MACHINE TRANSCRIPT · CORAGGIO CONSULTING

Prince William Board of County Supervisors Meeting, Tuesday, April 4, 2023

Date	Tuesday, April 4, 2023
Place	Prince William County Board of County Supervisors, Virginia
Length	6h 24m (video)

- Official meeting video (Prince William County, Granicus): https://pwcgov.granicus.com/player/clip/3283
- Official Board of County Supervisors page (Prince William County): https://www.pwcva.gov/department/board-county-supervisors

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

Speech-to-text: whisper.cpp, model large-v3-turbo. Produced 2026-11-04. Each paragraph starts with its time [HH:MM:SS] in the meeting video.

[00:00:05] Good afternoon. It's 2 p.m. on Tuesday, April 4th, 2023. Please join me in a moment of silence, if you wish. Thank you.

[00:00:22] Thank you. If we could all rise for the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance. I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the republic for which it stands, one nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

[00:00:48] Supervisor Bode is on his way. He'll be here. Just a second. Yes. Good timing. I just want to start off today's meeting with an update on a land use item. The applicant for Haymarket Crossing 2 has deferred their application, which is this evening, so there will be no public hearing agenda item in this evening's board meeting.

[00:01:07] We do need a resolution to remand it back to the Planning Commission. That's usually how we handle this, and it is being remanded back to the Planning Commission. Supervisor Weir, would you like to actually ask for a wave of the rules of procedure, unless anybody objects?

[00:01:23] okay second are we voting on suspending the rules or just yeah wait okay very good and uh any questions or discussion seeing none please vote vote unanimous okay thank you one one administrative thing out of the way um it will be coming back to the board of county supervisors on

[00:01:58] june 6 i don't remember the date for the planning commission um next we are on to item uh agenda item number three, which is the approval of the meeting minutes for March 7th, 14th, and 21st. I'll entertain a motion to approve agenda items 3A through 3C. So move, Madam Chair.

[00:02:17] You need to turn your microphone on. Madam Chair, before we do that, having voted on the prevailing side, I would move to reconsider item 11A from the March 21st meeting, the certification of the closed meeting, to give an opportunity for those who, upon reflection, wish to change their vote to do so. Someone's going to have to help me out procedurally here. That's sort of, you know, you're trying to go back and change the minutes?

[00:02:44] Reconsider the vote, yes. But we're actually voting on the minutes right now. And I prefer to do it before the minutes are adopted. Okay. It's a privileged motion that takes precedence. Okay, fine.

[00:03:00] And you're requesting what? Reconsideration of the vote on item 11A from the 21st, the certification of the closed meeting. So, Ms. Roper, can you help me out here? I mean, we certified a closed meeting session. I mean, we voted on it.

[00:03:17] we certified. Can people go back and change their vote? With regards to reconsideration, if you're in the prevailing side under your rules or procedure, you can make a motion to reconsider. Okay. I'll second his motion. Just a general motion to certify. Okay. So we have a motion to reconsider. And you want to re-vote on that? Correct. Okay. And so we don't necessarily have to reconsider it. If we don't want to, we can just vote against

[00:03:56] Okay, got it. Okay. So there is a motion on the floor by Supervisor Weir, seconded by Supervisor Lawson. Is there any discussion? Seeing none, please vote. I don't have my no.

[00:04:16] Motion fails, 3 to 5. Supervisors Lawson, Vega, and Weir voting yay. Supervisors Angry, Bailey, Bodie, Franklin, and Chair Wheeler voting nay. Okay, thank you. Madam Chair, I move to approve the minutes.

[00:04:33] Great. Can I get a second on 3A? Second. Motion made by Supervisor Bailey, seconded by Vice Chair Bodie. Any discussion on item three? Seeing none, please vote. Oh, sorry.

[00:04:56] No, I want to speak to it, but I can't request to speak without messing up.

[00:05:17] Okay. Okay. Speak, Ben. Yeah, thank you. So, if anybody's wondering what's going on up here, the motion to reconsider failed regarding an action that we took two weeks ago, which is what Supervisor Weir was trying to reconsider, and that failed.

[00:05:36] So for the purpose of explanation, I'm going to vote against the approval of the minutes simply because of that one. Or I can, thank you, I can actually abstain or I can vote against it because I take issue with something that I would like to go back and reconsider and discuss, but that motion failed.

[00:05:57] So you don't want to approve the minutes based on that? Well, yeah, because I think there's a flaw in the minutes, but you didn't want to reconsider the discussion for us to point out the flaw. So that's 3C? That would be 3C. Okay, if we could get a new motion, an amended motion for 3A and 3B first.

[00:06:18] So moved, Madam Chair. Second. Motion made by Supervisor Bailey, seconded by Vice Chair Bodie. Please vote on 3A and 3B. Vote unanimous, 3A and 3B. If I could get a motion to approve 3C.

[00:06:35] So moved, Madam Chair. Second. Motion made by Supervisor Bailey, seconded by Vice Chair Bodie. Any further discussion? Seeing none, please. I thought you already spoke. Well, here's the opportunity to discuss it. So I'm going to vote against the approval of the minutes because I don't believe that the certification is – I'd like to change my vote and have a discussion about certifying closed session discussions from two weeks ago.

[00:07:08] And I'm disappointed that five of you chose not to even have the discussion about it, so I'll choose to just vote now. Any further discussion? I don't see anybody's – your light is lit, Supervisor Weir. Is that because you want to speak?

[00:07:24] Well, I didn't think we could, but sure. I'll add on to Janine. I've got an objection as well because I believe that we went far beyond the scope of the call to close session with respect to the item regarding personnel discussions and considerations relating to the performance of the members of the Board of Supervisors.

[00:07:43] I believe we went well beyond the bounds of that with discussion of a policy issue and an unnamed member of staff who was not part of the motion and the material that we covered was not part of the motion, so I will be abstaining from this vote as well.

[00:08:02] Okay. Seeing no further discussion, please vote. Motion passes. Supervisors Lawson and Vega voting nay. Supervisor Weir abstaining from vote. Great. Let's see. Now we're going on to the consent agenda, agenda item four.

[00:08:21] Today's consent agenda consists of eight items. Are there any items that anyone wishes to remove because they have questions they need answered or concerns? Seeing none, I will take a motion for agenda items 4A through 4E without the proclamations.

[00:08:40] So moved, Madam Chair. Motion made by Supervisor Bailey, seconded by Supervisor Franklin. Any discussion? Madam Chair. Supervisor Franklin. Sure. I would like to just speak on 4F, the Child Abuse Prevention Month. No, we didn't do it.

[00:08:56] never mind okay okay seeing no further discussion please vote vote unanimous that brings us on to the proclamations for f through 4h motion made by supervisor Franklin seconded by supervisor Bailey discussion supervisor Franklin sure yes I would like to speak on item 4f the child abuse prevention month I just want to thank our social services staff for the work that they do with regards to not only kind of the myriad of work that they do on social

[00:09:35] services but particularly child abuse and prevention. Obviously a year ago we opened the Child Advocacy Center which I was proud to kind of champion and my colleagues bipartisan manner supported it and that is up and running and I know that they're doing great work but unfortunately there are some challenges that we have in our country and our nation even here in Prince William with regards to child neglect and abuse and I appreciate my colleagues for their their efforts on this and for our for their support for this but most importantly our social services department Elijah you've done an amazing

[00:10:10] job in the human resources space I know Courtney Tierney is not here but I appreciate the work that she's done but also just want to thank our social services advisory board my appointee particularly Clarice Torian former Chair, and just the work that you all have done and the staff at the Child Advocacy Center. So thank you so much. Supervisor Bailey. Thank you, Madam Chair. I just wanted to take

this opportunity also to applaud the Department of Social Services for the outstanding work that you're doing. We know that the work is not done. There's other opportunities for us from not just from a services

[00:10:48] standpoint, but from a funding standpoint. We are very much aware of that. And for the leadership and the partnership that Mrs. Torian and Mrs. Wilson, that you do. I've seen you work on the board. You're exceptional in your leadership. And so we appreciate the guidance that you give us when we're making these most essential decisions.

[00:11:09] And so thank you for all of staff and for your e-mails. We welcome them. Thank you so much for all that you do. We appreciate you. And the windmills are the best. I don't know about anybody else. That's the best time for me. So thank you for that. Seeing no further discussion, please vote.

[00:11:33] Motion passes. Supervisor Vega abstaining from vote. We do have three proclamations today. We're going to begin with proclaiming April 2023 Child Abuse Prevention Month. With us today is Teresa Wilson from Social Services, Van Washington from Social Services, as well as Lori Wilson, who I'll come down to the DSS Advisory Board Chair.

[00:11:55] And I did want to recognize Clarice Torian and my own appointee, Idris O'Connor, for being here today. Thank you.

[00:12:40] Awesome. Okay. Child Abuse Prevention Month, April 2023, whereas in fiscal year 2022, 5,118 cases of suspected child abuse and neglect were reported in Prince William County, and whereas the abuse is considered to be one of our nation's most, whereas child abuse is considered to be one of our nation's most serious public health problems, with scientific studies documenting the link between the abuse and the neglect of children and a wide range of medical, emotional, psychological,

[00:13:17] and behavioral disorders, and whereas our children are our most valuable resource and will shape the future of Prince William County, and whereas Prince William County is committed to supporting families through programs that will prevent child abuse and neglect, and whereas effective child abuse prevention activities succeed because of partnerships created between child welfare professionals, education, health, community and faith-based organizations, businesses, law enforcement agencies, and families, and whereas displaying a pinwheel during the month of April will serve as a positive reminder that together we can prevent child abuse and neglect and by doing so keep children safe. And whereas prevention remains the best defense of our

[00:13:57] children and families, now therefore be it resolved that the Principally and Board of County Supervisors hereby proclaims April 2023 as Child Abuse Prevention Month. Good afternoon Chairman Wheeler and members of the Board of County Supervisors. I'm Lori Wilson, Chairman of the DSS Advisory Board. And with me today are Idris O'Connor, Vice Chairman of the DSS Advisory Board, Clarice Torian, former Chair of the DSS Advisory Board, Van Washington, Assistant Director

[00:14:35] for Protective Services, Teresa Wilson, Program Manager for DSS Prevention Team, and Jessica Webb, Director for CSA. Thank you all for this resolution. Child abuse prevention work is important work because it involves protecting our most vulnerable children in our community.

[00:14:56] Last year, as you heard, there were 5,118 reports of child abuse and neglect in Prince William County, and 319 children have been interviewed at the Child Advocacy Center since it opened a year ago. Staff break barriers every day to ensure that children are safe and families are supported.

[00:15:18] Child abuse and neglect is preventable, and all communities benefit when children and families are supported. Having even one child abused in our community is one too many. We thank you again for this resolution.

[00:15:46] Next up, we have proclaimed April 9th through 15th, 2023, Animal Care and Control Appreciation Week.

[00:16:43] With us today, I'm going to read off a list of names, our Police Chief Newsham, Major Kim Chisley, Missouri, Kim Gregory, Sergeant M. Scott Williamson, Matt Schultz, and Kim Penny.

[00:16:58] If you could all join me or which ones of you are here, if you want to join me in the front.

[00:17:30] Madam Chair, request that the puppy be in the picture as well. I know, really, really key to bringing a dog.

[00:17:46] Wow, kudos for the day. Animal Care and Control Officer Appreciation Week, April 9th through 15th, 2023. Whereas the National Animal Care and Control Association has designated the second week of April each year as Animal Care and Control Officer Appreciation Week, whereas the various federal, state, and local government officials throughout the county take this time to recognize, thank, and commend all animal control officers and animal shelter staff for the dedicated service they provide.

[00:18:17] Whereas the Prince William County Animal Control Officers and Animal Services Center staff provide essential community functions, including the enforcement of animal control laws, protecting the public from diseases such as rabies, capture roaming and potentially dangerous animals, investigating reports of animal complaints and welfare.

[00:18:35] And whereas the animal control officers and animal services center staff who answer calls for assistance, educate pet owners about responsible animal care, provide the proper care of animals in their custody to protect the welfare of homeless animals from injury, disease, abuse, and starvation.

[00:18:53] Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Prince William Board of County Supervisors hereby proclaims April 9th through 15th, 2023, as Animal Care and Control Officer Appreciation Week in Prince William County. be it further resolved that the citizens of Prince William County are encouraged to make a special effort to express their sincere appreciation for the service and dedication of our Animal Control and Animal Service Center employees.

[00:19:18] Thank you. Anthony Cleveland, do you want to mind this? Sorry. I just want to thank the distinguished members of the board for really having this and recognizing the Appreciation Week for the staff and all the hard work that they perform throughout the year.

[00:19:36] We service between 3,000 and 4,000 animals a year, and we couldn't do it without our dedicated staff and dedicated volunteers who come in and help us. Thank you all for your support.

[00:20:17] Last but not least, Public Safety Telecommunications Week.

[00:20:50] Joining us today, I believe, is Michelle Serdam, the director.

[00:21:12] Break them all down. All down, I have them. Oh, no, that's great. Just have them stand to you and be on TV. And then I'll read and then I'll give you a chance. Oh, man, I'm being serious.

[00:21:33] These are the people that keep us safe. Some of them. Thank you for coming down.

[00:22:00] Public Safety Telecommunications Week, April 8th through 15th. Whereas when an emergency occurs, the prompt response of police officers, firefighters, and emergency medical services is critical to the protection of life and the preservation of property, and whereas the first of first responders are the public safety telecommunicators who are the first and most critical contact our citizens have with emergency services by dialing 9-1-1 and being virtually on the scene, providing emergency medical instructions, other life safety instructions, and moral support to callers in distress while dispatching field responders and equipment to the scene.

[00:22:38] Whereas public safety telecommunicators of Prince William County's Public Safety Communication Center have contributed substantially to the apprehension of criminals, suppression of fires, and the treatment of patients, and whereas the public safety telecommunicators exhibit compassion, understanding, and professionalism during the performance of their duties, whereas this year marks the 55th anniversary of 911 services in the United States, and in the same year, Prince William County became the first community to offer 911 service on the East Coast, whereas since 1991, Congress has proclaimed that the second full week of April be set aside as National

[00:23:17] Public Safety Telecommunications Week to salute them for their dedicated efforts on behalf of the public. Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Principally and Board of County Supervisors hereby proclaims the week of April 8th through 15th, 2023 as Public Safety Telecommunications Week and join in honoring the women and men whose diligence and professionalism keep our county and our citizens safe. Thank you. Madam Chair, Honorable Board Members, Mr. Shorter and Ms. Robles,

[00:23:51] thank you so much for this acknowledgement to our telecommunicators as we continue to put forth our efforts to be recognized as a public safety entity going along with fire and rescue and police. We so much appreciate this acknowledgement each year and the chance to come in and say thank you to the citizens and residents and visitors to Prince William County. We're so happy to be the first the first responders to be here supporting all of you. I just want to point out this group of people that is standing in front of you from those who have just started a couple of weeks ago all

[00:24:25] the way up through 30 plus years. I personally have been here 34 years so I can't believe when I look at 55 years of 9-1-1 how much of that time I've been involved in the service. So thank you so Thank you so much.

[00:24:38] And thank you.

[00:25:47] Can we get a board dog? Can I bring my dog to the office? Probably not. I don't have one yet.

[00:26:05] We have so many wonderful employees. We are really, really lucky. We're now going to start today's meeting with public comment time. The board will hear in-person and remote public comments. We're going to be in-person public comment time this afternoon. We have two people signed up to speak.

[00:26:22] I'm going to call them up. Each speaker will have three minutes to share their views and opinions regarding matters before the board. We ask that all speakers state their name and generally where they live or magisterial district and where they reside at the beginning of their remarks. Our two speakers today are Aria Johnson and Ashley Studholm.

[00:26:46] Is Ms. Johnson here? Aine. Sorry, maybe Aine Johnson. Good afternoon.

[00:27:13] Aine Johnson from the Woodbridge District, and as always, I like to greet everyone here in the chambers, all of the county supervisors, the attorney, and the county executive. Just wanted to share a few things, and I'll stand up because I want to make sure you can hear me.

[00:27:32] 33 months, 28 days. I am not a guinea pig. I think the most exciting thing of today, happy birthday Bumpy.

[00:27:52] His birthday isn't today, but we wanted to publicly say happy birthday, and everyone in the family is wearing capes for him today. He's our little superhero. That's why we keep coming back. Proverbs 22.1 in the King James Version of the Bible states, a good name is rather to be chosen than great riches and love and favor than silver and gold. I call my husband Spike, boyfriend and other names that'll probably make you blush. I call my son Lord Tennyson or little king. Our

[00:28:27] little man Bumpy, I call him Mr. VIP or Mr. Mump Bumpery. Our daughter Primrose, I call her mama girl. And the baby on the way, I call this little one, Lullaby Meh. But of all the names I found in the Virginia Department of Social Services manual, I've never found guinea pig. So I digress. And I realize maybe I've been referring to the individuals that we've been asking to be held accountable by their wrong names. If I'll call your name, my family is still expecting the following. We are asking for accountability. A timely fraud investigation specifically for VMETs when

[00:29:04] children come into foster care, as well as when and how VMATs are administered. Just so we're clear, this is not wrapped up in legal proceedings. Number two, the unethical behavior of directors, social workers, such as referring to me as a guinea pig. Again, this is not wrapped up in legal proceedings. Number three, a platform for foster parents to voice their concerns free from retaliation. You can do something as this is not wrapped up in legal proceedings. Standard operating procedures are not intended for the Prince William County Department of Social Services

[00:29:42] to circumvent the law, but rather to adhere to the law in the best interest of children. We are asking again the following individuals, Glenn, Danny, Chris or Christopher, Courtney, Diane, Phyllis, Bridget, Cheryl, Lillian, Caroline, Wani, Katina, Nicole, and LaShawn to be held accountable for their actions.

[00:30:08] Our contact number is 571-991-2827. Thank you. Next speaker, please. Good afternoon.

[00:30:39] My name is Ashley Studholm, Occoquan District, and I'm here today representing the Prince William Conservation Alliance. I'm here today to express support for the Public Works Reforestation Grant Program to be included in the upcoming budget.

[00:30:58] As we are all aware, we are facing several environmental challenges, such as climate change, maintaining water quality, and habitat loss, leaving many species vulnerable. However, reforestation can help us address all of these issues.

[00:31:15] Forests provide critical environmental services to all residents here in Prince William County. They absorb carbon dioxide, a key greenhouse gas in the atmosphere contributing to climate change. They clean the air by intercepting particulate matter and absorbing other gaseous pollutants.

[00:31:34] They help prevent soil erosion and promote water quality. They also provide habitats for various wildlife species, making them an integral part of our ecosystem. Unfortunately, over the years, we

have been losing forests at an alarming rate due to human activities such as deforestation and urbanization.

[00:31:52] This has a significant impact on the environment globally and locally. While I think it's also important to protect the forests we still have, this program would create opportunities to bring back forests that have been lost. Additionally, it would expand current reforestation efforts and provide an opportunity for private, residential, commercial, industrial, and HOA land to qualify that are currently left out of existing programs.

[00:32:19] Now, you might think that it's not necessary to fund such initiatives. you might think, why don't we just stop mowing and allow natural processes to return lawn to forests? And that may have been true a long time ago, but the prevalence of invasive plant species that thrive in early successional circumstances means that it's necessary to be active stewards of reforestation efforts until a native ecosystem has a chance to be established.

[00:32:48] This program would provide a critical starting point for native forests to grow and flourish. and would be crucial to a broader strategy to address a wide range of environmental and public health concerns in a cost-effective way. By planting more trees, we can support efforts to mitigate and adapt to climate change, improve air quality, protect water quality in our waterways and reservoirs, and create habitat for wildlife.

[00:33:14] I full-heartedly support the Public Works Reforestation Grant Program and would encourage it to be included in the upcoming budget. Thank you. thank you very much this will conclude our in-person public comment time and i will turn it over to vice chair bode for remote public comment time thank you madam chair miss fan how many folks do we have online today we have two resident speakers and one non-resident sure thank you and as with in-person public comment time for the folks online please state your name and where you live you have three minutes to speak miss fan shall we begin your first speaker is mary lawson

[00:33:49] i'm sorry i was trying to get my video um good afternoon my name is mary lawson i am a landowner in the Gainesville District. I currently live in Daytona Beach, Florida. Approving the rezoning for the Prince William Digital Gateway will allow the board to continue lowering taxes year after year and will provide additional funding for other programs and services that will enhance the quality of life for every resident. As we all know, the current 15% commercial tax base is just

[00:34:25] not good enough. The zoning decisions for the Gateway address financial needs in our county, which would otherwise continue to depend on residential taxes. While there are a handful of local and vocal residents that don't need a tax break. I hope you realize they speak for a very small percentage of our county residents. The other 99% of our residents are most likely hard at work this afternoon, trying to earn enough money to make ends meet and probably just don't have time to get involved. But I'm sure they will welcome your vote to grasp this amazing opportunity for our entire county and to better their lives in so many ways. The Prince William Digital Gateway is the only opportunity left

[00:35:02] to significantly increase our commercial tax revenue in a short amount of time and create a more robust local economy for the future of Prince William County. The rezoning for this project will provide enough land across the county to be available for existing and future targeted industries to grow over the next 20 and more years.

[00:35:22] I urge you to approve this rezoning and I thank you for your time and your service. Thank you, Ms. Lawson. Next speaker, please. Your next speaker is Phyllis Thompson. Madam Chair Wheeler and members of the board, I am Phyllis Thompson of the Gainesville District.

[00:35:51] I thank you for your service and for your time today. As you look ahead to voting on land use issues, I wanted to speak briefly about one benefit of the Prince William Digital Gateway, which is its plan for trail connectivity.

[00:36:08] In the Master Corridor Plan, there will be safe bike and walking trails along the widened Pageland Lane, which will be called the Pageland Lane Greenway. The traffic currently is hazardous. As it is a commuter route and a commuter cut through, there are no shoulders, which makes biking or walking very dangerous.

[00:36:33] In this plan, the Equestrian Trailhead Park and Trail Networks will open up horseback riding to residents in surrounding areas with trails that connect to Manassas Battlefield Park. Currently, private land blocks that access.

[00:36:50] When I moved to Pageland Lane 38 years ago, I rode horses from 234 across what is now Oak Valley to Cat Harpen Road. And all of that is closed now due to housing developments everywhere.

[00:37:08] The Prince William Digital Gateway will make equestrian activity available in the area again to connect to Parkland Trails. Thank you very much. Thank you so much, Ms. Thompson. Next speaker, please. Your next speaker is Dr. Anita P. Jones.

[00:37:39] Dr. Jones, you can unmute yourself. Okay. Good afternoon. Thank you to the Prince William County Board of County Supervisors, Madam Chair, County Attorney, and County Executive for continuing this platform for concerned voices to be heard.

[00:37:59] My name is Dr. Anita P. Jones. I'm a licensed social worker, consultant, a certified advanced social work case manager, subject matter expert, an advocate, and a researcher. Department of Social Services must be compelled to adhere to the rule of law, regulations, policies in the Virginia Manual, provided they should be guiding their work practices in foster care and right the wrong they have done. Quote, one of the most hardest things you will ever have to do is to grieve the loss of a child and the child is still alive. End quote. This is what the Johnson family continues to experience today. In this case, it appears the rules of law were abandoned by Department of Social Services and others they selectively chose to follow and then place blame on the foster parents who care for a bright-eyed little boy affectionately known as

[00:38:38] Bumpy for almost three years. In my assessment, they failed miserably. Every citizen, business entity, and yes, even the government is not above the law. According to the Virginia Department of Social Services Child and Family Services Manual, state law defines foster care as the provision of a full range of casework, treatment, and community services. The goal for any child in foster care is permanency. Bumpy was placed with a non-relative, the Johnson family. According to your manual, services shall be provided to the child and caregiver as necessary. What did you provide? Your manual mentions connecting families to community-based resources. Did you do that?

[00:39:10] How many child and family team meetings did you convene over the years that is inclusive of every entity involved with Bumpy? Do you realize what a valuable tool this is in stabilizing situations, informing decision-making, understanding and knowing the child and their family preferences? I know

about FTM's because over 20 years ago, I was trained as a coordinator and facilitator for the D.C. Collaborative and the Child and Family Services Agency in D.C.

[00:39:36] FTM's work and flush out problems like the ones the Johnson family encounter. The same manual states on page 15, removal from a home is not the only way to ensure a child is safe. Why was your response so drastic? No rule of law had been broken. The Johnsons practiced collaboration at its best in attempting to keep everyone informed, which strengthens working relationships.

[00:39:55] Where was DSS display and provision of family-focused, child-centered, and assistance with community-based services? Again, I say they failed miserably. They worked together collaboratively to cover up what they did and what they should have done. At an educational meeting, the social worker was supposed to be Bumpy's agency advocate.

[00:40:12] She said less than one sentence. There was robust discussion about services, changes to the educational plan, and how to move forward. She said absolutely nothing. But I'm closing with this. If Bumpy could pull the words together and speak, he would say, I was chosen. I was wanted. I was cherished. I grew in their hearts.

[00:40:28] I was the missing piece I loved. I was adopted. His vision, his desire. My desire is for the County Board of Supervisors to do something about the situation so that it never happens again. Thank you. Thank you, Dr. Jones. Ms. Vann, was that the last speaker? Yes, that was the last speaker.

[00:40:45] Thank you for everyone who spoke, and thank you, Ms. Vann, for your assistance. Back to you, Madam Chair. Thank you, Ms. Vann. Thank you, Vice Chair Bodie. That concludes our public comment time for today, which moves us on to item number six, County Executive Time. Mr. Shorter, the floor is yours.

[00:41:00] Thank you very much, Madam Chair. Just a real quick update. The last time we were together, there were a few questions about the Affordable Dwelling Unit Ordinance, the Affordable Housing Fund, and rental assistance and support.

[00:41:23] I wanted to just make sure that the board saw the memo sent on Friday. Certainly happy to kind of answer any questions one-on-one. Just by way of update to the public, in terms of rental assistance, $2.7 million of COVID-19 funding was allocated for rental assistance support.

[00:41:48] Of that $2.7 million, just over $1 million has been spent supporting 269 families. So I wanted to make sure that, again, we knew that that money is certainly going to support families in really vital ways.

[00:42:05] I wanted to also just acknowledge the Human Rights Commission. Last week, I attended a graduation ceremony for Cohort 7 Student Leadership Council. I had a fantastic opportunity to meet young people who were committed to the county and committed to civil and human rights.

[00:42:25] Also, I want to just acknowledge the Valor Awards. Last week was my first time attending the Valor Awards, and just want to appreciate all of the men and women who received some recognition last week. It is a wonderful thing that the county celebrates our public safety and first responders in that way.

[00:42:44] So just, again, want to acknowledge. Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you, Mr. Shorter. Madam Chair. Supervisor Lawson. Thank you. Would now be an appropriate time for me to ask a question related to a directive that Supervisor Bode gave?

[00:43:02] Or would you rather me do that at Supervisor's time? Well, is it of Mr. Shorter? Yeah. Yeah, sure. Why don't you ask him now? Okay, thanks. I think it was a couple weeks ago Supervisor Bode gave a directive related to fire and rescue compensation breakdown for fourth quarter, like April 1.

[00:43:23] And I would like to know if we could also, I'd like to, I guess, piggyback on that, get the same breakdown for adult detention center and sheriff's office, sheriff's deputies, the compensation.

[00:43:42] So I think it was 15%, 17.5%, and 20% so that we as a board can have that discussion next week regarding fourth quarter compensation adjustment. Happy to bring that along, or I should say happy to come prepared to talk about what it would mean to take action during the current year to make adjustments.

[00:44:14] That said, there were some responses related to current year adjustments sent from our budget director, but we'll certainly come prepared next week to answer those questions. Okay. And before I ask that, I pulled out the general revenue update that Michelle Atreid gave us in the presentation a few weeks ago, and if I understood it correctly, I mean, we're on pace to -- we had almost a $16 million surplus midyear for FY23.

[00:44:46] And if I understood her projections correctly, we're estimating another $10 million to $11 million for the third quarter, which just ended. So I'm asking that in light of the expected surplus.

[00:45:01] No, I definitely appreciate that. So as indicated during county executive's time, the last time we were together, I have had an opportunity at this point to touch base with each of you, Understand that there are a number of priorities that you all, each of you have articulated.

[00:45:19] We will do our best to come prepared to outline those priorities with any surplus that we may see current year and give the board an opportunity to make, you know, give direction based on how we want to spend that surplus.

[00:45:37] Thank you very much. Sure. I just want to go on record saying if we have a one-time surplus at the end of this year, we can't necessarily use it for ongoing operating that is absolutely correct just want to make sure everybody okay great that brings us to I'm sorry if I recall correctly we when we adjusted the police pay what was the revenue source that we identified was it was it wasn't the grocery tax it was anyway it was

[00:46:14] projected revenue for for 23 so happy to kind of come again prepared to talk about what action can be taken this year during current year I will say and I've you know certainly will follow the board's guidance on this current year action in terms of salary adjustments very different than planning for it during the budget cycle and then adjusting I mean approving how we move forward in the future year but we will absolutely come prepared thanks yeah thank you mr shorter i

[00:46:54] appreciate it and miss uh madam chair my point is is it that's what we were discussing in december so i think if it's good enough for the police department it's the same premise for our other public safety agencies so we're now on to county attorney time item number seven ms roble the floor is yours thank you madam chair members of the board for a closed session this afternoon we We will have consultation with legal counsel and briefings by staff members pertaining to the discussion or consideration of the acquisition of real property for public purposes, where discussion in an open meeting would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the public body, with the related discussion concerning an economic development

[00:47:33] item regarding the expansion of a prospective business or industry where no previous announcement has been made of the business or industry's interest in expanding their facilities in the county, along with the related discussion and consideration of the investment of public funds for the economic development matter where competition or bargaining is involved, where if made public initially the financial interest of the county would be adversely affected, and where discussion in an open meeting would adversely affect the litigating posture, bargaining position, or negotiating strategy of the public body.

[00:48:01] And we will have personnel discussions and considerations relating to the hiring of the new fire and rescue system chief, where consultation, briefing, or discussion in an open meeting would adversely affect the bargaining position, litigating posture, and negotiating strategy of the public body. These items are appropriate for closed session pursuant to 2.2-3711A1, 3, 5, and 6 of the Virginia Code.

[00:48:22] So moved, Madam Chair. Second. Motion made by Supervisor Angry, seconded by Supervisor Bailey. Any discussion? Seeing none, please vote. Vote unanimous. Great. Thank you. That brings us on to item number eight, our budget work session.

[00:48:42] We have a presentation today for a mobility work session, transportation and transit funding overview, OmniRide, and Department of Transportation. I will welcome Mr. Canizales and let him handle the flow. Thank you very much, Madam Chair, members of the board.

[00:48:59] Rick Canizales, your Director of Transportation. Thank you for your time today on this work session. Just kind of want to introduce it here and then we'll get going. We're going to have OmniRide here to present. Dr. Bob Snyder is here behind me, as well as Mr. Phil Perella, their CFO over there.

[00:49:16] He's going to be doing most of the presentation. Paulo Belita will start our presentation, and then I'll anchor it and take the last couple slides. That's kind of the way we're going to go today. We're going to talk about PRTC and nominee right at the beginning here a little, and then we'll go back to the county towards the end. With that, I'd like to introduce Dr. Bob Snyder.

[00:49:35] Thank you very much. I wanted to recognize this week, yesterday exactly, was six years in Prince William County. Congratulations, Mr. Snyder. A very exciting time. I kind of forgot about that until I saw my own name on the anniversary's email.

[00:49:51] And I was like, okay, time does fly. As a reminder, I have six members of the board of supervisors on the PRTC board of commissioners. So it's, I see many of you on a monthly basis, but I love Prince William County. When I moved here, the first place I lived was in Quantico, surrounded by the Potomac district.

[00:50:10] And I became a great fan and friend of all the restaurants and shopping down in the Montclair area. And of course we work in Woodbridge, right? So we are right there in the Woodbridge district, traveling through the Dale City District all the time because I live in technically the Brentsville District. However, I live in Gainesville, so I spend a lot of time in the Gainesville District.

[00:50:33] My wife and daughters attend. My wife's a teacher, teaches at Colgan High School. Both of my daughters are at Colgan High School in the Coles District. I spend so much time in Lakeridge. So literally every part of what we do, me personally as a family, as well as what our organization does, reflects every corner of Prince William County. I don't know every street name, but I think I know almost every neighborhood, and that's a big part of what we do, and I wanted to mention that, that we're not just a

transit system. We are a transportation network, and we're also subject matter experts for Prince William County and beyond. A big part of what we do also is I serve

[00:51:09] on FAMPO, which is the Fredericksburg Area Metropolitan Organization, which is a subset of the George Washington Regional Commission, which supports Stafford, Spotsylvania County, Caroline County and King George County on occasion, and of course the city of Fredericksburg.

[00:51:24] So knowing that we do have those southern jurisdictions, plus our partners in Manassas and Manassas Park, it is six different political bodies and six different jurisdictions that we strive very hard to learn and understand. But today we're going to focus on Prince William County and where we're going. So for our budget presentation, I think this is my clicker.

[00:51:43] What I wanted to highlight is a couple of new things that are representative of the budget. And first and foremost is we have some new commuter service coming in on the I-95 corridor. This is 100% grant funded, DRPT, so that creates the budgets well. So when you look at year over year, how come things are more expensive?

[00:52:01] Well, we're going to be receiving a lot of grant funds to operate these new services. They have not been formally approved. We have to go through a public hearing process for that, but these are items we include in the budget. We're also adding a commuter fare increase. one of the trends previously was our average commuter traveled 7.5 times per week and they got $270 from the federal government to do so. Now the average commuter travels 3.5 times per week. So our challenge is we still have to operate a certain level of services but we're not pulling in as much money due to frequency. So this is a way to help balance the program which we're able

[00:52:36] to harvest more federal revenue to match the number of trips made and the federal allotment I believe we'll increase this fiscal year. Congress has projected to raise it to, I think, a flat 300. I believe it's at 285 now, and we'll climb again. So this allows us to bring in more revenue. There's also the concern of, well, what if I'm not a subsidized resident, but I work in D.C.? We'll have past programs that will help cap that. The goal is not to punish our current passengers or new passengers. The goal is to bring in the federal revenue that we used to receive pre-pandemic that we're just not receiving right now because we don't have the same ridership

[00:53:10] frequency. We ironically have almost as many people as before. They're just not riding as often, which is our biggest challenge. They're not five-day-a-week commuters. Several members on the Board of Supervisors were five-day-a-week commuters, looking right at Supervisor Franklin, who was a five-day commuter traveling into D.C. at Capitol Hill. Perfect example of during the pandemic, that's not occurring. We do want to continue our zero-fare local service. This has been something that has concerned me since I arrived six years ago. We take our wealthiest citizens, and we transport them out of the county, and the federal government subsidizes it.

[00:53:44] Meanwhile, we have local passengers who don't have any type of subsidy. We don't have a very strong, robust network, so it's a balance of what they pay for is a mismatch against the quality of services they receive. This is a great way to grow ridership, and it's something we can always reevaluate later, but for what it costs to collect that service and what it costs to maintain cash counting, armored car services, cash auditing. Yes, we come in the middle of the night, count all the money in the bin, and then make sure that same dollar amount shows up. That's all costs that we incur behind the scenes. Now, the exciting part is we have local service improvements. Pre-pandemic,

[00:54:21] we retooled our Western service, and then within three months, we shut down two weeks to flatten the curve. Here we are three years later, and we are ready to tackle Eastern Prince William. Our ridership locally is higher than it was pre-pandemic. We have the best local ridership that we have had since even before I arrived.

[00:54:38] And that is despite the fact that in 2016 and 2017, we reduced local service. So we are outperforming what we had with less service, and that's a positive thing. And the success we've seen on the western side of the county, we've taken a poor-performing route, converted it to a microtransit service, which uses similar or equivalent resources, but it serves a larger footprint.

[00:55:02] So we're getting more efficiency by putting more cheeks in seats. We really do believe that if you're going to spend the money, reach more citizens, get your return on investment and the value. So some service improvements we've got moving forward is dedicated paratransit service on the eastern side of Prince William County.

[00:55:17] This is something that the disability community has advocated for. I think we're the largest system in the United States that still does deviated fixed routes, and that's not something too proud of at this juncture. At one point in time, it made a heck of a lot of sense, but for where we want to go and the volume of services in eastern Prince William County, it's time to make that moving decision.

[00:55:38] That would also eliminate the fixed route deviations, which would take more time and confusion than I think you want to spend on a busy agenda day. We've discussed this in our commission meetings, and I'm happy to talk later about this. But we're very excited about a new microtransit zone for Quantico, Triangle, and Dumfries.

[00:55:55] So this will serve what is generally a low-density route area in Quantico, in a small section of Dumfries, but tie it, or triangle, and tie it into the retail in Dumfries, but also be able to travel up Montclair to some of the retail development that is occurring on 234. So that's up near Shopper's Lane and the retail shopping area surrounding Supervisor Bailey's office.

[00:56:18] I'm forgetting the name. I call it IHOP Plaza, sorry. But that's my nickname for it. But it's that Fettler Plaza, I think, Fettler Way. All right, I'm getting there. Like I said, I know the neighborhoods, but not every street name. So those are things we're very excited about in terms of our local service improvements. We continue to focus on ridership.

[00:56:35] And as Phil's going to describe, one of the things we have done is we have just this spring taken another very hard look at our commuter services. We've been ratcheting down in sections and sections, and we had expected, as everyone knows, the federal recall to occur. Well, we've determined that ridership patterns have settled.

[00:56:51] So we're now able to really take a look at our services, and we're going to be removing trips out of non-productive routes. And you'll see in the presentation where this turns into, we're not recommending removing it from the budget because tomorrow the demand could come back. And so it's hours we will have in reserve. And if we don't spend is a benefit to the county because it'll help us with the fund balance, which will be the most challenging slide of all.

[00:57:17] So I'll turn this over to Phil Perella, our chief financial officer. He has been with us for almost a year came to us from CDTA, another great alphabet organization, the Central District Transportation Authority out of Albany, New York. So he's seen a politic item or two in his career and is more than happy

to answer any questions. Your clicker, sir. Thank you, everybody. So what I want to focus on here is getting into a little bit of the details that Bob was discussing here, but this is meant to really show sort of where we allocate resources from fiscal 23, the current

[00:57:54] year we're in to what we changes and adjustments that we've proposed in the budget that we brought to the full Commission in February and then again some additional service hours that we are looking at that Bob had referred to before in January these service adjustments you see a reduction in commuter hours of 3,400 it is actually a net reduction and so what happened there is that we have looked to reduce commuter service that was inefficient in in D.C. and take that and pull it into other services that you'll see in things like flexible services. But why that decreases not say 22,000 hours is because we were again as Bob mentioned

[00:58:34] received 100% state grant funding for commuter service hours along the I-95 corridor. So that net would be larger if not for fully state funded grants. And in the flexible services again as Bob was discussing microtransit as an emerging mode of transportation that is included in there as well as the eastern side of Prince William County, including dedicated paratransit service for the elderly and the disabled.

[00:59:00] And so that brought us to a point where we proposed our budget in February. Since that point, we've been looking even further at other commuter services and the fruit gets a little less low hanging each time. But we, right now, this is a rough, you know, an estimate of what we're looking at. We are still working on these hours, but we feel comfortable that taking low performing either routes altogether or trips and removing them from the service or suspending them in some way will be beneficial to us as well as to the county.

[00:59:30] And I think the thing we wanna highlight on here as well is that the funding where we've reduced services is service that was paid for by Prince William County to bring people into Washington, D.C. and it was not performing very well.

[00:59:47] We're in turn trying to take those dollars and those hours and bring them back into Prince William County by way of things like microtransit and enhanced paratransit service on the eastern side of the county. So that's really the goal here, is to try to bring the money back into the county where it is not being used efficiently in bringing it to Washington, D.C.

[01:00:07] And so looking in the same way as that prior chart, we're again walking from fiscal 23's budget to the work that we've done in the February proposal, as well as what we're looking to go through public process for in June, leading up to the beginning of this budget. The real thing to highlight here is that this is what the service delivery costs.

[01:00:25] This is what our bus contractor costs. And what you see here in the second line that is so brightly highlighted here is the recovery funding. Everyone is familiar with the fact that we've received significant recovery funding and that is beginning to sunset out of our budgets.

[01:00:41] And so really the entire need for the increase in subsidy coming from Prince William County is related to the wind down of that funding in this budget year. But again, this sort of shows you where the benefits lie with the various service changes that we would make, again, hopefully in June.

[01:00:57] The vast majority of that, again, would be services that are funded by Prince William County that we would hope to then just take off the books, depending on how things work out with demand

moving forward, as Bob had discussed. And so some of the significant factors that impact our budget, these are just some of the high-level issues, but some folks may be aware There was a collective bargaining agreement discussion that was ongoing.

[01:01:21] We're seeing an estimated increase of about 11% in that contract cost. And so that is reflected here in what we estimate is the cost per hour for those services. We do have a budgeted increase for passenger fares. We have to go through public comments on that.

[01:01:37] But we're hopeful for an additional $2.4 million in revenue. And then another item to pay attention to that we've got our thumb on a little bit is the cost of diesel fuel. It's not insignificant to us. And right now we have a budget of about $325, but we're pretty confident we'll be able to do a little bit better than that.

[01:01:54] I'm sorry. No. I didn't know if there's a question. My apologies. So these are some of the things that, you know, we've sort of just talked about before here. But, again, we're reducing nonproductive hours for commuter service.

[01:02:12] We're trying to bring that money locally so that way it benefits the residents of the county even more. And the use of flexible services, the paratransit, the microtransit, again, lower cost or similar cost. but larger service area, hopefully serving the same number of people. As we get these up and running, we'll be able to collect more data on what they do and what they do not do.

[01:02:31] And again, just touching on some of the commuter service expansion. Again, these are 100% funded by DRPT, and it does include fleet expansion if necessary. However, with the various reductions we have going on, we'll be monitoring that on a year-by-year basis. We do have some immediate fleet needs that we can discuss briefly in the capital portion, but our intention is to basically monitor this based on how service is progressing and make changes accordingly on a year-to-year basis.

[01:02:59] Either don't buy vehicles, retain them a little longer, whatever we need to do in those moments. And so this right here is really just sort of a visual of where the money from Prince William County is spent. We're requesting roughly almost $21 million in subsidy, but it should be noted that 82% of that is directly tied to the delivery of service.

[01:03:20] And it is really the commuter service, the local services, the flexible services, and the van pool. So, you know, a lot of the budget, a lot of what we ask for is towards service delivery. And that's, you know, I think consistent with a lot of public transit agencies. And this really shows you, again, from fiscal 23, walking to fiscal 24, the budget that was proposed, the areas with which the county funds us.

[01:03:46] You know, where you see these big changes is you can make the reasonable assumption that that is where recovery funding had been filling gaps in the prior years. But again, as that begins to fade off, that will change. I'd also like to make note of the capital project match. We're trying very hard, as a goal of mine, is to really leverage money from Prince William County as best as we can to not buy things 100% with the money that comes from the county, but instead to use it to pay for a 10% or a 20% share of something that's being funded more by the state or the federal government.

[01:04:14] So our goal is to try to keep that number low while still bringing in a lot of asset value. you know, into Prince William County. And with that, this is a look at the capital plan for all jurisdictions. It gets a little dicey to divide this up by all the jurisdictions. However, you know, as you would expect with an agency like ours, 90% is related to fleet. 90% of our expenses are tied to the purchase of vehicles. And what

you'll see again over here, highlighting the point that I made in the prior slide, you know, 94% of the budget is funded by the state and local government, which is again something we really hope that we can continue on. It's the best way

[01:04:54] to replace assets in the system, and we're hopeful to continue that. So this sort of just shows you a project basis as well as with the numbers. Again, bus purchases, they take the day. They are the overwhelming majority of what it is that we do. We do have a potential amount in here to look at fuel tanks at our facility, at our transit center facility, and that's what the large number is there. I'd also like to point out $300,000 for bus shelters. We are using federal dollars to hopefully spruce up and replace out old bus shelters in

[01:05:28] key locations across across the county. And this is the really, Bob had alluded to this and this is the final slide, but this is really a walkthrough of how we anticipate ending and walking into fiscal 24 and fiscal 25 with the the PRT or the PwC fund balance the fuel tax. We're hopeful to end the current fiscal year with a 6.4 million dollar surplus throughout the course of fiscal 24 we're expecting about 17.6 million dollars in collections and again the budget that we propose is about 20.9 million dollars in use making the

[01:06:04] balance at the end of fiscal 24 3.1 million. We start again with that same 3.1 million expect to collect roughly 17.8 million in fuel tax in fiscal 25 and And again, because the last $10 million of federal recovery dollars are in the fiscal 24 budget, they would be out for fiscal 25, no longer available to us.

[01:06:25] And that's why you see a substantial increase in, you know, what we would potentially need from the fuel tax. And that brings the balance to a negative. Now, obviously, that's not, you know, I don't think that's the intention to move forward there. But it's meant to illustrate a point that I think folks have been aware of for some time, And that prior to COVID, we were walking down this path of perhaps maybe running out of the fuel balance.

[01:06:45] We received significant recovery funds. I think that helped bridge some gaps for us. But we are rapidly approaching the time that, you know, we'll have to look into this further and determine what it is, you know, the funding mechanisms will be moving forward. But that's really, you know, the key revenue issue as it pertains to PRTC and the Prince William County budget.

[01:07:05] And with that, I'll entertain any questions or? Thank you very much. Are there any questions? Supervisor Franklin. Sure. I have a few questions. I think I'll start with the things that I support.

[01:07:21] And maybe, yep, I'll just start there, particularly with fleet management. I will be candid and say I still see some buses on the side of the road, particularly in HOV lanes, as I'm coming to and from D.C. So making sure that we have buses that are actually working properly, I think, is key.

[01:07:41] And so that's something that I certainly support making continued investments in because I know we've already started that. Bus shelters, obviously important. I know I'm doing a bus shelter project that you all are implementing on the Route 1 corridor. I think my funds are paying for that.

[01:07:58] But whatever PRTC can do to support across the county, I would be supportive of. I think some of the things, I don't know if there are concerns, but things that we obviously have to discuss, the fare increases. I mean, almost over $3 in fare increases, obviously, is on the commuter side.

[01:08:14] And so I can only hope that the federal government are helping to subsidize those employees to pay for those fare increases, which I think may be the case. And then, obviously, we're going to have to

have a very big discussion about the fund balance. I mean, that negative 12.3 for fiscal year FY25, I feel like we have to start preparing for that right now.

[01:08:36] whatever budget decision we make now for FY 24 is going to impact even what we do in FY 25 and so this board I know PRTC we're gonna have to we're really gonna have to look at this budget and figure out you know what we can support and how we can make sure that we don't get to that negative 12.3 because come FY 25 we're gonna figure out we're gonna have to figure out how to handle that and how to maintain that and maybe there are some answers to that and I'm sure Dr. Schneider you can address that but that would be a huge concern for me and of course going back to the fleet and the bus shelters we got to pay for those

[01:09:12] things right you know it just doesn't fall out the sky but but those are just some of them like I said I don't know if concerns is the right word but certainly some discussions we're gonna have to have. Madam Chair, members of the board and I'm sorry for the slide and I know you have a question now and I'll let Dr. Schneider answer your question but Madam Chair we do have a second half to this presentation where the county is kind of talking about where we see this and how we see this going and we were hoping to take questions after you heard both the county and PRTC. Okay um we can do that it did say question so. Sure well I will I'll just wrap up because I because I really

[01:09:51] don't have a question those are just some comments that I wanted to make with regards to how we need to approach PRTC's budget and it sounds like maybe there may be some solutions in on the county's portion. So I'll just say that. And then I'll just say, as I've always said, we need a dedicated funding stream, I think, coming out of Richmond to help us pay for transportation. I think the fuels tax has been holding us over thus far. I'm starting to think that that is not enough for the future. We're going to need something to supplement that. And perhaps at some point in life we can use the fuels tax for other needs, maybe infrastructure and things like that. But we have to pressure our General Assembly to give us dedicated funding sources for transportation.

[01:10:30] So that's all I'll say. And it looks like Supervisor Weir has a question that he wants to ask now. Sorry, they're specific to OmniRides analysis and really don't involve the county. Three quick questions. First off, how reasonable is it to presume that the federal employee recall will occur and occur to the level that you believe it will? And I'm kind of looking at it and presuming that it's not going to occur at the level you believe it will, and if that's the case, what is the savings that would be accrued from that

[01:11:08] 2,700 hours, roughly 2,700 hours? Keep going. I think it's right there. $2.6 million. No, yeah, 2.6 would come from the local subsidy, and there is small portions of that that are already grant funded. That would also be reduced as well, sir. Okay. Second one is, can you provide the services subsidy over over a five-year window so i can look at it pre-covid certainly we'll have to bring that back and then last but not least um the commuter service expansion to spotsylvania

[01:11:46] does the does the grant funding anticipate vehicle maintenance and wearing and yes it's the fully loaded cost fully loaded everything's soup to nuts i'm good and the one thing i did want to comment on is this is a new board in terms of dealing with this motor fund balance issue if we had a time machine and we're to go back to 2016, Supervisor Lawson might remember, the motor fuels fund balance was almost gone and we were in Richmond lobbying for motor fuels floor. We got that, however, welcome to the era of electric vehicles. But we can go back to prior to that

[01:12:25] when VRE and Omniride was fully funded by the motor fuels tax subsidy. Now you're using your NVT 30% funds. And I just want to mention, and that we don't lose sight of it, is there's also the CROC under VRE, which is the commuter rail operating capital fund. It takes the first $5 million that you collect and sends it to VRE to fund different rail projects. So just a reminder that it's not just that it's staying flat, it's that the first $5 million comes off the top and goes to our good friends at VRE, of which we are a co-owner. So that's my comment there.

[01:13:04] Supervisor Vega has a question now before we continue. You mentioned collective bargaining. Is that also connected? Are those numbers what was the result of the back and forth between Teamsters and you all? Does that include that?

[01:13:20] Yes, they are included in us. Thank you. Okay, well, thank you very much, gentlemen. Mr. Bellito. Good afternoon, Madam Chair and members of the board.

[01:13:40] Paula Bellito with the Department of Transportation here for the second half of our budget work session as it relates to mobility. And in this presentation, we want to highlight the history of how projects were funded in the county. I'll then hand it over to Rick to talk about the subsidy and other revenue sources we have for transportation.

[01:13:58] We did want to highlight the mission of the Department of Transportation, which is really to improve the transportation network and meet the needs of the growing community. We have various goals. We have goals to ensure that we have a safe mobility network. We want to ensure that residents can commute to work, but also have the ability to travel within the county and support our local businesses.

[01:14:20] We will work with a wide variety of partners. We work with our transit partners, such as OmniRide and VRE, as well as our local, federal, state, and regional partners. So we're very fortunate based on guidance from the board and working with our partners. We do have a $1 billion five-year capital improvement program of projects.

[01:14:38] Just a quick history. The transportation program for the county began as a bond and a road program. You can see the first bond was implemented the late 80s and over the years the type of projects the county implemented changed we are a multi-modal agency a couple weeks ago we had the ribbon cutting excuse me groundbreaking for the neapsco potoma commuter garage project in addition to roadway projects we also have trails projects sidewalk projects and other projects that also support our transit partners we did want to highlight how funding has changed over the years you can see i had mentioned road bonds for first

[01:15:15] 10 to 20 years. Over time, we were able to leverage some of the local funding that was invested and obtain other sources of funding and where we are today. The key takeaway is the Purple Bar, based on the local funds invested, we're able to leverage and utilize other sources of funding to implement our mobility priorities.

[01:15:33] I did want to highlight some of the different funding opportunities available. These are funding and grant opportunities, as well as local resources and revenues available to the county. For example, under the federal bucket, you have other USDOT grants, such as the Safe Streets for All.

[01:15:52] Under state, you have your revenue sharing, as well as your transportation alternatives program. Under regional, a good example is MVTA 70% regional funding. And under local funding

opportunity and sources, you have your MVTA 30% funding, also the different revenue sources such as your TOT tax, grantor's tax, and recordation tax.

[01:16:14] I did want to briefly highlight how we apply for funding and how projects are programmed. We have this graphic on the right we've used for several years now. This dates back to 2017. That gives an example of how we apply for grants here in the county. We follow a cycle. A lot of funding opportunities are available annually, but some of the larger programs, such as SmartScale and NVTA, are available every other year.

[01:16:38] For example, this year, the NVTA six-year program, Call for Projects, has been opened. Applications are due this year. That program is for FY24 to FY29. A lot of the six-year programs, when we apply for funding, the funds become available in the last two years of that program.

[01:16:55] So we did want to highlight how we plan ahead when requesting for funding. We did want to highlight a couple other things. Past couple years, we've been working closely with the Planning Commission. Anytime we have a funding opportunity available, we do hold work sessions with our Planning Commission to solicit input. With that, I want to hand it over to Rick.

[01:17:13] Thanks, Paulo. Again, Madam Chair, members of the board, Rick Canizales here. And kind of finishing off the presentation, Paulo talked to you a little bit about how we get some money from some grant opportunities. I also want to make sure that you understand that some of those grant opportunities, especially some of our federal ones, we do share with our transit partners.

[01:17:30] The CMAQ funds that we get through our CMAQ RSTP program that we take through the county are recommended usually about $3 million, $4 million a year for our transit partners. So we do help them get grants as well in making sure that we continue our partnership with them.

[01:17:46] I'm going to talk to you a little bit about how we spend money. He told you how we got money. I'll tell you a little bit how we spend it. This is your proposed 24 to 28 five-year plan looking at the debt service that you're going to need to fund the remainder of the bond projects that we have online.

[01:18:04] So as you see that, you know, these next couple years we've been in design. We've been using other funds to design the projects. But as we start getting to the construction or the right away of these projects, we're going to start taking some of those bond funds out. And they're going to have to start being repaid. And as we get to construction of some of the bigger projects in the later years, in 2029-2030, you see that our debt service grows to about $27 million based on what's projected to be needed for the projects.

[01:18:29] We do have some existing funds, and we'll even talk about them a little more, but we do have the NVTA 30%, the grant towards tax, the impact, and then, you know, and what we do with our grants and what we do with our mobility priorities impacts kind of how we do this.

[01:18:45] We do have some funds to attack this with, but again, it takes a lot of that funding that we get on a regular basis or that we're able to use to leverage other funds and to do other projects and to get to those priorities that we're talking to. We put out a five-year plan, so I just wanted to make sure that you had the OmniRide PRTC five-year plan in front of you.

[01:19:07] Dr. Snyder and Sprella talked about the first two years this year, how we're looking at just, And you can see through the highlight, that's this coming year, how we dig into the fund balance by $3 million

and have $3 million of fund balance left. But as you get to the next year, you see that the fund balance is down in the red to $12 million, like mentioned in their presentation.

[01:19:29] I did want you to see the future years, though, as well, as we see our five-year program and the needs that we're going to have to fund our transportation projects and the needs that PRTC is going to have continue to grow up to 2029 in the years that we will be needing that kind of cash flow they will be looking at about 24 million dollars or 24.5 million dollars just wanted to remind you we wanted to want to remind you of the mobility priorities that you do have these are the projects and this is just an example set of the major projects that the board has asked us to go looking for funding fund or look for other funding

[01:20:04] opportunities to get, whether local, state, federal, or regional. What you see there is a, this is just an example, and what you see there is a project list worth more than a billion dollars that we have not gotten to. I did want to bring this up. I talked a little bit about the funding sources. Paulo's talked a lot about our local funding sources. Here's where we're at with the MVTA 30% grant towards tax, our share of TOT tax, and then the 2% fuels tax that we want to highlight does not grow much in that time frame where, again, the OmniRide budget grows as well as our transportation needs continue to grow. We continue to partner with VRE. It was mentioned that the

[01:20:43] first $5 million are given to them. We continue to partner with them, make sure that we do as they need to fund their program and continue to work with PRTC and all their capital projects, again, mention even their grant needs and continue to partner with them in all we do to make sure we are a well-coordinated group to do that what paulo said at first was our mission statement which is a multimodal network that serves the county with that said now we are open for any questions thank you thank you mr conozalas and mr bolita supervisor lawson thank you rick i'm

[01:21:21] i'm looking at a old budget proposal it's actually and it would have been fy20 because my memory is is that we did not subsidize OmniRide PRTC.

[01:21:38] It was strictly out of our fuels tax and we did not dip into 30% prior to the pandemic. We used 30% for VRE subsidy. Is my memory correct? - That is correct, ma'am.

[01:21:53] The only thing that I do remind you of is you have funded PRTC 110 or over $100,000 or so a year for-- - For Wheels to Wellness. - Correct. right but for example in fy20 we made that now again this was just the proposal i don't i don't have handy what was actually adopted but the fuels tax for prtc was roughly 15 million dollars so i guess and i i was absent at the february prtc meeting when the budget was approved but

[01:22:27] i probably would be better served asking dr schneider the question but so my memory is correct that we had not been subsidizing PRTC pre-pandemic that that is correct man okay so clarifying what was your question ma'am well my question is how in the world did things grow so exponentially in such a short amount of time with the um federal funding that had been i mean federal funding is what kept public transportation alive vre and omni ride and again i wasn't present for the

[01:23:04] february meeting when the commission approved the budget i so i would have asked questions that i'm asking today but how in the world are we practically doubling um a budget need what's going on that so i missed the discussions in so for this current fiscal year it's cost escalation due to labor and just general inflation next year the the delta is tied to the fact the motor fuels tax is not keeping up with the cost of actual operations of services i i liken this to still i'm sorry real

[01:23:44] quick so my apologies for interrupting you but so right now it's labor labor cost which we don't know when this is going to plateau right and we have our labor con it's a four-year labor contract so we can look four years ahead and project those labor costs so keolis's contract uh currently that they just actually reached the agreement with the bus drivers, but when does the Keolis contract expire?

[01:24:15] Two more years for five years, and then the commission reserves the right to renew it thereafter. Okay. And then you said the gas tax revenues you're projecting will not meet the spending projections, correct?

[01:24:33] Correct. And my question to you is, With gas prices higher than they were pre-pandemic, there's a huge difference. It's a gallons pumped issue, so it's not necessarily a price. You are now dealing with, I'll just give you an example.

[01:24:51] I drive a Jeep Wrangler 4xe. So is this back to the Tesla, like the electric cars? I drove here on zero gas. I traveled 18.6 miles, I believe, to get here. So you're part of the problem with OmniRide.

[01:25:06] That is correct. But our air is cleaner. But that is an example of what is affecting the motor fuel stack. So you have a floor. Previously, it was a percentage of the cost. So when gas was super cheap, famine. When gas was super expensive, it was a feast.

[01:25:24] So that's pre-2018, 2019, when a floor was enacted to at least stabilize the funds. Again, I liken this to once upon a time, the post office subsidized their operations based on the cost of licking a stamp.

[01:25:39] That no longer works because then the price would be so high it would not be utilized. That's why they've now gotten into delivery services or they're finding other means to streamline and generate revenue. We don't have that opportunity. We don't have the ability to dip into other resources.

[01:25:55] So that's ultimately going to be a question for the governing body and ultimately the funding partners, the six jurisdictions, in particular Prince William, is, okay, the mechanism that Prince William has used to fund in the past does not match up with current and future projections because the nature of the revenue stream is selected.

[01:26:15] Yeah, well, I would argue that the spending is what needs to, you know, change. Understand. And I'll also mention that the six-year projection, what we have done is we have looked at all the small area plans projected by Prince William County, and we've added services. So, for example, the Innovation Town Center, as potential apartment complexes rise, Micron opens, We've identified routes, for example, to travel from downtown Manassas over to that area for dedicated services.

[01:26:42] We've also projected for potential service for microtransit in areas such as Haymarket, Gainesville. So outer year projections also recognize it's not same-year service at an escalated rate. We look to the future as to what's in the mobility plan, what's in the county's housing plan, what are in the various strategic plans, and we start laying out dollars, because otherwise what happens is someone cuts a ribbon on something and we have no money to plan for it. Yeah, I would also say, I mean, I do agree with your point about more electrical cars, and I'd like to know what those numbers are, if we have data that shows the difference between

[01:27:22] today's use versus pre-pandemic, and then, of course, teleworking, which we've already discussed, I mean, we're dealing with a different world and different factors. But I did want to point out that I thought that pre-pandemic we were not subsidizing Omnuride.

[01:27:43] That is correct. At that time, the motor fuels tax was enough. At one point in time, you used the motor fuels tax for VRE and us. Then when the motor fuels tax wasn't cutting it anymore, you extracted VRE from the motor fuels tax and funded them through the year 30% money from NVTA.

[01:28:00] So now you're back to the same scenario where that stream of revenue to say Prince William County shall not fund out of the general fund or other mechanisms, transit services, it's now opportunity for a new revenue stream. Bear in mind that those cost projections are not, it's not just a, maybe I'm wrong on this, for that, I'm not sure, Rick, if your outlining projection included our whole system in those, but it's whole system.

[01:28:28] So that also included whole system numbers. So that also includes the growth we're expecting on I-66 that is funded by the toll payers. That also includes the growth we expect on I-95, which is also funded by the toll payers. So that escalation isn't a Prince William-only number. The information we presented to you out of our budget package, that is for Prince William County except for those couple capital slides, which is too hard to parse.

[01:28:53] Rick's presentation, Mr. Gonzalez's presentation, includes what would be our summary budget for all grants, all programs, all services. It's not just a Prince William expense. No, no, no. Oh, is it? Okay. All right. I apologize. I misspoke. Yeah, the numbers, those numbers match the numbers that you shared just when we posted.

[01:29:09] Okay. I apologize. I misspoke. So I have a quick question. The grant that you're using to expand service to Spotsylvania County, how long is that grant for? It is a service-driven contract, so what will end up happening is they'll make a formal proposal to us.

[01:29:25] We'll go through public hearing. But as long as the routes perform, it's in perpetuity, and it's 100% funded service. So it doesn't show up later as an operating cost? Correct. And that's one thing we're specific about is when we apply for grants, we take the approach of we either have a mechanism to fund it going in or we don't do it because to have a grant that relies on after three years or five years someone else has to pick up the cost, it's not tenable.

[01:29:49] It just doesn't work. Unless it's wheels to wellness and we pick it up for $350,000. Correct. Yes. I thought it was $350,000. Okay. But, yeah, I just want to make sure we weren't on that kind of thing again. Correct. Supervisor Weir. Thank you.

[01:30:06] Piggyback on what Supervisor Lawson said. I'm looking at slide 21, and I would agree. It's not a revenue issue. It's a spending issue. And even then, I'm not even sure the revenues are correct. I'm looking at your FY24 proposed motor fuels revenue stream, and it's significantly higher than your last two years actuals.

[01:30:29] I would suggest higher by a factor that I don't think can be supported, and it grows in the out years even a little more. I'm not sure that that number, given the growth in electric vehicles, growth in other sorts of things, and certain clean air mandates, that that revenue stream projection is viable.

[01:30:52] Getting to the point that Supervisor Lawson made, what I see is more of a spending problem, particularly on OmniRide Express and OmniRide Local, where you're taking a $12.8 million proposed expenditure for the two combined in FY24, and you're cranking it up almost double by 11.6 in FY25.

[01:31:12] If there's a problem with funding, there's the problem. Okay, and as for the motor fuels tax, we will reconvene with the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles. They help us work through the economists there, help us identify and work through our projections for motor fuels tax.

[01:31:29] So we'll circle back with them. Will you also circle back on the expenditure side? Absolutely. We do every single year with our commission, our budget, and back with you. Supervisor Angry. Thank you, Madam Chair. I just, real quick question. Bus shelters, that's always a talk of topic.

[01:31:47] Is that in here somewhere? Okay. In ours, 300,000 programs specifically in this fiscal year for bus shelters. They are extremely expensive to install. As a matter of fact, if you use Google, and there's an article in the Virginia Mercury about a, here's a great example, a shelter that was poured.

[01:32:07] It's been in operation, I believe, in Chesapeake. It is now, they wanted to force them to rip it out because the concrete must be 18 inches deep. It doesn't make any sense. So we're working with DRPT and VDOT to try to streamline and better enhance shelter regulation so it's a lower cost and that we can include more of them.

[01:32:26] And I'll say, because I understand this, because we've been, you know, I talk about this all the time, because, you know, I hate driving down the road and seeing someone standing at a bus stop, not even sitting on a bench, which I would ask about a bench, But I also know that there are times where you would change that route or move that location.

[01:32:43] So putting a permanent shelter there means that route is pretty much permanent. I don't know, you know, how many of your routes would be staying permanent routes. But then just those ones, I guess, mobile ones that do move, at least a bench. Like I keep talking about a bench or some form of so forth.

[01:33:00] I see folks, you know, folks not in the best health conditions and just to stand out there. Sometimes they're in the heat. So I'm just trying to advocate for the fact that I think if not a shelter, you know, a bench, you know, something that folks can sit on and not just on the ground. So anyway, thanks.

[01:33:17] Thank you. Supervisor Franklin. Sure. Do we still have the local routes that are fare free? Yes, we are still zero fare. Yeah. And so just to my colleagues, that's another thing that probably impacts the budget. We're currently not receiving basically funding from that source, not advocating one way or another.

[01:33:34] But I think also, just taking into consideration, this is our budget to revise. And so I think there are some challenges. And it's for us to kind of decide which direction we want to go in with that. So just kind of pointing that out. Supervisor Bailey.

[01:33:53] Thank you, Madam Chair. I just wanted to acknowledge the paratransit on the Eastern Corridor. That was something that we have been talking about in the PRTC meetings. And you did the test run over in Manassas, and that went well. We've had kind of a slow start, but you're now focusing on the eastern corridor, and we really need the transportation on the eastern corridor.

[01:34:14] So I really just want to acknowledge that and thank you for that. I know there's going to be a cost, you know, incurred in that, but I think people on the eastern corridor don't have the cars or electric cars, and so I think that will bode well as we go forward just in providing that service, particularly in the Quantico and Triangle and Dumfries areas.

[01:34:39] I know you did a study there as well, so doing the due diligence and making sure that the funding matches that is very key right now, but you haven't let your eyes off of that, and I think that's real important when you talk about savings. I think that's all I wanted to say because that was something on the board that we had been focused on.

[01:35:03] So is the timeline still the same? Yes, ma'am. You knew I was going to say that. I hope the commission votes yes on Thursday. Okay, great. And then we'll have service, the Dumfries Triangle Quantico Microtransit Service, I believe will launch in the first week of June. Right.

[01:35:18] And the other question, Bob, I think you just answered that when Supervisor Angry mentioned about the benches and the bus stop. They are very expensive. And a challenge to get through, they're required to be engineered. So we have to have engineered site plans. VDOT then has to go through the approval process.

[01:35:37] It is simply a challenge. and I'll make one other observation is a lot of our routes serve neighborhoods and that's private property that we would have to carve into off of sidewalks things like that so then you're talking private property easements it's a complex issue and it's especially complex when you don't have the infrastructure of sidewalks and things like that in place fortunately when you're in front of a retail corridor or some of the great work that transportation has required easements or cutouts for shelter placement at construction makes things much, much easier. So I'm very appreciative of the work they've done to enhance that. It makes life much, much easier for us. Thank you. Thank you, Madam.

[01:36:15] Thank you. Supervisor Vega. Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm looking over at the fuel tax slide and the Prince William County fund balance, and based on some of the comments that Supervisor Franklin made, my question is is Prince William County getting 100% back what it pays into the fuels tax? It is your it is your money it is 100 percent of the maybe don't understand the question but it is your it is your motor fuels tax fund so we don't own any of that all money collected belongs to prince

[01:36:47] william county thank you so it looks like we're finished with questions um thank you so much for coming out thank you for that overview i'm sure there's obviously some issues going forward and that we have to resolve um maybe not this year but we probably need to start talking about them this year even with regards to budgeting so appreciate that okay well thank you gentlemen

[01:37:22] with that this brings us to agency time and we're on item 9a transportation presentation the department transportation joint mobility report Mr. Canizales welcome I didn't go far very efficient again Rick Canizales your director of transportation here with your joint mobility report. Again, a lot of this report has to do with our partners here at PRTC and VRE.

[01:37:50] We're going to go through their projects as well as VDOT projects and our active projects. We're going to start with Megan Landis telling you a little bit about the grants that we have out there and that we are receiving. We got some good news in that front just yesterday. She'll talk a little bit about transit and our transit partners' efforts, and then Paula will come in and talk a little bit about I-66, the efforts there. At that point, Richard Wyman is going to come up, talk to you about the safety projects and what we have going on around the county. And I'll anchor it again by talking about our active projects. And we'll hopefully get through these 55 slides as quick as possible for you. I'm sure you won't take that long if there

[01:38:28] are 55 slides. I know that you've been probably given a time limit. Madam Chair, members of the board, Megan Landis, Department of Transportation. So we're going to start off with some good news

today. Prince William County received almost a million dollar federal grant through the Safe Streets for All program. This is a really exciting grant for us for several reasons. One, this will be the first action plan that is specific about safety. We have a lot of transportation plans out there. Safety is a key component. This is the targeted objective of this. Second, it is comprehensive, meaning we have included our localities. So City of Manassas Park, Town of

[01:39:07] Haymarket, Town of Occoquan, Town of Dumfries are all partners in this study. And third, this is the first federal grant that is coming directly to the county. It is not going through VDOT. This is an agreement directly between FHWA and the county. So exciting for a lot of reasons.

[01:39:24] On to more grant updates. In the last 12 months, over $38 million in grant funding has been awarded to projects within the county. Important to note is that 100% of this funding is federal. We all know there's a lot of federal funding for transportation out there right now as committed to this board.

[01:39:43] DOT has been pursuing it every chance we get. We have had some success. We hope to continue to build on that and advance county projects with non-county funds. At the bottom of the slide, you will see four programs that did not select county projects for funding. We have already reapplied to one of these programs, the RAISE program, and we plan on applying to the remaining three when those opportunities become available.

[01:40:07] So currently, we have over $780 million in pending grant requests. The bulk of this is applications that have been submitted to the SmartScale program. Initial scores for applications have been released. Based on those scores, funding has been recommended for the county's Route 234 Business Corridor Improvements Project.

[01:40:27] Official funding decisions will be made in June, and we will report back to you at that time. There are six grant programs that are either open for application or that we are anticipating being open for application shortly. We have already met with this board as well as the planning commission to discuss two of these programs, NVTA's six-year program and transportation alternatives programs.

[01:40:48] So we have begun developing applications for prioritized projects, and we're going to continue to engage this board as well as the planning commission in prioritizing projects for application as more grant programs come online. Onto completed projects. As you know, the roadway widening portion of the Route 28 Phase 3 project has been complete for some time.

[01:41:09] The shared use path on Residency Road is now done. It has been accepted by VDOT. So this project is officially complete, and this is the last you will see of this project in our mobility reports. Onto transit. VRE's Broad Run Station Expansion and Yard Improvements Project. It is in design. It's moving forward.

[01:41:29] In February, the VRE Operations Board endorsed a preferred concept that moved all of the improvements to the south side of the tracks and it eliminated the pedestrian bridge. So DOT has been coordinating with VRE to identify potential grant funding to construct a bridge across the tracks and create that desired connection with Innovation Park.

[01:41:50] Their Quantico Station Improvements Project is in construction. It is on track to be completed by the end of the calendar year. VRE ridership. So with the exception of those historic seasonal dips we see around the holidays, VRE ridership has continued to increase. Average daily ridership is 6,000. To put that in context, that's double what it was last year. It is about a third of what it was pre-pandemic.

[01:42:15] So short-term, VRE is really focused on enhanced marketing to attract ridership. Long-term, they have initiated an update to their long-range plan, so they're looking at new services, tapping into new markets to really grow that ridership. Moving on to bus transit, we've spoken a lot about it today, but recently OmniRide did transition one of their traditional fixed-route bus route services in Manassas Park to microtransit.

[01:42:41] So microtransit, for members of the public that may not be familiar, it is essentially akin to Uber or Lyft, where residents can request an on-demand ride, except for these are OmniRide drivers, they're OmniRide vehicles, and they're operating within a defined service area. So as you heard from Dr. Bob in the presentation, they are looking at other areas of the county to introduce this service where it might be better for riders as well as provide some cost efficiencies, and they have recommended Dumfries Triangle Quantico area.

[01:43:10] So those of you that serve on the PRTC Commission, you will be voting on this recommendation on Thursday. OmniRide has completed their zero emissions bus study. This is going to inform their fleet transition. At this moment, they are pursuing a federal grant for the purchase of electric vehicles for their paratransit and microtransit services.

[01:43:29] They are looking to transition their larger buses. However, they have not yet determined exactly what type of zero-emission technology they will be adopting for the long term. So in January, Omniride restructured their service. They did this both to take advantage of the new I-66 express lanes as well as to better tailor the service to the ridership that is out there.

[01:43:50] Again, as you heard in today's presentation, there are more service restructured plans for fiscal year 2024 based on ridership projections. OmniRide has also been working to upgrade their mobile ticketing system. They've actually launched this system on their Haymarket commuter route.

[01:44:07] The plan is to extend that system to other commuter routes. However, it is dependent on grant funding. And finally, for transit, OmniRide is continuing to meet with their mobility councils. These are their advisory councils. They assist OmniRide in both public outreach and input.

[01:44:22] Thank you, Megan. Madam Chair, members of the board, Paula Belita with the Department of Transportation. I want to take a few slides and give a brief update on VDOT 66 outside the Beltway project.

[01:44:39] The project is substantially completed. There was a phased opening between Gainesville and Route 28 back in September, full opening in the November/December timeframe. Some of the work that VDOT is doing is working on the final layer of paving on the general purpose lanes. purpose lanes. They're also working on re-striping and re-vegetation in some areas. So be careful there are still lane closures as part of this project. In terms of how the express lanes work, the express lanes are broken down into several segments. On the eastbound you have three segments you're charged for that segment. You're able to get off before and you will get there's a certain cost associated with each segment. So you have three in the eastbound

[01:45:17] direction and four in the westbound direction. I will say if you have an easy pass flex, be careful and make sure you click. If you're in the HOV mode or or not because I did receive something in the mail. So just be careful. So in terms of quick history, 22.5 mile corridor, the project itself was $2.3 billion to fully complete.

[01:45:37] There were also other investments along the corridor totaling 3.7. This includes our concession-funded Balsford Road Interchange and Balsford Road Winding, which will support some of our commuters and express lane users. The exciting thing about this is the two commuter lots that we've talked about in the past.

[01:45:54] The Bosford Road at Century Park Drive commuter lot is completed. There's about 1,300 spaces. You have direct access via the express lane ramps onto the express lanes. VDOT's partners, Express Mobility Partners, their headquarters, excuse me, their operations and maintenance center is actually located adjacent to this lot.

[01:46:15] The other commuter lot, which is in substantial completion, there's 100 spaces open at the Park and Ride Lot at University Boulevard. You're gonna see continued work going into spring of this year, which will be wrapping up by the end of the year. With that, I'll hand it over to Richard. Good afternoon, members of the board and county executive.

[01:46:36] My name is Richard Wyman. I'm the traffic safety engineering branch manager here at Prince William County. And today I'm going to briefly give you a couple of updates on some of the things we're working on for you guys. We're continuing to do traffic studies. First quarter of this year is all kind of quiet because of the weather and whatnot, and we have a lot lined up for the summer, and we'll continue to work on those.

[01:46:56] Just like we got the Safe Streets for All grant directly from federal government, we have an application for some railway crossings with federal railways. We're still waiting to hear back on that grant, but hopefully we'll get that and we'll have another federal directly project without involving VDOT.

[01:47:13] Aden Road and Fleetwood study, we had the preliminary designs come back already from our consultants. We shared that with the supervisor's office, and they are proceeding to go into more detail with the three alternatives that were identified. With the braided stream runs for flasher the final design has been submitted and the final comments we're working through the next phase To get all the final waivers and paperwork in place so that we can go out for bid hopefully within the next two months Supervisor Lawson certainly ma'am

[01:47:51] Similarly the Dumfries Road signals on 234 final design has been submitted with the the final waivers and whatnot We're hoping to start the right-of-way phase on talent within the next month and hopefully go out for bid By the middle of this year at the latest queen chapel the plat has been submitted or has been finalized And I believe there's a meeting with the property owner to secure that easement So we can proceed there Vita can proceed with the construction on there shortly Route one transportation improvements. This is the bus shelters We have done their route one corridor primarily in the Woodbridge district. Some of them are also in Potomac district

[01:48:29] We have already ordered those shelters Unfortunately, there's a long wait time for those shots because they engineered structures, etc but those have been ordered and we are proceeding with that and our public works crews will be installing those. Old Centerville Road pedestrian improvements and coals districts, construction is underway. The concrete work I believe has been finalized and the asphalt is going and striping is going to be happening within the coming weeks. Moving forward on some of our sidewalk projects, Blue Pool sidewalk specifically, we have broken that project into two. There's a utility conflict

[01:49:05] on the northern part and we've decided to try break that up and do the first part without with county forces we will be able to get that first section in this summer we're just finding finalizing the plan with you and we'll be coming back to office shortly and that was a huge cost savings over going federal a street lighting projects marumsco the conduit is installed there on the route one we're just waiting for the construction to be finished before we can give the dominion notes to proceed to install those the Tartan Hills Parkway street lighting I believe is finalized we're just waiting for the final invoices and whatnot to

[01:49:44] come through and I believe the route 28 lights are currently being installed in terms of the orphan road program and bringing roads in state system Wiggles Worthway has been accepted industrial court the asphalt work out on the industrial court is currently going on I believe next week and the drainage has already been done so hopefully we'll be getting that into state system pretty quickly. Our partners at VDOT, their Highway Safety Improvement Programs, they're continuing to do the systematic improvements around the county, and that's basically a summary of what they're working on. We've also worked with them with the HSIP program to identify

[01:50:21] additional corridors for additional future programs, so we're all consulting and working with them on that and engaging with them. Finally, the photo enforcement program, we We presented to you two weeks ago, and we have a board item coming up, I believe, on April 11th.

[01:50:39] Please reach out to our office if you have any questions. I know there were a lot of comments at that meeting, preparing a memo that we got to all of you later this week, addressing your concerns that you brought up at that board meeting. With that, I will pass it over to Rick to go through active projects.

[01:50:55] All right. Thanks, Richard. As always, we'll start with our design projects, where we are in the design phase. Our first project as always, and as always, Supervisor Angry's favorite project, the design of the bow tie out at Clover Hill and the Parkway.

[01:51:13] As you can see, we just kind of initiated the design. We have gotten our geotech out there done, and we have coordinated with Manassas in order to make sure that we are able to transition properly from their bike lanes into a multi-use trail.

[01:51:29] No, I have a question. Is the bowtie structure, is that official? I'm teasing you. It's dedicated to Supervisory Anchor.

[01:51:44] Route 28 bypass, we have a couple public hearings, public information meetings coming up on this, one on April 19th in Fairfax, one on April 20th here in Prince William, or actually in Manassas Park Recreational Center right next to where the facility would be.

[01:52:03] uh we are this is our initial shot this is where our initial uh alignment uh to that we're going to present to the public again there's still a lot of work to be done we haven't even gotten to a 30 percent here uh we're going to show what we think and and some things that we think may be able to choose from and again uh get some initial reactions some initial impacts before we move forward and uh and finalize our design and get to a public hearing in about another uh 12 months or so. Page lane, right turn lane. Again, this project has lagged a little bit, and it's because of the

[01:52:41] signal equipment. We continue to have the same target that we had at the last report in winter of 2023, but we are finalizing the signal design, which gets us to be able to order that signal equipment. At that point, Supervisor Weir, the signal equipment can take anywhere between 40 to 50 weeks to get to us, and we will get that up as soon as we get it, but it's just a matter of waiting for the material on this.

[01:53:07] Again, in Gainesville, the Route 15 pedestrian bridge, we are negotiating with our consultants right now the fee for the proposal for the design of this facility. We'll probably come back to you at the next report, let you know who our consultant is and where we are in developing that design. Minnieville Road and Prince William Parkway interchange environmental study.

[01:53:26] We continue to work with the developer out there of the courts district, making sure that they finalize the design and finalize it in a way that it conforms to our NEPA documentation that we are doing for that project.

[01:53:43] We are working with VDOT to get the traffic reporter, what's called an IAR, done for the interchange. We were hoping to get comments last week, and I'm pushing to get them out this coming week so we can start submitting the design of this very important project, and actually one of our road bond projects.

[01:54:01] Route 23, Old Bridge Road, talking about road bond projects. Again, this is in the Occoquan District. We are actually going back and negotiating a task order. We're splitting the task order into two and taking a step back, We're going to be looking, and I think we've talked about this, Supervisor Bodie, but we're going to take a look at some potential other concepts before we start working on a 30% design that we can take to a public hearing.

[01:54:25] Obviously, there's a lot of impact that we create with the design that came out of STARS, so we're going to just take a moment to make sure that we are doing the right things for both the businesses, the citizens, and the travelers of this area. Route 24, this is the Parkway and Old Bridge Road also here.

[01:54:45] Actually, that kind of is divided into a couple districts here. Occoquan District, though. We are looking at doing a public hearing. I think we have sent a notice to your office to try to get a date, and I believe we sent a notice to the chair's office to try to get a date for a May public information meeting on this project as we have a preliminary design that you see up there set up and trying to get some initial reaction from the public as we do affect access to certain businesses and an existing shopping center in that area.

[01:55:12] Van Buren Road Environmental Study, we did, as I mentioned last time, we did find some historic artifact issues in the area. What we have chosen to do after talking to the Department of Historic Resources is we have decided to avoid the area.

[01:55:28] So we are transferring the alignment about 150 feet north in the area where the artifacts were found. The reality is by doing that, you create a straighter, after the curve, a straighter line up over the existing rest stop there in the facility.

[01:55:54] So it smooths out the curve and allows for better flow. So we think it's a good idea. Where the road was before or came in before, we will be shifting the stormwater facility that was up here before and shifting it down a little closer to where the site was found. the site is here. With that said, we were going to be able to finish this study in summer of 2023.

[01:56:20] With this shift, we have had to do some initial work on this EA. We will probably be bringing this to the board or to a public hearing either the winter of this year, spring of next. Marina Way Extension, this is the first part of a, or the second phase of the North Woodbridge project. We just started talking to JMT, our consultants on this, about some design options.

[01:56:45] We are trying and doing the best we can to make sure that we don't impact the shopping center that we are going through as much as possible. So we're trying to make sure because we're not looking to buy that shopping center. We're looking to that shopping center to kind of anchor the area coming up in a town center style area. So we're trying to find the best alignment with the best typical section still making sure that it's an urban typical section through there without total taking or totally affecting the shopping center in that area. The Potomac Neabsco commuter garage we had a happy event here back on March 17th we did a little groundbreaking so that's exciting but you

[01:57:24] see all the clearing that's going on out there getting ready to put that facility up. The first part of the North Woodbridge plan which is the extension and connection of Annapolis Way right now if you go out there you see that the developer has started work on his section. We have gone in there and cleared the trees for what we are doing and we are now trying to make sure that as we move forward and bid this out, now that we got the 100% plans, that we're able to make sure the timing is right as to when they're getting in and we're getting in to make sure that it's seamless. Now we go to projects that

[01:58:04] are in the right-of-way phase in Devlin Road out there, which is the extension of the Ballsford Road interchange project that we were able to do we're starting to get into the right-of-way of that we're affecting a lot of properties there I believe it but it's very little so we're affecting like a lot of properties but doing just very little partial takes in order to make sure that we get our our walls are both our retaining and our sound walls in that area. Old Bridge Road Occoquan Road intersection I know where this is a very we heard a lot about this project last week great I know that we had a call and we're doing great, I actually found out and I'm able to report here to

[01:58:42] the board today before I reported to my boss because I was on a phone call outside right before I came out here that our engineer said that it is possible to phase out the the utility relocation. So we'll be getting with the pastor to make sure that we make sure that the timing is correct and what they're trying to do and when they need to be out so we can set a specific date that works for both parties. Route 1 Fraley Boulevard, my favorite right-of-way project, 110 properties would be affecting in this project, most I've ever affected in the project. This is something that we have just recently

[01:59:18] started. We were able to move. We're still working on the design of this project, but we are starting to talk to a lot of the people that we're doing total takes on, as well as we're also starting to do the appraisals for the partial takes and those needs. Again, this is a $177 million project, which most of that budget is for right away. Summit School Road and Telegraph Road. Again, we've talked a lot about utilities in the past and how they've delayed projects. I know Route 1's a perfect example. Boss 4's another example.

[01:59:49] We're trying not to have this happen here. We're trying to make sure, again, that we get utilities out of the way before we get in there. What we're going to do with this project is phase it out into two phases. We're looking to hopefully phase out the part that goes from Summit School out to Caton Hill and be able to start construction in that. And then while we're removing the utilities on the part between Caton Hill and the parkway to be able to come back to that project and widen that out as the utilities get out of the way. We just want to make sure that we time it again right, again with utility issues that we've had. We're very hesitant to be able to move forward with a

[02:00:24] project without having them out of the way. Now, my favorite part of a project is construction and getting them done. Our intersection improvements, if you go out there at the Parkway University, that is cleared out. But you see not only construction for our project, but you see construction for the town

center. So lots of things happening at that intersection and that part of the Parkway. It's very exciting. We're hoping to be done with this project by this year.

[02:00:47] So as you see the clearing out there and as we get to construction, unless we run into some issues and weather gets bad, we're hoping to have it in by either the end of the year, beginning of next. University Boulevard Extension, this is the extension between Sudley Manor and Devlin Road. We're looking to have this project completed by next summer.

[02:01:04] As you see out there, we're starting to trench out everything, getting ready for utilities. I know that we're also doing a big water project here for the service authority at the same time that we're doing our project, so that's what you see being dug up there. Bosphord Road Interchange, good news here, we're looking to open this project at the end of this month.

[02:01:22] We're currently working on trying to set a date for a ribbon cutting. You'll be getting contacted, Supervisor Lawson, as well as the chair, on what your best date is in the last week of April. And we're trying to see if we can get out there in the middle of that bridge and cut a ribbon to have that thing open on Saturday, April 29th.

[02:01:42] Brentsville Road Interchange, I have never seen a project go up this fast. That's all I got to say about this. I promote Wagmans, great construction company. I mean, the earthwork that we began back middle last year when we did that groundbreaking to where we are now with this bridge is incredible to me, and I look forward to working with Wagman in the future.

[02:02:03] Balls 4 Road widening. Again, this is a project that we are experiencing a little delay on. A lot of utility issues out here. The contractor and us are working hard to do some workarounds and getting those things out of the way to make sure that we can open this road by the end of this year, hopefully in the October time frame, as you see up there.

[02:02:20] Neabsco Mills Road, if Supervisor Angry would see it, he sees that right in front of his office. He sees this construction every day, so he sees this moving. Oh, it's right in front of your office too, Ms. Franklin, so I know that you see the construction here also moving along. We're getting the pipe work in, and we're hoping again this project to be done in about a year or so from today, the full four-lane widening.

[02:02:43] That'll basically be eight years from the day we got the funding for it. So, again, I have asked the consultant to track this project just to kind of show some of the things that we deal with on federal projects as a sample project of where some inefficiencies are and we can work on process.

[02:03:02] The 95 express lanes on OPITS, we're hoping that they come in at about the same time that the garage is complete. We're looking at a spring of, at a fall of next year. We're looking at the garage. We're looking at summer of 2024. They're looking at fall 2024. So it'll be pretty close there on when these facilities open together because they do complement each other.

[02:03:19] the auxiliary lane about to be open we're hoping this gets open here in the next couple months i know that they're doing some final paving out there and and i know the people are really anticipating this this lane to be open which is the lane that's between the exit at 123 and the entrance to the parkway the fuller fuller heights project i know in miss bailey's district they've torn down those buildings they're starting to work on the road everything's starting to come together we're going to receive the uh the con

span here shortly and and get that bridge up and hopefully get to closing that cul-de-sac. The other thing you may be hearing on, and I know that our

[02:03:56] engineers went out there to talk to the two churches and the hotel back behind that area on the Joplin side of the house, to let them know that we are going to be closing that median here shortly, and so they are aware. So I'm not sure if your office may be hearing from them, but wanted to let you know that that construction is going to happen soon. I-95 Route 123, this is a VDOT project, but what's cool about this is it's the first progressive design build that VDOT's doing.

[02:04:22] I've been going to classes about these things and haven't put one in yet, but VDOT is doing this interchange with a progressive design build. They have allowed us to follow through the procurement. They have allowed us to follow them through the project process so we can learn how to do it. And if we have a chance or a project that can possibly take advantage of this type of procurement process, it saves a lot of time, I think, which saves a lot of money at the end of the day.

[02:04:45] I-95, the rehab of the bridge over Powell's Creek. This is going to continue on through next year, but they will be changing what you see up there the steel beams the concrete abutments you will see construction out there for the next year though route one featherstone to mary's way uh i know it's very important project to miss franklin i know that we've had a lot of delay on this project i know we discussed this at the last time we talked about this since then i have uh good news we have reported that we were going to go and have this project completed by early 2024 we have gone back negotiated some expedited activity uh and we think that the contractor or they have given us a schedule that thinks it can get it back to opening in the fall of this year.

[02:05:25] Finally, our bicycle and pedestrian projects, like we said, we have a multimodal network. I know that Richard hit on some of the sidewalk projects and trail projects that he's working on. These are major projects that we have. Again, the Old Carolina project will be getting out there soon. We actually got the notice to proceed out there in February and you should be seeing some construction because we do want to get finished with this project by this spring.

[02:05:53] Old Bridge Road, we're working with development services. We got that plan approval, so now we're working on the bid documents to get that moving and get that into construction. Sudley Manor Drive sidewalk, we're still doing field surveys out there and working on that design.

[02:06:10] And the Ellicott Street sidewalk, which we're working on with parks, that's moving right along into design right now. The Horner Road Park and Ride expansion project, we were able to get with VDOT. we're only doing part of that project and VDOT has taken some ownership in some other part of the project and that will be allowable with the grant we have with this so we're able to split that project up and get it done more efficiently out there. The token forest sidewalk we are moving forward and the task order has been submitted we're looking for approval as this for the design of this project and finally the project you see on the right hand side there the Prince William

[02:06:46] Parkway sidewalk projects a very exciting project to us we're crossing the interstate with this project and hooking up to an existing sidewalk and a developer sidewalk that's being built on the south side of 95 or east side of 95. With that said, this is what we have for you today and we will take any questions that you may have for us. Appreciate your time. Well, thank you. That was pretty quick for 55 slides. Thank you. It was 70. Oh, 70 slides. I heard someone told me 55. I did.

[02:07:15] That was my mistake. Supervisor Lawson, was this previous year? I have you in my speaker queue. Maybe that was when you were trying to, when we were in the middle of presentation. Okay. Supervisor Bailey. Wow, that was quick, Janine. Thanks. Rick, thanks for the 55, I mean, 72 slides.

[02:07:37] The lights, I want to go back to the lights when we were talking about getting lights installed. We've been talking about the Potomac Shores lights for quite some time. And where are we with that project? I've been having a lot of calls from the community.

[02:07:54] Certainly, ma'am. You're talking about the streetlights, not the traffic signals? Yes, yes. On Potomac Shores, our streetlight coordinator has submitted multiple requests to the utility. I believe that we anticipate to get those design estimates back to us in the next week or so.

[02:08:11] And as soon as we have that, we'll forward it to your office. We're focusing on the River Heritage and Potomac Shores intersection, as well as some of those crossings first, and then looking at the trail thereafter once we have a more solid idea of the funding. So we've broken kind of into two to try to accelerate that, get those high-risk intersections lit first.

[02:08:33] So these are not the lights that you had mentioned to us last, the beginning of this year, I guess it was, or last year, about if we had a request for lights. It's not the same thing? It's a different kind of project? And the reason why I'm saying that, Rich, is because of the darkness.

[02:08:51] I mean, you've been on the road already, the darkness on the main drag going into Potomac Shores, and we need to have some kind of input, positive input back to them. Certainly, ma'am. We are looking at it. We did identify some other lights that were that limited traffic light, sorry, streetlight funding that we have that has been, I believe, already expended.

[02:09:11] But we'll get back to your office again just to confirm that that is the case. This would be separate from that, though, yes. Okay. We'll continue to push for you. I think where we run into issues, and I know that Richard doesn't want to put fault here, but again, utilities, utilities, utilities.

[02:09:28] You know, we get these designs, and we put them out there. We ask them to pay, and they say they're going to get out there a certain time. We try to get them out there as soon as possible. But again, these are things that are not installed by our crews or our people. They're installed by the utility companies, and we have to wait on them to come. So you're waiting for the utilities? Yes, ma'am. Okay, so that's good to know.

[02:09:44] And then the other thing, Rick, we went through it really quick, but I just wanted to make sure we're still in the NEPA study phase with Van Buren. Like I mentioned, ma'am, I think we have just found out that we have to move the road a little bit because of the artifacts that were found. That's going to take some time. We have to revisit the NEPA.

[02:10:01] We have to go out there and do new geotech where we're putting the road. We have to go out there and survey. We have to go out there and do a few more things that's going to delay this NEPA process from ending this year. So we're probably going to be looking at having a public meeting on this once we get all the information needed for that shift of the roadway.

[02:10:18] It'll probably happen later this winter or in the spring of next year. Okay, that's a good time, Frank, because we're having a... Yes, ma'am. Okay, that's good. And then lastly, with the Fuller Heights

project, you know, when we were in the community meeting the other night, there was a question about what businesses are we going to, you know, do we have a plan for that or have we completed that plan?

[02:10:41] Yes, ma'am. As I mentioned at that meeting, that plan has been completed. The two buildings that were total takes were Mary's florist, which we relocated just down the road. If you go down Fuller Road, her florist is not there on the left at the end of a building, as well as the Kim's cleaners that we relocated over as well.

[02:10:58] A little further down the road, you see the cleaners there. Both those buildings were total takes. Both those buildings have now been demoed. There is no other buildings or other businesses that will be affected through that project. Okay. And then lastly, I just want to thank you again for the traffic light at Stockbridge and Talon. Yes ma'am. That's in the queue as well. That's in the queue. Thank you to you for being able to fund our design to get ahead of the game there. Now that we are have signed our agreements we have the money necessary to move forward to go to construction but as I mentioned that you mean the other night as well Talon has to go through a right has to go through a right away phase so that one will take a little longer than the Stockbridge. And that also has something

[02:11:37] to do with the the construction of the the new strip mall too. Wouldn't that interface? That'll help and be an adjunct to. Okay. Okay. Thank you. Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you. Supervisor Franklin. Sure. Just thank you for the presentation. I know we mentioned a lot of the larger projects in the Woodbridge District, like the Route 1 widening, which I'm happy to bring that to a close, but also just want to point out to residents kind of the smaller projects that may get lost in the shuffle of the bigger projects, but blue pool sidewalks, we're doing a blue pool roll in our

[02:12:13] River Oaks community. We're doing bus shelters up and down the Route 1 corridor. We're putting streetlights close to or adjacent to the Marumsco Plaza. And then we're looking at Bel Air Road for some consideration for maintenance improvements. So I wanted to point out some of those smaller neighborhoods that may get lost in the shuffle of kind of the larger projects that we're doing. And ma'am, just to mention, they are in there for your residents. If they ever want to come in, look at our report. They're included in this section that Richard has talked about in safety, that's where we have our smaller projects. I encourage your constituents to go into that report and take a look at those smaller projects. We do have a lot of information in there.

[02:12:51] Sure, and we're happy to send it out of our newsletter as well. Thank you, ma'am. Supervisor Vega. Thank you, Madam Chair. Just a few questions, Rick. Yes, ma'am. In regards to slide four, just kind of wanted to know what sort of projects can this money be used for and what's the criteria for these grants?

[02:13:08] Oh, I'm sorry. I'm not sure which grants. I'm going to have to go back. Slide four. Oh, that one. Great. Megan or... Actually, Megan went and got the grant, but Richard's actually going to implement this grant, so I'm going to let him go at it.

[02:13:26] But it's really, to me, this is an exciting, just before Richard talks a little bit about it, it's an exciting grant. Like Megan mentioned, it's the first one we're getting directly from the federal government, and this is how it all starts. That's why I'm excited about it. When we first started doing our federal program, we started by doing a turn lane into the Marine Corps Museum.

[02:13:44] That's how we start our federal program. It was just a small turning project that we had to prove to the federal government that we could get this done. And then from there on, when they saw that

we were capable, they gave us a little bigger projects and bigger projects, and now we're doing some major federal projects. So we're hoping this is something that starts that kind of trend as well, where we're getting money directly from the federal government.

[02:14:02] The federal government sees that we do a great job in what we do, and they start giving us money for some of the bigger projects and some of the bigger assets we have. Richard, please. Certainly. Thank you, Supervisor. The Safe Streets 4, like Rick says, is very exciting. This is a federal grant to develop a traffic safety action plan.

[02:14:20] So the Safe Street 4 program is designed to address safety concerns. We always talk about operational improvements, and this is something that's targeted specifically at safety. The downside of it is there's two phases to it. The first thing is we need to have a traffic safety action plan.

[02:14:36] A lot of communities will have, like, a vision zero or towards zero death plan. In the county, we don't have one. Without that plan, we can't actually apply for implementation grants to get the improvements. So what we have proposed is a one to two year program to get this in line so that we can go in two years from now or so to try and get some of those implementation grants to actually build the program.

[02:15:04] So this is just a traffic safety action plan. It's countywide. It includes the cities as well as the towns. And it's to develop and identify and build the background and information to work out where, what, and how to do it across the county.

[02:15:20] Okay, just to be clear, so that plan that we don't have, you say it's going to take between one to two years to implement? Certainly, yeah. So basically, because, again, federal programs, there's a lot of red tape and procedures that we need to follow.

[02:15:35] We've already started those with federal highways to get those agreements in place. that takes some time we then that will we we we're going to try compress that plan into a one-year project um but we're probably going to have to get a consultant on board and it's a big project and undertaking um and then we're also going to then have to get that ratified by not only the county board but also the towns and one and then get that back before we can then go ahead and apply for the implementation grants so we're actually on a very tight deadline most

[02:16:05] places are actually taking longer okay all right and if we could go to slide six please thank you So refresh my memory. I recall that the Prince William Forest Park entrance was at one point included in this list, correct?

[02:16:32] It was. Is there a reason why it was removed? It was under here is not selected for funding, so it was not chosen for funding. We did receive a FLAP grant for a Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail gap analysis, but this project was not selected for funding. Were we given like specific reasons other than?

[02:16:50] It is an oversubscribed program, so we did not receive a specific debrief on reasons why it was not selected. However, the county did receive a FLAP grant in the round before, and that might have been a reason as well, because they do look for geographic diversity. They try to spread out funds as much as possible.

[02:17:07] But we were not given a specific reason why we should not expect to reapply for this project. Okay, thank you. And then moving on to slide 13, we have some figures here from year 22 and 23.

[02:17:24] Do we, for comparison's sake, have numbers for 2020? We can provide all of those numbers to you. As I said in the presentation, when we were talking about pre-pandemic, average daily ridership was about 18,000, 19,000. So the ridership we're looking at now is about a third of what it was pre-pandemic.

[02:17:42] Okay, thank you. And then the last question I have is on slide 46. And that number looks a little different to me. I thought the cost for the parking garage was $54 million. And we have here the current appropriations number is different than that, 58?

[02:18:03] Yes, ma'am. So I thought it was $54 million. I believe the cost of the garage is $54 million. That is our current appropriation. That is the budget we have for the project. Okay. That's all I have. Thank you.

[02:18:20] Supervisor Lawson. Thank you, Madam Chair. Regarding Fleetwood, and I'm sorry I could not join the call last week with Mary Beth. I know you talked about Aiden and Fleetwood. Where do we go from here with your recommendation?

[02:18:38] So currently where we have is the consultant has identified three alternatives. Back again, I believe. One more. One more. There it is. So we've identified three alternatives, and we are looking at trying to – now the next thing is to go into a more detailed analysis on that, and then we'll be able to take that back to you and the community, hopefully this summer.

[02:19:06] We're hoping to do it June, July, with alternatives to get the feedback from the community, and then we'll be able to – currently they've done the traffic analysis and that kind of thing, and it looks like this intersection will be justified for improvements in the forecast of time.

[02:19:21] Okay, and then, Richard, I don't know if Mary Beth contacted you yesterday, but when she was briefing me, she mentioned that you believe there's a NOVAC facility of some type at one of the intersections, and I don't recall. Did you guys get that cleared up?

[02:19:38] I am not sure because I haven't spoken to the design team, but we did ask them to look into that. That was only last week, so I don't have the answer for you for that, but we did look into that. I think she said it was a substation, and Michelle and I were like, there's no substation in there. So, essentially, we have those two parcels and what we were essentially wanting from you is to, you know, either we can impact both or we can push it one direction or the other.

[02:20:02] And that's kind of the direction we're going at the moment as per that sketch. Thank you, Richard. And then, Rick, in Supervisor Bode's district, there is a 123 Gordon interchange, and I know we've discussed it before.

[02:20:19] You mentioned, yeah, or Old Bridge 123. You mentioned that you will be talking to business owners, or what did you say? No, we have been talking to business owners, ma'am. I didn't mention them, but yes, we have already been in contact with the coalition that's been put down there with the marina owner and some of the business owners on the side.

[02:20:39] We have heard their concept plans. We have told them where some of their concept plans don't meet our purpose and need. They have promised to go back and take a look at their concept plan to see how they can make it meet the purpose and need of the project and get back to us. Again that is one of the reasons we are like I mentioned earlier taking a step back from doing a 30% plan and moving forward with another concepts analysis to look at not only their concept but I know that our engineers have been

thinking about this. Our internal engineers, Katab and his group have been thinking about this and thinking about some other solutions that may be possible for this area that

[02:21:16] we may want to introduce to our consultants to take a look at and see if it could be feasible. So the business owners are spending their own money to design a concept? The business owners have an engineer that is part of the business owner coalition that is putting things together for them.

[02:21:32] Because I know for certain that Prince William Marina is very concerned that it will... We, again, we are in contact with him. ...grossly affect his business. Yes, ma'am. I think we've met with Supervisor Bodie in a meeting to let them know, again, that they're one of the big reasons we're taking a step back.

[02:21:49] Okay. Well, understandably, when he sees county supervisors, he wants to make sure that we're all paying attention. Yes, ma'am. No, it's a very important project, but it's also a very impactful project. So I understand the concern, and that's, again, why we're taking a step back. And I appreciate that. The parking lot across the street, is that county-owned?

[02:22:08] That is VDOT-owned, and they have told us that they will not let us go through there. Really? Yes. Oh, I did. We cannot do anything. We cannot condemn VDOT land. No, I'm aware of that. Yeah. So that reminds me, I did have a question for you earlier in the presentation.

[02:22:25] Speaking of VDOT-owned land, now that the 66 Transformation Project is coming to an end, winding down, I just noticed this morning when I was at the dry cleaners that the bank that they were running. Yes, ma'am. And by the way, it does look better than it used to.

[02:22:41] Yes, ma'am. It's not pretty, but it's not as bad. But it's cut. Do we know what their intention is? I don't. I'll find out for you, ma'am. Can you find out? Yes, ma'am. Yes, we'll find out for you. Okay, thank you. We'll get back to you as soon as possible. I appreciate it. Shocker, but there's real estate developers interested in that.

[02:22:59] I'm sure there is. So I'll ask that last question, and thank you for working with the business owners on this and Supervisor Bodie's office. We appreciate that. We know that you guys spend a lot of time doing outreach, and thank you, Supervisor Bodie. I have a really kind of funny question, but back in May of 2020, I had a directive that asked staff to research the, quote, vision zero program and determine if it could be implemented in Prince William County. Is that the same vision zero program that you're talking about now or is that a different one? What we're trying

[02:23:35] to implement is not the vision zero program. We have seen some examples I think in jurisdictions around us that have tried to implement the vision zero program and they've not been a success. You know it hasn't been something we look at. So we're taking this approach where we're getting this federal grant to look at a safety plan, a county-wide safety plan that identifies some of the same things that are identified in that kind of Vision Zero request, but it looks at a plan that has implementable items in it, like Richard mentioned, that we can go back to the federal government and say, hey, we created this plan with your money, and we're looking at these things.

[02:24:07] This is how we need to get our jurisdiction in line to try to get to that Vision Zero kind of goal, just not Vision Zero, and be able to move forward with some of those projects. So it's not the Vision Zero program? It's not the Vision Zero plan. That's what I wanted to clarify, because I knew it sounded familiar, so I went back, and that was three years ago.

[02:24:24] So, okay, awesome. So I think we're done. Oh, no, sorry. Supervisor Bailey. We're almost done. I just had one other point that I wanted to make, and I just need your feedback. Yes, ma'am. One of the opportunities that we had, excuse me, of late, when I look back on Megan's slide, which are really good, Megan, good job, good job, was slide number six.

[02:24:55] I think that's Megan's slide. It is. It is, okay. Was the congressional funding, and we've had some interesting conversations about that. And so what is the plan, or, you know, I know there is a plan because transportation, you always got a plan.

[02:25:15] What is the plan as we go forward to identify and utilize that grant funding to help us going forward and, you know, for the progress of what we're trying to do?

[02:25:31] Yes, ma'am. So this funding that you see up here, that was for FY23. As you know, we just submitted for FY24. We did not have a lot of lead time to get those applications in order, so those applications did focus on high-priority countywide projects.

[02:25:48] I believe the CXO's office with Nikki Brown and our legislative liaison, Glenn Lube, are focusing on how to prepare for the next round of it. We do expect that these congressionally directed spending opportunities will come up annually with each federal budget and prepare a process for how we can kind of get a pipeline of projects prepared to be ready for the next round okay and and and thank you for saying that and you know whatever input we can give please let us know because we are we're getting the calls but also you know we're out in the field a lot so whatever that looks like just let us know absolutely all right

[02:26:26] thank you thank you man thank you that can do it i think we're good all right well thank you very much for your time we appreciate your support of our program all the time and one quick mention that I didn't mention earlier on our prior presentation about the PRTC budget and budget chair. I just wanted to give some credit to Dave Sinclair and his crew that have been helping us out on those numbers and getting those presentations together. So I just wanted to say thank you to the budget group because I know that they're really busy right now, but they still took some time to help us out. With that, thank you for your time. Thank you, and thank you to everybody else who presented also. Great work. Okay, that brings us on to our other agency presentation, which is

[02:27:06] 9b uh the the police agency um i believe we have a presentation um and it looks like mr alexander is going to start us off madam chair members of the board dan alexander deputy county executive for public safety mr shorter asked me to make some introductory remarks before we get going as you know every year police department releases an annual report provides us an overview of their activities and a number of statistics today chief newsroom will provide us with a presentation regarding this annual report. In the future, we will bring our community safety initiative into

[02:27:41] this discussion so we can talk about a more robust approach to how we do community safety. We heard a presentation earlier on transportation and what we're doing countywide, so we look to introduce a lot of those elements as we talk about accomplishing our safe and secure community objectives. As a quick update to our CSI project, we've recently closed the application for the director's position. We work to recruit the analysts and the community violence intervention grant positions in the near future. And before I turn it over to Chief Newsham, we did want to take a moment to say how grateful we are for the leadership team and the work that our men and

[02:28:19] women are doing every day to protect and serve our community. Chief Newsham. Thank you, Mr. Alexander. Chief Newsham. Good afternoon, Chair Wheeler, members of the board. I'm Pete Newsham. I'm the chief of the Prince William County Police Department.

[02:28:36] Like Dan said, we have an annual report coming out later this week. I wanted to give you some insight of some of the things that are in that report. And, of course, we will start with crime. Our total crime in 2022 was, if you see up the top, 18,385 reported crimes.

[02:28:57] Seven percent or so of those reported crimes fall into what we consider and the state considers to be violent crimes. Crime rate in Prince William County for 2022 was 37.7 per 1,000 residents.

[02:29:13] And you compare that to the overall state crime rate, which was 47.3, which is an estimate because those numbers are not fully in yet. Our arrest totals, we had 8,043 arrests, which was up.

[02:29:30] You'll see that on a later slide. 92% of those were adults. 7.3% were juveniles. We had 20 murders. As you know, that's a high number for Prince William County. Last time we had that many in 2016, we had 22 murders in the county. I have a slide later on that'll talk about those murders in detail. Reportable crashes were up in the county, I want to say last year, or in 2021, it was around 4,300 or so.

[02:30:02] traffic fatalities. We had 28 and 21, 2021, 26 and 22. Calls for service, 173,000 calls for service. That's up again from last year. We had 160,000 calls for service last year. And then calls resulting in a report, 21,526. And we had 18,000, almost 19,000 the prior year. The reason I show those statistics, particularly with the calls for service and the reportable, is that our police

[02:30:36] department, although we were not fully staffed, actually did a lot more work in 2022 than we had done the previous year. On the right-hand side, it gives you a breakdown of the nature of the crimes we had. 11.5% were crimes against persons. The overwhelming majority that we have are crimes against property. Our violent crime rate, which I think is interesting, is 2.7 per thousand.

[02:31:04] And then again, that's as defined by what Virginia State considers to be a violent crime. This slide, I think, is the best representation and probably the most accurate representation of the state of affairs with regards to crime in Prince William County because it shows trends.

[02:31:24] Really difficult to compare one year over the other. You'll see in 2020 and 2021, much lower crime rates than we had in prior years. A lot of that is attributed to the pandemic.

[02:31:39] We had fewer people out on the streets during that time. We did have an increase from 21 to 22, but you can see over our long-term average in the county, We are still below our long-term average when you go back to 2009.

[02:31:56] The top line on this slide is our population in the county, and I don't have to tell anybody sitting up here on the board that over that same time frame, our population has continued to increase here in the county. A couple of factors that I will point out where I believe the community can be helpful to the police department with regards to crime is we had 136 guns that were stolen out of vehicles in 2021. That's a lot of guns to be taken. I would say that I'm a supporter of legally owned guns in our community,

[02:32:32] but legally owned guns have to be owned responsibly. And leaving a firearm in your vehicle is not responsible. Once that gun is stolen out of your vehicle, it turns from being a legal firearm to being an illegal firearm. And those are oftentimes the firearms that are used illegally in our community. 57% of the

thefts from automobiles occurred in automobiles that were left open. If you ask any one of our patrol officers who've watched video, and many of them

[02:33:05] have, of situations where things are being stolen out of cars, you'll see folks that are involved in that type of behavior will walk down the street and they'll check the door handles looking for an open door handle. So my recommendation to our community, and we do advertise this on social media, please lock your cars. Please don't leave valuables in your cars. And then with our stolen autos, a significant percentage of our stolen autos were stolen when the car was either left running or the keys were left in the vehicle and the cars were left open again. So again,

[02:33:41] And I would just caution our community that we've got to be real careful about when we when we park our vehicles, not to leave the keys in them and certainly not to leave them running. I can talk a little bit about the violent crime a little bit when we move a little bit further into the slides.

[02:34:02] We get into our homicides. Obviously, it's very concerning to see 20 homicides in our community. That's 20 unnecessary losses of life. It happened in 15 incidents. I know you will all remember that we had one quadruple homicide where four folks were killed inside of a home.

[02:34:20] We had two double homicides, so that's why it was 15 incidents that resulted in 20 homicides. That chart on the right gives you the 10-year average. The county averages around 11 homicides, so 20 is high above that.

[02:34:38] The types of situations where we have had homicides, 16 of those cases were involving a firearm, two were stabbed, one was from an overdose, you may remember this, we had a young person that died of an overdose, and we subsequently charged the person who had sold the drugs to that kid with murder.

[02:35:01] and so that becomes one of our murders. And then one was multiple causes. That was a situation where somebody was stabbed and actually run over by a vehicle. Very disturbing to talk about these in public, but again, it's an unnecessary loss of life in our community. The number here at the bottom is, I think, pretty telling. When we had 11 of our 20 homicides actually occurred inside of a residents. So a lot of our homicides are occurring inside of homes. And then if you go over to the

[02:35:35] other kind of interesting, I guess interesting factor is that 18 of our homicides that we had, 18 of the 20 were closed. Of the two that remain open, one of them we feel very confident that we will be able to close within the next several months. And so that's a testament to the work that's being done in our Criminal Investigations Division.

[02:36:00] But the other thing I think that's pretty telling is that in 18 of our 20 homicides, and those are the homicides where we know the offender, the offender and the victim knew each other. So these are not stranger cases. These are not random cases. These are cases where folks know each other.

[02:36:18] Going into a little bit more detail on the number of arrests that we had, this shows you that we did have an increase in the number of arrests that we had last year. arrests increased by almost 15%, and that 3.4% is not an increase, but that represents the number of arrestees that were armed at the time of the arrest. Our next slide is oftentimes folks want to know about our response to resistance or what kind of force that we used as a police

[02:36:55] department. Last year was the first time that we put this information into our annual report. We're going to do this every year on an annual basis to keep our community informed, to be as transparent as we can. And so the breakdown, if you look at the top, and I already talked about this, we had 173,000 calls for service, 8,200 arrests.

[02:37:17] In 95.2% of those arrests, absolutely no resistance was presented and no force was required to make those arrests. So the overwhelming majority of the arrests that our police officers make in Prince William County, they make without using any force.

[02:37:35] We have a very liberal definition of use of force at Prince William County. So even if you're putting someone into handcuffs and they struggle, that is considered a use of force. So we had 530 total investigations. In those investigations, we had 207 complaints of injury.

[02:37:54] That breakdown on the right further details the type of force that was used when we had to respond to resistance. And that word physical, what that means is somebody had to put their hands on somebody. That would also include tactical takedowns.

[02:38:11] For example, if somebody is running from the police and the officer has to tactically take them to the ground. Pepper spray, we all know what that is. our taser 1.6 percent of the instances where we were required to respond to resistance we had to use our taser in less than one percent of those instances we used our canine and then in a very small percentage or in actually one case our police officers had to respond with the use of a firearm. The next slide talks in detail about the nature of the injuries that were suffered during our response to resistance.

[02:38:50] We had 27 medical transports. In nine of those instances, there was a complaint of pain, but there was no visible injury. In 12 of those instances, there was an abrasion or a laceration. And those two at the bottom, serious injury or death was involving our police shooting.

[02:39:09] We had a police shooting, as you all know, a fatal police shooting on Foxglove Court this past year, which involved a task force where two Prince William County and two Manassas City police officers were shot at by a suspect who was trying to rob an undercover officer.

[02:39:27] And as a result of being shot at, they returned fire. They struck two individuals. One of those individuals lost his life and the other one received a non-life-threatening gunshot wound. There was a third person in the car And the two surviving victims were both charged in that case.

[02:39:47] Just to give you a little bit more detail for those of you who don't remember, the undercover officer was trying to purchase fentanyl, a significant amount of fentanyl and firearms from the suspects in that case. They attempted to rob her, and unfortunately, we had an officer involved shooting.

[02:40:06] Traffic enforcement, I know this is something of significant concern to every member of the board. We're all seeing the amount of traffic concerns that we have in the community. We increased the number of citations that we wrote in 2022 from 2021.

[02:40:22] 21, we issued about 18,000, and we issued 21,841 in 22. Top violations, I don't think this is any surprise to anyone who's sitting here, speeding, reckless driving, not having a driver's license, Disregarding a traffic signal and stop sign violations we had 951 du irs going back to the top violations i know there's been some conversation and some work and some ideas about implementing automated traffic force enforcement here in our community at least two of those top five violations

[02:41:01] could potentially be addressed by automated traffic enforcement i put the roadway incident management program at the bottom because it does show you uh these these are and those uh intersections on the right are the intersections that are selected and we select those intersections based off of data that we have regarding crashes and so during the incident management program we issued 865 citations uh the important number up there is the reduction in the number of crashes that we saw at these intersections so if you do at least in my opinion if you do do enforcement at intersections that are problematic with regards to crashes, you can have an impact

[02:41:41] on the number of folks that crash. The next slide I don't think is anything that you all don't know, but I'm sharing this with the public. Our budget was $116 million, which is 4.5% of the overall county budget.

[02:41:58] Our authorized strength at the police department is 707 sworn and 202 professional staff members. Our current sworn vacancies are at 85. We have an academy starting on April 19th.

[02:42:15] As you all know, when I first came, we had two academies a year. Now we're running four academies a year. We're doing everything we possibly can in this environment to increase our staffing. I have to say, and it's in one of my later slides, but I will jump ahead.

[02:42:30] What the board did in January was very helpful in addressing the pay issue on the police department and also allowing for a hiring bonus of $10,000. In the 20, the last fiscal year budget, the board authorized us to hire 16 professional staff positions to fill positions that were currently being filled by officers and to send those folks back into operations.

[02:43:04] This is an update on that. 10 of those positions have been hired. Four of the remaining six are currently in background. And the last two, we're waiting on the two folks that have been selected to do their ESOF requirements so we can do background checks on them.

[02:43:24] So we anticipate having that completed by the end of the fiscal year. Going back to the pay, as we're continuing to try and hire police officers in this environment. Prince William County isn't the only law enforcement agency that's suffering with staffing, it's a national issue.

[02:43:45] But again, raising starting salary to $62,000 made us competitive. One of the other things it did is it really had stopped the attrition that I was seeing. We had a lot of police officers that were leaving for police agencies very close, very nearby, and they were stating in their reasons for leaving, were leaving because of the pay issue that thankfully has been corrected and then parallel to hiring folks as we want to and i said this when i first came in here we want to make our department a more diverse police department we're doing a pretty good job with the classes that we have been bringing in you can see up there the national average for women in law enforcement

[02:44:23] agencies is about 13 i think prince william county runs around 15 or 16 right now we really should be at 50% but if you can look at the hiring we're doing we're in a much better place than we have been in the past and then on our diversity those numbers are looking better for us as well. The cadet program I believe this is a program where we can really kind of bridge the gap between young people who are interested in law enforcement when they graduate from high school and when they reach the age of 21 we've doubled the size of our cadet program since in recent years so

[02:45:03] and you know we're always pushing this program any young folks out there that have integrity and have a service-minded heart we'd love for you to come put in an application for our cadet program we

also have summer internships these are paid internships we had actually I think we have ten positions we've had 60 young folks that put in and these are again young people at the college level who are interested in law enforcement who come and they work for us for the summer and get a couple of dollars to do that we are an accredited agency I think you all know that we're in the process right now of doing our

[02:45:39] re-accreditation which requires that we get community feedback so you will see on our social media postings that we're asking for anybody who has information about the police department they want to share oftentimes that might generate folks who've had a bad experience but we also ask people who have had a good experience to let us know. This is, I think, apropos considering we just did our, somebody help me out here, we just recognized next week we're going to recognize our folks that

[02:46:14] work over at our Animal Services Center. This is the work that they do in a one-year time frame. This is a tremendous amount of work. If you look at the number of adoptions that they had 2,200 adoptions. Almost 600 folks who lost their pet were reunited with their pet by this group. 91% save rate. I think to the layperson, there's a lot of misinformation about what happens, particularly at the shelters, with regards to at what point an animal is euthanized. There's two circumstances under which an animal is euthanized in Prince William County.

[02:46:54] One is if the animal is sick or injured, and the other one is if the animal is dangerous and not all dangerous to humans. Not all animals that are dangerous to humans are euthanized. If we can find a suitable person to adopt them that's willing to adopt them, then we will try to go that route.

[02:47:15] And talking about adoptions, we're having a little bit of a lag in adoptions right now. So if anybody on the board is interested in adopting a pet, we currently have 73 animals that are open for adoption.

[02:47:31] We have 41 dogs, 19 cats, 6 rabbits, 2 guinea pigs, 2 rats, a hamster, a turtle, and a rooster. Do we have any takers? I hear silence. Supervisor Franklin, rooster? No? Okay. All right.

[02:47:55] But in all seriousness, we really want to find a home for these animals. If there's somebody listening here today, we'd really like to get those animals into homes where they can be loved. Our crisis intervention training.

[02:48:12] This is outstanding training. As you all know, we got a grant last year in combination with George Mason University where we can increase the number of folks that are getting crisis intervention trained. That's a photograph. So we have 345 members just on the police department that have been trained, and we've had 53 new members that have been trained just this year.

[02:48:35] This past Friday, the governor of the Commonwealth stopped by our CIT graduation to recognize them because they had won an award for being the best in the state. So that was a great surprise, and it was great for the folks that are involved in that program to see that.

[02:48:55] In 2022, we had our 10-year anniversary on the death of Chris Young. You all know Chris Young was one of our law enforcement officers that we lost in the line of duty. And I don't mention one without mentioning the others, Ashley, Mike, and Pete, who also died in the line of duty.

[02:49:15] And whenever I talk about these four individuals, one of the things that strikes me about it is the fact that if you look at the days that they were killed, Officer Young was killed on New Year's Eve.

Officer Pennington was killed on Thanksgiving. Officer Gwenden and Officer White were both killed on Saturdays.

[02:49:33] And the reason I say that is police officers do work weekends and holidays, and they're willing to do that, and sometimes they lose their lives in the process. God bless them and their families. Some of the community outreach that we do, and we do on a pretty regular basis, is our Coffee with a Cop, just had one the other day, National Night Out, Neighborhood Worship Watch, Santa Cop, Santa Ride, social media, special Olympics.

[02:49:59] We're very involved in that. Our trunk or treat that we do every Halloween. These are some of our community engagement programs. I talked about the commit cadet program. We have our community advisory board, community police academy, where folks can come and get a taste of what it's like to be a police officer.

[02:50:16] Our law enforcement explorer program, which is targeted at kids in high school. Our ride-along program. I talked about our student internships and our volunteers. This is our social media footprint.

[02:50:32] If you look at the numbers on the right, that's the number of folks that we can touch on any given day. We have 117, almost 118,000 followers on Facebook, 75,000 followers on Twitter, and 10,000 followers on Instagram, and that has increased by 8%.

[02:50:50] I always tell people in the community when I go to community meetings, if you want to know anything about the police department, you should follow us on social media. You get a lot of really good information. If something is happening in the community, police related, you'll know about that really quick. But you also get to see a lot of the community engagement that we do throughout the year.

[02:51:10] My last slide, and I never leave a public gathering without talking about this, the Prince William County Police Department is hiring. And if anybody is interested, we would love to have them put in an application. Join pwcpd.org.

[02:51:29] So thank you. We can take any questions that you all have. Thank you very much, Chief Nushum. I do want to recognize you also have with you Deputy Chief Colonel Phelps and Assistant Chief Kimberly Chisley, Missouri, with you also.

[02:51:47] So thank you for bringing your people. And Sheriff Hill is with us also today. I want to recognize him sitting here. And Major Fernley, thank you. I want to publicly thank Sheriff Hill for asking the governor to stop by our CIT graduation the other day. So thank you, Sheriff Hill. Thank you very much.

[02:52:04] Okay, so questions for Chief Newsham. Supervisor Franklin. Sure. Thank you, Chief Newsham, for the presentation. And before I get to actually my questions, I do want to recognize some of the community work that the police department has been doing.

[02:52:26] And I don't know that you all talk about this a lot, but at least in my district, what we've been doing is partnering to address some of the concerns by business owners and some of the apartment complex where we've seen some activity. Our police department does walkthroughs of some of these entities.

[02:52:45] They give advice to the entities on how to update their security systems. And I think in several of those instances, we've seen a reduction in service calls as a result. So for my colleagues and for anyone

else, maybe in the public, that is an opportunity that the police will take up to help address and really prevent issues from happening.

[02:53:08] So I do want to point that out. Some of the questions that I have just more so related to, you know, we look at some of the crime statistics and we see that I think most of our incidents that have taken place have taken place inside as opposed to outside.

[02:53:26] And I know this board obviously gave the police department more resources to address criminal activity. But one of the things that I'm still concerned about are, you know, how do we look into preventing crime that happens indoors, right?

[02:53:42] So it's easy to put officers on patrol to maybe prevent a carjacking or a drug transaction outside. You know, we may have additional lighting that may be a deterrent. but for incidents that happen inside a particular entity, I find that that's harder to control by anybody. And so that may go into our public safety initiative and kind of working on the prevention side there. But Chief, if you have any thoughts in terms of how do we address crime that may occur where we can't necessarily see it, therefore we can't prevent it.

[02:54:19] That's a great question. I'm going to touch a little bit. I want you to talk a little bit about the business owners. I do think that landlords and business owners need to be responsible landlords and responsible business owners, and they need to have adequate security at their facilities. And we do do a lot of work helping folks in that regard.

[02:54:36] With regards to preventing crime, I think that the community safety initiative, in my opinion, is the way for the county to go. That doesn't just address crime, but it will address crime. But it talks about some of the underlying causes of crime, like substance use disorder, some of the mental health issues, and I don't want to stigmatize mental health in any way, shape, or form, but we do oftentimes run across people in crisis, and there can be occasions when we run across somebody in crisis where assaults, you know, assaults which are crimes, occur.

[02:55:10] So I do think addressing some of those underlying issues is going to help us get into some of the homes on the prevention side. Sure, and then just a couple more. So we see the top incident type, domestic, and then number two, narcotics. Thoughts on how do we go in terms of prevention on the domestic side, which, by the way, doesn't necessarily have to be actual relationships.

[02:55:33] It could just mean people that you know that can qualify as domestic. So that's one question. Then also on the narcotics side, like, we've seen an increase, I think, generally within the region. And so what are we doing specifically to address the narcotics issue?

[02:55:51] And then I also want to talk a little bit about our youth and how can we kind of service them better to not fall into some of this. Because my last question was going to be, what are the average ages that we're seeing for some of the suspects? And if they're mostly under 25, you know, kind of what are your suggestions to how we can maybe capture that demographics of individuals to prevent crime?

[02:56:15] Yes, I mean, that's a lot in one question. I'll try and not forget some of it. But the domestic violence piece, you know, folks who are the victims of domestic violence oftentimes are in a very difficult circumstance.

[02:56:32] And I have found, at least in my policing career, that the advocacy groups that work on behalf of the victims can be very helpful in preventing that from occurring in the future. Sometimes domestic

violence victims stay with the offender because they have nowhere else to go.

[02:56:49] So they need places to go. Sometimes they will need counseling. Sometimes it's a situation where somebody in the home could have a substance use disorder. It could be alcohol. It could be drugs. And that's causing them. So part of your answer on the drug piece is really if we wouldn't have a drug problem if we didn't have folks that were addicted to drugs.

[02:57:08] So you really do have to address the addiction issue if you want to stop the volume of the people who are selling it. What we do on the law enforcement side is we target the people who are out there and they're selling it. One really kind of good example was the person that was charged with murder for selling fentanyl that killed a young person in our community.

[02:57:28] But we also have a special investigations bureau that is regularly, in fact, I don't know if I can say this, but they're regularly out there trying to seize illegal drugs out of our community and to hold those offenders accountable. There was one last piece on the end that I missed.

[02:57:44] Kind of talking about our youth, but before we get there, I do want to just point out that it sounds like, you know, obviously, and we've been doing this, putting more resources into social services. We have our co-responder unit to kind of help address our mental health crisis. We obviously have the CSU that's coming aboard that I think is going to help as well.

[02:58:02] But the public safety initiative, I think, is going to be key to addressing some of that. And so I just want to keep plugging away that that's something that I hope my colleagues will support in funding for those employees. And before we get to kind of the youth discussion, I do want to clarify when we say domestic, are we talking about only domestic violence or could it be if a friend and I got into an argument and it led to a crime, is that also considered domestic?

[02:58:26] No, not necessarily. But those types of things, too, you know, in those situations, oftentimes when you talk— to the suspect and the victim. In those cases, there were some anger issues or, you know, substance use disorder, alcohol addiction that have caused that behavior in the person that's going out and assaulting a friend. And sometimes those assaults are very serious. With regards to the ages, you know, you look at our arrest numbers, juveniles only account for 7% of our overall arrests. So I don't want to, I don't want to stigmatize our youth here in the county. We

[02:59:03] have a lot of really good kids that are doing the right thing every single day. I think that because of the way that information flows nowadays in our community that quickly, that when you have a circumstance involving a very young offender, it gets a lot of attention. We have had a couple of those cases highlighted, but at the end of the day, if they're only 7% of our arrests, they're not the main problem. Absolutely. It's adults that are largely the problem with crime in our community that's that's good thank you so much and i'm just going to go down the list um

[02:59:38] supervisor angry thank you madam chair so chief you know i love your the presentation you give because you give us this annual update every year and it's very uh detailed and well thought out you know i was the traffic citation i was just looking at that 21 841 traffic citations i'm just curious i'm not trying to you know blow nobody's bubble here but i know marijuana now is is just a charge. Is it $25 or whatever that? My question is, in the citations, are you seeing a lot of

[03:00:11] those? Are you all stopping folks for smoking marijuana and driving? No, we can't. We can no longer do that. Okay. Interesting. All right. If we pull somebody over and they are operating under the

influence of marijuana, that would be a different story. And then we would have somebody do a test to indicate that they are intoxicated, and then they could be arrested for driving under the influence of a drug.

[03:00:41] Okay. All right. Good to know. And the calls for service, 173,663, calls resulting in reports, 21,000. That's a huge gap in the calls for service, right?

[03:00:59] So I know I did a ride-along, and I just want to, if you can just kind of talk to this, Your officers do, you know, I think it was said before 6 p.m. it's called 9-1-1, after 6 p.m. it's called 4-1-1. Like, you do more than your average policing.

[03:01:18] And inside of these calls are calls that, to my colleagues when we talk about, you know, community service support and the things that you all are doing to try to mitigate some of those, you know, arguments, fights at the house, different things that end up taking officers off the street really for hours dealing with these calls.

[03:01:39] I just look in there, is that a lot of that call volume in there? Yeah, I don't have that breakdown. I can tell you we have been doing some work with the Public Safety Communication Center to try not to have our officers going to non-police-related calls for service. I have to tell you, it is something that the community has grown accustomed to, and sometimes what the community will do is they may give misinformation when they make the call because they want the police to come, and then you'll have a police officer going to, responding to a scene of a non-police-related event. So that's something that we're aware of. It's

[03:02:15] something that we're trying to address, and we're also looking, because of the staffing issue, maybe some of those things, just saying, telling police, public safety, please explain to them we're not coming. You know, we can take a report at a later time. We also try to redirect people into our telephone reporting or online reporting if it can be achieved that way yeah and i will say to that because i think that right there is where we are in policing and really in communities and so that's where we all going to play a role in our community safety initiative of identifying that next way of how do we combat that versus everyone thinking the first call you make is to

[03:02:54] a police officer and then you know we we find ourselves where we are in the situation today And the last thing I'll just ask you, really, because you kind of just mentioned it a little bit, because you have 85 vacancies. And I love what we've done with getting the pay to where it needs to be and starting to see a lot of officers in classes now and the police academy.

[03:03:13] And, you know, so it looks like it's growing. Do you have, and it's really going to be like a wish list for you if you had a perfect world, I'm pretty sure, with 85 vacancies, do you, like, how long do you think that'll be? Do you see that in the next year, year and a half, two years, where you'll have your police department?

[03:03:29] If we can keep our attrition slowed the way it has been and we can hire 100 officers in four academies in a year's time, then we're going to be a heck of a lot closer to our authorized staffing than we are today. So I would like to do it in a year.

[03:03:46] In reality, it may take a little bit longer than that. But that's the goal. And I've got to tell you, personnel, the academy, Everybody is working overtime, double time to get this done. One of the best-selling points for the Prince William County Police Department is this is a premier agency.

[03:04:04] This is a premier agency where police folks want to work. The fact that the board corrected the salary mid-fiscal year, which was unprecedented, shows that the community and the board cares about them. So you can't say a bad thing about this police department that I'll agree with.

[03:04:21] Maybe one or two things, but you can't. Not entirely. This is a really good police department. Well, let me say this last great thing about our police department that under your leadership and for every department to follow and emulate is your hiring diversity and your practices.

[03:04:39] I know that last class you graduated, we had like, it was seven different, was it seven different countries or nationalities of five? Okay, which what you're doing in your hiring practices is a model that should be emulated in all our departments in this county. So I just want to tell you out loud and all of you, thank you for that.

[03:04:58] Congratulations, because we keep talking about it, but you're actually doing it. So thank you. Yes, sir. Thank you. Supervisor Bailey. Great, great. Good evening, Chief. Good evening. What a great presentation, and I agree with my colleague.

[03:05:13] This information is absolutely, it helps us to help the community. I want to, I've got four things, and they are quick. One is I just want to pass on congratulations and thank you from former Chief Charlie Dean.

[03:05:29] I was with him at a funeral, and he talked about what a great police department we have and what a great chief you are, and I so agree with him. Oh, he said I was a good chief. He did. He did. Charlie Dean, he's an institution around here. He is. He, 24 years, he was a chief of police here, and he had a lot to do with the type of police department we have, so hats off to him.

[03:05:49] Yeah, the foundation, it's great. And so thank you for that. And I wanted to say also it is also helpful to us when you and your staff come out to our community meetings. And the other night when I had my community meeting, you stood with me.

[03:06:06] I know nothing about all guns and all like that. I don't know. But I know I'm protected, and I know that the community is protected. And when you all come into our town halls, it has an impact. It shows that you care. And so thank you so much for that. My two questions are, number one, has the human trafficking piece grown in the community?

[03:06:32] I know we've got a major issue on the Eastern Quarter. So how does that look now? So, you know, the human trafficking is a very discreet business. We have folks that are working with the FBI on a task force to specifically address human trafficking.

[03:06:48] One of the things we have to do as an agency to identify vulnerable people that could be the victims of human trafficking is in particular looking at our missing persons. Young people in particular, mostly young females but also some young males who are missing on a regular basis become vulnerable and then they become the targets of human traffickers.

[03:07:11] The other thing is in our immigrant communities, some folks will take advantage of them. So we're constantly working, we're scouring the internet, looking for these types of things in Prince William. So it is of a current. You asked me whether or not it has increased here in Prince William County.

[03:07:26] I don't know for sure if it has or it hasn't. I can tell you that we're working to address it. Okay, thank you. And then the other question I had, of course, is regarding mental health. Thank you for

partnering with the board as it relates to the needs there for our citizens.

[03:07:43] Is there any specific area in terms of the mental health that, as we are standing up, the CRC, that we really need to hone in on as we provide those services relating to your work? Yeah, you know, I probably should have included it in the presentation.

[03:07:59] Over the last two years, the amount of hours that we have spent on responding to people in crisis has grown pretty significantly, pretty dramatically. I can tell you our co-responders, and in fact all of our patrol officers, are very excited about the crisis receiving center coming.

[03:08:19] We did a walkthrough not too long ago. I've had some folks at the agency go and look at what's going on in Phoenix, Arizona with the crisis receiving centers that they have here. They've talked to law enforcement. They're very well received. I do think if it comes as advertised that this is going to make Prince William County a leader on addressing mental health issues in our community.

[03:08:43] When you talk about community safety initiative, addressing it from the mental health piece nowadays is critical to that. So I think the way that we're going in that area, I'm very optimistic, very excited, and so are a lot of my officers, particularly the ones that sit at the hospitals for hours on end, guarding folks who should be getting treated.

[03:09:06] And that's what the Crisis Receiving Center will do. And then lastly, I just want to comment and say with the community safety initiative, the community is salivating for it. They're ready. I think it will add an additional element of protection that we need to partner with you to make sure that it's actionable and it's out there.

[03:09:28] thank you for all that you do. Yes, ma'am. Supervisor Vega. Thank you, Madam Chair. Hi, Chief Newsham. I want to kick things off first by thanking the brave men and women who put their life on the line to defend all of us here in this county, and because of them, we can sleep peacefully at night. So just want to thank the brave men and women of our force. You know, this presentation this year looks a little bit different than years past, and the reason why I say that is because looking through it, I'll give you an example. Last year's report and previous reports, the five-year crime average has been utilized. And then this year, we're looking at

[03:10:07] the 10-year crime average, and the five-year average was not used at all. And so I kind of want to hear your thoughts as to why this year we went with the 10-year versus the five-year. So I think that, and I might be pushing this in the wrong direction, that that graph that shows our population and it shows our crime rates over the year is a good representation for the public.

[03:10:32] I saw an article in the paper the other day that said that violent crime in Prince William County had increased by 70 percent. I think you probably all saw that. That, frankly, without putting those numbers in context, I think is misleading to put that information out there. When you say without putting it in context, what do you mean by that? Well, when you're looking at crime, you have to look historically what's the state of affairs is in Prince William County. If you're going to say, you know, are we any safer or less safe? The driver, like for example, if you want to talk

[03:11:07] about violent crime, we'll go back to that article. Whoever did the calculations for that particular article chose the year where we had the lowest number of violent crimes that we've had in nine years and compared that to 20 to 22 numbers to come up with the most, I guess, salacious number they

could to write a story. And hopefully, what I'm hopeful is that that same organization will scour our annual report, which has very detailed information, puts this crime into context,

[03:11:43] because I don't want to unnecessarily scare folks or make folks think that Prince William County is not safe because Prince William County is very safe if you look at 2021 comparisons to a lot of the other cities and counties in Virginia our crime rate puts makes us a very very safe place and so I don't like that that's why that's why we selected this representation this is only the second year that I have done this if you think five years is better or if the board collectively thinks five years is better, we can do that. But I do think that putting it in context is important

[03:12:19] for folks to understand. Okay. I was just curious because since I've been, it's been the five-year average, so thanks for that explanation. On slide two, under the violent crime rate, it's 2.7. That's a 30 percent increase above last year's average of two. And just curious as to why there's an asterisk and it says defined by Virginia State Police. So my question to you is, are the others mention not their definition the other slide to the other um types of uh we're going to go back oh i'm going to have listed only the violent crime has that and so just kind of curious

[03:12:56] oh right there yeah yeah what that means is the the virginia state police define what our violent crimes are by category of crime so they have five or six crimes that they define as our violent crimes and we use those crimes to come up with that crime rate that's the same that the state uses. And that's why it was asterisked. So there's a better understanding. So that's 2.7 per thousand. You know, when you talk about 2019 compared to today and the increase in violent

[03:13:30] crimes that we've had in the county, 60% of those crimes, those violent crimes occurred inside of a home. Again, a significant portion of those violent crimes are domestic violence related. Another key factor, and this is all of the context, I think, that's necessary to understand this.

[03:13:52] I can't make people feel any safer, but I think you do need to understand it before you feel one way or the other. But when it comes to our aggravated assaults, which has been the driver for our increases in violent crime, around 20% of our aggravated assaults, a little over 20% of our aggravated assaults are by strangers. So that means that in a significant number of our aggravated assaults, it's by somebody that they know. And the reason that I say that is because what that suggests to me is that they're not random. So it's not like you're going to be walking down the street and you're going to get bopped over the head by a stranger. That's not

[03:14:28] what happens in Prince William County. The stranger cases are very rare. And so that's the context. You asked me why the context is important. That's why it's important. Slide four. When we talk about the folks that have committed murders here in this county, we get some calls and emails from, you know, folks wondering what the past, you know, history of the individual was. Does your department in any way know whether or not they had a criminal record? And do you keep that data? Is it available to the public? In essence,

[03:15:06] want to just, you know, know who should have remained in jail and not have been released to the community that keeps re-offending and committing these crimes? Excellent question. We can do criminal histories, obviously, at the police department, so we can know that information, but we are limited in our ability to talk about it publicly.

[03:15:25] So there are limitations on that. But as you ask the question, one of the things that I thought in my mind is maybe we can do it collectively. You know what I mean? Take all of the offenders and then note how many of them had criminal histories in it, because I think that's helpful information, and I hadn't thought of that, because that way you're not revealing individual criminal histories but you're saying collectively you're answering your question how many of these folks should have been in jail before this happened

[03:15:52] right okay uh slide six this one's been talked um quite a bit and so congrats on the zero excessive force complaints um i know that that number is always um zero or very close slide four oops i'm sorry, I said six. This one? Yes. All right. So as always, you know, the narratives that are getting pushed out there oftentimes contribute to the way folks feel about law enforcement. And so

[03:16:31] I think that this is a very important slide to talk about because of the numbers that you have listed here. I want to know, what was the number of bias and racial profiling complaints this year? Zero. Zero. Okay. And I know that that number was also zero last year, correct? It was. Okay.

[03:16:48] And so I want to point this out, 173,663 calls for service, 8,249 arrests. As a police officer, you really never know what type of situation you're going to walk into. And the reason why I read that out loud, despite the fact that we can see it, is that I just have to talk about, you know, the remarkable restraint that the department shows.

[03:17:11] That is a lot of calls for service and a lot of, you know, community interaction that our officers, you know, put themselves through when they, you know, respond to these calls for service. And I think that, you know, they have to be commended and we have to highlight, you know, the remarkable work that they do.

[03:17:29] So good job, again, in regards to that. Well, yeah, I don't do any of that. It's really the men and women who put on the badge every single day and go out there in the community. And I want to thank you for pointing that out because I do think there is a false narrative out there about response to resistance, use of force by police.

[03:17:47] And I can say these numbers are remarkable. If you watch anyone who attended the Valor Awards last week, you see the incredibly significant crime events that they respond to on a daily basis. And to very rarely even have to put their hands on somebody and then only like only using the firearm in the one circumstance where somebody shot at them.

[03:18:11] It's remarkable. It's miraculous. It's a testament to the folks who do this work. So thank you. I'm not going to, but thank you for saying that. If we could go on to slide 11, I want to talk a little bit about diversity. Am I going the wrong way again?

[03:18:29] Yes. Yeah, I'll get this figured out.

[03:18:41] So chief, we talk a lot about diversity and does the department have any metrics that they use to measure how having a more diverse police force contributes to less crime? I don't think that I've ever said that and I would never suggest that. No, I'm not suggesting that you are. That's a question that I have.

[03:18:59] No, I don't think that anyone could with a straight face say that. Or how about the reduction of crime? Yeah, I don't think you could say that with a straight face. Okay, and do you have any idea what the

turnover rate is post-graduation? You know, we had a class, one of my classes since I've been here, we had a significant turnover.

[03:19:19] We lost about 10 in one of the classes. But these more recent classes, I don't know if Jarrett knows off the top. We haven't been losing them like we did in that one class. Why we lost that many in that class, I don't know. And that's the reason why I ask, because it's great when we, you know, celebrate folks graduating from the academy, but also, you know, keeping the board informed as to how many of those folks are actually out on the streets working.

[03:19:41] It's a six-month process, you know, the time, the resources, the funding that it takes to put a recruit through the academy. You know, we would like to know what that percent is of folks that actually remain employed, because it's completely different, right, once they're in the academy in a controlled environment, and then they get out on the streets.

[03:19:57] they realize, you know, that perhaps that wasn't the best choice for them. So I think it's also important for us to be in the know as to what that number is. So one of the things I will say that may help address that is we did institute an obligated service agreement with our offices because of the investment that we put into them.

[03:20:14] You have to spend a lot of money. Now we're given a hiring bonus to get them in the door, get them through training. If they make it through training and go on the street, they're obligated to work with us for three years or they've got to pay us back. so uh that i think is is one way to do it um but you know we're just as concerned as you are about spending all that time and effort on training somebody and then losing them right and then the last point that i wanted to bring up to you is uh school security uh i've met with some folks over the last couple of weeks and i know that we've had to um ask you to get creative in terms of uh you know putting more folks out on the streets and folks have been relieved of certain duties where

[03:20:54] are we in terms of SROs in our schools, the numbers of SROs that we have, and what are we doing proactively as a department to prevent a mass shooting? So our school resource officers, we have one in each of our high schools, one in three of our identified middle schools, and then the remaining middle schools are shared amongst the remaining, I think it's nine officers. So we have 25 i believe if my numbers are accurate i believe that they are we have 25 total as our staffing increases on the department my intention is to have a police officer assigned to all of our high

[03:21:33] schools and to all of our middle schools i think you know already that the elementary schools are covered by school security and then are they all covered by by school security they are yeah so i don't you know i don't have the details of that in my head uh my understanding is that they are On preventing a mass shooting, you know, one of the things I think the school is thinking about right now is putting some artificial intelligence at the doors of the schools.

[03:22:00] I've had that conversation with the superintendent. I believe it's probably the right way for us to go as a community to make sure that we don't have guns getting into our schools. Just last week, we had a firearm get into one of our schools in the community. last thing in the world that we want to have is to see something happen where somebody gets a gun into a school and starts killing our young folks, particularly our young folks that have gone to school that day. Thank you. That's all I have for now, Madam Chair. Okay, we'll keep moving down the list. Supervisor Brody. Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you, Chief, for the presentation and for

[03:22:37] presenting the information in a very coherent and cohesive way and also presenting context. I think As we talk about crime, as you said, and we talk about incidents in the community, context matters, so I appreciate that. Just a couple questions, and piggybacks off of some of the discussion that Supervisor Franklin was having earlier.

[03:22:55] When we talk about crimes involving youth, there's one side of the coin where we're talking about youth who are the perpetrators of crime. Like you said, it's a very small fraction of the crimes that are perpetuated by youth. But on the other side of that, where we have youth who are the victims of crime, I know that, especially, unfortunately, in some of these narcotics transactions, we have folks that are as young as 16, 17, sometimes as old as 23, involved in these transactions, and as what happened fairly recently, they end up not only robbed, they're also either shot at or assaulted, what have you.

[03:23:30] So I guess my question, it's sort of a complex one, is how do we get at that? How do we get at these situations where we have, you know, youth, whether they're children or either just younger adolescents that are involved in these transactions where they're victimized? They're not necessarily perpetuating crime in and of themselves, but they're in a situation they shouldn't be in.

[03:23:50] And it goes south and they're the victim of a violent crime. Yeah, you know, I think it's concerning to all of us when we see our young people being the victim of crimes. And it is, you know, where I go in my head on that is oftentimes it's a failure to have adult supervision.

[03:24:11] Some of our young people need to have adult supervision. We can't, as a police department, 700 of us, we can't be, you know, the adult supervision for our children. I think that trajectories of young people's lives can be changed through mentoring.

[03:24:29] We have some outstanding mentors in our community through coaching. We have tremendous coaches in our community, folks at the schools, teachers that are doing those things. The community safety initiative that Dan Alexander is undertaking, I think part of that will be to identify kids who are at risk, not only of being involved in committing crimes, but also because usually it's the same kids.

[03:24:53] that are going to be the victims. So, good point. Thank you. And then my second question is in terms of the trajectory that you've seen since we instituted that salary increase and the hiring incentive, you have the slide up right now.

[03:25:09] And Sura's are angry-ass about, like, you see that within a year or so we're going to be closer to where you want to be. Are there any other resources or incentives or things that we can do to help you with this? Yes. Adults have to start directing, and these mentors and teachers and folks in our community, religious leaders, need to start directing our children back into the profession of law enforcement.

[03:25:34] Go back to the slide where there's misinformation about what the police officers do with regards to response to resistance. Like Supervisor Vega said, there's a false narrative out here that's painting an ugly picture of what this profession is all about.

[03:25:49] The men and women who do this work every single day, Every single day, they're out there helping folks in our community. And our community is really good about recognizing that. We had our Valor Awards. I can't go to the Central District Station on any given day and not see somebody who's left some kind of food item for our officers, the support.

[03:26:07] But the one thing that I think that's missing is our teachers, our mentors, our coaches. They're not directing young, service-minded people into the profession of policing. And I think if we can get folks to do that, we're going to improve our staffing situation here and across the country.

[03:26:25] I agree, and thank you for that. And my last question, Madam Chair. Thank you for that, Chief. As we look ahead at some of these crime trends that we know aren't isolated just Prince William County. We're seeing them sort of globally. Do you see anything that's emerging?

[03:26:42] Because, you know, a couple years ago it was people sealing catalytic converters, and we still have that as an issue. We've seen the violent crime rise a little bit here and there. Fentanyl, like you said before, is there anything else that you see on the horizon that you think the community should be concerned about to help you do your jobs better?

[03:27:01] The Stalin auto issue this year was particularly bad. I think many of you know that some person, I'm going to use that language. I'm not going to say a word that I would prefer to say, But some person decided to put out a posting on social media showing young people how to steal cars in a very easy fashion, particularly targeting Hyundai's and Kia's.

[03:27:28] And so we had a spike not just here in Prince William County, but across the country on that. So that's one of the crimes that I'm seeing. Again, and I spoke about it earlier, we can't leave firearms in our cars. When you leave a firearm in your car, what you're doing is you're handing your gun to somebody who's going to use it in an illegal fashion.

[03:27:50] And then on the stolen cars, please don't leave your car running. I know some of our delivery drivers do that because, you know, they can get through the day a little bit quicker. But they've got to turn their cars off. You leave the key in the car, you're presenting an opportunity for somebody to steal it. So I would say, you know, watching the crime this year, the stolen autos, is a particular concern.

[03:28:09] Sure. And then just two comments. One, thank you for that, because I know especially with the advent of the cars that aren't key, you know, they start with FOBs. I have one now that I'm using. People, they leave them in the car, and then someone can either go into the car, not even know where the key is.

[03:28:27] It doesn't matter. They just turn on the car, and they drive off. There's a valet key in there. Right. People have to be aware of that. And then secondly, I appreciate you mentioning the animal control portion of it. As you mentioned, we honored those folks earlier today. I know there's a lot more work we can do together on that.

[03:28:43] I know there's a lot of folks in the community that are talking about us looking at hiring veterinary staff and more folks for the animal shelter. So if you've got anything to share on that, I'd appreciate hearing from you. But the last thing I'll say is to plug that, my office holds an annual Barktober event every October.

[03:28:59] So please make sure that you're putting that out to your folks as well. We had a little bit, I think almost half a dozen adoptions at my first Barktober event last year. So we'd love to partner with you some more to get that done. We will be there. We definitely want to get these animals adopted.

[03:29:17] So thank you. Supervisor Lawson. Thank you, Madam Chair. Hi, Chief. Good to see you again. The Valor Awards were really impressive, and I was honored to be a participant or somebody in the audience, and thank you for recalling that.

[03:29:40] And the county executive mentioned it earlier today. We have a lot of brave men and women and all our public safety agencies that serve us day in and day out. And congratulations, as Supervisor Vega pointed out, the zero complaints on excessive force is remarkable.

[03:30:02] It's truly remarkable. And I appreciate your humility because we know it's the men and women on patrol, you know, especially that really deserve that congratulations. But to your point, it's also the leadership and the training that they receive.

[03:30:21] So a couple questions for you regarding the historical crime rate. And I don't know what's I guess it's slide three, the graph or the chart. There you go.

[03:30:43] So this is the historical crime rate, not reflective of just violent crime. But it goes back, you know, 13 years or how many ever years you want to take it. But I think if board members want to put it in context, I mean, all I have to do is look at where the trend was going.

[03:31:04] And then it plateaued for about four years. Then it went down, obviously, when everybody was in, you know, COVID lockdown. And now it's on the rise. So the article that you're referring to, I think you said it's sensational.

[03:31:22] misleading misleading um it's it's fair i would say it's fair that now granted that's not that's not what i'm referring to is the violent crime rate if i recall correctly in the article yeah but i do think but i think that that that is reflective of the concern that many people in the community have and it's not necessarily that graph or one article it's day after day the news reports of different types of crime in the county that have people concerned and i share their

[03:32:01] concern um 20 aggravated assault by somebody that they don't know that's a 20 of people one of them was a little girl that was riding her bike on a day where they didn't have school remember that yeah i mean i don't for one second think that i'm downplaying the experience of any victim of crime. I don't think you are, but 20% is a lot. But I do think the context is important.

[03:32:26] I agree with you, but 20% is a lot. So regarding population growth, it's indexed. So your comments regarding, yeah, we're growing as a county. Of course we are. We've been growing as a county for decades, but the crime rate is always indexed with that current population. And the reality of it is, it is up significantly. So I think it's important to recognize that the population is

[03:32:57] indexed. Agree? Yes, it is indexed. Okay, thank you. And then related to the child that you've referred to a couple times with the homicides, I actually thought of this case earlier because we're raising awareness that April is, you know, awareness of child abuse month, and this is a classic, horrible case. Actually, if this is the same case, I think you and I are either talking

[03:33:33] about two different cases because my understanding is we're prosecuting a mom of a toddler who died because of exposure to fentanyl. Is this the case that you're referring to? Because maybe there's a different case where somebody a teen died from drugs that were sold but I'm referring that's that's what I have to have that case where they uh I don't know she was charged with murder though she was charged with abuse the mother was charged with uh with murder for the death of her can you use the microphone yeah I'm sorry deputy madam chair members of board Jared Phelps deputy chief

[03:34:11] the chief is incorrect I think you are talking about two different cases um the one case that you're referring to ma'am uh the two-year-old did die as a result of an overdose and the mother was

charged in that case but we also had a case where a juvenile was overdosed on fentanyl and we were able to backtrack to find that supplier and we charged that individual with murder as well okay good glad that we're charging them as well but so is it fair to say that's two for neglect or was that referring to the toddler? Yeah. Well, we'll get to the detail on that. Yeah. Okay. So

[03:34:49] it might've been a prior year case. So the charges came later. Yeah. Right. Okay. All right. So let's talk about, uh, supervisor Vega touched on a little bit, but recidivism, are you not able to tell us like, uh, uh, a comparison of where we are today to where we were five, 10 years ago on recidivism. Can you be more specific with the question? Well, like DUIs. You know, there's widespread concern, including I heard from somebody who works to counsel, I think it's

[03:35:27] mandatory counseling for drunk driving offenders, that our commonwealth attorney is not prosecuting DUIs. So what can you tell me about recidivism? Well, we're not tracking recidivism rates on DUIs.

[03:35:43] I don't even know if we have the ability to do that. So it's not something that we're tracking. Okay. We don't have the ability to? I mean, we could do it by arrest, I suppose, but it's not something we do right now. Okay. Something you don't have to cite right now.

[03:35:59] Right. Okay. And it would probably take a little bit of work to do it, but if that's something that the board wants to see, if that's a request, we can work on that. Yeah, actually, I would like to see it. I think your deputy's trying to tell you something. Oh, he's saying criminal justice services may have that information.

[03:36:16] oh okay will you connect me with them thank you um and then uh another question earlier i i don't recall which colleague it was in reference to their question but we were talking about you were referencing business owners and their their responsibility to secure their business i agree to a point but last year i attended a meeting of a whole bunch of sedley corridor business owners who were super frustrated because uh their clerks were being roughed up by members of

[03:36:56] the public um and i hope that that situation is better um it is it's dramatically better uh when jacques was up there he met with that group on a pretty regular basis and they were very pleased with the work that the police department had done with them when i talked about businesses but what comes to mind mostly is landlords and multi-unit establishments ensuring that their folks are safe with cameras and security and those kinds of things.

[03:37:28] Also, I think about bars. I think our bars need to be operated in a responsible manner. I'm not talking about mom and pops. Okay, good, because I got a little defensive thinking, wait a minute. They're doing their best to operate their business, and they're very frustrated, too, Because a lot of these criminals were released, arrested, released, and back out on the street repeating the same offenses.

[03:37:51] There is, when it comes to property crimes, the criminal justice system is not holding them in the way that they have in the past. Yeah. And we're seeing it particularly with the thefts, which you have kind of chronic repeat theft offenders.

[03:38:09] Yep. And that's a problem, and that gets very political, which I'll refrain from here. But that I take issue with. And then the last question I had just escaped my mind.

[03:38:26] But, again, I want to commend, if I remember it, I'll put it in writing. But, again, I want to commend you for your leadership of a great department. And, again, highlight that zero complaints is really remarkable.

[03:38:45] Thank you. That's very much appreciated. Thank you. Are you through? Yeah, I'm done. Okay. I do go on to Supervisor Weir next, and then I'm going to finish up because we've held you for a long time.

[03:39:02] I do want to say that I don't believe it's true that the Commonwealth Attorney's Office is not prosecuting DUIs. I think that's completely untrue, and so I would like to actually find out that statistic. Maybe we can work on that for the next meeting to find out what the truth actually is, because you just said she wasn't prosecuting DUIs, and I don't believe that's true.

[03:39:24] That sounds great. Supervisor Ware. Afternoon, Chief. Sir. I really appreciate the 13-year graph. Never apologize to giving me more data. I'm a data-driven guy.

[03:39:39] I would always prefer 15 years or 10 years over five. That being said, could you provide sometime at your convenience sort of a historic look back of at least 10 years on what the arrest percentages were for adults versus juveniles just so we get a better picture over time of that because I'm just taking a one-year, getting a one-year kind of snapshot really doesn't tell us much.

[03:40:08] That's the only criticism I've got. On that particular slide, I would note one thing. 22 over 21, when you increase from 32.9 to 37.7 with the tiny increase in population growth by percentage.

[03:40:28] I think that's just a little over half a percent in growth. But that half percent in growth in conjunction with the rising rate, if my math is correct, is roughly a little over 2,600 additional crimes. Just something to note.

[03:40:44] It seems like it's trending in the wrong direction. I mean, when you see crime going up, it's going in the wrong direction. We certainly don't want crime going up. Especially at that level. And so overall crime numbers, I think I do have that.

[03:41:01] I think it was 21 versus. Year over year? Yeah. You might have. I might have just missed it. So crime total, it was 18. You would need to see a 21.

[03:41:17] I actually have the number right here. It's not important. Well, in 21, it was 50. So your math is probably right. It was 15, 960 total crime. 22 was 18, 385. So you're pretty good with your math. Lastly, with respect to the question on DUI prosecution, anecdotally, having talked to several other chiefs, it's not that they're not prosecuting the DUIs.

[03:41:44] It's they're reducing them from DUI to reckless driving, which has other impacts. Are you through? Okay. So we will find out if we prosecuted any DUIs last year in the county.

[03:42:07] I suspect we did. Thank you. Thank you for coming out today. I do want to ask you just a couple, one quick question, if you go back to the rate of crime. It is definitely on the rise from when it was low in the pandemic. I know that we all know that that was sort of abnormally low. It was. Correct?

[03:42:28] Yes. That might be too. That might have been why we went further back because five years includes those two years. So it does give a, I mean, I like that personally, but it's whatever the appetite of the board is so i i have a something to say but just a really quick question i mean you know there are there has been some uh do we live in a safe county i guess is what i would say i think we do okay you know and and like i said um my one of the guys i have over at the

[03:43:00] department who who's knee deep in these numbers has compared us to just about every city and county within, you know, distance of us, and our crime rate is, you know, it's very low. I think in 21, we were third from the lowest, you know, so we're very safe. I can't make people feel safe, but one of the things I will urge people to do is don't read a headline, don't read one story.

[03:43:32] Take a look at our annual report. There's about 15 pages of what I consider to be very transparent data on crime in Prince William County, and you can get a real sense as to how you feel about what's going on here. We're only going to see in the news the really bad stuff that happens, but that doesn't mean that it's going up or down, you know what I mean? All that means is bad stuff is happening in Prince William like it's happening across the country. So I just want people who are listening that, you know, we live in a safe community, but I do, people need to feel safe, And I said this yesterday on the news.

[03:44:08] And so how do we do that? And part of that is the community outreach and our community safety initiative that we have put four people behind half a million dollars going forward over the next year. And I think that's important for people to realize is that we know that people's perception is that and we don't want them to feel that way.

[03:44:24] And we are going out into the communities working with our community partners. And so, you know, that's, I'm excited that hopefully everyone will get behind that and understand that that will sort of help somewhat of the perception. The other thing I just want to say is, you know, thank you for I know when you came in, we had just had a study about the diversity in the police department.

[03:44:41] And one of our goals was to get a more diverse police department. And I just want to say, you know, I believe that having a police department that reflects the population and the makeup of the population is good for society, just in general. I don't know if you can attach any numbers to that, but I do think it's better in general for society.

[03:44:59] So thank you for working on that. Can I say a little piece on the diversity? And I say this to everybody is that I think every kid in Prince William County ought to be able to look up and see a police officer who looks like them. I think that'll help with our recruitment and our retention. And the other thing I always say is the best cultural sensitivity training that I ever received was riding in a police car with somebody who wasn't like me.

[03:45:24] And spending time with a friend under those circumstances, you learn a lot. And I want our police officers to have that experience. Well, thank you, and thank you for coming and giving us all this information. We really appreciate it, and we look forward to working with you over the next year. All right, thank you. Thank you.

[03:45:40] Madam Chair. Supervisor Lawson. I thought of the other question that I had, which the board would probably appreciate. Do you remember when we put in our legislative packet some legislation related to gun safety? Do you remember that? Did any of that go anywhere in the General Assembly?

[03:45:59] No, that was to look at some restrictions or some penalties for leaving firearms in vehicles, and it failed. So I will say if we need to put resources behind a public safety campaign regarding guns in cars and leaving cars running when you're not in them, right, and just some really simple things, maybe we can work on doing that if you need those resources and get those for you.

[03:46:25] Great. Thank you. Thank you very much. Thank you for coming out. Okay, that moves us on to supervisor's time. We actually do have a bunch of appointments, which is 10A through 10F, if I could get a

motion on that.

[03:46:44] So moved, Madam Chair. Second. Motion made by Supervisor Bailey, seconded by Vice Chair Bodie. Any discussion? Seeing none, please vote. Vote unanimous. Great. We'll go around the horn.

[03:47:02] Well, everybody gets five minutes, so don't worry about keeping track of time. I will turn to my, I'll start to my right today. Okay. On Monday the 27th, I co-hosted an affordable housing town hall with the Coalition of 100 Black Women, Prince William County chapter.

[03:47:22] And I want to thank all those who attended, as well as the other panelists. On Tuesday, March 28th, I co-hosted, alongside Supervisor Bailey, a women's history program at the Falazo Building, honoring 23 outstanding women who have had an amazing impact on our community as they share their talent, skills, and abilities. And again, thank you for participating in that, and it was a fantastic event. And then lastly, on today, I alongside Supervisor Bailey hosted an event celebrating the signing of an agreement between the Virginia Passenger Railway Authority and

[03:47:59] Potomac Shores in this agreement marks the first or the next step I should say in making the VRE station at Potomac Shores a reality and let me just say about that I appreciate the collaboration with Supervisor Bailey we've had a lot of meetings since the start of our term about how do we move the town center and the VRE station forward some some meetings were quite contentious as we tried to come up with different solutions to the various roadblocks that came about but this is all part of the sausage making and how we actually get to resolve and I'm very happy to say for those

[03:48:37] residents in Potomac Shores we have removed a major roadblock in the VRE station it's on its way so very very happy to be working collaboratively to move that forward. Lastly I'll just say upcoming events will be hosting dumpster day and spring spring dumpster day will be held may 13th 10 a.m to 2 p.m at fredlin middle and the fall dumpster day will be september 30th from 10 a.m to 2 p.m at ripon middle school and without objection i would like to issue a directive

[03:49:12] with regards to the recreation center that i've been talking about i would love for staff to research and make recommendations regarding initiating a master plan for a recreation center in the Woodbridge District. And hopefully that is without objection, but happy to answer any questions as well. Sure. Directive to direct staff to research and make recommendations regarding initiating a master plan for a recreation center in the Woodbridge District.

[03:49:43] Yes. Thank you, Supervisor Franklin. Supervisor Vega. Thank you, Madam Chair. On Wednesday, March 22nd, I attended the Economic Development Breakfast with my lovely appointee to the IDA, Cheryl Kenney. The breakfast featured great conversation on our own Department of Economic Development and the partnership that we have, not just here in the area, but also

[03:50:21] in the region. On Wednesday, March 29th, I attended the 37th Annual Valor Awards with several of my colleagues here on the dais. To honor our first responders, it was a beautiful ceremony, as many of you have already stated, as we always honor those who put their lives on the line for us every single day on Friday my staff and I met with the management of the Taylor Drive mobile community we've been having some issues with parking here for quite some time even before I took over this seat and so it was a productive conversation just want to let folks in the surrounding area know that our office is working with them to try to come up with viable solutions to the ongoing parking issues that they've been facing for a few years

[03:51:01] now and that we hope to fix the problem in the area here in the near future. After that I darted off to Loch Lomond Elementary School where I attended a training put on by Music for Life for Miss Kennedy's music class. Music for Life is a nonprofit that performs free musical training and support for tier one elementary schools and students with disabilities. It was a really great program and they even attempted to teach me how to play the ukulele.

[03:51:25] Unfortunately my nails got in the way so we're not going to talk about how great of a ukulele player I am um and uh on Saturday morning we fought the rain and we had our annual Coles district Easter egg hunt um of course the sun decided to come out just as we were wrapping things up but uh we still had a great time with the kids that attended and their families um lastly just uh want to go ahead and uh wish everyone a happy Easter and with that Madam Chair that's all I have. Thank you. Supervisor Ingrid. Thank you, Madam Chair. Real quick, just want to

[03:52:01] thank the Muslim community, Muslim Association of Virginia at the Dar Anur Mosque for inviting me to attend their Iftar dinner in Ramadan and also to the Ahmadiyya Muslim community at the Masrur Mosque for inviting me to their Iftar dinner as well. Both events were wonderful, great, and it's Yeah, always an honor to break bread among friends and have a good discussion.

[03:52:27] And happy Easter to everyone. Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you, Supervisor Angry. Supervisor Weir. I'll keep this real short. I would just like to ensure that the board clerk will record my comments earlier with respect to reconsideration and closed session in the minutes for the next meeting.

[03:52:45] Thank you. I'll address it with Ms. Robo after the meeting. Supervisor Lawson.

[03:53:03] Thank you, Madam Chair. so i want to give my notice of intent to appoint mr dean woodard to the veterans commission i have his file unless you already have it man my staff is good and then i also want to remind everybody that this saturday april 8th the bluebell festival at merrimack farm will start at 10 a.m it's sponsored by prince william conservation alliance and the virginia department of wildlife resources And honestly, I'm looking real quick to see what our weather forecast is.

[03:53:41] Hopefully it's going to be a beautiful weekend. I know we're missing really nice warm weather today. Yeah, it looks like it's not going to rain. So again, that's the Blue Bell Festival this Saturday, April 8th at Merrimack Farm. And I also want to thank the folks at Dalla Noor for the dinner.

[03:54:01] The food was delicious. Don't you think, Supervisor Angry? It was really good. Attended the Valor Awards. Thank you, Committee of 100, for the Forum on Water. That was in Occoquan District at Brittany's last week. Learned a lot about water. And then last Friday, I was invited with Governor Yunkin to the Adult Detention Center for the presentation of his first quarter of his salary to be donated to Good News Jail Ministry.

[03:54:32] And they do fabulous work at our Adult Detention Center. And it was a very touching event, and I just wanted to make sure that folks know that the governor was in the county and the adult detention center being there was a reminder to me, a visual reminder of how much responsibility our ADC officers have in making sure that they operate that ADC in the most secure manner, no room for error,

[03:55:07] and that's why I'm going to continue to advocate for them in this budget discussion. And I think that's all I have, Madam Chair. Supervisor Bode? Thank you, Madam Chair. A few quick things from me. On the 22nd of last month, I took a tour of the Lakeridge Library at Tackett's Mill with members of my staff and my son, Miles.

[03:55:29] They have a lot of really great resources over there. I know that Chen Park is the more prolific library in my district. However, I cannot tell folks in my district enough how much of a gem we have in the Lake Ridge Library at Tackett's Mill. So if you haven't ever been, please stop by there. Later that evening, I went to, I interviewed with two Boy Scouts in my office for the community merit badge requirements.

[03:55:55] It was interesting because those two same Boy Scouts actually interviewed me as Cub Scouts a couple years ago. So it was great to see them progress a couple years. And we had a really good discussion about traffic, about environmentalism, about public safety, about the district itself, and how we can really make things safer for folks who are out there on the road, as well as make commutes and walking safer to our schools.

[03:56:18] On the 25th, I attended, alongside some of my colleagues, the installation of officers banquet for the OWL Volunteer Fire Department. It was a really great event, commemorating a lot of great history of one of the very first volunteer fire departments in the county.

[03:56:33] And when they were first started, they were the only fire department between Alexandria and Fredericksburg. So they serviced a lot of folks for a long time, and I congratulate them on their 50th and all the achievements that they have. On the 30th, I had a web lunch with Lakeridge, so I wanted to thank the LRPRA general manager, Bernie Guthrie, for inviting me.

[03:56:56] We talked about the CRC and our recent purchase of the Gander Mountain site to address those issues, as well as the progress of the Ococon Greenway. If you didn't get a chance to view it live, we have it not only on my website, but also the LRPRA website as well.

[03:57:11] Later on that night of the 30th, I also attended the Dar al-Nor Iftar dinner. It's always a great, wonderful celebration of the early part of Ramadan to break bread with folks and learn more about the culture and the history of a great community in our county. On the 1st of April, our office hosted our dumpster day at Bethel Church.

[03:57:33] Thank you to everyone who came out. I unfortunately could not be there because I was at the hospital celebrating the arrival of my youngest daughter, Jemison Gwen Bodie, alongside my wife. For folks that don't know, Jemison comes from May Jemison, who was the first African-American female astronaut, and Gwen comes from my late mother, Gwendolyn Bodie.

[03:57:53] So I appreciate all the calls of support and praise. Both Mom and Jemison are doing just fine. They're at home now. I was able to bring them home yesterday, so thank you all for those well wishes. Finally, to go back to work a little bit, on March 31st, we received a memo from the county executive in light of recent conversations had between county staff and the labor coalition.

[03:58:17] I applaud the heightened collaboration and the new dialogue that has happened between the staff and our labor partners and we also came forth with a memo from the county executive on recommended changes to the collective bargaining ordinance that we currently have. Without objection I would like to issue a directive the county executive and county attorney to draft the amendments the collective bargaining ordinance as outlined in the county executive memorandum the board of supervisors staged march 31st 2023 and authorized a public hearing for consideration of a revised ordinance that includes the proposed amendments thank you thank you mr brody supervisor brody

[03:58:55] vice chair brody supervisor bailey okay well um on the on march the 28th myself along with my colleagues, unfortunately attended the funeral service of Mr. James Cadogan, who was married to

former Supervisor Maureen Cadogan from the Potomac District. And I got to tell you, though it was a sad occasion, it was great to see old friends. Jim has a way of bringing

[03:59:30] people together, as always, and so God rest his soul and our condolences again go along with Maureen. On March the 28th, along with Supervisor Franklin, we had a great time with the Coalition of 100 Black Women, who, as we celebrated the wonderful work that women are doing in this county during International Women's History Month. And so we want to thank Dr. Alice Howard and the Coalition for allowing us to partner with them as we talked

[04:00:04] about women on the move taking Prince William County to higher heights. And we did it in the Falazo building. We have some great buildings that we can utilize for community events, so I just want to encourage my colleagues to do so. Falazo has a historical property to it, but it was great being there. On the 29th, I attended the MDBIA Prince William County Chapter Breakfast at the Hickory Club with Madam Chair and my other colleagues and kudos to our own county exec for a wonderful message that he delivered on behalf of the county and

[04:00:42] we are very blessed to have you as a part of this community. On the 29th also that afternoon I attended the Valor Awards and to Chief Newsham and to Dan Alexander for the wonderful work along with all of our public safety employees. We thank you for risking your lives and supporting us in the way that you do. And it was just a moving ceremony. And I just want to bring to the attention most of the,

[04:01:16] unfortunately, the awards that were presented were due to mental health. And so I just want that to resonate with you for a minute. But for the great work that you're doing, the courageous work and the life-saving work that you're doing for us. We thank you. On the 30th, I'd like to express my thanks to the county staff for participating with the Potomac District surrounding the community, embracing the community, for a community town hall that I held.

[04:01:46] We had about 70 people in the audience, but it was very engaging. And for the agencies that turned out for us, I thank you so much for just updating the Potomac District on what's going on, where we have been, where we are now, and where we're moving to. And so I'm very grateful for the deliveries that you gave to the community. On the 31st, I was honored to attend the Dunfrey's Triangle DTQ Little League Opening Day. It was so much fun to see the little people get ready to

[04:02:20] play some baseball, and they are very excited, so I encourage you to go out and support them. They're ready to play baseball, but they are ready to be with each other as well, so that was exciting. I attended that with my school board representative, Justin Wilk. Today was an absolutely great day. Supervisor Franklin has mentioned it already, but it was a day where we actually had a signing a monumental signing to move the vre forward at potomac shores and i'm real glad about that and so i want to thank um the developer mr peter shavkin for potomac shores

[04:03:00] and the virginia pasture rail authority mr dj statler for partnering with the vre to make sure that that one step is a step in the right direction and so for the community that turned out we had about 40 people that turned out in the community. I'm very grateful that you took the time to see how your community is moving forward. So it was an exciting day and the weather was absolutely outstanding so I know we're going to be blessed to go forward as well. On April the 5th we're going to start our, which is tomorrow, we're starting our Public Safety Task Force so

[04:03:38] Dan will be talking to you about that as we go forward and and how we can support you in that. And then on the 8th, I'll be attending the Pillars Church Easter Egg Hunt, and so I'm excited about that. And then on the 10th, we'll be participating in the Grand Park Community Partners Appreciation Luncheon, where we identify those partners that the county has identified to support the community. And I think that's all I have for now. Thank you, Madam Chair.

[04:04:09] Thank you, Supervisor Bailey. I'll try to keep this short, but it's been a really busy few weeks, And I hate to leave anything off because I love to highlight all the great things that are happening in Prince William County and just the region, and it's just so great. You know, Wednesday, March 22nd, I got to attend the 8th Annual Northern Virginia Transportation Roundtable and hear really what other people are doing in the area regarding transportation, even free fairs.

[04:04:33] And there is some really ingenuity out there with regarding in other areas and some great presenters. On Thursday, I got to attend the Community Foundation for Northern Virginia's 2023 Shape of the Region Conference. It's their eight, about the state of aging in Northern Virginia.

[04:04:49] It was really fascinating. Our very own Sarah Henry, the director of the Prince William County's Area on Aging, was a speaker. And they had some great statistics about the aging population in Northern Virginia that I think we're going to need to address. Really fascinating.

[04:05:06] That evening, I had the pleasure of being the keynote speaker at the American Turkish Friendship Association's Iftar Dinner in Manassas. Talk about good food. Wow, it was at Cravings. It was really, really good. A wonderful organization. On Friday the 24th, I was a guest speaker at the Realtor Association of Prince William 2023 Economic Summit and got to speak to people who were, you know, just with new people moving into, you know, I told them that they were the chief cheerleaders of Prince William County because they were dealing with new people moving in and talking about all the wonderful positive aspects here.

[04:05:38] This past Wednesday, I got to speak also at the Northern Virginia Building Industry Association PwC Breakfast, along with County Exec Shorter, and it was a great breakfast, a lot of good information and give and take. I got to attend the Chamber of Commerce Valor Awards.

[04:05:54] It's always so moving. It really is. It's just amazing. Thursday, I attended the Muslim Association of Virginia's Iftar Dinner at Dar El Noor Islamic Community Center, which also was really great food, and they always are so great about inviting so much of the community in and making us feel at home. This weekend, I was able to attend the 150th birthday of the city of Manassas. You know, they've been a steadfast regional partner with Prince William County over the last three and a half years, and really a key part of our culture in Prince William County, you know, because they are entirely within our border, and so I was grateful to be there and help them celebrate and look at all some of their historic stuff that was going on.

[04:06:33] Saturday night, I was also at the Masroar Mosque, the Amadeya congregation, who had a community iftar Saturday night with some more wonderful food. You know, and they really reached out to the community and brought a lot of people in. And the theme was peace and security.

[04:06:52] With my calendar out of the way, oh, I do want to say, I want to give a shout out to Burnside Farms Festival of Spring out in Noakesville because they open today and I know that it's really one of the largest tulip festivals in the United States and they're already selling tickets. Don't know how you get them

but I know you can go online and look up Burnside Farms Festival of Spring. It's really one of the best agritourism events that we have in the county and with my calendar out of the way I want to congratulate Panorama Latino for 23 years of service to our community i'm grateful um for having panorama latino in our community because

[04:07:31] their broadcast helps bring us together because they help disseminate important community information so congratulations on 23 years of being an asset to prince william county and my office will be presenting them with a proclamation in the coming week that we can have so i'm grateful for all our community partners like that who are out there um helping us you know get our message across and helping us bring together bring everyone together so with that supervisors time is over it's about a little 12 after it's been a long few hours so I'm gonna give us a break until if it's okay with staff

[04:08:07] 6:30 for the closed session just to give us a little bit of a break and and you know and then we can go into closed session I'm sure I assume get some dinner are we with the school board i don't think so okay okay okay yeah yeah all right so because because our closed session will take a while can i just um make sure for clarification that the the stats that we're asking related to uh commonwealth attorney prosecutions on the duis

[04:08:42] dui convictions compared to total arrest um convictions or putting forward cases you said she just wasn't prosecuting them at all i don't recall i said at all she's definitely prosecuting a lot less and you said she wasn't prosecuting okay well then i misspoke and now i'm standing corrected that it's a lot less than it had been so what i want is the statistic of dui convictions compared to the total arrest okay and we'll see if you want to see if those are fewer uh we can get any statistics i'm sure from the court system so okay and with that at 6 30 we will have closed

[04:09:20] session. Good evening. We are back from closed session. Can I get a motion to certify? So moved, Madam Chair. Second. Motion made by Vice Chair Bodie, seconded by Supervisor Bailey. Any discussion?

[04:09:43] Seeing none, please vote. Vote unanimous. My apologies for coming in that late closed session item, but Supervisor Angry is going to report from our closed session item. Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, I make a motion that we approve the appointment of Chief Thomas LaBelle as the

[04:10:05] Prince William County Fire and Rescue System Chief. Second. Motion made by Supervisor Angry, seconded by Supervisor Vega. Any discussion? Seeing none, please vote. Vote unanimous. Welcome, Chief LaBelle. I'll turn it over to Mr. Shorter.

[04:10:30] Madam Chair, if I may, I will say we have done a national process, recruitment process, for our fire chief, a process that started with over 60 candidates. We have, at this point, found our new fire chief and appreciate the board's support and approval.

[04:10:54] Chief LaBelle, I want to invite you to the podium to say a few words. And again, to the board, thank you very much for your support. Good evening. Thank you all very, very much.

[04:11:11] I know how much the public safety community and the public safety workforce and volunteers mean to this board of supervisors and to the county executive and his staff. To be allowed to work side by side with them as we continue to protect the citizens of this community is humbling for me i appreciate the vote of confidence and i look forward to working with all of you thank you very much um do we have a

start date i didn't ask may 1st okay we will see very good well welcome aboard welcome to prince william county um i do want to in case anybody

[04:11:49] wasn't aware this afternoon we did announce that we don't uh item 13a was deferred our land use case and so we if anybody's here for 13a that was deferred and we won't be um doing that until uh june 6th just in case anybody was here for that um with that uh welcome school board dr latif madame chair yes oh yes supervisor no no yeah supervisor angry good job thank you madam chair madam chair before the presentation of the school board budget begins i need to declare a personal interest in this matter my wife is a special education instructional aid

[04:12:27] with the schools as a school employee my wife and i are members of a group which is affected by this transaction. I will be participating in this matter because I am able to do so fairly objectively and in the public interest. Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you, Supervisor Angry. Welcome, Dr. Lateef.

[04:12:44] I want to turn you in. Another year. This is my sixth year here. Sixth presentation and third or fourth with you all. So I'm excited to be here. Congratulations to the new Fire Chief. We look forward to working with you in the school division as we have 100 plus buildings or so that I know you guys come and inspect and check every year so so thank you for all your work congratulations um well folks I'm excited to be here this is a great we're here to present I don't know what just happened did I hit something okay sorry we are here to present our my the budget six budget I presided over six

[04:13:21] unanimous budget that we're bringing to the Board of County supervisors before I begin I'd like to introduce some of the folks who've come over from the school division with me we're gonna start with Shaquille Youssef our director of of Finance we have Kathleen Addison our budget director Natasha Valencia our budget supervisor we have John Wallingford our chief financial officer Dr. McDade Latanya McDade our superintendent of schools Dr. Carol Flornard our deputy superintendent of schools and Elisa Botello our chief of staff for the superintendent school board members in attendance with me this evening and Miss Lily Jessie of the Occoquan district Miss Lisa Zargarpur of

[04:13:59] the Coles District, Miss Lori Williams of the Woodbridge District, and Miss Jennifer Ball, Vice Chair of the Gainesville District. Did I miss anybody? I think I got everybody. Okay great. So thank you all for having us. We are excited to be here as always. Let's jump right into it. The fiscal year 2024 budget highlights and you know something that I want to bring up is that you know the budget process for us is a year-round process. It really starts tomorrow for next year's budget and so you know we have spent a lot of time on this and so let me go over some

[04:14:34] of the highlights the budget priorities are all aligned to our strategic vision our strategic plan 2025 launching thriving futures you all should have a copy of that if you don't please call us and we'll get you one and the vision statement you know that we should all be saying is that every student will graduate with the knowledge skills and habits of mind to help create a thriving future for themselves and their community and that is the effort we have put into that plan over 4,000 community members within the school outside of the school in our community have participated to help develop that strategic plan very proud of that in all budget priorities

[04:15:12] all budget decisions are aligned with the plan this year we're bringing forward an overall operating budget and debt budget of 1.6 billion dollars the this is an increase of approximately 7.4% over the fiscal year 2023. Our budget will be finalized once the state passes their final budget in the General

Assembly which we're still waiting for. Projected enrollment for next fall will be 91,631 students. Our budget aligns to projected county and state revenues. We are

[04:15:47] offering a 5% average employee pay increase which is a step in a cola and for an average teacher The average teacher increase will be about, in real dollars, $5,000 for next year. We have a health insurance premium increase to employees. This will be the first time in three years that we're increasing the premium.

[04:16:05] It'll go up by 3%, and for that same average teacher, that's about $209 for the year. So that's just the premium increase. We have worked with you all to self-insure Prince William County employees and the school division, and, folks, it's a great program.

[04:16:22] We've done a great job with that. We've really done a good job in keeping and managing control of costs, but inflation has been pretty tough this year, so we are seeing an increase for the first time in a while. Next, we're going to move on to just the demographics. We have 348 square miles that this school division covers. A population right now of 492,000, projected to be 569,000 in fiscal year 2040. Again 91,631 students for next year projected. Our population just like our county which is the 10th most diverse county in the country our school division reflects that. We have

[04:16:59] 27.7 percent Caucasian white, we have 19.7 percent African-American, 36 percent Latino, Hispanic, and 10 percent Asian and mixed or other is six and a half percent. We are very proud of the diversity that the school division represents and we work very hard every day to make sure that all of our efforts and our strategic plan are aligned to that diversity. So moving on to the highlights of the budget and we always try to break it down based on the plan. So we have learning and achievement for all, positive culture and climate, family and community engagement, and organizational coherence.

[04:17:37] In this year's learning and achievement I'd like to bring attention to the fact that we're bringing on 75 special education teaching assistants we'll be adding instructional coaches 14 of them now we've had those 14 we use the esser dollars that you all helped support us with and that came through the federal government to hire 14 coaches who help our teachers with improvements and in work in their the work that they're doing with curriculum management and and working on how to improve best practices with them. We're going to hold over the 14 that we were using ESSER dollars for. We're going to actually, we're building them into our budget this year because we believe they have,

[04:18:15] we've seen a return on investment with them already. Students are achieving more and we find that these coaches are extremely helpful. We're going to be expanding pre-K. Again, each year we do a couple classrooms. I think this year we're doing two, two or three classrooms, three classrooms. Positive culture and climate, climate and culture. You all heard the school and safety security assistance that we announced I think late last summer early fall that we would add to all the elementary schools we are still in the process of filling all those positions but that was a mid-year decision to hire those we've added this VCU residency program which is a neat program to help people who are

[04:18:53] aspiring to be teachers to get their teaching certificate and so to help address the national teacher shortage which not only affects national I mean it also if obviously it affects all of us as well we have this program that we're investing money and we're investing money in the international faculty we have a program called participate where we bring faculty from overseas who are here on work visas to teach in the school division and that program we've been doing for a number of years has been very very good so we're going to continue that we have family community engagement we have parent liaisons that

we've committed to having at every school this final amount that we're going to add to the budget will ensure that all of our elementary schools will also have

[04:19:32] one as well. So we concentrated on our secondary, so high school, middle schools, and some of our elementaries this year, we're going to complete that and have one in every school. Transportation liaisons, we're adding four of those. Regarding organizational coherence, again, the salary increase is going to cost the division about $32 million, and we're upgrading all radios on our buses. They have been in need of upgrading for quite a while. Moving on, so in our capital improvement budget I've tried to break this down and you you've all seen this presentation you should have received it but this slide might be a little bit updated new but division-wide some of the highlights in the capital

[04:20:11] improvement plan are security upgrades HVAC projects LED supplements and then I in each district you know put a number of highlights of the projects we're working on so for example in Brentsville we're doing the opening of the Rosemont Lewis elementary school this fall that's completing construction by the end of the summer Brentsville High School renovations in the Coles District Benton Middle School we'll see and by the way we have a lot more projects these are just some of the highlights you should have that in your CIP documents that you have it at your that were given to you last week Coles Benton Middle School renovation Gainesville we have Sinclair Elementary

[04:20:47] School roof replacement Neabsco we're adding the windows to Garfield High School Occoquan we're doing the replacement for the Occoquan Elementary school that school I think is over a hundred years old and we will be rebuilding or we're actually building a whole new one in its backyard essentially and that will be by the way our net zero project first one Potomac District we'll see Potomac Shores new area elementary school construction and Woodbridge which for one reason I must have forgot to put it on the deck but our North Woodbridge elementary school will begin construction and that is near

[04:21:27] fred lynn elementary school up on route one and we have featherstone elementary school renovations and well i guess it's the woodbridge elementary the um the other big project so some exciting things happening um as far as our capital improvement plan um slides that you'll see every year when i come here we have the student enrollment trends we're obviously continuing to trend upwards um and you know um basically this year we were right around 90,000 to 26 next year We should be at about 91.631, and we continue to see the trends increase.

[04:22:04] One thing that's very important as we look at our trends in increasing students, we have a growth in student membership, and I think this slide's really important, so I'll spend a little bit of time on this. So over the past five years, for example, under special education, our number of special education students as a percentage of our – The number of special ed students has increased by 7.2% over what we had five years ago.

[04:22:31] Our number of English language learning students has increased by 40% over what we had five years ago. And direct cert is the new term, the federal government, or we're using, you can think of it as free and reduced lunch. That population has grown 55%.

[04:22:49] So that population makes up about 31, 32% of the school division. So the reason I put this slide up there is these students are typically that require more services. We spend more money in doing English learning programs, and obviously special education is more costly.

[04:23:13] And so while our enrollment continues to grow, what's really important to see is that, you know, some of our enrollment's growing in some of the more challenging populations and populations that we do have to spend more money in. And I bring that up because I just think that's really important for all of us to, you know, when we say enrollment's increasing by 1,000 students, it's not just 1,000 general population students.

[04:23:34] It's, you know, it's a mix of ones that have higher needs. Moving on to our cost per pupil change over time. The, you know, and I like to slide because before the recession in, let me figure this out.

[04:23:51] Before the recession, we were sitting at around about $10,000 per student, and this is 2009. It wasn't until last year that we got to sort of cross that barrier the last couple of years to finally climb up over where we've been adjusted for inflation per pupil.

[04:24:15] Our non-adjusted, we've come up significantly in the last six years, and that's a lot of it's due to your all efforts and your work and your commitment to funding schools and so that has really helped but in the inflation adjusted number we really haven't moved a whole lot another slide I bring every year is where we compare to our regional peers and so if as you see Prince William County is down here second from the bottom in per pupil spending Manassas Park is below us and Manassas City is just above us we should maybe maybe get ahead of them in the next year or two and then Montgomery County Loudoun County Fairfax

[04:24:52] County Alexandria and Arlington is the highest and and they're at twenty three thousand per student and we're at fifteen now I will say and I say this every year that we do a really good job on making sure every dollar goes where it needs to go to get the biggest bang for the buck and I think you know while we showed this I didn't show that you know you know many of you have heard me say this over and over again in the niche rankings which is just one ranking of how school divisions rank in the state they they found that prince william county back in 2017-18 we were ranked 26th in the commonwealth for school divisions we are now 17th as of last

[04:25:29] october and that's really you know because of you all helping commit to funding our schools at you know higher rates than we ever had in the past and really catching us up to where we should be or should have been we're hoping that the state lifts their support caps and we can see some more funding to allow us to do some more work really where we need to get to going on to and I guess I should I we can you can ask me questions at the end or jump in if you need to but just regarding our finances Prince William County Schools and Prince William County work

[04:26:05] together on our joint audit committee that meets twice a year they work though throughout the year we've had no material findings in the Prince William County Schools over the last five years We continue to have high-quality financial management, and that, we believe, helps contribute to the triple-triple-A bond ratings that the county continues to carry, one of few counties in the nation that does so.

[04:26:27] We're very proud of that work. Just to let you know that our budget and finance office continues to receive numerous awards, meritorious budget awards for the past 29 years, certificate of excellence in financial reporting for 20 years, and certificate of achievement and excellence from reporting for the past 19 years. And these are from Government Finance Officers Association, the Association of School Business Officials. And we bring that up every year just to help the public be reassured that they can be, you know, reassured that and have confidence in

[04:27:02] our financial management for the school division. On this slide here, we have our just the large sort of proposed, you know, our operating and debt service funds, you know, for fiscal year. So, you know, the high points here is that, you know, fiscal year, the county revenue source was about $720 million. This year, we expect it to be $792 million. That's a $72 million change from the county, 10% increase from the state. Still, there's some, you know, blank spots there, but 731 to 761 for now that's a 4.1 increase from over last year federal dollars continue to remain

[04:27:39] you know about a 14 13 percent share of our entire county budget and that usually remains static and then there's some other arbitrage undistributed beginning balances and total all the exciting stuff if you have any questions about those please let me know moving on to our budget by funds we have a general fund debt service fund construction fund food services fund you'll see all the funds listed there and what our commitments to each of those funds are I put this up because you know every year we've since the pandemic we've you know we've we've had to

[04:28:17] submit to federal audits regarding our ESSER funds and we've continued to do well in all those audits there's been a lot of press about school divisions not spending their ESSER dollars I can reassure you folks that we have spent 76 percent of our dollars right there at the bottom and this year will complete the rest of the 24 percent. We have been allowed to allot those over the course of three years after the pandemic and we use them for any number of programs. Like I said with the instructional coaches will be some of the money of the investments that we use were for the unfinished learning plan as we re-entered school and for you know launching the strategic plan

[04:28:57] that much of it has to do with catching up after the pandemic and so I wanted to reassure you all that we are where we need to be on those funds so to summarize the implementation of the division strategic plan drives all of our investments and the fiscal 24 budget builds on all prior year investments so when I came here last year which was the first year we did this we had made those commitments last year we're holding all those commitments from year one in the strategic plan and we're building on top of those. Prince William County Schools remains behind regional peers and per pupil funding despite our increase in

[04:29:34] resources for the fiscal year and student needs continue to rise based on changes in our student population if you remember the slide we talked about for special ed and English learners. We have still continued many critical unfunded and underfunded needs in a growing with a growing diverse population. The rest of the ESSER funds can't be used for opera you know you know yearly operations. Those are for the special things we used during and right after the pandemic for recovery. And the division continues to operate within the revenue sharing agreement. And that

[04:30:10] wraps up the presentation, folks. And if you have any questions, we are happy to answer them. Thank you very much, Chair Lateef. So, or Dr. Lateef, or, and are there any questions? Does anybody I don't see my ah okay supervisor Bodie thank you madam chair thank you dr. Latif for the presentation thank you for everyone from the school division our compatriots on the school board for coming always a great time to join with you all to hear with what you're working on and congratulations again on building upon the strategic plan that you all adopted not too long

[04:30:44] ago I have two questions um one has to do with security because I know there's a lot of folks talking about security right now safety what have you you know we're fortunate that we don't have a lot of some of the same issues that we have in other areas of the country but we know that every so often every

couple weeks there's a report of something happening even here in Prince William County so first Dr. Lateef for whoever wants to answer can you talk a little bit more about security and safety so if you go back to our slide on our you know highlights for the budget and if you look in your budget there's a whole section on

[04:31:17] what we're doing for safety and security but you know again safety and security assistance we're working on our radios for the buses um we continue to invest in making sure the entrances to our buildings are appropriate and um implementing best practices and and um looking to um continue to add you know some of it i can't speak to but you know think adding um technologies that will make us more nimble in our ability to manage a crisis situation so those all have costs and

[04:31:52] they're built into the budget. You know, we are continuing to work with our public to understand their desires and needs. And you may have read about some of the artificial intelligence scanner systems we're working on. I know that the, you know, we're continuing to be supported by you all with, you know, tremendous revenues. And so we're working to work within the revenue sharing agreement on whatever needs we're going to have to move forward with. Sure. Appreciate that. And my second of three questions the other one came to mind can you talk about a little bit about the history of teacher salary increases because I know that we have

[04:32:29] folks that came as recently as two weeks ago asking about salary increases for teachers so you could talk a little bit about that and where you are all are going in terms of our teacher salaries great and and I think this is online our executive summary but there's a great in the executive summary we have achievements and you know I wanted to put this in here because you all have been serving since 2019 and so if you look at the first page of the executive summary achievements from 2018 to 2022 you know much of these achievements are done because of the work you all have done to help fund our schools at a much higher rate than we've had before it's a it's a great list it's not complete right there's a lot of other great things happening there but to your point

[04:33:06] on teacher raises it is at this point before this year's budget will be approved 25% increase so average teachers making 25% more than they were making in 2018 25% more now there are many positions that are making more than that up to 35% more for example our early teachers are starting salaries we made some adjustments to those salaries to raise them up so some of those positions saw higher percentage of increases because we've made a commitment to recruit and retain it really retain and recruit talent from the competition

[04:33:45] where you know we're still below the starting salaries as some of the other school divisions so we're competing with them for students from Mason UVA VCU you know to come and teach in our school division but yes we have made a big commitment to that and much of that has to do with the commitment you've all you know the funding you've given us is not a one-time funding right it's a year over year increase that allows us to make those investments in in our in our employees and we're the largest employer in the county and so it's very important. Sure thank you and my last question the 14th high school the one off of Telegraph and and Minerville can you talk a little bit about

[04:34:23] that in the timeline on that? I you know that so there's a timeline and we we have recently I think we voted on securing the final properties for that. And I think that is, I don't know, in the CIP, it might be two years or three years out before construction starts. But I can get you that information. Yeah.

Good to hear. It's right in the Occoquan district, so I was curious. Thank you. Right. Thank you, Supervisor Bode. Supervisor Weir. Thank you, Madam Chair. Chairman Lateef.

[04:35:00] A couple of questions for you. First off, does the school division have a system of accounting that prescribes the fund expenditures per the nine categories in 22.1 stroke, 11.5? Yeah, let me give that to Mr. Wallingford.

[04:35:18] Mr. Weir, we do not track our expenditures in the school division based on the eight categories set up by the state of Virginia. Our budget is adopted by you on a lump sum basis, not on a categorical basis.

[04:35:35] So am I to understand that you're not fulfilling the requirements of 22.1 115 5 to maintain that system of accounts? No, we do maintain a system of accounts based on that section of the Code of Virginia. What we do not do is we do not categorize our expenditures based on the categories identified in the Code of Virginia, and that is not a requirement of us. Perhaps I'm reading it wrong because it says the board shall prescribe the following major classifications for expenditures, and I'm assuming you would track them since you have to have a monthly report.

[04:36:08] We do provide a monthly report per the Code of Virginia. So you are tracking them? Yes. Okay, curious. The reason I ask is this body doesn't have authority over how you manage the school division, but we do have budget oversight, and it's something that I don't think this county has exercised in quite some time.

[04:36:32] How difficult would it be for you to deliver a budget request broken down into those nine categories for this year so that each category could be separately assigned or allocated. So, Mr. Weir, we will deliver to you in the budget resolution that will come before you on April 25th, we will deliver a budget by those categories.

[04:37:00] Those categories, however, is not or not how we adopt the budget or how we have historically. We've historically adopted the budget for the school division on a lump sum basis. I understand that. I'm just not one who's likely to approve a lump sum blank check. I just don't believe in operating that way with the fiduciary responsibility we have. And I think that's heightened. When I examine some of the stuff in your budget, I'm a little concerned. You know, in your executive summary, you talk about an average of 5% employee pay increases FY24 over

[04:37:40] FY23. Do we know what the average teacher increase is? Yeah, it's going to be about $5,000. I said that earlier, by the way. Average percent increase, FY24 over 23? 5%. 5%. Then would you explain to me why a significant number of the admin staff are getting significantly higher percent increases to the tune of 8.4 or 7.2? Are you valuing your admins more than your teachers?

[04:38:12] It's an average raise across the division of 5%. So are the teachers getting 5%? Average, yes. Okay. Mr. Weir, the employee population, the total population, will receive an average 5% increase.

[04:38:32] Those increases may be different at different grades and at different steps on grades. In addition, for example, in the current fiscal year, we provided an additional $20 million to the budget to prop up the lower end of some of our administrative positions, but most importantly, our teaching positions.

[04:38:54] So the average salary increase in the current year in fiscal 23 was actually a little over 9%. Is that what's occurring at the lower end of the scale, the top end of the scale, middle end of the scale for these teachers? Is there any way to scale it so we know what the teachers are actually getting in terms of a salary increase on a percentage basis?

[04:39:15] You can see precisely what's happening if you take a look at the salary scale that is in our proposed budget. But that doesn't give me numbers of who and how many. For example, grade 12, step 3, and goes to grade 12, step 4, you can see precisely what that number is.

[04:39:32] One of the other things that I'm sort of taking issue with here, and I'm not going to beat this dead horse, but in looking at a lot of the line items, especially on salaries and benefit line items, it looks like your year-over-year increases are almost formulaic, and they certainly don't, at least in my view, at least from 2020 to the present, look like they consider your actuals year-over-year, so that in many cases you're under-budgeting your salary.

[04:40:02] Well, in several cases you're under-budgeting your salary and benefit line item, and in other cases you're over-budgeting it. And I'm not comfortable with it, and that's one of the reasons I'm not going to be in favor of giving you a lump sum allocation. I would rather take it down or allocate it by area, because I just don't have any confidence in some of these numbers in the manner in which they've been drafted, particularly from FY22 to the present.

[04:40:34] It looks like there's been, as best I can tell, strictly in base administration, an increase of roughly 100 FTE and even more, significantly more than that, more than 300, just in a kind of a spot evaluation of non-teaching personnel.

[04:40:52] So it seems like you're growing the admin, at least to some extent, at the expense of the teachers. I'm not real happy about what I'm seeing here. Like I said, I'm not going to beat this to death, but I would like to see at some point prior to the April 25, I would like to see the breakdown by category of what you're requesting for operations, debt support, everything.

[04:41:26] I'd like to see those nine categories between now and then, if that's in any way possible. I believe we delivered those to the Prince William County staff earlier this week, both a breakdown by category and a breakdown by fund, which is the way.

[04:41:45] My understanding was those are not being provided. If I've been misinformed, my apologies. I'll ask again tomorrow. Okay. I see some have received it. Now, there was a separate schedule that I sent to Ms. Casciato, I believe it was on Tuesday.

[04:42:02] No, it would have been yesterday, that detailed both by fund and by category what those amounts are. If you haven't received those, we can get those. So you gave it to us the day before our budget here? Yeah. Our budget. Okay. I have not seen it. I will contact Ms. Casciato.

[04:42:18] Thank you. If I could, Mr. Weir, add one more thing. The number of administrative staff that you referred to, I'm not sure how you calculate that number, but the number of central office staff, because administrative is a vague word, it could mean assistant principals, it could mean principals, and those positions are driven by enrollment.

[04:42:37] But as far as central office staff, we haven't added anywhere near 100. That's not what your budget shows, judging by your FTE numbers that you're reporting in here. And I'm strictly talking central

budget staff. I can read this. I understand what you're saying. So it's your numbers of projected FTE or budgeted FTE.

[04:42:56] It's not that hard a calculation. Maybe you're misunderstanding some of their numbers, Supervisor Ward. I am not. Madam Chair, I know how to read a budget. I know how to read an FTE schedule. It's not very hard to manipulate the data in a spreadsheet.

[04:43:15] The numbers are not off. Supervisor Weir, let me just remind you also that, as I pointed out in the presentation, we continue to abide by the Joint Audit Committee. Our documents, our numbers have been checked and rechecked year after year without any material findings.

[04:43:32] There is nothing that anyone who's listening this evening should feel like they should not have reassurance about. So let me be crystal clear about that, crystal clear. Now, if there's a problem with your contention that we are growing maybe central office, we continue as a school division to be not as well served.

[04:43:56] We don't have as many central office employees as other school divisions our size. We have been very frugal with that. We have staffing studies that can show that and comparisons and benchmark work that we can certainly share with you over the years. but those are things that we have continued to strictly try to control and really most of the money we spend goes in the school system. Let me be very crystal clear. I'm looking at the numbers on the FTEs that you're reporting in your own budget. I'll give you an example. In your finance department in FY22, you had a scheduled FTE of 45.5. In this year's budget, it's 61.5,

[04:44:35] which is an increase of 16 over FY22. Add to that the six new positions that you create with your new budget department, which I'm presuming was previously under finance in FY21, so you've increased by 22 from 45.5. So you are placing a large number of new administrative positions in the Kelly Center. That's just one example. You've literally doubled the size of division Council. I get enrollment is growing. I get program costs are growing. I get the requirements are growing, but you're growing the admin division at a level, in my view, is unsustainable

[04:45:14] in the long term. And the FTE numbers speak for themselves. They're your numbers. Now, if the numbers are wrong, I can't be responsible for my math because you provided the numbers. Mr. Weir, if I could, the number of FTEs that you were looking at with regard to the finance office. Many of those FTEs are FTEs that have moved between offices from IT, information technology, into finance as we upgrade our financial and HR systems. There are about, I think it's seven or eight of those positions. We have also added two positions in finance that were positions that

[04:45:52] were funded by ESSER funding in prior years that we've needed to manage the 250 or so million dollars that we've received over the past couple of years. So yes, you're correct. There has been some increase in FTEs and finance, but some of that's an internal movement, and some of that is us picking up and funding grant-funded positions. If it was internal movement, then it wouldn't be increasing or staying static in all the other divisions. Like I say, I'm not going to beat this dead horse anymore tonight, but I've got serious questions about where the money is being

[04:46:31] spent and whether it's actually being spent in what is a concern of many people in this county, whether it's going directly to the education or whether it's just going in a larger percentage every year to the Kelly Center. Supervisor Bailey. Thank you. First, let me say welcome to the illustrious school board

members and to Mr. Wallenford, superintendent, and to our chair, Mr. Lateef it's a pleasure to have you here with us this evening and we appreciate we have come a

[04:47:09] long way in terms of the reporting structure I agree with you we started this last year together and it continues to be more robust and more detailed and so I certainly appreciate it I did receive my documents I didn't read them through and through please forgive me but I want to say first of all to my school board representative who is absent this evening I'm going to get him when he comes back, Ms. Lilly. He's with his family, I know. He gave me a detailed report on what to expect tonight. I want to thank you for what I saw from the CIP in terms of the Potomac Shores Elementary School. I'm very excited about that. Potomac is a very

[04:47:49] historical, seasoned district, if you will. And whatever we get new, however it's uplifted, I'm appreciative. So I only have one question this evening, and it's because I've gotten a lot of questions and requests, if you will. And I never want to look a gift horse in the mouth, so I'm very appreciative up front. But I got to tell you what I got on the phone. Is that fair?

[04:48:16] So one of my opportunities, if you will, in my district is the Dumfries Elementary School. And I've had that discussion with my school board representative, and I just want to put it on your radar may not happen this budget season we've got other opportunities but the Dumfries Elementary School is a very old school 84 years old and as you drive upon the campus of the school it is not inviting for the students it's not inviting for the students and I think it's an opportunity for us to kind of

[04:48:56] look at that in the near future if we can in terms of renovation as well and and I'm getting phone calls from mostly the Dumfries community, and I understand that, and I'm sure you do too.

[04:49:11] But I just want to put that on your radar, not to say that you're not looking at it, but to say I'd like to be collaborative with you and my school board rep as we go forward. I think you've done an impeccable job in just lining out where you would like to go with our school system.

[04:49:30] Our kids are really suffering as it relates to mental health, And my question, that was my request. My question is, in terms of the mental health piece, could you elaborate a little bit more for us in terms of how you are ushering in on healing minds as they are learning in the environment coming out of COVID?

[04:49:54] Well, we have used primarily ESSER dollars to the tune of about $16 million that we've invested in better supporting students' social-emotional well-being. And a lot of that is focused on trauma-informed care, so providing training across the school division. So we do have specialists in schools that have been trained on trauma-informed practices so that they can help identify when a student may be in crisis so that we can get the right professional services and support to students and families.

[04:50:22] We do have a crisis support team now that is in place. We also have a threat assessment that we're using to identify when students may be in crisis as well. So those are a couple of things that we're doing. WE HAVE THE BARK SYSTEM NOW THAT HAS BEEN INSTRUMENTAL IN HELPING US IDENTIFY OR TARGET WHEN WE HAVE STUDENTS THAT MAY BE IN DISTRESS EARLY SO THAT WE CAN PUT PREVENTIVE MEASURES IN PLACE.

[04:50:45] SO IT WILL CAPTURE WHETHER A STUDENT IS COMMUNICATING IN A WAY THROUGH E-MAIL THAT HAS HIGH FREQUENCY WORDS THAT LET US KNOW THAT IT MAY HAVE TO DO WITH SUICIDE OR VIOLENCE AND THEN THAT WAY 24 HOURS AROUND THE CLOCK WE CAN HAVE SOMEONE

THAT CAN REACH OUT TO THE FAMILY OR to the student to check in to make sure that the student is okay those are some of the things that we put in place we've also put in place some supports for staff at the school building so those SEO specialists are also working to make sure they're addressing mindfulness practices with staff and additional supports for staff that may need you know maybe also experiencing trauma so

[04:51:24] we have made some significant investments there more is needed because the school system just simply cannot do it all we're just ill-equipped to handle some of the mental health crises that we are experiencing related to suicidal ideation and other situations that are happening in our schools so we are using the dollars appropriately that way but there are licensed professionals that really are needed to better support us because oftentimes when students experience trauma it's not just a direct support to the student wraparound services are needed for the entire family which is something that you know of course we're not

[04:52:03] equipped to provide but we have put in place supports for students while in school and we even have our crisis support team that does home visits and goes out to families if need be. Thank you and I appreciate I appreciate Madam Superintendent you offering your staff to come to when we had the breakfast with Senator Kane. I think it's essential that we partner together in that way as we go forward. And I also want to offer, and this might be, change is hard for everybody, but this may be an opportunity for us to partner together when we go to the General

[04:52:38] Assembly as well as it relates to needs. And so just want to offer that as going forward as a recommendation. But thank you for the work that you do. Thank you, Supervisor Bailey. Supervisor Franklin. Sure. Thank you, Dr. Lateef, for your presentation. And welcome to the school system, Dr. McDade, everyone here and to my school board member, Ms. Lori Williams. Look, I just want to point out the investments that this budget puts forward. Expanding pre-K, which has been a national discussion all around. Special education teacher assistance. We are doing salary increases for

[04:53:16] teachers. And then probably one of the more important things that I don't think we spend enough time on is capital improvement for our schools that's one of the things that I've been talking about over the past several years particularly on the eastern end particularly in the Woodbridge district we have some of the oldest schools in the county and so capital improvement I saw on there Featherstone and we have a list of additional schools as well that's critical and when we talk about education for our students making sure that they can learn in a comfortable environment that's critical when we were going through the pandemic and had to make the decision to reopen the schools you know the questions that we had to decide on the eastern

[04:53:53] county is you know are our schools big enough to effectively social distance you know those are our discussions that that had to have that had to be had the other thing I'll just point out in terms of the Woodbridge district is the new elementary school that we have coming that's a huge investment into our corridor as a matter of fact it's going on an intersection where we need critical revitalization efforts and this school is going to help do that is it is going to make that intersection safer. And then I think the other thing I'll point out about the new elementary school is I don't think, and I don't know the numbers, and my school board member and I have talked about this, we haven't had a new elementary school in the Woodbridge District, I would say

[04:54:30] decades. So this is a huge investment that's going into this budget, and that's the reason why I support it. The last thing I'll say is something that I get the most calls about and discussions about, and that's security and safety. And a key investment is being made in that area with the AI technology that we have going in. I'll be honest, when it was first kind of, when I was approached about it, I had a lot of questions. I was a little concerned, but then when I saw the technology and how it would work, I said, you know what, this is the best thing that our school system could probably do. So when we talk about some of these investments, I think it's important to really

[04:55:09] put it into perspective in terms of how they impact each district and so I thank you for this budget obviously you know nothing's going to be perfect within a budget you know there are some things you're going to love some things you're not going to love as much but I think that this is a strong budget that this board should support and so I thank you all for bringing that forward and I thank you for the investments particularly on on our schools here in the Woodbridge district and particularly the eastern end of the county.

[04:55:36] I'll say in terms of salaries for teachers, it's a discussion we'll continue to have. It's been rising each year that this board has been here, and I look forward to working with my colleagues to continuing to work with our school system to continue to increase salaries because I do agree that that's important, but I think we've been making those investments and we'll continue to do it more.

[04:55:58] Thank you, Supervisor Franklin. Thank you for that. Just to add to that, one of my highest priorities, the first place I moved to was Woodbridge when I came to this county. and those elementary schools along the Route 1 corridor are our ones with the highest capacity and overcapacity. And we have been desperate to build that school for a long time.

[04:56:16] I mean, that has been my number one priority. And the prior board wasn't as interested in helping us secure land as you guys all have. And so we have now done that, and we hope to break ground, I think, in a month or so, if not sooner.

[04:56:33] And we'll be happy to see you with your yellow hard hats. But it is one of the most critical projects, I believe, that's in the CIP and that has been missing in the CIP for far too long. If I may, Jeanine, I just want to piggyback on some.

[04:56:50] She's not. That's right. Just go. Can I, if I may, whoever it is, give me permission. I just want to piggyback on something that Margaret just said. You know, the eastern schools, the eastern corridor schools are really undeserved. And I just appreciate the focus that you're beginning to give to the Eastern schools.

[04:57:11] And one request that I have, my staff and I were talking about this, if you could create in your spare time a pie chart for me, for us, to let us understand in terms of revenues and how that's being dispersed as it relates to districts, I think that would help us understand a whole lot, a whole lot.

[04:57:34] But just thank you for investing in the Eastern Corridor. That's critical, because that's where a lot of history is, and our kids need to understand that. Thank you. Whoever's turn is next. Supervisor Vega. Thank you, Madam Chair. Welcome, Dr. Lateef, Dr. McDade, and members of the school board to our chambers.

[04:57:53] I can personally understand why there seems to be a little bit of a heartburn as you're presenting your budget, because we cannot forget what has transpired over the last three years okay we

know what the pandemic did in terms of learning loss negative learning loss in particular with black and brown students I bring that up because as district supervisor I get a lot of emails from concerned parents and even from concerned educators as to what we're doing in the direction that you all are going in and are we really getting the best bang for our dollar especially when it comes to educating our children you know I am a product of

[04:58:33] the public school system. I have two children that attend Prince William County Public Schools. And so I certainly, you know, have an interest, if you will, and even if my kids didn't attend the public school system, I think that every child deserves to have access to a world-class education. And so I know that attendance might be a little high, but, you know, when we consider what has transpired over the last three years, I think that we can understand where the frustration is coming from uh because we're we're getting bombarded from all angles it's not just our school board representatives it's us too because as supervisor we are stated um 57 percent of our

[04:59:10] budget goes to you all and yes we can say without any strings attached because we give you this 57 percent but we have no say as to how you all spend that money and so it's our duty to ask these questions to ensure you know that we're in a position to get back to our constituents and and provide answers now I wrote my questions down because I love history and I like to go back especially when I ask you a question I know you're not going to remember going way back to 2020 so let me get to that at Dr. Lateef at one of your school board meetings from October Tim Neal Prince William County's director of research accountability and strategic planning gave a presentation

[04:59:48] which noted that our on-time graduation rate was was at a six-year low and of those who do graduate, only 50% of them meet the college readiness benchmarks in basic classes like math. Additionally, last year's standard of learning exam still saw a 23% decrease in pass rates of science, a 20% decrease in pass rates for math, a 12% decrease in writing, and a 5% decrease in reading from pre-pandemic levels. SAT scores are also at a five-year low. Now, Dr. Lateef, when you give our presentation to this board in April of 2020, per pupil spending in Prince William County

[05:00:25] was less than $12,000 per student. By this last fiscal year, that number had risen to over $15,000. And with your latest request, that will balloon to over $16,000. I remember that I asked you then if more money always translated into more success. You're nodding your head, so I'm assuming you're remembering. You said that if we gave you more resources, then you would do even better. But based on these numbers that I've been able to have access to through the standard of learning reports SAT scores from school division websites and the pupil spending in this in this presentation that you have that has not

[05:01:04] materialized is it has not happened and so my question to you is why you're before us here today asking us for more funding right and that hasn't materialized what are the reasons so supervisor Vega if the question you asked me was, the first time I answered was in 2014, and then you asked me what we did in 2017 or 18, I'd have a good answer. We can compare apples and oranges. I came to you in 2020 in the spring before when the pandemic hit. That was March 13, 2020. We've had a pandemic in between, so our numbers have dropped, right? Nationally they've dropped. As you pointed out in your

[05:01:41] beginning remarks, that especially with black and brown students, it's having even more. money isn't going to solve that all of that right so it's some of it much of it is going to be money in the sense we have to invest in resources that allow us to catch students up to complete our unfinished learning plan and to do all of that work so if you're going to you know hold us to the measurements of what we were pre-

pandemic to post-pandemic it's going to take us a while we've made no indications to you all at any point that this was going to be easy from the pandemic. Dr. McDade, I think, is ready to tell you that, and I'll let her say in her own

[05:02:18] words, but we never promised we would get us back to pre-pandemic levels in a year or two years. We said it's going to be hard, and it's going to require investments, and it's the same challenges many divisions are facing across the country, but I'll let Dr. McDade answer for it. Yeah, real quick before she does, and I guess that's what we're looking for, right? If we're going to be asking for an increase in people's spending, what are the efforts, you know, to get these numbers to be what they were pre-pandemic levels.

[05:02:44] 100%, great question. And I do appreciate that question. And we are moving in the right direction to say that the dollars that we invested both from ESSER funding as well as the increases that we had last year, you saw that we have instructional coaches in buildings. So we are seeing a rebound from the pandemic numbers, which the numbers that you quoted are based on the pandemic.

[05:03:03] Coming out of the pandemic last year, our reading SOL was at 73%. So that's compared to 78% for pre-pandemic for 3-8. For math, we saw the lowest performance during the pandemic for math, I think it was to the tune of 35 or 39 percent. That has rebounded up to 52 percent, which shows that we are moving in the right direction, but pre-pandemic was 82, so we still do have a ways to go. With regards to that, too, keeping in mind with SAT, a lot of students, we're seeing now an increase in test takers because a lot of students over the last two years were not taking the exams.

[05:03:42] A lot of the exams were waived or where we had colleges that were no longer looking at assessments for enrollment. We saw a drop in the number specifically as you look at SAT. So that does impact, but even with the pandemic, our SAT numbers were at the 50% mark, which was what it was before the pandemic, which says that the supports that we did put in place does make a difference.

[05:04:08] The fact that we're seeing the kinds of increases that we're seeing across the board after the first year says that we are moving in the right direction. If you look at research from John Hopkins, from McKinsey, from NWEA, it is projecting that improvements to get back to pre-pandemic levels would take anywhere from three to five years.

[05:04:28] And so for the amount of increase that we have seen both at the end of last year, as well as when we looked at our end of semester grade reports that we just shared with the board, we are trending positively in the right direction with double-digit gains, especially in the area of mathematics.

[05:04:45] Thank you for that. That leads to my next question. At one of your school board meetings, you all talked about 23% of students are chronically absent. Can you please expand a little bit on that for those that are hearing chambers and watching at home?

[05:05:01] What does that mean? It means that chronic truancy would be a student has missed 17 or more days. For absenteeism, I believe it's 10 days for absenteeism. So once they hit that mark, and these are definitions that are defined by the state that we go by, all school divisions go by.

[05:05:20] So we are seeing, we ended last year at 19.1% in terms of truancy rate, and it has been up this year to about 22 or 23% where we're seeing students not coming to school or missing a significant number of days up to 15 or more where they would end up being unenrolled from the school system.

[05:05:41] So we are struggling with attendance, and we have some schools more than others. We've put a lot of things in place to try to support that. A lot of the attendance is around trying to find out why students are not coming to school. That was my next question. And, you know, there's a myriad of reasons why we have not really been able to pinpoint one salient point that we can say unequivocally this is why students aren't coming to school.

[05:06:05] We do believe that some of it is some students are essentially leading to dropout because they're working, and if they're working and choosing to work rather than to come to school after the 15-day mark, they can be unenrolled. We have students whose families pull them out of school for travel, and they sometimes travel and leave the country for sometimes 30 days or more.

[05:06:30] We have those kinds of situations. We have missing students. When you look at our graduation rate, which right now is about 91.38%, what you're seeing is that we started the school year coming back from the pandemic where students just did not return to school.

[05:06:46] And we had to the tune of about 300-plus students that were just missing that we had to search for to find out where they were. Did they move? Did they leave the county? Did they leave the state? You know, where are they? So coming out of the pandemic, there was a lot of re-engagement that needed to be done to try to recover students who had simply just disengaged, may have chose to take on a full-time job as opposed to coming to school.

[05:07:11] And we're still seeing some of that now, where students are choosing to work, especially our high school students, as opposed to come to school. But there's so many different reasons that we're seeing why students are not coming. We have to work collaboratively with our parents. We are doing all kinds of communication.

[05:07:29] We have an incentive now going with attention to attendance where we're supporting schools with documentation, regular communication to parents with different mediums. We're doing attendance incentives to get kids to come to school. So I think it's a full all-out effort on our behalf, but essentially we do need the support of all families so that we can get to the root cause of what's happening.

[05:07:53] And what we can do, we will, but of course there's limitations to what we can do in terms of attendance. this is a big problem and it's not just a problem in prince william county it's a problem that's happening nationally around attendance as a result of the pandemic and we're really trying to tackle it the best way that we can thank you for that um explanation uh i brought this up during our um 2 30 session while chief nation was giving his uh police uh report presentation um you know i asked him what they were doing in terms of being proactive to prevent a mass shooting from happening

[05:08:30] I am really happy of the steps and measures you all are taking when we talk about school security. However, I had a meeting a few weeks ago or maybe a month ago with the Coles District School Board representative and some concerned parents in regards to safety and referring to their children as sitting ducks and educators as well.

[05:08:49] And so when we talk about taking these steps to ensure the safety of our children, I want to talk a little bit about our SROs. I know that a lot of our SROs have been reassigned to different assignments and they're no longer in our schools. I am particularly concerned for our elementary age students. The chief wasn't too certain if every single elementary school had a security guard, is what he referred to, being present at the school, but he did say that we had some at the middle school and some in the high school.

[05:09:16] What are we doing? Are we going to revisit that to ensure that we get some SROs back in school to partner with the additional measures that you all are taking to ensure that our students and educators are safe? The SROs are staffed by the Prince William County Police Department, So they assign the SROs.

[05:09:32] We don't have any control over how the SROs are assigned. Right now, all of our high schools are covered, and our middle schools are covered, not necessarily a one-to-one. Some of them have shared SROs. We don't have any SROs assigned to elementary school. What we do have is our community officers who are armed, and they do patrol.

[05:09:51] Of course, it's not a one-to-one ratio, but those are the officers that support with the elementary schools. We did add all of the additional security assistance. Not all of those positions are filled, but we went from having zero security presence in elementary schools to now having the 65 security assistants that are now assigned to elementary schools to be on guard to do the perimeter checks.

[05:10:16] And we still have to fill some of those positions because we added those in the off-budget cycle. So some of those positions still haven't been filled because we couldn't hire during the peak season. And I understand that the SROs work under the direction of the chief, under the police department, but if there is an ask or an interest from you all, they will make it happen.

[05:10:35] And so I want us to be very mindful of that because it existed before, and, you know, for various reasons they were, you know, reassigned and whatnot. So if there is an interest coming from the school board and you, we can make it happen is what I'm saying, right? We love our SROs.

[05:10:52] We are, I've been working collaboratively with Chief Newsham to try to assign more SROs so that our middle schools will be one-to-one, just like the high schools. And he did, you know, add three additional SROs for the current year that we're in.

[05:11:08] So, you know, he's been working very collaboratively with me on this. And as he onboards more SROs, you know, he's committed to giving them to us. But we did revise our MOU. We welcome the opportunity to have SROs so that all of our middle and high schools are covered.

[05:11:25] Great. That's all I have for now, Madam Chair. Supervisor Vega, I do have one correction. I said 10 days with the chronic absenteeism, but it's 10% of the school year, not 10 days. So I just want to correct that for the public. But the 17 days or more is accurate. Is the chronic truancy.

[05:11:41] Okay. Thank you. Supervisor Angry. Thank you, Madam Chair. Just real quick. You know, I was thinking about, you know, the results of COVID last two years. You know, we've done a lot online. Our bus system has changed their traffic pattern and routes, and federal government has cut back.

[05:12:01] Is teleworking working for you in the school system anywhere? Or if you use it, how do you use it, and do you see any, is there any cost savings in that? So we have many, many, many positions in the school division that obviously teleworking doesn't work for.

[05:12:20] It's very difficult to teach students remotely, although that's something that we undertook for about two years. I think Dr. McDade would, not to speak for her, she would agree that that's not the best delivery method for instruction. There are positions, and I'm a really good example, the folks who work for me, payroll.

[05:12:41] The first day that we encountered COVID, we shut down on, it was on March 20th, and we immediately took almost everybody in finance and budget and moved them out, okay? So for most of the

positions that exist in the school division, maintenance, transportation, food service, all of those non-instructional positions, they really don't lend themselves to remote work. For those folks who continue to be remote, I think many of them enjoy it. I know some of the folks who work

[05:13:18] for me like the flexibility. Personally, I prefer to be in the office. And let me just say it's good to see everybody too. So thanks. Supervisor Lawson. Thank you, Madam Chair. Dr. Lateef, will you put the slide up? I forgot. I don't know if you have it numbered, but it showed Rosemont Lewis. Okay. So I'm going to take objection to a comment that you made a little while ago that prior board did not work. Wasn't as interested in securing land with you. And I'm going to take

[05:13:55] objection on route one on that specific site that specific site that the the the prior board did not we we could not get couldn't get a new school in the woodbridge district forever because the land was difficult to attain not the rest of the county specifically that side because come on i mean i mean we 25 schools in the last 15 20 years so but in that district we didn't we weren't able to do thank you for clarifying because I'm like wait a minute no no no that school is in the Brentsville district and it was a county-owned park that is now a park and a school right so I 100 percent no

[05:14:35] no I'm glad you clarified we work very closely with you all on land acquisition all the time on that region we just we we couldn't find anything we couldn't do anything there were a number of options that could have been taken that weren't taken for whatever reasons and I kind of remembered yeah some of those were closed session discussions and i remember those but thank you for the clarification i strike we appreciate the work that you've done to help us get rosemont lewis and and and and the other things okay and i hope you're keeping the name uh we have a naming committee that it's it's out to committee right i hope you're keeping the name because i will

[05:15:11] take your opinion it will be duly noted supervisor thank you thank you i appreciate that it'd be very confusing to the public in my opinion so so thank you very much Dr. Lateef and look while I'm praising you I do want to praise you for leadership that you took when when not everybody on your board agreed with you to return to in-person teaching and we were a leader in the region. And I do appreciate that you stepped up to the plate and advocated when colleagues

[05:15:50] disagreed with you. And so thank you for that, because I do think that that was something that we stood apart from our peers in the fall of 2020. Yeah. Okay. Mr. Wallingford, now I'm going draw my attention to you, sir. Let's go back to that conversation that Supervisor Weir and you were having. I show in your budget that from FY22 to FY24, you've increased your information in IT

[05:16:26] positions by six FTEs. So explain to me, when he was asking you about growing finance and budget, You mentioned IT positions, so that doesn't seem to match what your budget shows for IT.

[05:16:44] So the question you ask requires me to know almost everything in all of the departments in the budget, to be honest. And so we could sit here and have a conversation about this department or that department or the next department. The numbers that I have suggest that we've added about 300 FTEs across the division.

[05:17:03] about 15 or 20 of those were central office positions and in order to to satisfy you know your understanding would require something much more in depth than we can really do here um but but i'm i'm more than happy to continue to engage that conversation all right well let's do that right now um so uh

back to supervisor weir's analogy or or data showing um it wasn't an It's just a comparison of where you were in FY22 to where you are today.

[05:17:38] Budget and finance, you have grown the FTEs to 22. I just got the email from Supervisor Weir that was sent maybe presumably yesterday to some members that shows the categories.

[05:17:57] And you have instruction in one and admin, health, and attendance in another. Is that, am I looking at something you sent? That's correct. Okay. So instruction, you're at FY23 and 24, about a little over a billion dollars.

[05:18:17] But the percentage change in growth, and of course, we're growing your revenues by $72 million. So there's obviously growth across the board, but your growth in instruction is less than 1%.

[05:18:35] it's close to 1.93. However, your administration health and attendance growth rate from this current fiscal year to next year is 18.5%. So it's not my job to be a partisan cheerleader up here and praise everybody that's doing everything to make Prince William County Schools great.

[05:19:01] We all want high quality education, but we also want it to be cost efficient. And for me, and my personal views, I want as much money directed in the classroom as possible.

[05:19:17] I have grave concerns when I see your instruction growth rate is less than 1%, and I'm assuming that, I think it's a safe assumption, you tell me if I'm wrong, that that includes teacher pay. That would include teacher pay, that's correct. So you're only growing that one line item, less than 1%, but health attendance and admin almost 18.5%.

[05:19:47] That's why I think we're taking issue with the point that Supervisor Weir was making earlier where it appears to be that you're ballooning things at the Kelly Leadership Center and the money is not directed to the classrooms where the teachers and the students benefit.

[05:20:03] Where am I wrong? It's difficult for me to answer your question. I have to sit down and do the math. I can assure you that we are not ballooning the Kelly Leadership Center. the staffing there or the funding that goes to the kelly center i have to go back and take a look at those numbers the numbers certainly would say something different i would i would say when you're you know growing at an 18 and a half percent rate and uh your associate and this this is your

[05:20:35] budget your associate superintendent is being paid on the average to about 246 000 that's more than we just hired for our fire chief um and the teachers are getting a five percent raise and prince william county cost of living i want it to stay lower than fairfax and arlington and alexandria uh but when when you have the chair of the school board saying well our teacher starting pay is lower than our peers well our cost of living is too but when but when we're

[05:21:15] paying associate superintendents at roughly $250,000 a year, there's a great divide. And that's what we're taking issue with. So if you want to schedule a subsequent call, that's great. But tonight's the night and we just got these numbers. I literally got them a few minutes ago.

[05:21:36] I understand the request to produce those numbers on a categorical basis we received very recently as well. Historically, we have not brought those numbers to this meeting. We've produced those numbers to add to the resolution to the adoption of the budget resolution. Okay. So human resources is additional 21 positions. It was 40 in FY22, 61.5 now. So you've grown HR 21. Is that because

[05:22:15] of collective bargaining or is that other reasons? That is not because of collective bargaining, although we have added some positions in HR. Okay. A simple search on your job page shows a lot of positions at KLC. So my question to you is how many positions in this budget will be housed in KLC and how many are new in the schools? Like I said before, we have about 300 additional FTEs

[05:22:49] this budget about 14 of which are central office positions 14 that's correct okay can you send us what those are i'll have to get them together yes ma'am okay and then um what what is a and maybe you already have some apparent parent liaison um i mean no surprise everybody knows parents movement is strong across the country certainly here a lot of frustrated parents i'm glad to see that you're recognizing that but tell me what is what's the job description of a parent liaison and is it

[05:23:28] new this budget cycle? No we have currently in the current fiscal year fiscal 23 about 35 parent liaisons that are funded with local funds. In fiscal 24 we're adding 65 I think it's 62 parent liaisons to get up to 97 so that we have one in each school. Okay and what do they do? So the parent liaisons started with schools were funding them themselves, especially those schools that had low family and community engagement where there wasn't a lot of parent engagement. And so the parent liaisons that schools were paying for was to get parents removed barriers for access to

[05:24:06] information and resources. And that proved to be very successful in getting more parents engaged as partners in education. Instead of having the schools, especially as an outgrowth of the pandemic where there needed to be more touchpoint, more opportunities to reengage families.

[05:24:23] As we talk about, as we had the conversation earlier about attendance, the parent liaisons are very helpful in helping us to reach families, especially when families can't be reached by phone or they're not responsive via email communications. And so those are the people that are on the ground that are contacting our parents, having the check-ins, getting information to them, especially our populations that are new to the county or new arrivals to the county that come through our Global Welcoming Center.

[05:24:51] And so we believed that all schools should have that and not only the schools that could afford it out of their budget. So instead of having schools pay for it out of their budget and take away from programming, centrally we've been providing, we started through the strategic plan to provide that fund to every single school so all schools could have a parent liaison and not just a chosen few.

[05:25:12] I agree. I like that idea. Good for you that you're implementing it. I would imagine that they supplement the administrative office and the counselors and whatnot. Yes, they do. And a lot of times they have a stronger connection to the community.

[05:25:31] They know what's happening in the community. And there's a lot of trust there where families trust them because they're usually parents that actually live in the community. And so they can reach parents more readily sometimes than even school officials can. And so because we saw a lot of success from that, and that was something that we received feedback in our, when we were building our strategic plan, we did get feedback that said, you know, people wanted schools needed someone in the community to be present in the school to support families.

[05:26:00] Okay, thank you very much. And then the last question I have is the facilities That that growth rate is at 200 about we'll say 250% What what is what is that is that does that include the CIP?

[05:26:20] Included in that number or facilities? Yes The facilities numbers includes our construction numbers and those numbers Particularly here in Prince William County swing wildly year to year to year.

Okay So that would be...

[05:26:37] It's just a function. We're about to build a new high school. Right. Costs go up substantially, for example. Yeah, that was an outlier because it's just so much bigger than the others. All right. I think that's all I have. Thank you very much. That number may also not hold, right? So that's a projected number, too.

[05:26:53] Sure. So we think that might come down. And there's some evidence of that coming down already. Okay. Thank you. So everybody's gone one so far, so I'm going to take my first. You know, just try to keep track and make sure that we all get to speak. You know, I want to say a couple things. I do want to clear up just a statement.

[05:27:11] 57% of our budget does not go to the school system. 50% of our general revenue goes to the school system. We have a lot of other revenues that come in to our budget and things like that. Just to be clear, our agreement with the school system is for our general revenues.

[05:27:27] Because we have a lot of other revenues coming in for the county. I want to say, you know, I applaud your... I know that when I go out and talk to people, one of the things they're talking about is school safety and feeling kids and being safe. And, you know, almost without fail, everyone I've spoken to, you know, it's anecdotal, but supports, you know, the AI scanners to see, you know, you can prevent kids from bringing things into school.

[05:27:52] And so I applaud you on that. That's wonderful. And I think that's a great safety initiative. You know, there was some mention about heartburn. You know, I have no heartburn. I just want to be clear right here, sitting with the school system, you know, I believe our school system was very underfunded when we came into office, and I'll just go there because I, you know, if you look at the per pupil spending, and we have increased that because it was underfunded and the school system didn't have the resources.

[05:28:22] Thank goodness that we're actually spending the resources now, given that we went through the pandemic. You know, I don't know if anyone will ever really understand what the impacts of the pandemic have been on learning and i think it's going to take years to sort it out um you know even you know maybe it was you dr latif who was talking about well kids don't show up for school because all their stuff is online on on canvas or conva or whatever it is and they can get all their homework assignments and they don't need to come to school right and and they're doing their assignments and so there's been sort of a shift in our our society with regards to that i will say you know in terms of um instruction versus other things you know one of those things was health and

[05:29:01] maybe that's mental health. I think in a lot of ways we do need more support for our teachers and our whole school system just in general, like you're talking about the parent liaisons. I know they're not instruction, but those are the kind of things that will really help us move out of the pandemic and try to get back on track. And so I don't have any heartburn that, you know, you're actually adding support services for our families and our teachers. I think that's great. You know, just the increase in ESOL learners as a whole knows that we have to go out and reach out to the community. So I just want to say, you know, I have no heartburn. I don't have any really

[05:29:40] questions at the moment. We have an elected school board. And I think that the school system has done well to navigate the pandemic. And I'm really grateful for that and for, you know, Dr. McDade coming on board and everything else. So with that, I'll go to Supervisor Brody. Thank you, madam sheriff a few things based on the conversation has been going on um dr latif can you go back to the slide where you

showed the increase in percentages of the uh english language learners the the direct certification yeah so i think it's important as we talk about increasing that that

[05:30:18] per pupil funding that for better or for worse however you want to look at it each time we allocate dollars to the school division, it gets in some ways diluted because it's not direct one to one. Increasing a dollar for a general ed student that has no other requirements, what have you, goes a lot farther than just giving a single dollar for someone who's an English language learner or someone who's free and reduced lunch. So yes, money, and as we've given the school division more money over time, but those dollars go less far because we have more folks that have more needs. And the fact that we have the most diverse school division in the Commonwealth,

[05:30:56] not only from an ethnic or cultural sense, but also socioeconomics, country of origin, what have you, is something that I think gets lost in these conversations that we have on where we sit versus our regional peers, because guess what? A more homogenous county that has less needs when it comes to these extra parameters, they're going to be able to do a lot more with that money, right? And that money goes a lot farther than it does this. So I want to, one, highlight that, because I think it's a point we need to talk about, but two, I want to applaud just how much you all have been doing over the years to address those needs, because as was said before, some of this stuff really were already ongoing concerns and things

[05:31:35] that were going on before the pandemic happened. The pandemic only exacerbated them because, let's face it, kids that were coming from tough backgrounds suffered even more from the pandemic. Folks that had less access to resources suffered even more because they had less opportunities to help offset whatever failing was going on as a result of the pandemic.

[05:31:54] So I think that we need to continue to highlight that we talk about not only where our cost per people funding is going, but also how we address the needs of these populations that are coming out of the pandemic because they get affected a heck of a lot differently depending on what zip code you are in Prince William County, and we know that.

[05:32:09] We saw that in death rates, we saw that in the infection rates, we saw that in kids returning to school. So we have to continue to grapple with that. So I wanted to leave that with you first. Second, we talk about some of the percentages of increases and stuff like that, as was said before. I get the heartburn that could happen because folks really want their direct tax dollars to go as much as they can, but their kids are learning. Completely get that. I have seven kids now.

[05:32:35] All of them are going to be going through the school system at some point. I get it. At the same time, I want to make sure that the teachers that my kids have, have wholeness and holistic care for themselves also. I want to make sure that the programming that my kids are getting is top-notch and that isn't just instructional dollars those are everything else that goes around it so i appreciate so the holistic look that you guys are taking now where you're not just looking at hey how much dollar for dollar we've given in the classroom but for every dollar we're getting in the classroom how do we make sure that teacher is supported make sure that bus driver that janitor all those people that have to support that teacher in the classroom is being supported as well

[05:33:12] um because i think that's the point needs to be highlighted as well so that said two questions i have one transportation because I know you guys talked a little bit about that and frankly I get frustrated like everyone else my kids bus is is late Cohen and coming back um and I know there's been a bus driver

shortage that you guys don't control but how are you trying to address that is my first question so I think uh Dr. McDade she can answer that she was ready to grab the mic so you're saying repeat the question are you saying how are we handling the bus driver shortage So, I mean, we are continuing to recruit aggressively.

[05:33:52] One thing I will say, your question is apropos because I just had this conversation today with some, we have some drivers who could get on the road today but have not been able to get to the CDL permit because they have to take all components of the assessment even though, you know, they're driving a passenger not necessarily a tractor trailer or 18-wheeler or you know a truck like that and so we probably need to take a look at too what it takes to get the CDL for a bus driver shouldn't necessarily be exactly the same as what it takes for someone who may be driving a

[05:34:32] rig. I think that's something that we need to consider because we have some drivers that are just waiting in the queue and I'll give you one anecdote of one driver that I one person that I met he completed everything and what he said was to to study for the five components of the test even though he really only needs two you know he can't work a full-time job and prepare for that so there are some things I think that we need to take a hard look at in terms of where whether or not we can make some changes that's not required of us but through the DMV that being said we have we've increased bus driver salaries we're doing incentives now attendance incentives now for

[05:35:11] our drivers to try to get more drivers to stay on and we have done better with recruiting this year I think the other problem is not just recruiting of course we definitely need more drivers and we do still have vacancies but we also need to make sure for all of our drivers that are present some of them are working multiple jobs so we have to look at what we can what changes we can make there because you know there there's a break in between their morning route and their afternoon route so we're looking at ways that we can support drivers with other career choices within the school division during that that built-in time are some

[05:35:49] of the things that we're doing we do have an attendance incentive going right now for bus drivers because we're going into the crunch season in terms of you know absenteeism for for drivers so you know we've put a full force effort behind it but like everyone you know we're seeing less and less individuals going into or applying for for that role i don't have an answer for why that may be the case but everything that we can do to address this situation we have been going into the new school year one of the things that we will need to take a look at is how we pair routes that's something that we did

[05:36:28] not necessarily do strongly this year so going into the new year we can look at start times like marginal changes in start times for um elementary schools where we can pair routes in that way that would help to um significantly reduce some of the on time uh or lack of being on time rates um that we're seeing with with the buses but our bus drivers are working incredibly hard many of them are working um you know overtime hours uh to support we just simply do not have enough drivers and we're all competing from the same pool.

[05:37:01] So between Loudon, Fairfax, Stafford, we're all competing from the same pool of drivers. But we do have a competitive salary wage for our drivers, and like I said, we are instituting initiatives as well. One thing she meant, when they pass all five components of the test, they can get a truck driving job that pays a lot more than the bus driving job.

[05:37:23] So we pay to put them through the training and everything, But once they actually achieve CDL, then, you know, we kind of we lose them because now they can actually make three, four times what they're making to go and drive a rig. And I know that sometimes we have some competition between OmniRide and the school division where they're suddenly certified for CDL.

[05:37:43] And based on what we do on the OmniRide side, it can have interplay there. Thank you for that. And my last question has to do with our free and reduced lunch kits, because I know that a lot of families, While we were under COVID, everyone's, you know, meals were paid, you know, straight up.

[05:38:00] The feds gave you all that money. No one really had to worry about that at all. Coming out of the pandemic, though, and my family felt it, suddenly kids, depending on which school they go to, some of them have to now have that payment for the lunches and breakfast while other ones don't.

[05:38:17] So how are you all looking at that at all? What's the long-term vision in terms of feeding kids and what have you? I mean, you know, so we continue to abide by all federal regulations for free and reduced lunch.

[05:38:35] We continue to support all the students that require that. I know that there are some schools where we have moved to, I think, even the majority of students are on free and reduced, and I think everyone then goes to free and reduced in some of our schools. So we are evaluating programs. The feds continue to change their requirements and allow more flexibility on programs, and so we're continuing to look at those.

[05:38:57] Thank you. So if I could just one or two pieces of information, there's something called the community eligibility provision. There are students who are referred to as direct certs who are qualified based on about, I think it's about nine or 10 different criteria, including things like SNAP and TANF.

[05:39:17] Okay, 37 of our schools are currently CEP or community eligibility provision qualified based on 40% of those students being direct cert. That's something, those students, all students at those schools get free and reduced meals.

[05:39:36] And so this has created kind of a conundrum for us from a data standpoint, but we expect that that percentage will continue to increase over the next couple of years. we expect about six more next year, those students in those schools will then also be able to get free and reduced meals regardless of income levels. So that's something that's a big change taking place right now. Thank you, Supervisor Brody. Supervisor Weir. I'm going to unfortunately return to the earlier dead horse. Mr. Wallenford, I now have the spreadsheet that was forwarded.

[05:40:14] Supervisor Lawson's correct. In your admin bucket, you're actually, you're reporting that percentage increase is 18.48%. It's a variance of roughly $18.5 million, FY23 to FY24, where you go from essentially $101 million to $120-ish million to the admin department.

[05:40:40] Curiously, that $18.5 million more that you're spending in that bucket is nearly twice what you're spending on the instructional side in terms of an increase, even though the instructional budget is 10 times the admin budget. In fact, if you combine the instructional increase with the public transportation and the operations and maintenance increase, you still don't match the admin increase. So I'm having less and less faith with every number that's being read out.

[05:41:10] And quite frankly, you've changed your tune a couple of times on percentages. I have an expectation that somebody that's in charge of the finances of a multibillion-dollar entity will have more than a passing familiarity with the budget. Mr. Lateef, your comments with respect to the facilities and the monies there, essentially they're aspirational.

[05:41:35] You don't know if it's going to occur or if it's not going to occur. At $538, actually $539 million, with an increase of $384 million over last year, I would hope your numbers were a hell of a lot more firm than they are right now. Now, wait, excuse me. That's $384 million that could be reprogrammed.

[05:41:54] And this is why I question why we should give you a lump sum. You're also missing one of the nine categories. I believe it's contingency reserves. So I hope you have a contingency reserve. So we do have a contingency reserve. And on the CIP, this year's CIP came in much higher for the next 10 years than we expected.

[05:42:17] And the numbers that we projected are conservative, and they are higher than I think what we hope to get to. But we did put out numbers that we thought, well, okay, what's going to happen with inflation?

[05:42:34] If inflation continues at this rate, if everything happens, this is what we expect to have to pay for those projects. We are seeing as those projects start to come online, sometimes we're paying less or sometimes we're paying more. So there is some fluidity in that, and that's a statewide thing.

[05:42:50] At the University of Virginia, same issues with their construction budgets. We're talking about the same things. So I don't mean to be glib when I tell you that, you know, that number may change. It may change, you know, plus or minus a few percent, but it will change. A few percent of $500 million is several million dollars.

[05:43:10] Yes, it is. Of course it is. And those monies, by the way, that we put in the capital budget are typically borrowed monies that we then do debt service on. And we've been extremely good with our debt servicing over the last five years. We've dropped our borrowing rate. We've borrowed less over the last couple of years. We've also borrowed much better percentages. And we've been able to pay off debt sometimes if we have extra cash here and there. But we are doing a better job on that.

[05:43:38] And I would reassure you that we're going to continue to do so moving forward. I just find it hard to fathom the 247% increase in what is essentially, one would assume, mostly debt service year over year? I'm not sure what 250% you're referring to.

[05:43:57] You're going from roughly $155 million in the facilities bucket to close to $540 million. That's how much you're increasing your spending there. I don't think that's accurate. What is he referring to, John?

[05:44:13] That is correct. our construction budget is going from about $154 to about $511 million year over year. The increased cost on a single school, a high school, the 14th high school, is in the range of $150 million to about $285 million on the one project.

[05:44:35] And there are other projects in the budget, okay? The funding for those schools, for new schools, is almost exclusively debt funded. And so the $511 million that you refer to, Mr. Weir, is funded by debt sales that will take place in 2023, excuse me, 2024, 2025, and 2026.

[05:45:04] It is an extraordinarily large number, even for the Prince William County Schools CIP. It is, I agree, a very large number. I don't disagree about how you're going to fund it, but I also note that this is an expenditure for FY24. No, that is not an expenditure for FY24.

[05:45:23] It's a budget because when we encumber a new school, for example, the high school, we will have to encumber $285 million for that school in order to make that encumbrance and sign off on that contract. We'll have to have the budget authority in place to make that happen.

[05:45:41] My understanding is you have to do these categories by expenditure. And you should be predicting it by expenditure. That's what you're supposed to turn over to us is the expenditure for the year. And if that bucket says $538 million, that should say to us that you are projecting a $538 million expenditure.

[05:46:02] Mr. Weir, we are not predicting a $511 million expenditure. Our capital projects team couldn't spend $511 million in one year. But that's what you're reporting in your spreadsheet. No, that's the budget that we need to put in place in order to encumber projects.

[05:46:18] Then why does the total equal your total budget of all funding? Which total? The total for all of the categories on the spreadsheet. You're talking about? The $2,371,000,000.

[05:46:35] That's correct. That's because that's the budget we are bringing forward. It is not our projection for expenditures next year in the Capital Projects Fund. the capital projects fund does not forecast expenditures it requires a budget in order to make your expenditure is so at the end of the day you're going to have extra money lying around or you're just going to program it to something else i mean if if you're supposed to report the expenditure in that bucket so that we know where the money is going to shouldn't that be a real

[05:47:07] number mr weir that is a real number that is that is what we have to contract we will have to sign a contract, for example, for that high school that will cost us about $200, I believe it's $285 million. When we sign that contract, we have to have the budget authority in place to do that.

[05:47:29] The budget authority is supported by bond sales that will take place again in the future years, going out about four years. I understand that, but you've also got a separate category for debt service. So somewhere along the line, you're not accurately reporting where you plan to expend that 2.3 billion dollars or 2.4 billion dollars. It's in my first budget rodeo. Supervisor, perhaps you just don't understand their accounting. I understand. I understand how this is supposed to be done. They've been doing this for years and you seem a little flustered. I mean, they are

[05:48:06] telling you he's explaining to you what he's saying and either you believe the CFO of the school system understands the finances or you don't. I don't think he understands how it's Supervisor, why don't we do this? We will provide the documents and the numbers you'd like to see, and we'll come to your office and make sure you understand them the way we have them out.

[05:48:29] And if we're mis-presenting them in any way, we'll try to clear that up with you. That sounds great. I would appreciate that. Please contact my office to set up that appointment. Thank you very much, Dr. Lateef. That would be wonderful. Next is Supervisor Vega. Thanks, Madam Chair.

[05:48:45] you know i use the term heartburn because that's at least how i felt as a mother of two children that attend prince william county schools but you know chair wheeler i take issue with your dismissive

nature as to the comments and the concerns that i've raised because those are concerns that one i don't expect you to understand the drastic impacts that the pandemic had because you don't even have school-aged children okay but to dismiss it and to say what you said is infuriating and insulting and this is why. We have elected representatives that made the decision to force our students to stay at home when the science dictated that the best place for our

[05:49:24] students was inside of schools. So if I have heartburn you better believe I do and now it goes beyond that because of your comments. What happened over the last three years in this county has been a travesty because a lot of these things that we're now facing should have never happened and I know Dr. Lateef that Supervisor Lawson thanked you. And I'm going to do it because I know that you took a very unpopular political position for looking out for our students and wanting to do the right thing. I speak to parents within the Hispanic community, okay, who already have a language barrier and feel helpless trying to get their children where they need to be because of the

[05:50:03] learning loss that they've experienced over the last three years. Dr. McDade, you just stated that it's going to take, or if it was you, Dr. Lateef, between three to five years to get our students to be where they need to be. Madam Chair, I think we fully understand the effects of the pandemic.

[05:50:21] And the problem here is, is that you have people that were responsible for this, showing very, very little to none accountability. And as a parent, that infuriates me. It infuriates me because you can't dismiss it. You can't say everything is peachy. I don't have heartburn. Everything is fine. Let me give you all of these millions of dollars that you're asking for because everything is great because it's not. As a parent, I have a duty. As an elected member of this governing body I have a duty to ask those questions and I don't just pull them out of thin air madam chair I ask them because people email me those questions and because it's my duty to do

[05:50:56] so so I would kindly ask that you be a little more considerate for those parents that are struggling with their children at home because of the learning loss that they've experienced and to perhaps for once push for a little accountability we screwed up yes we never thought that we would govern during a pandemic but we're learning from it and we're learning from it and this is what we're doing to make it right for the students and for the parents supervisor Bailey I am

[05:51:30] just to get back to some some real questions that I had before I wanted to ask it's are the CDL our CDLs required they're absolutely required okay and the reason why I was asking that is you know in terms of the people that we have in community retirees that could possibly drive that's the only reason why I ask And then the other thing is in terms of the parent liaison, am I saying that correctly?

[05:52:07] Is the requirement for that, for them to be degreed or anything of that nature? No. No, they don't have to have a post-secondary degree. Okay. And the reason why I'm asking is because I know that that is an excellent idea, because those were used during the pandemic, particularly with the food insecurity piece, and it worked extremely well.

[05:52:32] I know in the Eastern Corridor it did. And so with that, just offering, I try to bring solutions. If we've got a problem, let's bring some solutions to the problem. And potentially there are retirees in the educational realm that we can create a program, a recruiting program, to garner more experience in the educational field for that position because they are extremely needed from food insecurity to learning mathematics, whatever it looks like, they are needed.

[05:53:11] And if that means that that's a resource that we can help you with with community partners, please allow us to avail that to you as our population grows. And then lastly, the other thing that I want to say is we certainly can't tell you how to do your business wholeheartedly because you are the subject matter experts um we can ask the questions because that's we that's what we're supposed to do um but i i too wanted to say um you're doing an impeccable job of what

[05:53:45] you have to deal with um the hardest thing for us to deal with is dealing with covet and governing at the same time no other administration has had to do that and all eight of us did a great job or seven. Bob wasn't here. But he lived it, too. So we have done this together. We've come out of COVID, and it's hard. It's very hard. And so we do want our children to have a grade. I don't have kids. I don't have grandkids. My kid is real grown, off on his own. So I'm fully invested in

[05:54:20] everybody's kid in this county, totally invested. And so we have to look at this thing in a different way. And so I'm, and I was saying to the police chief earlier, you got to teach us how to look at this thing a different way, particularly when we're talking about money, we're talking about babies, you know, and so I'm not trying to shut anybody down or whatever, however anybody thinks, but it's a different world now. It's totally different from even when I was in public school or when Margaret was in public school, it's different. And so you got to teach us when we're

[05:54:54] talking about spending, what that means. We need for you to teach us what that means. We had an impeccable joint meeting about three months ago. It was impeccable. It blew my mind. It blew my mind what you were doing with mental health. It blew my mind what you were doing with security. It blew my mind. And so some of us was there, some of us were not. And so bring us along with you, please.

[05:55:21] That's all I can say. In order for me to govern and support not just the eastern quarter, the western quarter too i need for you to bring me along with you and when you talk about the budget it you know big they're huge numbers but it's a huge county and so chairman latif um you and i got in a little kabuki dance uh when kobe first hit we came out we were two-stepping when we finished because our babies needed those computers that's the bottom line you showed us why and so I'm not on a soapbox, but I'm telling you what I need as this one-eighth.

[05:56:01] Just like I said, I need your help with Dumfries. You need to bring us along because we don't want to beat you up. We want to serve these kids from a fiscal responsibility standpoint. Being a good steward of dollars, which I think we are.

[05:56:17] Ain't nobody stealing nothing. But we do need to be brought along with what you're doing. And Madam Superintendent, your strategic plan is beyond reproach. It's better than anything we've ever had.

[05:56:34] I want you to know that and teach us how to work it because it's new to us. Just teach us how to work it because nobody's dumb up here. Bob's the smartest one with numbers, he thinks. But, you know, I respect that.

[05:56:51] He's my colleague. You know, I respect that. That's his bailiwick. But I come to the table with social skills and helping you with that. But it all comes together. And when we don't come together, the babies suffer.

[05:57:11] So that's all I'm going to say. I'm going to shut up. I don't want to stay here all night, Madam Chair. It is 9.35. Supervisor Franklin. Sure. I just want to say that you don't need children in the school system to support and understand our education system.

[05:57:30] I take great offense to that. And it's unfortunate that my colleague is not here to hear that. We all have differences of opinion, some of us, and that's okay. I think that we should be able to have that dialogue. That's why we're here, to have a dialogue with our school system about their needs, their wants.

[05:57:51] And we may disagree with some of those things. But to launch into personal attacks, I quite frankly find that unacceptable. And many people on this dais and many people in the audience here, we have different experiences.

[05:58:08] We come from different backgrounds, and so I would hope that we would continue or maybe even start to respect one another when it comes to those various backgrounds and experiences. And again, I'll just say it again, my colleague is here, we don't have to have kids in the school system in order to understand and support education.

[05:58:29] I think that's important to understand, and I'll say it again, I find that to be quite offensive. Thank you. Supervisor Angry. Thank you, Madam Chair. You and I, we do a tough job here. And since COVID, it has been an extremely challenging road because now we're finding ourselves coming out of something that was traumatic for the entire world.

[05:58:56] So I will speak on behalf of all citizens of Prince William County when I just say, please do the right thing for these kids and these families, which I know you're doing. I don't know your worlds.

[05:59:13] so I'm sure you don't know mine. My expertise is putting faith in the people who are assigned to do the jobs that we need you to do. Same way the people put me up here to do the job that I'm doing.

[05:59:29] You're not going to make everybody understand that. I get it. And that's not to throw any stone at anyone. My point here is that what you've put together, what you're presenting for, or where we've come from since 2020 with COVID, it's challenging.

[05:59:45] I get it. And so with what you presented here, and I want to stick to the budget because I feel like we've been going all over the place with a lot of things, but the fact of the matter is, you know, dollars are real and dollars are taxpayers, and you all well know that. And so what you've put together, you know, it is my wish and hope for you all that it gives you what you need to be successful for our school system, our children, our parents, just the whole industry of what you got going on.

[06:00:14] So, you know, I'm appreciative of you all coming here tonight, presenting this. Going forward, I hope that we can, you know, get over this hurdle, if you will, and create this synergy that we really need throughout the county. So thanks for being here.

[06:00:31] Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you, Supervisor Angry. Supervisor Vega. Thank you, Madam Chair, and thank you, Supervisor Franklin, for your opinion. I never stated that that was a reason in order to understand or be supportive of the educational system. I certainly do think that as a parent of children in Prince William Public Schools and knowing parents that are struggling with the learning loss at home gives you a different perspective as to the real effects that this pandemic caused.

[06:00:56] And the issue that I took was with our chair dismissing my concerns or saying that she doesn't call it heartburn. She has no heartburn. It's that dismissive nature that I took issue with. but I never said that you needed to have children in school in order to understand the effects that the pandemic has caused.

[06:01:16] Madam Chair, it's not working. Supervisor Lawson. Thank you. Thank you, Supervisor Vega, because I was going to set that record straight, but you spoke before me, and I concur.

[06:01:32] There are, and Dr. McDade and Dr. Lateef, I know that you've heard countless testimonies of families that have suffered from the pandemic and virtual learning. We have new school board candidates because of the personal effects on their own family, and some of those come with tears, and it's heart-wrenching, and it's a serious matter,

[06:02:04] which is why I commended Dr. Lateef for his bravery in taking a position, as he did, a couple years ago. And I agree with you. I mean, all eight of us want what's best for Prince William County students, teachers.

[06:02:28] We also want what's best for Prince William County taxpayers. And it's my job to sit up here and ask those questions. As an elected official, I have a fiduciary responsibility to make sure that we're delivering services in the most cost-efficient manner.

[06:02:44] So I am going to critique your budget, just like I critiqued Dr. Shorter. I just promoted him to a doctor. Mr. Shorter's budget, because that's the role that I signed up for. What's that? That's okay.

[06:02:59] I'm good. This isn't working, but... I'll get you. Let me just have one second. Okay. It's distracting, though. Okay. So I'm good. Thanks. So, back to the budget, the admin, health, and attendance, as we've, you know, beat a dead horse tonight over the growth rate and the $18.5 million that we're putting in there.

[06:03:27] Speaking of the pandemic and students, mental health is a huge piece of this. So, tell me, what are you doing? I've looked through the slides. I haven't combed through your thick budget as much as my colleague has, but where is a lot of this money?

[06:03:47] Is it going to more mental health professionals in the schools? Where is this $18.5 million being spent?

[06:04:03] Ms. Lawson, which $18.5 million is it you referred to? The admin health and attendants. Almost all of the funding that we're currently providing for health services, additional health services, as it relates to the pandemic, has come from the $250 million or about $250 million that we've received in federal funding.

[06:04:31] That was almost the last slide in Dr. Latif's presentation. We've spent down about 76% of those funds thus far, which is a very good number. And we have about $16 million in those funds that will be used in subsequent years in fiscal 24.

[06:04:52] That is not part of our operating budget. Okay, but I'll give you an opportunity to look at, is there something that your staff wants you to highlight? Because I'm looking at the numbers that you sent us, and you have a growth in that budget category of $18.5 million, and health is part of that line item, so I can only assume that mental health is part of that?

[06:05:24] And that, of course, would, well, I don't know, does the 18 and a half include federal funds? The 18 and a half does not include federal funds.

[06:05:40] Okay, so then I'm going to go back to the question of... Mrs. Lawson, here's what I'd suggest we could do. We can provide you a detailed breakdown of what rolls into those categories. Okay, that's more detail than we can easily talk about this evening.

[06:05:58] I'm not trying to hide anything from you. What I would suggest we do is provide you that detail, and we can do that. Yeah, I appreciate that because I think, well, I know I want it, and I think the public deserves it too, and so I will look forward to more details before budget markup next Tuesday.

[06:06:15] I understand. Well, actually, yeah, is next Tuesday budget markup? Okay. well then i'll give you a well i think a week is adequate isn't it is a week adequate we can put the information together for yes ma'am um it depends on when you're going to schedule with him i might join you um okay mr weir is a budget hawk so i'm sure you've noticed that um and i'm

[06:06:53] going to piggyback on him and want to know what these numbers represent so i look forward to our conversations in the future thank you very much well thank you thank you for coming out tonight um it's quarter 10 i see no more questions and everybody's spoken at least twice except for me so thank you for coming out um you know i appreciate the partnership we have with the school division i appreciate our elected school board i appreciate the fact that pandemics are difficult and i still think we don't know where we're going to end up in uh two or three years even um as we come out

[06:07:30] madam chair as we come out of the end of the pandemic so so so as we as we just wrap up first of all I want to thank you all and maybe supervisor weird and welcome you to the the dance here into the board so welcome to being here with us but in and I look forward to you all meeting with John and his team on that but I I do think it's important for you all to to leave here this evening and understanding that the monies you've given to the school division over the last five years, and four years, and six years, has been very well spent to the tune of seeing

[06:08:07] our rankings go up, which affects our property values, which makes us a destination county to come and live in. We have become the number one school division to work for in the Commonwealth by Forbes magazine. We've received numerous awards. You'll see them in your summary.

[06:08:22] The dollars, and we're, remember on the chart that we're near the very bottom of per pupil spending of our regional partners, but we continue to make significant, you know, have significant successes with the dollars that we're given. Ms. Vega, just on the last thing I'd tell you is because English learners are very important to us and to me, but if you look at school divisions that have more money like Arlington and Fairfax, their ratio for English learning teachers to students is less. They have more teachers per student than we do. We have a long way to go with that and we've been so far behind before I got on this board on that issue alone that has put us really in

[06:08:58] really we're really behind so we have a long way to go on those efforts and we're gonna try to keep doing that so I want to reassure you that the strategic plan lists all of that out and we're happy to share that with you and if you have any questions about that but I want to thank you all for having us here this evening and best of luck for the rest of the evening. Madam Chair. Thank you very much. Thank you. Dr. Lateef, on that note, the 300 new FTEs, will you make sure that we have a breakout of what those are? Yes, Mr. Wallingford will get you everything you need. And I just want to add one thing about the 300 FTEs. One, because everything that everyone's opinion here does

[06:09:37] matter to me personally, I want to make sure that we are garnering public trust, especially when it comes to integrity with our finances and so uh I know that you'll have a meeting and go over those positions the 300 positions I think was about 308 maybe 14.2 of those are central office the rest are directly in schools one of the things that might be different from in in past years we did decide to take on kind of

like with the parent liaisons that I shared where central office is funding these positions as opposed to you seeing it in the school budget directly and so it shows

[06:10:14] up in our budget because we're allocating those dollars for those positions centrally but the but the positions are based in schools so out of the 308 and i know you guys will walk through this um mr weir but out of the 308 that you see total so notice we put 75 special education teaching assistants that's in there the parent liaisons that's in there the new security officers that's in there those are all in schools but you're seeing it in our central budget you know as a roll up because we're paying for it now instead we're paying we're funding that for schools as opposed

[06:10:50] to schools taking it out of their budget where before we weren't funding certain positions like that so with all of the tas instead of the schools having to try to find that money or if they don't money have it go without we're saying we know we want to support level two special education programs like our autism program, our intellectual disability, our emotional disability, we want to make sure those TAs exist so we can have greater inclusion, we're funding those positions.

[06:11:17] So when you see the 308 positions, all of those new positions that we're now deciding to fund for schools, we have to show that, but they live in the actual school to support the instructional program. And clearly the way that it's rolling up on the sheet is not matching with what you're looking for.

[06:11:35] Or in the past, because we've done stuff by site-based management. So this would be something that's out of site-based management, right? This is not coming out of that site's budget. Just to be clear, my issue is not with the 308. Mine's with 100. Thank you so much for that explanation.

[06:11:53] That's really very clarifying. Thank you. It really is. I appreciate it. And can I also say that I definitely want to talk about that wide range that you have for the 14th high school? i mean you went from 150 million to 285 did i hear you right maybe you can do that with them personally when you're when you're meeting with i'm planning to but i'm giving them a heads up that that's something i want to discuss because that's a massive range and when the colgan high school was built we broke 100 million for the cost of colgan and we were being discussed in

[06:12:27] the general assembly about the cost and now you're looking at 285 million that's a huge jump and i would like we'll discuss it but come prepared for that one too we will what i'd like to do is contact your offices and get information to help us in that meeting then there's not even a pool with that money you had to go there hey thank you thank you very much thanks for coming out thanks to our school board members who attended and all the staff we really appreciate it i'm sure we'll

[06:13:00] be meeting you guys again okay that brings us to uh public comment time for this evening we have two speakers in county speakers signed up to speak I'll call them up please state your name and generally where you live in the county as well as or your magisterial district everyone will have three minutes there'll be a timer and our two speakers are Steve Amato and Alan Gloss

[06:13:27] please proceed Mr. Amato feel free to start close the door not make noise thank you good evening Madam Chair, Supervisors, County Attorney, County Exec. I am Steve Amato. I live in the Lake Ridge District. And Supervisor Bode, thank you for getting me information the other day on, again,

[06:14:07] bringing up the question about the FY22 surplus that occurred, which was $75 million. I bring this up again because it does have an impact on the proposed FY24 budget. And I find out that we had

million dollar surplus in the first quarter of FY23. So my fellow residents of Prince William County, please pay attention. In 15 months, we had over $90 million in surplus. To me, that's

[06:14:42] overtaxation. We were overtaxed. What did the county do with that money? Well, why don't you all ask your representatives of the supervisors of what that money did? I'm not going to go into those details. But now in this proposed budget, the real estate taxes are to increase over $24 million, even though we have the lowest .977 tax rate proposed. So I don't have confidence in this 24 budget. We're going to be overtaxed again. It's been proven already in the first quarter.

[06:15:21] I think, and I strongly recommend that the real estate tax rate be dropped to .94. You raise up the precious data center tax to $3 because there's about 150 families, as an example, in Prince William County. Take out, give or take, 30,000 of those family members that are renters.

[06:15:50] So you have about 120,000 that are paying real estate taxes. And if you distributed that original $34.5 million from FY22, we would have received just under $300 in a refund, which goes a long way. We hear that many county employees, school employees had all of these raises. Those raises are due to us taxpayers, and that refund would have helped. So Madam Chair, what this demonstrated

[06:16:27] was no transparency, no equity amongst the Prince William citizens, no real fiscal responsibility, definitely overtaxation. And as a leader, I would have expected better leadership, listening to your county residents, the transparency and fiscal responsibility, and tax relief if there was refunds.

[06:16:50] So going forward in this fiscal year, I really stress tax refunds. And Supervisor Ware, you can ask the school board what their $50 million went to in surplus that was given to them because they didn't describe that.

[06:17:06] And I hope it's reprogrammed in their budget. Thank you. Next speaker, please.

[06:17:23] Good evening. Coles District, Alan Gloss. As a project management professional, it always amazes me when a simple manipulation of the numbers can snooker a whole group of executives. Without standardized data points, it gives a briefer the liberty to paint a rosier picture than the numbers truly tell.

[06:17:40] That manipulation of the data provides a false sense of security and is a fundamental reason why it's imperative that as an executive, you are checking the numbers and making sure year over year, briefing after briefing, the briefer is comparing the same data for the same times.

[06:17:57] Tonight, this board allowed Chief Newsham to manipulate the data, and I only saw two of you catch it. I don't understand why. For as long as I've attended and watched these briefings, the police have always compared the same data this year to five years ago.

[06:18:14] Why? So we can establish a trend based on relatively comparable data. This year, this board allowed Chief Newsham to compare data from 10 years prior. That's like comparing the iPhone 14, the current version, with the iPhone 4, a 10-year-ago one.

[06:18:32] That type of technology comparison doesn't make sense. and it doesn't make sense to compare crime data from a completely different Prince William County 10 years ago either. This was a feel-good briefing, meant to make people on this board feel good and let the citizens of Prince William County think that something is going right.

[06:18:53] Well, I'm here to tell you that it ain't going right, and people in Prince William County already know. This stuff isn't going right. We already feel it. It's what we feel, not how you want to feel. Nothing

could have shown more that this board wanted to feel a good briefing than Chair Wheeler denying that Amy Ashworth is refusing to prosecute crime.

[06:19:11] It's well-known, Chair Wheeler, and mind you, Chief Newsham just said that she was refusing to prosecute property crime right here at your briefing. You completely glossed over that. It doesn't make sense. Property crime.

[06:19:29] Those property crimes are trespassing, loitering, shoplifting, criminal damage, theft, false info to a pawnbroker, and, of course, stealing stuff out of other people's cars. You know, all the low-level crime that's fueling the uneasiness the good people of Prince William County are feeling. That briefing helped no one.

[06:19:46] And you know, one other thing I heard tonight was I heard Chief Newsham say that he wants to start holding business owners responsible for crime that happens on their property. Did I hear that right? It sounds absurd, but I do remember just two months ago, Colonel Phelps standing up there asking this very board to request legislation from Richmond to hold victims of property crime responsible for leaving their stuff where criminals could get it.

[06:20:09] You know, a way of double penalizing victims of the very crime Amy Ashworth is still not prosecuting. This board voted to send that request to Richmond, by the way. Next year, I hear they are asking Richmond to make it a crime for women to carry cash in their wallets so those victims can be charged with a crime if they get robbed.

[06:20:29] The truth is, since this board was set, we are feeling the effects of those really stupid votes. And until this entire lot is replaced, we are going to continue to feel the effects of rampant crime, all the while they try to sugarcoat all that we know. Vice Chair Bodie, why don't I turn it over to you for remote public comment time?

[06:20:52] Thank you, Madam Chair. Ms. Phan, do we have anyone online for public comment time for 730? Yes, there are two speakers. All right, shall we begin? Your first speaker is Garland Williams.

[06:21:12] Garland Williams, Gainesville District. Good evening. Thank you for allowing me to speak tonight. I support the Prince William Digital Gateway, the rezoning of it, to help our county achieve more of the revenue that we need across the county for all the programs.

[06:21:29] I have two kids in Prince William County Schools right now. They are both thriving. Thank you. Have a good night. Thank you, Mr. Williams. Next speaker, please. Your next speaker is Melanie Williams. Hi.

[06:21:45] I want to first thank everybody tonight for your time this evening, and definitely I want to thank our supervisors who've courageously supported the Gateway Project despite the repeated ridicule from the opposition. We all know that this project will create much-needed revenue for our county.

[06:22:03] We've just listened to two hours nearly of the shortfalls and what we're going to need in order to support our school systems. This revenue can be used to move our county forward, benefiting schools and public service workers that desperately need this money.

[06:22:20] We just heard about all of the teachers. Police, fire and rescue, all of them need bigger salaries. We need to be able to recruit and retain those folks in this county. This revenue can be used to reduce residential taxes across the county, which we just heard a speaker speak about just a minute ago.

[06:22:42] The Western End continues to be totally unaffordable for the average family. They can't afford 10-acre lots with million-dollar homes. Can they afford the tax on an average home?

[06:22:58] No, not in the Western End. Let's move forward with approving the digital gateway zoning and let the entire county and every resident benefit. Let's make Prince Wayne County an affordable place to live across the county, a county with more money in the schools to provide a truly world-class education system, a place that our public service workers can work receiving a really truly livable wage. I support the Gateway because I support progress in our county and the increased revenue it will provide. There's no larger

[06:23:35] opportunity we're going to get. Let's not let it pass us by. Thanks. Thank you, Ms. Williams, and I'm gonna ignore the penance you have in the background I'm actually an Eagles fan that's better that's much better thank you for that ma'am miss van do we have anyone else online no not at this time thank you for your assistance have a good night thank you madam chair thank you miss van thank you vice chair Bodie motion to adjourn second motion made by supervisor angry with a quick second by supervise vice chair Bodie any discussion seeing none

[06:24:10] please vote



Coraggio Consulting · aguyonx.com