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## Loudoun County School Board, Finance & Operations Committee Meeting, Tuesday, March 3, 2026

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| Date                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Tuesday, March 3, 2026                                                         |
| Place                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Loudoun County Public Schools / School Board meeting (see BoardDocs / LCPS-TV) |
| Length                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | 55m (video)                                                                    |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Official meeting video (Vimeo / LCPS-TV): <a href="https://player.vimeo.com/video/1170078605?rel=0">https://player.vimeo.com/video/1170078605?rel=0</a></li><li>BoardDocs (School Board): <a href="https://go.boarddocs.com/vsba/loudoun/Board.nsf/Public">https://go.boarddocs.com/vsba/loudoun/Board.nsf/Public</a></li></ul> |                                                                                |

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[00:00:00] Miss Riccardi and Mr. Pepper. I think there's no public comment, correct? Okay. This meeting will be audio recorded and posted on board docs. Just trying to move along here. Okay. So we're going to move on to the approval of the draft minutes from February 3rd, 2026. Could I please have a motion to approve the February 3rd meeting minutes? I move that we approve the meeting minutes from February 3rd, 2026.

[00:00:36] Second. That motion has been made by Mr. Pepper and seconded by Ms. Riccardi. Is there any discussion? Okay. All those in favor, say aye. Aye. Aye.

[00:00:53] And with that, that was unanimous. With that, we'll move on to our action items today. 4.01, Support Services Contract Award, IFB number I26-543, Press boxes at Briarwoods High School.

[00:01:11] Thank you. And you'll be presenting, Mr. Lewis. Mr. Pascarelli will take care of this one. Thank you, Mr. Lewis. So this is a construction contract award to build the press boxes at Briarwoods High School. This is an approved CIP project.

[00:01:29] We received six bids for the projects, and we are proposing on awarding it to the low bidder. And happy to take any questions you may have. Any discussion? Yes, Mr. Pepper.

[00:01:45] Just as a notice, thank you, Mr. Pasquale. Madam Chair, thank you. Oh, thank you, Madam Chair. And thank you, Mr. Pasquale. Until it's early or late in the day. But just out of curiosity, I noticed that this has not come to the information item.

[00:02:03] It's gone straight to action. Is that just due to timing on the bid? Typically what we've done, if it's an approved CIP project in the CIP, we'll bring it straight to action. Because normally we are under a bit of time constraints when it comes to these projects to get them awarded. This one we want to start construction on as soon as school gets out, so there is a bit of a time constraint.

[00:02:20] But typically that's what we're dealing with, and we've done that as a process. Thank you, Mr. Pepper. Any other discussion? I did want to mention that I have noticed we have been replacing, I guess, the press boxes or updating them.

[00:02:40] I know, I think Stonebridge may have been fixed, and you can update me on this. but their press box, I think that's where they do announcements during sports, and they were having problems with the audio. Are you familiar with that?

[00:02:55] I know I'm getting away from Briarwoods, but this is in regards to press boxes in general. If you could just let me know if you're up to date with that particular issue, now that we're discussing press boxes. Yeah, so I'm not familiar with that specific issue.

[00:03:14] That would be something that would go through DDI. typically if there was an audio issue but if there was a building maintenance issue that would go to our facilities operations team and you know forgive me when I'm at Stonebridge or any other school I don't really look for the press boxes so when I think of press boxes I think of enclosed area an announcer is in there can you tell me a little bit more give me a little bit more of a high school level yeah sure so these these are these are small buildings essentially behind the back stops both one at the baseball field one at the softball field so the lower level contains storage

[00:03:53] um for you know for various accessories for the game then the upper level would be um there's a place to call the games and to witness the games um and and that's pretty much it's a relatively small space but used for that purpose uh well thank you um i do know that we need some of them replaced and worked on at some of our schools so i appreciate that uh yes ms recording. Chair, thank you. So I'm looking at the list. I see that their bid is significantly lower than the remaining, than the other bidders in this project. Have we worked with this firm

[00:04:31] before? So it's a great question. So yes, you're right. That bid, that low number is quite a bit lower than the others. So we have not worked with this contract before, although this contract has work with the county, and we've checked references and received good reports.

[00:04:47] So being a relatively project more on the simple side of things, we feel comfortable awarding the contract based on the vetting that we did of this contractor. It's a small company. They have lower overheads, a local Loudoun County company, so we feel good about awarding it in that regard, and we've met with the owner of the company and feel confident that they'll be able to do the work.

[00:05:10] Okay, this is now going to open up a series of other questions. If I could add something, Ms. McCarty, as well. We also have concerns when we see those. We've been on an awful lot of projects in the years, and those are things that pique our interest as well. And Mr. Pasquarelli mentioned it, but he didn't go into detail, that we brought them in and sat down and had very serious conversations to make sure they

had what they needed to do that, confirmed that they performed well at the county, so we are comfortable based on a very significant look at that because as soon as we see those same things, when we open the bids and we see that, that's the first thing that comes to our mind because we've had many contractors in the past that do well in this situation.

[00:05:50] We've had some that don't do well. And so it's not something we appreciate you noticing it as well and it's something we take very seriously. Well, considering that I play in these kind of numbers for my own bidding as a small business and my husband also has a small construction business as well. I'm familiar with this.

[00:06:06] Absolutely. So, number one, I'm going to say I'm very excited that we're working with a small business to do this kind of work. So, as a large organization with a very large budget, I think it's great that we're looking at small companies to do this. So, that's a great thing. I guess my question would, are we sure that there aren't going to be cost overruns to get up to close?

[00:06:28] I mean, even if this goes from \$885 to \$1 million, it's, you know, what's the total budget for this project? I haven't had a chance to look at the SIP. So this is definitely lower than what we anticipated, although we did sit down with the contractor and we went through their proposal line by line to make sure they weren't missing anything.

[00:06:50] So we're comfortable knowing that they have everything included. And we were impressed with the contractor in terms of his knowledge of what was in the contract and what he needed to do to perform the work. So we're comfortable with that. Okay. Is this that the labor costs are less expensive than a larger firm because they're smaller?

[00:07:10] That has a lot to do with it. Overhead and profit is usually, you know, as you know, it's a significant part of the project. So this company has a lower overhead and they self-perform more of the work, which is appropriate for a small project like this. So that's really what's driving me on this cost. But as Mr. Lewis mentioned, this does raise a red flag for us.

[00:07:29] So we did, you know, an extra amount of due diligence to make sure that this was the right partner for us. And I'm not suggesting that you guys don't do your due diligence in any way, shape, or form. It's just, as you guys probably did, when you looked at this too, you're like, ah, this is interesting. And, again, I'm excited that we're working with a small company.

[00:07:46] That's great. I just want to make sure that, you know, as we did a couple weeks ago at the meeting where we reallocated then the overage to other projects that we're cautious about not doing that too soon. I don't know what the timeline normally is for that. So the timing for that is when the projects are completed.

[00:08:05] And so the press box project is a multi-project project. In other words, we had several of those to do for all the schools. The idea was to get a press box at all the softball and all the baseball in the entire county at all high schools. So that's a multi-year project for us. Sorry, I lost track of your last question.

[00:08:26] It's okay. I might have two. Okay. No, it's good. It's fine. Again, I'm excited that we're doing this. It was about the overage not getting reappropriated until after the project is complete. Right. We wouldn't do that until we're sure we had everything done.

[00:08:42] And, you know, Joe's team is quite gifted in the field as well, so we can help them through any of the processes. As a new contractor to us, we have some pretty strict processes that we go through that maybe others don't, so we'll help them through with that as well. And we're also excited about having smaller contractors and local contractors that we can get better values for and the ideas.

[00:09:02] And the other thing is they have all the requisite backing up of the insurance and bonds and all those types of things. So they can't be with us until they have all that. Yeah, great. Well, I appreciate you guys doing that. As a small business owner myself, it's great when you can do work with a larger organization. So good.

[00:09:17] I'm excited for this. Thanks. I just had one more question. I'm sorry. Do we already have a press box there? And this is an update? No. Or this is a brand new? This is a brand new press box. And they've requested, or it was in line on the CIP for this?

[00:09:38] It was coming up? We've provided these at other schools as well. So last year we did three of them. So they were in line for the next set of press boxes. How old is Briarwoods now? How old is that school? Sounds about right.

[00:09:55] 2005? I believe it opened in 2005. So when we built the school in 2005, we didn't, press boxes was not thought of. I mean, I know we're building a school. We're building Parkview. We already know, I guess, they're going to get everything, a press box, everything brand new.

[00:10:17] So that was never, when we built the schools back in 2005, it was never brought up that maybe our high schools should have press boxes. I'm just curious. That's an excellent question. And so that is part of the evolution of our capital budget program over the years.

[00:10:32] And as you all know, I've been here quite a while. And we didn't used to even build concession stands at our stadiums. And we started doing that after Stonebridge. And we started at Heritage was the first one we built. And over time, same thing with playgrounds. We didn't use playgrounds in, then the board, at the time, directed us to start doing playgrounds.

[00:10:50] And at some point in time, after these schools were open, we started making the press boxes a part of the scope of the project. So, yes, now HS-14 and Parkview will both have those put in. And that's part of what this project was to do, is to catch up all the older schools that didn't have the press boxes so they would have that.

[00:11:07] So, yes, that's a new part of our design standard moving forward. All of them would have those. Thank you. I just wanted to ask that question as far as when the schools were built, what the thought process was. So, thank you. Any other discussion? No?

[00:11:24] Well, we can, let's see, we can send this over to consent or action, I believe, for the school board, right? Or just consent over to the school board. Generally, we send these projects as consent items to the full board.

[00:11:40] So, do we feel comfortable? Madam Chair, I feel comfortable moving this to the consent agenda. All right, thank you. So we will go ahead and we'll move that over to the consent agenda for the school board. Ms. Griffith, sorry. Yeah, sure. This is still an action item for this committee, so this committee would need to vote to do that as well.

[00:12:01] Okay, so we're good to, we're doing the thumbs up here. So it does need to, Mrs. Griffith, I believe it does. Yeah, it requires a formal vote. Oh, formal vote. So let's vote. All those in favor, say aye. Aye.

[00:12:18] Sometimes I'm a little rusty. Okay, so we'll move on now to 5.01, Information Items, Business and Financial Services, RFP, R25315, Architectural Engineering Services for Miscellaneous Projects, and if you could just elaborate as to what that's about.

[00:12:35] Thank you. Thank you very much, and good evening. This is the first of five renewals I have for you this evening. This renewal is for Miscellaneous Projects, Architectural Engineering Services. You will see in the item that these services include school and school support facility planning, building assessments, space planning, new construction, renovation, and occupied renovation.

[00:12:59] We also have included a list of projects that will come under this contract, including the CTAE renovations, visual and performing arts improvements, the independent living labs, the VIEW Transition Academy, and other small projects that come up throughout the year.

[00:13:15] This contract offers three renewal options. This is the first renewal option for this contract, and there are seven vendors on this contract, and there were no rate increases for the services for the next fiscal year. Thank you. Any discussion?

[00:13:36] Yes, Mr. Pepper. Thank you, Madam Chair. When I look at these, I'm looking at the contract right now. I appreciate that this is a renewal and there's no price increases. That makes me happy. I'm assuming that these are hourly rates for architects or engineers on these specific, um, terms?

[00:13:52] That's correct. It's based on hourly rates. Okay. Appreciate that. Um, I don't think I have anything else. Madam Chair. Yes, Ms. Riccardi. Thank you, Madam Chair. Um, so we have seven firms that are a part of this, this contract. Have, how have, do we have any evaluation of their performance over time and how they've been performing on the contract?

[00:14:12] The way we handle those evaluations and how they perform on the contracts is we work very closely with Joe's team in construction and any performance issues are immediately addressed between the procurement office and the construction team we have not received any concerns regarding the services that have been provided in the first year of this contract and have all seven of the firms conducted work over the term of the contract I I'm not sure although they will so we do our best to make sure that we spread the work out amongst seven

[00:14:46] firms, so these firms are all qualified to do work, and we, you know, provide the work to them as best fits their skill set, but we will use all of these firms during the terms of this contract. Okay, thank you. I just want to mention regarding Broad Run that's on this list.

[00:15:11] As Mr. Lewis knows, we've gone back and forth about Broad Run, and they're going to have some work done, I guess, visual arts, but we had discussed that there was not a line-by-line item of what they were going to have done, and I have to tell you, we've been going back and forth for a couple years now, and it's been a little frustrating, so if you could tell me today exactly what you will be doing for Broad Run, because you did mention visual

[00:15:44] arts and theater, they are not feeling like renovations are being done per work orders. I think they're starting to feel like we're not continuing with visual arts programs there, like we're phasing it out. And so it's kind of like, why put the money into something if we're going to phase it out? And that's sort of

how they're feeling. And I really feel like we need to make the renovations, go in there and do what we need to do as far as what they need, but also safety reasons, for safety reasons.

[00:16:21] I've been there many times where there's problems with storage and electric, and the space is a big deal because they have no room to do anything. They end up outside in the parking lot, as you know, so that's a huge issue, and then there's people on the street, as you know, that have come into the school or, you know, there's people walking on the street while the kids are out there doing work. So space is a huge issue. And we had provided storage through a work order several years ago, but the band ended up using that storage and they don't have access to it. So I know we were going back and forth on

[00:17:00] renovations for Broad Run. I really need a line by line for them, even with this particular contract are you able i i know we discussed a little bit the other day but are you able to give give me some information on that because it's it's be it's a sort it's a serious issue thank you yes thank you mr griffith so um if i can draw a comparison to the question a few minutes ago about press boxes years ago the scope of the work for our new high school did not include the press boxes and over time we realized that is something that really needs to be an integral part of the

[00:17:37] new school. When we build a school, we build the press boxes with that. The same thing happens with the evolution of every program. You know, special education programs evolve over time. Visual and performing arts evolve over time. All these things, athletic programs. And so in the 60s, when Broad Run was built, the standards were different. And so now we have a different set of standards. So what this contract will do on July 1, we get the funding for that project for the visual and performing arts. One of these firms, Mr. Pasquarelli's team, will pick one of these firms to start that work. They will take the whole itemized list of all the things that we put in a new school. So

[00:18:16] all the things that are going into the Parkview School and all the things that are going into HS14, we have those in what we call an educational specification. That document is developed in working with the school administration here in this building to say the visual and performing arts program needs to have all these components they will take that list and this architecture one of these architectural firms along with joe's team will go out physically to broad run and they're going to compare that list of what we would do in a new school to what's there and

[00:18:49] design the facility around that so it may be that um both places have you know our requirement is a storage room and broad run has a storage room but it's half the size of what the new program is so So we would work to get a larger or add a second storeroom.

[00:19:05] So all those things will be done over the first few months of that program when we come through what we call the concept phase of the project. So the architects will look at that, they'll work with Joe's team and say, "We need to add this many square feet of storage, this many square feet of this, the lights need to be changed here, this needs to be changed, all those things, and that concept will be the list you're looking for."

[00:19:28] So we don't have that yet because we haven't done that comparison and we want to make sure that we don't just make the assumption and we have a real formalized process that the architects are going through and making sure that we're talking through how the school is using the programs where their issues are where their storage is where their access is and all that and so that list will be done and we'll bring that in and just like we have in the past we'll come to this committee we'll we'll bring to this

committee schematic designs and what you were here so we brought HS 14 we brought Parkview we said here's what the school is going to look like we'll do the exact same thing it'll be a

[00:20:04] public process and we'll bring that here so that everyone can see so short answer is we don't have the list yet the long answer is I can absolutely assure you that we will have the list that you're looking for once we do that full assessment I hope so they're a little discouraged they feel like they're being ignored so I I just wanted to bring it to your attention again they're really struggling over there um sharing rooms with the band um you know the sewing room shares with the

[00:20:38] band and then the other issues with the electric um and also i wanted to thank you for taking the bar out of that main door there but there's a hole in the floor that needs to be filled um or taking care of my left we'll take care of that yeah okay so i just wanted to bring it up So thank you so much for chatting about that today.

[00:21:01] But regarding, did you have another question? Oh, Mr. Riccardi has another question. All right, thank you, Madam. Just a couple more questions for you guys. So this contract ends in 2027, so next year, is that right?

[00:21:18] That is correct. And then are we, are the scope of the architectural and engineering services going forward, since we're not doing as many big construction projects, is this when this comes up for renewal next year are we looking at another bidding process when it comes up for renewal we work with the end user and in working with the end user we determine are they satisfied with the performance of the vendors under the current terms and conditions and scope of work as long as the scope of work continues to meet the requirements and the vendors perform we do a renewal for an additional year up to no more than three additional one year renewals so

[00:21:55] it's based on performance. The vendor at the same time can also choose to not renew. So you'll see that like this one said, there's three renewal options. This is the first renewal option for this contract. When we get to the next one, you're going to see it's the final renewal option. So next year, we will have no option but to issue a new solicitation. That was one of my questions, is kind of how far we were in this process. And then I was just noticing in the summary of the firms, we have lots of firms here in Northern Virginia or the DMV, but we have one firm that's out of fort worth you will find that firms have offices here as well though they might have a

[00:22:31] corporate office in texas but have satellite a huge satellite location here in northern virginia just because of the population the growth and so on yep i totally understand i just wanted to ask about that since it's kind of the outlier in that group um and i think that's it for me thank you any other discussion no okay um and i believe this one can go to consent with a vote so all

[00:22:58] those in favor aye aye thank you um so uh we will move over to a 5.02 which is um business and financial services rfp 23 uh 23257 civil and environmental engineering services rental thank you mr cardy opened the door for me on this one thank you very much um the civil and environmental engineering, we are in the final renewal option for this contract. So the July 1, 2026 to June 30,

[00:23:34] 2027 will be the last renewal and we will bring forward to you sometime during the next fiscal year. We will bring before you the new solicitation and award options. This contract includes the civil and environmental engineering, which includes such things as the Waterford Elementary school renovation in addition which we've talked about previously the visual and performing arts improvements walking tracks

artificial turf lights view transition academy evergreen mill road widening playground improvements and other small projects very similar to the architectural

[00:24:10] except this one does have five companies on the list and this one they this represents a three percent increase in price which is understandable as last year they had no price increase so we try to ensure that we are in line with any price increases.

[00:24:27] When we do price increases, we look at the consumer price index and other indices to make sure that we're in line with that, and then we work with the end user before approving those increases. So this is brought before you this evening as the final renewal for this contractual agreement.

[00:24:44] Thank you. Any other discussion? We can move this to consent as well. It's a contract. All those in favor? Aye. Aye. Thank you. I took off my microphone.

[00:24:59] We'll move over to, I guess, 5.03, Business and Financial Services, RFP, R25267, Back of the Envelope, Audit, Renewal. And please explain this one, because I always get confused on this one. Yes, I'm going to turn it over here to Mr. Woehead in just a minute to explain that to you.

[00:25:17] I remember our discussion from last year, so we'll give you some more details. This contract year coming up, we will be doing projects under the CAP, Capital Asset Preservation Program. We'll be using those funds for any work that is completed. This contract is with two vendors, CMTA and McClure.

[00:25:35] McClure was new to us with this contract, and they're doing business with us now. This contract actually has 10 additional one-year renewal options. Once again, renewals are optional, must be agreed to by both parties in order to move forward.

[00:25:52] As I said, this is the first of 10 renewal options, and I will turn it over to Mr. Woehead. if there's any explanation he would like to provide. Good evening. The Back of the Envelope contract is a contract vehicle we use to execute energy performance work.

[00:26:09] So as of right now, through our Capital Asset Preservation Program, we have 10 projects approved in the FY27 budget that we'll be using this contract vehicle to execute replacements of HVAC equipment and plumbing equipment at the schools.

[00:26:24] That's part of our Life Cycle Capital Improvement Program. In this, we'll bid the projects out basically individually to each one of the architect engineer firms, CMTA or McClure, ask them to produce a project package, a guaranteed savings program, and then a cost estimate.

[00:26:41] We'll then review that along with the design and then issue the award to each one of these vendors. Thank you. Any discussion? No? So mostly just HVAC work, duct, working with the ducts and that sort of thing, and updating.

[00:26:58] Yes, Mr. Pepper, do you have a question? Go ahead. Yes, Madam Chair. Is there a particular reason why this is a 10-year renewal instead of the standard three, or is it just the type of work they're doing? In general, this is a partnership we developed. We did a five-year program last year. The process is somewhat onerous to go through the evaluations, and then this 10-year relationship allows them to understand our processes, develop long-range plans to help us not only replace aging equipment, but also develop energy efficiency solutions.

[00:27:28] This could range anywhere from replacement control systems, to answer Ms. Griffiths' question, or Chair Griffiths, HVAC equipment has rooftop units, chillers, boilers, any of the equipment

associated with the main mechanical plant. We have used these for electrical lighting replacements to add LED to the classrooms, and then solar voltaic cells, building envelope improvements, any type of project that has a return on investment, and then improves the comfort, air quality of our schools.

[00:27:58] The sustainability right? It can be used the sustainability of this particular in the FY27 It will be almost entirely used for end-of-life cycle replacement of HIC equipment. Got it. Thank you Thank you. Any other discussion? Did you have another question? Mr. Pepper? I didn't madam chair. Thank you very much All right. Thank you. Thank you So this can go to consent if we all agree if we take a vote right now All those in favor say aye. Aye. Aye. Thank you. I turned off my microphone again

[00:28:31] Okay, so we're moving on to 5.04, Business and Financial Services RFP R25275 Auditorium and Black Box Dimmer System Services Renewal. Thank you. As shared in this item, this is to provide labor, materials, equipment, supervision required to perform auditorium and black box dimmer system annual inspections, system replacements, and repairs on an as-needed basis.

[00:29:00] The current contract is scheduled to expire on June 30th, 2026. This is the first of four renewal options for this contract. And if renewed, the contract is with Artistic Concepts Groups of Chantilly, Virginia. Thank you.

[00:29:19] Any discussion? We can take a vote for this to go to consent. So all those in favor, say aye. Aye. Thank you. We will move on to now 5.05, Business and Financial Services, RFP.

[00:29:38] R24250 Language Interpretation and Translation Services, Renault. Thank you. With this one, we're going to move away from support services and move to our communications office. And this relates to language interpretation and translation services done through our FACE program.

[00:29:55] This is for both written and oral translation interpretation services for our school system. This RFP was issued to provide face-to-face video remote interpreting for foreign language interpretation and written document translation.

[00:30:13] This contract RFP did allow for multiple awards with the option to renew for four additional one-year term. This is the third renewal option for this contract. The current contract is set to expire on July 31, 2026, and we bring before you this evening two vendors to be renewed, Liberty Language Services and PGLS LLC.

[00:30:36] Thank you. Any discussion? Yes, Mr. Pepper. Can you, thank you, Madam Chair. Do you have any explanation as to how we choose which of these two providers to provide services?

[00:30:58] Generally speaking, with these services, a lot of it depends on availability and volume. So really, a lot of it comes down to, especially with the face-to-face and video remote, who's the most readily available at that moment in time. And then the written, we would disperse amongst the two.

[00:31:19] I imagine this is used quite a bit. Do we know, just perhaps the ballpark figure, what we spent last year on our translation services? The estimated value of this contract is \$300,000. Per year. So that would be based on the annual spend and that would determine that we went out to solicitation and what the anticipated spend would be for the next year.

[00:31:43] Thank you. questions um i guess my my question is i mean i'm just looking at the translation list i mean these are are we getting in are we getting uh pamphlets or documents translated for every single one of these languages a lot of that is done through our communications office determining which

language translations are needed but i know there is a hefty number of translation The written I can't attest to, but I know that we have a lot of people on standby for the various oral languages.

[00:32:20] So these are not documents we keep on file. I mean, when would we reach out for Tamil, the language of Tamil? I'm just asking. Maybe we hire a Tamil employee or a family, and they need documents interpreted for employment.

[00:32:38] So is it quick? Website, yes. oh it's quick translation yes it's translation okay that's what I was wondering I mean do we have like a storage room with all these documents with every single language a lot of it's done on an as-needed it's as needed okay okay that was my question thank you any other discussion okay so this can go to consent as well via a vote so all those in favor say aye aye thank you and with

[00:33:11] that um we're moving on to i believe new business um is there any discussion oh yes mr accordi thank you madam chair um i would like us to put onto the agenda or consider putting onto the agenda um a process for us to start looking at getting feedback from the school board members about the budget delivery process and how we're getting um presentations and just how that process went in general for everybody this time around and feedback from the school board members

[00:33:50] and then also potentially having some conversations about how we might like to see the budget presented in the future how we want to continue to work on it i expressed during the budget process some concerns i had with it and i think it'd be a really great time for us over the next couple months to really evaluate that process and make sure that as we move forward that all that feedback is collected from school board members and see if we might be able to either set up some working sessions either with the rest of the school board or for the committee and then invite everybody to come to those to start talking about that process and kind of getting things moving.

[00:34:28] Thank you, Mr. Accardian. Just to piggyback on that, we have Ms. Willoughby here today. You know that we can have discussions with you on that, on how we can streamline this budget process, but also I had brought up in the retreat that I would like to see a budget with and without investments. And to clarify investments, it's removing the special programs and everything that, you know, like wish list type of things from the actual budget and having, you know, seeing what it looks like without those items. But I do agree with Ms. Riccardi that we should be

[00:35:07] approaching the budget in a different way and we should meet on that to figure out how to do that. Thank you. So I'll take this opportunity to you know Chair Griffiths you may recall but for Mr. Pepper and Ms. Riccardi's sake we start discussions on the FY28 budget here in the next couple months. We have penciled in May 12th as being our target date of having that initial budget work session

[00:35:36] so unless there was something more specific direction to take before May 12th I'd be open to that but that would be our first opportunity to have that discussion with the school board I would welcome you know jumping on the phone if there's you know something more specific of what that work session even looks like it's it but it is that first initial discussion of what the budget process is what it you know what what constraints we have as well as you know getting

[00:36:12] initial feedback from the board in terms of priorities because it's not just even so much the process we're actually beginning to develop the fy28 budget based on that initial feedback that will happen here in about two months so if if that works that could be our first initial discussion again unless there's

something more specific I'd be open to that yes miss recording um so yeah i definitely have something more specific in mind um and i don't think this is necessarily a one or the other or one has to come before the other i think it can be a parallel

[00:36:47] stream in the process i think as we're um thinking about our 2028 budget priorities and starting on on may 12th i don't think that's an issue i think what i would love to see though is between now and then and hopefully sooner if possible that we actually start creating something so i've got some ideas on that and I think what I'd like to do is just make a motion and we can maybe go from there um sure did you want to add anything before I do that I'm just curious to see where you're like where I'm going on this I want to see where the bus is going well I got to make the motion first so let me let me see if I can get some of this down here and then we'll we'll sort this out

[00:37:27] all right so chair if I may only because I actually got a reminder earlier today about the process. Since this is new business, I'm not sure we can just have a motion. I believe the pathway could be either we could have this as an information at the next committee meeting, and that way we can have a more thorough discussion. If there's specific action, I think it would require suspension of the rules, perhaps, and I'm not even 100% sure we can do that from a new business perspective. I think you are correct, Ms. Willoughby, and we can discuss it and maybe bring it back to this committee as an information item. So would you

[00:38:05] like us to put a placeholder as an information item? Yes. As the next FNO to talk about the FY20 budget process? Yes. And I believe Ms. Riccardi will go through some of the ideas for this today and then we'll bring it back. Yeah, because I don't want to just bring this up in two weeks and then everybody go like what is she talking about? So here's just, and again, I'm very open to suggestions on approaching this differently. So I'm not suggesting this as the only way to do it. I think the three of us can -- there may be some ways to do this, but I want to throw this out there since we can't have conversations about this outside of the meeting. I want to see if I can just put some of these out

[00:38:40] here. So I think the first one is I'd love to see us explore a series of working sessions. I think two or three would be great, hopefully convened by the committee or some -- I don't even know if we do subcommittees, but really just kind of a working session of this committee, I think, is probably the right way to do it. I've seen that done with some of the other committees before where we're really trying to make sure that we have a really clear understanding of what's going on outside of northern Virginia with similarly sized organizations kind of the two to three billion dollar

[00:39:16] school districts and other places and how they present budget information I would love for us to get some people in to be able to provide some of that context for us to be able to sort out just best practices from outside of LCPS in general I think we need to have some really clear feedback from the public with regards to the budget process I know there are a lot of people that if you're just a lay person looking at this the budget process and pull that PDF down from the website there's a lot of information there but it's really hard to discern even as a school board member coming in the differences between

[00:39:53] the what's being presented and for example projects so I would actually like to disengage this process it was it's very focused on the strategic plan and since we're in the middle of doing a new strategic plan right now I think it makes sense for us to disengage the the budget process tying it directly to the strategic plan and having it more aligned with the the cabinet level members and the organization as a

whole so going through each department presentation in just a different way to present that information so I have a lot

[00:40:32] of details on that but I don't want to hit that right now but I definitely want us to have public comment public engagement some opportunities for us to redesign the way that the budget information is presented so that it's very clear to us exactly what's being spent and where it's being spent what's being what's in the base budget for operations versus all the additional programs I think that's where you were getting at too is like all the other programs and we've done a really lovely job I think in the last several years of adding some really great programs to the things that we offer here in LCPS but I want to be able to see that from a cost perspective and a staffing perspective

[00:41:07] etc so I think breaking that those pieces out as well would be really helpful and if we so for meeting yeah so I think that just we can probably I think three meetings will probably do it to be able to kind of just get us a better sense of where we want to go with this and get some really good feedback from the public. Mr. Pepper. Yes. Wait sorry. Thank you Madam Chair. Thank you Madam Chair.

[00:41:34] I think in addition to the things Mr. Riccardi put forth I would love before we have these sessions if we as we're going to discuss this I'd love to solicit feedback really from the entire board about what's working and what's not working right. I think that's kind of that really if anything should be our launching off point um and so because I think that and I'm I may be speaking in platitudes but I think all of us um want a transparent budget process and we want a budget process that you know there isn't the surprising I know that and I'm going to use your example Ms. Riccardi the idea of kind of horse trading for priorities at at the end of the process about

[00:42:11] you know if we put money here we can get this if we take money there we can get that um maybe kind of putting the cart ahead of the horse if you will so seeing what's working and seeing what's not working um with the whole before probably before we even dive into these work sessions would be extremely important and so that might be kind of a grounding that we look at when we do our information item next week yes mr carney i'm sure thank you and just to add on to that too i think actually even getting feedback from our aides too because they were helping us digest a lot of that information so through that like having them submit their stuff through the school board member and then having us be able able to gather and collect that information i think would be really great

[00:42:46] yes mr pepper the other thing i would add is and i know that you're willing to bring in some outside groups i i do want to stress that virginia is kind of a unique place um and that school boards in this state i believe maybe even this state alone don't have taxing authority so um we are entirely um reliant on the state the feds and the board of supervisors for our transfer so i i'd love to see how you know nationwide school districts our size are doing a budget process but it'd be much more helpful to kind of look at some of our peers at principally i'm a fairfax of Virginia Beach, just because it makes a lot more sense

[00:43:24] in the grand scheme of how we get our money. Yes, Ms. Riccardi. Yeah, and I don't think it's, for me, as much about that part of the process as it really is how is the information gathered and delivered to the school board so we can make whatever decisions we want to make.

[00:43:42] Yeah, and the horse trading business, I think that's the thing I really want to make sure that we're... I just want it to be really clear what the base operating budget is that we need to run LCPS And

then all the additional pieces of that puzzle, I think, would be really helpful, too. And then we can figure out from there the priorities.

[00:43:58] And I think the sooner we can get that, the more meaningful our summer conversations and our fall conversations will be in order to not show up in January having to read a 300-page document that we're not even, you know. It's just hard to make heads or tails of it.

[00:44:15] And I know that this is the process. For the last four years that I've watched, it's been the same process every time. But I just think there's a way for us to be able to more cleanly deliver the information in the budget document and process itself so that it's just easier for all of us to really understand what we're spending money on because it's a lot of money.

[00:44:34] And also, to be honest with you, we're also at some point in time going to have to start cutting a budget. And I don't want to have to do it all as the revenue, you know, the revenue from the data center's pieces ramps down. I don't want to have to get stuck in 2028 or 29 having to make massive cuts to a budget.

[00:44:55] I want to kind of see the effectiveness of what we're doing now and if there's ways for us to start saving some money here and there so that we can make this a wind down of our budget instead of jumping off of a cliff, kind of having to make major cuts. Any other discussion? I did want to add to that that I'm all about being able to go through that budget thoroughly and see what can be cut and not have to do an amendment here, an amendment there.

[00:45:25] That's why I was looking for the with and without investments. But I think any suggestion to do this differently is a good one, and we can start it here in this committee. So I appreciate your thoughts.

[00:45:41] And Ms. Willoughby, how could we implement it into this committee? You know, you said may, but how can we implement some of these ideas into this committee? That would be you working on that for us, right?

[00:46:00] I think for, I think there's two ways of looking at this. One, I welcome the opportunity at the next meeting of bringing information about the process, recognizing that two of our new school board members sit on this committee, and it is.

[00:46:19] you're sworn in in January and then a week later we start the budget process there are reasons around that timeline we share the same frustration the county shares the same frustration we i mean i could almost give the presentation right now because we talk about it very frequently of the condensed timeline um and how there are really strong boundaries of what we can and can't do with that. So I welcome the opportunity to discuss that more thoroughly with this committee, as well as get perhaps, you know, maybe there is something, you know, we're missing in terms of other opportunities

[00:46:54] or what the trade-offs are. Because again, just to help ground the conversation, when we are saying that we're going to begin the discussion for the FY28 budget in May, we haven't even started the FY27 budget that you guys have just recently adopted. So that's how far ahead we are, which has its positives, but it also has its drawbacks. The drawbacks being that we don't have most recent information. A lot can happen over, you know, several months the closer we get to that fiscal year. So again, that will be some of the information I would share. I would like to piggyback off of

[00:47:31] what I'm also hearing Mr. Pepper say in terms of getting feedback from the board. One of the primary actions that the school board has as a responsibility is adopting the budget each year. It is a huge

responsibility and I would want to make sure that we are, to Ms. Riccardi's point as well, getting the proper feedback from them as well and so that there's a consensus on direction for staff to take so that we can more efficiently try to look for what those improvements are.

[00:48:04] So I would think, unless I hear something differently, that I'm looking at for my role at the next committee meeting as bringing information about the process as well as perhaps a recommendation on how we can get feedback from the board and I would welcome the opportunity of getting feedback from the committee on what we could include in the work session on the 12th because that really is a really good opportunity I will share just since Ms. Riccardi had mentioned it one of the things that we are looking to include a part of that work session is not just

[00:48:41] a forecast for FY28, but also a forecast for the next couple years. Now that we have more clear direction from the county of their constraint with the data centers of what that looks like versus one year. In the past, we have truly been just one year at a time, because as Mr. Pepper mentioned, we're not fiscally autonomous. This is the first year that we actually have numbers and data in more clear direction from the county on a long-term perspective which is welcome is welcoming because we know that gives us the opportunity to long-term plan whereas before

[00:49:16] we couldn't and that that makes it difficult so that will be something new that we do plan to include on that work session and again any other thoughts or suggestions on activities or feedback or information to have at that May 12th work session would be great yes Mr. McCarty I just want to make sure that um and i appreciate i appreciate that feedback i just want to be really clear about the direction i'm going with this which is i don't want to change your timeline for any of the process like the timeline is the timeline and i get it and i know we have to stick to that for a whole host of reasons i get all of that what i'm suggesting is i would like to see

[00:49:55] a fundamental shift in how department presentations are given to the are presented to the board and the board book, the scion book that we get, and how that is presented to us. I think that by making significant improvements in that process, we will wind up reducing the 5,000 questions that you got.

[00:50:21] Well, that's an overstatement, but the hundreds of questions that you guys get from us in that January window of time, if we do a better job of presenting the information up front and getting it in a way that we can all understand it better, I think you're going to wind up reducing a lot of that administrative end in January or that part of it in January.

[00:50:41] So that's really what – and I also really want our constituents and the media and everybody else that winds up receiving this and our families and our parents and our taxpayers to be able to look at that Sion and understand what in the world is in it. It's very difficult to go through that and be able to call out and pull out, like, the essential pieces of information, which is why we're bombarding you guys with all those questions.

[00:51:06] And so that's really my ultimate goal, is it's not to change the timeline, it's to change the communication method with which we're getting information so that we can make better decisions in a more timely way. And we're also not under all the stress in January of trying to figure it out ourselves. And if I may add to that, I mean, this is my third year, you know, my third budget.

[00:51:27] I'm working on that in January. And I do think it needs to come to us in a different way. I do think we need to work on better solutions, better ways, better ideas on how we can be more transparent for the public.

[00:51:46] But also, it should be easier for us to figure out, you know, what's what. And I do want to, you know, mention that anything that comes through this committee will go to the full board. And they will see it.

[00:52:01] And if it needs to be voted on, if it comes in an information item and it goes as an action, They will, you know, we'll have a discussion and they will vote on it. So it's just a matter of how we can now work on this with you, Ms. Willoughby, and get it on the agenda and have these discussions here.

[00:52:22] Also, I was going to mention, and I did reach out to you about this, I would like to see the agenda, you know, prior to this meeting. I'm like dating a week before, maybe a week before this meeting so I can really give it a look over and see, you know, question anything that I might need to question ahead of time as chair of this committee.

[00:52:46] So any way you can help us out with that, I'd appreciate it. Sure. And as I've responded to that email, we are following the process that we had had for several years. And so if that timeline is not meeting where you are receiving the agenda a week in advance. So if there's something that you need sooner, also just recognizing there's a trickle-down impact to the work of making sure that we have items on the agenda.

[00:53:11] So I'd be happy to have a discussion offline how much sooner you would like to see the agenda because we do already provide it a week in advance. And as far as Ms. Riccardi's ideas and possible solutions for the budget in the future, should we get that information over to you ahead of time for the next meeting so you can take a look?

[00:53:34] And maybe we should go line item, item by item. I don't know how many items you're suggesting, but maybe we should do that and implement them into the agenda. But, you know, you and I can have those discussions, you know, way before the meeting and see what works.

[00:53:53] My phone line, I'm always open to a meeting. I would always welcome information in advance. As I mentioned in an email to you recently when you asked about, like, the OPEB policy of I welcome, since we didn't really get feedback of why it was being sent back to committee is another example of we would welcome to have what questions there may be on items so that we can be prepared of what to bring so that we're, you know, having meaningful meetings.

[00:54:21] Thank you. And did you, is there any other discussion? No? Well, I appreciate that discussion on the budget because after doing it for three years, it was a little bit frustrating for me. So thank you. Thank you, Ms. Riccardi, for your suggestions.

[00:54:38] And just to get back to, I'm shifting gears here. Again, I did want to have the discussion again, CIP, with you, Mr. Lewis, about a broad run in particular. And we could possibly have that offline.

[00:54:54] But, again, I did not see renovations or storage in the CIP. So, that was just a concern. But that's just something we can chat about and make sure that's done. So, with that, is there any other new business? No?

[00:55:11] Okay. I think we can adjourn for today, and I want to thank everybody for coming.



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