incredible diversity of languages that come into our courthouse obviously spanish is predominant we do have the office of the supreme

[00:39:51] court does have on-site Spanish interpreters who are hired. We can request, if we do have other languages spoken, so we can either file a motion or request directly from our interpretation services, hey, we need somebody who speaks Arabic or Urdu or some other language, either for victim meetings, for court cases, for court hearings. If we have a case that comes in where we have 200 text messages that are in a foreign language, we can file a motion, write to the supreme court or office of supreme court and ask for funding to have that translated in whatever language it is a lot of the times though unfortunately we are in court calling

[00:40:28] what's called language line um that is a service a national service where you call in you state the the language and and then that person interprets over the phone in the courtroom it's not ideal but that's where we are there are a lot of languages spoken loud and it's it's wonderful the diversity is great but it does create some barriers in the courtroom thank you for sure Mr. Anderson says sometimes it's difficult to get translators in the courtroom.

[00:40:58] Thank you. Mr. Sains. Thank you, Madam Chair. Just to kind of piggyback off your questioning, Mr. Kushner, if we can get clarity, if it's okay, Madam Chair. Can we get for the last four years all the different courts, the Veterans Court, Behavioral Court, Drug Court, everything, the last four years?

[00:41:18] So 22, 23, 24, and obviously we're in the middle, 25, that'll be good to see. Yeah. Thank you. Absolutely. Yeah, thank you. That was actually the thrust of my first question that I wrote to you.

[00:41:41] What percentage increase? And, you know, that is because, you know, I think male people don't know that you have to actually charge and have adjudication before you can actually put somebody in a program, a diversion program, a specialty court program. And so saying that somebody's been charged and adjudicated, that doesn't bother me. Saying that plea bargains are up, that doesn't bother me.

[00:41:56] I just want to know, like, what's the rest of the story? Like, what happens, what's after that? And that was the pause in the sentence that I just wasn't getting before. Finally, I would say that the last question I asked you is not in here, but you did answer it, and I think it's worth answering to everybody, and that was this question.

[00:42:14] If anyone was charged with simple cannabis use with no intent to distribute or anything else, has anyone ever been adjudicated and gone to jail for that since this administration has been in office? No, ma'am. Okay. The answer is no. The answer is no.

[00:42:30] That's a fine answer. That's a fine answer. Thank you for coming back. I do appreciate it, and I do look forward to seeing those numbers of our specialty courts. Thanks a lot. Thank all of you. I appreciate it. With Parks and Rec, please come to the table.

[00:42:46] I'm going to just go straight to a motion, and then I'll talk inside the motion.

[00:43:23] I move the board of supervisors lower the amount allocated for the Independence Day event at the Howland-Bernie-Hanson-Riginal Park from \$80,000 to \$52,300. I further move the board of supervisors allocate \$10,000 to the town of Hillsboro to aid in their fireworks display. Second. Motion made and seconded by Supervisor Kirchner.

[00:43:40] First, let me say this. Quite frankly, I don't really believe fireworks is a great use of taxpayer money, just period, in general. I mean, I think you're quite literally sending taxpayer money up in smoke, quite literally.

[00:43:55] I don't know, but I believe that's a good use. We have been doing fireworks, especially for Sterling and Levittsville, for many, many years. Sterling's amount has been right around between \$13,000 and \$14,000. Levittsville has been between \$16,000 and \$17,000.

[00:44:14] That was originally done because those two areas didn't have HOAs, and those were kind of grandfathered there. Later on, we started doing Franklin Park, and that has run between \$52,000 and \$53,000.

[00:44:30] The idea that we're going to now do \$80,000-plus for another area is something that I just cannot see doing that. If we're going to do it, and I, you know, listen, I have all kinds of issues with it anyway, but okay, I'm not going to go \$30,000 higher than we do anywhere else.

[00:44:57] I will also say I made a call to Roger Vance, who is the mayor of Hillsborough. Hillsborough has 120 people, literally. They do an amazing whole 4th of July celebration with food trucks, with moon bounces, with Reno Declaration of Independence, and with an amazing fireworks show.

[00:45:15] They collect the money themselves, and they spend \$25,000 on it. Probably about 5,000 people come to that show. Now, I'm told Helen Burney has about \$10,000. So even if we double the amount from 5,000, 10,000 people, that still wouldn't mean \$80,000 for me.

[00:45:33] That's still just \$50,000. I don't know how you double that and get to \$80,000. So \$80,000, that is just beyond the pale of what we should be doing for fireworks. I understand that we want to do them all over the county and in different places, okay.

[00:45:53] But I also think even though it won't be at a county-owned park, you give \$80,000 to that part of the county, you're going to have other parts of the county coming in and saying, why can't we get some money? even if it's not in the park why can't we get some money in Lansdowne why can't we get some money in Ashburn you're going to get that why wouldn't they why wouldn't they so I appreciate what a great event it is and all those things I appreciate all that but I'm going to make this amount or I'm

[00:46:26] trying to make this amount at least even to what Franklin Park does and not more than that and I would say if this scales up over time it scales up with what Franklin Park does Ms. Letourneau Yeah, I'd like to ask Mr. Torpy some questions because we're missing critical information, which is what is I know but before the motion is made, it would be good to get the facts. So what exactly was the basis of a cost estimate to Hanson? We have the chart that shows it for the other ones, but not for Hanson.

[00:46:55] So the size and scope of the Hanson event was so much larger than any of the others that we have ever done, and that was in year one. Franklin Park, we have been providing fireworks since the park opened, which was about 26 years ago when Franklin Park opened.

[00:47:16] Lovettsville has been about the same amount of time. I only have two minutes. I'm sorry. Tell me what the cost of the event versus the fireworks. So the fireworks is the same amount for the Franklin Park shoot as well as the Hanson Park for the pyrotechnics. It's the same amount. Where the increase gets into is just the sheer amount of staffing that it takes for that many people, LCSO's cost for that many people, and then the other things that are associated with the special event, the entertainment, and it's different for the size of people or the amount of people that you have at Hanson as opposed to just Franklin Park.

[00:47:54] You have to scale that up. You have to scale because of the size of the venue. That's correct. So if you're going to have a firework show at Hanson and you're not properly staffed up for it and you have 10,000 people showing up and there's inadequate security, there's inadequate sheriff's office, there's inadequate safety, there's inadequate even programming for those people to do, you're going to have a problem, right?

[00:48:13] That is where the budget came from, yes, so that it was the same type of event. Could you scale it a little bit? So when we were looking at the item, The question that came in this morning, one of the things that would have to come off because we can't take the, necessarily the fireworks out, obviously, we can't take the security and the staffing out.

[00:48:38] So it would be the other types of things, the entertainment and the various types of vendors that come in to make the event whole. So really it would scale down to a fireworks display and that was it.

[00:48:53] but we do do those things at the other venues that's correct okay so i understand the dollar amount but if we're trying to do the same thing in every place and one venue happens to be larger with greater demand look we do very little especially in this part of the county that builds any kind of sense of community whatsoever um it's there's nothing more gratifying to me than to see especially at hanson a whole heck of a lot of first generation americans and i said americans even though they may have been born somewhere else, they're Americans, come out to something like this with unbelievable demand in the first year when it wasn't advertised and wasn't even a

[00:49:32] county thing. So \$10,000 is the starting point of what this is going to be. This is actually probably going to be a lot bigger. I would encourage everybody to not shortchange it for the type of money we're talking about here. Ms. Tacroni? Yeah, thank you, Chair Randall, and thank you, Mr. Torpy, for coming prepared with some estimates. How many people do you think it it could get to so we know that um uh mr kane pull your mic a little closer to you yeah we know that um uh you know you're going to start in 2026 with a county sponsored event what do you what

[00:50:09] what numbers are we looking at do you think because it was 10,024 honestly i don't think that the the park is going to be able to take much more of an increase to that so it may scale up a little bit, but we may, just like we are at Franklin Park, we get to a point where we're not able to allow any more people in because of capacity issues.

[00:50:32] Now, if you were limited to the 50,000, 52,000, what would you be able to do at Hanson? I mean, it sounds like you can't do an event there. We could do an event, but as I mentioned, it would be a basic fireworks display.

[00:50:51] So we would shoot fireworks, and we would have staff there for the traffic control, but there would not be any other type of activities or entertainment or event-type activities going on. Could you take the, like, 12,000 people if it went up to that for the fireworks display?

[00:51:09] I mean, would that at the 52,000? The capacity issues are going to be about the same. Okay. But have you done fireworks in a town before? we given money to a town before for fireworks or is this the the closest would be where we shoot at lovetsville which is right adjacent to the town but we have been shooting those fireworks um for many years from the park which is outside of the town okay so you don't give it to the to the town no you don't give the money to the town okay um and i guess i am concerned about security do you

[00:51:47] Do you think security would be an issue at Hanson with this reduction in the amount? No, our estimate would include the LCSO as well as the PRCO. No, but if it was at 52. No, that's what I'm saying. With the reduction, where we would take those reductions, because we couldn't take away the security and the staffing needed even for a display, it would be with all of the other types of entertainment that make it a special event.

[00:52:14] Okay. All right. Thank you. Mr. Sains. Thank you, Madam Chair. Chair. So Mr. Terpi, when did we start doing fire, when did this county start paying for fireworks for the Sterling community? I think we are in our fifth or sixth year. I'd have to go back, but it's not been. Sterling is the most recent one. Lovitzville and Franklin Park have been for a while. Yeah, so I would, you know, with respect, I wouldn't say many, many years, but it was just recently started in the last, what, four to five years or so. So in regards to the money, you could do with fireworks,

[00:52:51] Maybe \$20,000 where you just actually light some fireworks in the sky, have some security, and have fun staffing for parks and rec staff or county employees. So clarify or expand upon the amount of money that was originally asked for, \$80,000. That would cover, obviously, fireworks, county staff, parks and rec staff, sheriff's department on site.

[00:53:13] but that would cover other things like food vendors hired entertainment that's correct all of the stage and you know that is an event so technically you know with the the motion that madam chair put forward you could do a fireworks event but it just wouldn't be with you know say a person with the clowns and balloons and you know all those type of things is that that's correct that's correct so so You still wouldn't get in the fireworks display in a fireworks show, but it just wouldn't be in the concert and, you know, whatever else.

[00:53:48] Would that be accurate to say? That is correct. Okay. And then to refresh everybody's memory again, so we pay, how much do we pay at Franklin Park? Are you talking for the entire event? Yes. For the entire event at Franklin, over the past two years, we've been averaging around \$53,000, \$54,000.

[00:54:12] Okay. I know the Sterling event is smaller, so how much is that one again? Last year was just over \$14,000. Okay, so again, we could do a fireworks display at \$80,000. We could do a fireworks display at \$60,000, \$50,000, \$40,000, \$15,000.

[00:54:32] We'll still have the fireworks. It just depends on all the other stuff that comes along with it. We want to have concert folks, musicians, artisans, et cetera, et cetera. Is that what the price differences would be? But we still would have a fireworks display. We could do just a fireworks display.

[00:54:48] Okay, thank you. Mr. Kirsten. Thank you, Madam Chair. Mr. Torpy, good to see you. So to me, it really sounds like this is really kind of a discussion of how robust we want this to be, one way or the other. Is that a fair statement? So in other words, as Mr. Sainz points out, do we want to have a lot of the extras or don't we want to have a lot of the extras?

[00:55:12] Can you, the other question I have is how, my understanding is up to last year the HOA was paying for this in large part. Is that right? Yeah, up to last year there was, this display was on private property, yes.

[00:55:29] I understand, but last year it was held at the park? No, well, yes, this past year, it was the first year it was held at Hanson Park. But we didn't pay for it, the HOA paid for it. That is correct. Do we know what they spent? It was. Approximately?

[00:55:45] Yeah, hold on a second, I do have. they spent around 80 and yeah it was around sixty thousand dollars around sixty thousand dollars okay and were there any issues that arose from that there was there was issues with traffic there was issues with just the sheer number of people that were coming in which is why we upscaled some of our staffing and some of the estimated cost really was the sheriff department there were they required would be we would be required to pay for the sheriff's department would they automatically be there because it's an event no we it's an off-duty assignment. Okay, it would be considered off-duty. That's correct. All right.

[00:56:26] And we pay for that at the other events as well. Okay. If we did authorize only the 52,300 as proposed by this motion, is this something that the HOA will help to contribute additional to so they can have a fuller display? I know it's not just for them, and so that's why I'm not entirely against the funding of some of this. I do think it's important to, I think, support our celebration of our nation's birth as a whole as long as it's evenly distributed to some degree

[00:57:00] throughout the county but I guess my question is if we if we authorize only the 52,300 do we know if the HOA would contribute the rest to have a more robust as we I said at the beginning display or not we don't know I don't know that I don't know that but I guess that that they would have that option in other words we're not going to turn that down if they say hey we'd like to we'll take care of the fireworks at the county we do partner at times yes yes okay fair enough do we partner on any of the others right now franklin park or we used to partner with the lovett's bill community center advisory board um there is somewhat of a partnership uh with

[00:57:39] just from the standpoint that the town of lovett's bill does the independence day parade and that's kind of advertised all as the same thing that leads to the fireworks at night but they do we partner financially with any of these other places no so we taking care for the places we do we take care of the most of the expense that's correct thank you you good mr turner okay miss uh i call miss bricksman already on this one miss bricksman did i call you on this already yeah uh no ma'am i don't remember if i did no miss bricksman yes thank you um mr torby

[00:58:16] how many people attend the franklin park event uh last year it was a little over 5 000 estimated okay and and i'm assuming that the hallen bernie hansen park is bigger than franklin park can you put that in context for us is it bigger do you know by how much uh it is um about 40 acres larger but it doesn't necessarily equate out because hansom park is split by evergreen and so the the event was on the north side of the park so it was more people in a smaller acreage area

[00:58:52] well not just more people it's twice as many people yes okay all right thank you i have so let me just say a couple things again. One, we have a town with 120 people who do all the events.

[00:59:09] They do the entertainment. They do the moon bounces, the clowns, the band, good bands. They do all of it. And the fireworks for \$25,000. All of it for about 5,000 people. For about 5,000 people. They do all of it for about 5,000 people. What we're actually saying is we can do it and we can do it safely. We just can't do all the entertainment. I'm not sure that's, I'm not, I'm kind of okay with that. I don't know that us paying for entertainment is a great use of taxpayer money. And oh, by the way, let me say the most, the thing that's going to end up in the

[00:59:47] paper. This is the 4th of July celebration. What happens when Juneteenth comes to you all and says they want some money for Juneteenth? Because not everyone feels like the 4th of July was their day of

independence. What are we going to do on that day? Because I'm going to watch the sea up here what happens on that day. We have people up here who don't want to give money to nonprofits.

[01:00:10] Okay, been consistent on that. But you give money to this? I'm sorry. There are better ways to use this taxpayer money. And we'll do the fireworks and we'll do the security. They will be safe and we'll give them a big fireworks display if if people need to have entertainment then there are other ways to get at that and there are other communities that do raise money for the entertainment and i just think if little tiny hillsboro can raise money for the whole thing including a great

[01:00:50] day of entertainment for 5 000 people then other communities can partner together i know it's not just Brambleton. I get that. The Brambleton can partner with us. There are thousands of people that live over there. You're telling me they can't find any way to partner together to raise enough money to have entertainment? We shouldn't do everything. Finally, I'll say this. I've heard somebody say the term, well, we have the money now. That is a terrible way to think about this.

[01:01:22] That's a terrible way to think about this. Because one, we don't know what's going to happen with the economy and two years from now three years from now for you we have no idea but the other thing is you don't just say well the county has the money now so let's just put it on this that's not how you spoke that's not that's not responsible so I'm not sure if I agree that any of this should happen to be quite honest but because Franklin Park is at 53 then okay 53 is where I'll be willing to go so whether this passes or doesn't pass I'll see you all on

[01:02:07] Juneteenth. I made the motion seconded by Supervisa Kirshner. All the people say aye. Aye. Opposed. Nay. Nay. So that motion will fail. I think that was 3-6. Would you say aye? That was 3-6. That was 3-6. Wait a minute. Where were you? She said aye. Okay. So that was 3-6. Okay. 3-6. Thank you. Thank you all very much. Thank you. Oh, wait a minute. Did that mean say Hillsburg is okay? Y'all. That's a mess. Okay.

[01:02:32] all right thank you mr torby appreciate you all right the next item is the probation and parole oh no it's not that we're not doing that one miss miss bricksman we're not doing that correct correct madam chair there's no motion on that one okay so then the next issue is well i'm not sure how to do this next one then yeah let's do sylvia let's do a supposed classic because it's a little it's a little easier and the other ones are going to take a bit more of a discussion Ms. Glass would you like to make your motion and then we can talk within the motion because that's what I said we're going to start doing now. Yes Madam

[01:03:11] Chair. I move that the Board of Supervisors direct staff to change the PRCS CARES coverage guidance to cover the full cost of tuition for all children eligible for assistance under option one utilizing grant funding for fiscal year 2026. I further move that the Board of Supervisors direct staff to return to the finance government government operations and economic development committee as part of the fiscal year 2027 budget development process for with long-term funding options motion is being taken by

[01:03:48] supervisor saying discussion the motion miss glass yes thank you madam chair as stated in this motion and I'd sent an email to my colleagues I'd asked to support as support to provide 100% coverage for children who attend CASA yes and PRCS summer camps and who are recipients of current PRCS cares option one discounts so that's people who may be receive free and reduce lunch those

[01:04:23] who are on WIC, SNAP, TANF. This would make finding child care for families already on the eligible programs and who may really need it much easier, much more attainable. We are financially

blessed in this county and we could use some of that money toward helping children, some of whom are homeless. As I said, the McKinney-Vento students who with having quality child care when school is not in session our PRCS programs are safe reliable beneficial and fun for the children

[01:04:57] enrolled and covering 100% of the fees make these programs all the more reachable for families. I'm grateful that there are in there that we have we're able to fund we have the fund to cover the tuition for fiscal year 2026 so that this motion does not affect local tax funding nor the tax rate. I'm confident staff can return to the board with ways to continue with the 100% tuition assistance that is both sustainable and financially savvy for the

[01:05:33] county. And I ask my colleagues for your support. Thank you. Ms. Glassman, do a point of clarification. Did you say where this money would come from? Yes. So it's coming from, there's an existing funding of \$2.7 million that comes from the Virginia Department of Education Child Care Stabilization Grant. Okay, that's where it come from. Sharon? Yes. Yes, well, let me get one more thing. Ms. Glassman, let me ask you one more clarification question. Is there a transportation piece attached to this at

[01:06:12] all? I believe there is for the McKinney-Vento students. I believe there's there's that need to be stated so we know what we can you want you want to do that a little more I can go to Megan if you'd like me to because as we have this discussion we go to Megan to add it in madam chair no I just think that we before we have the discussion they need to know the whole all of what we're discussing that's all okay okay it's Burke I was just going to explain to the

[01:06:47] board that we have currently have grant dollars that can be utilized so that this is why the reason this is the reason why this motion has no fiscal impact I cannot speak to the transportation issue you just asked sorry okay mr. Torpy yeah I think the transportation issue that we were that was talked about in some earlier questions was the schools are putting some money towards those particular students for transportation and if

[01:07:27] If 100% was covered by this grant that we have currently, that money, that grant money that the schools have could go towards further transportation as opposed to going towards the 25% of the cost for the program that those several students are in.

[01:07:49] Exactly. That is what I was clarifying. That's what I was clarifying. Mr. Letourneau. Thank you. so i think this is sort of this is a policy question more than as a budget one um and honestly doesn't really need to be i don't think dealt with immediately because it's not going to have a local tax impact um my concern would be if we took all of the eligibility here which is quite a few students already because i think it was 300 something elementary i forget the press

[01:08:24] but and suddenly if you look at this chart on this motion all of it became free wouldn't the enrollment jump up considerably or wouldn't the demand for the enrollment jump up considerably if there was no cost associated with it for everybody that's eligible here the potential is for it to go up yes we have grant funding that we think we would be able to handle an increase in that with the 2.7 or 2.4 that would be available to go towards that at least for next year we could

[01:09:01] do that and I think that was the nature or the reason behind the secondary motion was to further the conversation at finance for beyond well yeah except once you once you do something it's pretty hard to roll something like that back right so you know elected bodies don't tend to do that I am perfectly okay with having a robust discussion if we need to start increasing our level of support, particularly for

those McKinley students who I think should be tuition-free. But I'm concerned about what the unintended consequences are here of just jumping into a long-standing

[01:09:40] policy change that I think could pose logistical issues, pose capacity issues, impact the entire program pretty quickly um and i'm not sure that i would necessarily agree with a hundred percent for every one of the categories maybe it could go up um but i think we need more analysis around because it doesn't i don't know how many students are in each category and all that kind of thing i would want to get into all that before i made policy change like this that i think could have effects on what is an important program especially you know we see pretty good demand for casa across

[01:10:17] the board more demand than we can already meet and then we you know and i know it's easy to say well it's funded by grant well yeah for the short term it is but that grant money is going to go a lot quicker if the enrollment goes up so i prefer to have kind of the plan in place first and then make the change um and i don't know i just would ask staff do you think this could be something that could be discussed and potentially changed outside of tonight in this budget work session is a pretty big topic to spring on us in a wrap-up yes i think it's appropriate to do it another way as well okay so i may have a motion just to send this to finance for the overall discussion then

[01:10:55] i'm sure mr saynes thank you madam chair um yeah i am in support of the the idea and actually i did have some more questions like the the number of students would be affected you know do you foresee if this was enacted would you know the enrollment go up how fast would we you know with the switch deplete the the grant funding on both sides and you know and of course there is a conversation I have about philosophy because right now as I told miss miss glass you know yes the board possibly could support this you know and then in a few years then the board might make up might change and then

[01:11:34] that philosophy of that board might change and say you know what nope let's take this away and then what would be the the cause and effect of that so mr. Torpy you could you know do you feel I guess we just heard from Miss Burke saying this possibly could be discussed a little bit further once we get a little bit more information are you do you do you feel you need the should we do this now or could you possibly come back later on as mr. La Turner was suggesting to finance and I have us look at I mean the the grant funding that we have is not going away we don't have a deadline for use of this particular type

[01:12:11] of funding so but there is a limit to what we have so I think as as Miss Burke was saying it's very appropriate for us to come back and and perhaps have the long-term plan in place for something even while we have the grant funding available and then beyond okay all right let me ask this question so So say if we were to approve this tonight, how soon could we make the switch and get this going?

[01:12:41] Would you do this right now in the middle of the school year or would you say no, let's wait until the next, you know, the school year starts and I guess everybody goes back in school in August now. So in August or what would be the plan if we were to say yes tonight? typically when we have changes to fees it is done at the start of a school year so we would put this in place or recommend put this putting this in place and rolling this out as a part of the registration process so we would do those types of advertisements that this program is out but then it would go into effect in the next school year so even if we were to take this up now it

[01:13:16] would not happen now you would wait for the next school year that's correct the motion was dealing with fy26 to next school year okay all right thank you uh mr turner i'm sorry i'm sorry i'm sorry uh no she did not miss and then you miss brixman i'm sorry thank you madam chair i i fully support this

motion um especially since mr torpe said that uh it wouldn't be implemented till the beginning of the school year i mean how long have we we've been talking about child care and we know

[01:13:53] now that a year of child care costs about a year of as much as a year of college tuition right now. We also know that the new administration is making folks go back to D.C. Again, we'll see if there's offices there at the time when they finally do go back to D.C. or their jobs. But we know folks are stressed about that. And if it does come to fruition, next school year is going to be the time that people really need this. We've got plenty of money in the grant fund

[01:14:25] right now. I'm really happy to hear that. So it's a zero effect on the tax rate at this point in time. And I just can't even imagine why we would not do this. And again, I'm also happy to support bringing it to finance so that we can have a more full discussion about it but tonight i'm in full support and i'll be voting yes thank you thank you mr kirschner thank you madam chair um i want to support this um i i think obviously if there's a need there and we

[01:15:02] have the grant funding we need to apply it wisely i am a little and mr letourneau brings up a really good point this i i i my i guess my question just kind of for the thought process of the board here is is this really it is a little bit germane to the the budget process but this doesn't have to be decided tonight it could be decided next month at the finance the next finance meeting and so it could be fleshed out a little bit more and more questions because it's a little difficult to ask some of the more broad questions within a two minute especially that we're doing everything within the motion itself so it wouldn't affect the funding it wouldn't affect the program if this

[01:15:40] was able to be discussed next month and it's fully correct and you could still put implement the funding and is there any and if i so the chair could ask miss brisman is it is there room on next month's finance meeting in april or may to have a discussion on this likely yes likely um i i'm fine with that i would want to check with staff and i know i'm not on finance so by my but getting implemented until next fall so we have some time so i guess i i think generally i think i would be in support i do have some questions i don't have time to ask those questions i think

[01:16:17] within this short period of time, but I do think that probably if there's a need there and we have the funding, we should look at that. I think there is a good point, what's going to be the long-term effect and maybe have that fleshed out and thought through a little bit more, and I know I spoke with Ms. Glass earlier and I really do want to support this. I'm not sure without a full more robust discussion whether it's such a good idea to do it now, but I think it should probably pass in some sort of form. I'm not sure if I'm there quite yet tonight. That's all. Thank you. Mr. Turner. Thank you, Madam Chair.

[01:16:48] Where does the grant funding come from? It was a federal program administered through the state, the Department of Education, so it was the child care stabilization grant that we got through Virginia. So that could disappear within hours? I think it's already in our hands. Supervisor sorry I think I have the microphone I'm just kidding around here but I mean the point here is this is a pretty turbulent environment probably the nexus of that turbulence is federal funding for programs and we're talking about this program should be funded years ago I think this is a terrific idea and we

[01:17:27] should have done it years ago and I'm all for it I think it's great but if we're relying on grant funding that's basically a federal source for the grant funding then we got to figure something else out because it's clearly an unstable funding source. That's just, do you agree? Do you disagree? Any thoughts on that?

[01:17:46] Yeah, well, we do have the grant funding already in place, and so that's, I'm not concerned about that funding going away. I hear what you're saying about future opportunities for grant funding, and I think that was the basis of Supervisor Glass's discussion about future program enhancements and to be able to continue that beyond the time when the grant funding that we have in place runs out i mean you say we have the grant funding in place and i accept that except if we expand the program in this way we really don't know how much grant funding we're going to need because we're

[01:18:21] going to have an increased population and and so the point is when is the grant funding going to sunset if we don't get it replaced by something yeah it it would be dependent how quickly we go through the grant funding is going to be dependent upon how much the program would expand yes okay thank you miss berk i apologize i just wanted to share that um we currently have the grant funding in hand um and it exists so there i don't believe we will lose it um based to yes changes yeah the packet does say our estimate if um participation in the program does not expand it would take six

[01:19:00] years to fully expend the existing grant funds that's the number i needed thank you very much Say that one more time. We currently have \$2.7 million based on the current number of enrollees, not projecting an increase, but if it stays at the same amount of participants or qualified children, it would take six years to expend the existing grant funds we have.

[01:19:27] That's a long time. That's a long time. Correct. And even if we did expand it some, even if it was four years, that's still a long time. And the thing about CASA and yes, because sometimes, you know, I hear the concern. Sometimes, you know, if this is rental relief, I'm not going to start giving someone rental relief if I can't keep giving them rental relief because that's almost cruel.

[01:19:51] The difference is this, is these kids grow up and grow out the program. And so it's not like, it's not the same thing, you know. I mean, so you start with, you know, kid A. Four years later, that kid is gone anyway, and you've at least given that family some relief.

[01:20:07] during that time, depending on what happens with the grant program, whether it expands, whether it doesn't expand. Mr. Torpy, if the grant program were to expand, if the program were to expand because more kids came into it, do we have the space for them? Well, we are working on expansion currently, and based upon what I hope is still going to happen on April 1st, we're getting additional staffing for the CASA program and expanding that.

[01:20:31] We also are coming back later with our child care item to have a discussion, which includes uh future recommendations for uh the casa program and things so we are expanding capacity where we can um and we do believe that we would be able to handle some expansion in this area if that would happen and back to the issue of transportation with this that would be a different you would now have a different money available for transportation correct that would be the schools the schools

[01:21:02] Exactly. So it wouldn't be this money. Listen, especially because people are losing jobs but will have to find other work, and the work they find might not be at the same salary, I do want to be able to help people as much as possible as soon as possible, which is why I think that being very careful about where we put taxpayer money right now is very important.

[01:21:35] And so I think this is a very good item. I appreciate you bringing this item, Ms. Glass. I think this is a very good item. And I would support it right now, knowing that part of this issue, part of this discussion, because if you read the whole motion, part of the discussion is still going to finance.

[01:21:52] So we can still discuss what will happen next, what happens, you know, how this continues. And so we don't lose anything by saying yes right now. And still being able to go to finance and knowing that we have possibly up to six years, maybe less, depending on how much it expands, gives us some breathing room to do that even right now.

[01:22:16] And again, this is exactly how we should be doing to help people, in my opinion, during this very, very turbulent and hard time. Ms. Glass, would you like a closing? Mr. Century, turn the light off, please. Point of clarification. Yes, ma'am. Yes, sir. Thank you. Yeah, no, the second part of the motion does direct, you know, forward to come back to the finance committee.

[01:22:35] But that's for the fiscal year 2027 budget development process for long-term funding options. But the first part of the motion does not direct it to come back to finance. Yeah, I know. So that's my point of clarification. Does staff interpret it that with this motion, if it was to pass tonight, that you would go start figuring out how to allocate the funding and get it going for the next school year, as you said?

[01:22:58] Or did you interpret it as coming back to finance after you've done some research and homework and coming back to finance to present? My interpretation of the motion would be that we move forward on making this happen in the FY26 budget process or the next school year.

[01:23:20] But then as we move into the discussions about fiscal year 27, we would have that discussion further about what happens beyond the time of the grant program or the grant money running out. So, yeah, I just wanted to clarify there, make sure I'm understanding it, too, because, yeah, so if we vote for this now, the first part of the motion says go ahead and get going and figure this thing out.

[01:23:43] Since that was your clarification, are you clarified? I'm clarified. Okay, Ms. Blass, would you like a closing? Yes, Madam Chair. I don't think I can say it any more than you did, Chair Randall, on how this would benefit our families that are in trouble and are in need.

[01:24:02] I just want to thank my colleagues for your understanding that this motion came so late today, but I didn't have the full answers to my questions under the packet released last night. And I want to thank staff for helping me with this initiative, and I hope that you all can support this.

[01:24:19] Thank you. Thank you. Ms. Glass made the motion seconded by Mr. Sains. All in favor, say aye. Aye. Aye. Opposed.

[01:24:39] Okay, that motion will pass. I think that's 702, with Mr. Kirshner and Mr. Letourneau abstaining on this motion. All right. Okay. I think, Ms. Bricksman, you're going to drop off now, right?

[01:24:55] Yes, Madam Chair. Thank you. Okay. You take care. Okay. All right. So the next discussion is going to be a little more, I'm not even sure I would do this.

[01:25:11] I think I do have to move us into a committee as a whole because we have two motions on the dais that are both attempting to do the same thing but in very different ways and and I just I just don't know how to do this and so what I'm going to do is this I'm going to put a half an hour on the clock to go to a committee as a whole I'm going to first go to Mr. Croney to briefly describe what you're trying to do. Then I'm going to go to Mr. Kirshner

[01:25:50] to describe what you're trying to do. And then briefly, I'm going to have to tell you briefly. Madam Chair, can I make a, I would suggest we put time limits because we're going to be here all night long. No, we're not. That's why I just said the committee as a whole is going to be 30 minutes but that's still

we if we need to put for 30 minutes and we're going to what that when your question has been asked and answered thank you very much mr. Sainz 30 minutes is what we're going to do and and then we will have a discussion so we can try to figure out what's what they're both trying to do

[01:26:27] and how we get there if we get there at all because it may be that neither one of these things are gonna be something we're going to support mr. Crony would you three minutes would you start please briefly describe your what you're trying to do no she doesn't no she doesn't gosh okay no i won't all right so um this is a motion i i brought uh at the first meeting um and chair randall and uh supervisor letourneau were not at the first meeting so i'm bringing it back because um supervisor hirschner and i are trying to do the same thing, we're trying to lower the vehicle tax and give relief to residents.

[01:27:06] So my motion keeps the reduction in the vehicle tax on the personal property side. What I'm proposing is to reduce the personal property tax on vehicles to 325 and restore the general tax rate that includes data center computer equipment to 420.

[01:27:34] By doing this, it yields 10 million of additional revenue for FY 2026, and then for half a year, it's 5 million for half a year if you look at tax year 2026. The 420 rate has been the historic rate for 35 years from 1987 to 2023. So that's the rate that has been on the books for literally 35 years. We have a revenue stabilization fund that is fully funded at 127 million,

[01:28:07] restoring the historic rate to 420, increases the general rate 5 cents and brings in 10 million, which is a small amount compared to the \$669 million we collected from data center computer equipment in tax year 24. I understand it increases the amount we're getting from data center computer equipment on the personal property tax, but again, it is a small amount, and we have a fully funded revenue stabilization fund. This is the reason we have this fund,

[01:28:42] to reduce the risk. So my proposal is to, again, lower the vehicle tax to 90 cents from 415 to 325 and restore the general rate to 420. Supervisor Brisman. Are you good with that? Well, wait, I have one other thing. Supervisor Brisman, how this would impact, I'm still talking, Supervisor Brisman asked how this would impact small businesses on their computer equipment, and we were given an answer to that question.

[01:29:18] It would be \$8. So it's an \$8 impact to small businesses. Meanwhile, it would be a \$0.90 reduction on the car tax, which many small businesses own cars. Thank you, Mr. Crony. I appreciate it.

[01:29:33] Mr. Kirschman, would you like to describe yours? Yeah, my motion is very, very simple. it's really a question. Right now, as we remember at the beginning of our discussion on the Tote Board, there were additional approximately \$10 million, I think, that we received from the state to the school so that we could now reduce the Tote Board, which actually brought us down another half cent on the Tote Board. So really my motion does, it's a choice between the supervisors. I think my motion is the better choice, and that is to take that essentially \$10 million by moving the tax rate back to 80.805, which is where we started, which is still one cent below

[01:30:13] the equalized rate for the homeowner. So we have tax savings there, and then taking that money and applying it to the car tax. So basically, the concept would be, and actually, it gives, I think, greater and broader tax relief to our citizens.

[01:30:29] So it's really a question, do you want to give that 50, I think it's an average of \$56, \$57 savings on the average house out of one-half cent across the county or, and you can see from the graph, depending on

the value of your car and how many cars you have, you could have anywhere from \$14 to \$368 savings per car.

[01:30:55] So if you're probably the average household in Loudoun County who has an average \$20,000 car and you have two cars in your garage, you're actually going to get twice the tax savings as you on your car than you would on your house by doing it this in this way and for those people who don't have necessarily own real estate in Loudoun County they would also benefit from this additional tax reduction on the car tax itself um far more and so it'd be much broader to be across the board it's a wash it doesn't cost anymore it's not a raising of taxes similar to what Mr. Crony is suggesting even though she's suggesting raising on data centers um and I think

[01:31:33] the most important thing for this board, and then I'll shut up and be quiet and let everyone discuss. I think the most important thing is we have given Mr. Hemstreet guidance to keep this balance between personal property and real property. And what this does is actually move us slightly in the right direction by ensuring that that balance maintains. So that would, I mean, I'm quite frankly in favor of both motions, obviously mine first, and it would take it all the way down to \$3.09, and Mr. Cronies only takes it down to \$3.25.

[01:32:03] So if you're choosing between the two, like I said, I would favor both. But if you're choosing between the two, mine is much better. Mr. Kirsten, thank you so much. Mr. Hempstead, would you like to add anything into those two statements before we open up for discussion?

[01:32:21] Yeah, the only couple things I would add is that the supervisor DeCrony's motion actually is \$5.3 million. And so that's which lowers the recommended rate as part of the proposed budget, lowers the personal property rate on vehicles to 348.

[01:32:36] So her motion increases the general rate, which is not just on computer equipment. It's the general rate. So it's all property that's in that rate, which generates an additional 5.3 million and then reduces the 348 down to 325.

[01:32:54] Okay. So I just want to make clear mechanically on what that's doing. Supervisor Kirschner's motion takes the \$9.1 million that is currently available from additional state funding, and instead of applying it to a reduction on the real property tax rate, it applies it 100% to the tax rate on vehicles, which started at \$348, which is where the proposed budget starts in tax year 26, would lower it to \$309.

[01:33:24] So that's just mechanically how each one operates. Okay. So, Buzz, as you have questions, thoughts, put your light on. We have 23 minutes left, and remember, we're on the clock. If you have any questions, thoughts, Mr. Sainz. Thank you, Madam Chair, to Mr. Hemstreet and Ms. Burke. Out of the two motions, can you please clarify which one would staff prefer?

[01:33:46] So, staff is not able to recommend that you increase the general rate on personal property tax. We've said that for over three years now. We just can't recommend that you do that. So then you'll be in favor of Mr. Kirshner's motion, it sounds like. So we've made our recommendation through the proposed budget.

[01:34:03] The adjustments that are being proposed by the board are up to the board. Mr. Kirshner's motion fits with the fiscal policies that the board has. Okay, and then to clarify also, I think Mr. Coney's motion is pretty much the exact same motion that she made, I think was the first night of budget session that the board voted down, is that correct?

[01:34:27] It is. The only difference with her motion is I believe she made the first motion as a substitute to the opening motion. Subsequent to the opening motion, the board recognized the \$9.1 million. And so technically her first motion started at \$0.80 and a half.

[01:34:44] This motion tonight is starting at \$0.80 because the \$9.1 million has been applied against the real property rate. Okay, thank you. Mr. Leto. Thank you. Well, I appreciate my colleagues for thinking about these things and trying to come up with some creative ways to handle them.

[01:35:00] I'm not going to support raising the tax rate. I do think you do catch cats and dogs in that rate. I know it's not a big amount of money, but, and then quite frankly, we're already making data centers a special exception.

[01:35:17] I don't know that a tax increase on top of that right now is necessarily the best look. Mr. Kirshner, I was initially skeptical of this, and my bias is towards reducing the real property tax rate, because that is assets that increase, and there is pretty wide variation.

[01:35:38] So we do have constituents that get 10%, 15% increases that will not get a tax cut, even though we're lower than the equalized rate. However, when I looked at the charts that staff provided about the savings in every scenario, the real property versus the vehicle property tax, unless you don't own a car and you own like a million and a half dollar house, which seems pretty unlikely, you're going to save more money with his motion.

[01:36:10] And quite frankly, for a lot of families, especially if you have multiple cars, multiple drivers, I now have a teenage driver with a car, and my household is quite a bit more money, actually. So I think I'm convinced that, you know, I wouldn't if we weren't below the equalized rate anyway, but since we are, I think the majority of people out there are just going to appreciate as low a bill as possible.

[01:36:33] Now, the one downside is we can't apply this personal property tax savings until a full year because of the tax years on personal property. So we have collections occurring in May and October on personal property tax, which is going to be at the current rate.

[01:36:51] And then this goes into effect the following year, which was always going to be the case even with the lower rate that we have. I am saying, though, if we do real property, that's an immediate thing that we can kind of say is taking place July 1. This is not but in the long run people will save more. So I'm leaning towards supporting that approach Unless my colleagues convinced me differently in the discussion here. Ms. Umstead Thank You madam chair. I mean I I did some Simple arithmetic on how much my family would save under both scenarios And under mr. Kirshner's scenario

[01:37:32] My real estate tax bill is going to go up \$33, but my car tax bill is going to decrease by \$530. So for me, in our household, this is an easy one.

[01:37:52] And so I am happy to support Mr. Kirshner's version. Thank you. Okay, all of us who still have Hyundais, that's not going to apply to any of us. I said, my son has a Hyundai. My old Hyundai, in fact. Mr. Turner.

[01:38:15] Thank you, Madam Chair. Mr. Hemstreet, is it true that if we raise the general personal property tax rate to 420, by definition, we are becoming more dependent on data center personal property tax revenue?

[01:38:30] Yes, that's what I thought. To Supervisor Letourneau's point, this is pretty obscure, and I'm going back to Econ 101 to pull this out. But the timing is interesting. So if we go with Supervisor Kirchner's option, we are realizing a savings in car tax a year from now, and we are realizing an increase of a half a cent in the real property tax in present day dollars, present value dollars, versus a decrease in the property tax in future dollars, which would minus inflation.

[01:39:08] Do I have that analysis correct? Anybody? In my opinion, no, because your current tax rate is 86.5 cents. You have not modified the tax rate, so you still need to set a tax rate for tax year 25.

[01:39:24] Okay. My last point, very quickly, is based on a discussion I had earlier today, which is a really valuable discussion, I think it would behoove all of us to recognize that we are in an incredibly flush year right now, and everything that we do with tax rate in this year could very well in a year or two or three have to—we're going to have to come back hat in hand and say, well, we're sorry.

[01:39:48] Remember that great tax cut we gave you three years ago? Remember the money we paid for fireworks three years ago? We've got to get all that back because the turbulent environment has caused us to do this. And so I think this is good what we're doing. I think we're in a great position to be able to do it this year, but it's a cautionary tale.

[01:40:06] This is not going to last forever. Thank you. You know, I would associate myself with these comments. Are we not already lowering the car tax? The proposed budget for tax year 26 lowers it to \$348.

[01:40:21] It lowers the car tax to \$348. The proposed budget lowers the car tax already, correct? And we've already got rid of the vehicle licensing fee, and right now we're a penny and a half below the equalized tax rate all that's already happening so now we're going to do this because again because we look like we can this year and i'm going to go back to what i said before we don't have any idea what's going to happen in a couple of years and the reason i'm um i'm being i i actually if i supported one it would be mr

[01:40:57] Kirshner's by far. The reason I'm being a little hesitant is because I had the opportunity on yesterday to go to the Council of Governments and to see the real impact of what is happening right now to the Northern Virginia region and to Loudoun County. And I think the impact is going to be much greater than anyone has any idea. Now, in some ways, that's an argument for lowering taxes because people are going to get hit hard. And in other ways, it's an argument for holding steady to see how we need to spend this money in some years to come, how much we need to maybe help people in other ways.

[01:41:33] And so I'm a little, you know, I'm a little six in one hand and a half dozen in the other. Mr. Crony, with all due respect, you're actually talking about us being more dependent on data center revenue than we are now. When I talk about trying to find ways to not be as dependent on data centers, your idea would not get us there. It makes us more dependent on the data center actual revenue. That to me is wholly illogical. I will not be supporting that. Mr. Kirshner, yours makes sense. I just wish I

[01:42:06] knew better what it's coming because there's just so much unknown coming that I don't know if it's smart to say, let's give the tax breaks right now for the car tax or we'll realize those next year are let's hold on to this money because we may need to dump a whole lot of money into so many other things just to help people eat no kidding eat um when i know what's about to happen in in years in the next couple of years to come if things still go the way they're going now cogs i i can share all those cognitive numbers with you all on tuesday but those numbers really

[01:42:46] rattled me and it makes me think that we want to give some some relief right now but also we want to keep something back so that we can give relief in other ways later on and so that's my that's my that's my um unrest right now and not knowing which way to go um mr kirster thank you madam chair and just to answer some of your questions and i think hopefully address some of your concerns it's a pretty simple choice do you want it it's this is really a wash at the end of the day quite frankly it's just about how the relief is going to in what form it's going to come in large

[01:43:22] part that's okay it really is so it one of my arguments for my motion in this particular situation is we're if we go if we basically take that my motion is to take that money that came from the state that we've applied to the tow board and rather than applying it to real property apply it to um to the car tax and so to me that is quite frankly a better use of that extra money to give greater and broader relief um people i think will feel that impact on a regular base on an annual basis more and i think um they will appreciate the work that this board has

[01:43:58] done a lot more um than they would by you know i think the average is and if i don't if you can if i can ask megan or mr hemstreet the average equalized per half penny is 57 dollars is that right and savings am i correct per per penny or per half a penny 57 so so the average the average homeowner is only going to feel 57 different whereas if you look at this chart the the average car at 20 000 is going to feel 50 is going to have 56 per car so you know this is loudon county most

[01:44:36] everybody's got at least one car and you know quite frank i don't know what the average this is something i tried to dig up and i spoke with several people we couldn't quite figure out exactly what the average car is, but I would venture to say that the average car is somewhere between \$20,000 and \$30,000 in value in this county, and so if many people have two cars or one car at that value, they're going to feel it significantly more, and so I think this is just going to be broader, and I don't think it impacts us in future years.

[01:45:02] Yeah, I think we just, okay, no, you make a good point. You make a great argument. You make a great argument. So, yeah, yeah. Yes, you weigh in. Then I'm going to stop the conversation, and we're going to go to motions. So I would say our reliance on data center revenue is here.

[01:45:22] I think that ship has sailed. We are reliant on data center revenue. Loudoun County is. So what I'm trying to do, and I appreciate Supervisor Kirshner and I are in the same place. We want to give more relief on the vehicle tax because people want to really feel relief, and this is the way to do it.

[01:45:46] I just think that the board has traditionally not wanted to increase the real property tax rate, and that's where we're headed. I mean, we're moving the \$9 million to pay for a reduction in the vehicle tax and return the real property tax rate to .805.

[01:46:03] So I believe that that's traditionally been our position. So my motion is keeping that reduction in the personal property tax side. It is going back to the historic rate of 420.

[01:46:19] And I understand if this year it may not be something we want to do, but by golly, I'll probably bring it up another year because it has been our tax rate for 35 years. The 420 rate has been our tax rate for 35 years.

[01:46:37] And so I will be bringing this back in FY27. You can count on it. But I do think Supervisor Kirchner has a great alternative. I just would say that traditionally, the board has not wanted to go to the real property tax rate because that's more about residents.

[01:46:59] increasing the general rate would increase the rate on data center computer equipment to pay for a bigger reduction in the vehicle tax. So that's where I was headed. That's where my mind was, having data center revenues pay for a bigger reduction on the vehicle tax. So I know that some residents um would would like a 0.80 um uh real property tax rate so i would just say that going to 0.805 even though it is below the equalized rate might have an impact on some residents so

[01:47:37] but i'm happy if if mine's not going to pass i'm happy to support supervisor kirschner because he and i agree would you like to make your motion uh i can make my motion how about you do that Okay. Can you shut up the clock? We're going to go to motions with eight minutes and 45 seconds on the clock in the half an hour. Look at that.

[01:47:59] Would you like to make a motion? Yeah. Yeah. Okay. I'll make it. I don't know if there'll be support, but I'll make it. Okay. I move that the Board of Supervisors make adjustments to the TOE board to reflect the real property tax rate of 0.80 for tax year 2025.

[01:48:15] The general personal, wait a minute. Is that right? Yeah. Property tax rate. Sorry. The real property tax rate of 0.80 for tax year 2025, the general personal property tax rate of 415 for tax year 2025, and 420 for tax year 2026.

[01:48:33] The personal property tax rate on vehicles of 415 for tax year 2025, and 325 for tax year 2026, and the appropriations proposed in the county administrators FY 2026 proposed budget.

[01:48:48] made by this my supervisor to crony is there a second on the motion i'll second that for a vote mr crony would you like to have an opening um i think i i think i said everything okay anybody else like to speak on mr crony's motion mr crane's motion was uh made a second by mr kirschner all the people who say aye all opposed nay can you can the eyes raise their hand so i can see that

[01:49:18] So that was 3-5-1. That motion will fail with Ms. Glass, Mr. Crony, and Mr. Kirshner voting for that motion. Mr. Kirshner, would you like to make a motion? Thank you, Madam Chair. I move the Board of Supervisors to make adjustment to the Tote Board that would return the real property tax rate to 0.805 and lower the personal property tax rate on vehicles to 3.09 per 100 of assessed value for tax year 2026, which is able to be funded by the recognition of the state revenue to Loudoun County Public Schools.

[01:49:53] Second. Mr. Kirsten, would you like to speak on the motion? I pretty much have spoken my piece. Again, I'm really glad that it looks like we do have the support up here that this board, I think this really is a much broader relief and I'm so grateful that we have the revenue this year to help do this.

[01:50:10] I've always said I hate this, the car tax is one of those little pesky taxes that I understand taxes are one of those necessary evils that we have to have, but this is just one I really dislike a lot, because a lot of states don't have it, and so I'm glad that we're able to provide some relief. I think it'll be broad, it'll be good, and I think it'll be appreciated by the citizens. Anybody else? So I just want to wrap up what we're doing here before we get to a final motion on the first. We have lowered your equalized tax rate a penny

[01:50:41] below a penny. We have lowered your car tax twice, personal property tax. We have taken away the vehicle fee. We have fully funded the school system. We have funded all of our reserves. We have funded all of our contingencies. We have funded all of the department requests at least the first and second level. Is that correct Mr. Hemstreet? The first and second level of department requests generally speaking for the most parts first and

[01:51:17] second level of department request there are people out there that are going to say say things there are there just are I'm going to send every complaint I get to I don't know I'm gonna send them to you mr. words just cuz I don't know who wasn't to send to send the mr. words cuz at this word I'm not sure what to do with him to be honest wait he said his inbox is full I mean because you know I'm not quite sure

[01:51:49] he's looking at me so I'll you're the person to forget them we would do the the the the final wrap-up motion on the first but but this has been a incredibly incredibly good budget year and mr.

[01:52:08] him Street and miss Burke thank you all for everything that you've done and all the work you've done let me say this one more time budget season starts right around July and and we end April 1st and it starts again around July so just so everyone can know that and once again I say thank you to all the department heads and to thank you all of your staff mr. Kirschner make the motion I second the motion on paper say aye any opposed that motion will pass 801 with Ms. Bricksman being off the dais.

[01:52:38] I believe that is all for tonight. We are adjourned. Chair Randall, we do have one final wrap-up motion. I'm sorry, I got a wrap-up motion. We are not adjourned. Everybody sit down. Yeah, Mr. Works is trying to run because he knows he's about to get all those motions.

[01:52:55] Call 1-800-WORKS. Wrap-up motion. Wrap-up motion. All right. I move that the Board of Supervisors direct staff to prepare the FY26 appropriations resolutions based on the FY2026 proposed budget and amended through straw poll votes taken during the March 3rd, March 6th, March 10th, and March 13th work session with a tax year 25 real property tax rate

[01:53:25] of 0.05 per \$100 of assessed value of a tax year 2025 personal tax of \$4.15 per \$100 of assessed value, a tax year 2026 general personal property tax rate of \$4.15 per \$100 of assessed value and a tax year 2026 personal property tax for vehicles to \$3.09 per \$100 of assessed value.

[01:53:52] That is the motion. Is there a second? Mr. Vice Chair, is there a second? Second, Madam Chair. Normally seconded by the Vice Chair or the Finance Chair. The Finance Chair is not here, so it's going to be seconded by the Vice Chair. I have nothing to say. said all that we're going to say oh would you want your computer back taking it home with me anyone have anything else to say all the people say aye aye any opposed that motion will pass 801 miss horses you now may leave thank you welcome sir



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