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Prince William Board of County Supervisors Meeting, Tuesday, April 15, 2025

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[00:15:25] Sometimes they don't work.

[00:15:37] Check one, two.

[00:28:57] Everyone, it's so quiet.

[00:36:46] We are ready to get started. It is 2 o'clock on Tuesday, April 15th. I've really got to reach over. We are going to start with a moment of silence.

[00:37:09] Thank you. If you are able, please rise for the Pledge of Allegiance. It stands one nation, divisible, liberty, and justice for all.

[00:37:28] We are going to begin today with public comment time. we have one person one whole person signed up to speak in person and we have a couple people online um so mitch nason if you can go to the back and i asked when i just said your name you're going to state it again for the record you're going to state where you generally reside um and you have three minutes good afternoon madam chair members of the board up good afternoon madam chair members

[00:38:03] of the board mitch nason i live in stafford i'm a 20-year veteran of your fire department here in Prince William County. Thank you very much for the opportunity to come and address you all. As you've

probably noticed, I haven't been here week in and week out this entire budget season, and that's for good reason. The contract that we were successfully negotiated with you all this past year really set the table for what's happening in fire and rescue, and I very much appreciate that. So I want to take the first 10-15 seconds to say to the county executive and your staff, thank you very much. The process has been delightful, and I look forward to continuing that in the future. However, I do come to you here at the end of your budget deliberations on a fairly

[00:38:39] somber note. I sent you all an email about two weeks ago, and since then I unfortunately have some updated statistics, and this is dealing with cancer screenings and cancer in your fire department. We've actually had now three confirmed diagnosed cases of cancer in the past three months. We have one member that's already had his testicle removed. One member is set to have a tumor the size of an orange removed from his kidney next week. I just talked to a female in our department that has cervical cancer. Talked to her this morning. I just heard also later on this morning, we have two more cases that I haven't talked to personally of cancer. This

[00:39:16] doesn't count multiple cases of skin cancer that were diagnosed at the end of last year and two brain aneurysms that I'm aware of. All this is coming out of a study that I know the hospital system is doing, which I'm happy, of course, to have done. But unfortunately, that study is not available to all members of the department, both career and volunteer. The study is funded by the Journal Assembly to screen 800 firefighters in Northern Virginia. So it's not just ourselves, but Loudon, Fairfax, Arlington, Alex, MWA. And so you can imagine how quickly that's going to be overrun. It's also only for folks 35 years of age and older with 10 years of service.

[00:39:55] These early detection screenings that the study is actually looking into to figure out which one is the best type of way to find these sorts of cancers and other issues has proven itself to be an incredibly powerful tool. And I think the point that I want to drive home with you all is not just an emotional one, but also a financial one.

[00:40:15] A lot of these cancer cases are covered under what's called our presumptive law in the state of Virginia. And so they're going to be workers' comp cases. I'll use the testicular cancer case as an example. While my brother already has had his testicle removed, he just was told last week that he actually had two tumors and he's going to need to go back probably about every other month for the next five years testicular cancer is covered under the state presumptive laws and for that reason this is going to be a workers comp claim in prince william county and so finding these cancers early when they're stage one not only is the best thing for the individual member but it's also i believe

[00:40:50] a financially prudent thing to do for the county so i'd ask you all to to consider looking to find out whether or not we can allocate quite frankly 150 to 200 000 a year that would allow us to screen all members of fire and rescue career and volunteer on a rotating two to three year basis one for the betterment of the actual folks serving but two for the financial position of the county so thank you for your time today best luck in your deliberations both today and next week thank you so very much we are now going to go to remote public comment time i believe we

[00:41:27] have two people we do madam chair good afternoon everyone shall we begin please well madam chair thank you so much for your support madam chair back to you all right thank you so very much we are going to go to agenda item number four and that is county executive time mr shorter thank

you very much madam chair members of the board just two directives that i want to quickly highlight that were issued last week. The first, researching and reviewing best practices

[00:42:01] in existing legal authority regarding microgrids, on-site power backup generation, and other on-site power generation uses. And the directive asked that we come back to the board with staff's analysis and recommendations. This directive was assigned to me, the county attorney's office, as well as our Office of Planning. The second directive was to identify funding for additional noise testing and technical assistance associated with refining the draft noise ordinance. And that directive was

[00:42:37] assigned to the Office of Management and Budget and will be resolved next week as part of the budget adoption. There were no other directives issued and no other directives closed. Also wanted to make note and some of you attended the career expo this weekend over 1100 attendees certainly a signal to the need in our community just wanted to really thank and appreciate our HR department for all the work that they did Sarah Henry for the work that she did coordinating some of the federal resources that were there supporting those workers that were in that have

[00:43:15] been impacted, and all the other agencies that came out to hire, to interview, and to do on-site reviews. So just a big, big thank you to Prince William County and the county departments. And with that, Madam Chair, I want to now introduce Amy.

[00:43:34] Sorry, we have a couple questions for you, but thank you. I have Supervisor Franklin DeVega. Yeah, thank you for highlighting the career fair. I know several people now in need who were ripped from the federal government. Obviously, I think all of us sent out the information over newsletters and social media.

[00:43:52] And I did hear there were thousands of people there and that it was a pretty good turnout. Are we planning to do another for those that may have missed it? Or, you know, one feedback, even though it was a great event, was that it was a little overwhelming because of the sheer amount of people that showed up.

[00:44:09] but I'm hoping that we can do something else maybe a little bit later in the year. We absolutely plan on continuing to do these. You may recall that this is not our first, so we have started doing these career expos. I don't have a date yet, but I do know for sure HR plans to host another career fair this calendar year.

[00:44:29] What I'll do maybe next week is come back during county exec time and give a specific month where I know we are looking towards. Supervisor Veiga. Thank you, Madam Chair. Mr. Shorter, do we have any additional data from previous fairs in terms of attendance?

[00:44:46] Just curious. We do. We also have the numbers of those who were interviewed and hired on site. I don't have it with me, so I will also come back with that next week. Thank you. All right, thank you. You may proceed.

[00:45:02] All right. All right, well, thank you again, Madam Chair. Just want to first thank our Commonwealth Attorney, Amy Ashworth, for agreeing to come today with very short notice and want to turn the mic really over to her.

[00:45:17] All right. Good afternoon, Madam Chair and Supervisors of the Board of County Supervisors. As you know, I'm Amy Ashworth, the elected Commonwealth Attorney for Prince William County and the

cities of Manassas and Manassas Park.

[00:45:33] I want to thank you for inviting me to come speak about all the good work and what's happening at the Commonwealth Attorney's Office. As you hopefully recall, I was here in April of 2024.

[00:45:48] I made quite a lengthy presentation as part of a budget work session. And today what I'm going to do is update you on the information that I previously provided. Of course, if you have any questions, I'll be happy to answer those.

[00:46:11] There we go. All right. So when I appeared before you in April of 2024, we had just received the results of the time study done by the National Center for State Courts.

[00:46:35] That was a time study done by the Virginia General Assembly. And the result was staffing standards that the compensation board could use to inform the General Assembly of how many prosecutors they need statewide.

[00:46:52] The compensation board gets this data from the Virginia Supreme Court. They're looking at the number of cases brought by the police departments in each jurisdiction and the type of cases brought. And then they compile that data and give that information to the General Assembly.

[00:47:12] So, in December of 2023, we had the first results of that time study, which indicated Prince William County should have 49 attorneys, 12 paralegals, and 25 administrative staff.

[00:47:31] And I came to you last year. Ultimately, the board approved us for eight full-time positions. That was four attorneys and four administrative staff.

[00:47:48] And this year, it's my understanding that the county executive's budget is recommending another eight positions, FTEs, four attorneys and four administrative staff. After you approved that budget last year, the General Assembly then approved their budget, which gave the entire state 29 positions for prosecutors' offices.

[00:48:17] The compensation board awarded those based on need, and Prince William was awarded four of those 29 positions. So I came back to the board in October of 2024 and asked you to create those four additional positions, and you did.

[00:48:38] So we were able to fund one additional attorney, three additional administrative staff with that compensation board money. So last year, my office saw a total increase of 12 full-time employees, that being five attorneys, two paralegals, five administrative staff.

[00:48:57] And so the question would be, what did we do with those additional positions? Well, the first thing we did is added a senior assistant to our special victims unit. That is the unit that handles child and adult physical and sexual assaults.

[00:49:18] Now, we don't often talk about the successes of that unit publicly because very often the offender is known to the victim, and we always want to keep the privacy of our victim and their victimization private and confidential. But there are two noteworthy cases that I wanted to share with the board just to highlight this unit that typically goes, their work typically goes unseen.

[00:49:44] One is the case of Philip Michael Brown. Now, the police, Prince William County police, were called by several concerned citizens because there was what appeared to be a very intoxicated teenage girl at a convenience gas station.

[00:50:00] By the time the police arrived, she was gone, and they didn't know where she was. What their investigation revealed is that she had been picked up by Philip Michael Brown, previously unknown to her. She'd been taken to a parking garage where she was sexually assaulted.

[00:50:17] He then took her to the bathroom, and while he was waiting for her at the bathroom, her friend, who had become alerted to her friend missing, located her using her cell phone and arrived at the bathroom. Philip Michael Brown pretended to be a helpful stranger, right, helping out this drunk, intoxicated teenager.

[00:50:41] Ultimately, this was a very difficult circumstantial case because the victim had very little memory of what had actually transpired. So the police had to pull together a lot of eyewitnesses and video cameras. This case went to jury trial. He was convicted, and he was sentenced to serve 70 years.

[00:51:01] Another noteworthy case from this unit this year was Balmore Ortiz Guadardo. Mr. Guadardo was providing illegal substances to teenage girls, and when they would take those substances, he was sexually assaulting them.

[00:51:20] He was taking photographs of what he was doing. This case, again, came piecemeal together, but the prosecutors working hand-in-hand with the police were able to build a strong enough case that he pled guilty to, and I grabbed that release, three counts of rape, three counts of object sexual penetration, seven counts of distribution of a Schedule I or II substance to a minor, and one count of child pornography.

[00:51:54] There was no agreement as to the sentence, and Judge Irving sentenced him to six life sentences. We also had a deputy in charge of the Special Victims Unit.

[00:52:12] This deputy, Deputy Klein, had been a Prince William County prosecutor since law school for just over 30 years. She recently left our office to go to a neighboring jurisdiction where she could make similar money and have less of a caseload.

[00:52:29] We were very fortunate, though, that we were able to promote Stephanie Buck as the new deputy of the Special Victims Unit. And just last week while I was preparing this presentation, Stephanie Buck had been invited by the Commonwealth Attorney Services Council to give a presentation on a case that she handled that went to the Virginia Supreme Court and was upheld.

[00:52:58] And the difficulty of this case was the victim was autistic, and the judge, the trial judge, found that she was incompetent to testify. So the victim of the case couldn't testify.

[00:53:15] Stephanie did not give up. She found a workaround for that case, took it to trial, won a conviction, and was giving, this was a picture I took of her presenting it with the detective that she worked that case with. With another position that you gave us last year, we added a senior assistant to our special investigations unit.

[00:53:41] That unit handles gang, large-scale drug dealing, and human trafficking. So it's now staffed with three senior attorneys and one deputy Commonwealth attorney. Again, I want to sing the praises of that team in a noteworthy case which involved Commonwealth v. Anthony Perkins.

[00:54:04] Anthony Perkins is an admitted gang member, and he's incarcerated in our detention center on unrelated charges. From the detention center, he ordered two juveniles to commit a murder so that these juveniles could be members of the gang. These two juveniles not only committed one murder, but they

committed two murders. Now, we prosecuted and convicted the juveniles of those murders. But our team wanted to go after Anthony Perkins for first-degree murder, even though he

[00:54:40] was nowhere on scene, he was in the jail. Not only were they successful, but he was convicted of two counts of first-degree murder, resulting in a 70-year life sentence. With the other attorney positions, we were able to add three attorneys to what we call the line. The line attorneys are our less experienced attorneys who handle everything else. And mainly they're working with our patrol officers of the seven police departments that we serve. I think it's notable

[00:55:20] that two of the three attorneys we hired had been interns in our very robust internship program that this board very generously supports us having. We open that up to both undergrad and law school students. We run a program in the fall, the spring, and the summer. And this year we've had over 100 applicants for the 20 positions we have available in the summer. This small increase in the line gave us enough attorneys that we could divide them into three teams that really

[00:55:58] coincide with our police department's patrol squads. So we have an east team, a central team, and a West team. This provides the police officers and the prosecutors with more consistency and as they work directly with the same officers each and every court date. We're just nine months into this arrangement, but it seems to be working well both for our office and for the police

[00:56:28] department. While I'm here, I want to also share with you some of our other awards and accomplishments. And mainly I want to highlight our Violent Crimes Unit this year. Ladies and gentlemen of the board, we had one senior assistant who handled six murder trials this year. And I

[00:56:58] can't impress upon you how difficult it is to try six murders in one year. Most attorneys can do one or two, maybe three. These trials were long. They were complex. They were time-intensive.

[00:57:17] The individuals were dangerous and gang-related. The witnesses were not always wanting to come to court and testify. And yet, this prosecutor convicted all of them. And her dedication to the job and seeking justice for these victims is unmatched. And we are truly grateful for her service. And then again, last week, she put on successfully a five-hour preliminary hearing

[00:57:52] with nine witnesses in a missing person, presumed dead, nobody homicide from 15 years ago. These prosecutors don't give up, ever. I also want to highlight Deputy Don Goodman, who is now in charge of our Juvenile Crime Unit.

[00:58:19] Last year at our Spring Institute, he was awarded the Duval Award, which is a Virginia Association of Commonwealth Attorney Award. It is statewide, recognizing his service in the Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court.

[00:58:35] It was an honor and an accomplishment, and we're very proud of Deputy Don Goodman. But I also want to come here today and update you on some of our needs and challenges that we're facing.

[00:58:51] The first is the additional staffing needs in the juvenile and domestic relations court. As you recall, last year, the General Assembly added an additional judge, which was much needed. The judges wanted to make best use of that, and so they increased the number of courtrooms hearing criminal cases from three to five.

[00:59:17] And so now we have what we were doing before is one court would do motions, one court would do about 20 adult cases, and one court would do about five to ten juvenile cases each day. We've now

switched to two courtrooms doing 20 cases every day in adult court, two courtrooms doing juvenile cases every day, which is great because the faster we can move cases forward, the more justice prevails.

[00:59:47] Unfortunately, we only added one attorney to our juvenile unit or our special victims unit, which goes down to JDR. And so we've got this frustration by our judges because our prosecutors are very often in another courtroom.

[01:00:06] And so you've got some longer wait times for police officers, judges, victims, witnesses and defendants. We've heard from the court that it's frustrating. We've tried to put line attorneys down there, but it's an ongoing struggle.

[01:00:24] The other important need and challenge that we've addressed for quite some time is attorney burnout and resignation. We are losing really good, experienced attorneys to other jurisdictions where their caseloads are lower.

[01:00:42] And at the spring conference last week, I met a nice young prosecutor. He introduced himself to me because he said, I'm one of your constituents. And I said, then why don't you work for me? And he said, well, you know, I heard about Prince William.

[01:00:57] And we left it at that. I don't think it's a secret that we have higher needs than some other jurisdictions. And I think that's what people are weighing. I do want to say thank you to the board for all that you do for employee wellness.

[01:01:17] These tools have been incredibly helpful, especially over the last couple of weeks. And I think it's great that we provide them. You know, our job, I've got my chief of staff here today. I'm one of my deputy chiefs of staff.

[01:01:34] A lot of our job is trying to spot when an attorney is starting to struggle or feeling stressed out. And then the county has great resources available that we can refer them to to help. And one of our last real needs and challenges that we have are what we call discovery.

[01:02:01] Discovery is the process of getting information about a criminal case to the defense, which sounds really easy, right? you just scan it and send it over. We're talking about things like all of the hours and hours of body-worn camera that the police officers produce, the photographs, witness statements, police reports, cell phone dumps. And the problem is that all of this information has to be reviewed by somebody. We have to redact out any confidential information like dates of birth, social security

[01:02:35] numbers. You might have people in a state of undress that you need to make sure is properly transmitted. We can't just send it all out. And so what we do is we have a team of four paralegals whose entire job is getting this discovery in from those seven police departments and out to the attorneys. The problem is that our general district court judges have set a deadline of 14 days before trial it's just an arbitrary deadline that they set and if we don't meet it what the

[01:03:13] judges are doing is just continuing the case so even if we get it to them 13 days or 12 days in advance they are still granting automatic continuances which is frustrating because we have to bring the witnesses in in case the defense doesn't ask for a continuance and if the defense doesn't get what they want then they ask for the continuance and we have to tell the witnesses to come back. It's frustrating for everybody. And, you know, we have leaned on our paralegals. We've offered them over time. We have tried to fill in with other administrative staff to cross-train and

[01:03:50] get them to help out. But you've got someone that goes out sick or somebody that's on maternity leave. Now we're down a person and it's just this 14-day deadline has been a challenge. So moving on to what's on the horizon for us.

[01:04:11] I think there's good news and there's bad news. I'm going to start you off with the bad news so I can end on some good news. As I stood before you last April, I told you that the numbers we were looking at, the figures we were using, were going to change, and I was afraid they were going to go up.

[01:04:31] Well, I was right. In August of 2025, we got those new numbers. So this is where we currently stand. Those new time study numbers came out saying we should have 61 attorneys, 12 paralegals, and 25 administrative staff for the work that we were doing in 2024.

[01:04:58] If the county executive's recommendation is given to us, we will, in July, be at 53 attorneys, 9 paralegals, 18 administrative staff. So that's that four additional attorneys, four additional administrative staff.

[01:05:17] That leaves us with a shortage of eight attorneys, three paralegals, seven administrative staff, total of 18 full-time employees. I'm not addressing in this presentation the staffing for victim witness.

[01:05:32] There are no staffing standards for them, but it would reason that the more cases we have, the more victim witness staff that we're going to have. Again, the new numbers are expected to come out in August, and I expect that Prince William is going to see an increase because I borrowed the slide from last year's presentation and updated it.

[01:05:58] As you can see, the criminal case filings are continuing to go up. For fun, I thought about what could we do with those additional positions if all of our dreams came true.

[01:06:16] I would add those to our juvenile crime unit who has seen an increase in their numbers. I would add, too, to the Domestic Violence Unit. We are woefully understaffed in that unit. I would love to have an attorney in special investigations that I could cross-designate with the federal system.

[01:06:37] The Eastern District of the United States in Alexandria handles a lot of the gang cases that we see are brought by the task force because they're not just in Prince William County. They're crossing state borders and county borders.

[01:06:55] And to have an attorney on our staff that's cross-designated with the feds would really allow us to leverage the laws that they have and bring justice to people on that level. I also think we are at the stage where Prince William County's Commonwealth Attorney's Office needs a civil attorney.

[01:07:17] And I know that sounds strange, but we are all prosecutors. But the Code of Virginia puts a lot of duties on the Commonwealth attorney that are civil in nature. Expungements, civil commitments. We have a new sealing law that's threatening to go into effect in July, I think, of 2027.

[01:07:37] And FOIA, which is a challenge. And so having an attorney that handles those cases exclusively would be incredibly helpful. What we do right now is we have to spread it among the attorneys.

[01:07:55] Literally, we look at everyone's caseload and we're like, you look like you're not doing enough. Here's a civil case for you to figure out how to do. That's not how we should be operating. I would also add more attorneys to the line.

[01:08:14] You are increasing the police patrol numbers as you should, as the data indicates we should. Every time you add more police officers, they bring more cases, and we need attorneys to prosecute those. On the paralegal side, the current, whatever comes to us this time is going to go to our discovery team so we can try to meet that 14-day deadline.

[01:08:40] If we had additional units, I would love to see us be able to put paralegals in those specialized units. Right now, we have, if the staffing standard from the state says it's four to one, four attorneys to every one paralegal, we're currently at 10 to one, six to one, and seven to one in those units.

[01:08:59] And there is no paralegal for the line attorneys. They do their own motions and stuff like that. And administrative staff is really where we struggle and are low.

[01:09:16] And adding seven admin staff would just be game-changing. We don't have an IT person. We would love to have somebody that can really dig into. We have a case management system that has a lot of features like document preparation and subpoena preparation.

[01:09:39] I would love to have an IT person really get to know that program and be able to use it in ways that we just simply can't. witness clerks who, when a case comes in and is set for trial, who review the police report and send out the witness subpoenas. Right now, we rely on the police officers to issue those subpoenas.

[01:10:03] They're not thrilled about it. That's just the way it's always been done, and we haven't agreed to take that on for them. But having a witness clerk that could just generate those subpoenas for witnesses would be phenomenal. I think we're going to have to move to, right now we do one grand jury every month.

[01:10:23] I've talked to the clerk of court. I think eventually we're going to have to expand that and run two grand juries every month. It would be, we don't, right now the person who runs our grand jury also leads our circuit court team. It just would be so much easier to have one person in charge of that.

[01:10:44] We could have courtroom clerks. There's so many administrative tasks that are done now by attorneys, again, which is part of the complaints we hear when people leave. Having admin to do that stuff would just save a lot of attorney time that could be better spent on those cases.

[01:11:06] Okay, and now for the good news. So as the governor's budget or the General Assembly's budget stands right now, there are 70 positions for Commonwealth Attorneys' Offices across the state.

[01:11:21] I think Prince William County is going to see some of those positions come here. Just, I think, based on looking at the numbers and the need. The compensation board is the one who decides how to divide up those numbers. And we will get that information probably sometime in May is what they were telling us last week at the conference.

[01:11:44] Those would be effective in July. And so if that happens, I will work with our budget people to do what we did last time. and see if we can bring that to the board to fund those positions using that state compensation board money.

[01:12:00] The office renovation, many of you came and visited the office when it was, before it was renovated. And you did approve, I think close to three years ago, this full-scale renovation.

[01:12:16] It is 99% done. It has been such a morale booster for our staff. They are thrilled. We will, of course, have a small open house and invite you all so you can see it.

[01:12:32] It's very beautiful and very functional, and we thank you for that. And I just started talking with the circuit court about bringing a behavioral health docket to Prince William County.

[01:12:50] This is a Supreme Court of Virginia-approved docket. It deals with criminal cases where there's an underlying mental health disorder that results in criminal behavior. These are a lot of our what people call catch and release cases, right?

[01:13:07] People are arrested for very low-level nuisance-like cases. They're taken to jail. They're held for a short period, sometimes just overnight. They're released. And guess what? They go right back out, steal something from somewhere else, get drunk again, get arrested.

[01:13:23] Here we go. This cycle is frustrating for the police officers, prosecutors, the jail, the magistrates, the court system, everybody. And so this docket will address that problem in a way that holds them accountable for their criminal behavior, but also provides accesses to services so that we prevent the crimes from happening in the first place.

[01:13:50] We have seen tremendous success with our drug recovery court, our veterans court. This would just be another really important tool for this county that I think is long overdue. So we're very excited about getting this up and running. Finally, I know I sent you an email last week about the loss of an employee.

[01:14:19] He was here for 30 years as a prosecutor. I worked with him when I was a young prosecutor, and I happily kept him on when I won the election and took over the office.

[01:14:35] he headed up our domestic violence unit. Mike was a quiet hero of our office. He was humble, kind. He showed up for work every day with his lunchbox, ready to do battle. He would come into my office. He rarely complained, but when he had something, he would come in and say, you know, I love my job, right? He was a mentor, colleague, and friend to many of us, and he will be missed.

[01:15:11] He died unexpectedly, tragically, March 30th of this year. Again, I want to thank you for allowing me to come in and speak with you. My invitation stands to all of you to please come to the courthouse for a day.

[01:15:30] We will welcome you. We will match you up with one of these prosecutors that I sing the praises of. And you can watch them do what they do. And of course, my door is always open. Our legal ethics prevent us from publicly commenting on cases while they are pending, which is frustrating for me.

[01:15:52] But I can always answer questions as much as I can provide to you. I'm happy to do that if you ever have something happen. And many of you have reached out. So with that, Madam Chair, that concludes my remarks.

[01:16:10] Well, thank you so very much. Thank you for coming, especially on such short notice. And I am sorry for the loss of Mike and your team. That's very hard. And I can tell, you know, when you're speaking that he meant a lot to your team. My first question is, how much turnover have you had in your office?

[01:16:26] Thank you for asking that. So we, I explained the deputy in special victims that we lost. We also had a deputy chief of staff. Again, he had been a defense attorney for a number of years, fantastic prosecutor.

[01:16:43] we lost him to the feds i'm kind of secretly hoping that his job gets cut we lost a line attorney to another jurisdiction we lost our director of operations and and the frequent the recitation you hear is it's

the workload it's the stress you know all of these departures we have a little cake and say goodbye and everyone's in tears but it is just there's not much we can do when we recognize that somebody is having you know they're stressed out

[01:17:18] it's often myself my chief of staff my chief deputy that come in and we take some of their cases but you know we're really just passing around this massive problem which is the case are you saying about like maybe five people in the past year um yes i think i think it was four or five since january well kevin was last summer right all right and then um in terms of relieving workload and burnout which positions are most critical between attorneys administrative staff

[01:17:56] and paralegals because from the sheet it gave it seems like administrative staff is a huge need administrative staff is our biggest need that's where we're short the most um you know they they work hand in hand right you've got if you don't have enough administrative people then you've got attorneys that are inputting data from what happened in court today, right? So they take their files, they go to court. Some cases are continued. Some are found guilty. Some are found not guilty. Some are continued for disposition. So now somebody has to input all of that into the

[01:18:33] case management system. And that typically will fall to attorneys. Now we get 20 interns in the summer and that's the first thing we train them to do is put input all of this information yeah and so last year there was a shift to allowing police officers to handle certain misdemeanors in court I just want to know how that process is working and you know with the staffing plan that you gave us if we give you additional staff you know right now what's in the budget the additional aid will you be able to take those cases back are you going to keep them with the police

[01:19:06] So what we did after the last budget cycle, I met with the administrative staff in our office and the attorneys and said, what can we do?

[01:19:22] How can we do more with less? What is the next steps? Part of the strain is that each and every case that the police officers bring to us, we were opening a file. An attorney was being appointed, which meant we had to do discovery, running records.

[01:19:41] I then met with the police chiefs for Manassas and Prince William County. We talked about what we could change that would not be a horrible impact on them.

[01:19:58] We then met with the magistrates and the chief judge in general district court. So we've always had what was known as a traffic docket, right, where it's just the police officer and the judge. Essentially, we expanded that to include cases that were low level, that were typically not resulting in jail time.

[01:20:19] So your disorderly conducts, your first offense, shoplifting, trespass, things like that. Things where you typically didn't need a lot of witnesses. They weren't complex. And we moved those to the traffic docket and expanded that docket.

[01:20:37] We gave the power to the judges to continue the cases for dismissal if that was the appropriate thing to do. We still send a prosecutor in on those dockets who meets with the police officers and says, are there any cases on this docket that you think we should be involved in?

[01:20:55] And if the police say yes, we move them to the 1030 docket and go through the process of opening the file and doing all of that. This is similar to what some other jurisdictions do. It allowed, it freed up some administrative time because they didn't have to open files.

[01:21:15] And it was the best option that we had. As a prosecutor, I don't think that should be our way of operating. I think for justice to take place, you need a prosecutor in the courtroom.

[01:21:34] But I recognize that there's financial constraints that we can't always do that. And I accept that. And so this compromise allowed us to still focus on our resources on the cases that need that level of attention and allow the ones that don't to be handled by the judges and the police officers.

[01:21:56] All right. Thank you. I'm out of my time. So Supervisor Vega, then Franklin. Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you, Ms. Ashworth, for coming in today. I spent plenty of time in the courthouse, just not in your office, but I will take you up on that offer. I didn't catch the name of your um did you say she was your deputy she's uh my deputy one of my deputy chiefs of staff cara graham okay and my chief of staff I saw cara in action the other day in circuit I was in that courtroom so um again I'll take you up on that offer you know for me not just because I'm a law enforcement officer but just in general society cannot

[01:22:32] function if there's no law and order so I'm very critical of your office for various reasons um You know, when we conduct our county-wide survey or when you just engage with your constituents, safe and secure communities is paramount. And the success of your office is critical in ensuring safe and secure communities.

[01:22:49] It's not just the police department, but it's the different branches that fall under a criminal justice system, if you will. And so I mean this wholeheartedly that I want to support your asks. But the issue that I take oftentimes when I'm presented with asks, and not just with your office, but in general, is managing efficiency, right?

[01:23:11] Are we being efficiency? Last year, I asked you for data. While I appreciate the presentation that you've provided, I still maintain my position that more data probably is needed so that we can make better sound financial decisions when it comes to allocating funds. I will put this plug in every single time that I can that I think that we would find ourselves in a much better position if we actually revisited our revenue share agreement that we have with our school division to ensure that we had funding that is needed to fulfill not just your asks but other asks that are equally as important.

[01:23:42] And so with that, I want to lead with my first question because we had Chief Newsham here not too long ago. Is crime in Prince William County increasing or decreasing? I think the last chief's meeting I went to, they said it was decreasing, but that's just a spot of time.

[01:24:01] Yeah, and so the reason why I ask that is because I want to understand where the caseload is coming from, right? And so could you provide more insight as to if crime is decreasing, why are we increasing caseloads? So, you know, you have a measurement of crime.

[01:24:21] I think the last chief's meeting that we had, we were talking about the first quarter of 2024. And so, you know, compared what the time study bases it on, they're going to be using a three-year average of the numbers.

[01:24:37] but they're looking at the filings in the general district court the juvenile court and the circuit court and the types of cases that they are so your larceny cases don't take as much time by a prosecutor as for instance a murder case or a sexual assault case and so you know the the I thought in your materials that I sent yesterday I sent that time study it is a brutal 130 some pages

[01:25:06] is, I know, but it does walk you through the analysis and how they do that. I have a somewhere in my, I remember seeing a PowerPoint that they did where they explained it to us, and I'm happy to forward that to you. It's a little bit easier to go through, but that's what they're basing that data on. And as you saw in that slide that I put up, I'm just looking at January to December case

[01:25:41] filings. Okay. I mean, it'd be great. I would love if I showed up at the August meeting and they said, oh, you need less than what you needed last year. That would be great news. Would you say that your specialty dockets are also taking up a lot of your time? They actually don't take up a lot of prosecutor time. What takes up time is screening the cases and making sure we're getting the right disposition, but the dockets themselves maybe take one afternoon every two weeks. And this is the docket that the attorneys love doing because it's actually good news, right? You're seeing people go

[01:26:18] through these significant life changes, and that's uplifting compared to day after day of these horrible criminal acts that you see. And so it does good for the community. It does good for the attorneys working that I would not want to see that go away. I think I have room for one more question. In terms of workload and distribution how do you how do you measure that? How do you you know does every attorney have the same amount of cases? So great question. So we have that case management system that I talked about having to be updated. That will generate for us a list of

[01:26:57] how many cases each person is handling and what we have another deputy chief of staff before every senior staff meeting will go through and update how many trials they have versus how many like sentencing cases because sentencings are a little bit easier than your trial caseload and so we try to keep track of how many attorneys how many cases each attorney has so we can see who is struggling, who should be struggling, and who has some bandwidth, if you will, that we can add some extra cases.

[01:27:35] I went out of time, Madam Chair. Thank you. All right, Supervisor Franklin, we are Bailey Gordy. Well, okay, well, thank you for coming and sharing this presentation. I guess I'll just kind of leave where Supervisor Vega left off with regards to, I thought it was an interesting question with our crime rate going down, which obviously we love, but yet the caseload still being quite significant.

[01:28:01] And I imagine, kind of as you just mentioned, that it's a number of different things that we have to consider. Types of cases, as you just mentioned, certain types of cases just take more resources than other types. And particularly, we do have particularly violent crimes going down in the county, which is wonderful, but we do still have challenges with motor vehicle thefts.

[01:28:23] And so I know that that's still something that law enforcement is paying very close attention to. But also what we haven't talked about is population growth. We have almost half a million people in Prince William County. So even if the crime rate decreases, we obviously have a larger number of cases in other jurisdiction by the sheer fact that we have a large population.

[01:28:46] So we also have to keep that in mind. Any thoughts on that? No, I think that's an excellent point. And as long as your population has continued to grow, your need for police officers is going to continue to grow. Your need for prosecutors is going to need to continue to grow. Sure.

[01:29:01] And then just kind of diving from that, I do want to talk a little bit about the time study. I did go through as much as I could from the time study. Can you just talk about that a little bit more? You've explained what it was, but just to backtrack, what is the time study?

[01:29:17] What are they looking at? And what are you basing your numbers off? Is it based on just what Amy Ashworth wants, or is it purely the time study and what you are seeing in your courtroom? So the time study was done in 2023.

[01:29:35] It was about nine weeks long. Every prosecutor in Virginia participated, and we literally wrote down what we did every day. We kept track of our minutes, and at the end of every day, you would put into this computer what you did.

[01:29:51] So they pulled all of that data, right? how much time is spent on administrative tasks, how much watching body-worn camera, how much in the courtroom, how much on phone calls, how much meeting with victims. And they pulled all of that together. And they did it by case type.

[01:30:07] So if you were working on a murder case, you were putting that under murder. If you were working under sexual assault, that's where you were putting it. And so they were able to figure out how much time everyone was spending on different types of cases. And then they went through and they had committee meetings to decide, okay, this is what you are spending it on, but what should you be spending it on, right?

[01:30:29] What, you know, should you, did you have enough time to meet with all of the witnesses? Did you have time to do this? And they came up with, like, the recommended amount of time you should be spending on those cases. And from there, they just backtracked and said, okay, if you should be spending this much time on murders and this much time on sexual assault and this much time on larceny and juvenile cases and domestic violence, how many attorneys would you need if there are 40 work weeks in a year and you figure people are going to take a two-week vacation, they're going to have training, they're going to be sick?

[01:31:09] Like, what do you need? And that's where they came out with the numbers. And it was surprisingly on point. It really, from what we were feeling, because what ours said is you're low on administrative people. And it was like an aha moment when I saw that because that was the number one complaint.

[01:31:28] Why are we as attorneys making our own copies and doing all of these administrative tasks that a secretary should do or an administrative professional should do? Our administrative professionals are like, if you ask me to mail one more letter, I'm going to lose it, right?

[01:31:44] Like, they're at full tilt. And it was like, you read the time study and you were like, yes, this fits exactly. And then I've seen other jurisdictions saying the same thing, like one jurisdiction only needed one additional attorney, and they were like, yeah, that feels about right.

[01:32:04] Yeah, and I'll circle back with my second time slot, but basically you're going purely on the time study as well as kind of what you're seeing in your courtroom. Right, right. I'll circle back. Thank you. All right. Supervisor Weir.

[01:32:20] Thank you, Madam Chair. Ms. Ashworth, I'm kind of with, I'm a lot with Supervisor Vega, but I'm the data guy. And I've looked at the chart and I've looked at the numbers. And what is inescapable is that over the last four-year period since the FY22 budget, your budget has increased by almost \$6.3 million, which is a 91% increase over four years.

[01:32:49] We can't sustain that. At the same time, you've got 35 new FTE over that same period, which is a 59% increase in staffing. And you have, at least with respect to the eight largest jurisdictions in the Commonwealth, you have the second highest average expenditure per FTE.

[01:33:08] So I'm having a hard time justifying even more FTE. You know, I get what the General Assembly is saying or what the study is saying. But what I'm looking at the study, and I've talked to several of the jurisdictions, it looks like Prince William is an anomaly in terms of its ask.

[01:33:28] Fairfax County, two and a half times our population, just cut three FTE. They have significantly lower numbers total than you do. And my understanding is they seem to be fine. I know the Chesterfield CA asked for additional positions based on this study, and the Chesterfield board last week said no, and the CA was fine with that.

[01:33:52] I'm kind of curious why we're the anomaly. I also sort of take issue with the correlation between more officers being hired and sort of a data jump in terms of more cases being filed.

[01:34:10] We were so low in PD officers that we didn't have people with enough backup. So if you've got two people in a cruiser, I doubt seriously that your caseload is going to double just because you've got two guys in a cruiser to provide more safety to the officer that's there. I mean, I'd love to see how that correlates, but to me it's a matter of efficiencies.

[01:34:32] I'm seeing a lot in your presentation about specialty dockets and, you know, wine supervisors doing particular caseloads, and I'm not saying that's a bad thing, given what the results are, but, yeah, I've got a lot of managerial experience, and I'm having a real tough time putting together the increase in the budget over four years, the increase in the FTE over four years, and then an even greater request that seemingly is based largely on a document

[01:35:07] that no other jurisdiction that I've looked into seems to be pressing or fulfilling. In fact, you know, I'm kind of curious why Fairfax is so much lower. Maybe they've got a different strategy. Maybe they don't prosecute the same type of cases, but with two and a half times the population.

[01:35:29] Oh, by the way, our population is plateauing. And probably likely to diminish over the next couple of years, at least that's what's probably in the works, given the lower birth rate, given the possible impacts of DOGE, people retiring out, people moving out of the county because they're now essentially work from home types of things.

[01:35:54] I mean, there's a changing dynamic here, and then last of all, if the GA is going to give the Commonwealth Attorneys as a whole a bunch of new positions in May, I know it doesn't jive with our budget schedule, but I'd like to know how much they're going to fund before we fund more that they would otherwise be funding, because at the end of the day, they should be funding your office and not us.

[01:36:19] i mean you're you're you're you're you're a constitutional employee uh our constitutional officer excuse me your office is constitutional everybody in there and so why we're we're paying for what they haven't paid is is a gripe that we probably share uh but i would much prefer to readdress additions after you find out what the general assembly is going to give you in fund that's all i've got madam chair there is a question somewhere in there okay do you want

[01:36:54] respond? I mean, I'm the elected commonwealth attorney for Prince William County. I care about Prince William County and Prince William County's needs. I don't know what Fairfax is doing. If

you're interested, we can invite Steve Discano down and he can explain what he does. But every single commonwealth attorney that I've spoken to in the Virginia Association of Commonwealth Attorneys is abiding by this time study and making requests. We even put together a package called Virginia Access to Justice, requiring the General Assembly to fully fund prosecutors and defense attorneys across the entire state.

[01:37:32] It passed the House Committee Courts of Justice. It passed the Senate Courts. They both died in appropriations because it's about \$258 million. But we're going to try again next year. All right.

[01:37:47] Thank you. Supervisor Bailey. Thank you, Madam Chair. And to continue this statement briefly, we know that when we came on board, you were dealing with a lot of archival information and systems in 50 years, and so that doesn't go unnoticed on this board.

[01:38:06] But in moving forward, I just wanted to ask you, when you talked about going back to what my colleague had mentioned about the data, collecting data, because I think we're all data wonks up here and making decisions when it comes to the funding of the taxpayer's money.

[01:38:22] So my question to you is, in terms of data and making sure that you are collecting the data more expeditiously, more succinctly, what does that look like in the future in terms of future budget? I know we're in the current budget, but is that something that we need to look at that you would be responsible for in terms of IT, or is that something that you collaborate with the DOIT team?

[01:38:46] So there are multiple groups out there that work with prosecutors' offices to collect this kind of data that you're speaking about. I know Deputy County Executive Dan Alexander brought to my attention that Fairfax has such a system where they're really digging into that data.

[01:39:04] I did reach out to my counterpart in Fairfax to say, hey, what is this and how did you pay for it? He said it cost about a million dollars and he had so many unfilled vacancies that he used that money to pay for it.

[01:39:21] I don't have unfilled vacancies. Our vacancies, we try to be very proactive once we get applicants and keep them kind of waiting for a position to open so I don't have that kind of savings in the budget.

[01:39:37] We could potentially look at grants to pay for that. So I hope that answers your question. Yeah, it does, just in terms of future and where we are right now in terms of having more data. I've got three more minutes. The other question that I have in terms of interns that you mentioned earlier, could you just kind of review for us how you use those interns and at what level do you bring them in to assist where you have holes where you need to fill?

[01:40:05] Yes, so our fall and spring programs, they are usually classroom-based interns, meaning they are getting college credit, so they're not getting payment, and they're coming in for a set number of hours. Most of them are undergraduate. In our summer program, we have a lot of law students, and with the funding the board provides, we're able to offer sometimes a small stipend to those law students.

[01:40:32] We match them up with a prosecutor in the office, so they really get a hands-on experience working with that prosecutor. they assist with, you know, any way that they can in the cases. Some of them even get their third-year practice certificate from the Virginia State Bar.

[01:40:52] So they can actually do the case with the attorney sitting at the table next to them, which is very exciting for them. And the last question I have, one more minute. With those interns, is there a possibility when you talk about FTEs that as they come back, that's an opportunity for you to fulfill the number that you need for FTEs?

[01:41:13] That's exactly what we did last year. Like I said, two of the three line attorneys that we hired had been prior interns. We, as the board does its budgeting, this cycle, if we are granted more attorney positions, or the four that are in the budget, we have already reached out to previous interns who are interested in coming back to work for us.

[01:41:37] Thank you, Madam Chair. All right, Supervisor Gordy. Thank you, Madam Chair. Good afternoon, Ms. Ashworth. How are you? Good. How are you? Doing great. In going through the data between the two staffing standards schedules, in the 2025, they actually ranked each locality based upon, I guess, the algorithms in terms of the need.

[01:42:03] And just trying to answer, so in trying to compare that to what the state funded last year and the fact that they're looking at funding 70 positions this year, do you know where Prince William ranked last year when we received the four positions? Ninth. We were ninth.

[01:42:19] So we're ninth again this year. And how many positions were funded by the state last year? Four. No, I mean total. 29. 29. So we're three times, somewhere in that range, two and a half times what that was. So we would be potentially looking at somewhere around potentially three to four or five ads coming from the state this year if everything holds true based upon last year.

[01:42:46] Right. So, yes, as I understand it, all of the offices that were one-man offices were given a second. Okay. And then they did it based on need. So I'm hoping that we are fortunate enough, again, to get a percentage of these positions.

[01:43:08] That would be nice. Thank you for that. In terms of, you know, this is theoretical, you know, and this is based on time, but you're also having to deal with the very practical, you know, this is what Prince William County needs in terms of prosecuting.

[01:43:24] And I thank you for hosting me at your office, and we had great conversation about some of the challenges facing Prince William County and where the needs lie. And one of the areas that I'm particularly concerned about is domestic violence in terms of both in protecting the witnesses and making sure that they show up to trial.

[01:43:47] Also making sure that when you think about the most violent cases in our county, what percentage does lie along that domestic violence category? You know, I used to say it was about half were domestic violence.

[01:44:07] I haven't had a chance to look at those numbers recently. It feels like those are coming down a little bit. Domestic violence is certainly a lot of what we deal with.

[01:44:23] I think this time study showed we needed seven people in that unit. We have four. We also have the early diversion program where we screen those and try to take out of the criminal justice system the very low-level mandatory arrest domestic violence cases that we see, which are like brother and sister fighting over remote control.

[01:44:50] Those can be screened out so we can focus on the more serious ones. It does feel like a lot of our violence recently is coming from, I want to say, the 15 to 22-year age group, and a lot of it feels more gang-involved and drug-involved than it used to.

[01:45:13] Yeah, and that's where I was going to go to next in terms of, and then with that, in terms of prosecuting, one of the challenges, again, gets back to the witnesses showing up to trial to assure we can prosecute. So the positions that we added this past year, you know, the state, I think you applied them towards helping, working with victims and witnesses.

[01:45:36] What have you seen, have you seen progress in that, and what do we need to do to ensure, again, that we are able to prosecute these criminals instead of going to trial and witnesses don't show up and therefore no trial takes place?

[01:45:53] Yeah, that's one of our main challenges is getting victims to come to court and be willing to testify. And sometimes it just takes a lot of hand-holding, but that's time that you have to take having those conversations. Getting subpoenas out would be helpful.

[01:46:11] Getting that 14-day deadline met would be helpful because you wouldn't have to, it's hard enough to get them there the first time, then to get them to come back maybe a second time or a third time. Relying more on the grand jury to issue charging documents instead of the magistrate is also helpful because it cuts out the whole step of having a preliminary hearing.

[01:46:34] All of those things, making the whole system more efficient, is always going to be better for getting justice. Okay. Thank you. I'll have additional questions in my second round. All right. Supervisor Vega. It's back to me again. I thought Penny was next, but I guess not.

[01:46:57] I will go on the record saying that I do not want Steve to come over to Prince William County for obvious reasons. And while I understand where Supervisor Ware was going with this, he was trying to make the point that you have other jurisdictions that have a higher caseload number, and they seem to be managing just fine.

[01:47:13] I also understand your position as to, you know, I'm worried about Prince William County and Prince William County only, but just wanted to reiterate the point that my colleague was trying to make, and I believe they also blew through a \$240 million surplus, which is probably why they're cutting positions, But that's not us here in Prince William County.

[01:47:28] And I thank our finance team for keeping us on track to making sure that we don't commit that mistake. But I do have a quick question. I want to know more a little bit about in the presentation you talk about wellness tools to help with burnout. What does that look like?

[01:47:44] What does that entail? Yeah. Well, I first want to say from what I hear from other jurisdictions, they're not doing just fine. Well, and I was just spacing that off of the additional attachment that you included.

[01:48:00] We have, you know, Chesterfield County. The point is that everybody has a higher caseload, and they're working with what they have. And I get it. We're all working with what we have. I get it. That might look different for other jurisdictions and whatnot. But I was just making an emphasis based on Supervisor Ware being the data guy, and he's just trying to match it up with the ask, which is similar to what I kind of asked last year.

[01:48:22] But, yeah, I just don't I don't think we say, oh, well, you know, Fairfax is operating with only 41 prosecutors. I don't think if you talk to the defense attorneys, the judges, the police officers, the prosecutors, that they're saying that's just fine.

[01:48:38] I think they would say the opposite. At least that's my opinion. Yes. The wellness tools. So when Mike Phipps passed unexpectedly, the county did provide a counselor to come.

[01:48:54] and meet with a lot of the attorneys who were grieving. She's going to come back, I think it's next week. And that was just so, we were so in shock by this and having to, you know, we were greeting people as they were coming in Monday morning saying, hey, here's this terrible news, and by the way, here's your docket.

[01:49:17] I mean, it was terrible, and we felt really powerless as to what we could do. Kara reached out to the county. I think I spoke with Mr. Shorter, and we had a counselor available to start the grieving process.

[01:49:34] That was very helpful. There's been other things that we have reached out. I know there were, like, this sounds silly, but coloring books, right, which are a real shown stress reliever to have people be able to do those things.

[01:49:56] The ice cream social, right? That's great. Everybody's spirit is high on ice cream day. Again, it sounds silly, but that kind of thing. We also provide services to the police academy where we teach at the police academy.

[01:50:15] That gives us a little bit of discretionary money. So on a tough docket day, we can order 10 pizzas, right? Those kind of little things are really helpful. Okay, and then the last question that I have is in regards to the ask for the IT position.

[01:50:34] Obviously, we know the county has their own IT department, and we just increased that budget by a lot. And so this is a state program, yes? The database? No. It's in-house? It is in-house.

[01:50:51] Okay, but that doesn't mean we can't ask the state to fund it, this position. no it doesn't but the so it's my understanding every agency kind of has an i.t person i know the sheriff does and we rely on the sheriff's i.t person to help us out um and no i know he asked for it but i don't think we granted that last budget cycle if i'm if i'm yeah just trying to figure out you know where else we can get additional support in terms of funding um if

[01:51:27] this board cannot fulfill your asks where else can we look into yeah um which is why why i was asking um that's all i have thank you thank you all right supervisor franklin yeah sure i just want to um just go back to a couple of things um you know we've talked a lot about other jurisdictions like fairfax obviously they're they're undergoing a pretty dire budget situation so i think that's important to point out um and so it's likely that they're just making do with what they have whereas Prince William County is in a much different state because of some of the commercial

[01:52:05] revenue that we have coming in over the past several years so just want to point that out and then in terms of what we can and can't ask the state for you know I always say that the state should come in and do better now with regards to now with regards to IT services I don't know if because we go about what the comp board should be doing and the comp board provides resources for staffing. So we need to kind of think about that as we're saying, well, you know, they can just come in and pay for the furniture.

We need them to actually come in and do their job and pay for staffing. That's what's going to actually relieve the pressure from the locality. So I want to be

[01:52:43] clear about that. I also wanted to ask about the CAC. I wanted to ask this kind of in the beginning, but exactly how does that relationship work? I mean, does the investigation start, I guess, with the police department. They kind of work with the CAC and then your prosecutors kind of work with the information given from the CAC. Can you just talk a little bit about what does that look like? Yeah, the CAC has been just an amazing addition to the county services that we provide. I was prosecutor in the special victims unit for nine years begging for a CAC because

[01:53:18] what happens is you have detectives put in the special victims unit and you have to be specially trained to forensically interview a child about sexual abuse. I'm sure the internet is full of horror stories of bad interviews create bad cases. And so the CIC kind of took that burden off of the police department by having forensically trained interviewers. And they do a phenomenal job. So what happens is when a child reports sexual assault, usually very often a patrol officer is the first one on scene. And we tell the patrol officers, please don't interview the child.

[01:53:54] bring in special victims right away. The special victims detective will reach out to the special victims prosecutor, and they're working from the minute that complaint comes in. And so we can, there's case law and statutory law that allows us to use that interview sometimes in lieu of making the child come in and testify. Yes. Anything else, Supervisor Franklin? All right. We are going to go to Supervisor Weir. Thank you, Madam Chair. Going back to the efficiencies aspect, I'm looking

[01:54:29] at the staffing needs slide 2024 and as i recall you know these these staffing ratios one paralegal for every four is what you had then one admin admin staff for every two attorneys and then we gave you more positions last year and the ratios deteriorated and under this scenario you're not even getting back to 2024 ratios you're actually getting you know so for my one-eighth um i understand the need for paralegals. I understand the need for administrative support. I do a lot of

[01:55:04] legal research and support briefs, et cetera, for a lot of attorneys. So for my one-eighth, I'm willing to give you the admin side, but I'm not going to create an even bigger staffing issue for the paralegals and the admin staff because adding the two more FTE for the attorney side, which I'm having an issue with anyway, given the drop in crime rate, given the plateau of population growth and given what's going on elsewhere in the Commonwealth regardless of what the reason is. From I-18 to the rest of the board I'm willing to compromise a little bit

[01:55:43] and I don't have an issue with the with the admin and the paralegal side to bring you a little more in line. How I might even be willing to give you more paralegals on top of the two but not not more paralegals not more admin staff and more staff attorneys. All right supervisor Gordy. Thank you Supervisor Weir, for stating that. So that kind of leads into my question. If you were to prioritize

[01:56:17] your requests, what's most important to you? That's such a difficult question because there are, you know, I'm trying to envision when I go back to the office, if I stand here and say attorneys, I'm going to have a very angry admin. And if I go back and say admin, I'm going to have very angry attorneys. I mean, everybody's running full tilt. I think you can see from what I've done

[01:56:51] with the positions last year, we needed to be up at 49 attorneys and I got us there, right? And kind of this shift in the docket that we made took a little bit of the pressure off of the admin staff. And I

think that's easier to do because I can't send admin staff into a courtroom to try a case. And so I think if I had to prioritize, I would say attorneys, and a lot of our attorneys

[01:57:25] are capable at admin tasks. They don't like it, but they can do their own typing. And, you know, we've gotten away from the years of having attorneys that didn't know how to turn on their machines. All of my attorneys know how to turn on their machines. They know how to operate them.

[01:57:44] And so I think that's where the bigger need is. That said, I know I'm going to pay for that answer. We can have security come to your office.

[01:57:59] That's right. It's going to cost more ice cream. That's right, more ice cream. And I'll buy the next round. You just send me the bill since I put you in that bad spot. And this is just more of a, just trying to get after, you know, part of what I've seen over the past couple of years is one of our big challenges is we have people who are arrested and then they're arrested for a violent crime.

[01:58:31] They are, they go before a magistrate, they are released, and while out on release, they commit a murder. Yeah. I mean, that doesn't happen terribly often, but it has occurred. But when it's been a murder, it's usually, it fits that sort of scenario, right?

[01:58:47] Yeah. So those that are not the domestic violence, it's, you know, on the other side of, you know, more the gang side of things, I guess. But how do we, are we getting better at identifying those who present the threat so that we are reducing that rate of scenario of ensuring if somebody's presenting enough threat, we keep them in jail until we get them to trial?

[01:59:13] Are we getting better at it? Right. So the law changed in 2020 that there used to be a presumption that if you committed a certain act, criminal act, you would be held in jail pending your trial. The General Assembly did away with that presumption against bond.

[01:59:32] And when that happened, our judges kind of flipped it into there's a presumption against holding people.

[01:59:41] And so we are, our prosecutors day in and day out are saying, we think this person is a threat, we think they are going to flee, they should be held. And the judges are just simply not doing it. Now, the vast majority of times, nothing happens, which kind of leads them to say, well, see, we told you. But those one or two occasions where it does happen, it's horrible. And it's frustrating to us, the police.

[02:00:15] the and there's no real accountability for it now we go in you know we now have a attorney that does the arraignments every day the same attorney so she is seeing this on a regular basis and she is even filing motions to revoke bond where she sees somebody has committed another crime even if it's not a violent crime you're out on bond you should not be committing another crime and they are and so we file motions to revoke their bond that's not always happening so it's very frustrating for us

[02:00:51] we share your concerns i think until the general assembly steps in and makes those changes i don't think they're going to get the message to talk about yeah i mean it's something i talk about that to them regularly um i know other jurisdictions are seeing the same problem, it's...

[02:01:13] And I know I'm out, but just, you know, and then the inter-jurisdictional challenges of something that may happen in other jurisdictions, but then they come to Prince William and commit another crime. So that's another issue for another time. Thank you. Yes. All right, Supervisor, I agree. Hi, Ms. Ashworth.

[02:01:28] Hey, I didn't have a question initially, but something was triggered in me. But first, I sent an email, because on the 29th of April to Tuesday, at some point, you'll get an email to, I want to come by and to your office. Yes. So hopefully you're there. So, okay, that's out of the way. I want to talk about the IT you mentioned, and it's really a question for you and Mr. Shorter, you, because you've asked for IT needs, and I've had a similar discussion with our clerk of the courts.

[02:01:55] What IT support does the county give, if any, to your office and the? All of it. So the county IT provides our laptops. They are the help desk.

[02:02:11] They hook up our printers. So I'm going to say this, and you didn't say it. I'm going to say it. So if you're asking for IT support, then am I missing something in support that you should be getting from our IT department? And is that something that we need to look into then that would help you garnish more support that you need?

[02:02:32] Okay. So I'm not putting any words in your mouth. I think I can answer this. I think every agency has to designate someone to be their IT representative. ITR. Okay. And that falls on Kara, who wears a lot of hats in our office.

[02:02:50] And so she's responsible for all of those things. Now, she doesn't complain ever, but I know there are times where she feels overwhelmed by what is being asked, right? Like you have to track all the laptops and do the refreshes.

[02:03:09] And we often, when I say we rely on the sheriff's IT guy, it's his ITR who does our badges and all of that. We just go downstairs. So I think that's critical. And not to take anything from you, I think because the IT guru is someone that definitely knows more about IT than you.

[02:03:32] And I think that's the missing element here to this position, which we really should talk about. because I've heard similar things coming out of, you know, Jackie's office as well. So I don't know if she has that position, but it sounds like if the sheriff has this position or if the sheriff doesn't have this position, then maybe we should be talking about an IT person that works in these agencies that, you know, because I don't want to throw our IT under the bus, but it sounds like something's missing there, thus the reason you asked for this position in the first place.

[02:04:05] And that only triggered me because I heard this comment before from, you know, clerk of the court's office. So I just want to make, I don't know what that looks like. Sure. Supervisor, I agree. Thank you for the question. What I'll say, we have, it's a decentralized model for DOIT.

[02:04:25] They have a public safety support team. So a team of IT professionals that support all of our public safety agencies. Some of our larger agencies do have an actual IT analyst to support information technology. We do not have a dedicated person at the Commonwealth Attorney's Office or the Sheriff's Office.

[02:04:46] Okay, so then I don't know if this is that. I just want to maybe that's something we should, maybe we can get some more deep dive between those three agencies of if that is something that's an issue. Because if they're asking for a position, then something seems to be not working over there.

[02:05:04] Well, if there is a need for a dedicated support, then I think the Commonwealth Attorney's question to the board is, you know, will the board support an individual, like an FTE, that solely works on IT and has IT duties for the Commonwealth Attorney's Office?

[02:05:28] What I'm saying is that the way we are organized is that a team of IT professionals supports all of our public safety agencies as it currently stands. So because I don't think the board here is going to just necessarily agree with that. But the team that we have that does this work, is it something that we should look into to see if that team is missing something between her office, the clerk of the courts, and the sheriff's office?

[02:05:53] because I've heard it from the two, maybe not the sheriff's office, but I'm just curious if she's asking for a position. If we give her a position, then it's probably going to open up Pandora's box to the fact that it's a sheriff's office and now the clerk of the court. I'm not saying you don't need yours, but I'm curious. What I'm really getting at is should we look inside of our how do it is set up and what service they're providing for them, and is it something we can maybe enhance even on our side to give better support for whatever they need?

[02:06:19] And I'm saying better support, but I don't even know if they're – Clearly, if she's asking for a position, something's missing. And I know you manage all that right now, but it seems like there is a disconnect between these agencies. So I'm out of time, but I'm just curious if we should look into something like that before we get down that road.

[02:06:38] Can I just say that I think the DOIT is fantastic. They've been wonderful, responsive. Every laptop that's needed to be replaced, they've immediately helped us. and they do support the software.

[02:06:55] What we need on the administrative side is somebody who can become a subject matter expert in the case management system because I feel like there's a lot of tools and reports that could be done with that that we just don't have the time or anybody that really has the expertise to do that.

[02:07:14] So I'm going to interject. I'm going to ask a question for one of my colleagues who's out of time because I'm going to manage time for this strictly because we do have to move on to markup, and that's going to take a great deal of time. Did you have an ask, like an IT ask or anything that wasn't included in the budget?

[02:07:33] Like, was there anything that maybe you made a request on regarding IT that wasn't in the budget or we didn't have a chance to see as a board? Yeah, when I prepared our budget request, we had submitted a four-year staffing plan.

[02:07:59] And I'm looking at it, I don't, yes, there was an IT tech that we did ask for in that plan. Just one?

[02:08:15] Just one? Mm-hmm. All right. I guess that was it for, we are going to move on to Bodie, and then that's going to be our last question. Sure. Thank you, Madam Chair. Thanks for coming before us. Thank you for the presentation.

[02:08:31] Thanks for all that you do, our communities, and again, condolences on the loss of Mike. I know, continue to reverberate, each day is different. leaves a giant sort of absence in your office that I know is felt every day. So I wanted to upload that for you. A couple of questions.

[02:08:47] I know that some folks have sort of talked at the fringes about this, about sort of comparing the data we have in the crime report versus sort of what your asks are. But we know that anecdotally on the street, things aren't always what is shaped by what the data shows.

[02:09:03] So I wanted to allow you for a little bit to elaborate on that, Especially as it pertains to drug and fentanyl offenses and the trafficking side. Because I know that there's sort of two issues that have been

emergent over the last few years in our community. And everyone's sort of trying to grapple with those.

[02:09:19] So could you talk about those in particular quickly? Yes. So your question, thank you, brings up the good point that a lot of these cases that I'm telling you about, you know, these are successful prosecutions. These crimes occurred in 2020, 2021, 2022, 2022, and so while the crime rate that you're talking about is the number of arrests in the first quarter of this year, those prosecutions aren't going to happen until sometime down the road.

[02:09:56] So, you know, we're kind of lagging in that, and we're never going to have enough attorneys and staff to go to trial on all of those cases. What makes the system move more efficiently is when we have good investigations on the front end, and the police have provided us with all of the information that we've turned over to the defense and been able to say, look at this strong case. You are not going to win this case in trial, right? Let's figure out

[02:10:34] a resolution. And that is a much more efficient way for the system to move. Now, there are some actors in the system that don't want it to move efficiently, and that's their job. But the stronger the investigation, the stronger and more involved the prosecutor is in the beginning, the better the system, the stronger the system.

[02:11:01] I appreciate that. And also by the same token, I know that Suarez or Vega sort of mentioned it earlier that there was an ask of can we see more data around? And I assume that you couldn't quite get there this year and this presentation sort of as a corollary to that. I guess my ask there is as we continue to look at the compensation board, what's going on in the ground, is there a better way for us to begin like receiving more information from you on how this is playing out, especially knowing that we know that's a moving target, right?

[02:11:32] We know that emerging issues, like you said, different processes in the judicial center based on new judges, different processes. Is there something we can do to support you getting more data to us so we can make more informed decisions around this? I think we need to start the conversation about what exactly you're looking for, and we can figure out a way to collect that data.

[02:11:56] I mean, right now our best data is that slide I showed you with the incoming case filings because each of those case filings is a case we're dealing with. Understood, and I appreciate that. And sort of my last question goes back to the conversation that Supervisor Angry was sort of talking about and that IT, that DOIT.

[02:12:14] It's great to hear that DOIT as a whole and the team that we have for the public safety continuum is going well. But I hear you, you know, everyone that's had any sort of size office knows that it's great to have a SME in that office that really knows the systems. And, yeah, you have attorneys and even paralegals that know how to turn the system on and do sort of those core things at their job.

[02:12:33] But if there's a whole suite of software and reports that could help enhance the operation of your office, it's good to have someone in there. So I guess my question to that, and it gets a little bit in the weeds, is has there ever been discussed a specialized person or team just for the Judicial Center offices.

[02:12:51] So yours, Jackie Smith, even the ADC and Sheriff Hill. So it's sort of that happy medium. Knowing there's efficiencies that can be gained by one person who's specialized for everyone in the Judicial Center but isn't sort of a generalist that has to spend their time between police and fire and all the other public safety entities that are on our side of the house but more someone that's specialized for your

guys in your side of the house and they might have the time to at least get to know everyone's individual systems within the Judicial Center.

[02:13:16] That could really be helpful because I know in our system there is a way for the police to put certain information in. And, you know, if we could coordinate that, that would be phenomenal because that's information we wouldn't have to upload or manually put in.

[02:13:36] And same with the clerk's office. But I'll tell you, it's, you know, we're struggling just to get our dockets from the clerk's office. I wouldn't even know how to go about suggesting that we coordinate that.

[02:13:51] But that could be a position that could really be helpful and would improve efficiencies immensely. Thank you. Food for thought. I'm not shy. Thank you, Madam Chair. Inefficiencies drive me crazy. So I'm all for it. Well, thank you so very much for coming out and, again, joining us on short notice.

[02:14:10] We appreciate the presentation and that you were able to, you know, answer our questions today. Thank you for having me. I appreciate it and have a wonderful budget markup all right and Mr. Shorty you don't have anything else correct I am going to move on to our county attorney thank you Madam Chair members of the board this afternoon in closed session we will have a personnel discussion relating to the office of youth services director and we will have consultation with legal counsel and briefings by staff members pertaining to the discussion or consideration of the disposition of publicly

[02:14:45] held real property to include parklands, along with the consultation with legal counsel and briefing by staff members regarding the actual litigation of Frank Washington individually and as trustee of the Scott Cemetery v. International Investments, LLC, Prince William County and Prince William County Board of Supervisors, United States District Court, Eastern District of Virginia, case number 1 colon 24-CV-01978, along with the accompanying consultation with legal counsel and briefings by staff members regarding specific legal matters requiring the provision of legal advice by such counsel pertaining to cemetery law

[02:15:22] and land use law, where such consultation, discussion, or briefing in an open meeting would adversely affect the bargaining position and negotiating strategy or litigating posture of the public body. These items are appropriate for closed session pursuant to 2.2-3711A137 and 8 of the Code of Virginia. Move for approval, Madam Chair. Second.

[02:15:43] All right, let's go ahead and take the vote. Vote unanimous. All right, thank you. We are going to move on to agenda item number six. Before we do, I'm just going to kind of look around at everyone to see if anyone feels that we should take a break before we dig in, because this is going to be a long process.

[02:16:04] Madam Chair, may I make a suggestion? I've got to sound like my mother-in-law. I'm going to presume that the county attorney needs staff here for her presentation for closed session, and that rather than make them wait for 10 minutes, 2 hours, eight hours for us to finish markup we take closed session out of order and get it out get it out of the way because I don't presume that's going to take very long I have considered that I and I hate to make them take such a long time I may be willing to move it up based on markup and depend on because

[02:16:39] we may take and I'll go over the ground rules um which will help people understand because there may be times that we need to have staff duty calculations or we may take a break so um rather than moving it up immediately I'm going to see how the discussion flows for um for our markup might I suggest combining lunch dinner whatever with closed we can we can you know we can certainly entertain that but

i just want to see how everyone's feeling if you guys need coffee stretch break does anyone you want to need a potty break okay we're going to take 10 minutes

[02:17:12] and i do mean 10 minutes that means 350 y'all 350 all right um all right everyone we have a quorum um even though i we have a couple extra minutes because food has arrived we are going to go ahead sometimes supervisor weir has a good idea all right today is one of them lightning can sometimes strike twice um we are going to actually go ahead and amend the agenda and we will do closed session

[02:17:49] that will give everyone a chance to eat and then we will go into markup um and after closed session

[02:17:56] we will take um we will vote to certify so all right let's go we are back we're back from the

[02:22:08] closed meeting um the first thing is i need to we need to certify so 7a can i get a motion so moved second all right it has been properly moved and second let's go ahead and take our vote vote unanimous all right thank you we have one thing to report out we didn't say who would report it out i will we do have to we have to yes we know what you say yes yes thank you madam chair members of the board just want to first uh appreciate you for the support uh and thank elijah johnson

[02:22:47] for leading the recruitment and welcome Mr. Levi Bass, our new director of the Office of Youth Services down to the podium and thank him for his service to the county. He has served here in Prince William County since 2012 and has served extremely well and I am just very thankful that he has gone through a very competitive recruitment process and we are now able to welcome him here as the new director of our re-established Office of Youth Services, Mr. Bass.

[02:23:17] Thank you, Mr. Shorter. Madam Chair, members of the board, I'm Leviticus Bass, Director for the Office of Youth Services. I want to express my sincere gratitude to the board and executive management for this incredible opportunity to serve.

[02:23:41] I am honored by the trust you have placed in me, and I am committed to working diligently and collaboratively to contribute to the betterment of our community. I want to thank my colleagues outside for their continual support on this journey.

[02:24:03] And lastly, I would like to thank the dedicated men and women who work alongside of me in youth services, and I really thank them for their commitment to creating positive youth development opportunities for every youth that we meet. I look forward to collaborating with each of you to advance the opportunities that empower the youth in Prince William County.

[02:24:29] Thank you for allowing me to be a part of this important work.

[02:24:40] Congratulations, and we appreciate all that you do for the county. I do actually have, before we go into supervisor's time, I do have one quick thing to mention because it was just brought to my attention. Our very own Chris Shorter was elected to the board of the directors for the National Forum for Black Public Administrators.

[02:24:58] So we want to give him a congratulations as well. all right with all these good feelings we are now moving we're going back to item six other supervisors time we are going to get in into the fiscal year 2026 budget markup before we do thank you madam chair madam chair before the board begins uh budget markup i need to declare a personal interest in this matter my wife is a schools employee as a

schools employee my wife and i are members of a group which is affected by this matter i'll be participating in it because i

[02:25:36] am able to do fairly objectively and in the public interest thank you madam chair before the board begins budget markup i need to declare a personal interest in this matter my wife is a special education instructional aid with the schools as a school's employee my wife and i are members of a group which is affected by this matter i will be participating in this matter because because i am able to do so fairly objectively and in the public interest thank you madam chair all right thank you guys for your statement. So I just want to go through a couple of ground rules before we get started. First of all, I am going to give, similarly to what we did last year, I'm going to

[02:26:12] go around and I'm going to give everyone five minutes. Please don't take the five minutes. I think three minutes is more appropriate, but to discuss their priorities for this budget and for this markup. And staff, we will have staff doing live calculations. I know Bob, if you want to wave your, he also has his calculator, but we're also going to have staff doing this. So it's going to be double-checked. And there might be times where we need to take five to ten minute breaks to facilitate calculations, because I really want to try to stay on things and work it out as we go along. Again, I ask everyone to be respectful of the process. So with that, I'm trying to think.

[02:26:50] We already had our dinner. We had an early break. We did close session during that, but I may call for another break depending on how late things go, and just based on how people are feeling. Hopefully, we won't go to ODARC 30, but you never know.

[02:27:06] So with that, I'm going to start with Supervisor Bailey, if you want to, and then, you know, we're going to go around for our priorities. And we're going to, let's focus everyone on budget priorities. Thank you, Madam Chair.

[02:27:21] I'm honored to start first. Let me just start with my budget priorities based upon the recap that we received from our county exec. I believe that County Exec Shorter has given us a healthy budget to make these decisions from.

[02:27:38] My focus and my priorities for this budget cycle was, number one, parks and recs, the Forest Greens golf course upgrades that was mentioned in the budget, and it's a capital facilities upgrade.

[02:27:54] And with that, it is in the amount of \$500,000. I'd like to utilize, just for my colleagues to know, the proffer funds that was given to us earlier by Mr. Sinclair of \$325 to make that amount at \$175 for the general fund.

[02:28:13] Then secondly, I'd like to focus on, for discussion, an increase in funding by \$50,000 for the Arts Council grants, which we have been discussing all year. That \$50,000 is to give a sense of equity and distribution, as well as making sure that upgrades and revisions to the Arts Council application process is equal across the board.

[02:28:44] And the \$50,000 is for the increase in the level of organizations across the county and the service that they provide for us. Next, I'd like to offer, we had a discussion about the redevelopment program that was discussed a year ago.

[02:29:02] Our finance director brought us a program that addressed our ability to assemble, do assemblages, and redevelopment across the county. But where it's much needed is on the eastern corridor

of the county, and it was an amount of \$1 million.

[02:29:21] I would like for there to be a discussion or support for the small area plan assemblage market study that will also support across the county, but \$250,000 to that, which was proposed in the budget.

[02:29:37] I also would like to offer as one of my priorities, we are in great need of FTEs for our planning department. And to that need and request, as we move forward with long-term, but also current planning here in the county, just want to refer back to our discussions about not just one FTE, but two FTEs for current planners in the planning department.

[02:30:09] And again, just want to support the redevelopment and assemblage study that was mentioned for \$250,000. The last, no, not the last, but in addition to that, there was also presented for us in the Parks and Recreation Historic Preservation for the Williams Ordinary a budget item of \$130,000, and this is to support the 250th anniversary that's coming up in our area, but specifically on the Eastern Corridor.

[02:30:41] And it covers the gap of fundraising and shortfall for the Historical Preservation Williams Ordinary Organization, where they've done private fundraising themselves, and they're in a shortfall of \$130,000.

[02:30:59] The other thing is, just want to support the annual, I don't know, excuse me, I'm sorry. Oh, lastly, the clerk of the court, the lands records management system that was presented to us two weeks ago for \$329,583.

[02:31:23] I do support that, and I think that's an area of opportunity for us to receive funding back from the state to support our county. And so I am in support of that. and that is all that I have in terms of priorities at this juncture.

[02:31:42] Thank you, Madam Chair. All right. Supervisor Gordy. Thank you, Madam Chair. First of all, I have to recognize, you know, given the sunshine laws in our state, it makes it very difficult for us as board members to engage directly in conversations related to our budget, But our staff have engaged with each other to address the issues related to this budget and working collaboratively.

[02:32:17] So I just want to commend them. I want to thank them for all the work that they've done. I can't thank – I mean, they've gone above and beyond, and so I really do appreciate all the hard work that they've done. For me, I think any budget should be a good balance between effective governance and at the lowest possible cost to the taxpayer.

[02:32:38] And for me, it's about given the inflationary pressures that our citizens are facing in many different aspects of their lives. It's about trying to find a way to ensure that that we're able to provide them some tax relief while at the same time ensuring that we're meeting our county's priorities and meeting the needs that we have as a community.

[02:33:01] And so, you know, one of the things I've been outspoken on is the food tax. I'd love to eliminate the food tax. I know we probably will not be able to eliminate it, but I certainly want to see us take reductions there, certainly reducing the real estate tax to keep that flat for our citizens, and then providing car tax relief.

[02:33:21] And I think over the next year, everything that we're hearing is the potential that car prices, even used car prices, are going to go back up again. So we need to be prepared and go ahead and start providing a balanced approach to that, given what's likely to happen over the course of the next year.

[02:33:41] And I do support the increase in taxes on the C&P tax to bring us in line with our neighbors on the computer and peripherals tax. I also believe we have to get serious about our revenue-sharing agreement with schools.

[02:33:59] Right now, the projections over the next five years, according to the original budget documents, is a 20% increase through FY30, while at the same time there's going to be a 5% reduction in student enrollment projected by the school system.

[02:34:17] So I think we have to start having a very serious conversation about what the actual need and requirements are for our school system. And we need to revisit and start to adjust that revenue sharing agreement based on what the requirements are, not just on an autopilot of tax increases.

[02:34:40] And so I'll leave it there, Madam Chair. I look forward to a robust discussion today. And, again, I appreciate all the hard work that our staff has done to get us to this point. Thank you. Supervisor Weir. Thank you, Madam Chair. I'll keep it very, very brief. You know, I think budget priority number one for me is to fulfill the promise that this board and the past board have made to reduce the burden on the residential and, to some extent, the commercial taxpayers, both in the form of real estate taxes and vehicle taxes, by taking advantage of the alleged revenue windfall from the data center industry.

[02:35:16] Um, the budget as proposed doesn't do that. It actually creates quite a number of issues, particularly with respect to the school budget. Um, due to the difference in what the school division asked us and what they're, what they're required to ask of us, they've, they've given us a needs-based budget, uh, and a wish list, but the needs-based budget and the proposed allocation from the county exec create a \$40 million Delta, um, wherein they have asked for 40, roughly 40 million dollars less than we have allocated uh that actually creates a 70 million

[02:35:54] dollar funding requirement due to the revenue sharing agreement with 30 million dollars roughly going going back into the county budget that's seven cents on the mill rate give or take i may have that wrong um i think what everybody else and i'll just leave it at that everybody knows where i stand on this uh but i will note this uh any additions to the budget beyond what's already and beyond what's already in it.

[02:36:31] We'll require cuts or significant tax rate changes. However, we are limited in the tax rate changes that we can make having already advertised the maxes. So if somebody wants to add something, they better have a cut to fund it with if it's outside of the budget presented.

[02:36:54] Supervisor Franklin. Yes, thank you. I just want to first start by thanking our county exec and his team for the hard work that they've done this budget cycle, answering all of our questions, doing kind of the math on the spot, the analysis.

[02:37:14] So thank you to our county exec and his team. The board saw a proposed budget in February for the first time and after months. I think we are to a point where we can make some real decisions here in markup. I support changes in the proposal by the CXO recap to reduce the real estate tax rate to \$0.90, and particularly \$0.906.100 of assessed value from the current rate of \$92.

[02:37:45] This change reduces the average tax bill by about \$5K. The total general revenue is reduced from real estate taxes by roughly about \$8K. And however, much of that increase is offset by an increase in revenue elsewhere, resulting still in some revenue loss.

[02:38:04] But I think we can kind of go back and forth about kind of what that looks like. Also, in recap, the county exec has presented additional sources of revenue and expenditures. The additional expenditures include funding for the Social Services Children's Services Act, the Circuit Court Clerk Land Management System, the Noise Ordinance Enforcement, and No Wrong Door Project Manager.

[02:38:26] Each proposed expenditure is essential for the proper functioning of government. And I also want to highlight the circuit court land records management system that needs immediate attention and generates significant revenue for the county. These additional expenditures are supported by the resources in the budget recap.

[02:38:44] I also support funding for the adult detention center and the projects listed in the recap for board consideration for markup, including others as well. So the key issues were to find revenue to support the programs, I think, can include several options for increasing the C&P tax, particularly from where we are now.

[02:39:06] And also just want to point out some additional things that I support, including trails construction, forest green, golf course, as mentioned by Supervisor Bailey, Recreation Center's Location Study, Williams Ordinary Historic Preservation, also mentioned by my colleague, the Therapeutic Recreation Programmer.

[02:39:27] I know Supervisor Gordy and I have expressed interest in that, and Arts Council grants. And I also support the Swim Lane Rentals for the use of Veterans Park for swimming teams, which is a net cost of zero, because this will be covered by rental fees. Also, the Employee Home Ownership Program, Redevelopment Fund Reserve.

[02:39:47] And I know the county exec has laid out several options to consider those mentioned. So just, again, as an overview, support reducing the real estate tax. I'm happy to have a discussion about what increasing C&P, then obviously separating out property taxes for that and seeing how we can also see a decrease there and making sure that our revenue is still strong in terms of growing.

[02:40:11] So with that, happy to have a discussion with my colleagues. Supervisor Bode. Thank you, Madam Chair. It's going to sound like a broken record, but I think that certain things still need to be said, especially in terms of gratitude. I want to thank, of course, the county exec, the finance team, and the entire county staff that works for months and months to put these budgets together to, you know, address questions from us and the community to really be flexible and responsive to this board and the multitude of staff that we have that also asks them questions. So I wanted to say that first.

[02:40:44] Also, like Suraz Agordi said, I know that behind-the-scenes folks usually don't see how much our staff, our chiefs of staff, collaborate with each other. And again, knowing that we can't, in a group, discuss these things outside the committee, I'll get to that in a second, that our staff do a lot of heavy lift, especially this time of year.

[02:41:01] So I wanted to thank them publicly as well. Also wanted to thank, again, my colleagues for all the discussions we've had in the Finance and Budget Committee. I think that it's helped cultivate more constructive opportunities for us to talk. I look forward to next year when we're able to have that a lot more front-loaded and have ongoing discussions to help this part seem a little less onerous.

[02:41:22] That said, in terms of priorities, I'm going to echo what some of my colleagues said. At the end of the day, I think that, especially in this moment where we have a lot of uncertainty regionally, we have to

balance what's coming down the pipeline to our constituents and our taxpayers, but also stepping forward and realizing that we are the last backstop to the residents.

[02:41:43] We are the local government. We are the ones that provide those services that they touch each and every day, and as other levels of government retreats or are shifting in ways that people right now don't fully know how that's going to pan out, we need to be that rock, that steady goal that people know that when they come to us for services, we're not going to back away, and we support the folks that deliver those services.

[02:42:07] I started last week where I said that I appreciate how the county exec focused on people and centered people in this budget and the county organization and how that needs to continue to evolve and grow to a point that's responsive as it can be to our residents.

[02:42:23] And knowing that, you know, in a few months from now, if not already, we're going to see likely influx of people looking for services, looking to be connected to community service, looking for ways in which we can help them during uncertain times. And to me, this is a time in which we need to invest in those folks to ensure that they are as well-equipped, trained, and feel the value that they're delivering to our residents every single day.

[02:42:47] Now, that said, I do see a real need to balance that with knowing that our taxpayers do deserve some relief. Again, I fully support raising the computer and peripherals tax up to \$4.15. The computer and peripherals tax, we now know, especially with some of the presentations we were given earlier this budget season, predominantly, overwhelmingly impact the data industry, some of the richest companies in the history of the world, and they need to pay their fair share for our community needs. So I wholeheartedly support that, which gives us some room to bring down some of the other tax rates. I do believe that we should be looking at to the point that was made earlier at the vehicles tax. You know, that's one of the biggest taxes I hear

[02:43:26] from my constituents all the time. Yes, there's some others that they mentioned, but the most universal tax that I know that really hits my constituents is that vehicle tax. So I'm looking forward to lowering that probably to around 360, maybe even lower, depending on how our conversations go. But we also need to look ahead again with how some of the other economic moves that are being made will affect those prices and affect those price points in the months ahead.

[02:43:50] Looking forward to discussions around the meals tax. I know that's one that I've been resistant to really get rid of or reduce because of the ability for at least part of that tax to be paid for by visitors. However, I will acknowledge that there is impact on our businesses, especially our mom and pop restaurants.

[02:44:06] That needs to be discussed as well. But I'm looking forward to other ways in which we can help have a diversity of taxes that help support our community. Looking at the real estate tax, I'm not sure how much farther down we can lower that beyond the 906 that the county exec put in there. I'm open to having that discussion. Again, knowing that the two biggest things that people have to pay taxes for each and every year is their home, whether it's mortgage or rent, or their vehicles, and then of course everything they buy in order to feed their families. So open to that discussion. In terms of

[02:44:42] After that, with my last 36 seconds or so, looking forward to having discussions around the therapeutic program, looking forward to having discussions around some of the other issues that folks

have brought up, but also I want to bring up transit. Transit has not been talked about too much in these chambers, but I know that that's a true equalizer in our community.

[02:45:02] I'm looking forward to talking about transit with my colleagues as well. Thank you, Madam Chair. Supervisor Vega. Thank you, Madam Chair. I know that it's going to sound a little bit redundant, but it is important, and I feel that I also should thank county staff and the county executive for the time that they dedicated into putting the original proposal forward.

[02:45:19] As we all know, once they present it to us, it becomes our budget, and as stated by some of my colleagues already, I certainly want to thank my staff because our staffs have certainly collaborated with one another. But I also want to take this moment to thank Supervisor Weir because Supervisor Weir has spent countless hours.

[02:45:35] I know he doesn't like the spotlight, but he deserves to be thanked. He put together a great spreadsheet, taking into consideration a lot of the feedback that our chief of staff had discussed and came up with numbers. And so, Supervisor Weir, thank you for your time and your effort and what you've proposed. I agree with a lot of what you have put together in the spreadsheet, but do want to share and be on the record that once the budget was presented to us, I was the very first one to put forth a plan, and that email actually went out to my constituents.

[02:46:05] Well, not really my constituents because we have people that sign up for a newsletter from all over the county, and I'm grateful for that. But we put that email out on February 19th, and that email talked about a bold plan to reduce the real estate tax to 88 cents, to eliminate the meals tax, also known as the food and beverage tax, and to lower personal property tax.

[02:46:24] I'm not going to go into the weeds of it because, again, this email already went out and folks have seen it, but it talked about the cuts that we were going to make. It talked about the revenue share agreement with the school that I'm still going to be pushing forward for us to modify because I still believe firmly that a 50-50 revenue sharing agreement is what is fair. And I obviously hope to engage in those conversations later this evening. Also, you know, just want to highlight folks that we have a lot of people coming into chambers to talk about the cost of living, to talk about how expensive it's becoming to live in Prince William County. It's not affordable. And there's a lot of speculation going around, right? We've heard it

[02:47:03] here in chambers. Some of my colleagues have talked about it. We see it on the news. We know what's happening in Washington, D.C. and how this is going to impact. It's speculative. But what I do want to say and what I do want to remind my colleagues and those here in chambers and watching at home is that what your local government decides is going to have a greater impact on your life and on your pocketbook. Not what's happening in Washington. It's what we, the eight of us on this board decide for the taxpayers of Prince William County. That's going to have the greater impact.

[02:47:31] And so as we have these conversations, my goal, my mission since being elected to this seat has always been to provide real tax relief. People are struggling. People are living paycheck to paycheck. Not everybody has a six-figure income coming in. We have single moms. We have single dads. We have people that really are struggling to make ends meet. So when we talk about helping people, when we talk about affordability, we got to remember that we have the power to ensure that we help those folks and so as we have these conversations I want to remind my colleagues it's going to be us that decide whether or not people can afford to live work and play here in prince

[02:48:06] william county thank you madam chair supervisor angry thank you madam chair um i was just reflecting so this is my sixth budget season so i started this in 2019 under the corey stewart board hit the ground running 2020 covid hit didn't do anything but try to survive figuring out what was going on that went on for about three years i think this is honestly the first year where the money's kind of flowed even though we're dealing with federal issues and and layoffs and jobs but you know without a a pandemic of a virus or such it's the first year where we talking about like a

[02:48:43] full budget and all the grand things so so let me just be clear about my priorities taxes i started this by the discussion of decoupling taxes because i wanted to look at how can we help out our citizens with that car tax i'm going to specifically call it that the car tax because it's a single one tax that drives most virginians absolutely crazy so in decoupling that that was my focus i was not interested in raising data center taxes and i will simply simply say this i believe these there should always be a discussion with industry about anything you're going to do in

[02:49:18] industry and being elected officials if we're not talking to them then i feel like we've shorted something there. However, it sounds like we've got consensus that that's going to be what it's going to be. But I just want to be specific in that. What I am interested in is lowering our fire levy tax. And if we're talking about saving taxpayers' dollars, we have many taxes in this county that we can do better with as we look at these. I can support lowering the mills tax. I want to, I'm looking forward to that discussion. Also, I know that Mr. Shorter introduced the real estate and getting it down to uh 90 cents we've over the last six years we've done nothing but

[02:49:56] lowered that tax so regardless of how you say your taxes are going up i can tell you since i believe we said uh way anyway i know it's it's come down from 112 to 90 or yeah 90 cents right now so or 92 right now so so i've seen that over the last six years since i've been on this board so and i'm happy to discuss getting that lower to where it makes sense for for our citizens um i have great concerns as we look at that dollar and we cut out how the percentages of all our divisions have great concerns when you take out 57.23 percent of that and give it to the schools the

[02:50:34] next highest bracket is 20 percent going on in our safe and secure communities but inside of that safe and secure 44 percent of that is inside fire and rescue i do believe there are some areas there that we can do better so i want to have discussions about that not sure where we go and then to my colleague, Supervisor Bode here, as you look at the transportation routes, we know that our transportation, OmniRide, PRTC, you know, needs some enhancements to the services. So I'm interested in really working to find a solution to get us through this year. And I'll end by saying this. I, too, thank Supervisor Ware, our

[02:51:12] staff, county staff, you, Mr. Shorter, for all the work that it takes to get us this far. Again, I've done this six times now. I don't know how this is going to go today. I'm really hoping it's the best one yet. But I just know that the process to get here is always a journey.

[02:51:29] And so I thank everyone involved in getting us this far. Thank you, Madam Chair. All right. Thank you, everyone. I do also want to be, I do want to start off by thanking our county staff because I don't think we can be redundant enough. This is a huge process.

[02:51:45] It's a process that is year-round. It's a large lift. you know, thank you, Mr. Shorter, for guiding us through this. Also, thank you, Steph, you know, Mr. Sinclair. Lord, I know I was emailing you this weekend, last minute. I'm that type of student sometimes. You know, Michelle Atreid, all of you, everyone who was involved, all of our directors, thank you so much for the hard work that you have put in for this.

Essentially, a budget is a statement of our values. You know, you're going to hear me talk about the things that I think that we should do, but I just want to start that a budget is a statement of our values. And we have

[02:52:23] conflicting, you know, ideas of how to fund, you know, our county government. But I hope that we can remain respectful of everyone's ideas. I hope that we can have a fruitful and productive discussion. You know, for my part, you know, I am mindful that we have a real threat of a recession.

[02:52:42] And that's something that we're going to have to think about. I do agree that local government is the one that touches you most intimately. We're the ones who decide how much money is going to your schools? Are the potholes getting fixed? What do your communities look like? Are there near an industrial area? Are we going to put a pig farm next to a townhouse community? I mean, those are the things that we are looking at and we're deciding. But again, I do want to be mindful about what is going on in Washington, because there is a real threat of recession. That's been talked about, and that's a very real possibility, and we have to keep that on the back of our minds, or actually the forefront of our minds. For my part, I really do want to invest in us. I want

[02:53:22] to invest in our community, and I think that this is a good time to do that. I want to talk about where we can make incremental tax decreases. One of the things I've always said is we do need to reduce the burden on our residents, but I also am looking at a moderate, balanced approach to that.

[02:53:40] We do have more data centers, and that is an opportunity for us to expand our commercial tax space, but we're not where some of our neighboring jurisdictions are. We're not there yet, so I do favor incremental tax decreases. And over time, hopefully that will add up. Hopefully over time that will make a difference for our residents. So with that, I am going to kind of outline where we go next. Mr. Sinclair, if we can pull up this sheet, do you still have this presentation available? It's already loaded. Because we are going to start with the CNP tax. And if you can

[02:54:17] go to, just so we know what we're working at, if you can go to slide two. I know that we have some people who want to return to what the board was doing previously with incremental tax increases for the cnp but i also know that the will the majority of the board is to go to four dollars and fifteen cents which we advertise so i'd like to get a motion to go to four dollars and fifteen

[02:54:50] cents second everyone wants to do this i'll give it to vega and um gordy thank you so very much any discussion um we do okay so i can send this i actually have additional copies it's not the recap we're going to look at the recap but for this one if anyone needs a come on i don't have very many i'll pass one out over here bob and i can look at one of those oh you have one oh yeah

[02:55:25] oh sorry i just don't need it um just so i'm clear so this is from our finance department yes this is what you have requested okay but is this the same information as the recap sorry i was going by the recap so we have two different documents we're going to lean heavily on the recap i just had this pulled up so that we could see some of the numbers most of this discussion is going to center around the recap you can you can have you can use my copy you can use you can have

[02:56:02] mine it's emailed yes if you don't want to give it back or i just have hard copies or some things if anyone else on the board does anyone else want a hard copy of this all right so what we're looking at is four dollars and 15 cents and you can see where that would land us in terms of additional revenue in terms of what we'll be sharing it with the schools and what we'll be sharing are what we'll receive as a board.

[02:56:29] My first speaker is Supervisor Weir, then Franklin. Sorry, I know you know what the answer is. I know what the answer is. I just want to confirm for everybody this is an additional \$17.995 million.

[02:56:49] Yes, I'm in a given mood, so it's \$18. But the number we're going to go with for your purposes is \$17.995, 505? Yes, sir. Supervisor Franklin. Yeah, this is more of a comment for, I'm just going to call it the data center tax for purposes of this discussion, but I do think, particularly in our legislative agenda, we really do need to push to figure out how we can separate out businesses that are not data centers from being impacted by these increases that we're doing, and I think that

[02:57:29] probably needs to end up being a priority for this board. You know, I'm fine with going up for our data centers, but it really, really pains me to have to do it for the 500 or so businesses that are not data centers. So at some point, we'll love to have that conversation with the board.

[02:57:47] You know, it's the same with the food and beverage tax. I always say, you know, for our larger restaurants, you know, fine to do it. But our mom and pop restaurants, you know, we really do need to have that discussion about the General Assembly giving us more flexibility locally.

[02:58:06] Supervisor Weir. Madam Chair, for at least a third time today, I'm going to agree with Supervisor Franklin's really setting a however no but I wrote down what you said about the legislative legislative side of it and there was actually a bill to do that this year it died and I think that's the kind of thing that we need to be considering in the legislative committee and uh when whenever we meet um and start pressing particularly our delegation and allowed in delegation to do that because we are the two jurisdictions that are most impacted by

[02:58:43] And I will be more than happy to lead that charge, although I'm probably the wrong person to do it. Supervisor Bailey. Thank you, Madam Chair, and I appreciate this additional document because it does help us go through the recap a little bit easier as well.

[02:59:00] But I sincerely agree with the 4.15 as it relates to computer equipment and peripheral tax. I think when we talk to the business community and we look at the needs that we have here in the county, that as we build partnerships with the business community, I think it's necessary that they are bought in.

[02:59:20] And I think that we're at a juncture in our community and in our budget process where that partnership is getting stronger. And so I do support the 4.15. I didn't say it initially in my priorities. I was focused on what my personal priorities were.

[02:59:38] But as we go through this, I see that how this document could be very helpful. So 4.15, I will be supporting. All right. I don't have anyone on cue. And this, again, we're not inviting. This is a straw poll. So I think, I'm sorry, did you have another question? Madam Chair, I just wanted to make sure that Andrea knows that we're having problems with our computers.

[02:59:59] You know, when we speak, it doesn't go out for you. So that's kind of confusing. Oh, no, it went out. I saw you. mine is still here um it needs to be cleared yeah it's not being cleared i just wanted to maybe it's just me thank you i do see you and we're and i do take paper notes just to keep um and now it's cleared yay all right so miss madden would you like to do roll call supervisor vega yes supervisor gordy yes supervisor angry no supervisor bailey yes supervisor bode yes

[03:00:38] Supervisor Franklin? Aye. Supervisor Weir? Aye. Chair Jefferson? Yes. Motion passes seven to one. All right, we're going to have some more fun. We are going to move now to the personal property tax

rate for vehicles. Now that that has been decoupled from the C&P tax, we have different options. And hold on, let's go to page number three. Okay, you're already there. Thank you so very much. We have a lot of different options. We can keep it at 370, which I don't believe there

[03:01:13] is in the appetite for that we can look at 360 we can look at 350 345 i mean there are a number of options that we can look at i do want people when they speak to give an idea of where they want to land with that um and being mindful again that you know um we're going to have to think about you know what it is we want overall and you know if there's going to be needing cuts to anything um supervisor franklin then vega sure i am going to need a hard copy just because i i can't find the email um you have okay thank you

[03:01:47] um and so also so it looks like we have a chart here because what i was going to ask is is again this kind of specific chart i'm only willing to go down if we if if we can guarantee that we're still producing revenue overall so i just want to know that one answer are we still producing a net growth in revenue it depends on which rate and also depends on what other cuts we want want to make but so uh right so i understand that i'm aware of that but but um i

[03:02:22] guess what i'm asking is a recommendation from staff on the proposal 370 right does staff want to or did you guys need time i'm sorry supervisor franklin can you restate your question again yeah i was asking basically if there's a recommendation from staff if we wanted to go

[03:02:57] down from 370 we thank you for that question supervisor we typically don't provide recommendations on rates this is so if if there's um a combination uh of rates we could certainly work the numbers but want to sure and and i guess respectfully i will say when we when the budget is presented to us that is a recommendation on rates so okay so um madam chair wait hold on so i i guess i'm going

[03:03:33] because this is an uncomfortable spot and i don't want staff to be put in hold on an uncomfortable spot. They go generally with what has been the prevailing rate. And we advertise at the highest rate possible because I think that gives us flexibility if we want to go down. And the real discussion is going to be on how far we go down. We just voted to raise the C&P tax. We know how much extra money that we're going to be working with. We are also going to be talking about, after this, the real property tax rate. We're going to talk about the fire levy. We're going to talk about the meal stacks and other things we may want to reduce or possibly leave alone.

[03:04:10] So I would say, you know, if you want to really look at that sheet, you know, I can come back to you for, you know, your next moment of time. But I don't know. I mean, Michelle, are you able to kind of answer the question? If you could go to slide four, please, on this. So the county executive's proposed budget and recap were both based on the 370. We did know that the board was interested in raising that computer and equipment and peripheral, so we've created these two charts to help you really make that decision. This chart, I think, shows you, you could go as low as 345, and that's sort of the break-even.

[03:04:47] There's a little bit left on the bottom line. It really depends on how much you want left to put towards other priorities, so I don't know if this slide maybe helps. Supervisor Vega. Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm going to go ahead and propose a 350, because you asked where we wanted to go. I certainly don't want the 370 and i think that 350 um is a good starting point for discussion if anybody wants to go lower i always welcome that but the math um has already been uh done and to supervisor franklin's point

[03:05:19] there's still revenue being generated supervisor angry 350 weir thank you madam chair i mean i wanted to go down to 343 couldn't make it work i tried to make it work at 345 initially i couldn't to have to talk to Mr. Sinclair. I could, but I want to be realistic about it. And I think probably 350 is the landing spot. Bodie? So I have concerns because if we lower it to 350,

[03:05:59] we're not leaving a lot of room to look at meals, tax, or real estate unless we start cutting things quite a bit, which I know is what some folks want to say. But I want to just throw that out there If you look at the math between what we're raising here with the C&P tax and then cutting the vehicle tax too far down, looking at what would be reduced by the meals tax in and of itself, you're kind of looking at a break even with those two things.

[03:06:26] And then we don't really have a lot of room to do anything else, especially with real estate. So I want to say 360. And I'm sorry, I don't know what happened. Gordy, did you take yourself out of queue? Well, I was in queue, but I didn't know if you were just going down the line and asking folks.

[03:06:44] No. For the people who aren't in queue, I'm going to go back and ask. Yeah, no, I wanted to be back in queue. I'm sorry. A question I have, can you remind us how much revenue was generated in this fiscal year for vehicle tax, car tax?

[03:07:27] So I have the total odds of Q4 for fiscal 24. Is that what you're asking?

[03:07:52] Based on our 370 from last year, I was trying to, because, you know, the way I look at things is what is the net effect going to be on the resident, not just comparing to what a proposed budget was, but compared to what people paid in one year compared to the next.

[03:08:08] I mean, even at a lower rate, they may still be paying more in taxes. So I just want to try to figure out what the, I want to see the whole picture from one year to the next. Correct. But again, we're talking about, I'm trying to understand what the real effect is going to be on our citizens.

[03:08:29] Because this is only in relation to the proposed budget.

[03:08:44] Is that the one? And \$228 million is the vehicle portion of personal property.

[03:09:04] \$228 million. Okay. Okay. All right. Thank you. All right. All right. I've got to do some calculations. Okay. We'll come back to you. Supervisor Franklin.

[03:09:21] Yeah, actually, before we take a vote on this, I think it may be important to actually have a discussion on the real estate tax first, since that's our largest portion of revenue. Because once we decide, like, if we're staying at the proposed for 90 or going down to 90 point, point 90, whatever we said, then that kind of helps us out a lot.

[03:09:46] But I just want to make sure we're all on the same page about that because at least that way we know what the revenue would be and that can help dictate what makes more sense for the personal property tax. I am open to that. I don't know how other people feel. But I do at least want to get a sense.

[03:10:03] Are you comfortable giving me a sense where you are right now or no? Yeah, so I can't do that, but I will say if we're all, or if most people are open to the .90 for real estate, then that helps me at least look at the personal property.

[03:10:19] I see. Just quickly, how do people feel about going to, because that is a bigger number. No? No. How do you feel? No. You're fine going to it, Bodie. Okay. We're open for discussion. All right.

[03:10:34] Before, though, I will go to that, but I do have a couple people. I guess, Bailey, did you want to wait? Because you told yourself. Angry, did you want to speak now, or do you want to go over? To this, I'll just simply say, you know, we took an industry. We shot them to the top.

[03:10:50] We're trying to do right by the citizens. So if, you know, \$3.50 for car tax is good and \$0.88 for real estate is good, then, I mean, I'm all in for the people because we've got the money now to do it. So I'm all in it.

[03:11:06] So what we're going to do then, I'm going to go ahead and go to real estate since that is a bigger number. The reason why I also, I'll just say this, is the reason why I start with personal property tax rate is because last year we all agreed that we need to focus on that and prioritize that this year.

[03:11:23] And that's why I wanted to do that rate first. But I am open to going to the real property tax rate because it is a bigger dollar number. So with that, then, we're going to switch over to the real property tax rate. We, the discussion, our county executive came back to us doing a recap with a lower number because he wanted to stay in what we originally talked about, you know, and I think that was fair.

[03:11:53] I've heard other rates bandied about, and so I wanted to talk about the rates that were bandied about. You know, there is a 0.895 rate that was talked about, and there is also a 0.0885 rate that was talked about. So I do want to have a robust discussion on where people feel we should land. And again, knowing that when we, that the budget, that the recount was based on that, you know, I just want to be mindful that with all the rates that we're really going to be looking at today, you know, the lower we go, the more cuts we need to make or the more things we need to say

[03:12:29] no to. So for real property tax rate, Supervisor Weir. Thank you, Madam Chair. Let's be clear. Point 906 is not a reduction. Point 906 is an adjustment to the higher than predicted assessed value. So 906 delivers essentially 92. It's, you know, and I've said this before, I'll say it again.

[03:12:55] the rate is irrelevant. It's the tax paid. There is virtually no difference between the tax paid under the February submission at 0.92 and the recap at 0.906 because of the change in assessed values. Moreover, because we didn't change the fire levy, it's not actually a \$3 decrease. It's actually a \$3 increase because the fire levy was not adjusted for the increase in assessed value. So in essence, the combination of the two, which constitutes

[03:13:30] the vast majority of your total real estate tax bill, leaving out mosquito levy and that kind of stuff, it's actually a net increase over the February taxable bill. And I think that's what we have to keep in mind is we're talking about the tax bill. The rate is irrelevant because the rate and the assessment together are what define what your tax bill is. I've played around with this for a long time my my druthers would have been 0.88 uh i could not make that work um but i think we can make 0.885 work and i think at the end of the day that's still going to be a slight to

[03:14:09] modest increase in everybody's bills because i think 0.88 is the relative break-even point but there is a significant dollar difference between the two and to be compromising i guess are realistic, I would be willing to go to 885. Civilizer Franklin?

[03:14:33] Okay, so I'm looking at this document and it's all a comparison for personal property as it relates to CMP. So I guess my question is, if we do, if we stay with the reduction to .906, increase CMP to 4.15, I guess where does that give us for revenue to play with the personal property number.

[03:15:04] So what you're asking for, I think, by raising the C&P, and please correct me if I'm wrong, to \$4.15, that would be what he had up on page two. Right. Yes, understood. But if we keep the real estate to .906, does that give us, is that if we drop the personal property tax to one of those scenarios, Yeah, essentially, will that still generate revenue for us?

[03:15:37] So at .906, it generates revenue to support the county executive's budget at RECAP with the additions that were added. The 415 was not factored into the RECAP at all, so that's really where the additional revenue comes in. So that means that we do have wiggle room to go down from the 370, correct?

[03:15:56] Up to \$18 million, yes, without making any other adjustments. Up to \$18 million without any other adjustments. Wait, I'm sorry. Wouldn't that be \$7 million because the school portion? Well, yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah. Okay, but yes, that top number, the 17, this is what we need to look at to look at the reduction.

[03:16:20] Right, each reduction at the \$18 million. So if you went to \$365 million, or let's do \$360 million, a \$10 reduction, it would decrease our revenue by \$6.5 million. Oh, jeez. Okay. And so you have an \$11 million balance of the \$18 million to split with the schools.

[03:16:39] Did you have anything else, Supervisor Franklin? Okay. Supervisor Vega. Thank you, Madam Chair. So at the original .92, we know that the average tax bill for taxpayers would increase \$276.

[03:16:57] If we kept it at what was proposed for recap at .906, Dave, how much does the average tax bill for taxpayers go up? At the budget recap rate of .906, the average tax bill increases \$273, or 5.6%.

[03:17:18] \$273. Thank you. And just to be clear, because there seems to be a bit of confusion in terms of the public wanting to know how this sharing with the school division goes to the county attorney, we are obligated, yes, to share, to split with the school division this and the personal property tax. Yes?

[03:17:45] Madam Chair, members of the board, by law, you are required to budget and appropriate to the standards of quality. And then you have the discretion to provide additional funds to the board. And that's a policy decision for the board to make as to how much more.

[03:18:03] But at a minimum, you are required to budget and appropriate the standards of quality. Which is super important as we talk about how much money we have to play with. Thank you, Ms. Robel. Supervisor Franklin, are you back? Yeah, just you asked me kind of what I would be comfortable with. I think \$365 for personal property tax while keeping real estate at 0.906.

[03:18:25] I think, Supervisor Bode, you said \$360, right? I think I'm willing to do \$365 with keeping the real estate at 0.96 and increasing C&P to 4.15. Supervisor Vega? Yeah, and just a refresher.

[03:18:40] I said \$3.50, and I know that I had verbal support from Supervisor Angry and Supervisor Weir and myself, so don't want to. He said \$88.5 since we went up on \$4.15 for the data center, C&P tax, and he was okay with the.

[03:18:58] I'm going to get back to him. So where are you on property? You're the \$88.5? Yes. All right. Gordy. Yeah, and I'm also at 88.5 as we think about, again, this is, and based upon the information that our great staff has given us, nearly 130,000 bills will go up under this scenario, tax increase, with only 4,188 decreasing.

[03:19:31] So getting something south of 0.906 provides a better balance between the number of bills going up and the number of bills going down. And again, I wish we could break out commercial real estate from residential real estate.

[03:19:48] We don't have that luxury here. But, you know, as we drop this down, we're providing more of a benefit to our residents. While the largest landowners, the most expensive landowners in the county will continue to pay, will have an increase in their tax bills.

[03:20:10] So I'm going to say a few words and I'm going to pick on those who haven't spoken. I do want to decrease both car and property tax rate, but I'm also nervous about making big jumps because we have a lot of things we still want to fund. And we haven't gotten to meals tax. And honestly, I am committed to making a decrease in meals tax.

[03:20:27] And we'll talk about that because that's going to be an ordinance change. But I'll get to that when we get to that section. For myself, you know, I am willing to consider the 0, 0, 8, 9, 5. That's as low as I'm willing to go.

[03:20:44] I am hesitant to move away from what we had already discussed, what was in the recap budget. The lowest I'm willing to negotiate is to go down to 0, 8, 9, 5. And the reason for that, as I said, we need to do incremental decreases. If, you know, we need to do incremental. What I'm prioritizing is the car tax and the meals tax.

[03:21:04] Those are my priorities. When I look at the average, not the median, I think the median is a better indicator, but the average. You know, at \$2.73, we're talking about \$22.75. Last year, my bill actually decreased \$25.10.

[03:21:21] And I would say that I live in an average house in Montclair. I live in an average house. It's a nice-looking house. It needs a lot of work. But I would say it's the average house. You know, what we're losing sight of is, yes, some people, because it's an average, some people are going to see a decrease.

[03:21:38] Some people are going to see an increase. But I don't think it's onerous. I don't think the people who are on fixed incomes that we're necessarily driving them out. And thank you, Mr. Sinclair, for sending the historical data of what our increases have been. Because our increases over the past few years have, in my mind, been very modest.

[03:21:56] They've been very modest. We haven't had huge spikes. Now, you can argue maybe collectively over the years, but looking at surrounding jurisdictions, because I do think it's important to note what our neighbors are doing and how we stand in comparison, noting inflation, I think that we have had a pretty measured increase.

[03:22:17] And for me, for car tax, I am looking at 360, again, because I want to be able to offer tax relief in other places. And I also just want to say, you know, as we go through recap and see what we pay and nay to things, we may, you know, I'm willing to actually go back and see if we can do a little bit better on some of these tax rates. With that, I have Supervisor Weirth and Angry.

[03:22:43] Madam Chair, I'll put things in some context. Let's assume, let's take a house valued at \$500,000 last year, assessed at \$500,000 with a 0.92 rate, would have paid a bill of \$4,600. If you assume a 5% assessment increase, which is probably, I believe, is less than the county average, that drives it up to five and a quarter, \$525,000.

[03:23:10] And at .906, even though it's supposed to be flat, they actually pick up \$156 in additional charges over last year. Even at .885, the average bill is going to be higher than last year.

[03:23:28] So if we're talking real tax relief and not just lesser increases, I mean, we'd have to get down to, you know, .88. I understand we can't do that, but I think we have to be a little more honest with the residents and their taxes.

[03:23:47] And, you know, that's why .906 is just a non-starter with me. I would strongly suggest .885. I think the two other things we need to keep in mind, there's a lot of reference to other jurisdictions, and I would reference Loudoun and their data center revenue streams, and they have actually managed to reduce both the rate and the actual tax bill over the last couple of years, something we have not been able to do.

[03:24:21] And I would also note that we actually have more money to play with, to Ms. Robles' point. There is still a \$40 million delta between the needs-based budget submission we got from Superintendent McDade, and it was adopted by the school board.

[03:24:41] So we have plenty of wiggle room to play with yet, because under the state code, that's what we're mandated to supply them with. And if we use that as a starting point, that opens up a lot of doors both for addressing things we want to get rid of or things we want to add both in our budget and their budget.

[03:25:02] But we need to take advantage of that at the front end to give both the commercial and the residential taxpayers some amount of relief this year. Well, I'm actually going to jump in real quick. I also want to make the distinction when we talk about Loudoun County and data center revenue, they've had more data centers than we do right now, and they've longer.

[03:25:21] They have been taxing at a higher rate longer. That is one of the reasons why I supported, you know, last year going to the highest level that we were able to do without raising the vehicle tax. And that's why I'm glad that we are talking about separating the two out.

[03:25:37] You know, it's hard to make a comparison. I know people want to see more immediate tax relief. They want to see deeper reductions. But I personally, we're not there yet. We're not yet where Loudoun County is. So I want to say that. And reducing at a lower rate, I hear you on that one. Their bills aren't going as high as they could. I would argue that we're taking our foot off the gas. It may not be the reduction. We may not actually be cutting into some people's bills as deeply as some would like. But again, I go back to, you know, the relief that we are able to

[03:26:16] offer. For my part, my house, I looked at my assessed values for fiscal year 2026. You know, my total assessment is \$618,300. And for last year, again, I saw a decrease. And we're talking about over \$517,000. So, I mean, the reason I'm using this is, again, at my house assessed value, I did see a decrease.

[03:26:41] You know, we are talking about modest, a modest increase. And again, working out \$273, that on average for people is going to be \$22.75. I'm not trying to minimize hardships for people, but I just want to be realistic about what we're talking about. And I don't want to scare the public.

[03:26:57] I don't want people to think that, oh my God, we're going to have this huge spike. When you do the math, it is actually a modest increase at the rate that we had at Recap. Again, you know, I do support possibly a lower tax rate, but I just want to be realistic with everyone here.

[03:27:14] Given that, you know, yes, we raise CNP tax, that's going to allow us to offer some reduction. But how deep do we want to go? Supervisor Angry. So I'll simply say to Mr. Schroeder's budget he introduced, that has all been taken care of because, as we've heard, that was the budget that we had prior to this 415.

[03:27:40] So the \$18 million, roughly, that we just picked up from \$415, I will say if we make a modest increase in revenue by targeting the industry for \$18 million, then I'm willing to make a modest investment in our citizens for that very same \$18 million because his budget is met with the things we have.

[03:28:05] Now, maybe we don't spend all \$18 million of it, but I will say you can't say a five-cent reduction is going to help a car tax. but you can say a \$0.20 reduction will. You can't say \$0.90 reduction in residential tax is going to help. I get what you're saying, the modest piece.

[03:28:20] But I think as we talk about \$8.80, I'm just simply saying we've got \$18 million, and if I'm going to spend it, I would rather spend it on the people this one time because everything else has been met to the knees of what I've heard you all say about Mr. Schroeder's budget and the personnel that we want to invest in.

[03:28:36] So we're not messing with that. But anything additional, maybe we have some left over, maybe we don't. Maybe we need to find out and keep a running total of how much that \$18 million has come down with these two major investments for the citizens. So where are you on property?

[03:28:54] 88.5. All right, Supervisor Bailey. Thank you, Madam Chair. Just in listening to my colleagues, but most of all, what you said about we have to be very careful, I think, about how we make reductions and how we support our community.

[03:29:16] And I think we can't compare ourselves to other jurisdictions because we're at a pace in how we're raising funds and where we're going. And it's not going to happen overnight. And just because we have a great lump sum of money, we've got to consider we don't know where we're going to be in terms of the national climate that we're in financially.

[03:29:38] So for me, I can definitely support the C&P, like I said, the 4.15. But I think that we would be comfortable in making sure that we're projecting if we go at .0895 because I think that we need that cushion, that leverage for the lack of projection that we have nationally right now.

[03:30:02] And then the other was the \$3.60. I'm flexible in that, but I'm very comfortable at \$3.60 in supporting the personal property. Because we still have to understand we're not quite where we want to be yet, given the national climate and given how we're trying to raise revenue, as we have not in the past.

[03:30:30] In the last two years, we're raising revenue. So we've got to be very strategic in how we do that. So I'm right at, Madam Chair, 0.895, and I'm at 3.60, given the discussions going forward. I'm flexible at 355, but definitely 4.15.

[03:30:49] Did that answer your question, Madam Chair? I'm sorry. I just said with car tax, you're saying, what are you, 360 or car tax? Where are you on that one? Currently, 360. 360. I just wanted to verify. and then um you know you're eight eight nine five all right um supervisor vega franklin well first i want to go to bode because i'm sorry we haven't heard from bode but i we haven't heard from him so i'm gonna let him

we've heard from everyone else multiple times sure thank you madam chair so i i won't be too long-winded here i just again want to reaffirm that if we go to even eight nine five

[03:31:26] and \$3.60 on the vehicle tax, that really doesn't give us very much room to decrease the meals tax unless we're going to start talking about cuts downstream. I just want to throw that out because again, we're only raising \$18 million and going \$8.95 on real estate and \$3.60, and I believe my math is right, is already around close to \$17,800,000 around that, I think. And so that comes very close to what we raised in the C&P tax. So I just want to be cognizant of

[03:32:04] that. That all said, I'm a fan of 360 when it comes to vehicle tax, and I would be open to 895 for real estate, but again, that doesn't leave us very much to do anything with the meals tax.

[03:32:25] Thank you, Madam Chair. And that is actually a very fair point, because I am greatly concerned about the meals tax, which is why I'm not keen on really going too low, but I'll go to Supervisor Vega, then Franklin. You know, we can't have it both ways.

[03:32:42] Sometimes we want to compare ourselves to other jurisdictions when it's convenient for us. Other times we don't, so which one is it? we preach affordability up here. Well, this is your chance, right, to provide that affordability that your constituents have been asking you for. They come in here, they email us, so this is the time to do it. Now, I will say it again, we would not be pinching for pennies or scraping the bottle of the barrel if we just slightly moved the revenue share agreement by 1%. How much additional

[03:33:11] revenue would we get if we modified the 57% to 56%, let's say? And while you guys try to get that answer, I will, you know, just keep going down the road that Supervisor Angry was going.

[03:33:31] I think you have the answer to this question, but before I ask that question, because I already asked one and you're working on the answer for that, we get emails from folks, phone calls, people come here and say, I thought that the data center industry was going to be the answer to all of our problems, that they were going to generate all of this revenue. Well, the data center industry through the C&P tax has been generating a lot of revenue. It's not a lack of revenue. We don't have a problem of revenue in the county. It's just us adjusting our spending. And so when you hear folks making those comments, it's because they don't see those dollars that have come into our coffers

[03:34:09] put to work for them. So to Supervisor Angry's point, I think he is spot on when he says that if we're going to raise it to \$4.15, real tax relief means putting it back to the taxpayers of this county not scraping the bottom of the barrel for pennies again we have money here that we can play with it's just going to require some bold action from us and for us to really look at these numbers i'm not asking for a significant change madam chair to the revenue share agreement i'm just suggesting a small change and we wouldn't have to be debating this back and forth because we would generate the revenue that we need in order to fulfill a lot of the asks and so do you have

[03:34:46] an answer for me, Dave. Okay, now this is based on budget recap amounts, okay, at 90.6. If the revenue sharing agreement was changed from 57.23% to the schools down to 56% to the schools, that revenue change is \$21.3 million based on my calculations. \$21.3 million. Yes, ma'am. Thank you. And then the last question that I have for now is how much revenue did we receive from the

[03:35:16] C&P tax last year. Do you have that? Michelle's saying yes behind you. From the rate increase or overall? Overall. I want to say \$56 million, but let us verify that, please. If we could come back

[03:35:50] to that, we'll work to verify that number. Okay. Again, if we went down to 56%, we're talking about \$21.3 million that we have to move around, okay? You gave me \$56 million. That is a lot of money folks so when people email us when people call our offices and they don't see this being put to work on their behalf that should worry us again we don't have a revenue problem we just have to prioritize our spending and i understand that a budget is a reflection of our um what did you

[03:36:27] call it madam chair our values but you know i'll also talk about the fact that we uh have to analyze the budget and what are the needs what is the function responsibility and role of your government and then you know really ask ourselves about these wants and are they necessary this fiscal year or can some of this stuff be be pushed over to the next fiscal year and um even at 56 percent um dave if i'm not mistaken they would still be getting 13 percent more than what they did last year am i right on that or i i have the answer to your previous question i'm just

[03:37:05] bombarding you with questions i'm sorry to answer the previous question when the board increased the computer and peripheral tax rate to 370 as part of the fy25 budget the county governor the county picked up 54.8 million in additional revenue sorry what was that yeah yeah but again those are huge huge amounts and you know it's important for for us to be reminded about those numbers because it's a significant amount. And now we're going up to 415, which means even more

[03:37:43] money. Supervisor Franklin, did you? Yeah, just for those of us who do support the revenue sharing agreement and who actually do want to go down on the food and beverage, be careful with these numbers. I mean, even at the 0.895, that's putting us in a very, very tight position, particularly if we go down to 360. Um, so, you know, again, I'm, I'm only going to support the 0.906 to go down to, uh, 365, um, with the increase in the CMP being at 415. I think that still puts us in a pretty,

[03:38:21] uh, good position to give the schools, uh, what they need. Um, and then still at a later date to go down on food and beverage, um, and still get a decent amount of revenue. Thank you, Madam Chair.

[03:38:38] So let me just say, I'm not interested in lowering the revenue-shared agreement. I will say, to my point again earlier, I am interested in these revenues. Now, that may also mean that I'm not interested in lowering the mills tax.

[03:38:58] And I said, because we can't have it all, so it's going to be a give and take. That means I may not be interested in even lowering the fire levy. But if this all means that the people are going to get the maximum out of this money that we just raised on an industry, this is what I'm interested in.

[03:39:14] So, you know, meals tax may have to wait until next year. You know, fire living may have to wait until next year. I don't know. I'm just simply saying. But right now, you know, we've got \$18 extra million in addition to a budget that was presented that meets everything with still some revenue. We don't have to get rid of all of this.

[03:39:31] But I think right now I'm interested in car tax and I'm interested in residential taxes being as low as they possibly can because of the revenue we have in now, and now would be the time that we can do both, take care of the people, our employees, our staff, and also take care of the people, our citizens.

[03:39:51] Thanks. All right, guys, I'm going to make this a little messy because people have already mentioned meals tax, and when you speak, if you want to tell me where you are on that as well, I'm open to it. Supervisor Gordy. Yeah, just so that we have some numbers here, and you guys can correct my calculations, At the rate of .895, the reduction would be \$12.167 million.

[03:40:18] I have \$12.167,291.2. I have approximately \$12.4, but it may be more than that. Okay. That's strictly based on the value of a penny. Okay, so \$12.4.

[03:40:35] Actually, I've just been told .895 is a total revenue reduction of \$13.3 million. Okay. \$13.3. So what that's saying is, based on our assessments keep going, apparently we're getting more from our assessments based on some of the, because these numbers keep shifting north.

[03:40:57] So the reality is, as these numbers, the assessments keep shifting north, this is more of a tax increase on our citizens. So, yeah, so even at .895, you said 13.4 would be the tax reduction.

[03:41:18] And so, based on your calculations, what would .885 be?

[03:41:31] The revenue reduction at .885 is \$25.3 million. \$25.3 million, so that's a little more than the calculations. Now, I want to explain something, if I may, to the board.

[03:41:47] what you're seeing is a deviation from the value of a penny that we previously gave you because we actually when we actually run it through the county's revenue model there's other reductions that occur for things like interest on taxes things like that okay i just want to say that yes sir i hope all right did you have anything else yeah i just wanted i just want to kind of make sure that i'm the numbers that i'm working with are in alignment with with staff so all right

[03:42:24] Vega. Just a quick question so that I not waste time. Supervisor Angry just said he's not interested in amending the revenue share agreement. Can we get just like a feel up here? Because again, I just found ourselves an additional \$21.3 million. No, I think we can. And I would venture to guess most people are not for ending revenue sharing, but let's just go around. Supervisor Bailey, where are you on revenue sharing?

[03:42:52] 1%. Just 1%. No, I'm not in favor of moving the revenue share agreement. Supervisor Weir. Yes or no? Madam Chair, they've got a \$40 million carryover from last year.

[03:43:08] We're giving them \$40 million more on top of their ask for a total of \$80. It needs to be adjusted because it's hamstringing us in our budget. Bodie. No. Angry. You're a no. All right. Vega, you're a yes.

[03:43:25] Franklin. Gordy. Microphone wasn't on. And I just also want to say the revenue-sharing agreement has hamstrung the board, the school board, and that was their message to us. They planned based upon the revenue-sharing agreement, which didn't fully fund their – what in their mind was the requirements.

[03:43:46] So, again, this thing is broken and needs to get – we need to have a serious conversation about meeting the requirements of our school system, not just having an arbitrary funding source that doesn't fully fund or meet the needs of our school system. And so, you know, and again, even if we take the 950 that was in their request, and it based on both Supervisor Weir and Supervisor's Bodie's increases and other things that they did not fund, we can still get to 965 and meet those requirements. But instead,

[03:44:21] we're giving them 992, which more than exceeds even their request and the additions. So that is \$27 million still left in there, even if we gave them what they asked for, plus provided additional funding for special needs, counselor services, per pupil funding increases, career tech programs additional support to english learning students and computer science

[03:44:55] and digital curriculum so so i mean there's room to play here even based on their own budget requests and so i think we need to be serious about that i agree with supervisor weir this is hamstringing

us and the budget and the and the revenue share agreement is rev is hamstringing them thank you so i'm a hard heck no on this one and the reason and i've stated throughout our process, why support revenue sharing. And I don't think it's hamstringing them. I think it's giving them budget certainty. And they're going to budget up to what they are expecting. You know, and from what I took away from my conversation is that they want to be respectful. Yes, they have additional

[03:45:34] needs, obviously, that we can fund. But from my perspective, and it bears repeating again, our schools are our number one asset. It's what makes people want to live in this county. it makes people want to do business in this county. And I think our schools have a tremendous amount of needs. We've seen an increase in populations that have more needs. They need to make sure that, we need to help make sure that they are adequately addressing those needs.

[03:46:04] We have a need to rehabilitate older schools. And we do have a need for newer schools, particularly, for new schools, particularly in the Brinsville and Potomac districts. So that's going to be a conversation that has to be had so i support revenue sharing um we can go through this but i think it is there is a consensus that revenue sharing will stay in place um i have bode and we are asked the question but i wasn't done because they took their time answering all right supervisor vega thank you so now that we know that i still want to be on the record for those in chambers those watching at home currently right now the school division sits on 101 million

[03:46:40] dollars of unencumbered funds. And there's a difference, Supervisor Franklin, because I know what you're going to say. There's a difference between encumbered and a surplus. Am I correct, Dave? Yes. Okay. So I'll say that again, \$101 million. Even if we reduced it by 1%, they are still getting more money than they did last year. That is a fact. We're not talking about not fully funding our schools. We've been doing that. We've been more than generous. With our surpluses. We have to give to them. Ask yourself if they return the favor. No, they don't. So this

[03:47:19] is about prioritizing. This is about, you know, looking at this budget holistically. And I also want to share, Madam Chair, that on average, based on my time on this board, more than \$260 million annually go unencumbered. And that has been for the past five years. We all got the letter from their financial officer. I think that's who came when the school board came to speak to us.

[03:47:43] And they couldn't give me a number when I asked how much they had. But in the letter, they stated that they had that number amount since June of last year, if my memory serves me correct. We certainly have to look at this revenue share agreement. We're going above and beyond. And, you know, this is one of those hills that I am going to die on because they have exactly what they need and then some.

[03:48:02] I'm going to say this. And, you know, again, we have people who want to speak to this issue. But I think the voice of the majority is clear. And I also want to just note that it's called an agreement for a reason. It's an agreement between us and the schools. It is our decision with how much we're providing to the schools.

[03:48:20] It's a policy. It's also part of our principles of sound financial management. So I just want to note, it is an agreement. It's a one-sided agreement because we're the ones who control the purse strings. But again, I think we've heard from the majority of the board that we want to keep it. You know, I have a few people in queue.

[03:48:37] I have Bodie, Weir, and Franklin. We'll go in that order. But we're going to have to land this plane, and it looks like, and we can continue to have discussions about the revenue sharing agreement. I think the appropriate vehicle at this point is our finance and budget committee, but I have those three people in queue, so I'll let you speak, and then we're going to have to really talk about car property and meals tax.

[03:48:57] All right, Supervisor Bode. Yeah, thank you, Madam Chair. I just wanted to actually pick up right from what you said. I'm open to having discussions about the revenue sharing agreement, but not at markup literally a week before we adopt the budget. But we have not discussed it with the school board directly this entire budget season.

[03:49:15] They predicated their budget on that. And I agree with you that even with we given them more with the revenue share, with the increases in the assessments, there is room between their ask and what they gave us. However, I believe in the principle of the fact that we have a revenue sharing agreement policy in place.

[03:49:34] We have had it for decades at this point, right? At least about a decade or, yeah, decades at this point. 27 years. I don't think the appropriate time to buck that again is a meeting before our budget adoption. I think that we should to madam chair's point have uh finance and budget committee meetings about I think that we should have those with the school board and I want to hear more of what supervisor Gordy said in his comments at that kind of meeting where he if we have school board members that believe that it's hamstringing them as well I'd love to hear that from them um I would love to have

[03:50:11] a long discussion of that because if they feel like they're constrained by it then we should talk about what that looks like a what a post revenue share agreement world policy works and looks like with them but again I don't think that to honor what they their certainty our relationship with them but also what the taxpayers and what the constituents of this county know to be true which is right now we have a 57.23 commitment to the school division which means that those tax come in and we give that 57.23 to the school division they understand that they want us to keep that at least for right now until we have more discussions about that with the duly elected

[03:50:49] school board that then takes that money and delves and those doles it out so that's what I would say on that point um to go back to meals tax like I said I'm I'm willing to entertain and talk about uh going down a percent on that that's the the the maximum that I would be able to to stomach this you're going down understand that we have other discussions to have but I know madam chair you asked at the outset long before we got to the revenue sharing agreement policy discussion um going to the meals tax I just wanted to add that too thank you madam chair all right we're

[03:51:25] madam chair I'm going to kick this dead horse a little more it was clear from the presentation by the superintendent that she developed a needs-based budget that's why I asked her if it was a needs-based budget.

[03:51:46] And the statute is clear. They are to deliver us a needs-based budget that funds the SQL. Regardless of what the school board chair and his, what I would characterize as a stump speech from the podium, said, their ask without the wish list is \$40 million more than in the proposed budget because the proposed budget is based on assessments that weren't in place when they got the original projections, that the projections were far short of what was actually assessed

[03:52:25] and what the rate delivered means that they were proposing a budget that was not actually geared towards the number that we would be giving them under the CXO's proposal.

[03:52:43] In essence, what you're doing by continuing down this road is Giving the school division \$40 million of additional unencumbered monies that we are exercising zero oversight over, have no way to direct to education, construction, or anything else, on top of the \$100 million of unencumbered plus the CIP money they've already sitting on for school construction, including a significant percentage of which will probably not get used on the 14th high school,

[03:53:23] given its lack of need it's time to get fiscally responsible and give the residents some oversight of the taxes that they're paying us and that we're then allocating and in this case blindly allocating 40 million to the schools which means we spend 30 million more if we reduce the rates the delta between their request and what was what's in the proposed budget necessarily shrinks

[03:53:57] So with each dollar or each percentage you knock off of, take your pick, real estate, vehicle tax, or food and beverage, that narrows that gap. But in order to narrow that gap, we need to look at some other cuts, and I've made some proposals here where you fund things with proper dollars and not general fund dollars for capital improvements, where we save on both ends.

[03:54:25] And the ultimate beneficiary of that is both the commercial and the residential taxpayer. Pick the rate you want to use to do it. But blindly going down this road is just, and continuing to go down this road after 27 years. And I never agreed to this resolution.

[03:54:42] I don't think some of us were even alive when it happened. But it's grossly irresponsible. Supervisor Franklin and Bailey. Sure. I just want to clarify, and I really think we've got to bring the schools back in, Dr. McDade and their finance people.

[03:55:04] The \$100 million that's been thrown around, that's actually for reserves. They can't spend that money, and it's actually under their \$263 million budget that they roughly have. They should have one to two to three months of reserves, really three months of reserves, and they don't.

[03:55:22] They have \$100 million, which is under the \$263 million that they should. So if something goes wrong, they can barely keep the lights on. So the \$100 million is not money that they can play around with. It's money in reserves. Thank you. Bailey?

[03:55:38] What about the extra \$40 million? Oh, no, Bailey. No, all day. It's Bailey's turn. It's Bailey's turn. Okay, so, again, I don't think we should talk about now the revenue share agreement. That's not where we are.

[03:55:54] We said we were going to meet with them and talk about how we wanted to talk about funding and budgeting prior to the budgeting season, and we did not do that. So I think out of respect for what we are asking, we need to have that meeting and not doing markup, period, for me.

[03:56:12] And so I'm going to support that. But I think that as we go through this, we cannot – there needs to be cuts, and I am for cutting the meals tax. Just want to say that up front.

[03:56:28] But I think we have to be reasonable when we talk about cutting the real estate tax. We have to be reasonable about that because we don't know how the climate is going to be nationally. And we've said that also during the budget season. And so we can't make a decision in a vacuum by just throwing some numbers out there.

[03:56:47] We've got to be reasonable and have a big picture thought and decision making about this. So, I'm still at between .90 and 895. I'm still there. But we've got to have, I mean, it just doesn't make sense for us to just throw numbers out there.

[03:57:05] And I believe into what Victor said about protecting the citizens. Absolutely, we have to protect the citizens. But because we don't have a prediction or solid footing on what's going to happen nationally, we also have to look at that. And when we don't, we're making not good decisions.

[03:57:21] So I'm going to go back and I'm going to say something and then I'm going to go to Vega because, you know, I do want to get to make sure, you know, and I appreciate the robust discussion, but I do want to get to where people are. And the ones we're looking at right now are car, property, and meals. You know, for me, car tax, I'm at \$3.60.

[03:57:38] I'm going to reiterate that. For property, I, you know, because I want to do meals tax. For meals tax, I'm at \$0.03. cents. I'm doing an incremental decrease every year as we see more data center revenue, as we see things going online. I'd like to slowly phase out the meals tax. Now on property, I am going to go back. I am going to go with 0906. So that's where I'm at. Vega, you're next in queue.

[03:58:07] Yes, Madam Chair. I just want to remind my colleagues that I am not making numbers and pulling them out of thin air. I sent an email with my budget proposal, the rates, eliminating the meals tax, supporting the C&P increase, and where the cuts would go and how we would generate the makeup for the income that we were losing. So this is not the day of markup.

[03:58:29] I made comments about tackling the revenue share agreement, and I had some interest from my colleagues to my left. But let's be real. We have to be serious about wanting to really tackle and have the conversation. So I just want to go on the record saying that I've done my due diligence. I haven't brought anything today that I haven't already brought to my colleagues months ago. I'll go back February 19th. That's when I made my budget proposal known to everybody on this day and my intentions of tackling the revenue share agreement along with the meals tax.

[03:58:58] With that being said, Madam Chair, you had kind of asked where we were and it seemed like we were kind of stuck between the um proposal that you sent also via email which was what 0.889 or five he was 895 895 and then um the other proposal um of 0.885 and i had proposed 350 for the uh correct and so supervisor franklin was the only one that was supportive of the um 0.906 rate so do you want to do the straw pool for that?

[03:59:34] What I'm going to do is I'm going to go back around in case people have different, where they're at, you know, after this discussion, people have different ideas. So for you, you are at \$3.50 for car tax. You are at the \$8.85. And then for meals, where are you? Eliminate all of it.

[03:59:54] Zero? No. So we will come back to you on meals. Supervisor Bode. Thank you, Madam Chair. I don't mean to throw another number in this, but Dave, question for you. You don't have to get back to me because I know you You need to make calculations. If we lowered the real estate rate from \$9.06 to a solid just \$90, what would that look like in terms of reductions in not only the revenues but also the tax bill?

[04:00:25] I'll answer the tax bill first, if I may. At \$0.90 even, the average tax bill increase would be \$239 or 4.9%. At \$0.90 even, the general revenue decrease by itself on real estate is \$7.2 million.

[04:00:49] Thank you. And I'll be able to answer more questions after I take a second. I'm sorry. Can you give me those numbers again? Yes, ma'am. At \$0.90 even, the average tax bill increase is \$239 or 4.9% increase.

[04:01:05] and the general revenue impact at 90 cents only is a 7.2 million dollar decrease in revenue all right before we move on supervisor baker what did you just whisper to me because i want it on the record i'm okay with the three cent reduction all right hopefully next year we get rid of it all together all right next is supervisor franklin uh i'm at uh 0.906 for real estate eight three six five for personal property uh and i i have not thought about the food and beverage

[04:01:42] because we're not doing it tonight all right before i start calling on folks does anyone else want to jump in madam chair can i ask supervisor gordy can also people can you guys press um so go on the um can you give me the numbers that you just gave but at 89 cents At \$0.89 even, the average tax bill increase is \$182 or 3.7% increase.

[04:02:18] And at the \$0.89 tax rate, general revenue decreases \$19.3 million. Okay. Thank you. All right. You're saying at \$0.89, I'm sorry, what was the average bill, average increase?

[04:02:42] \$182 increase or 3 point, I'm sorry, at 89 cents, \$182 increase or 3.7%. All right. I just want to kind of, before we go through and talk about some of these things or take any struggles, I just want to see if anyone had any additional questions or if you guys need a little bit of time to think, because otherwise, and if you need time when I call on you, just let me know that you need additional time.

[04:03:08] So Gordy, where are you right now? I would prefer to maximize our tax savings to the citizens, and the best way to do that is through the personal property tax.

[04:03:25] And so I'm at \$3.50 on that. I prefer \$8.85, but would be willing to go to \$8.9 on the real estate and \$0.03 on food and beverage. Hold on. All right, Franklin?

[04:03:51] Yeah, yeah. Vega, you went. Angry, where are you? Yeah, so .885 real estate, \$3.50 vehicle personal property. I'll do the same for the meals tax, 3 cents, 3 percent.

[04:04:10] Yeah, I guess it will be the rest. Voting. A flat 90 cents for real estate, \$3.60 for vehicles, and 3 percent for the meals tax. We're going to get complicated.

[04:04:33] Prefer 885, can read the room, would be willing to go to .89. but that means staying at 3.5 at personal property and 3 at meals tax unless you want to go to 885 and go to 36 on personal property there's a menu of things i'll bend a little bit but not much bailey um three cents for meals tax uh 350 for personal property and um nine zero

[04:05:11] so we're a little over the map i book first i'm going to start with meals tax that is an ordinance change and based on the temperature of the room it looks like you know we want to move forward and the staff is going to have to come back to us hold on um staff staff will need to come back with resolutions related to this item because it's an ordinance yeah it's an ordinance um and also just so i everyone knows that any changes to the meals tax would actually be effective january 1st So I just wanted to let everyone know that.

[04:05:44] So it does look like for meals tax, we're in a good place for staff to come back with some resolutions related to this item. So that one is done. So I'm going to go back to property tax. I'm flexible.

[04:06:01] I just will be honest with you. I'm nervous about the 885 because while I do want to see real relief, I just don't think we're at that number just yet. I don't think we're there. yeah i you you want to rip off that band-aid i'm not ready to rip off the band-aid um i'm just going through so we have gordy who's at 885 or 89 franklin 906 vega 885 i'm flexible i can do 906 i can do 89 although that kind of hurts me um angry is 885 bodie is at 90 where is it

[04:06:39] you can be flexible 89 we're um all right and bailey you're at 906 or you're are at 90 you're 90 so the car is you know gordy is 350 margaret's 365 vega's 350 angry's 350 bodie's 360 we're 350 bailey's 350 so 350 is for car tax so 350

[04:07:12] all right so here we go so i just want to let everyone know again to reiterate meals tax we're going to look at going to three cents and that will be an ordinance change and the staff will come back next week for the car tax we are going down to three dollars and fifty cents um are you i just have can you clarify is the meals tax going to three percent yes okay i keep hearing three cents i just want to make sure it is thank you yes and again effective january 1 of 26 because of the notification requirements because it is a resolution notification requirements this is how

[04:07:51] it's going to work i don't know if you had anything to add mr shorter on meals tax but We will, you are right, Madam Chair, this will require an ordinance change. We will come back as part of the budget adoption resolutions with language specific to essentially directing staff to come back and come back with the effective rate that you establish on next week.

[04:08:18] So if that rate is at a 3%, then we will notate that in the language. Madam Chair, if I might. Yes. In speaking with Mr. Sinclair and Ms. Atreid about this yesterday, I think the three of us would agree, and I believe Mr. Shorter would agree, one of the principal reasons you have to push it back to January 1 is so that the establishments have the opportunity to, and I agree with this, modify their systems, get their software changed, get their reporting changed, and it's going to take a significant amount of time.

[04:08:54] I mean, here we are already at the end of April. So making it effective July 1 would be problematic. Am I overstating this? She can explain it a whole lot better. July 1 was not the, was not, I don't, Madam Chair, I believe you said January 1?

[04:09:12] January 1. Yeah, and I'm explaining why it's January 1 and not July 1 like everything else. All right. Thank you so much. Supervisor Franklin, did you have something? Yeah, I just want to reiterate what the chair said about, you know, it's going to be a lot of heartburn if we're going down the personal property tax, which I'm fine with going down because that impacts more people.

[04:09:35] But if we're going to go to 350, we really have to look closely at that real estate tax rate. You know, I'm going to stick to the point 906, particularly if we're going if we want to open up the ordinance for the mills tax to go down by one percentage. we we got to think about the revenue um and the fact that we're we're sharing that with our school system so i just want to reiterate what the chair said it's going to be it's going to be tough with some of the other cuts that we're making all right so what i'm going to ask staff to do for a minute if you guys can do some calculations for us they have us keep a running total if we are looking at i know it's going to be hard because meals tax is january 1st

[04:10:11] but if we are looking at the reduction you know we've raised cmp on the 415 we're going to go for car tax for 350 we are going to look at a one percent reduction in meals tax can you give us an idea or do you need time no we have that for you right now if you would like okay let's go wait hold on i'm sorry i

can listen to one person at once dave dave you're the man right now computer and equipment at 415 vehicle personal property at 350 and a three percent food and beverage tax rate total general revenue we are down approximately one million dollars no decisions yet on real

[04:10:50] estate okay so right now we are down one million dollars nine hundred fifty thousand dollars to be precise okay i appreciate that supervisor franklin oh you're still here all right i i think this has been a really good discussion we are at 503 um i would actually if people feel good about discussing property real property i say we keep going and then we take a break or do people want to take a break now keep going all right we're going to keep it got two people who are already taking a break. I do want to keep this going because we already have two people out. I'm just going to say

[04:11:26] let's take five minutes, okay? Five minutes. But she is going to be back shortly, she said.

[04:12:18] So I am really glad with this one that we have. You know, we've settled on car tax. We've settled on meals tax. Now we're really going to dig in arm wrestle, lucky rabbits, foot, whatever you need for the property tax rate because, and I just want to remind folks, you know, With where we are right now, thank you, Dave Sinclair, with going down to \$350 for car tax and going to 3% for meals tax right now, we're about a \$1 million loss.

[04:12:51] And that's a rough estimate. And so, yeah, yes. Okay, because of the full year impact of the meals tax being realized in fiscal 27, we are down \$950,000 in FY26, but \$7.2 million in FY27.

[04:13:14] Can you say that again, please? Yes. With the decisions already made thus far tonight, general revenue is down a net of \$950,000 in FY26, but we are down \$7.2 million in FY27.

[04:13:38] And the major reason for that is the full year impact of the food and beverage tax being reduced to 3%. Please remember, it's a half-year impact in FY26 because it would begin January 1.

[04:13:54] But the full-year impact, that's the major reason for that. Yeah. If I might, Madam Chair. Please, everyone who wants to speak, jump in queue.

[04:14:12] I heard supervisor. Oh, okay. I'm in. I don't see you, though. Hit your recycle button on the left, bottom left. Click that. Hit the refresh button. Everyone refresh. I learned something from my team.

[04:14:31] Just hit the refresh, bud. All right. Gordy wins. Go, Gordy. So do we have any anticipated, what the anticipated increase in the C&P would be in 27? Staff has made no assumptions about what that rate would be in fiscal 27.

[04:14:50] We have flatlined it at 415. I think it's going to go up on more than \$7 million. Agreed. So thank you. No, Mike, please let me clarify. We made no assumptions on the C&P tax rate. The forecast has built in, already had increases built in, just in the valuation in general.

[04:15:20] Supervisor Vega? Now the \$7.2 million that you mentioned for FY27, we can make adjustments later down the road to mitigate that, right? Yeah. It's not like that's...

[04:15:36] It might require some hard decisions, but yes. Thank you. Supervisor Weir. To Supervisor Gordy's point, that's a 2027 or FY27 problem, but it will be mitigated significantly, in my view, by the increased number of servers that will be online in FY27 that are not online in FY26.

[04:16:01] And I think that will be a significant number is probably an understatement, given the state and the state of the construction right now and the near-operational status of a couple of new data centers.

[04:16:17] Yeah, let me say, Madam Chair, if I can, and I stated this at Budget Recap and then proposed, part of the objective here and part of our requirement is that we present and eventually adopt a budget with a five-year balance budget, and that is every single year of the five years that the budget is balanced.

[04:16:39] so the 7.2 or whatever the gap might be between 27 28 or 29 we have to resolve as part of the adoption of this budget all right thank you for the clarification um i don't know what anyone else wants to jump into the queue um i really do want to go lower but i'm also mindful again of what the shortfall is going to be um for this year for this or for the year we're looking at fiscal

[04:17:13] 2026. Each year we're going to do the budget. We can make a decision at that time where we want to go with each of our tax rates. But just looking at the year ahead, we do have a number of asks or a number of things that we're going to be looking at from budget recap. And we've got to be mindful about what cuts we're willing to make or not going to make. And so I'm really focused on 26 because I want to focus on the year ahead. Again, I would have liked to go just slightly lower with the property tax rate? Because I do understand that people are hurting. I am, again,

[04:17:48] looking at the threat of a pending recession. But as I said previously, with the data center tax rate, it's going to bring in additional revenue. And I think we're going to have more room to play around in future years. As more data centers go online, as we collect more taxes, I think that we're going to have more room to be flexible. And I want us to get to a point where we have a flat tax rate or we have a decrease. Personally, I don't feel that we're there yet, but I want to say that I understand where people are at. I am a single mom. I know what it's like to live paycheck to

[04:18:24] paycheck. I know what it's like to balance a budget and have to make sacrifices, but I also want to be realistic that a lot of people are not going to see, this is not a huge spike that we're proposing, and a lot of people are not going to see a huge spike. The average family, the average home is going to see a modest increase that is going to amount to you know roughly \$22.75 again that's not every household there are people who are going to see a decrease I saw a decrease last

[04:18:58] year but again since we've kind of landed on you know a different since we landed on reducing the car tax and reducing the meals tax I want to go around again I have all these messy sheets to see where folks are with the property tax rate.

[04:19:16] I don't know if anyone has any comments before I kind of go around and see where we land. Anyone else? All right. Weir? Madam Chair, I'm already on record as saying I preferred 0.88.

[04:19:31] I've already accommodated 0.885. I have to look at this particularly with respect to the Gainesville District, and the hits that the Gainesville District residents will take are significantly higher than they are in some other magisterial districts, but I think you also have to look at this long term.

[04:19:55] The average increase in the Gainesville district is probably on average over the last 10 years, \$200, \$250 a year, sometimes more, in many cases significantly more. So although, and I've heard this reference before, it's one pizza a month.

[04:20:12] Well, after 10 years, it's, you know, two dinners at Morton's a month. I think my tax bill since I bought the house has quadrupled. It's a cumulative effect, and you reset the baseline every year, and an incremental increase this year is significantly more impactful than a similar percentage increase in years past just because the assessed values have arisen.

[04:20:41] So I think if we're looking at really delivering on what has been promised by this board in many land use applications over the last six or seven years. I think we finally need to address the real estate tax side of the equation.

[04:21:00] And saying that, there is a lot of room left in the expenditure side of the budget to make up the difference, and the delta between what the school has proposed and what will be budgeted to them will decrease as a result of both the decreases in the revenue and changes to the expenditure side of the ledger.

[04:21:24] So at the end of the day, I think we'll be much closer to 57.2 than anybody actually thinks. I think in the budget that I sent everybody yesterday, it was not 57.2. It was 56.9, something like that. Food for thought.

[04:21:43] And so where are you right now? All right. Angry? Yeah, I'm sorry. I did have a question. Hey, Dave, you said FY27 was 7.2.

[04:21:59] What was FY26? What was that? \$950,000. \$950,000. Okay. Okay, so total.

[04:22:15] Yeah, so help me just clarify. So when we started this, we had a proposed budget that the rate was set at \$370,000. Then the C&P rate was \$370,000, and we raised that to \$415,000. That generated another \$18 million, roughly.

[04:22:32] If you like, I can go through the breakdown for you. Yeah, you could. Okay. Computer and peripheral at \$415, that generated revenue up \$18 million. Vehicle personal property going down to \$3.50 rate. That's a \$3.2 million reduction in revenue against the \$18 gain.

[04:22:54] Let's call it \$15, roughly. And then the food and beverage going to from 4% to 3% for a half year in FY26 is \$5,750,000 down. Okay, and so then we're roughly at?

[04:23:10] Combined, all that combined, the revenue is down \$950,000 in FY26. Okay, that was the, now we're, I'm playing with that 18 mil, or you're talking, So the \$18 million that we just generated of new money.

[04:23:28] It's gone. It's gone. And that's gone because of what you just went through there. Because of the decisions on vehicle rate and food and beverage tax. And that total, so the math was, I guess my math is off, that was \$18 million. Okay. But then that will put us back at kind of the starting block to the budget that we're working with.

[04:23:48] Close to it, yes. Okay. So then now we've got a real decision to make about real estate tax. Okay. I was going to say, do you have a preference at where you're at for the lower rate?

[04:24:13] It's going to be a lot lower. I can come back to you. Supervisor Vega. Thank you, Madam Chair. I respectfully disagree with you in terms of your perception of what's modest and what's not.

[04:24:29] Again, I think about people on a fixed income. I think about people living paycheck to paycheck. This board preaches affordable housing. this is our chart to give people real and meaningful tax relief we obviously have the funds if we really wanted to get them we know how to do it but there is no real interest um from the board in doing that and i'm just going to keep reiterating that an increase of a hundred dollars a year is a huge jump um you know when you talk about five ten years so i will go ahead and maintain my position at point eight eight five um because again you know we we talk about making

[04:25:07] this county affordable we talk about the cost of living well this is our shot this is our opportunity to really put some meaning behind that and give people real and meaningful tax relief i was looking um through my inbox and i couldn't find it but i think the email came from dave i'm not sure um who asked the question um in in regards to when was the last time that i believe was personal property tax was lower do you remember that question dave yes i believe the question was how long, generally, how long has the personal property tax on vehicles been \$3.70?

[04:25:44] Correct. And I believe I indicated through research of budget adoption resolutions, I think it's been that rate since? 1990, if my memory serves me correct.

[04:25:59] 91? Fiscal year 91. Right. In fiscal year 90, the rate was \$3.75 for the record. And obviously, the time's changing. You have to take other things into consideration and whatnot.

[04:26:15] But again, folks, this is our opportunity to provide real meaningful tax relief. You know, what is a slight increase for some is a significant one for others. And, you know, it's our job to make tough decisions, just like we do with our personal finances.

[04:26:32] You know, I want to go to the store and shop, but I have priorities. I have two children. They have priorities that I need to fund, and I have to hold back. And I think that as responsible stewards of taxpayer dollars, we have to look at this county budget as we do with our personal one, because it's easy to spend other people's money.

[04:26:49] That's easy. But when you sit back and you think about your own finances and how you manage your finances, I can bet my right pinky, Supervisor Franklin, that we're not reckless with our personal finances. But I'll leave that at that. Thank you, Madam Chair. All right. Does anyone else want to jump in before I start kind of going down the line to see where people are at?

[04:27:09] Yeah, I put you down there. 885. Anyone else want to jump in? Comments? Franklin? Yeah, so thank you. And I'm glad Mr. Sinclair kind of clarified that the increase that we had for the 415 is essentially gone.

[04:27:28] So the 0.96 I think is going to be important, particularly if we're going down a percentage on food and beverage. So just for my colleagues, just really something to think about. Thank you. And you're still 906 again?

[04:27:48] Clarify 906. Gordy. I'm still at 0.885. All right. I'm going to go backwards where I know where you're at. Bailey. I'm at 0.906.

[04:28:06] And I don't think just for point of reference, because I understand what Supervisor Vegas said, I don't think we're being reckless. I think we still have to plan according to the future. And so that's all I have, Madam Chair.

[04:28:24] Bodie. 0.906. Angry. Madam Chair, I'm going to tell you this. I'm going to ask for something, because this is all about negotiations. And I started this thing by talking about the fire levy, and I wanted to take that down to .0684.

[04:28:44] I know we're not there yet, but I'll go to that .0684. If I get support on that, I'll meet you guys at that 0906, because I want a cut, I want a tax cut in that fire levy, and that will help out the people as well.

[04:29:03] So if I can't get that, I'm sticking with my 885. Hold on one second because I need to pull up. I have a whole list of rates, but I just want to make sure I have exactly where we've advertised the fire levy.

[04:29:21] And I guess, Dave, if you can tell me what that would generate if we went down from 074 to 0684 on the fire levy. Four mil, yeah, okay. Generally, yes, that would be a \$4 million.

[04:29:38] decrease in revenue yeah in the levy and and that fire levy is not in the general fund that's its own yes sir fund so you just want to clarify that would be just for clarification for the rest of the board that would be a five percent decrease in the rate from seven point two cents to six point eight four cents if i'm hearing correctly so you said six two point eight four that's where you

[04:30:07] want to go i'm sorry 60 six eight six point eight four cents looks like victor is kind of our kill shot right now um i'm mad at you and i ain't mad at you but i am mad at you all right where are people this is i'm gonna give this one thing this is not a boring meeting um supervisor franklin them voting yeah so the i guess one question supervisor angry then another um to dave because

[04:30:44] we've gotten several um letters uh from several of the uh fire companies um i think one or two i think dell city in support um but the others very much so in opposition um and so i guess just to get a little bit more rationale in terms of um in terms of what your cuts would be for and then to dave if we cut four million how will that impact the fire and rescue system so you asked me first i'll let you jump in second we hang on i'm gonna go first because

[04:31:22] we spent an hour with our commonwealth attorney about cutting her budget and she makes up 2.7 percent of the entire you know uh safe and secure community budget fire and rescue makes up 44 percent of that entire budget that budget is extremely too big and i will guarantee it is a four million dollar cut in the fire labor that only goes to fire and rescue volunteers included, is not going to be anywhere of a dent to that service render.

[04:31:53] And I would challenge this board that we need to be looking into those service responses and what does that data look like as this fire and rescue has grown so big in itself. This is just one area that I'm even looking at. So there's many more that we will be discussing in the future after this whole budget process.

[04:32:11] But I would want to be clear on that, that \$4 million is not going to hurt anything inside about fire and levy and won't hurt services that we provide to our citizens. I'll let you take it from there. I'm sorry, Supervisor Franklin, we kind of cut you off. Did you have more? Well, yeah, so that answered from Supervisor Angry, kind of his, why he wants to cut.

[04:32:32] And it sounds like it's because you're saying the budget is really big. Mr. Sinclair, do we know, and I don't know if we have anyone from fire and rescue here to kind of talk about the impact, excuse me, that would be like, are we, will we have to rearrange any services for FY26. I know we're trying to do some renovations at some of my fire companies, so I just want to know kind of what the, oh, wow, what the impact will be.

[04:32:58] Here we go. Welcome Chief LaBelle. If I may set the stage for Chief LaBelle, the board has a couple options within the fire levy. The revenue generated for FY26 is really going towards three or four major initiatives okay that that the board would have to decide okay one major initiative is the centralized apparatus replacement program um the the total ask there is 12 million about five or six million of which was being funded by fire levy revenue in fy26 the rest

[04:33:36] from fund balance okay um another major initiative i believe was five million dollars for structural firefighting gear i'm not hearing anyone on the board say that they want to cut that okay but but

that is what that some of that fy26 revenue is funding all right at five million dollars in the proposed budget and then the the other major initiative is um station 30 apparatus all right now you may be asking yourselves we haven't even started design on station 30 and that's a fair

[04:34:10] point but if you remember from chief labelle's presentation in march we have to order apparatus three or four years in advance of delivery okay so those are the three major things that the fire levy is is funding in in fy 26 in terms of new investments okay now something that the board can consider and i don't know this isn't necessarily my recommendation but you can choose to use more fire levy fund balance for apparatus replacements to compensate for the \$4 million. That would

[04:34:47] reduce projected fire levy fund balance to less than \$10 million. It's still roughly about 10% of annualized revenue, but that is an option available to the board. And with that, if you like, I'll turn it over to Chief LaBelle. Sure, that will be helpful. I already said too much.

[04:35:07] Yeah, and where is Station 30? It would be within the Brentsville District.

[04:35:20] Good evening, Tom LaBelle, the Fire Chief. Madam Chair, members of the board, Mr. Shorter. I'm sorry, you may proceed. Are you guys ready? Do you mind repeating the question?

[04:35:37] Oh, yeah, the question was what the impact of a \$4 million cut would be. Now, Mr. Sinclair has mentioned centralized apparatus that's planned for FY26, as well as structural firefighter gear, which sounds important.

[04:35:53] as well as Station 30 to start planning for that, which is going on to Wellington Road. It sounds like one option may be to take from the fund balance. And so Supervisor Angry, that's one thing to think about. They would still get \$4 million. And so if your angle is to cut the budget altogether, I think that's a different type of discussion we may need to have.

[04:36:16] If I could, just to be clear, so the fire level is just one piece of that budget. So what is the budget that's coming out of the general fund going into fire and rescue? It is the major budget. So let's not confuse that the fire levy funds the fire department by itself.

[04:36:33] There's a whole big pot of money. And then I'll simply say this. Is there a balance right now in the fire levy? Like what is the balance right now in the fire levy? The fund balance? Yes. Based on the proposed budget, the projected fund balance with all the uses in the proposed budget would be around, I think, \$10 million.

[04:36:57] \$10 million. No, without the \$4 million. Yes. Yeah. Okay, so with the \$4 million revenue reduction, theoretically, that would be the projected fund balance would be drawn down to \$6 million.

[04:37:14] Right. And so, again, this may be a discussion for the board, But if your goal is to reduce the size of fire and rescue, key suggesting go into the fund balance, they would still get the \$4 million.

[04:37:31] So, well, I'm sorry. If the board supported it. And the whole point here is the fire levy is its own fund, so it's not taxed by any, that's a non-tax fund that goes strictly to fire and rescue. Now, the \$4 million is not coming out of the journal fund because it's already in the fire levy as a fund balance.

[04:37:51] So that money sits in the fire levy. It's not coming out of the general fund. So we don't have to pay into that. That money is already in a balance in the fire levy. Additionally, even at that original 0.72, the revenue generated was, what, \$30 million?

[04:38:11] What's the total revenue generated? For the fire levy, it was approximately \$81 million. \$81 million. So you're mining some \$4 million from the \$81 million is what we're talking about. So you're still sitting at a very hefty fire levy tax that's coming in there.

[04:38:28] Sure, yeah, and I'll get back to Chief LaBelle. I think the point that I was trying to make is we can agree to the reduction of the \$4 million, but what I'm saying is if your goal is to overall reduce the size of their budget, I'm not sure that that's still going to happen because we can still have a discussion about dipping into the fund balance.

[04:38:54] which we will, which I don't see why we would do that, but you definitely could. And I would say this is just step one for me. As I said before, I think that department is entirely too big, and so I think there's a whole list of discussion that we need to have anyway.

[04:39:09] So it starts somewhere, so this is where I'm starting. Do you have anything else, Supervisor Franklin? Well, I would like to hear from Chief LaBelle, but then I would love to hear from my colleagues because, I mean, those three items sound kind of important. Actually, while you're on this, because I want to jump in here, too, and ask this, because I think it really ties into what you're saying.

[04:39:29] You know, when we're talking about the fire fund balance, how much do we really need to maintain? Is this something that impacts our credit ratings? So I, you know, our fiscal outlook. So wait, LaBelle, you can just kind of stand to the side. I don't want you to go anywhere. No, uh-uh, baby. No, you stand right here. So, yes, our rating agencies look at our total reserves.

[04:39:49] We are low for a triple A. We are not triple A when it comes to our reserve balances. They want the reserve balances to be close to 30% of our general revenues. Right now we are, at the end of 24, we had dipped under 20%.

[04:40:05] So as we continue to withdraw reserves down, that delta shrinks, and it could become problematic for us. So I would caution, any fund should have a reserve fund balance of some sort. Our unassigned fund balance in our general fund is based on general fund revenues.

[04:40:23] It's not based on our fire levy revenues. So it would be prudent for the fire levy to have a fund balance as well. All right, thank you, LaBelle, if you can step on back. To be frank, this is the first time I'm hearing about an amount of cut.

[04:40:46] I really would need to go back and meet with my team to talk about how we would absorb a \$4 million cut. I have Bodie, then Weir. Yeah, thank you, Madam Chair.

[04:41:01] I appreciate the discussion. I know that Suresan Green has not been shy about this. I know that he gave us a presentation earlier on in the budget cycle and he went to the finance committee about this with much more robust cuts, frankly.

[04:41:18] But I have heartburn about this, at least for this year. And I'll tell you why. We've talked about it ad nauseum during the last few weeks around where we see things going in terms of increases in costs for vehicle parts, vehicles themselves, equipment structures, what have you.

[04:41:38] The core part, and this was reiterated just now, of a lot of what the fire levy is going to be paying for, at least for this fiscal year, are precisely those things, right? Vehicles, building components for new buildings, renovations for buildings, equipments for firefighters.

[04:41:55] I'm not sure how much that's going to pivot on things, but we know that most everything in the world now just comes from one single place, right? Parts of different equipment and vehicles come from all over the world where we are. So we don't know how much that's going to impact folks.

[04:42:11] And I have concern about cutting into what's really a pretty small reserve in the fire levy, knowing there will likely be escalating costs throughout the year, if not longer. So again, I appreciate the conversation. I know this is a conversation that needs to be had at some point, but I'm not comfortable with lowering the fire levy this year.

[04:42:31] Supervisor Reardon-Bailey. Chief, you walked away from the mic too fast. Let me start off with, I'm generally in agreement with Supervisor Angry, albeit for some different reasons.

[04:42:50] I've said for quite some time, this goes back years prior to me even sitting up here, that the fire levy is not what the fire levy was once. And it doesn't serve the intended purpose that it was adopted for in the first place, given the significant reduction in the volunteers.

[04:43:09] And I would suggest that if we lost all of our volunteers, we lose the ability to collect the fire levy. I could be wrong, Madam Attorney, but I believe that's correct. We had a discussion a couple of weeks ago. It's my understanding you do not have an accounting for all of the fire proffers available to your department, or have you gotten that?

[04:43:28] I've received that. You have received that? Do you know what the balance is? Not off the top of my head. I would suggest that it's significant? It's in the millions of dollars. Okay. Most of or many of the projects that we're talking about are capital expenditures, and I think we agreed that those proffer funds should be used for those, and a significant portion of what would be drawn off of the fire levy with a reduction could be easily made up for with proffers for the capital projects that you've got on the books for this year.

[04:44:03] Similarly, do you have an accounting for the fire funds that are going to be transferred to the department from the towns of Occoquan, Haymarket, and Dumfries? Yes, sir, we do. Do you know what the total on that is? I don't off the top of my head, but we can find out. It isn't, not in the millions, but it is another significant number?

[04:44:21] It's a significant number, yeah. I know the town dealt with that Monday night in transferring or paying for equipment. If I may, they specify the equipment, and we work with them as it's their... You're welcome. I made them do that 20 years ago.

[04:44:37] I wasn't just going to give Chief McGee a blank check. There are ways to make up this \$4 million, and I think we're going to talk about proffers again and again. It's going to be a recurring theme through the evening, but I think there is the ability with very little manipulation required to use, particularly older fire proffers that are significant and sitting around for, in many cases, a decade

[04:45:12] to offset the impacts of Supervisor Angry's suggestion. So at this point, Tom, I'm going to support Supervisor Angry on his proposed rate. Supervisor Bailey.

[04:45:28] Thank you, Madam Chair. You know, I want to make sure that we are really matching apples with apples and oranges with oranges, if that makes sense. And so I would like to understand in detail, you know, what the needs are because I know one of the things we experience, what the needs are in the costs, if we're talking about reducing the fire level levy.

[04:45:55] Because in the past, we were trying to amp up everything because things had been not supported for so long. And so now we are in a rhythm in spending and how we're projecting our costs because equipment was backlogged because of COVID, and now we're at a place where we can move forward with the fire stations and with the apparatus and equipment that we need.

[04:46:21] And so I would be very careful in just reducing the fire level or anything because it was just too big. Because when you talk about public safety, what does that mean? As well as when we hire, you know, too big would be a lot of people on your roster, but we need it because the population is increasing and the services are increasing.

[04:46:47] So what I would like to see as we move forward outside of the budget cycle is maybe we sit down and, Chief, you can explain to us where we can cut or what's imperative, because I'm not a fireman.

[04:47:02] I just like y'all. But I'd like to see that, and I'm a little uncomfortable right now in just cutting you because you're too big. But I want to understand it, and I want to understand it from my colleague as well. Supervisor Vega? Just to be clear, Supervisor Weir, you do recall that Supervisor Angry said that if we modified the fire levy, he would be supportive of the .906, and you just said that you would support Supervisor Angry's ask.

[04:47:35] So does that mean that now you're changing your position and you're supporting the .906? No, I don't have situational ethics. Okay, well, just wanted to make sure that I reiterated that. I might consider your request if you meet us halfway with the rate.

[04:47:59] I'm asking Supervisor Angry if he wants to play. We're going to play. I don't think any of that matters because you just heard from my colleagues that they're not. Only one said that. Is that what Supervisor? No, no, no. That's one, two. That's pretty much. That's two. Wait, hold on.

[04:48:15] No, I'm saying that. So I guess you don't think you have the support for your request. No, no, no. So I said either I'm going to, we're doing that or I'm staying 88.5. So I'll stay 88.5 and we'll be done with this. I hate to say this, but I'm going to say this.

[04:48:30] First of all, I really do want to protect our creating ratings, and I do want to protect reserves. And I know by saying this, we're going to have to kill other projects, but so be it. I'm not comfortable cutting the fire levy. I'm not comfortable with that at all.

[04:48:46] You know, and I appreciate, you know, Supervisor Ingrid and your team. With my team, we had a discussion. I think that's going to be an ongoing discussion, you know, and also involving fire. But I am not going to play with public safety. And if I lose your support for the current tax rate, then I lose it.

[04:49:05] Because I'm not going to play around with public safety. But I'm also going to take issue with some of the things said here about affordability. Because I care about affordability. And again, to reiterate, not only am I a single parent, I am the only single parent on this board. And there are very few people who are single parents who are elected officials.

[04:49:24] I truly understand what it is like to live paycheck to paycheck. I understand what it means to live in one person's means, but I'm not going to allow our public safety to be hijacked for a tax rate.

[04:49:40] I'm not going to do that. If you want to make cuts, if everyone is up here, it's fine making cuts, so be it. But I am not going to play around with public safety. I'm not going to play around with our fund

balance. So that's where I'm at. I want everyone to comment on this, but I do feel, I just, I feel very strongly that the people who put their lives on the line know what they need better than this board.

[04:50:13] LaBelle came to us with what he needs, and I'm going to meet it. I'm going to meet it. This is, you know, again, statement of our values, statement of our principles. I've said very clearly, education is huge for me. Education is the number one thing. Very, very, very, very, very close second, maybe one point B, is public safety. And I'm not going to play politics with those two things. So if we're going to have to make cuts, we're going to have to make cuts. I'm not happy with where we're at, but I'm not going to mess with our personal safety. Supervisor,

[04:50:50] we're than vega, than angry. Thank you, Madam Chair. And I do take umbrage at the insinuation that we're jeopardizing public safety. Chief LaBelle, you keep walking away. You're not getting off that easy. I don't think that's what I'm suggesting. And I don't think that's what Supervisor Angry is suggesting. I'm going to speak in his defense and on his behalf.

[04:51:10] I think it's simply a matter of allocating different resources to lessen the impact of the fire levy and make better use of the fire levy funds. Nobody is saying that we have to raid the reserve.

[04:51:26] In fact, what I'm saying is the exact opposite. We just need to utilize a different resource that has, to date, historically been underutilized. I mean, I'm looking at your budget, and you've got a structural firefighting line item at \$5 million coming out of the fire levy revenue.

[04:51:43] I would suggest that that structural firefighting gear is capital expenditure of some sort and can come out of proffers. And if I look at your capital outlay line item, there's a \$8.2 million. So if we offset a significant portion of that \$8.2 million, and I would strongly suspect that you have far more than \$4 million in proffer funds, that we can accommodate this with absolutely no loss in service levels, service impacts, and that sort of thing.

[04:52:12] We just have to rethink the way we fund the department, and I would even suggest that in the future, to avoid this type of argument over the fire levy, we simply roll the fire levy into the real property tax rate and then subtract out the fire department's budget from the share, if we're going to retain the revenue sharing agreement, from the share of the general fund that the school division gets.

[04:52:38] because you're right, we can't jeopardize the kids' education nor can we jeopardize public safety, but that doesn't mean we have to continue doing it in this fashion. I think we need to start making better utilization of the resources that we've got and the fact that many departments don't even know how many dollars they have in profits and they've laid unspent or unallocated in some cases for decades.

[04:53:02] I'm looking at one from 1987. I think we need to do better, and I think continuing to do the way we're doing it now just because that's the way we've always done it is not the answer. Supervisor Vega.

[04:53:19] Yeah, Madam Chair, you know, you're talking about public safety and whatnot, so that leads me to my next question. Where does this leave the CA's office based on the presentation that we just got a few hours ago? Are we going to get into the weeds of that right now? We're going to go back to that. No, we're going to go back to that one because we need to finish where we are with fire levy and with the property tax rate we need to finish that discussion madam chair county attorney madam chair members of the board i know there's a lot of discussion with regards to proffers and i understand that that discussion and i know that this is why the county exec i think recommended for the audit plan to look at that um calling

[04:53:59] something capital for budget purposes does not mean that it can be used by proffers proffers can only be used for capital that expands the use they cannot be used for operation and maintenance and making the decision on this dais tonight to determine whether or not a new vehicle or apparatus or uniforms qualifies to legally qualifies for the use of proffers I have concern about at this time I appreciate that clarification um Supervisor Vega did you have anything else

[04:54:33] before i move on all right supervisor angry thank you madam chair i joined dale city volunteer fire department in 2011 i've served this county for the last 10 years as a volunteer i save lives and i save property if we're if you so i don't ever want to be confused with i'm making the decision on public safety to to uh interfere with someone's life i will tell you this i may not be saving lives now but i'm going to save some property and their money because that's what we're responsible for so i'm going to stick with my 88 five and we can move on from here if we need

[04:55:05] to hold on no we're no supervisor franklin yeah thank you for this um so i think what we need to do because it looks like um four four uh to keep um the fire levy where it is uh which means that we need to go back to the discussion on real estate excuse me the the point zero nine zero six um and so that obviously means if we have to go down to 88 9 5 we got to make cuts and so my

[04:55:42] question to this board is we all have priorities who wants to make cuts and supervisor supervisor angry maybe we should start with you um in terms of you know if there's anything we think we can all give up wait hold on one second so what we're looking at and i'm just going to be real um we are going to look at at 885 that's where we're at that's where we're at that's what has the most votes so we are going to have to make cuts based on that i just want to make sure that everyone's comfortable comfortable well comfortable no but uh that looks like where we are and madam chair

[04:56:21] to your point that's why i wanted to start the discussion of what are we going to cut and i that is the next discussion um we can park this for now um but it looks like right now we're at 885 um so let's go through because the next wait hold on there are a few other things we've got to discuss wait hold on yes we've got to discuss the rest of the tax rates so let me go back to my and we have to discuss landfill hours we have a number of things that we're going to discuss so um fire levy we're at we're stuck on that one um so we're going to have to come back

[04:56:57] to that one um because that's 4-4 that means actually it doesn't move am i correct if no change so there is no change for the fire levy so yes it was 4-4 so i'm done with mails tax um hold on we are going to discuss first of all we have other advertised rates mosquitoes stormwater all

[04:57:34] the other stuff that we have you know personally i would like to leave those at the rate that we've advertised i don't know if there's anyone else who has ideas supervisor we are madam chair i'm say the same thing I say every year I'm not gonna I'm not gonna oppose them this year but like every other jurisdiction just roll that amount into the bloody real estate tax so we're giving anybody an accurate picture of what they're paying rather than four different figures that they have to add together to get their total hit on a yearly basis it's I I grow weary of this Supervisor Gordy

[04:58:13] Yeah, the only concern I have about that is when we have some of these levies, they do not go into the general fund. They go into very specified accounts to deal with very specified things. There is no revenue sharing agreement associated with those things, unlike the real estate tax.

[04:58:31] So there are some challenges there that I think we need to be careful because even if, let's say that we take the fire level we put in the general fund, well, we just lost 57 cents on the dollar on that. I think I addressed that. Yeah, so I would have concerns about that.

[04:58:48] So for you guys, where does it mean where you're at? Do you want to go with the rates as advertised? I know you want to roll them all together, Bob, but the question is do we, and I'm going to just go down the line, you know, are we going to leave them at the advertised rates? Supervisor Gordy, where are you?

[04:59:04] What say you? I'm sorry, say your statement again. I was reading something. So the other advertised rates, you know, we're talking about mosquito stormwater and others do you have do you want to keep them at what they were advertised or did you have any specific concerns or anything um i think um i'd rather focus the effort on the the real estate tax and keep everything else where they are um and

[04:59:36] and try to maximize the ability on the uh real estate supervisor franklin vega i did an eye roll for the camera so i'm angry angry mosquito being a problem um as advertised body as advertised isn't worth the fight as advertised bailey as advertised all right i should have let the clerk do the roll call but i'm as advertised so um so that one is good let me go through what is next

[05:00:13] we have got to talk about landfill hours um we got a lot to talk about so i hope everything everyone's comfortable well fed um if we can put that slide up and i think that is in our recap packet yes and recap all right everybody i don't know why gordy you're still in the queue

[05:00:53] let me keep refreshing and don't worry i'm going to refresh too all right so now we're going to talk about i think this is an important discussion is the landfill you know option one is what is proposed and that's um six three hours a week with a sunday opening um but we have other changes um and if i believe i just want to verify where we're at because i believe option two is what was discussed with the trash haulers if we can get some clarification from the director i would greatly mr shammut i would greatly appreciate um just giving a little more clarity around option two

[05:01:31] good afternoon i am chair members of the board katab shammut the director of public works We discussed several, actually, with them. The 63 was the one we originally discussed with.

[05:01:47] The 65 hours is basically stretching Thursday to add two more hours to 6 p.m. But we had just a general discussion on all of the options that we have available to us when we discussed with them the last time we met. Did they have a preferred option?

[05:02:07] Because I'm just trying to remember. I felt the two might have been their preferred option, or am I making this up? Well, yeah, we didn't really go into preferred. We just got into pros and cons of some of those options. They would really like to say no change, if that's possible, because change also, you know, add different routes and different costs and different things for them, and they don't know what that impact is until they actually see it and they actually map it, because the idea is once they change it out because of the squeeze schedule, that may add trucks, that may add drivers, may add stuff like that.

[05:02:44] You know, they exactly know what it is right now, so that's why it's probably easier. They've actually asked us, why do you want Sunday? And we said the public asked for Sunday, and that's why we're looking at it. I really appreciate that. Let's see. Don't go anywhere. I have Bode in the mirror.

[05:03:00] Thank you, Madam Chair. Just want to remind folks on the price tags here. So if we go with option three, we're adding \$900,000 for FTEs, which is an ongoing cost. And then we'd be adding, I would imagine, a one-time price of \$852,000.

[05:03:19] So now that we're, based on the current tax rates already in the whole, this will be adding to that. Now, if we do one, two, or four, there's not, well, one and two, there's no change. Four, we gain, we... Supervisor Bodhi, all of that is enterprise fund.

[05:03:38] Sure. So it comes out of the solid waste and the tipping fees and not the general fund. Got it. That said, though, I, yeah. my preference is option two i am actually right there with you with option two um i'm gonna go down to i guess we are bailey vega madam chair for once i'm gonna be the agent of change but at no cost option two all right you had me in some suspense there for a minute okay supervisor bailey

[05:04:15] option two vega option two um all right let me call on everyone pick on everyone else gordy where are you at ditto okay he's a ditto franklin i think that's fine so long as we think we can get the personnel to actually do it and i've said that before so angry angry so just turn your mic because i want to make sure it's on two all right did i call on everyone i called on everyone so

[05:04:50] everyone's a two option two thank you so very much thank you so yay we will one day have sunday hours all right so let's keep moving this along did you did we have anything on prtc does anyone want to talk about prtc yes no no i guess we're good okay supervisor uh vega than bodie are you in for prtc oh i will let you make a quick comment on the landfill okay all right let's go all right

[05:05:26] so bodie angry yeah so understanding again where we are now in terms of the hole we're in in terms of revenue for the budget currently um all i will say again is that if we're going to um step away from having additional funds to work with now because of slowing all the all these tax rates um we really need to get serious about having a dedicated funding stream for transit and transportation so i will again say we need to really look hard at the cni tax i know i've had a couple conversations with folks on the dais

[05:06:05] about it. So I'm hoping, and I see that Rick just walked into the room, I'm hoping that this board, especially knowing that there is some folks who want to look at revenue streams that don't touch residences. If you're looking for a revenue stream that doesn't touch residences, look no further than the CNI tax, commercial industrial, doesn't touch residences.

[05:06:26] So I believe that we should have a serious discussion about that, and I would want to see where my colleagues stand about implementing CNI january 1st of next year supervisor angry than we are uh thank you madam chair um i know we had that um omni ride prtc a detective director came in to our budget committee and talked about some extra routes uh that would help any problems that we're having with some citizens overcrowding on some bus routes so i will just um i think i sent this a couple of you guys but i'll send you this

[05:07:03] email that just had if he had three priority routes that we could uh look into it was those three the total came to 1.2 mil i'm just going to send this to you guys and we leave it up to you if you if you want to work on any of these and add it to the budget or not so i just want to bring that to your attention supervisor we're thank you madam chair um supervisor ang if you could park that 1.2 until a little later on and we can come back to it i'm actually in agreement with those supervisors bode and angry except for a little bit of a different reason i had a long talk with Bob Schneider when he came into my office

[05:07:42] and I, a couple of things a lot of this isn't really ready for primetime until FY27 and he kind of admitted that in many cases especially some of the microtransit because the areas that it's going to, the areas that it will impact aren't quite ready for service yet but I wish this discussion were occurring a little bit later in the year I don't know how long we're going to experience current circumstances you know are further doge cuts going to reduce the

[05:08:15] demand is go back to work going to change things you know is this just a function of uh the first couple of weeks first couple of months of the changes in in the normal is this going to be the new normal in two months i don't know i think everything is in far too much flux right now to be making long-term funding suggestions then again if we've got enough money at the end of the day for the three priority routes and it's only 1.2 million I could probably be willing to wrap my arms around that but I want to see what else happens before we start adding in 1.2. Supervisor

[05:08:55] Bailey. Thank you Madam Chair. Thank you Bob for saying that it's eight o'clock and we agreed on yeah wow so since he sits next to me at prtc i i agree with you i mean this is something that we do need to look at uh but because we're cutting so much we won't be able to serve in that at that level right now but i think this is something that we need to bring to our finance committee and really have an in-depth discussion about it to make sure that we're not at during budget studies and talking about this over and over again, I think it's a more precise way

[05:09:34] that we can do it and elevate the level of service from PRTC and come to the public with a really good tight budget to let them know that we're looking at them, but not just at budget season. All right. Does anyone else have anything they want to see on PRTC? Hold on. I'm just pulling it up. I am going to... So actually, I'm going to take a moment to express some disappointment because i didn't have a meeting with prtc there was none made i thought that bob schneider was going to come around and speak with each of our offices that didn't happen with mine

[05:10:12] and i'm disappointed he didn't i i you know and i'm disappointed i'm very very very disappointed with that um you know at this time i don't support anything with prtc because i would like to have a fuller discussion with them so i don't know if anyone else had anything they want to add on that i'm sorry what uh yes i did say that and i'm someone i will be honest i rely i i prefer public transportation when i'm going into washington dc and when i'm in this district and i'm moving around i do personally prefer public transportation i am a huge fan of that um i see

[05:10:49] mr sinclair you have your light on did you have a comment i'm very sorry i do i do not my mistake did anyone have anything else that they want to say supervisor angry if i could um i don't know how um we missed you i know we did the budget committee presentation with dr snyder but i so I know he made rounds.

[05:11:12] I didn't make those rounds. I don't know if you guys called him. I'm not going to defend that, but I don't know how he missed you. So I don't think that was purposeful. So I got to figure out what that was. I will say when he came to the Finance and Budget Committee meeting, he spoke for 15 minutes to give us a handout.

[05:11:27] And there was, you know, you had said there would be follow-up. I don't know what happened. But certainly my office was not a part of that follow-up. I don't know if anyone has anything else they want to see on PRTC. Bob has brought his entire desk. We are actually going to, I want to go a little deeper now into recap.

[05:11:50] We are going to go, so before I go, because I wanted to go into budget markup considerations, but before I do that, all of the other stuff in recap, I'm asking this for Mr. Sinclair, are we going to have to make changes to some of the things that were outlined? yes so you know um are you know such as you know um children's services no wrong door noise ordinance enforcement the land records management system are we going to have to make changes to any of those things those are all in um the budget recap that the county executive presented to the

[05:12:28] board last week so all those things are currently in the budget they're in and we can even with the changes that we've made to the budget we can fully fund those things okay i'm not talking about the second part i'm not talking about board consideration but everything in the first part of the packet we can fund okay well i can provide what we've done is we have programmed the impact of 88.5 cent real estate tax rate if the board would like that update so again for the first part all that's the board considerations is i guess assume we're going to make cuts but

[05:13:05] first part is that fine and what i'm asking is madam chair from pages um 13 from pages six pages six seven eight nine and ten do we have to make cuts to any of those items or should our if we accepted those things as are with all the cuts we made madam chair i think what um maybe what might be helpful, because I do understand your question. Dave is trying to provide essentially

[05:13:40] an update on where we stand now in terms of the cuts that will be needed to the budget recap numbers. So Dave, if you want to... Okay, so what we have is computer and peripherals at \$415, personal property vehicles at \$350, 3% food and beverage tax. And I know this is this is a point of discussion still for the board but we have put in a real estate tax rate of 88

[05:14:15] and a half cents the total general revenue that we are down is 26.3 million dollars of that amount based on the revenue sharing agreement the school transfer is down 15.1 million compared to the amount in the county executive at budget recap and the county portion is 11.2 million down so

[05:14:49] theoretically at 88.5 cents the board would need to come up with 11.2 million dollars of reductions to the budget on the county side i hope that's helpful that is very in terms of magnitude in terms of that is that is very helpful i am going to give us um because we're going to have to i'm supervisor franklin then i am going to give us time so that we can kind of look over things that you're not in the queue okay all right sorry um maybe i can read minds i don't know so what we're

[05:15:26] going to do is we're going to take i don't know if i know people want to get out um i'm leaning towards 15 but i'll just say 10 minute break um to kind of look through the packet do what you

[05:15:39] got to do um but we'll take a 10 minute break so that is 9 18 thank you i'm just going to give it

[05:17:55] a little everyone we are back so when i was leaving out for the break um it was brought to my attention that we didn't take a vote on the residential tax rate because right now we're 4-4 so i want everyone to officially go on the record andre if you want to do the roll call for the tax rate for 0.885 yes okay very good supervisor angry yes supervisor bailey nay Supervisor Bode?

[05:18:31] No. Supervisor Franklin? Supervisor Gordy? Yes. I'm sorry. Sorry. Supervisor Vega? Yes. Supervisor Weir?

[05:18:47] Chair Jefferson? No. We're at a 4-4. So if it's 4-4. It fails. So it fails. So then the other, so do we need to go through 9-0, I mean, because 9-0-6 is the advertised rate, so that's what it's going to stay at. I just

want clarity.

[05:19:02] Point 9-0-6. Point 9-0-6. We need to come to some agreement. You advertised at 9-2. We advertised at 9-2. And you can go anywhere down. And I presented a recap at 9-0.

[05:19:19] So we are at 9-0-6 now, and without an affirmative vote at 5, we will remain at 9-0-6. Now, that is to say that the board will still need to vote on 9-0-6 as part of the resolutions next week.

[05:19:43] but we need to take a straw poll on 906. Let's go, let's do a straw poll at 906. Ms. Mannon, if you can do the roll call. Supervisor Angry?

[05:20:05] Supervisor Bailey? Aye. Supervisor Bodie? Aye. Supervisor Franklin? Aye. Supervisor Gordie? Supervisor Vega? No. Supervisor Weir?

[05:20:21] No. Chair Jefferson? Yes. That passes five to three. That changes the spreadsheet. Sorry, he's like, oh, that changes the spreadsheet. you know you love your spreadsheets um madam chair all right hold on we can i want to get updated numbers if we can get updated numbers and also supervisor bodie had something i'm so sorry let me refresh my screen so i can view the speakers um while they're getting supervisor bodie what were you talking so no i so i wanted to ask uh madam county attorney or anyone or

[05:20:58] anyone um i know we advertised rates if we wanted to go up on a rate what time frame would we need to advertise for it, do you care? Madam Chair, members of the board, it would depend upon what it is and whether the Virginia Code requires once a week for two weeks or advertise once, but you would need another public hearing on that.

[05:21:20] And then it would be tied to X number of days before the decision is made, so it would really throw off the whole. Just wanted to know. Thank you. All right. Are there any other speakers?

[05:21:38] Are you ready for your calculation? All right, go, sir. Okay, based on a real estate tax rate of 90.6 cents, total general revenue, we are down \$950,000. Of that amount, based on the county school's revenue sharing agreement, the reduction to the schools is \$544,000.

[05:22:01] The reduction to the county is \$406,000. So the county government budget is short \$406,000. I appreciate the clarification. I feel like I've written on almost every clean sheet of paper I have.

[05:22:19] So, what we're going to do is we are going to almost, I'm not going to say we're almost in final stretch because that's going to add time. All right. So, I would like to go to the recap. Before I do, before we really get into the recap and the markup considerations, I do want to talk a little bit about proffers.

[05:22:40] It's already mentioned, but I think that it might be worth really stating up front because I do want to spend down more of our proffers and I appreciate Supervisor Weir what you were looking at and how we can fund things out of proffers but to reiterate what was said earlier we're doing an audit right now of our proffers and I was advised by Mr. Shorey that anything we want funded you know for parks and rec for we're really going to need to rely on the budget process we're going to really we're going to need to prioritize because using proffers at this time you know it may be difficult because the county staff is going to need more time to

[05:23:18] analyze each proffer. Mr. Shorter, I don't know if you wanted to say something. Madam Chair, you said it well. Just to remind the board, as Michelle Roble mentioned, we added proffer account management to the annual budget calendar, so it will be audited this year, and we will come back to the board with the results of that audit.

[05:23:42] I would also suggest that maybe as part of the board's finance and budget committee that we provide updates as we work with the county attorney's office and our proffer administrator to really work through the accounts.

[05:23:58] We do not have to wait on the audit to provide updates, but we would certainly need to be very specific, project by project, on what proffers are eligible, if you will, for that project.

[05:24:16] So this will be an ongoing process, but it is not something that we will know tonight. We will not be able to tonight say for sure that we'll be able to use park proffers for specific projects. And that, for me, is going to play into a lot of what we discussed tonight.

[05:24:34] And I do want to say this. I do want to think more as we move forward about what proffers we have and how to use them. I think that's going to be, I hope that that's going to be a very important discussion moving forward. Because if we have money sitting there in a pot, I want to make sure that we use them before any of them expire.

[05:24:53] Supervisor Rear. I'll apologize if I sound irritated, because I am. I don't want to hear any excuses. We've got two types of proffers.

[05:25:09] You've got proffers dedicated to particular uses in a particular district, and you've got general proffers that can be spent in all districts. Proffers do not belong to the district supervisor. They belong to the board, and we can allocate them. In fact, we have a listing of the allocatable proffers that was delivered to us.

[05:25:27] I would argue that this spreadsheet's a little too big, because it contains things that have been zeroed out, which should have been just removed. But I'll give you an example. Hunter at Haymarket, general use proffers, available \$50,000. That's just one example out of this long use, and that particular one is from 2012.

[05:25:50] The county attorney and I are going to disagree in many respects on how they can be used. There's room for disagreement on it. I've been doing this a very, very, very long time with a number of different legal counsels opinions vary across the board but the fact of the matter is at the end of the day we have fund balances that have been sitting there in many cases for a decade unused and you can have the general fund proffers out of my district i don't care whose park they go to in this particular

[05:26:26] instance same thing with the fire department we've got needs that need to be funded and we shouldn't be funding them with general revenue sources when we've got millions available in this spread in this spreadsheet alone just for parks continuing again continuing to do things the same way we've done them and just accrue these proffer funds year over year and not expend them for the purpose that they were given to us and i would say the same thing for the fire department a new

[05:27:04] station is not because of a new neighborhood a new station is because of expanded demand across the county. We can do this. It's not that hard. It takes a little bit of effort, but the funds are there. We don't have to allocate them tonight. All we have to do is accommodate them, and the budget is to be dealt with by proper money at some time in the near future. It's just a bookkeeping exercise. It's not that hard. Supervisor Vega. Yeah, just point of clarification, Madam Chair,

[05:27:40] now that the board majority has essentially voted to spike taxes yet again on the taxpayers of this county what is the meals rate and the car tax rate so those remain the same the meals tax we're going

to lower it's going to be an ordinance we're going to have a resolution next week that's going to be we're going to lower it to three cents and i the car tax is going to go down to 350 so instead of spiking we're offsetting thanks supervisor bailey thank you madam chair just to get back to where you were trying to focus us in terms of the proffers and what what page are you starting

[05:28:18] You know, are you on 13 in terms of going forward? Because to what my colleague just mentioned about the proffers, I just wanted to offer, as we move forward with this, how we could utilize the proffers to share, if I could, so that we could move.

[05:28:36] I just need to know how you want us to move forward. I know that there are, I would like to actually start with budget markup considerations, and then we'll go at the end. The last thing we'll talk about, other further revisions that weren't discussed on that might include a few other things that people have additional interest of.

[05:28:55] So I'm looking at starting, guess, at page 13. Okay. And, again, I do feel your frustration. I feel your frustration, Bob, because it's like, come on. You know, we do need to spend – we already have this money, and we need to spend it.

[05:29:10] And so my recommendation as we move forward next budget year, you know, I want to see what we can use proffers for. you know that doesn't help the taxpayers this year with all due respect and then i'm gonna look at you know i um you're right i don't know is there anything that can be done or real should we you know i'm asking because i want to know what's realistic and what's feasible madam chair i haven't delved into the fire department that heavily but i would notice that we've got proper

[05:29:43] integration on page 402 of the budget and with fire we're using 1.75 million if i read this correctly, Dave, for Fire and Rescue Station 30, but we've got other C&P expenditures in FY26 that I would argue we could use additional fire proffer funds for specifically Fire and Rescue Station 27, which we've got an allocation of \$8.89 million, or 30, which is Fire Station 30, and the Emergency Operations Center, which I would suggest is an operations center that

[05:30:22] serves the entirety of the county to some degree and then the replacement renovation program at 4.5 million i don't know where those funds are coming from right now but since they're not listed on proffer integration i'm assuming those are either fire levy funds or general fund dollars in the case of the fire and rescue stations those are scheduled to be debt financed and the debt service impact does not impact the county's budget in fiscal year 26 we can evaluate the use of fire and rescue

[05:31:00] proffers for the the station construction on station 30 and station the other stations included in the proposed cip i don't know if that answers your question or not supervisor weir it doesn't it doesn't because the capital improvement just includes the stations not the you know if you build a new station, it necessarily requires a new unit. And if the new unit is to go to a fire station whose purpose is to expand service because of county demand, county-wide, thus the creation

[05:31:36] of the new station, then the vehicle that's in that new station to accommodate the expanded need and the need for the new station should also be a capital expenditure and has always been the case in every jurisdiction i've done this yes um for station 30 the apparatus for station 30 which is a new station and so the apparatus in that station would be new apparatus that is something that is in the fy26 proposed budget it is funded by the fire levy so to supervisor angry's point if we

[05:32:14] replace those fire levy dollars with proffer dollars for that equipment we could reduce the fire levy in theory. If that's an applicable use of proffer dollars. I will argue that is the case. I don't know. Madam County Attorney, do you have any guidance? Madam Chair, members of the board, as I stated prior, proffers and when they were provided to the county, probably a lot of them were provided back when the county had a proffer policy, and there would have been an analysis done on the expanded need caused by a rezoning application.

[05:32:50] And I do not think that that analysis included vehicles for either the police or the fire. It was discussing stations, et cetera. Proffers cannot be used for operation or maintenance. Sometimes proffers are provided to the board for a specific purpose.

[05:33:08] There would need to be legal analysis done on where the proffers came from and where they would be applied for. I do not know of any specific statutory authority, and I've discussed this with Mr. Weir, of the use of proffers for vehicle apparatus.

[05:33:27] We have Supervisor Weir than Bailey. I'll also add, Madam Chair, if I can. Yes, Mr. Shorten. One of the things I said to you earlier this afternoon regarding proffers, we certainly heard the board earlier this year and your interest in us better understanding our current accounts and inventorying those accounts.

[05:33:48] This is why it was added to the audit plan. What I'm also suggesting is that throughout the budget year, as we are more clear on proffer accounts and what is eligible and what we have access to, that we come back to the board through the Finance and Budget Committee and where there are resources that can be used in lieu of general fund, that we will certainly bring that to the board as we become clear about the use of the proffers.

[05:34:23] And I'm recommending that because we don't want to get in a situation where we are committing proffer dollars this evening or next week, and then we find out that we cannot use those proffer dollars, and then we are in a position in the middle of a budget year where we have a shortfall where we did not expect to um oh you just dropped out of queue so we are in bailey did you guys want to speak again okay that's we are than bailey madam chair i agree with the county attorney in part and i disagree in part um i think what everybody has to realize is that many of the profits and i can

[05:35:02] only use the parks ones because i've got those sitting in front of me i don't have the other ones But there is a line of demarcation of roughly 2016, and whereas many of the proffers post-2016 have to have a nexus to the development from which the proffers came, that was not the case prior to 2016.

[05:35:23] We had a general fee schedule, essentially, and this is why the 2016 legislation took place, because we specifically, and Loudoun County, were accused of extorting money out of the developers to a high degree, and that's why the development industry went and got the proffer law changed, kind of bit them in the ass for a couple of years after that.

[05:35:44] But there are general fund dollars that are not restricted by nexus nor restricted by general magisterial district, and that we're arguing about this at this point in time is our fault.

[05:36:00] This should have been addressed a long time ago, and I know I've been bitching about this for a long time. But we have the opportunity to correct this. We have weeks, months to do the analysis because we have to allocate the proper money. That takes a board action, to my understanding, or at least it does everywhere else I've ever been.

[05:36:20] So we can make this work. It is not that hard. It is not as difficult as it's being portrayed. Supervisor Bailey. Thank you, Madam Chair. First things first, when Supervisor Weir and I talked about the budget last week, It was an enlightenment that he gave to me in using proffers from the reports that Mr. Sinclair had sent to us.

[05:36:50] So in doing so, the proffers that I'm going to use in the budget cycle tonight was approved and discussed legally with our county attorney. The agencies talked about it for what I'm going to use tonight and is applicable because I don't want to get into, and us using it, using the profits, I don't want us to get into a discussion that's not applicable to us moving forward and making sure that markup is healthy tonight.

[05:37:23] I think it's a tool. I agree that maybe we can talk about it in the finance committee. That's where I'd like to flesh it out and get a better understanding because as a board, I know that it hasn't been thoroughly fleshed out as to where and how we can and when we can.

[05:37:41] And so I don't want us to misuse funds like the county executive is saying, and I know that he and the county attorney work. When we do use proffers, they work together to make sure we're doing it right. So I just want to say that. And then to that, on page 13 of where you refer to, Madam Chair, for example, with the Forest Greens golf course, I just want to use that as an example that I've shared with some of my colleagues on the board.

[05:38:08] What was projected was \$500,000, and I did use some of my profit funds that Mr. Sinclair had sent to me three months ago, I think, two or three months ago, towards that to defray the cost of what we're looking at here.

[05:38:24] So I just want to put that out to the colleagues so that, you know, we could satisfy what you're trying to require on page 13. Supervisor Vega? Thank you, Madam Chair. I obviously don't support some items here that are listed under budget options of board and committee interest.

[05:38:42] So I just want to make sure that I'm understanding how you want to go through this. Supervisor Bailey just mentioned one that I'm opposed to, \$500,000 for a golf course. We can get into the weeds of that as to why I don't support it and why she's asking for us to subsidize. This is a private business. It is what?

[05:39:00] Is it? Okay, well, I stand corrected, but I still want to know why. when the time comes so do you want us to go down this list because this is this is for our consideration it's not like we have to fund these we are going to go down the list I want to hear where people are on profits because this is a really vital discussion and to be quite frank you know what yeah Bob I agree with you and I agree that these don't belong necessarily unless they're restricted toward individual district so I think this is an important discussion we're having did you have more I'm sorry I do and my question is for Dave I just want to be clear in terms of how much money we're working with or what we have to come up with

[05:39:38] can you give me um the amounts for all of the new rates because we're talking about you know decreasing the car tax to 350 the meals tax to three cents i just want the box numbers not the school portion and i stand corrected i did not know that that was our golf course i've never been i'm not a golfer i'm sorry i just want to be clear that i answer your question supervisor vega you want the county where the county is at yes okay all right so we are short 406 000 in fy26

[05:40:15] however we are short 3.1 million dollars in fiscal 27 and that's because of that the food and beverage tax half year impact in fy26 full year impact in fiscal 27 okay so with all the rate adjustments it's

just 406 in fiscal 26 yes okay gotcha thank you but that it does increase to 3.1

[05:40:44] million in fiscal 27 supervisor franklin i kind of forgot but i think i was going to point out that we needed to find four hundred thousand dollars in cuts which i guess we're doing that now we're still talking about proffers well we're i think no we're i think we've landed or so with proffers again just so we're clear because I do want to keep moving forward Mr. Shorter the staff is going to look at what we have and you're going to come back to us correct that is that is correct Madam

[05:41:19] Chair we're on an ongoing basis throughout this year we are not going to wait on the audit or the completion of the audit as the accounts as we become clear we will come back to the board through the finance and budget committee and so basically tonight is we will prioritize the things we want, and your team can go through and say, hey, we can use some of the profit money to offset that?

[05:41:44] Am I clear? Can we do that or no? Well, for our purposes this evening, I think to get to agreement around the actual budget, I'm not sure that I fully follow in terms of... Well, so basically tonight, you know, I'm just going to use the Forest Greens Golf Course, Prince William Forest Greens Golf Course, \$500,000. If we say, hey, we're going to go forward with this and we approve it as part of the budget, But if you come back and say, hey, we can use proffer funds, can you come back and say, you know, we can use proffer funds for some of this?

[05:42:18] Can the rest fall to the bottom? That is absolutely what would happen. If we find in 60 days and 30 days that there is a certain amount of proffers, and I don't want to speak for our county attorney, but that we have gotten legal review, that we will come back to the board.

[05:42:38] all those funds will fall to the bottom line at the end of the year to the capital reserve. And Madam Attorney, I see you shaking your head in the affirmative. Madam Chair, members of the board, when we were working with Supervisor Bailey's office with regards to the directive that she's already provided, we did change some of the wording because some of the intended purpose could possibly argued as operations or maintenance.

[05:43:02] And so that's why we changed the wording to the directive to read what it read. And I think the board has already passed that directive for that. And I think that the additional funds that are to be utilized, I don't know if the proffer administrator has analyzed what the use is for this \$500,000, if there's been the analysis on that or not.

[05:43:25] I do know that we did work with your office before giving that other directive to make sure that the wording was that we could legally support the use of those proffers that have already been directed. All right. Thank you. Well, I'll let you go, Bailey, since I've used your example, and then angry.

[05:43:42] To respond to that, Madam Chair, to give you and my colleagues a sense of comfort in terms of the directive. And yes, the agency has confirmed that that's what can happen. That's why I was trying to explain earlier that in terms of using proffers, that's how it happened.

[05:44:01] And thank you, Madam County Attorney, for clarifying for my colleagues exactly what that looks like. Thank you, Madam Chair. Supervisor Angry. Madam Chair, the Neabsville District is sitting on a little under a million dollars in fire propers.

[05:44:17] We have been discussing for many years renovation of some of these stations. If that money can be used, and there's four stations in Dell City, I will be investigating putting that money towards

renovation of those stations. Thank you.

[05:44:33] I don't see anything else, so we're going to close the proffer discussion. You know, again, I wish we were in a better position to make use of that. And I'm going to, as we go through page 13, slide 13, you know, I will be honest with you, and there are some things on this slide that I'm not fully comfortable with right now, given that we do need to make cuts, given that we have a number of things left to discuss.

[05:45:02] Trails, I want to start with trails. I'll be honest, I think \$5 million is ambitious. I think it's very ambitious. I think maybe in future years we can make up for it. I personally would like to at least cut that in half, particularly since, you know, we have been talking a lot about being sensitive to taxpayers.

[05:45:20] And I would like to see if that is something, maybe at a later date, that we can use some parks proffers for. If I may, Chair Jefferson and members of the board, these items, I just want to emphasize that these items of board and community interest are not in the proposed budget.

[05:45:42] Okay. I didn't want to leave you with the impression that removing any of these improved the situation. So basically, and that's a good point, so basically we don't have the money to put any of this in, right? Yeah, we don't.

[05:45:57] Not at the moment without cuts elsewhere. So we are going to look at cuts. We have to look at cuts elsewhere. And we've got to see if we can include any of these things in the budget. So I appreciate the clarification. Supervisor Bode. Yeah, Madam Chair, a question on that piece.

[05:46:14] Because I feel like since we're going through these slides, and I get why from an organizational standpoint you would like to, but if every slide were to go, hey, we can't really invest in any things because we have to make cuts, then, yeah. I just want to, I thought we were going to go through all these items first.

[05:46:30] Nope, since we, you know, and I appreciate the clarification, we're now going to talk cuts. Okay, that's what I was going to suggest. Thank you. We are now going to discuss cuts. I want everyone to look at, and so I'm also clear, Pages 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10.

[05:46:56] Those are areas that are right for cuts, I believe. Because that's not baked into the budget, or is that baked into budget? It is. These items are baked into the budget through recap. Yes, they were added at recap. So these are things that are good targets, essentially, for a cut.

[05:47:12] They are in the budget. So we can cut them. They are available for cuts if that's the will of the board. Thank you. All right. I don't know. Supervisor Bode. Well, just for clarity, slide 9, I would imagine, is not because I think slide 9, the ADC and fire levy stuff, are not general revenue funds.

[05:47:32] That's correct. These are funds outside of the general fund. So then we're looking at, and let's go through actually some of these too because on page, I'm just trying to think where to start because, I mean, some things, I'm just actually going to take a quick page looking at page 7.

[05:47:56] I know that we're all in agreement. We cannot, we have to fund the land records management system. I believe that everyone's in agreement, so that is going to be saved. We have other things, you know, that we can talk about where we want to make cuts.

[05:48:16] I'm just going through and seeing if there's... Supervisor Brody, you're still in the queue. Did you have something else? No, I'll wait to hear the discussion from everyone else, because I'm not in favor of cutting any of the things on that expenditure addition. So we can't cut the Child Services Act, as an example. I don't support cutting the land records management.

[05:48:33] I don't support cutting the noise ordinances. I don't support cutting the No Wrong Door project. So on this page, I don't see it. Does anyone have anything on page? We're actually going to have to go back and have a conversation as well about page six. But is there anything that anyone wants to cut on page seven?

[05:48:51] Supervisor Vega, are you on page seven? I don't think anyone has anything. Looking at page six, this is page six is revenue from the Commonwealth.

[05:49:10] I don't think that's something we really can cut now. expenditure savings i don't think that's something we can cut let's see i have to get a little creative here um yep supervisor franklin mike isn't or i don't know what's happening yes supervisor franklin um so i wonder and this is a question for staff and the answer may be no i mean we have

[05:49:41] to find 400k are there staff positions um that we are hoping to put forth to staff up that perhaps we can look at cutting this year, maybe revisiting for FY27?

[05:50:02] I hate to say that, but I'm just, you know, looking at our options. We can certainly pull up the, we can go back to the initiatives that were proposed on February 18th to remind the board what new programs, initiatives, and projects we were anticipating bringing forward so that the list for board's consideration is certainly larger than what was presented at Budget Recap.

[05:50:35] And to be clear, these are actually already baked into the budget because obviously my goal for asking is to see where we can make some adjustments. Correct. So the projects, programs, staff, FTEs that were proposed on the 18th and that were added on the night of Budget Recap are all eligible because they are all baked into the budget.

[05:50:58] Supervisor Bode, then we're. Actually, all the producers are we're. I just wanted to respond to Supervisor Franklin. There are some proposals from a number of people. I have a list of them. It's rather limited, but if you want a starting point, I can give you one.

[05:51:14] I actually have your spreadsheet open, but I also want to see what, you know, when they pull up the slides so that we can talk about what positions to cut because, I mean, we have some great programs and some great things that I know that we want to fund and that we have to fund, like the land records management system.

[05:51:31] Supervisor Bode. Sure. So one of the things I know that Supervisor Weir had in his spreadsheet that I kept from mine is the facility's fleet replacement. That's sitting at 385, 250. That's not on a page.

[05:51:48] It's on the spreadsheet. It's on the spreadsheet. I have a cup. Well, I'm going to... I just bring that up because that gets us putting that through the Capital Reserve, which is what Supervisor Weir is suggesting, gets us part of the way there.

[05:52:10] I know there's an ongoing concern about that being something that we use as ongoing expenses, but at least gets us there in this year so we can look at other considerations later. Yeah, if you can, I'm sorry. I just want to offer the board clarification. I know exactly where Supervisor Weir stands on this.

[05:52:28] As part of the proposed budget, we are adding vehicles to the county's overall inventory of fleet. new police vehicles because of new officers, sheriff deputies, things like that. This is intended to add

to our annual replacement budget on an annualized basis so that we can replace a growing fleet, especially a public safety fleet, when replacements come due.

[05:52:56] If the board recalls, we also have in the proposed budget \$2.5 million from the Capitol Reserve to catch up on police replacements that's put this is part of the reason why staff is recommending this increase so that we don't fall further behind um in that sense staff's perspective is that these are annualized replacements and i'll i'll say no more well it may be helpful dave or maybe michelle

[05:53:28] if you would just speak to the use of capital reserve uh versus the use of general fund for ongoing purchase and even and I guess speak to our principles as well? Yes the board's principles of sound financial management do say does say that you will not use one-time dollars one-time fund balances to fund to fund ongoing costs and and we do as part of again as part of our credit check each year as we go through our fund balances and why they change when we explain why

[05:54:07] they went down we really make a point of trying to say these were one-time capital which may have otherwise prevented us from issuing debt and have the it's harder to explain when you get into using it for operations all right um i have vega and franklin the queue i don't want to go to them but i'm sorry um yeah i'd like to go to um vega and franklin um i propose that we um cut the nine unfilled positions that have been vacant for over nine months i'm sorry um you said the nine for

[05:54:42] what department? It seems like they're all in one, two, three, four, five, six are in community services. Development services has one, two, and one from economic development. That should be pretty easy, in my opinion. Did you do the calculations for how much that would save us?

[05:55:07] No, but I can. If you can do the, can you read off the positions, how long they've been open? Sure. Community service, clinical service, caseworker associate, it's been vacant for not 290 days, principal fiscal analyst, 290 days, psychiatrist, medical doctor, 791 days, senior business service analyst, 290 days, senior service business analyst, 266 days, senior clinical service caseworker, 269 days, and development services and inspector, it's been

[05:55:41] open for 658 days, development service plan reviewer, 350 days, and economic development business developer officer, 308 days. First, can I just do this real quick? Because I want to call down the relevant directors to make sure, to see what the impact would be.

[05:55:57] So for community service, we can... I'll reiterate, Madam Chair, they've been unfilled for nine months plus, so... And Madam Chair, I have a suggestion maybe before we do that.

[05:56:20] I wonder if it's more prudent for maybe our county exec to come back next meeting with a balanced budget rather than having us kind of figure out where the \$400,000 will come from?

[05:56:36] I'll let you go, then I'll respond. Well, I wasn't prepared necessarily to speak to that. I would absolutely be ready to come back if the board asked me to work with the team to come back with a balanced budget. And yes, we will, in doing that, take as much into consideration as possible.

[05:56:55] That said, I was before Georgia speaks, wanted to make sure that that list of vacancies certainly is a dated one now. There are a number of vacancies that were listed that have been filled or offers made. So I just want to make sure that we are looking at the vacancies as they are now in terms of where we stand.

[05:57:20] I mean, I asked for a vacancy report, and I think that's a significant change. And as we're filling these positions and updating the vacancy report, I think it should immediately be sent over to the board so that we have an updated. Yeah, that's the one that I have. My copy of the vacancy report is as recent as March 1st.

[05:57:40] I'll also note that there are two fire and rescue positions that have been unfilled, one for 600 and 700 days. I made this point in our early conversations about the budget. I think that it's important to note that if a department can go so many days without filling a position, I can make the case that that position, they can do without it.

[05:58:01] I'm going to let you speak to that. Good evening, Madam Chair, members of the board. So the question is, what is our current vacancies? No, we're trying to propose cuts, and I am going off of the vacancy report, and I made suggestions, and this is, I don't know.

[05:58:27] So currently we have, so CS is one of the larger agencies in the county. We have 500 FTEs. Our current vacancy rate is actually 6%. The most recent vacancy report has 29 vacant positions.

[05:58:44] Over 50% of those are already filled or in the final hiring process, including the child psychiatry position that we had talked about previously for which a contingent offer has been made. The other position that had been vacant for over 270 days was filled several weeks ago. Thank you. Madam Chair, for what it's worth, I don't know, it's almost magical when we ask the school for an update on what they have in their coffers and when we bring up the vacancy report. It just amazes me that it can go unfilled for so long and then out

[05:59:24] know where we fill positions. I guess it's a good thing. But I will object to Supervisor Franklin's request to have the county executive come back with his suggestions because this is our budget and we make the decisions as to what we want to cut. And so I do not support putting it to the county executive. All right. I hold on a second. Let me go through and clear out, refresh my queue, make sure I have everyone because I have Supervisor Franklin. Yeah, just to follow up on that. The reason why I suggested that for a couple of reasons I think for efficiency purposes

[05:59:56] that may be better than for us to peruse through the entire budget and two you know as I stated earlier in the night I mean the county exec does present recommendations in the very beginning and then we kind of go back and forth on the budget so I just think it'll be a little bit more again efficient if maybe he came back with a recommended balanced budget because he already knows kind of where we are on all the tax rates and so at this point it's just him coming back to us with recommendations on where to find that 400k and it doesn't mean that we have to accept his

[06:00:33] recommendations I think it just helps provide a guiding point. Supervisor Weir and Bailey. Thank you Madam Chair I agree with Supervisor Vega but for some additional reasons we need to go through the budget and we need to review everything and it's not just to make up the couple of hundred thousand dollars that we're short, but it's also to ensure that we actually need the rate that we've already talked about since we haven't voted on it yet. There is the opportunity to make further cuts and reduce the rate because of additional savings. You asked for

[06:01:09] specific cuts. I'll give you a couple and the rationale for it. Deputy Director of Communications, we could save \$190,000 plus, move it to FY27. I think you actually asserted something along those lines for some of these things. The green building manager and the climate manager can be combined into one

FTE. We save another \$139,000 there. Staff support for BOCS committee, two FTEs, one for the budget committee, one for the legislative committee. You can't tell me we have to have one for each on a committee that meets a handful of times each year. It should be at most

[06:01:49] one FTE to cover both committees with a combined total of maybe one meeting a month, annualized. um hr transition training ftes to this year to next year that saves another 30 313 000 and some change um come back to this one in a minute um fire and rescue services analyst it's been vacant 640 days time to go um i'm going to take some umbrage with community services you say you're referencing one one that's been vacant for 270 days i've got multiple that have been vacant for

[06:02:27] Now, they're mostly clinical case workers and that sort of thing, and you're asking for, I think, what is it, four more with 13 current vacancies? Until you fill your vacancies, if you want to go ahead and create these positions, fine, but fund them with your existing balance, and that saves another quarter million dollars.

[06:02:52] Library Office of Programming and Events, given their vacancy, another \$234,000, and then the biggie. And I told you I would remind you of this, Chair Jefferson. You took umbrage at Dr. Schneider not coming in and visiting you.

[06:03:09] I don't think anybody in this office got a visit from the Commonwealth's attorney. In fact, she wouldn't have even been here today unless I all but demanded her presence at the last meeting. And the numbers speak for themselves.

[06:03:28] I made the commitment to give her some more administrative staff because I think that will help. There is no reason that the staff attorneys, line attorneys, Commonwealth attorneys should be doing the scut work, that their paralegals and admins done, if she needs more admins and more paralegals to reduce the load on the attorneys, great. I'll split the baby, but giving her more attorneys and more staff and then actually increasing the disparity, increasing the number of negatively impacting

[06:04:01] the ratio of staff to attorneys because she values the attorney more, doesn't make any sense because it just creates a bigger load on the administrative assistants and the paralegals. I do legal research every day. I write briefs for attorneys. I do their filings for them so they don't have to do it. So the attorney who you're paying \$7,000 an hour charges me to do something at a fraction of the cost and doesn't pass that on to his client. If that's what's going on over there, then that's an entirely different management matter that unfortunately we can't control

[06:04:40] through her operations, but we sure as hell can do it through the budget. So there's a couple million dollars to play with here. And I would suggest at the end of the day, there's enough hundreds of thousands when added together along with some other things where we can actually shave another penny or two off the real estate tax rate. If we're going to look at this, let's look at it holistically, top to bottom. Let's not just cherry pick it. And Supervisor Vega's point, it's our time to make the suggestions, not CXOs to come back and pick which cuts he wants to make when we might have cuts of greater priorities, us as a board.

[06:05:16] Supervisor Bailey, then Franklin. Okay, let me just say a couple things. Number one, if you could come back up. One of the things we talked about was to Supervisor Vega's question was the psychiatrist that was listed on the, and I don't know if it was you that came during our finance committee

meeting and explained that I think you were in the process of interviewing or something like that, then that's why it's closed out now.

[06:05:44] So we just need to have an understanding of how. I know it's a lot of vacancies on a report, but it depends on the skill set and where you are in the interview. Could you just kind of, with that example, explain to us to help us understand? It's an incredibly difficult position to fill.

[06:06:01] It's basically a unicorn position. I remember that term that you used. So the longer we keep ads out, the fewer resumes that we get. And so we finally had gotten reached out by someone who had worked for us previously.

[06:06:21] And that's been in process. And as I said, a contingent offer has been made. So we're keeping our fingers crossed that that position will get filled. It's incredibly critical for the work that we do and for the opening of the CRC as well. Yeah, and that wasn't necessarily for the CRC, that was just, okay.

[06:06:41] And the other positions that were referenced, those are often very hard to fill positions. It often takes multiple recruitments to get the people who want to go out and do the work in the community.

[06:06:58] And some of our more heavily community-based programs, like our ACT program, Assertive Community Treatment, and our Supported Living Services programs that are very, very community-based, we don't get a lot of candidates. So some of those positions were vacant for quite a while, but we seem to be making more progress.

[06:07:19] We've been out at career hiring fairs, and there's been a lot more interested candidates in these positions, so we're very excited. And does that have to do, and something else you mentioned in our finance committee coming up to the budget cycle was incentive programs that you might offer, things like that.

[06:07:37] Does that help as well? Yes, absolutely. Because I share her concerns about the list, but. We do have the bonus for the clinical positions. Okay, just examples. As well as some targeted stipends for some of our, a few of our other programs.

[06:07:54] So I would, you know, I would, I disagree with my colleagues about, you know, it's not your responsibility, county exec, thank you, in terms of because you know your staff and you know what's needed in your staff based upon your manager. So I totally disagree with that, but I think what would help us in terms of really narrowing down the budget with the vacancies is if we could have a time in the finance committee about the vacancies and where we are, the status of where we are, in terms of filling those positions, because that would help us with the budget.

[06:08:30] But, you know, I just think we need to cut, but, you know, it's how we cut and what the needs are from county staff as we serve the community. So we have to be very careful just not to cut because we might not know as board members. We might know how we want to save money, but the need might be imperative before we cut it.

[06:08:50] So if you could help us in that regard, that would certainly help me in cutting. I don't know, Mr. Sher, if you want to address that, because I have an idea. I think I might get killed by my colleagues, but I have an idea. Did you want to say anything before I share my brilliant idea that I might get killed by my colleagues?

[06:09:08] All right, you're just going to let me get killed. I'm happy to have Dave go to slide 14, where we started back on February 18th, and go over the next few slides after this to all of this is obviously new and would be new to the county.

[06:09:31] Some of it would hurt more than others, and so if there is a need to go back through this slide deck, I'm happy to do that. I'm going to jump to page 23. Sorry, y'all, but there is an increase to trip funds.

[06:09:56] Recordation tax. It's not charitable fund. Okay, all right, never mind. I will keep looking. Yeah. I'm sorry, I was... That was a good try. It was a good try. You know, one of the things I actually wanted to talk to you, first of all, we weren't prepared because we were, there were a lot of changes to the rate and things, so we are not fully prepared to make the cuts tonight.

[06:10:18] I do think we should still have these discussions. You know, I would love to hear Mr. Shorter's recommendations, but today really is markup. And I'm afraid, I am nervous for my 1A that if we come back next week, you know, I don't know how much time we're necessarily going to have to digest whatever changes are made.

[06:10:37] I'm willing to give us another little bit more recess so that we can have discussions, you know, only two people at a time. But one of the changes I do want to make, and I apologize because I do believe the department heads should run their department as CC fit. But one of the changes I would like to make is to a planning department.

[06:10:57] I do think that they're woefully understaffed. I know that Director Washington was looking at adding more, two more people to long range. I'd actually, if we can, shift that to current. I just, again, it's a slight change, but I'm making that change because we talked about current, having two more FTEs for current in our recap.

[06:11:18] I just want to throw that out there. I'm going to let other people speak, and then that's something I'm going to want to discuss. So two for planning. This is revenue neutral. It's the shift that she has two people that she wants for a long range.

[06:11:35] If we can use them for current, I see Director Washington. I don't know if you want to address that. All right, did you come down if you can address that? The only reason I'm saying this, and I hate messing with, you know, how you want to run the department, but I just know current is such a huge need, and it doesn't look like, unfortunately, we're going to have the money to do both.

[06:11:58] Good evening, Tanya Washington, Director of Planning with the Planning Office. Thank you for the opportunity to provide my perspective on this request. From my perspective and from our team's perspective, both divisions, current planning definitely needs additional staff, but long-range planning does as well.

[06:12:21] And if you may recall at, I believe, last week when I talked about the fact that the long-range planning division's workload has grown significantly, they also are here often to bring items to the board, CPAs, CPA requests, zoning tax amendments, zoning ordinance update, other big projects.

[06:12:40] So, if you would like, you know, my sort of feedback, what I would recommend is that, or what I would suggest is if the planning office can get, if we were to get two FTEs, so to say within what's in the budget request, I would recommend that we would get one FTE for current planning and one for long-range planning.

[06:13:01] And I appreciate the clarification. Before we move forward, again, this is revenue neutral. I just want to see how, you know, I feel kind of weird taking a vote on this, but I just want to see where people stand on this request. Bailey, how do you feel? Bodie?

[06:13:23] One and one. All right. Anger gave me the thumbs up. That means one. Vega? Franklin? Yes. Yes. One for current planning and one for long-range planning. They'll both be principal planner positions.

[06:13:38] And Gordie? I'm sorry, what? You want both the current? Yeah, that's what you, yeah, one-on-one. So I do one-on-one, so one-on-one it is. So that's revenue neutral.

[06:13:55] What I'm going to do, I'm going to call, we have Franklin Angry, then we're, and then I'm going to take a break for us to, for people to go through and think of areas where, you know, they feel comfortable making cuts. So Franklin Angry, we're.

[06:14:12] Sure. So I just want to just throw out again that it may be more prudent for the county exec and his team to maybe make some recommendations. Again, we don't have to take those recommendations.

[06:14:28] And if we're concerned about time, and this will put more effort on he and his staff, but they can, between tomorrow and Tuesday, set up meetings with each of us about where they are recommending some of those cuts so that we are fully prepared to make some decisions on Tuesday.

[06:14:49] So that's kind of my recommendation because the way we're doing it now, I mean, obviously we're in a driver's seat, but I think we will continue to be in the driver's seat. But, you know, efficiency-wise, it just may take a little bit longer than probably necessary. Supervisor Angry?

[06:15:06] Hey, Dave, give me that number again. What are we trying to cut? What's the number? 406,000? 406,000 in FY26, and approximately 3.1 million in fiscal 27.

[06:15:26] And we can address that, 3.1, though. What is late? Like, could that come next year? As the county executive mentioned earlier, we do ask the board to approve a balanced five-year budget plan.

[06:15:45] Okay, okay, so go to slide nine for me. I'm going to ask a question, okay, because they're talking about personnel cuts and all this. We talked about this. Is that nine? Oh, I'm sorry. I guess it wasn't nine. Where's the slide that had a...

[06:16:01] Now, this is what you're seeing on the screen is the county executive's original proposed budget presentation to the board in February. Did you mean the budget recap presentation, sir? Budget recap, yeah. So is that one, is that presentation still up? Because there was a question about a slide, and I'm curious.

[06:16:26] So slide nine, this \$4 million and the fire levy, this is, is that money we're putting in to bring this thing home? What is that \$4 million? That is for apparatus contingency based on anticipated tariffs.

[06:16:43] Okay. If this money is not spent, Supervisor Angry, it will stay in the fire levy. Because this money is coming out of the fire levy. Yes, sir. Okay, so that's where that is. I'm just going to ask a question, man.

[06:16:58] So you can't move fire levy funds out into the general fund? No, sir. That would be against state code. It must be used for the purposes established by the levy. Okay. All right. Because I tell you, you know, we've been discussing for a few hours about personnel.

[06:17:18] So somewhere in there, there's a 400K cut that you can do somewhere in one of these programs of funding at that level instead of nickel and diamond people. So maybe not this slide, but there's one of these slides that we can look at and pull out 400K without dealing with the people issues.

[06:17:42] Supervisor Rear. Thank you, Madam Chair. I think much like we went through all of the potential changes to the revenue stream, we should be going through proposed cuts.

[06:18:02] And I've got a bunch of proposed cuts, and they're not just personnel. And there are some shifts. And I would suggest there's no way we're going to get to do that tonight. So first off, I'm going to suggest that we continue markup until the next meeting so that we leave the door open to revisiting rates because we still have to deal with the elephant in the room, which is the school division, and what the impact of that is.

[06:18:30] I have a list of proposed cuts, some large, some small. And then we have the wants of several board members, and I'll just list a couple of these off. District Court TNR program.

[06:18:46] If you want to add in that \$48,000, we've got to find the money for that. The Therapeutic Recreation Program, you've got to find the \$103,000 for that. And then there are other things, like we could adjust the funding on the distiller house, the Bristow Battlefield.

[06:19:05] You know, there are a variety of things that we could do, and if you want to go through all of my suggestions line by line, I'm going to want them done line by line with a straw vote. We're going to be here a while. I don't mind doing it. I've got nothing to do tonight. But I think the focus shouldn't be on just shaving off the 400 and some odd thousand dollars.

[06:19:28] It's determining what we need, what we don't need, where else there are savings that can be had that we can then pass on to both the commercial and the residential taxpayer. So I'm ready to go all night if you want to. I'm also willing to compromise and carry some portion of this over with a list of recommendations to the CXL.

[06:19:51] or some hard and fast deductions that we all agree on, or at least a majority of us agree on. But, I mean, that's part of this job. So I just want to be clear, because you were saying something about schools. Because we've landed on that we're staying with revenue sharing.

[06:20:07] So I just wanted to, can you? Well, then, Madam Chair, if we're going to stay with the revenue sharing agreement, the revenue sharing agreement total, the amount of revenue will depend on what tax rate we ultimately land on. And I'm not sure we're there yet. So we don't know what the impact is, but I want to be able at the end of the day tell the residential taxpayer who's looking at a \$270 increase in their bill that this amount of money was allocated with no supporting use at the end of the day.

[06:20:41] I'm sorry. We've sent the rates. I mean, we did a straw poll. We've done a straw poll. I mean, we haven't voted on them yet, so there is opportunity to revisit them depending on what we do with the rest of the cuts. If this is just an exercise to get at \$497,000 and not look at whether we need some of this other stuff or we can fund it with other funds, then why are we here?

[06:21:04] I mean, that's not – I don't think that's what budget markup is. Budget markup is determining what we can afford, what we need to do, what can be pushed off, what is a moonshot. Because if it's simply finding \$497,000 out of the CXO's budget, no disrespect to the CXO, because we changed the rates, then we're just rubber stamping the rest of the budget with no review, and I'm tired of that.

[06:21:33] Supervisor Gordy? One question I do have on the CRC, the delayed opening of that, in terms of the operational cost, how does that delayed opening affect the total amount needed to commence operations for the fiscal year?

[06:21:55] If I can, thank you for that question, Supervisor. The \$5.7 million is match funding. So we expect to get \$5.7 million from the state as well for opening.

[06:22:12] Those numbers are not based on, let me say it this way, if any of the funds are not being used because the waiver application comes through, we are not accepting as many adults or youth, That money will fall to the bottom line.

[06:22:36] We are assuming, even if we are dealing with an opening in October, bless you, that the entire amount, \$5.7 million, will be needed. If we reduce, let's say, by a million, then the state will reduce by a million.

[06:22:53] And we absolutely believe that we'll have some challenges with opening based on the financial forecast that we have in place in terms of the number of clients served. I don't know if, Ms. Backman, you wanted to say more there.

[06:23:11] Okay. Thank you for that. And I agree with Supervisor Weir. I mean, look, I mean, we're not trying to find \$406,000.

[06:23:27] We're trying to figure out what should we really be spending money on here. And so, you know, what Supervisor Weir and the work that, you know, a lot of the staff, our staff members, you know, they've come up with about a \$4 million reduction.

[06:23:47] And so I think there's some room within all that to be able to get to take a look at shifting some of those funds to, you know, from general funds to other fund balances, reducing some of the, you know, eliminating some of the positions that have been vacant for quite some time, as well as, you know, having, you know, do we really need to be, for instance, on the Washington Airport task force fee?

[06:24:18] Do we really need to be spending money on that in the midst of trying to ensure that we're meeting our priorities? So, yeah, I think there's room for us to discuss well beyond the 406, maybe even 10 times that. So I'd look, you know, I certainly think we need to take that hard look.

[06:24:39] Vega, then Bailey, then I'll comment. Spot on, Supervisor Weir and Supervisor Gordy. You know, this is our second term for most of us on this dais. This is what budget markup is. It's not kicking the can down the road. We were supposed to come here prepared tonight with what our cuts recommendations were going to be.

[06:24:55] so I don't understand why, to a certain extent, we're acting like we haven't done this before. I will reiterate my position. It is not appropriate to punt it off to the county executive. It's our responsibility and our duty to our constituents to have this sorted out tonight because that's what budget markup is.

[06:25:12] It's not our first rodeo. So I think, Madam Chair, that I know that I've thrown stuff out there, others have thrown stuff out there, and there doesn't seem to be the majority in support of said recommended cuts. but i think that we need to kind of go down the line and say do we support support these cuts or not and then keep the conversation going supervisor bailey then i'm going to weigh in so i know i agree so the problem is that we can't talk to each other like only one of us at a time we can't have these discussions which is why i do like us going through tonight and having these

[06:25:47] discussions um and you're right it's not just finding what we can cut finding you know are there other things that we want to cut? Are there things that we really want to preserve? I'm prepared to go late. You know, I'm dressed comfortably. I'm comfortable with what I'm wearing. I'm prepared to go late. You know, but what I think that we do need to do is take a little bit more time and have a few more conversations because I do feel like we're spitballing. You know, I think that we need a little bit more time tonight to go through some things that we really think that we can cut and

[06:26:22] have discussions around that and have discussions on things that maybe we really feel we should add um but i also want to understand how where people are at i see supervisor bode because i know that people do have families i know that we people have other obligations but it is my preference at least to keep this discussion you know take a recess look this over and keep the discussion going if we have to come back next week i i will make whatever work um well i mean technically next week is we are passing the budget we're if we were to allow mr shorter to come back with

[06:26:58] recommendations and such i still don't think that that is necessarily a clean answer because we're still going to need to have discussion you know we're still even though it's when we're going to do adoption that meeting's going to go late so we're here late today we could be here late tomorrow i mean late next week um but these are important discussions to be had supervisor um bode then yeah before i go i madam county attorney i saw you reaching do you want to say something madam Chair, members of the Board, as I mentioned earlier, the Code of Virginia talks about when your public hearing is and then when the action is going to be taken.

[06:27:32] So, for example, with ordinances, the first notice has to be published no more than 28 days and no less than seven days before the date referenced in the notice, et cetera. And we work diligently to make sure that the public hearings met all the criterias for the Code with the adoption being on the 22nd.

[06:27:50] So I would recommend that you not change the date of the adoption to whether continuing tonight or not. I would recommend that you keep the adoption of everything next week on the 22nd. And I know that staff, based upon what the board does with markup, we're all going to be working on getting those resolutions and ordinances finalized to be in the agenda to then be dispatched.

[06:28:16] And it's going to be a late dispatch on Friday. So staff needs to know what it is that you're going to be doing. and I would recommend against changing the adoption date. Bodie, then Bailey. Did you have anything else, Supervisor Bodie?

[06:28:31] Yeah, no, so sorry, Professor Bailey, but that's what I was going to say. I get that there's frustration. I get that folks would like more time to set things, but the fact of the matter is that staff needs our direction. Staff needs to have resolution prepared for Tuesday night.

[06:28:48] We can't continue this until Tuesday. There's no time to do that, And I appreciate the suggestion that Senator Bailey just had. But again, it just doesn't work logistically. So we have to figure this out. And I will agree with some of my colleagues that it's an interesting situation we're in where we agree to these tax rates and now we have to find money to make it up.

[06:29:09] Well, those votes were cast. The straw poll votes passed and now we have to deal with the reality that we have. Now, I do want to say, of course, respect to the county executive and all the work that he's done. And at this point, we have to find the money again, not only for this budget, but also for FY27.

[06:29:26] I know that's not great, but it is where it is. And I agree with what was said earlier in terms of let's just start going down the list of folks' proposed cuts. Let's take straw poll votes on those because on one hand, we're saving money on that side, but it too also may make room for things that we know are priorities for us that currently we don't have money to pay for.

[06:29:49] So let's go through the cuts and see where we land with the bottom line, then use that as a basis to see, do we have money left to then fund priorities that we've identified that we've all talked about? Thank you, Madam Chair. All right, Supervisor Bailey. Thank you, Madam Chair. My suggestion to Supervisor Bodie was that could we have a finance committee meeting prior to Tuesday so that we could, but that's, I know logistically that's a nightmare, But can we have a meeting to go through this where we're, you know, we can really work through what we want, what we don't want, and have the discussions?

[06:30:24] Because prior to, that's kind of what we were supposed to do in the finance committee meeting. So that's why I'm offering that. No, I don't, yeah, we don't have time to notice it. Okay. That's the issue. So what I'm going to do is we're going to take a recess, and we're going to take 30 minutes.

[06:30:41] If anyone needs any printouts or anything, please let me know because I'm going to go to my office and we can print them out. So let me know if you want anything printed out because I'll do that with you. I'm going to take my budget book, my computer. I'm going to have a couple conversations.

[06:30:58] And then we are going to come back. And I'm actually going to put a time on that. I'm going to give us maybe 30 minutes. I'm going to give us until 10, 10, I might go to 45 minutes. I know, again, I realize people want to go home.

[06:31:15] I'm going to give us 45 minutes, so 1030. That's what I said. That's what, 40 minutes. Roughly, we're going to do 40 minutes. I'm just going to keep it clean, 1030.

[06:31:38] That's Chris. I saw him. Oh, there he is. He magically appeared.

[06:31:56] All right. Thank you, everyone, for the break. I hope everyone is having fun. I know I am. So there are, I did send around some proposed cuts, and I did get one response for them.

[06:32:15] I'm going to go through the cuts and then I want to go through the response I received. So from page 392 of the fiscal year 2026 budget, we were going to increase the funding for the parks and recs existing parks improvement. We have that slated at \$5 million, but we can maintain the current level of \$2.5 million. That would be a savings of \$2.5 million annually. We are also able to decrease the contingency fund from \$1.5 million to, I'm sorry, to \$1.5 million from \$2 million. We need \$1 million that still keeps us safe if we make that small decrease. I did have

[06:32:52] eliminating \$500,000 on landscaping from public works. Supervisor Franklin has expressed that that would be a concern because she wants to continue the revitalization of Route 1. She's had a lot of complaints so that's one we can certainly discuss um and i spoke with supervisor b i'm sorry bode the other b about eliminating 349 um 100 100 000 from the aquaquan trail maintenance and

[06:33:23] that would be i'm sorry okay so eliminating that um and then we can also from workers comp um we can take out 100 i'm sorry 300 000 from our insurance premiums the proposed budget has an 800,000 increase, but we can do 500,000. We can do half a million. So those are some proposed cuts I think that would give us a little bit more leeway. I wanted to open discussion around those proposed cuts. I will go ahead and take out the landscaping. You know, I don't know if there's

[06:34:02] going to be any opposition to that, but I would love to open up for comments on the email that I sent around and that i just outlined hold to give me one second my system's a little slow gordy than vega thank you madam chair just to clarify on the parks and rec improvements it says in fy 26 two and a half million is uh in general funding is appropriated um but looking for fy 27 it's five so we'd be looking at reducing the 27 future budget not but so it would have no effect on the FY26, but it gets us to address the 3.1

[06:34:40] in 27. Exactly, yes. Okay. But if our revenues jump, we can always in the next year. That's a more decision for a future date. For a future date that we can, absolutely. Okay. So just to circle back, \$2.5 million was already in the proposed budget for fiscal 26. We would flatline that for the time being at \$2.5 million to balance the out years okay and so just to make you know so really it has no this has no effect on uh fy 26 so we'd we'd still have to uh you know continue looking and and provide that balance but this

[06:35:19] gets after the vast majority of fy 27 so that's good thank you and so actually for and for maybe not for that one and i mistimed but we still have other things that are going to offset this year the cut our potential cut in our insurance premiums the decrease for our contingency fund and you know the eliminating for the Occoquan trail maintenance so we still have those things on the table I I don't know my screen everyone just cleared out so I'm refreshing there's no one in queue there's no further discussion so again I would you know we could take out the

[06:35:58] landscaping. If everyone's fine with this, then we can, you know, I guess, take a straw poll on making these eliminations. Supervisor Vega? Yeah, I just want to be clear that there are still other recommendations that some of us want to make.

[06:36:18] And that doesn't stifle that. No, we can make, you know, because also it is about making cuts and making strategic choices on what we want to invest in. So I think this is a starting. So Mr. I'm sorry, he's talking So for this year, I can grab up my calculator.

[06:36:39] For this year, the cuts, taking out the \$500,000 for landscaping for public works, I can actually, would it be helpful if I resend this to everyone? Yes, no, you got it. Oh, you got it? So for this year, I guess, parks and rec, existing parks improvement, that would be a zero, that would be for out years.

[06:37:00] We would decrease the contingency fund, so that's \$500,000, \$800,000, for the things that we're going to limit, hold on. Yeah, if you can run the numbers, 1149.

[06:37:21] Just for clarification, for the time being, we're taking out landscaping, half a million dollars, as well as Occoquan Trail maintenance? No, we're not going to consider the landscaping. So what we're going to consider is the 300 from insurance premiums.

[06:37:38] It looks like the parks and rec, existing parks improvement, looks like that's not going to change for this year. It's just going to change for out years. Decreasing the contingency fund by half a million and eliminating aquaquantrails maintenance.

[06:37:56] We will keep in the landscaping. Okay, so I have the following balances. For fiscal 26, the board is \$742,000 to the good. But in fiscal 27, we're still to the good, but by \$312,000.

[06:38:18] We are positive in all five years.

[06:38:35] Does that sound good? Wait, hold on. Did you guys have something additional? That is correct, 1149.

[06:38:54] \$1,149,000 in cuts. If we don't have any objections, and I can say it for clarification because I just want to take a quick vote.

[06:39:12] Because we can also, you know, I'll entertain other cuts, but I feel like this is low-hanging fruit. No? Supervisor Angry? Just want to go to that work, the insurance premium for the workers comp.

[06:39:30] So you're basically decreasing that. It's \$800K now. You're taking out \$300K to get it to \$500K. So there's still some advantage. There's still insurance premium, \$500K now. So if, in fact, that they go through some more cuts and find something else, you know, is there any interest in keeping that at \$800K?

[06:39:56] You know, insurance premiums are always challenging for everybody. So they like that \$800K, I'm pretty sure. But it's just a question of if they find more cuts that we agree to, if that can stay, you know. Can you, before we say anything on this one, because I can table it, is there any advantage to having a little bit more?

[06:40:17] What is it changing, you know, if anything, Michelle Trey, the insurance premiums to respond to what Supervisor Angry said? Sure. When the estimate for \$800,000 was put together, we were not complete with our negotiations.

[06:40:35] Our insurance broker goes out and gets bids from insurance companies for our coverages. And we weren't done. So that was early. So I've confirmed with the PBSIG, Lori Gray, who runs that, that she can pay premiums on \$500,000.

[06:40:52] And she'll be fine. Are you comfortable with that? Yep. Supervisor Bode. Yeah. Thank you, Madam Chair. I just wanted the question asked, because I know what it does, because I've read the budget book. But just so it could be socialized what cutting the Occoquan Trail maintenance Operations would do its three employees, but if someone from staff could just say what it does so people know what we're cutting And what the impacts might be

[06:41:34] Good evening chair members of the board Seth Hemler Voss director of Parks and Recreation So regarding the Occoquan Trail Staffing for the maintenance Those are tied to the bond project improvements which are ongoing and will be ongoing for the next Probably 24 calendar months.

[06:41:57] And so those positions will still be necessary once all the improvements are made and the trail expansion work is complete. So hopefully those will just be deferred and considered at a later date. But for now, if they're not appropriated in fiscal year 26 budget, it shouldn't have an impact on the maintenance of the trail corridor.

[06:42:17] I appreciate that. And you hit the nail on the head. What I was going to say is even if we don't fund them this year, there's not going to be an adverse impact of the trail long term because it's not even fully completed yet. No, sir, with the assumption that those positions will be budgeted in the future. All right. Hold on. Let me... Supervisor Weir?

[06:42:39] I suspect this gets to the heart of my issue with many budget items. You just tapped me first up. It's not that I'm picking on you. But if it's not going to be done for 24 months, why are we budgeting FTE for something that's not complete? That would be a question maybe for the budget office.

[06:43:02] But I believe that it is based on the five-year plan and how the positions are built into the budget based on anticipation and anticipated completion dates. So if we did budget them and you brought

them on on July 1, in accordance with the budget, they'd be sitting there twiddling their thumbs because the trail's not complete yet?

[06:43:23] We would hire those positions and we would assign them to conduct other... Something else. Yes, sir. You've just made my point. All right, everyone. I'm quickly sending around the revised cuts that I initially sent out because I just want these so that everyone has the top of their box.

[06:43:48] We're all clear. I'm not sure if I'm copying. So I just wanted to send those out so that we all have them at the top of our inbox.

[06:44:11] I think that these are easy, low-hanging fruit for us to make cuts. And then after that, we can entertain additional cuts. Are there any, if Erin had a chance to kind of look, This is what we've been talking about. Any objections?

[06:44:28] Because I want to go ahead, Michelle, I'm sorry, Andre, if you want to kind of take a roll call on this suite of cuts. Supervisor Angry? This is what you just sent me? Yes. Yes, right here. Yeah, what we talked about. Oh, yeah, I'm okay. I'm okay, yes.

[06:44:45] Supervisor Bailey? Aye. Supervisor Bode? Aye. Supervisor Franklin? Aye. Supervisor Gordy? Aye. Supervisor Vega? Sure. Supervisor Weir? Aye. Chair Jefferson? Why not? that's a yes thank you ma'am all right now i want to before we go into any additions i want to open the floor um to see you know entertain any additional cuts i'm going to look at you mr weir how many do you want in a row or do you want to split them up because i've got

[06:45:20] mine and ones from other i'm not going to say who gave them but i agree with them or did agree with them so i'm going to make them i'm going to make the suggestion anyway i'll do them one at a time are these at your on your spreadsheet huh are these all on your spreadsheet uh all but one or two because i just added two back in um can you send around the updated spreadsheet and while you do that i will go to see i don't know if i can create a new spreadsheet out of this without okay um it would be difficult so what i'm gonna do i'm looking at your spreadsheet um i've got

[06:45:59] them highlighted so that i can just whip through them okay but don't go too fast because we all need to discuss so what are the things you were looking at uh deputy director of communications push it off till next year wait hold on did you did you want to take out the because you have facilities fleet replacement is that now off you don't i'm not going to touch that okay so deputy i'm just going to the ones that i'm okay willing to deal with right now all right deputy director of communications push it off till fy 27 okay and that saves 190 74 what else do you have uh green

[06:46:34] building and climate manager two ftes combined one okay what else do you have and then the last thing under oem is actually i got two more things in oem uh staff support for the bocs budget and legislative committees reduce the two fte to one fte i don't think we need one for each committee That saves us \$92,700.

[06:47:01] And last but not least, split the HR transition training, FTEs, two this year, two next year, which saves us another \$313,000. And these were? That's just the OEM stuff.

[06:47:17] Supervisor Bode. Yeah. Thank you, Madam Chair. I just want to ask staff, especially Mr. Shorter, since obviously this is stuff, especially in his domain. The idea that one clerk could manage the Finance

and Budget Committee, the Legislative Committee wants to stood up, and the Inter-Jurisdictional Committee, do you see that as a stretch?

[06:47:38] I do. I want to sort of take a point of clarity. Dave, you had something you want to jump in on, and then I'll come back to the question on the cuts. If I may ask, just for clarification on the Deputy Director of Communications, are we pushing that to fiscal 27?

[06:47:58] of this five-year plan, which means there's only one-time savings in FY26? Okay, thank you. Anytime I say that, going through this list, that's what I mean. Not eliminating, just pushing back.

[06:48:14] I just didn't know if we're pulling it out entirely and then revisiting it during the FY27 new process. Thank you. Yeah, what I will say generally when it comes to the Deputy Director for Communications and the Deputy Clerk positions is the offices are already overtaxed.

[06:48:37] And the idea that we would be talking about not supporting when we know that the board has significant ask for both the Clerk's Office and the Communications Office constantly. And so, yes, for one FTE to support two committees and a third that will be stood up in the next few months would absolutely be a stretch.

[06:49:01] Appreciate that. And then the question about the HR transition training FTEs, again, Mr. Ardon, I don't know if you're the best person to ask or if someone else should. Pushing two to that question to FY27 and keeping two to FY26, is there a concern there?

[06:49:17] There is a concern. So what we are attempting to do is transition to a different model. And in order for that to work, you need the FTEs to support the transition. And splitting it up into two years, we've already done.

[06:49:35] So the original ask from HR was for eight FTEs that was split into a staffing plan. So to further split it would essentially be us saying we want to hold off on this transition for HR. Now, I will remind the board that we are in transition in HR, and the additional support is certainly needed in our HR department.

[06:50:01] So I hope that answers the question. It does. Thank you. That's refreshing. I don't see. Supervisor Vega? Do we have an updated vacancy report that we could look at? Because I had brought up nine positions, but then, I don't recall her name.

[06:50:22] Yes, she came forward and talked about certain positions being filled, but that's still not everything. I do not have a vacancy report as of April 1. We have sent out the latest available.

[06:50:39] So do I just assume that the other unaccounted for are still unfilled? I think, well, because we have all the directors still here, and they are certainly aware of where they are in terms of the hiring process, We have been very clear with directors.

[06:50:59] Obviously, we talked earlier today about the fact that we just had a career fair where some of those positions were, you know, sort of being hired. So, yes, there has been some updates. We, unfortunately, don't have a vacancy report that is current. But if there are specific positions, I'm happy to either myself, Dave, or have the director come in to speak to those positions.

[06:51:25] Mr. Viser Bode. Yeah, sorry, I forgot one and that was one of the ones that I was most concerned about. The combining the green building and climate manager, I know I saw Julia out there in the atrium. I don't know if you want her to address it or if you can.

[06:51:42] Sure, we'll have Julia come in.

[06:51:58] Good evening, Chair Jefferson, members of the board, Julia Mano, Director of the Office of Sustainability. Thank you, Ms. Mano. So Supervisor Weir was just saying that he thinks there's an ability to combine, at least for this year, if not necessarily moving forward, the duties of the green buildings and climate manager into one role.

[06:52:27] What are your thoughts on that? Yeah, well, I appreciate the faith in our office's efficiency. Those two positions have very different skill sets and qualifications.

[06:52:42] Climate and Resilience Manager will be working on actions related to natural resource protection, flood mitigation, and preserving air and water quality actions in the Comp Plan, Strategic Plan, and the CESMP, while the Green Buildings Manager would be working on energy efficiency and renewable energy support for residents, businesses, and the county government, again in the Comp Plan, Strategic Plan, and CESMP.

[06:53:11] and if we fund both these positions in the budget are you confident we would be able to fill them within that fiscal year yes thank you madam chair wait hold on we have supervisor we're bailey supervisor we're madam chair the only one i'm going to die on the hill for because i don't believe it's a stretch at all is the two staff support positions for the board committees we have two clerks right now that handle multiple meetings a month for us and i don't think it's

[06:53:43] too much to ask one person to deal with two committees that meet periodically at best and i just don't see it i mean if we really need one person for a inter-jurisdictional committee that's going to meet in an undetermined number of times in a year and i doubt it's more than half a dozen in fact i would suggest it's probably four at most um then we need to rethink what we're doing Never mind. I'm good.

[06:54:16] Supervisor Vegas and Franklin. I had a question for Julie as a follow-up to Supervisor Bodie, but she left. There she is. I think we're fun.

[06:54:35] So I'll ask you the opposite question that Supervisor Bodie asked you, because we want to meet halfway, at the very least. If for this fiscal year we allocated one FTE, could you manage until the next fiscal year when we give you the other?

[06:54:59] I will say I feel that both of these positions are time-sensitive. For the reasons of our upcoming climate mitigation and resiliency goals, we have very ambitious goals with a 2030 deadline in terms of climate resilience and greenhouse gas emissions and renewable energy incorporation.

[06:55:23] Also with our strategic plan, the Office of Sustainability will be involved with leading or supporting about 20% of the action strategies in the strategic plan. So, and again, these are both in quite different areas of sustainability.

[06:55:42] The climate resilience manager would be supporting 16 action strategies in the strategic plan, which is over 10% of the actions. The green buildings manager, nine of the action strategies. We are working on a comp plan amendment for sustainability and resiliency that these positions would be critical for on top of, you know, implementation of our CESMP for our climate mitigation and resiliency goals.

[06:56:06] So the answer is no. Yes. Madam Chair, you know, I don't, I'm not interested in this trick and pony show. It's 1056. So if we're really serious, I'm done, Julie. I don't have a question for you. This is not

intended for you. You know, so if we're seriously, you know, interested in having a conversation about trimming fat, let's just be honest with one another.

[06:56:27] If we're just going to rubber stamp everything, you know, let's just say that. But if we're honestly going to consider the needs, you know, and try to be reasonable with one another and meet each other halfway, I don't think that it's unreasonable if somebody's asking for two that we meet halfway and go with one to provide additional cost savings.

[06:56:46] But again, you know, we're creeping up to midnight, and if there is no sincere desire to actually make any cuts, then we should just say that, because it seems like we're going to keep calling every department head up front, and everybody's going to make their case, and we're just going around in circles, and we'll be here until 5 in the morning.

[06:57:04] so i want to respond to that um what is the goal with these cuts is it so that we can revisit the tax rates and do further cuts is it so that we can look at what we strategically want to add you know are we really using a scalpel you know i i it's hard to say but i i do want to weigh into this process because i want people to really think about what it is they want what are we trying to go after what are we trying to get um i i would love to hear your answer uh thank you and the reason why i bring this up um you know obviously some of us have been here for the first we were

[06:57:42] here for the first term this is our second term i want to use one office for example and it's the office of um uh our office of is it diversity equity and inclusion or is it just equity and inclusion equity and inclusion i want to use that office as an example we've created committees commissions we've created um departments offices if you will um that in my personal opinion and i think that I have a solid ground to stand on at a time we're politically motivated these offices were established with a goal with a purpose and this is one office in particular that I feel and

[06:58:19] based on the data that has been provided has already accomplished its goal they were sent out on a mission to find ABCD the board was presented with a report there were no findings so I keep asking myself this is an office that their budget has grown since its implementation and I'm just you know curious you know what does the director do on a daily basis to earn that paycheck and in addition to have two employees that work in this office that quite frankly don't fit the criteria of somebody that should be employed in this office which is why Mr. Shorter that organizational chart that I've been asking for years is so critical and important when we

[06:58:58] talk about positions when we talk about personnel because we can see right what the need is and who works for who and we still don't have that and so you know I look at the executive management summary that we got and when this office was established in FY22 it was to the tune of \$325,654 and FY23 \$392,381 and FY24 \$523,269 I mean and it just keeps going up we're creeping to over half, it's over half a million dollars at this point. And I keep asking myself, what are the

[06:59:33] taxpayers of this county getting out of this office? Now we can talk about personal feelings, we can talk about personal ideologies, but it serves no purpose. It serves no purpose. And you know, I want to make sure that the positions that people are asking for, that the offices that are being created, that the commissions that are being established that create an additional workload which then forces you to come to us to ask for more positions are actually needed and not us just merely checking a box because it makes us feel good when people go to the county website to say that we have an office that quite frankly i don't

know what they do and just showing up to community events showing up for photo ops doesn't cut it for me and i think that i have that i have

[07:00:13] the taxpayers on my side and they would agree that's why data is so important that's why when we look at these reports and we look at the mission we look at the findings we look at the result i can i can make my case madam chair and that's why when we talk about these positions you know when we talk about how long they've been vacant it matters and it makes a huge impact on our budget i don't know if you want to respond because i have a response um i mean it's up to you madam chair and supervisor vega i don't believe equity and inclusion is a temporary

[07:00:47] office or program in an organization this size it and i wasn't here in fy 22 when the office was created, but for an organization that is almost 6,000 employees, having a program that is focused on culture and making sure that we have a workforce that is included, I don't believe that that is a temporary program or one that is based on a single report. The staff help with training. They provide support to employees. They are in multiple agencies providing that training, and Maria serves

[07:01:26] on the cabinet on the executive cabinet and provides advice across our organization and so I think there's value there and I would hope that the board the collective board would see that value and continue to support the office and and I appreciate that and again you know it's not mean-spirited it's just again about being efficient and responsible with public funds I don't see the value of the office and again we can agree to disagree but the chair you know asked a question and that's why it's important for us to go line by line to look at the asks that are

[07:02:02] being made and again you know what are we getting what are we getting as a result so i'm actually going to speak to that and i think i'm going to tighten up this process because you're right it's late and we are going in circles so i just want to say with the vacant positions i agree you know it'd be great if we had a more up-to-date report but at the same time we just had a job fair on saturday so there were a lot of people i'm sure we said there were over a thousand people there so if there are over a thousand people and there were interviews on the spot we're not sure what resumes we've gotten i mean let's be frank we have a lot of people who are looking for a job right now and this is a great time to take advantage of some of that talent so i don't

[07:02:40] know what's being filled i don't know what's in the queue i don't know who was spoken to and i think it's unrealistic for today for us to expect an up-to-date report because we don't know what all what interviews taking place again over a thousand people that shows that there's a lot of interest in county jobs, and maybe some of those hard-to-fill jobs will soon be filled.

[07:03:01] As for the Office of Equity and Inclusion, we are the most diverse county in the Commonwealth, but that doesn't mean that we don't have work to do. I say let's keep doing that work. But I'm also really going to ask people, again, it is 11.03. Why are we here? What is the next goal? We have things that we just cut. We could talk about maybe things that we want to strategically add we can keep making decisions on what can be cut but you need you're going to need five people to go along with you you're going to need five people if you don't think you're going to have

[07:03:37] the five if we want to get into the um you know we do have obvious you know divisions on how we view the budget and how we view government and how we view spending i don't think that's going to be resolved in one night and i respect people's differences you know i do want to hear from people but I

also want us to be serious on what we really think we can make cuts and what we really think we can make strategic additions.

[07:04:04] I want us to be serious about this because we can keep going on until 5 o'clock, 6 o'clock, 7 o'clock. I'm here. I'm ready for it. But I really actually want this to be a fruitful discussion, not what we may want to see, but we know that we don't have the votes for.

[07:04:22] So I'm asking everyone, if you really seriously have something, if you don't think you have the votes you can bring it up but realize that we're going to keep sitting here for that realize that we're going to keep sitting here because people want to make their point i want to land on a budget that we're comfortable with and if it's not unanimous i'm i'm fine with that but i want to pass something and i want to feel and i i do respect the work that our county staff has put into it again there's areas of disagreement there are areas that you know we can you know make some cuts to as we did but i want people to be honest about do we really

[07:05:00] have the votes are we taking or is this more about taking a personal stand supervisor go ahead it's not a personal stance um my job is to cut wasteful spending and i am dead serious when i say that we could save six hundred thousand dollars if we really evaluate and i was just using this office as an example, right? But I am serious about, you know, what I'm talking about, and it's not personal for me. Again, it's about efficiency, and it's about cutting wasteful spending, but you're right. If you don't have the votes, you don't have the votes. That doesn't mean I'm not going to bring

[07:05:36] it up, because my duty is to the taxpayers of this county, and I have an obligation to bring up their interests. You have an obligation, what you feel are their interests, but again, we have eight different people with 76 different personalities, and for you, that may be an area that you feel priority. But I will say for the majority of the board, the interest is not there. And the majority of the board does represent the majority of the county. To be fair, to be fair, we represent the majority of the county. So we can keep going in circles. But I want us to be really honest. There are things that I want to see that we are not going to put in this budget, that we're not going

[07:06:15] to put in this budget. Red is not. And I'm okay with that. I am 100% okay with that. Because I will live the fight, you know, another day. We will have these discussions next year. And I do look forward to having a real discussion on proffers, because maybe some of the things we want, we can do that through other means. But for right now, we're going to have to compromise on some of the things that are need to have, want to have, and again, being realistic. I'm going to go to Supervisor Bailey, then Bodie. Thank you, Madam Chair. Julia, please. Kind of forgot what I was

[07:06:54] going to ask, but it just came back to me. One of the things that I just need for you to substantiate in terms of where we're going as it relates to sustainability and environment, you had a phased approach when you first came on board and put together your team. And part of that phased approach was to set your department up and then phase in individuals that can support um the requirements for the region and specifically for the county am i correct in that yes okay so

[07:07:31] these two positions that we are looking at was a part of that if i will if correct me and just tell me in terms these two positions were the requirement for the next phase of standing up your department correct they're the most critical next yeah up positions yes but you didn't hire them initially you wanted to stand up your that's what i remember that's what i'm asking you so that we could substantiate why they're

there yeah i mean this is a this is part of our work plan that's been we have a few years uh built out in our work plan and these positions are supporting that work plan

[07:08:11] according to um impact and priority okay you were your intent was to were you supposed to hire them last year or are you in the in the in the in the line of where you wanted to hire them now um oh they were not in the in the budget last year right right yeah right but they're in the phase of where you want to hire them right now yes okay okay thank you supervisor body you know what i'm not gonna i i was gonna go around in circles with the previous discussion i'm not going to thank you sir professor weir thank you madam chair nothing about this budget

[07:08:51] proposal or the ones i'm making is personal uh if it was this this list would be a hell of a lot longer than it is and some of these things don't um i don't necessarily agree with but people people posited them we included them so i think we should discuss them um with respect to the purpose of going through this exercise it's actually twofold there are a number of proposals to add things back into the budget that are not currently there some of which i actually agree with but in order to do that we've got to find a cut somewhere and this is our fault because we

[07:09:30] agreed last year that we would issue budget guidance in november which i would have assumed would have addressed the rate or the potential impact and what we wanted to see and that didn't happen and that's on us now hopefully that will change this year with the budget committee that being said in the order of in order to expedite excuse me process of damage went down the wrong tube in order to expedite the process on these four i can read the tea leaves the only one on like i said the only hill i'm going to die on um on this particular group of four is the staff for

[07:10:09] the committees i think one person can do it i think it's ridiculous to need two for two standalone committees with limited meeting requirements so i i would i would restrict my ask to the reduction of the two FTE for BOCS committees to one, saving us \$92,787.

[07:10:30] Supervisor Ingring? All right. Actually, I'm going to skip a little bit because we do want to talk about cuts, but I also want to talk about things, you know, from the, and I'm just going to throw this out here.

[07:10:50] I don't have a lot of stuff I want to add back in. You know, for recap, the things under trails, parks and green space, forest greens, recreation center study. I say we can hold off on that. We can wait. We can wait and see where we are with proffers and maybe have that discussion a second time, you know, at a later date.

[07:11:08] There are a couple things that I do think are sensitive. Williams Ordinary Historic Preservation, the Therapeutic Recreation Programmer, the Redevelopment slash Assemblage Study, Trap, Neuter, Vaccinate. I do kind of want to throw a bone to our Planning Commission.

[07:11:24] That's really all that I want to add. That's not a lot. And the reason why I'm throwing that out, because it's not a lot, you know, maybe if we can agree on some of those things, we could talk about further cuts. I am really hesitant to, I do sympathize with our clerks. I sympathize with them greatly because, you know, this was a while ago, and I'm going to try to put you on the spot, Ms. Madden, but we had a conversation a while ago, and you had a much larger staff, and then it got cut during the pandemic, and it never came back. You know, where I'm sensitive with our staff is I don't want to burn people out. I don't. You know, if we want the top talent, we have to be cognizant that they need to

[07:12:03] be compensated fairly and in line with neighboring jurisdictions, and that they have a good work-life balance. We have to be cognizant of those things. We cannot expect to get the best and keep the best if we're not treating them like the best. So, you know, again, we can have these discussions.

[07:12:23] I'm not there for those positions. I really am not there. You know, again, I don't know where all these positions land, and I did speak with, you know, Mr. Shorter about some of them, just so i understand because i have a few things i had questions about um you know again we can keep going around we can keep having these discussions i do want to hear from people but we also may be at an impasse with some of these things supervisor gordy thank you madam chair i you know i think for the sake of trying to move this along you know if we take a look at the things that we i think we

[07:13:02] all agree we would like to add such as the the 400 000 for the clerk's office uh for the lands record management system which is uh desperately needed oh it's in the budget okay i'm sorry i i didn't see that in there okay um when then that solves a little uh bit of our problem but all right so what about um just kind of look through this list noise ordinance enforcement it's in the budget all right um so um so wait to help things out look at pages 13 that 14 15 This is recap.

[07:13:39] Those are the things that we could possibly add. Everything else, we're good on. We've made the cuts earlier, so we do have a little bit of wiggle room. I don't want to use up all that wiggle room. Then, Madam Chair, you know, like with the discussion that we've had on the proffers, I think a lot of those things on those pages certainly align within the park proffers that we can find out what's the art of the possible with those related to what the proffers can be used for during the course of the year but given the fact that we're in such tight

[07:14:18] straits i don't know that there's a lot of room to add any of these other items in the short term so what i'm going to go is i'm going to go to franklin bailey and bode i'm going to see if there's anything else we want to add i'm going to give people who want to make the cuts a little bit more time to look at it i want to see if there's anything we want to add from those positions, but again, you know, we are, I do feel at this point, we are kind of starting to go to circles. Supervisor Franklin. Sure. I just, for my one-eighth, I do support the ask on page 14, Williams Ordinary Historic Preservation Therapeutic Rec Program or Arts Council Swim Lanes,

[07:14:54] but I can also be flexible on those. And then, excuse me, I want to also just also agree with the chair with regards to the positions, with regards to our committees. And the reason being is because if we remember when we first approved our rules of procedure, I voted against these, but the majority voted to, in my opinion, add a bit more strain to our clerk's office by upping the time that we have to get the agendas

[07:15:33] together all the information things of that nature so you know in my opinion the least we could do is if we know that we're creating some of these committees think a little bit more far out and being a little bit more thoughtful about how we plan to support admin with those particular jobs. So I just want to point that out. It's us that added the strain, and so I agree that we don't want to continue to add to that. Bailey, then Bodie. Thank you, Madam Chair.

[07:16:09] I can definitely, of course, support the Forest Greens golf course. That's something that I wanted to keep in, that I can use, I've investigated to use my proffers for. So I would like to keep that in. And also the Williams Ordinary Historic Preservation, I could support that.

[07:16:30] And the Therapeutic Recreation Programmer, 1FTE. I could take the Art Council's grants out, the 50K, because I think that's more of a process-oriented opportunity rather than a funding opportunity.

[07:16:48] So, you know, we could take that out. And then on page 15, the Trap-Neuter-Vaccinate Release Directive. And I would also like to consider a discussion about the Redevelopment Assemblage Study.

[07:17:08] And the reason being, I'm sorry, did you have a... All right, I apologize. I think what would be easiest, if we just go through this real quick, we'll just run through these pages so we could see, get a consensus where people stand on each of these things, drop whole, super, I'm sorry.

[07:17:25] i don't know if this is helpful for the board um so we have a positive balance of 742 000 in fiscal 26 but only a positive balance in the out years of roughly 300 000 a year what i'm trying to tell the board is that you have about 300 000 of recurring funding to work with at this juncture and so we have to show restraint and that's why i mentioned the items that we want i i'm going to say this again i want to go through this we'll go by page by page i really think for page 13 we save

[07:18:03] all that for products proffers as you mentioned supervisor bailey you have looked at that for forest greens golf course you know i say for this page you know we save all of this to see what can be used for proffers um so i'm going to quickly go down and i'm sorry i know people are in queue but i want to really move this meeting along um and you know i know people have comments and such so I greatly apologize, but I also want to land the plane at some point.

[07:18:32] So I'm going to go for page 13. I think we should hold off all of these to see if we can use proffers. Andrea, can you ask people for a roll call to see if they agree with that or if they want to include that? And if they want to include it, we're going to have to talk about each of these items.

[07:18:49] Supervisor Ingrid? Yes, I agree. Supervisor Bailey? I agree. Supervisor Bodie? Agree, proffers. Supervisor Franklin? Yes. Supervisor Gordy? Agree. Supervisor Vega? Yes. Supervisor Weir? Did you really have to ask?

[07:19:06] Chair Jefferson? Yes, 100%. All right, thank you. So we are going to look now at page 14. We have Williams Ordinary, Therapeutic Rec Programmer, Arts Council Grants, Swimland Rentals.

[07:19:27] Again, I do want to keep this to around \$300,000 if possible. I also want people to be mindful of page 15. i mean although some of this is not recurring you know like the study i would say is a one-time cost um but i don't know if there's any um i know the programmer that is going to be a multi-year cost um the arts grants i mean we could take that up each year slim slim lane that's going to be a fee supported net cost is zero williams ordinary preservation is that a one-time cost mr sinclair

[07:20:01] i believe so one client cost all right um you know with the exemption again the therapeutic programmer is going to be ongoing so we have to think about that that is going to be an ongoing cost so if we do that now we're going to have to make sure we have the funds to budget for that does anyone have you know any specific questions about this or anything they really want to say because otherwise i just want to kind of go through down the line and see what people want or do not want are we good all right folks if you can do me a favor clear yourselves out of queue

[07:20:34] um all right so for williams ordinary historic preservation um actually if we could take these one by one. Ms. Banner, if you could do a roll call. 130,000.

[07:20:50] Supervisor Angry. I just want to say, because I have no idea what we're doing in this preservation. I know this is really, this is Brentsville, right? This is Brentsville District? It's my district. Shall I explain? Yeah, because that would really help.

[07:21:06] I don't know the urgency of this, because we're working with 300K, so that's 130K. That's a 251,000, too. So, yeah, can you It's not 250. Okay. Yes, I'm sorry, Madam Chair. I can't explain.

[07:21:22] What this is, Supervisor Angry, is a project that was started three years ago, or maybe even four years ago, and they've been doing private fundraising for the project. It's in reference to the 250th anniversary in Dumfries, but they're trying to expand the Williams Ordinary, which we own here in the county, to also be, you know, like agritourism for the county, not just for Dumfries, but it's located in Dumfries.

[07:21:53] So they've been doing fundraising the whole time, and this is a one-time request that they're making for \$130. I just wonder, everybody's going to have a powerful issue with this, you know, and with all of these, because everybody's got, you know, I have no idea how to even...

[07:22:12] If you want to pass, we can come back to you because I, you know, I do want us to start to land this plane. We have to make decisions. So do you want to pass? I'll pass. All right. Supervisor Bailey? Aye. Supervisor Bode? Aye.

[07:22:28] Supervisor Franklin? Aye. Supervisor Gordy? I want to support it, but I want to find out if we've got other priorities given our limitations, so I'm going to pass for now. Supervisor Vega?

[07:22:46] No. Supervisor Weir? Like Mr. Gordy, since we don't know what we're going to have on the end of the bottom line and we're still going to have to make cuts and nobody seems to want to do them, pass. Mr. Jefferson? I support it. Did you want to have anything else angry or no?

[07:23:05] Do you want to abstain or? All I want is a trap neuter. That's all I want in this whole thing. Okay, so abstain or no? I'm abstaining.

[07:23:24] Yeah, so you got it. So we, all right, therapeutic recreation programmer, if you could take a roll call. Or would it be easier? No, I'm just writing down.

[07:23:39] Yeah, you're good. Supervisor Angry. No. Supervisor Bailey. Yes. Supervisor Bodie. Yes. Supervisor Franklin.

[07:23:56] Aye. Supervisor Gordy. Aye. Supervisor Vega. No. Supervisor Weir. This is one of the few additions I was actually willing to fund.

[07:24:12] I still will, but we're about to go upside down again, so you guys got better start thinking about some cuts. We're not going to say yes to everything. I am going to say yes to this. The next one is the art council grants. Supervisor Angry.

[07:24:32] No. Supervisor Bailey. No. Supervisor Bode. No. Supervisor Franklin. Sorry, quick question. Do they need the grants? Because it's my understanding that they may not actually. No. No. I'm a no. Just say no.

[07:24:49] No. Are you a no? All right, arts council. Very good. Supervisor Gordy. No. Supervisor Vega. No. Supervisor Weir. oh chair jefferson see we got a no this is a no we're something down swim lane rentals because this is a net cost of zero can we all just say yes these are the kids i mean it's still there's going to be

a cost but it's going to what even out eventually yes i believe so chair just uh clarify i think you you pushed for this initially but this is also a veterans part this is the kids

[07:25:28] these are the kids who came in we all loved them they were cute they were wonderful they were kind they were articulate. And they do need the additional lane. And they do need the additional lane. So let's go ahead. Madam Chair, Mr. Shorter was about to speak. I just want to make sure that it is in fact zero. There are so yes, this is fee supported and the fees will cover the cost ongoing, but there are some initial costs associated with equipment and the costs associated with the overtime for lifeguards. And so there is a that's the 30k okay in that case i would just appreciate that in the future we don't

[07:26:08] put a note in that net cost is zero in that case that yep 100 all right so let's go with swim lanes supervisor vega no supervisor franklin aye supervisor angry aye supervisor weir supervisor Gordy? Pass. Supervisor Bailey? Aye. Supervisor Bode?

[07:26:34] Aye. Chair Jefferson? 100% yes. So I'm going to say, this was mine, and I'm going to kill it right now. We ain't going to take a vote. Employee Homeownership Program, \$1.2 million dies, so scratch it out. Scratch it out.

[07:26:53] Redevelopment Fund Reserve, we ain't got the money. Let's go ahead. We're going to scratch that out. Coordinated response to FTEs. This is an ongoing... We're going to come back to this one, because we've got to pray on that one. Development slash assemblage study.

[07:27:11] I kind of am a, yeah, it's a one-time cost. I don't know. Let's go ahead and take a vote on that one. Supervisor Vega? Madam Chair, yeah, just want to clarify. I know Ms. Washington was here. I'm not sure if she's still here. Is this for, well, let me see if she's here.

[07:27:32] This would be more of a Christina. It doesn't have to do with the small area plans. No. I think the small area plans certainly guide, but no, this is economic development. This could make us money. Come on down, Pinky. Pink lady.

[07:27:48] was it the pink ladies? I love pink. You know that, Christina. You make us money. So I'm inclined to give you what you want. We had this conversation. But I guess since you're the chosen one for this hour, why do we need to do a study? I mean, what is going to be different than what your office has already done in order to identify? So I think, because this is from the recap, right? And so I think when we have circled back and clarified, it's not a study. It's really for an advisor or

[07:28:21] consultant that will help us um i'm a no but it's a but it's a but it's a but but it's an as like it's an as needed um to help us figure out the structure and how to assemble property and which properties should be prioritized thank you christina friends you know my position on how much we spend on consultants and contractors we're going to keep this moving keep it moving All right, we're ready.

[07:28:49] Let's go. Very good. Supervisor Bailey? Aye. Supervisor Vega? No. Supervisor Franklin? Aye. Supervisor Bodie? Aye. Supervisor Weir? No. Given current...

[07:29:06] No, wait, no. I was saying no to her. Yes, I was. You were going to ask me if I'm going to be nice, and the answer is no. Given all the small area plans, courts, district, projects we've got going on, No, I'm not willing to spend another quarter million dollars on a contractor to do something like this.

[07:29:25] It just boggles my mind. No. Supervisor Gordy? Only if we offset it with other cuts. You're in abstain. And Supervisor Angry? Yeah, I'm with Supervisor Gordy on this.

[07:29:40] We don't have a lot of money, so what are we cutting in? Chair Jefferson? I am a yes, but yes, I want to see where we are because I think we're still good. We're good for this year. Where are we?

[07:29:58] With the inclusion of this consultant for the study, consultant money, we're at \$259,000 in FY26 and \$200,000 in fiscal 27. No, to the good.

[07:30:14] To the good. All right. So this one passes. We dealt with current planning. We have the trap-neuter-vaccinate-release directive. That's \$48,000. So wait, hold on.

[07:30:30] Let's go with that one. Yes, ma'am. Supervisor Angry? Aye. Supervisor Franklin? Aye. Supervisor Vega? No. Supervisor Gordy? Which one is this? Think of the cats. Supervisor Bailey?

[07:30:45] Aye. Supervisor Weir? No. Supervisor Bodie? Aye. Chair Jefferson? Of course, I love cats. All right. The coordinated response in two FTEs, I say we put that on a hold unless we find other money.

[07:31:02] I mean, that's a really important one, but unless we find other money, we just don't have it. And then this one is, you know, do we love our planning commissioners? Do we? This is going to be \$13,000. It's going to be ongoing. So I just want to say that up front.

[07:31:19] Let's take a vote on that one. Chair Jefferson. Yes. Supervisor Angry. I just feel like you're giving, it's only \$13,000. All right, yes. Supervisor Bailey. Supervisor Vega. Pass.

[07:31:38] Supervisor Corey. Yes, yes. Having been a planning commissioner, the \$800 doesn't go far, given the level workload that these guys do. So I'm a yes on this, knowing that, you know, for volunteer hours that they put in on this, it really isn't much.

[07:31:56] So, yes. Supervisor Bode? No. Supervisor Weir? No. Supervisor Franklin? I'm going to pass, but I also just want to say for the future that we really should look at some of our other commissions. Because, for instance, social services, they get \$100.

[07:32:13] And quite frankly, they do a lot of important work in advising our social services department. So I just want to point that out, that we need a little bit more equity in how we do some of these stipends. And we can talk about that in finance and budget.

[07:32:29] All right. Where are we at on that one, Andrea? You can pass. Yay. All right. So this is it for the recap, I think. Unless do we have, we'll go back to cuts. Because we're still in the positive. I don't want to spend to zero. I appreciate everyone's flexibility.

[07:32:47] Are we still having fun? And are there any other additional things that people really, hills that they need to die on? My bayonet's sharpened. Supervisor, we are. I have a number of hills I'm going to die on.

[07:33:04] Okay. Let's take them one at a time. Senior Inspector Development Services, adding another FTE at 142.6. The current position has been vacant more than 270 days. You can fund this in 27 once you fill the vacancy.

[07:33:22] Why have two vacancies? Public relations firms for the EDA take the additional \$50,000 that's out of the general fund, fund it with TOT. Washington Airport task force fee, \$25,000. Why are we supporting the Loudoun County Committee, which is nothing but Loudoun County and run by the Loudoun County Chamber?

[07:33:43] I don't care if it's networking. Why are we paying \$25,000 for something that's not going to benefit the residents of Prince William County? Will it benefit Loudoun? I'll start with those three. I'll skip the third rail for the moment, but I'm going to come back to it.

[07:34:00] Fire and Rescue Principal Engineer, vacant 782 days. Fire and Rescue Service Analyst, vacant 640. So I don't know how you want to do this, Supervisor, but I can maybe have you go to three and then I'll respond to the three and then you continue.

[07:34:17] Okay, I can start with those first three. So Development Services is funded via development fees and not filled until the need. the second one so that won't that doesn't impact the job public relations firm saved 50 grand by fully funding it with tot funds rather than three quarters of it with tot and 50 out of general fund or reduce the contract here she comes yep same thing i'm sorry i had to call the pink because i

[07:34:53] love it you're like so matchy and i apologize last time i was here i didn't introduce myself christina win economic development and tourism and i apologize because i was running in so do you mind repeating the question supervisor we are can we fund the remaining 50 grand of the public relations firm with tot funds well rather than general fund the so the the public relations um contract effort strategy is really about um trying to get prince william county on

[07:35:30] more um lists so being like occoquan the top 25 you know small towns to come visit and so forth. It takes a very strategic effort to reach out to those Pacific PR and travel writers and so forth to get on those lists. And it takes at least three years for that to happen. We can do, if we are only doing TOT funds, we can do it on the travel side, but we can't then do it for economic development because you can't use economic development. You can't use TOT funds for economic development. You can only use it for visitor tourism. So the economic development side

[07:36:10] would not be able to help try to raise the rankings of Prince William County and various industry trade magazines. So how did you arrive at three quarters of it would be on TOT or would be on tourism if you don't know what you're going to do? I didn't I did not say that I did not know what I was going to do. I apologize if that's what you heard me say. Well I mean it seems kind of nebulous as to what I mean I I get it I'd rather just cut it to 150 personally and take the 50 50 grand general support general fund support on it's not a hill I'm gonna completely die on but I will die on the next one which

[07:36:49] is the Washington area task force that's fine also say can you explain the importance of that fee for which one the PR airport task force fee so I believe that the Washington Airport task force came out and visited with all the board members prior to the budget season. A long time ago Prince William County was a member within the task force. We have not been a member I guess for numerous years as long as I have been here. The task force is focused on really the

[07:37:26] importance of airport operations and connecting our business community to the airport. So we have several companies like ATCC and FedEx and so forth that have these immediate need to that airport. One of the things right now that the Dallas Airport is working on, and especially the task force in EMWA, is increasing the warehouse and the storage, and especially cold storage. So companies like ATCC, they need cold storage. And so these are

[07:37:58] efforts that if we now have more connection within to that task force and we are partners we can help with our business community. The other piece is that we have a sub-zone of a sub-foreign trade

zone at Innovation Park and then that helps create that leakage between the Washington Airports Task Force. And I believe all Loudoun and Fairfax are both at a hundred thousand each I believe and so Prince William would be coming in at um 25,000 I would argue that the airport is

[07:38:35] actually in Loudoun and all but touches Fairfax correct and has a direct road I mean it's true but from a but from an economic development and business perspective attracting businesses having access to an airport is almost one of the number one things behind um um uh workforce And so having those connections to our transportation network is super important for attracting businesses and especially diversifying our industry sectors.

[07:39:11] I just question whether being part of a task force for a Loudon-centric, Loudon-development, Loudon-economic development is worth the squeezing. I'll just let it go. Okay, that's fine.

[07:39:26] Thank you. So, okay, so you want to vote on those three senior inspector development services.

[07:39:45] That's fee supported. So did you, Supervisor Weir, though, is that one that you want to keep in or take out?

[07:40:07] All right, so let's take a vote on Washington Airport Task Force Fee. Supervisor Bode? Pass.

[07:40:24] Supervisor Bailey? Supervisor Angry? Aye. Supervisor Franklin? Aye. Supervisor Weir? No. Supervisor Vega? No. Supervisor Gordy? Chair Jefferson?

[07:40:46] god damn all y'all i i said it i don't particularly care for this fee the only reason god i don't particularly i i pinky won me over yes all right so that means we keep it in um

[07:41:13] what else you got bob is mr chief labelle here mr sinclair yes uh the first uh fte um you may recall, we found during the analysis that we were doing for vacancy rates, that FTE has been moved to development fees and not being supported by a general fund.

[07:41:52] The other FTE remind me, what FTE is that? Fire and Rescue Services Analyst is a second one. I need the Chief for that one. Good evening.

[07:42:21] Tom LaValle, Fire Chief. The second position has been reclassified as position, excuse me, business systems administrator, excuse me, which actually closes tomorrow. Some of you are pretty familiar that we went through some dramatic changes in our business systems administration over the last year. We brought in a new wonderful assistant director of services. We wanted to allow that person to pick this person. And so that elongated

[07:42:58] the process what I'll also say is what's probably worth noting we're currently utilizing executive temporary workforce to do this work so we are paying for the position quite frankly at a higher rate than when the position is filled and we would need to continue to do that as part of the budget madam chair I'm not going to die on either one of those hills I just wanted to point out what we're dealing with on an annual basis we keep adding FTE so without objection I'll simply go the next one, and I'm going to simply note these. I know most of this isn't going to gain any

[07:43:36] traction, but I think it needs to be publicly noted. There is \$366,000 and some change for the Housing and Community AFDU program. I'm not denigrating the program, but we budgeted two FTE and FY25. They've both been vacant for 184 days with one on hold. So why are we adding more?

[07:44:01] Second one is social services, public assistance, staffing, cut the revenue support by half, given 22 vacancies averaging 126 days and the time required to hire new FTE, those 22.

[07:44:17] I mean, I don't see it happening before, you know, halfway through the fiscal year at least, so I would chip for this year only, cut that a little bit. Community services, clinical services, caseworkers, we've got 13 vacancies.

[07:44:30] We're funding four more. Why? We could save \$221,000 by just rearranging the deck chairs in that department, and last but not least, in that particular group, Library of Office of Programming and Events, you've got 14 vacancies. If you're going to fund them, fund them with the vacancies, redo something else, but why create two new FTE when you can't even fill the FTE that would ostensibly fill some portion of that service right now?

[07:45:00] Mr. Scherer, do you want to speak to that, or should we have department heads? Joni could come up to speak to the housing program. So according for the Affordable Dwelling Unit Ordinance, we have one additional that we are trying to fill right now.

[07:45:24] We were able to hire a manager, and we are needing the analysts to work with that program. We are getting closer and closer to getting the ordinance approved and have the Housing Trust Fund also in place, ready to roll.

[07:45:41] And these positions are very important to get this project, this activity, off the ground. Thank you, Joni. Anything else? Madam Chair, I'm not going to...

[07:45:59] Wait, I'm sorry, Mr. Shorter, real quick, did you have something? Well, I was going to move on to public assistance. Okay. You didn't see me in the queue. No, I'm sorry. I can leave. And I have, did you, I'm sorry, Mr. Shorter? I was going to move on to public assistance. I think that was the next set of FTEs.

[07:46:15] So with the public assistance program, I think what you all saw as a board in the February 18th presentation, the proposed budget, was the growth in public assistance applications in the work happening within the public assistance program.

[07:46:33] That is a program that has a lot of turnover, and it has that turnover because of the sheer amount of work. You would also recall that consistent with the audit recommendations and management responses associated with those recommendations that we need additional capacity.

[07:46:53] And so those 10 FTEs are needed and are supported by the state as well. So as you can see as a reminder that the state contributes to the FTEs and is not just locally funded. I'm only looking at the general revenue.

[07:47:10] I'm not going to die on any of those hills. can read the tea leaves uh but i i think people need to know what's going on here um wait quickly i have vague on the queue did you want to say something or are you good for now because or do you want to go i actually have questions for dave but i can wait okay all right go on next batch is parks this is a simple one uh parks and rec senior fiscal analyst um contract oversight for what this guy was going to do or what this position would do has largely been transferred to rick so why do We still have it in here.

[07:47:43] If Rick's going to be largely, and we just did this, you know, why are we funding this for the construction management if transportation is taking this over with his new position? And the second one

on Parks and Recs, why do we need a Parks and Recs human resource analyst when we have an entire human resources division?

[07:48:05] Sure. So with the first item to advisor Weir, I would say the decision that the board made or will make as part of the adoption of this budget is the starting place for the conversation around the transportation merger.

[07:48:21] That has not actually happened yet. And Parks and Recreation needs the support. This won't actually take place for another year and a half. So any transfer of staff to transportation, a merged transportation department wouldn't take effect until July 1 of next year.

[07:48:41] In terms of the HR support, But Parks and Recreation is unique in the county in that they take in, during the summer months, hundreds of new employees seasonally. And they are not on their own, but they do the lion's share of that work on their own.

[07:49:04] And so, yes, I would say that Parks and Recreation does need that HR specialist to help with the onboarding of so many seasonal employees. Again, Madam Chair, I know I can read the tea leaves.

[07:49:19] I'm not going to die on the Hill. I'm going to give you a number here in a minute. We've already dealt with the Ned Distiller House. We've already dealt with this. The criminal justice, two new FTE, I would just suggest we revisit that in FY27.

[07:49:40] And then if we're hiring a marketing and promotions contract for EDA, why are we also giving them a new position that does the same thing? You can have a contractor or you can have an FTE. You can't have both in my mind. That's a hill I will die on.

[07:49:59] Here she comes. We love you, Christina. It's just late at night and we're a little silly. I apologize for the last time.

[07:50:20] My feet are cold. Thank you. Sorry, Christina Winn again. Two different things. the PR consultant contractor is really focused on as I said focused focused on targeting national writers for us to generate earned media and get Prince William County on the various lists because those lists make us even more attractive to visitors and to businesses because when you go search for things Prince William County will come up but you have to develop those relationships

[07:50:56] the position is in over the past uh five years you know we've gone from an organization who didn't put um on any events or any governor's announcements or conferences or anything last year alone we've done 17 we've absorbed all of that through our whole entire team they're getting to be bigger events that are more challenging. We do a lot of job fairs ourselves, and there's going to be a greater need with the federal workforce and helping that out. So that really

[07:51:35] focuses on the logistics of really putting Prince William County on the map, you know, Holstein round business roundtables. All of that takes a lot of work to put into. Did that answer your question, sir?

[07:51:53] It answers the question, but it... Two different things. I'm good, Madam Chair. Again, I'm not going to die on these hills. I'll revoke. I would just suggest that, you know, in these few things I've talked about here in the last 15, 20, 30 minutes, and these are just a couple of what I would have initially proposed, that's 24 FTE.

[07:52:19] It's probably easily \$2.4 million salary and benefits went on average. And I haven't picked a lot of hills to die on, but I've got one last cut. Okay. And this cut, I am going to die on the hill, and I want to

vote.

[07:52:41] And that's the Commonwealth Attorney's staffing plan. She has not made the case. She did not come to my office. I don't think she came to anybody's office. And the numbers don't bear out her request. What's going on elsewhere in the Commonwealth does not bear out her request.

[07:52:57] I know I'm going to lose this vote, but that's another \$1.2 million and another 8 FTE. I grow weary of this. All we're doing is growing, and I'll just leave it at that. We'll take a vote on that for our Commonwealth attorney for her staffing plan.

[07:53:14] Madam Chair, I have a question for Supervisor Weir. Yes. Supervisor Weir, you're a no on everything, or are you willing to find a compromise? I would be willing to give, what is her ask, eight, four attorneys and four assistants and paralegals combined?

[07:53:34] I'll give her the paralegals and the assistants, but I don't know how that breaks down because I'm sure the attorneys have a higher compensation. Would you entertain, because she was asked and she said if she had to pick one or the other, she'd prefer the attorneys.

[07:53:53] and that would increase the already overburdened staff because she's increased the ratio of – she's got more work on the administrative and the paralegals than she did before we gave her more staff positions each of the last two years.

[07:54:12] So what she brought up as a problem in 2024 has been exacerbated in terms of staff load per paralegal and per administrative assistant.

[07:54:28] So it's become even more top-heavy in terms of load for the attorneys. And I think you're seeing this. She was commenting that the attorneys are doing their own data entry, which is ridiculous. And, you know, I deal with the legal industry every day.

[07:54:44] I'm actually part of it. And what she was – I'm going to be blunt. What she was telling me is the situation over there is what I would consider, in the private sector, a really messed up management of a law office.

[07:55:06] So you're okay? You don't pay attorneys to do clerical work. You do attorneys to do legal work, like try cases instead of – you know where I'm going. I'm preaching to the choir. So that's why you support the paralegal and the assistants to alleviate that from the attorney so they can focus more of their attention in the courtroom.

[07:55:23] Okay, so you would fund that or support that? So just so this is a friendly amendment, so I'm sorry, Supervisor Gordy. So just a question, and this is going to the potential for state funding.

[07:55:43] Is there a way that we, let's say we fully fund the request at 1.2, but any resources that we receive the state would offset those costs instead of adding additional FTEs from the budget, from whatever the state.

[07:56:04] So it would cap it at four for the year or eight for the year. What typically happens when the comp board makes decisions and then allocates funding to the jurisdiction is we come to the board to make sure that the funding is appropriated.

[07:56:25] Now, I don't know, Dave, if we at that time would then ask the board if we would take an equal balance of general fund dollar from, I mean, if that's something that I would do or if we would ask the

board to do. That is an option for the board to consider in the sense that theoretically you're at this time as part of the budget funding them with local funding, and then the board could decide to recoup that revenue from the comp board if it comes through.

[07:57:03] That is an option. Supervisor Vega? Supervisor Weir? I'm still here. How about two attorneys and two paralegals? Would you support that? One attorney, three paralegals.

[07:57:26] Franklin. Currently in the budget for the Commonwealth Attorney's Office. Eight total positions, four attorneys, four paralegals.

[07:57:43] Okay, and that's already baked into the budget? That's in the proposed budget, yes. Okay, so are they asking to cut those? Correct. Okay, well, obviously I'm supportive of keeping what's in the budget just for my 1A. Well, we're going to just take a vote because, you know, for fairness, I think we know where we're going to land, but let's go ahead and take the vote.

[07:58:01] What we're going to vote on, I'm sorry, are we going to vote on one attorney and three paralegals? Or what are we voting on, Supervisor Ware? I will leave it to Supervisor Vega's discretion. So what are we voting on, Vega? Again, I want compromise. I support two attorneys, two paralegals.

[07:58:16] We kind of meet halfway and find a win. Okay, we're voting on two attorneys and two paralegals, so we will be cutting. It will be four total positions instead of eight, roughly. Supervisor Bode?

[07:58:35] No. Supervisor Gordy? Supervisor Angry? Again, I'm saying 2.7% is what the Commonwealth fraternity is in the budget.

[07:58:51] I'm a no. We can do cuts, but I'm telling you, this is not it. Supervisor Bailey. Supervisor Vega. C. Supervisor Weir. Supervisor Franklin.

[07:59:08] Chair Jefferson. No means no in many languages. I got Spanish covered, French, whatever, English. 3-5. Motion fails. All right, before we shift over to Vega, anything else, Bob?

[07:59:27] Because it was your final hill, right? You did? I actually do have one. I do have one left over, but I wasn't going to do it, but what the hell? I'll throw a big bone. Before we move to a different topic, I would like to discuss or take a look at the offsetting costs coming from the Commonwealth and using those to offset whatever funds we receive from the Commonwealth will be used to offset these costs for these positions.

[07:59:59] So we would not do that as part of a budget adoption next week. What we would do is, based on the collective board's feedback today, we would bring a board item corresponding with a budget and appropriation item for comp board funding.

[08:00:25] So when we come to the board, let's say in however many months, we would be coming to the board with an item that has both the budget and appropriate comp board funding and a corresponding request from the board to reprogram general fund dollars.

[08:00:47] Dave, I don't know if you... That is certainly one option. There's a couple ways to approach it for the board. The CXO is absolutely correct with what he said. Another option is to just accept the revenue and not adjust the expenditure budget at all.

[08:01:08] All right. Are you good, Gordy? You good. I'm going to throw Vic a bone then. Okay. And that is the funding of the 30 FTEs for the collective bargaining for the fire department. I wasn't necessarily in

agreement when this was brought to me, but because I was trying to stay neutral and all this stuff and represent everybody's interest and kind of playing fair, I put it in here.

[08:01:35] It's \$3.2 million where we would fully fund it from the fire levy and not from the general fund. and I heard we can't fund it from the general fund, but if you're funding half of it with the fire levy and half of it with the general fund, don't tell me you can't fund it with fire levy. You can't have it both ways.

[08:01:51] You can't have your cake and eat it too. I know it's a one-year thing. Vic, this is your baby. I'll let you deal with it because it's not my puppy. That's a simple question. I don't know. What's the answer there? That's a lot of money putting half back into the budget.

[08:02:11] From a purely financial standpoint, It would be, we believe, a use of fire levy fund balance that would fund ongoing costs. And it's, from a financial standpoint, it's not something staff would recommend.

[08:02:28] It's a no, I think. All right, anything else before I go to Vega? And I think that's it. You're good, Bob? All right. You're still alive. Vega, did you have anything else you want to add? Yes, Dave, what would now the increase be at .906 for the average tax bill?

[08:02:52] I've got a lot of stuff on the table. I apologize. It's okay. The average tax bill increase will be \$273 or 5.6%.

[08:03:08] Okay. And then with values increasing, do you know what the average increase of taxes at a rate of \$350 would be for the, yeah, personal vehicle?

[08:03:26] That I don't know. Wait, we do have the estimates that we were looking at that earlier. Let me see if I have it up. I'm sorry. Oh, it's that chart, right? Yeah, it's the chart. I thought I had that.

[08:03:45] Here we go. Here we go, right here. Let me try to blow this up. What would that be for taxpayers? It's this one. Oh, that one.

[08:04:02] Yes. Here we are, \$3.50. It's right there, \$3.50. The \$3.50 column is right here.

[08:04:31] For automobiles, for trucks and SUVs, it looks like the average would be \$22.16. Yes, increase.

[08:04:55] It is savings at \$3.50. Did you have anything else or do you need time to do your calculation, Supervisor Vega? Is there anything else from anyone else? I don't know if we really want to go home. Oh, we did that earlier.

[08:05:21] No, we're not. That's all on the can. Well, then I do have one more thing. All right. What do you got? Madam Chair. Dave, what was the total increase at \$9.026 average? \$120. \$273.

[08:05:38] \$273, which is \$3 lower than what was proposed in February, correct? Yes. And because there's no change in the fire levy, that's \$6 more. So the net, we just raised their taxes by \$3 net.

[08:05:56] So we're up to, what's that, \$379 on average. And then we're giving them, whoo, anywhere from \$16 to \$22 tax relief on their vehicle tax. That's not a trade I'd make. I think it's disgraceful. I think this is absolutely disgraceful, given what we have promised the public and what people have voted in favor for in years past, and here we are again, literally almost \$300 increase.

[08:06:30] And if you don't think that doesn't impact those on unrestricted incomes or flat incomes, I mean, year over year over year, \$300 this year, \$200 last year, \$300 the year before that, we've got to stop

this.

[08:06:46] i i apologize to all the residents prince william county i really do so i really appreciate the spreadsheet or what and i made the request because i want to see historically how much taxes have gone up and the average let's be real this impacts people with higher value homes more than anyone else i want to stop pretending that we're attack you know um hurting the poor people and some of the people on fixed incomes are going to see this but a lot aren't you know as i said i live i think a pretty nice home in Montclair. My tax last year was negative. It went down \$25.10. You know,

[08:07:25] my assessment went up and went up greatly. But I would say that I probably fall in that median home or I fall in, you know, what might be considered a nice home on the higher end. I guess for me, again, this is a real partisan difference here. This is a very real partisan difference. But I I don't want people to think oh here's the board you know we're really sticking it to you because I know we're going to get emails from people why are you doing this to me why are you doing this to me and if I had their address and look them up in the assessments they'd probably see a tax decrease so I just I just really want to be cautious what we're saying because I don't think that we're

[08:08:02] you know truly harming people in such a detrimental way and we are going to have greater tax increases that is something I want to work towards but as I've said I want it to be measured and I want to be balanced. Because we don't have the data center revenue to really, truly make meaningful cuts.

[08:08:23] We don't have that revenue. It's not here yet. The data centers haven't been fully built out, and we're just now getting to a higher rate. We have a lot of needs in this county that need to be addressed. I want to invest in us, and I want to invest in our future. And I want to recognize that we are a growing county, and that's a beautiful thing. We are a diverse county, and that is a very beautiful thing we have lots of changes we have room to make these you know to make incremental cuts we're going to get there we're just not there right now at this second doesn't mean we'll never be there but i believe in us and i want to invest in us madam chair with

[08:09:01] all due respect um the fixed income thing works both ways i've got any number of residents and quite a number of residents in my district i'm sure everybody on here on this board has a number of residents in their districts who are on fixed incomes. And I would guarantee you that a significant portion of them paid off their mortgages 10, 15, 20 years ago, and their expenditures are going up because of taxes. It's not because their escrow is growing. It's because they've got to stroke a check to the county every year. And it's not just the rich people are paying

[08:09:36] more. I've got several people that I know, that I am friends with, where their tax bill is going up more than a thousand dollars this year and quite frankly i'm gonna catch some heat for saying this uh at this rate with no reduction i'm actually starting to feel sorry for the people in the digital gateway because they're going to get really slammed they've already screamed at us about their rates and how much they're paying you just made their bills even higher um i don't know

[08:10:12] how much sympathy i have but it does bother me um that you know what while they're yelling at us about those rates we're going to we're going to increase the tax bill whether it gets paid or not or whether litigation succeeds or not but i am truly concerned about those on a fixed income because to say that they're in one area of the county or that they're in one particular type of house or that they're not as impacted by others by increases in the real real property tax rate is just wrong when you consider how

long some of them have have owned their houses how long some of have been paid off and how restricted some of their income is particularly those that are truly

[08:10:50] elderly and i get that complaint and i get those and i get those calls every day of the week from multiple people in my district complaining about the rate and their fixed incomes and these are people that live on larger properties that are now valued at significantly more than they than they ever dream those values would the properties would be valued at i i'm i'm not going to argue it anymore i'm done uh i just think we've done a disservice to a lot of people bigger than voting madam chair i'm truly stunned i i really am at you know your remarks right now but that's not

[08:11:26] here nor there because yes the plane landed um i would say the plane crashed and you're absolutely right supervisor weir it's truly unfortunate to use that type of reasoning when people cannot control value increases around them. I am almost at a loss for words, especially when you talk about, you know, the least of these. And while to some it may be insignificant, you know, I dare not try to even pretend to understand how this is going to impact other people, because I sure know how much it impacts me. And, you know, it's kind of ironic because I'm sitting here, you know,

[08:12:04] thinking about the votes and, you know, these numbers, this and that, while actually sharing my personal property bill with some of my colleagues on this dais, in the hopes that when we got to this point, we would have some sort of compassion, even if it were for ourselves. You know who you are, and you know what your comments were in regards to that bill.

[08:12:24] So it's truly stunning to me to try to make that justification, but it is what it is. Now, with that being said, I do want to make a request, and my request is, Mr. Shorter, that at the very least, quarterly, we get a vacancy report update because that also helps us with, you know, conversations as the year goes on and we can better prepare and, you know, stop trying to make points on this dais without having an actual up-to-date vacancy report.

[08:13:02] But, you know, the public will know what this board decided to do, and you were right in your earlier comments, Madam Chair. The board speaks through the majority, And when you're talking about tax increases, it doesn't matter which way you look at it or how you slice the pie. The majority has spoken, and it is what it is.

[08:13:17] And I just hope that, you know, folks remember the importance of your local government and the impact, the direct impact that they literally have on almost all areas of your life. Supervisor Bode, then Ingrid. Yeah, thank you, Madam Chair. I'm not going to belabor this too much, but as we look at these taxes, we look at what we were doing tonight, and I was actually more on board with a lot more of the cuts that Supervisor Weir was going to do, but then sort of backed away from, so there's that there.

[08:13:48] But more importantly, as they have that chart up, I just want folks to look at that chart because the averages were the averages. I know that for quite a few people, \$12, \$16, \$18 isn't that much, but on the high end, you're talking about some people are going to be saving \$76 on their car bill, which I think is, we're talking about, okay, \$270 increase on their house when they saved \$76 on their car.

[08:14:17] There begins to see a difference there. The other side of it, which sort of got lost in all the stories, is we did vote to reduce the meals tax by a cent or a percent today. With everything that we've heard from folks, whether it's community members or restaurant owners, I know that folks met with all of us this year and in hinder years about the impact of this.

[08:14:42] to me i feel like there's a significant change that we made this year and i'll be the first thing i was one of the most resistant people to lowering that meals tax largely because especially in my district a huge chunk of that is paid by people that come from outside the county and we have very few revenue streams that we can say reliably almost a quarter of the people that pay it are from outside the county but now folks are going back to well look at what we didn't do on the real estate tax. I'd rather talk about what we just did on the car tax and the meals tax, especially knowing that, yes, there have been folks that have shared with us the impact of

[08:15:19] their business, their impact of their eating habits, and what have you. And at least in this time, at this moment, we decided to be more sensitive to that and lowered that meals tax at an impact that, to the point earlier made by Mr. Sinclair, not only impacted this fiscal year, but had bleeding effects in the next year that we then had to make up for right here tonight.

[08:15:39] So as folks begin to communicate to their constituents what we did tonight, I hope they tell the whole story and not just parts of it that they want to tell. Thank you, Madam Chair. Supervisor Angry? I came in here today. I was not in favor of an \$18 million hike on an industry, but I feel good about taking that \$18 million and giving it back to the people because that's what I did.

[08:16:05] Now, there's a lot more work we can do, and we sat here and dodged around every department that we really looked at and tried to figure out some real major cuts. So I'm not going to sit here and act as if, you know, the people, that really is minuscule.

[08:16:25] Thank you, Supervisor Ware. But, you know, there's some real conversations we can have about this budget in this county. And, you know, I did my part. I tried. Every penny matters to the people. I will simply say I did my part. and you know we'll be back at this again next year so let's do it we um you have a quick question for supervisor yeah um i want to request that we put the revenue share agreement on the agenda for the next finance and budget committee well this is the first time i say it publicly i gave you a heads up but i haven't said it publicly so thank you all right so i i did say it publicly so i just

[08:17:05] you know real quickly supervisor vega you didn't share your bill with me um but i would appreciate seeing i you know we always talk about the data so i want to see the data you know after we pass the budget and all that i want to see the data on homes you know just like you had broken out with the car tax earlier you know people saw or hear zero bill bill under 100 i really i want to see a better breakdown and i can work with staff on what kind of information i'd like to see because again you know i and i appreciate what supervisor bode said you know we did a lot we

[08:17:39] didn't get to everything. But to me, the glass is half full, not half empty. Because this is one budget. We'll see where we're at next year. And I'd like to continue making cuts. We're not getting everything in one time. We're not doing everything at once. But we can continue to make cuts. This is the start of a discussion. You know, and I'm sorry, I hear a supervisor. We didn't cut a single FTE. I mean, success means different things to different people. But again, I am going to reiterate, I'm the single mom on the board. Since taking this, I have, you know, this has been my

[08:18:17] main position. I've taken a tremendous pay cut. And trust me, it's difficult. I've had to make difficult financial choices. But I would say that I understand the average person because I am the average person. And I know it is like to make those difficult cuts. But at the end of the day, I want to protect the county. I want to invest in our future. I want to invest in us. I cannot repeat that strongly enough i don't

think we disappointed people i don't i think people want us to mean to protect to protect our education spending and to do better in our schools and i

[08:18:55] think people want to feel safe in our community so i do reject the notion that we've shortchanged people that we're conning people when the average is going to be 22.75 a month i reject that notion and people please reach out to me if we supervisor bodie and i did a budget town hall not a lot of people attended i know supervisor angry did one as well i'm willing to listen please reach out to me send me copies of your bills i will have the discussions because i haven't had thousands of people reaching out to me in concern i've had people reaching out to me with what they'd like to see us protect and what i like what they'd like to see us invest in supervisor bailey and

[08:19:33] then we will call to adjourn thank you very much madam chair um madam chair i i agree with a lot of what you've just said and i i think that as a board regardless of whether we agree or disagree we are moving in the right direction to protect a county that is growing over 500 million people here and it's growing rapidly the unfortunate thing is past boards have not considered that and and moving forward it's been the last two boards ours and the board before that we've try to work together to make sure that we're considering everybody in the county and so we

[08:20:11] we we don't we apologize for demonstrating on the dais in unprofessional ways when we should be communicating more to to our districts our respective districts and i i think that we can do better and uh in the newly uh created finance committee we had an opportunity to go over a lot of the things that we talked about tonight in the finance committee so the so the public would sit up to one o'clock in the morning to discuss things that would just stress them out we had an opportunity to talk about the stressful things in the finance committee and some of us decided that

[08:20:50] we weren't going to do that we preferred coming to the dais and demonstrating so what i think this is is very positive and moving forward i think it's an opportunity for us to work together more to create an even better budget each year we've decreased the percentages on personal property taxes on let fire leverage whatever we have done that why because we have incremental revenues coming in that in previous boards was not coming in and that's a positive thing but some of us want

[08:21:25] to paint it as something negative so i think what i'd like to do in a positive way is for us to come together more in the next budget cycle prior to 24 hours before we sit down and do markup and talk about what the needs are in our communities and see how we can compromise and see how we can govern better because each year the trajectory goes positive and grows thank you madam chair all right i'd like to motion to adjourn to adjourn second time out we have supervisors time

[08:21:58] no we don't we don't no i have a directive and i have an appointment we we this was not my motion this was wait hold on i'm going to allow you guys to because this was we didn't do this last year i just want to be clear we didn't do this last year if you have an appointment because it's time sensitive and a directive it's time sensitive i will allow this but otherwise we're going to adjourn so please supervisor gordy then vega we did not do this last year guys make a decision Madam Chair, without objection, I'd like to direct the county executive to work with staff as a follow-up to Directive 22-04 to draft a public art policy for further board consideration

[08:22:36] consistent with staff's proposal and its memorandum in response to Directive 22-04. The proposed policy should include, among other things, any associated calls to the county and the county

executive's appointment of a policy development task force to provide him with feedback as he makes recommendations to the board.

[08:22:54] The county attorney's office is directed to review the information and recommendations for any legal issues. When the work is complete, the county executive should report back to the board with his recommendations during a board meeting or by memorandum as he determines appropriate. Please send that around to the board.

[08:23:11] I am looking. Who sent it? You or a member of your staff? Send it around while you're sending. Supervisor Vega? Yeah, I just want to issue my notice of intent to appoint Mr. Chris Mayers to the Veterans Commission.

[08:23:31] All right, I have no objections. I don't think anyone objects to Tom's directive. We can give him a hard time at a later date. Move to adjourn. Second. All right, let's vote. Guys, wait.

[08:23:59] We already keep filling. We've got to call the votes. We've got to make sure. Did everyone? Is it a, are you a yes? Yes. You're giving me a yes. Okay. I'm a yes. All right, vote unanimous. Thank you. Thank you so very much.



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