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Prince William Board of County Supervisors Meeting — Organizational Meeting, Tuesday, January 13, 2026

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- Official Board of County Supervisors page (Prince William County): <https://www.pwcva.gov/departments/board-county-supervisors>

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[00:00:03] back for our first meeting of 2026. Today is Tuesday, January 13th. It is 2.01, and I'm calling the meeting to order. Let us begin with a moment of silence. Thank you. All rise, if you are able.

[00:00:28] By the United States of America, to the republic for which it stands, one nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all. All right, let's move on to agenda item number three, and that's approval of minutes. May I get a motion for items 3A, 3B, and 3C? So move, Madam Chair.

[00:00:56] Second. It's been properly moved and seconded. Is there any discussion? All right. Seeing none, let's go ahead and take a vote. Aye. Supervisor Bodie.

[00:01:13] Supervisor Franklin. Aye. Supervisor Gordie. Aye. Supervisor Vega. Aye. Chair Jefferson. Aye. Vote unanimous. Supervisor Bodie absent from vote. All right.

[00:01:29] And here he comes, I bet. All right. You know, really. We're moving on to agenda item number four, and that's organizational matters. The first stop is every year I must do an annual state of the county. And this year we did things a little differently. So our director of communications, Nikki Brown, is going to cue it up.

[00:02:04] I'm DeChandra Jefferson, chair at large of the Prince William Board of County Supervisors. It is truly an honor to deliver my third state of the county address. This year, I like to do things a little differently. I like to focus on what I believe best tells the story of who we are in Prince William County.

[00:02:22] by counting down our top five accomplishments of 2025. So let's get started. Number five, service delivery is at the heart of local government and technology plays an increasingly vital role in how we serve our residents, businesses, and visitors.

[00:02:40] In 2025, the county launched PWC 311, a platform that makes it easier than ever to request services, report issues, and access support, offering multiple ways to connect with county government at a time and a manner that works best for the user.

[00:02:58] PwC 311 is a part of a broader effort to modernize service delivery, improve the customer experience, and strengthen transparency and accountability across county government. It reflects our commitment to investing in technology that helps Prince William County deliver accessible and exceptional service.

[00:03:20] Number four, last February, the board adopted the 2025 to 2028 strategic plan, a four-year roadmap that guides our decisions and actions. The plan reflects what you, our residents, told us matters most. It centers on eight goal areas, education, environment, government, mobility, quality of life, safe and secure community, service delivery, and smart growth.

[00:03:48] This plan represents the most inclusive strategic planning process to date. with meaningful engagement from the community, the board, and county staff. It provides a clear framework for addressing key priorities while enhancing our overall quality of life.

[00:04:04] We have already made strong progress, and I'm excited about what we will continue to achieve in the year ahead. Number three, 2025 marked the adoption of the county's first affordable dwelling unit ordinance. This significant zoning tax amendment represents a pivotal step towards expanding access to housing for low and moderate income residents across the county.

[00:04:27] In addition, the board adopted the Affordable Housing Fund guidelines and policies and committed to investing \$31 million into the county's Affordable Housing Fund by fiscal year 2029. This fund will provide critical gap financing for eligible projects.

[00:04:47] In Prince William County, we believe that everyone deserves a safe and affordable place to call home. These actions aren't just about buildings. They're about people, families, and the future of our community.

[00:05:04] They represent a real long-term solution to a growing challenge. Number two, the adoption of the fiscal year 2026 budget was monumental in many ways. The board reduced the real estate tax rate from 92 cents to 90.6 cents, making it the fifth consecutive year the board has reduced the rate. And for the first time since 1990, we also reduced the personal property tax rate on vehicles. We listened closely to our small business community and the board amended the food and beverage, also known as the meals tax ordinance, lowering the

[00:05:40] rate from 4% to 3%, which took effect on January 1st. The budget advances our strategic goals through key investments in public safety, quality of life, infrastructure, and essential services. Most

notably, it includes historic investments in education with the \$991.6 million transfer to Prince William County Public Schools, which is \$80.6 million more than the year before.

[00:06:09] And we were able to do all of this while maintaining our coveted AAA bond rating, reducing the county's borrowing costs when financing public projects, and saving millions of taxpayer dollars each year, allowing more funding to be invested in community services.

[00:06:26] I am proud of how the board came together to pass a responsible, balanced budget that meets our needs of our community while remaining aligned with our fiscal policies. If we want to be known for our quality of life, then we must invest in the things that matter most to our residents, our schools, public safety, parks and services for our most vulnerable neighbors.

[00:06:49] And that brings us to number one. Prince William County is, at its core, a community that cares deeply for one another. And nothing reflects that better than the opening of our crisis receiving center complex. In October, community members, my colleagues, county staff, and the governor gathered to celebrate the ribbon-cutting of this facility, one that has already been recognized as a model for others to follow.

[00:07:15] This facility allows us to provide timely, compassionate, evidence-based behavioral health support to individuals experiencing a mental health crisis. It is a powerful example of what happens when community and government, at every level, come together with a shared commitment to care for others.

[00:07:33] and is working. Since its October opening, the CRC has served a total of 304 adults through its 23-hour observation unit. Of those individuals, 164 transitioned to short-term residential crisis services that provide therapy, medication support, and stabilization as alternatives to inpatient hospitalization. And with the recent announcement of the center now open to walk-ins, we anticipate these numbers will increase as we help more people in crisis within our community. While these are in

[00:08:07] no means all the accomplishments of 2025, I think they tell a larger story about who we are as a county and what we value. They show a Prince William County that plans thoughtfully for the future, invests responsibly, and leads people with the center of all that we do. As we look ahead to the coming year, I am confident in our direction and inspired by our potential. Prince William County is a growing community. It is a thriving community. It is a vibrant community and it is one that we are building together. That's why I invite everyone to join us on the evening of Monday,

[00:08:42] January 26th at the Hilton Performing Arts Center for our second annual State of the County event. At that event, you'll hear directly from county departments about how they're advancing the goals laid out in our strategic plan and you'll be engaged by panel discussions that highlight how Prince William County is reimagining ourselves to meet current and future needs.

[00:09:05] None of this progress happens in isolation. It happens because residents engage, staff innovate, and the board works together with a shared commitment to serving the public good. I am grateful to my colleagues on the board, our county employees, our community partners, and most importantly, the Prince William County residents for your trust and collaboration.

[00:09:27] I am proud of what we have accomplished together and even more excited about what lies ahead. Thank you. All right. Thank you, everyone. Thank you so much to our communications team for working me on that and for doing something different this year.

[00:09:47] So we are going to go on to 4B. And before I get started, I know there's going to be a long discussion around this. And this is to elect the vice chair. I would like to move to reelect Supervisor Kenny Bode to this position as he's someone whom I've worked well with.

[00:10:03] I know that there are some people who think that it should be rotated. But I'm going to go ahead, and I'm going to move for Supervisor Bodie, and I would like to see if there's a second. Second.

[00:10:19] All right, it's been moved and properly seconded. Is there any discussion? I'm in queue. Okay, Supervisor Franklin. Sure, yeah, thank you for this. I actually would like to make a substitute motion for Supervisor Victor Angry, and the reason being is because we've always rotated the position of vice chair, and I want to continue in that spirit.

[00:10:45] I've kind of messaged Supervisor Bode about that, and he understands. He's been vice chair already, and I think we need to continue in that spirit. Supervisor Angry has been here the longest. I think he has a lot to offer, and I would like to make a substitute motion.

[00:11:06] Is anyone second any of that substitute motion? Second. All right, it's been moved and seconded by Bailey. Again, folks, I'm sorry I don't have the supervisor angry. Thank you, Madam Chair. Let me just speak a little to some concerns.

[00:11:26] We don't have to get along on this board, and the votes we make on this board, decisions we make, are exactly that. At the end of the day, there's respect, there's decorum, as we always say in the chamber, and that's the end of the day.

[00:11:42] So what we do in our professional capacity and decision-making that we make is exactly what makes a democracy and how we have a majority-minority board in all the discussions. How we get to the conversations of these positions and leadership, I am very comfortable in all the roles that I've played and the seniority that I have on this board and all that I do for this county.

[00:12:04] So either way, whoever is up here for this position, I 100% support. I think it makes a better leader in all of us. I have done my role here for the last six years. I have stood my grounds. I have made votes that have been contentious and that many do not agree with.

[00:12:24] I will continue to do so, and I hope that the relationship that we have on this board on the desk continue to be positive. I can only offer in the beginning of this term, of the new 2026 year, that the decisions that we make on this board do not affect the relationships that we have, and if they do, may they not affect the personal decisions that we have to make going forward.

[00:12:46] Thank you, Madam Chair. I have to be honest. I would like to rotate, and I would have liked to have given this to one of the Republican colleagues on the board. You know, Tom, we don't agree on everything, but I think that you've done a very good job in being cooperative and trying to work across the aisle.

[00:13:05] My colleagues did not agree with me on that. they want to keep this around party lines and for me that is disappointing that is disappointing that despite how hard we've worked on this board that's how people are still thinking for me i can disagree with people but when i call someone i appreciate the call to be returned there's certain professionalism that i'm hoping to have and while i respect your time on the board and i have to acknowledge you are the first black person to be elected to board of county supervisors

we still haven't been able to bridge that communications gap and so for me that's why it's difficult if I I hope I never have

[00:13:44] to be sick and miss another meeting again but if I am I need someone who I can call and say hey this is what's happening someone who's going to actually take the call so for me that's very very much of a concern I do not have the screens right now so I am sorry I don't know if people have been tapping I don't know if there's Tom doesn't even have a screen I don't know if anyone have anything else to say, I am sorry, Supervisor Angry, I would have preferred another pick.

[00:14:16] If it is the will of the board that you are vice chair, then it's the will of the board. I do not personally support it. So, all right, let's go ahead and take the vote. Votie?

[00:14:39] Aye. Supervisor Vega? Aye. Supervisor Stewart? Aye. Abstain. Chair Jefferson? No. Motion passes six to one.

[00:15:00] Supervisor Angry abstaining. Chair Jefferson voting nay. All right, and we're going to move on to 4C, and that is to elect our Chair Pro Tem. I would like to move that it is Supervisor Tom Gordy.

[00:15:19] Second. It's been moved and properly seconded. Any discussion? All right, let's go ahead and take our vote. Aye. Aye. Supervisor Angry.

[00:15:36] Aye. Supervisor Bailey. Supervisor Bodie. Aye. Supervisor Franklin. Aye. Supervisor Stewart. Aye. Supervisor Gordy. Abstain. Vote unanimous.

[00:15:53] Supervisor Gordy abstaining from vote. Congratulations, Supervisor Gordy. Next thing, we're going to move on to unanimous vote is 4D, and that is to adopt the 2026 meeting schedule. So I would like to entertain a motion on that.

[00:16:10] So moved. Second. It's been moved and properly seconded. Is there any discussion? Madam Chair. Supervisor Vega. Thank you. Just for consideration purposes, I know that typically we look, for those that have children in school, for the days that they are off, i see that the only meeting after a holiday is um the 20th um mlk day is on the 19th so not sure if we want to go ahead and have a board meeting uh following that holiday or if we want to reconsider another day is there any anyone else who has anything to say on that i am fine with it

[00:16:45] um supervisor bode appreciate that thank you madam chair and supervisor vega i i like where your head is and on most other holidays i'd probably agree with you um on this one it's one those situations where i don't get mlk day off anyway so i'm not missing any family fund by then coming to a board meeting the day after but i appreciate the consideration is the county open it's closed right and the kids are off so while you have to work the majority of people don't um but again just putting it out there i'm fine one way or the other just wanted to be mindful of those that use this day uh to make travel plans and whatnot but if i could madam chair just follow

[00:17:25] up with that. But to go in a slightly different direction, we don't have to decide this now, but I've heard criticism in the past that we have not been sensitive enough to some other holidays, like Jewish holidays and stuff like that. So although we don't have to deal with that right now, I think we should be sensitive to things like you just said, sort of Vega, Jewish holidays and other holidays. So sometimes we have, you know, night hearings and land use cases on nights that some of the community may not come to because of Diwali, Jewish holidays, things like that. So I think as we continue to move along, want this to

be as inclusive as possible, we should consider that as well. Thank you. Is there anything else? Anyone else want to say

[00:18:04] anything? All right, let's go ahead and take our votes. Supervisor Stewart? Aye. Supervisor Bodey? Aye. Supervisor Angry? Aye. Supervisor Bailey? Aye. Supervisor Franklin? Aye. Supervisor Gordy? Aye.

[00:18:25] Supervisor Vega? Aye. Chair Jefferson? Aye. Vote unanimous. Yes, I guess you're doing all the button pushing. All right. So we're going on to 4E in this discussion of the rules of procedure.

[00:18:42] So I would, this is a discussion since we don't have anything to vote on right now. Does anyone have anything that they want to bring up? I'm looking around, looking around again. Doesn't look like we have anything. So, all right. We can move on to agenda item number five and that is public comment time. We have a few new faces. So what we do for public comment time is I will call you to the back. You have three minutes to speak. Please begin by stating your name and where you live for the public record. First, I'm going to have Bernadine Futrell, then I'm going to have

[00:19:21] Brittany Dunn, and then Stephen Amato. Good afternoon. Audio's all right. Good afternoon. I'm Dr. Bernadine Futrell. I am a resident of Prince William County, Potomac District. Grateful for my supervisor, Bailey. Hi, everybody. Madam Chair, and I think the new Mr. Vice Chair, as well as the honorable members of the board. Thank you for your leadership and your commitment, as well as conversations that you've had around supporting our children and our babies in our county.

[00:20:01] I am a proud resident of 20 plus years. My husband, former delegate Michael Futrell, and I are also proud parents of Prince William County school students as well. I formerly served as the U.S. Department of Education Deputy Assistant Secretary and the Office of Head Start.

[00:20:19] Today I'm here to ask you to build a better world for our babies in Prince William County by considering and having conversations around how do we support our youngest residents through collaborative efforts and through a children's cabinet or a similar coordinated effort.

[00:20:36] Every community wants to be a great place to live and raise their family. In Prince William County, that work begins with our babies. we have strong leadership, we have caring educators, strong families, and many dedicated organizations that are currently serving our children and families. However, at the same time, not all families are experiencing Prince William County in the same way. Some families struggle with access to child care, health services, early supports. I just got a text from a mom saying that she was evicted and facing homelessness. And because our systems feel

[00:21:13] disconnected and hard to navigate, it becomes challenging for families to do what they can to support their children. And our schools cannot do this alone. And I believe and I know in my heart of hearts and in Prince William County, what I've seen across the nation is that we can do better and we can lead this work. One way is by creating a children's cabinet, which is a partnership that brings together our county government, our public schools, our health and human services, our community organizations, our faith-based groups, churches, local businesses to focus on a shared goal for

[00:21:48] our children. This cabinet is about connecting the good work already happening across our county so families can experience a system of support and not a maze. Schools cannot do this alone, and this cabinet will create a place for us to plan together and support our children more effectively. As a county, we are well positioned to take this step. Our county and our school division already share a

commitment to our thriving futures for children. A cabinet would help turn this vision into sustained action. I started in education as a baby in Head Start,

[00:22:23] and I've seen across our nation and the world what happens when communities come together and put their babies forward. It builds a stronger future for everyone. Thank you. All right. Thank you so very much. Next speaker, please. Good morning or afternoon, I guess. My name is Brittany Dunn, and it is just a pleasure to be with you all today thank you madam chair and the entire board just for your leadership I reside in the Gainesville district but I'm a new resident to the area and come up from Virginia Beach my husband is military so we just relocated

[00:23:00] to the area but here what the reason I'm here to talk to you today is that I lead a national organization called safe house project we seek to eradicate child trafficking in the United States. So January is National Human Trafficking Awareness Month.

[00:23:16] Every year, an estimated 300,000 American kids are trafficked right here in the United States, but victim identification is only at 1%. We have an opportunity through Collective Impact to really help move things forward in a real way to see stronger protection of victims, prosecution of traffickers, and buyers, and ultimately the prevention of human trafficking.

[00:23:39] This past year, our organization had the privilege of serving over 2,600 victims of human trafficking as they exited one of those trafficking experiences and helped get them into residential safe house programs around the nation. Having served over 70 victims right here in the Commonwealth and serving on the Governor's Commission, I understand deeply that the biggest challenge that we are facing as victims are recovered is the ability to place them into those programs. So more than anything, I want you all to know that we are a resource, that I am a resource here to help strengthen our collective response to

[00:24:16] human trafficking in Prince William County. In addition, we want to make sure that prevention efforts continue to go forward and we see that identification rate increase above the current one percent. I had the privilege of partnering with Chrissy to train many of our DSS workers throughout the month of November, and just working alongside you all, I hope that we can continue those efforts to really move that forward and see more people equipped and empowered to identify victims of trafficking. Finally, in the spirit of it being National Human Trafficking Awareness

[00:24:49] Month, we are also hosting an event next week, January 21st, through Parenting E3 Program and Manassas City Police Department, helping equip parents with the information that they need to effectively identify potential trafficking of their kids, of their friends' kids, what's happening online, and create greater protective factors.

[00:25:11] And so thank you for your leadership. I am here as a resource, and I look forward to working alongside you all. Next speaker, please. Good afternoon.

[00:25:29] Ms. Jefferson, Board of County Supervisors Meet. I'm Steve Amato from the Occoquan District Resident. On December 16, 2025, at the 2 p.m. Board of County Supervisors Meeting, Item 7-Alpha, the Adopt Local Foundation School Management, Soil Management, I'm sorry, Fund Ordinance Countywide was presented for the public hearing and voted on.

[00:25:52] In 2025, the Virginia General Assembly passed a law to allow Virginia counties to create such an ordinance, but the law does not require counties to institute this ordinance. During the December 16th

Board of County Supervisors 2 p.m. meeting, Supervisor Vega provided factual data from her county-wide survey regarding this ordinance.

[00:26:16] Over 300 county residents responded with an over 75% not supporting this ordinance, as it is the responsibility of property owners to pay for their foundation repairs.

[00:26:32] Only three supervisors had the courage to vote against supporting this ordinance. I thank Supervisor Gordy, Supervisor Stewart, and Supervisor Vega. It's an embarrassing and an irresponsible this ordinance was approved by Chair Jefferson, Supervisors Bailey, Bodie, and Franklin.

[00:26:54] I want to ensure for the public record that on December 20, 2025, I personally wrote emails to Chair Jefferson, Supervisors Bailey, Bodie, and Franklin, asking for them to please explain to me their rationale for supporting this ordinance.

[00:27:10] For public record, I called their offices to follow up on my email messages seeking for them to explain to me, a constituent of Prince William County, why their rationale was to support this ordinance.

[00:27:27] And for the public record, to date, I have not received any responses. Thus, as a Prince William County constituent, can you explain to me why you voted in favor of this ordinance? Why do you want to add more tax burden to county property owners to fund this ordinance?

[00:27:47] Why do you support the county to grant funds to private and commercial property owners? This is their responsibility. And why do you support increasing the affordability of housing by additional burdening the county property owners? It's a shame these four elected officials have not responded to a county constituent about this ordinance and their rationale.

[00:28:10] but it's more shameful my own supervisor has not responded to me so there's a lack of transparency and a question of trust thank you all right thank you so very much we are now going to move on to virtual public comment time supervisor angry thank you madam chair let's start about two speakers uh miss veronica if you can hear us i see your name on the screen oh that's veronica oh sorry All right, there's Veronica right there.

[00:28:49] Okay, Chris. Chris is in the back. Chris is in the back. Yeah. Okay. Good afternoon, Vice Chair. We have nobody online. Nobody, okay. All right, thanks. All right, thank you so very much. That concludes public comment time. We are now moving on to agenda item number six.

[00:29:06] Mr. Shorter, the floor is yours. All right, thank you very much, Madam Chair, members of the board. Just a few quick announcements. First, as I always do, I want to go over directives issued in our last meeting. As you may recall, one directive was issued, and that was to compile a clear and complete breakdown of all county funds, services, and resources that support Prince William County schools and other public education programs.

[00:29:32] This directive was assigned to our finance department. You may also recall that the board directed me through a resolution to send a letter to the SEC and Dominion Energy regarding the Noakesville to Bristow transmission line project. Those letters were sent on December 22nd, and you received copies of those via email.

[00:29:53] There have been no other directives closed since our last meeting. As I recently shared with you all via email, our Department of Finance will be launching an outreach program aimed at supporting

our local farming community through increased awareness of business tax requirements and expanded access to growth-oriented resources.

[00:30:16] We are excited about the program and appreciate your support in promoting the effort. I also share that we are starting the FY27 Competitive Community Partners Program with a virtual information session on Thursday, February 5th from 3 to 5 p.m.

[00:30:34] The application period will then open on Monday, February 9th and close on April 13th. All information is available on the Community Partners page on the county's website. You also received a copy of the disparity study report.

[00:30:52] This was done with the vendor and business community to identify gaps and barriers in providing businesses that may face barriers in providing services to the county and doing business with county government. The board will hear a presentation on those findings of the study next week, but we wanted to make sure that you had the full report before the meeting.

[00:31:18] In terms of staff, I want to take a moment to thank and recognize our Solid Waste team. As you know, we began our Sunday openings at the landfill and compost facility this month. This change was made to address the needs of the community, and I really appreciate all the work that went into this.

[00:31:39] And you all know directly that this required quite a bit of work from our staff and from our leadership team at Public Works, and just really want to thank them. I also want to acknowledge and thank our Department of Parks and Recreation on all those who played a part in the Holiday Walk of Lights.

[00:31:57] So this year we welcomed more than 33,000 visitors, which is a 126% increase over 2024. This is a great attraction for our county, and the experience, as you know, gets better and better each year.

[00:32:16] I also want to acknowledge that PwC 311 recently was named winner in the local smart awards as a local IT innovation of the year. The awards are given to innovative technology focused projects or technology based software that is improving the lives and changing the way residents receive services.

[00:32:41] And we are very excited about what we are doing here in Prince William County related to PwC 311. Last but certainly not least, I want to recognize our library system. So we were named, some of you may know this, we were named a top innovator for 2025 by the Urban Libraries Council for their now viral video, Finding a Way to Slay Among Gen Z, and Director Patterson is here, our Director of Libraries.

[00:33:15] More than 180 library projects in six categories were submitted from across the U.S. and Canada to be considered for the top awards, and I have asked Nikki and the team to share a video that will certainly demonstrate why, in Prince William County, our library system received this award.

[00:33:35] so nick if you'll virtually public libraries is thrilled to have been named a top innovator for 2025 by the urban libraries council in the advocacy and awareness category for our gen z marketing videos in the spring we invited our teen advisory groups to provide input on a marketing

[00:34:14] script for bull run library to promote library services to gen z and gen alpha audiences a team created a script using gen z slang and i from not that generation did my absolute best to deliver the lines what's up sigmas need a place to study say less besties you need to come to the blue run library it just hits different everything at the library is free no cap the librarians really popped off with these programs slay the video really popped off on social media and youtube

[00:34:52] gaining 3.2 million views on Facebook alone. Blooper Reel video was viewed over 90,000 times. Local media outlets wrote about the Reel and welcome best on podcasts, and a professor used it in his media class. Viewers worldwide shared how joyful the video made them feel, and it even inspired generosity with individuals from across the country donating to the PWPL Foundation.

[00:35:18] This marketing and engagement campaign redefined how young people see public libraries. It proved that public libraries can innovate, inspire, and stay relevant in the digital age, all while empowering youth voices. Slay!

[00:35:40] So, Madam Chair, members of the program, you can see why I'm so excited about the program. Great job. I have concerns about the use of Slay. I wasn't sure if that was the proper context. I'm going to consult a Gen Zer later. Well, I'm not the one to consult.

[00:35:56] I see some of y'all out there, okay. Very, very excited about their work. And congratulations to Director Patterson and the entire library team. And that is all for me, Madam Chair. All right.

[00:36:13] Supervisor Bailey. You just got here, and all of a sudden you've won an award for your department. Slaying. You're slaying it. Congratulations. Yeah. That's the correct use of the word. I appreciate that. All right, from what I know, don't ask me, I'm just Gen X.

[00:36:30] Is there anyone else? I don't see anyone, so all right. Thank you, Mr. Schurter. We're going to move now to Agenda Item No. 7, County Attorney Time. Madam County Attorney, the floor is yours. Thank you, Madam Chair, members of the board. This afternoon in closed session, we will have personnel discussions relating to the following members to the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, COG, and the Virginia Railway Express VRE Operations Board, and discussion of reports or plans related to the security of the McCourt government building complex and the safety of person using such building complex, including briefings by staff members,

[00:37:06] legal counsel, and law enforcement or emergency service officials concerning actions taken to respond to related threats to public safety. These items are appropriate for closed session pursuant to 2.2-3711A1 and 19 of the Virginia Code. Can I get a motion?

[00:37:23] So moved, Madam Chair. Second. It's been moved and seconded. Let's go ahead and take our vote. Aye. Aye. visor Franklin? Aye.

[00:37:41] Supervisors? Aye. Unanimous? All right. Thank you so very much. I'm now going to turn it back to Mr. Shorter for agency time. Thank you very much, Madam Chair, members of the board.

[00:37:57] I'd like to invite Eric Olson, Director of our Office of Elections, up to provide an update to the board. Eric, welcome. Thank you, Madam Chair, board members.

[00:38:12] Nice to be here with you guys today. I am going to talk about the status of our Office of Elections and what we've been working on. The last time I came here to talk to you guys about elections was in November of 2021. Some of you were on the board at that time. Some of you were not. You talked to me about a great number of concerns that you had about things that were going on in elections and problems that we were having in the county.

[00:38:37] And I had been in the job about two weeks at that point. So I took that feedback. And I had a full herd of hair at that time four years ago. Don't look at the video. Just trust it. Long shag here, long locks. So I am going to talk to you about the changes that we've made and some progress we've made on some

different areas, and then happy to answer any questions that you all have about our elections process in the county.

[00:39:03] So what we do at our agency, we assist voters with registration. There's 330,000 registered voters in Prince William County. We run fair, accurate, and safe elections every year. Over the last four years since I've been here, we've had 10 elections.

[00:39:19] And we've had more than 830,000 voters come through our polling places and cast their ballots in local, state, and federal elections. We also educate the public on the voting process. We hold open houses. We have resources online that we provide for people so that they can learn about how the voting process works.

[00:39:36] Certainly, we're in an area where there's a lot of misinformation about voting, and we want people to understand how that process works and all the steps we take to make sure that our voting is accurate. So at our agency, we have 18 full-time employees. When we have election time, we have about 5 to 20 temps that come in and assist with that process.

[00:39:54] When we start getting a lot of mail ballots in, start getting more registrations, we need help to handle that workload. We have more than 2,000 bipartisan election officers throughout the county, people that volunteer. Well, we do pay them, but they volunteer their time for a really long day every election day, and they make elections work on election day itself and for early voting.

[00:40:15] We have a roughly \$4 million baseline budget, so we are a fairly small agency, but we have a big impact. We are the second most interacted with agency in the county. Libraries and Parks and Rec and Elections are the top three agencies in terms of ones that are encountered by roughly half of the county in any given year.

[00:40:34] In terms of our leadership structure, if you look at the Prince William County organizational guide, we are a little off to the side as we are a little special. I am technically a state employee, but I work for the county also, so I run elections in the county.

[00:40:50] I'm the director of elections and general registrar. We have an electoral board member, which is bipartisan. There are two members of the majority party that match the governor and then one of the minority party. We are funded largely by the county. Elections at the local level are funded mostly by the county, but a little bit by the state they support.

[00:41:08] And we work for the Virginia Department of Elections. So the Department of Elections for Virginia, they manage a lot of the administrative procedures, a lot of the processes, and they own the voter registration database that we interact with when we update registrations for local residents.

[00:41:24] So some key values of our organization. We believe in accuracy, obviously, building systems that eliminate human error and make sure that we're reporting accurate results on election night and after the election. We believe in transparency and providing innovative solutions to build public trust.

[00:41:42] We believe in good customer service. If you send me an email, I am responding to you, whether you're a supervisor, a voter, one of our election officers. We are extremely responsive. If you call us up, you're getting a call back, you're getting someone on the phone. So we offer really good customer service to our voters throughout the county, and our election officers reflect that value as well on Election Day.

[00:42:05] We also believe in good communication. So trying to provide the public with easy-to-use resources and good information. There's a special election going on today, so that's a good sign that elections are doing well, that I'm here talking to you while we have an election going on. And we did send out voter guides to all of the voters around the county so that they're aware of the election because especially in smaller elections, sometimes that awareness is not there.

[00:42:30] And while we do reach people through our website, through social media, going with print and mail, media to reach out to people is still important to make sure that we're reaching a lot of different audiences throughout the county. So in terms of registration and voting, we complete about 100,000 transactions or mailings in any given year. Updates to people moving, people's name changing, mail that comes back and we have to confirm if that person is still living here or if they've moved to another county or another state. We are meeting all the Virginia Code requirements and we do even go beyond that to make sure our voter registration rolls are as up-to-date as possible

[00:43:09] by providing voters with additional forms and information so that we get mail back and that we can facilitate accurate records. In terms of mail voting, voters can receive a ballot for any or all elections. So you can receive, if you're going to be out of town for an upcoming election, you just need one, you're going on vacation, you can get a mail ballot for that elections. You can also get a mail ballot for every single election and we will send you one anytime there is an election. We have more than 20,000 voters in Prince William County who have signed up for the service, and every time an election comes up in their district, they're getting a ballot. And about 9,000 of those get the text service which we offer,

[00:43:47] which allows voters to track their ballots. So they get a text message when a ballot is on their way to them. They get a text message when the ballot arrives in our office. They get a text message when the ballot has been counted. So they know exactly where their ballot is and what the status of their ballot is. So that's been a really popular feature for people, and it's completely free if you are receiving a mail ballot to sign up for that and get those text and or email updates.

[00:44:13] At early voting, we have six sites that are available. The board of county supervisors is now responsible for the ordinance that puts that in place. We do have Saturday, Sunday, and evening voting. I want to point out Sunday voting because I don't know if you all are the only county where the ordinance has been passed, but certainly the first and one of the few that has Sunday voting baked into the ordinance and is guaranteed for all elections in Prince William County. It's been very popular with voters. We also do evening voting on Wednesdays. That has also been very popular with voters and was something that you all advocated for. The dates

[00:44:48] and hours of that vary by election, but we have a lot of locations available for people that are not too far away from where they live. On election day we have 103 polling places that we manage in any given general election or county-wide primaries. They're open from six to seven and we do have curbside voting for seniors or disabled voters that it's difficult to get out of their car where officers will come out to your car and they will assist you. Our facilities are also ADA accessible so that voters can come in if they have a physical disability or if they have vision problems. We have special machines where you can mark your ballot on, so we are very ADA

[00:45:26] accessible, and Election Day, of course, is your last chance to vote. What we're seeing increasingly is that more voters are voting before Election Day. So in our last general election, we had about 52% of our voters went out on Election Day and just under half voted either early or by mail. The

special election that's happening today, probably most voters have already voted because we're going to have more male and early voters than we're going to have election day voters. So that trend is likely to continue. We're going to see more voters voting early. We're going to see more voters voting by mail. And early and male voting have grown faster in Prince William County over

[00:46:05] the last four years than our neighbors in Loudoun and Fairfax. So it's a popular option. It's increasingly popular. And we'll have to see at what point that kind of plateaus. It tends to reach a plateau at some point. Voters seem very happy with the service they're getting. They have a 94% satisfaction rating for elections. 67% of those say very satisfied, which is well above the average. And we, in the community survey from 2024, our net score went up seven points, and that was the largest increase of any single activity in the county. So I'm very proud of our election officers

[00:46:42] for the great service they're clearly offering our voters, members of their community that are out they're serving at the polling places and clearly giving excellent service to our voters. And they are showing that in the surveys that they're completing. So some challenges that were brought up to me when I arrived here in around 2020 and 2021, we had late, uneven and inaccurate election results that were pointed out to me that there was a delay in election results and a delay in certain types of election results. We had long lines at some of our early voting sites and traffic issues that were popping up because of that. And some of that was probably pandemic related, but some of that was just general problems that needed to be solved.

[00:47:21] We had a complete lack of political party equity among our election officers, and we had concerns about transparency and election processes. So what solutions have we come up with to make that a thing of the past? Well, we added a high-speed scanner, and that was a huge step. We were one of only two of the ten most populous counties in the state that didn't have a high-speed scanner, and that really improves your early and mail voting report times.

[00:47:45] So election night entry, we do extra verification steps to make sure our results are accurate. And we do a triple check of any post-election result processes. We had an attorney general's investigation shortly after I arrived because of some bad information that I found where we had reported results incorrectly back in 2020 with my predecessor.

[00:48:05] And so we instituted a triple check process after the election where we're going to make sure that all of those results are right three times. That's with staff checking, with the board checking, and with our election officers double checking all of that work. We are now among the earliest in Northern Virginia and usually one of the first couple large jurisdictions in the state to report our results on election night.

[00:48:28] You can see that from our timeline in the 2025 general election that just happened in November. The polls closed at 7 o'clock. we had our mail and most of our early voting results and our election day results by 8 11 p.m so only an hour and 10 minutes later we had more than 99 of our results up online we had two precincts that had a little issue and that happens sometimes that we had to resolve and by 8 24 we had everything reported so you're going to see now that uh with with elections within an hour hour and 15 minutes usually we have all our results up online and there so that um those of

[00:49:04] who are elected officials can start your parties or be disappointed or whatever happens on that night, and the media can report on those events so that the candidates are the story and the election results coming in late are not the story. Early voting lines. You all passed an ordinance to change the locations, and we suggested that we make more locations open later in the process because that's when

most voters go. Usually for early voters, those last two weeks are really by far the most popular time people either procrastinate or they want to wait and see what issues arise or they're making their decisions about who they want to vote for and so they

[00:49:41] wait in that time we expanded check-in stations at all of our locations especially the busiest ones that way we can put through you know a hundred more people an hour without a line building up at a certain location and we used line management tools that are available with at MIT to model behavior and voting arrival patterns to make sure we were prepared for all that. And the results are that in the 2024 presidential, we assisted more than 100,000 voters at our early voting locations, and we had very minimal lines. If you came on the first day of early voting for the first couple hours or the last couple hours, you might have had a little bit

[00:50:19] of a line. But other than that, you were breezing through. So we have handled that workload, and our officers are doing an excellent job. Here you have an example from 2021 to 2025. You can see that in 2021 and 2025, the early part, not that much difference with one location or three locations.

[00:50:38] And then you really see at the end, we really exceeded what we did in 2021 in terms of early voters in two elections that had fairly similar turnout because there were more locations that were closer to the voters in that time period. In terms of our election officer equity, when I started, we had a two and a half to one Democrat to Republican ratio.

[00:51:00] And under state code, those are supposed to be even at the precincts. Now, this can be a challenge in a lot of Virginia counties where you have, you know, a lean one way or the other. We did a lot of direct mail recruitment to try to bring in more Republican officers. We had an electoral board.

[00:51:15] They adopted an election officer policy that helped facilitate some additional things. And both the staff and the board did a lot of recruitment and officer retention tactics. And now in the 2025 general election, we are only seven officers apart, 315 Democrats and 308 Republicans.

[00:51:33] So those numbers have been very even for the past several years in having equal number of officers overall. But also in each precinct, we have a Republican chief and a Democrat assistant chief or vice versa. So we have leadership that has parity as well.

[00:51:48] So that's been hugely improved. On the transparency front, we have been an innovator. We post all of our election tapes online. So if you go to our website, you can see the signed tapes from election officers from election day, from the machines that are there that they've signed.

[00:52:05] You can go do your own audit of the election if that's how you want to spend your free time. It is available for you to do that. We have documents that explain election security steps, all the steps we take. We have our How It Works series, which is sort of a step-by-step illustrations of how voter registration works, how mail voting is kept secure.

[00:52:27] We have our election officer manual online. All of our board meetings and the materials from those are now online and available, just like they are for the supervisors' meetings. In each election, we track more than 300 tasks. So in those meetings, we give updates on where we are at in that process, which tasks are complete, which tasks are in progress, which tasks are still to do, what's falling behind, what's ahead, so that we know that we are on pace each election to execute what we need to execute to make sure that the election is going well.

[00:52:59] And the result of all this is that we've gotten a lot of awards and recognition. Posting our result tapes online. I know we were the first county in Virginia. I don't know if we were the first in the country, but possibly. We did get an award from the EAC, which is the Federal Agency for Election Management, for this practice.

[00:53:21] And we're seeing some other jurisdictions also follow suit and do that as well. On voter education, we've had an open house program. I thank several of you who have come over to that. If you haven't, we try to do them every year somewhere around August. You can come by, you can see how the process works.

[00:53:36] We've had supervisors, we've had members of the public, we've had state legislators come by, county management staff has come by and check out all of the steps that we take. You hear a lot of concerns in the media about election integrity. There are so many steps that we take with early voting, with mail voting, with election day voting to make sure that our results are accurate.

[00:53:58] If you're talking about, if you're seeing a voting machine on election day, that machine has been tested before that election. every single time, every single election. So that open house is designed to dispel some of that information, provide information to the public. It's been very well received. We've gotten good media coverage about it. And we won two different awards, one from the Election Center, which is the National Association of Election Officials, and then also from VACO, the Virginia Association of Counties. And then our sticker contest has been real popular. This is more of a fun one than anything. People love good sticker designs. I think the designs reflect different aspects of

[00:54:36] our community. And when we got all the designs, rather than choosing one design, we decided that it would make sense to have several designs because Prince William County encompasses so many things. So our stickers show the history of Prince William County in the battlefield, the diversity of Prince William County in this year's hands-in sticker, the Marine Corps Museum, which is the most popular tourist attraction in the county so this has been a popular program it's something that we hope to continue in the future and it's great that all these stickers are designed by prince william county residents and by students the future voter sticker was designed by a student

[00:55:14] with a cardinal a virginia cardinal walking on the neomscope boardwalk it's been very popular and we got an honorable mention from the eac for that new york city won the award you can go look and decide for yourself, I think our stickers are better than New York City, but competing with the big dogs there. So we were the only county to get, we won all these awards this year.

[00:55:37] We're the only county in Virginia that's ever received all three of these awards. So we feel very positive about where we're at and the progress that we're making and want to continue to innovate so as we go into the future here you all approved funds for this fiscal year last year for new equipment so we're going to have new scanners that are going to be coming in this year those scanners will allow voters to verify their ballot when they place a ballot in and some voters go well how do i know the machine is counting what i wrote down well they're going

[00:56:16] to be able to confirm that on a screen and then they can cast their ballot or if it may they may realize they made a mistake or something, they'll be able to get that ballot back and correct that. So that's going to be a new feature they're going to have. We don't know when the timeline of this will be exactly. Federal certification has happened on this equipment, but state certification has to happen before we can implement it. So we are awaiting that certification. I've been in touch with the Virginia Department of

Elections. We hope to hear something soon, and we'll be implementing that as soon as that state certification is complete. So that's coming at some point this calendar year. That calendar year is a little bit uncertain in terms of our election schedule.

[00:56:56] So we know there's an election today. We're sure of that. And we know there will be one on November 3rd. And everything in between is kind of a question mark right now. Depending on the outcome of the election today, we may have an election for a Woodbridge supervisor at some point in the near future. There is a statewide amendment that is going to potentially redistrict Virginia and change the congressional districts at which point there would be a special election for that and then that also might affect the normal June primary may get pushed back because you would need time to redistrict so there's a lot of uncertainty right now the state legislative

[00:57:35] session starts tomorrow so I think in a week or two we're probably going to have a lot better answers and at least some ideas about how the schedule is going to work out so stay tuned but we are looking at somewhere around possibly five elections in Prince William County this year, as well as redistricting. So we have our work cut out for us. And I encourage voters to pay attention to those dates. We will try to supply voter guides and social media to make people aware. And as always, we appreciate the county and you all helping to make

[00:58:10] your constituents aware of those voting opportunities future considerations for you all there are a few things that a number of things are controlled by the state or our electoral board in terms of decisions but there are a few things that fall squarely in your area as it relates to elections one of those is early voting ordinance we i talked about at our last electoral board meeting about some possible changes that we could make to that so i'm going to send that to you all You all can see it was about a 20-minute presentation looking at some of the data and what we've seen.

[00:58:43] I don't think that is an urgent matter at all. I think that if you all want to make some minor changes to that ordinance this year or next year, I think that might be a good idea as we see early voting continuing to grow. But right now, I think the early voting ordinance is working well for our county residents, as seen in the surveys, as seen in the wait times at the location.

[00:59:04] So that is just trying to tweak and make a good thing a little bit better. Ranked choice voting is something that you all can consider for local contests. There's a state code that allows for you all to consider that. And I know a couple of you all have talked to me.

[00:59:20] So if at some point that is something you all would like me to come back and talk to you more about, I will say in the meantime, if you go to our voting sticker contest page, we did our voting sticker contest as a ranked choice voting contest. and there's a video that explains what the voting was for that sticker and also how rank choice works so it's a nice little three or four minute video that explains that to you all or members of the public we did that on purpose in case it came up at some point we would have something that was illustrative of that um and then lastly the budget of course uh you all set the budget for the county agencies including us as i noted the state supports uh some of my salary and the

[01:00:00] electoral board member's salary, but under state code, election costs are all borne by the localities. So we are looking at expanding registration and educational opportunities for our voters and building on programs that we've already built around participation and election integrity. And we also have a continued number of increases to the compliance regime that we have in the state and the

convenience options. So these are all good things in terms of making sure our polling places are accessible. These are giving voters more options in terms of how they go out

[01:00:36] and cast their ballot that are convenient, but they are less efficient. So that does mean that they do cost more money at times. So those are the areas that you all have for consideration as you go forward as they relate to elections. And I'm happy to answer any questions that you all have about our election process or our office.

[01:00:55] Well, thank you so very much for your presentation. I am back up and running, so if people want to jump into queue, I see that Supervisor Vega is first. Thank you, Madam Chair. Eric, I just want to take this moment to publicly thank you for your leadership. Ever since you've come on board, you've led.

[01:01:12] And what I mean by you've led, we had, prior to your arrival, a lot of concerns stemming around election integrity. And the way that you lead is through transparency. And that's exactly what you've brought to the county. You have made the Office of Elections accessible to the public.

[01:01:28] And you've put every possible concern that I can think of that has been brought to my attention at ease. And that speaks volume. And I believe that credit is due for the remarkable work that you have done. One of the things that I personally appreciate is your ability to use the data, present that data to us, and consolidate resources instead of, for lack of better words, wasting resources if they're not needed based on the data.

[01:01:54] So personally, I want to thank you. I know that when it's been Election Day and we've received a phone call or an email from my office, you've never questioned it. I think that I don't want to speak on behalf of my colleagues, but sometimes some of the emails and concerns that we get are outrageous. But despite how outrageous they may be, you take every single one of them seriously.

[01:02:14] And I want to thank you for that. And I think that the people of this county appreciate that transparency. So kudos to you and to the team, and keep doing what you're doing. Thank you. Thank you, Supervisor Vega. Appreciate it. Supervisor Bodie. Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you, Eric.

[01:02:29] I'll just ditto a lot of what Supervisor Vega just said, you know, not to retread too much ground, but to so many folks, elections are just I show up on one day, and I vote, and I go home, And we see results and people, you know, constantly update the VPAT page or office elections or whatever other page.

[01:02:49] They might be constantly refreshing to see the results. But you, in so many ways, have demystified the office of elections in this county. For two years running, I've gone to the open house, did the first inaugural one two years ago, then did this year, this past year as well.

[01:03:05] And I always take at least one of my children, especially my younger children, to vote with me. and I sort of swap where I do early voting. Last year, I did the Manassas because that's close to my Western district constituents. Before that, I usually go to the DMV.

[01:03:20] So I always like to get a feel on the ground of how early voting goes. And I hear less complaints. I hear more and more people say just how fast it is. They didn't realize how fast it was because their previous experience was maybe three or four years ago when you were just getting your feet wet.

[01:03:36] And so there were lines, especially early voting at the DMV and what have you. so i want to commend you for that um also wanted to uh highlight uh one of the the uh can you go back to your your second last slide sort of considerations um i think you went too far yep bocs because i appreciate that yeah

um i i think you might have an interesting synergy by partnering with the library system on educational outreach um and i only say that half jokingly because so many folks in this county now are being pre-registered to vote because they're applying to get their driver's license as 16- and 17-year-olds,

[01:04:14] but they don't actually exercise that first-time voting. And we know that there's such a large demographic of those 18- to 25-year-olds that make up such a good, robust part of our community that they don't vote nearly as the same degree as older cohorts. So whatever we can do to continue to partner with you, to broaden who votes and who participates, especially among those younger cohorts, I think is really important.

[01:04:38] As Sue Reservaica said, you've done a really good job of collecting data. whatever that data can do to inform us, to make better decisions around expanding that voter base and those folks who are actually participating in the franchise, I think would be helpful. That actually leads me to my first question. One of the things I know that we did this past year is we sort of consolidated the days that all of the early voting locations were open.

[01:04:58] We played with having, I think it was Wednesday during early voting, open a little bit later. Can you tell us a little bit about what that bore? Yeah, thank you for the question, Supervisor Brody. we we've had wednesday nights till 7 p.m um and we have found that that that time just from 5 to 6 15 especially where people are coming home from work and stopping off so um saturday and sunday have always been you know the weekend days are kind of our busiest days because people are free and available and they're often out and about and they stop and vote while they're doing other things um but uh wednesday is now our most popular weekday because uh obviously the extra two hours

[01:05:37] helps but it's also just the influx that that hour from 5 p.m to 6 p.m i believe that is our busiest hour of the day uh on that day so our uh you all asked us to uh consider that and our board implemented wednesday as as our late night and we've uh you know continued that i think that will stay if anything we might look at how we might um you know increase that or or or look at that for some other days we could also consider um you know hours as well so yeah i appreciate that was going to be my next point is based on that data um if we could make tweaks to some of those other

[01:06:14] days because you're right i hear from a lot of colleagues a lot of my constituents hey i just can't get there by that time so wednesday or the weekends are the days where they mostly do it so appreciate that um i obviously also want to acknowledge he scarborough one of our electoral board members who a former constituent of mine now lives in the woodbridge district so i wanted to say that as well.

[01:06:35] Ranked choice voting, I appreciate you bringing that up. I know that I brought it up before, and you're right. We were able to sort of test case that with the sticker contest. I'm a big fan of ranked choice voting. I think it helps elections seem more representative, express preferred candidate choices, encourage new people to run for office, they don't have to worry about becoming a spoiler, or some of the politics around, even within the parties, and I think it's more civil, too, because it weakens incentives to attack political opponents. It makes things a lot more people running on their merits as opposed to attacking the other side so whatever we can do to can have continued conversations around range choice voting i think would be great i mean i

[01:07:11] would be happy to come back and and talk with you all at some point about what the um what the practical implications of that as well as what the technical implications of that and the you know the positives and the negatives and and and the challenges um that that are that are there so i'd be happy to

you know provide more information on that at any point my last one madam chair right as I'm running out of time, is I know that we're likely the only locality in the state that can't appoint a governing body member when there's a vacancy. Can you talk about that a little bit and what we'd have to do to change that? I am not sure about what we'd have to do to change that.

[01:07:47] I believe that's a matter of state code. I will say I am on the, I did speak, the state is considering consolidating Virginia elections into even years and getting rid of odd years. This would not happen for some time even if it were adopted uh you know so four or five years off at the earliest i think um but i did speak to the state legislature on that and i am the uh legislative co-chair for the association of registrars in virginia so i certainly could uh look into that more and and find out about what if you know is that something that someone might propose to

[01:08:25] to to change in the future or is that something that you all would like to you know keep all right supervisor wait hold on uh county attorney did you want to say something you're good madam chair members of the board mr olson is correct it's been codified in state code it applies to the county executive form of government next to the urban county executive form of government and the only locality that satisfies those criteria is prince william county it would require an amendment to the code of virginia all right supervisor bailey thank you very much madam

[01:09:01] chair um i i ditto what supervisor vega said eric you just you just you rock i want to just uh congratulate you you know and we do appreciate the time that you spend and making sure that everything is transparent in detail and i've noticed how organized you and your staff are and making sure when we roll things out they're rolled out when we say we're going to roll them out, and the public is aware of any glitches or any changes that there may come, so we really appreciate that. And then how you have been extraordinarily collaborative in your process,

[01:09:40] and that bridges the gap in a lot of different ways, so thank you for that. And then to win an award also, just for a little sticker, I think it's great, I think it's great, so I wanted to commend you on that. It's the little things that matter in the community, and it boosts the morale of your staff as well. So thank you so much for that. And it helps the kids. The kids love the stickers. But the question that I have is, you've been very, in all measures, transparent in, you

[01:10:15] know, just how you post tape results online and how it works, the material, how it works, all of that. And then the public task tracker that's available to us, that's very key. But what has been the most effective in building trust? And what additional transparency or public-facing communication would you recommend we scale next and going forward? Because there's a lot of activity, as you said, you know. What's your recommendation in that vein?

[01:10:48] Thank you for the compliments and the question, Supervisor Bailey. I think um you know i was quoted in an article uh we did a media day before the 2024 presidential election and i was quoted an article and i said you know election of the offices we're in a canoe and we're we're paddling towards a tidal wave and it's hard because the the misinformation that's out there on on social media um is a real challenge because it has a hugely amplified voice compared to what people are going to hear about from a government organization.

[01:11:22] So I think we're doing about all we can. I think we want to continue to build trust. We've tried to, you know, I've tried to do op-eds. We've tried to get media focusing on these issues, tried to explain

things through open houses, touch on something related to that and also something Supervisor Bodie asked about, which is looking at our data.

[01:11:46] Our data shows that our... Our registration level is a little bit under what we see in comparable counties, and our data shows that our participation level is a little bit under what we see in undercounties when you're considering a statewide election where people are voting for the same offices.

[01:12:03] So we've done a lot on election integrity, and I want to continue to do that work on election integrity, but I also want to use the data to figure out are there ways that we can reach certain communities. I mean, we have a lot of different communities in Prince William County. We have a lot of different reasons that people may or may not participate and register.

[01:12:21] And we have to have an approach that's very multi-pronged. So we're actually trying to add an outreach coordinator in fiscal 27 because we haven't had much of that arms. And when I started, we added a communications position.

[01:12:38] We didn't add that. I just realigned some of our positions and added that because I thought it was an important function. And that has been huge to some of the awards and recognition that we've done and some of the public education that we've done. So I want to continue to expand in that direction to not only address integrity issues and build trust, but also to look at, you know, is there anything that we can do?

[01:13:00] We don't want to be an inhibitor to anybody participating in an election or to register to vote. We want to be, we want to maximize everyone's potential. I mean, for us at elections, I wish everyone voted every election. It doesn't take that much effort. And I certainly would encourage you all and anyone to encourage everyone to sign up to get a mail ballot every election, because the participation level of people that get a mail ballot is off the charts compared to people that don't get a mail ballot.

[01:13:28] And it's something about, it's partly self-selective, the people that get a mail ballot are probably high participators, but it is also when that mail ballot arrives and you've got it and you can make your choice and you can return it, and you can still go vote in person if you want to, if you get a mail ballot. But that is one thing that we've seen that has really, you know, when you get a mail ballot, I think in the gubernatorial election, I want to say 75, 80 percent participation, much lower if you did not get a mail ballot.

[01:13:55] So we want to continue to look at those things that we can do to maximize the public's awareness of things and their ability to participate in elections. And, you know, just I know my time is up. I just want to thank Mr. Scarborough and your colleagues for the great work that you do as well for the board.

[01:14:13] We appreciate you all as well. So that's all I got. Thanks, Erin. All right. Supervisor Stewart. Thank you, sir, for your presentation. Thank you for your leadership. And as somebody who's been on both sides of what you offer, yeah, thank you.

[01:14:33] So one of the questions I have, as it pertains to slide 8 and 12, when it comes to mail-in ballots, so with this new directive about postmarking, what challenges do you foresee, and then how can those be overcome?

[01:14:58] I think, and for those that don't know, I think you're referring to the fact that the USPS is basically saying And they're not guaranteeing postmarking on their envelopes. Correct. I mean, even before that news, our recommendation to people is to mail your ballot back as early as possible.

[01:15:16] Because not only do you want to get it on time, but sometimes people make a mistake on their mail ballot envelope where they leave information off where their ballot won't be counted. And if you mail it back early, you still have an opportunity as a voter to go vote in person or correct that or take some corrective measure since that ballot is not going to count.

[01:15:35] So we encourage that anyway. I don't think it will be hugely impactful just because the number of ballots we get right at the deadline is not a ton. And we do have means to track. Because of some of the ballot tracking tools we have, we can see if a ballot was sent, even if there's not a postmark, we can see when it was sent.

[01:15:54] So we're going to have to look at some guidance from the state on when and how we can use that. So if we, it doesn't have a postmark, but we know it's mailed the day before the election, you know, we need to look at some of the legality behind that. So I don't think it's going to be hugely impactful, but it certainly is disappointing that, you know, a pretty basic function of the post office is not going to be followed through on because that doesn't just affect elections, affects bills and taxes and, you know, all sorts of other things.

[01:16:23] So I think we'll just try to educate people to return it earlier or just go to a polling place on Election Day. If you have a mail ballot, you can go to any polling place on Election Day and just drop it off. They have drop boxes at every single one. So we'll try to educate people on that, which plays into good behaviors for voting anyway.

[01:16:44] Thank you very much. Thank you. All right. I don't see anyone else. So thank you so very much for the presentation and all the work that you do. You as well, Mr. Scarborough. I know that elections can be testy. It can be tough and challenging times, but the fact that we are able to offer things such as Sunday voting that our neighboring jurisdictions aren't able to do, it's important.

[01:17:04] I do have a quick story. I was actually out one year handing out sample ballots, and I had someone from King George come all the way up because he wanted to vote on Sunday, and I felt really bad letting him know that he cannot, in fact, vote in Prince William County if he is a resident of King George.

[01:17:21] We had an interesting discussion, but, you know, the fact that he really did, at the end of the day, appreciate that we had Sunday voting. So that's a really big thing. So thank you very much for your time. Keep doing the good work. Now, quickly, team, unfortunately, when we voted for a closed session, there was something that we missed.

[01:17:40] So I'm going to turn it back to our county attorney. Thank you, Madam Chair, members of the board. In addition, the board will be discussing personnel discussions relating to the appointment of the director of the Department of Criminal Justice Services. And this is appropriate for closed session pursuant to 2.2-3711A1 of the Code of Virginia.

[01:17:59] So is that worth amending my motion or just a new motion? It's a second motion, sir. Motion approved. It's been moved and properly seconded. Can we take a vote, please? It's a small thing.

[01:18:17] Vote unanimous. Thank you, Steve. All right. Thank you so very much. We are up and running. So yay. For supervisor's time, I'm going to be calling on folks at random. But I did let you, I'm sorry, actually, before we do that, we have a couple people to vote on. So I'd like to get in motion for 9A and 9B.

[01:18:37] So moved. It's been probably moved and seconded in a discussion on 9A and B. All right, let's go ahead and take the vote. Motion passes. Vote unanimous. All right, so now when we go around the horn, I'm actually going to start.

[01:18:55] Again, everyone be ready, because I could call on you next. But I'm going to start with Supervisor Franklin. Good afternoon, and Happy New Year. I just want to first say happy Founders Day to the women of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Incorporated.

[01:19:12] Also, I just want to point out that today is Election Day, so if you have not gotten out on the 23rd, please do so. And also, I just want to issue a quick directive with regards to winding down the Racial and Social Justice Commission.

[01:19:28] I'll talk a little bit about that. On October 20th, 2020, the Board of County Supervisors created a Racial and Social Justice Commission to examine the state of racial and social justice for people of color in the areas of policing, the provision of government services, and public education subject to the establishment of a partnership with the Prince William County School System.

[01:19:52] Since that time, the commission has held meetings and issued a report with 41 findings. I greatly appreciate the work of the commission and the staff of the Office of Human Rights and the Office of Equity and Inclusion who have supported the work of the commission. Based on the broad scope of the statute governing the Human Rights Commission, it is appropriate at this time for the BOCS to consolidate the efforts of the two organizations.

[01:20:14] Therefore, without objection, I hereby direct the county exec to work with the staff to prepare a resolution for the board's consideration that would dissolve the Racial and Social Justice Commission as a separate advisory body to the board and establish a task force under the Human Rights Commission.

[01:20:32] Such a recommended solution should, where applicable, include timelines, fiscal impacts, and other pertinent impacts to the board consideration. The county attorney's office is directed to review the information and recommendations for any legal issues. The county executive should report back to the board with his analysis and recommendations during a board meeting.

[01:20:51] The county executive will work with the chair regarding the scheduling of the resolution. And just want to clarify, making it a task force would make it temporary. And my idea is with winding it down, it would put it under the Human Rights Commission, which kind of deals with some of the same issues and kind of come up with a timeline for final review of the recommendations as well as kind of bringing to a close the work that the commission has essentially done.

[01:21:21] So, Madam Chair, without objection. Supervisor Vega? Thank you, Madam Chair. Before I formally object, Mr. County Executive, where are we on the directive that I issued in regards to all board commissions and committees? So a report of an audit of the boards and commissions was sent to the board.

[01:21:44] I would actually, I'm not prepared to answer. I don't want to misspeak in terms of the specific directive that you issued. I do know that Supervisor Gordy issued a directive last calendar year. That

directive, our clerk's office and communications did do that audit of all the boards and commissions, specifically around attendance, and that was sent to the board.

[01:22:08] And so let me follow up with you in terms of where we are on the follow-up directive. Yeah, because I'm referring to the one that I issued. I'm just wondering if taking a decision on Supervisor Franklin's directive is premature considering the fact that some of the information that I requested via my directive would perhaps better guide us in making a decision on her directive here today.

[01:22:32] But I do have a question for you, Supervisor Franklin. If the task force is temporary, why is that not listed in the directive? Or do you have a time frame that you would be willing to add to the directive? I think the time frame should be left up to the Human Rights Department so they can figure out, based on the recommendations, what the next steps should be.

[01:22:54] So I want to kind of leave it broad in that sense to give them the flexibility. I'm happy to add the word task force to the directive. And if you all will recall, one of the original ideas in the beginning when we were talking about this is making it a task force so that it would be temporary.

[01:23:11] I was against it at that time because I wanted it a permanent commission. Now I'm asking for it to actually revert to a task force so that it would be temporary, giving staff the flexibility to give a timeline to actually wind it down. Yeah, thanks for that, because the only way I found out, or the only reason, rather, that I found out that your intention was for it to be a temporary task force wasn't having a conversation with you off the dais, and so nowhere in the directive is that indicated, and I would feel more comfortable supporting your directive if it was specific to that intent.

[01:23:44] I'm happy to add the word task force. I think staff, based on my conversations with them, understands kind of my intent. I've spoken to the county exec. I think, I don't know if staff has talked to the, oh, okay. My concern is not task force, it's temporary.

[01:24:02] A task force is temporary. But I would be more comfortable. Yeah, I would feel more comfortable with that. Sure. Fantastic. So, Madam County Attorney, do we need to make a friendly amendment or? If Supervisor Franklin is amending her own directive, and then if there is no objection, it would go forward as an action of the board.

[01:24:19] If there's an objection, it turns into a vote. Yeah, I'm totally fine with that. But just to be clear, a task force, at least here in this county, is always meant to be temporary. I get it, but I just feel more comfortable having the temporary in front of it. Thank you. All right, I just want to add a couple things.

[01:24:36] I certainly do not object, but I just want to let everyone on the dais know that I re-sent an email from Monday, April 7th, 2025, and the subject line is boards and commissions audit requests. So that is something we have not acted on, but if people would like to have a discussion on that, we certainly shall.

[01:24:55] The only thing also, too, I request, I know that this is kicking the process off, but the existing members of the Racial and Social Justice Commission, are they aware that they could possibly be moved or that this is that i have no idea i would leave that to staff to figure that out and let them know all right i don't see any objections um i know this has eaten a lot of your time do you have anything else you'd like to add yeah just want to say uh obviously i'm not sure what's going to happen later today but if this is my last meeting i enjoyed serving on the board representing the woodbridge district the good bridge district for the past uh five

[01:25:31] years but not going anywhere hoping to represent at a higher level so thank you all now i'm about to eject you know higher level dang higher you know we're not the highest all right i'm gonna go over to supervisor bode who's at least laughing at my jokes thank you madam chair um just wanted to say happy new years uh appreciates uh the comments so far um i just wanted to remind folks that this is obviously the organizational meeting.

[01:26:02] We have another meeting next week and more means to come. Our first Budget and Finance Committee meeting will be next week as well. I'm looking forward to talking to my colleagues about what we're going to be talking about for the next year in terms of budget and finance. And just wanted to remind folks, as was just said, today's an election day in that specific district.

[01:26:21] There's some other special elections going on around the Commonwealth. We will likely be having a Woodbridge special election here soon. So I will congratulate ahead of time my colleague and thank her for her time on the board of supervisors um the last thing i'll say is it's sort of a request i know that dr fruchel talked earlier about the the children's cabinet um and i know last year um there was a sort of a conversation around that and conversation around existing programs that we have around children's programming family programming so i have a request not a directive request that sometime um in the future uh per the the county exec and the chair

[01:26:57] we could have a work session on programs, offices, things of that nature around families and children to get a better idea of what we currently have and where something like a children's cabin may fit better into that to continue. Thank you. All right.

[01:27:13] Who am I going to go to? I'm going to go back over here. Gordy, you ready? I'm ready. Happy New Year, everyone. And it's good to be back. Hope everybody had a wonderful Christmas and holiday break and looking forward to another exciting year of working with everyone to address the challenges we face as a community.

[01:27:37] The only thing I have is my intent to appoint Bradley Kelly to the Solid Wasted Citizen Advisory Group, and my staff has sent over his resume to the clerk. That's all I have. Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you so very much. and supervisor stewart it's your time to shine so happy new year everybody um and if i didn't wish you last time merry christmas so um you know not a lot to share but uh madam chair i i would like to present a motion okay all right uh so yeah i'd like a motion to reconsider 5j um for the

[01:28:15] four hundred thousand dollar outlay to the um outside uh legal firm from last month's meeting all right is there a second second it's been properly moved and second any discussion it's hard for me to see if anyone do you have anything else you would like to add for discussion well i i really feel like that that's a motion that the way it was presented should be uh number one split into two separate motions number one and uh number two uh the motion itself was fraught with errors all right so what we're going to do is we're first going to do the motion to reconsider and

[01:28:54] if you'd like to split the question if the motion is successful we can take it from there so is there any other discussion on the motion to reconsider all right now i do have to ask a quick question of our parliamentarian because supervisor franklin was she here for that were you here for that part i don't remember does she get to vote or no she was not here she does okay so let's go ahead and um take a vote on that motion motion fails all right thank you very much

[01:29:34] do you have anything else supervisor stuart nope that's it thank you all right i'm gonna go over to and I haven't even really kept track, Supervisor Vega. Sure, I just wanted to say that Supervisor Franklin, should she leave, forgot to say that I'm the one she's going to miss the most. With that, I wish everyone a wonderful and blessed New Year.

[01:29:56] All right, and then Supervisor Bailey. I love being last. I get to laugh more. I get to laugh more. Oh, I'm not last? Well, what a concept. Okay, so I just wanted to say, Supervisor Franklin, you've been a hoot.

[01:30:16] And we appreciate your level of professionalism and expertise, your collaboration, your teamwork. We appreciate it. However it turns out, just know that we appreciate you, and your policy head is extraordinary.

[01:30:33] So I just wanted to say that on camera. Happy New Year to everybody. On December the 18th, I just would like to begin by offering my sincere thanks and appreciation to all of county staff, community members and friends and to my colleagues for your outpouring of support shown to me and my family during the loss of my mother. And I say that and to the gentleman that was in earlier in his comments, if I miss something that you sent to me, count it to my head, not my heart, I'll make sure that I address you. That's probably why I missed it. So my apologies. On the 19th, I had

[01:31:13] my appointees' annual holiday appreciation luncheon. I close the year with them. And just thank you to my appointees for all that you do. We're looking forward to 2026 with you. On 2020, we had Toys for Tots family giveaway. I'd like to thank my president, Allison Blow, of the Lynx Incorporated, for collaborating with me and my staff for an outstanding effort to support the Toys for Tots family giveaway on that day. Through this collaboration, We were able to provide 800 toys to families in need.

[01:31:46] And then on the 30th, the Dumfries Legislation Dinner, which was absolutely wonderful, thanks to my mayor, Mayor Derek Wood, and the town council for hosting a wonderful legislative dinner that fostered collaboration and meaningful engagement about the future, the past, the present, and the future of Dumfries.

[01:32:06] Then on the 9th, I had the honor of participating in the Global Maternal Health Roundtable with Congressman Vindman. And it was hosted to provide the focus to elevate a discussion on physicians, community leaders, and stakeholders to address disparities and improve outcomes for mothers, particularly black mothers and women of color, by identifying priorities and strategies to strengthen maternal health care globally and specifically locally.

[01:32:38] Then on the 10th, thank you to our own Delegate Josh Thomas for inviting me to the Ethiopian Christmas, which was an experience that I wanted to participate in, but because of a slight cold, I decided to protect the community and just come and say hello, Merry Christmas, and I had to leave.

[01:32:56] But today, on the 13th, I want to congratulate the county exec and his team. Today, when I drove to my office, I saw a little truck that said litter crew. Yes. And so a big thanks to the litter crew who was on 234 this morning for doing a great job and cleaning up the litter there in the district.

[01:33:19] We really appreciate you, and we appreciate your efforts and what you do. On the 15th, my staff and I will be participating in Potomac Shores 100 basketball games. So I look forward to that. And they have not lost a game in five-year history of the school.

[01:33:39] So let's see what happens. And also on the 15th, the NAOP awards will be held. I'll be participating in that. And then congratulations to our soon-to-be-inaugurated Governor Abigail Spanberger. I will be participating in those festivities.

[01:33:55] And to all of Potomac, we love you. And to my wonderful vice chair, congratulations to you, sir. I look forward to working with you and the pro tem time. We've already started some good work together.

[01:34:11] And Madam Chair, it's been an honor to serve you as the vice chair of this board for the past year. Thank you very much. And Supervisor Angry. Thank you, Madam Chair. First, Happy New Year, everyone. I want to start by apologizing for missing that last meeting on the 16th.

[01:34:28] You probably heard it in my voice. I was pretty down and out. So this is my public service announcement that the flu A and these viruses are running rampant. So please take every precaution to wash your hands, wear a mask if you need to, or whatever you need to do to stay away from all those strands, because those strands, because they are not nice.

[01:34:47] Okay. I don't have much. I just want to talk really about the three events upcoming. But before I do that, I want to really thank the future business leaders of America, Woodbridge High School. They visited me yesterday, 35 students, and I got to tell you that our future is bright with our young people.

[01:35:07] And so I will leave you with this one thing, as I told you. Do not seize the day and do not let the day seize you, okay? So, upcoming Friday, January 16th, we got a ribbon cutting for a former military buddy of mine, Sergeant Major Don L. Johns.

[01:35:23] He's moved the location of the Veterans Growing America, still in the Stonebridge Town Center, but they're going to be doing a ribbon cutting on Friday the 16th that evening. I don't have the time, so please, if you know him, you've got the website. Please look that up if you want to join in that. The 17th, we got our Universal Human Rights Day here in Board Chambers at 10 a.m.

[01:35:42] Unfortunately, I will not be here because I will be attending the inauguration for the governor. But if you're in the area and want to attend that, please do so. And as you know, the 19th Monday is Dr. Martin Luther King Day, where we always do that youth oratorical program competition.

[01:35:58] That's going to be held at Mount Zion Baptist Church at 11 a.m. It is always something to see more of our young people doing amazing things. So if you've never attended one of those, please attend. You will be blown away. Thank you, Madam Chair. All right. Thank you so very much. I would like to begin with notices of intent.

[01:36:16] First, I would like to reappoint Dr. Patricia Bright to the Animal Advisory Committee. I would also like to appoint Leslie Weldon to the Agricultural and Forestal District Advisory Committee to replace Michelle Atreid, and then Ricky O'Connor to the Advisory Plans Examiner Board to replace Mandy Spina.

[01:36:37] I would like to note that on Monday, January 26th, I am going to be hosting the second annual State of the County at the Hilton Performing Arts Center. The doors will open at 6.15 and the program starts at 7 o'clock. I will have more information next meeting about the topics to discuss, but I am very excited about this because it's, I kind of think of it in some ways almost as a big town hall.

[01:37:01] And I'm hoping that, again, last year we had great attendance. I'm hoping to do even better this year. And with the four minutes and 13 whatever seconds I have left, you know, would like to certainly

thank my colleague, Supervisor Franklin, who is not going on to better things possibly, but to another level.

[01:37:19] She has talked a lot. Obviously, everyone knows that she is running for the House District 23 to replace former delegate Candy King. You have spoken a lot about the need to have that legislative solution enrichment. So now I'm looking for you to be that legislative solution enrichment.

[01:37:39] So look forward to seeing what happens next. We have local government day coming up. We'll certainly be down there, and we may have a Christmas wish list for you to fulfill because you will now or you will hopefully soon have the ability to fulfill that. So with that, let us go on.

[01:37:55] We are going to go into closed session. I'm going to give everyone a five-minute break, And I do mean five minutes, because that seems to be like a thing with us, five minutes turns to 15. All right, so thank you very much, everyone.

[01:38:33] All right, everyone, we are back from closed session. First, we need to certify. I would like to get a motion for 10A. So moved. Second. It's been probably moved and seconded. Let's take a vote.

[01:38:52] Unanimous. Supervisor Franklin absent from... All right, thank you very much. The first thing that we're going to report out, and it is appointments for the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments. Kenny? Thank you, Madam Chair. I move that we reappoint our appointments to the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments as per our 2025 appointments.

[01:39:12] Second. It's been probably moved and seconded in any discussion. All right, let's take our vote. Unanimous. Supervisor Franklin absent from vote. All right, then the next thing we are going to move on to is reporting out the appointments to the Virginia Railway Express Operations Board.

[01:39:36] Supervisor Bailey. Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, I recommend the appointments to the Virginia Railway Express Operations Board. Supervisor Andrea Bailey as chair, George Stewart as participant, Tom Gordy as participant, Victor Angry as an alternate, as well as Kenny Bodie as an alternate.

[01:39:53] Second. All right, it's been properly moved and seconded. I just want to note that the authority actually makes their appointments for chair rather than this board. All right, so that then Supervisor Andrea Bailey is a regular member.

[01:40:10] All right, let's take our votes. Vote unanimous. Supervisor Franklin absent from vote. All right. And then the last thing, we have one more thing to report out, and that is an appointment.

[01:40:25] Supervisor Vega. Thank you, Madam Chair. We would like to appoint to Madri Thomas as the new Criminal Justice Service Director. Second. It's been properly moved and seconded. Is there any discussion, any congratulations people want to say? Congratulations. All right, that's easy.

[01:40:41] Congratulations. Let's take the vote. Vote unanimous. Supervisor Franklin absent from vote. All right. Mr. Shorter. Thank you very much, Madam Chair and members of the board. As is now custom, I want to ask our newest director, Director of Criminal Justice Services, Tamadri Thomas, if you would come down.

[01:41:05] Tamadri has been serving as Acting Director and has been with Prince William County for 11 years, but in service in this work for over 30 years. And we are just excited to have you serve as our next director. So, Tamadri, welcome. Thank you so much, Madam Chair.

[01:41:23] members of the board and county executive shorter thank you so much for this opportunity thank you for this tremendous honor um and for the trust that you have bestowed in me to accept this appointment of director of criminal justice services in prince william county i look at this as a huge opportunity to continue the great work that we all have continued to do and i say we all because it's not just about the director it's about all of the people that i work with on a regular basis. I will serve with humility and a strong sense of purpose. I recognize the

[01:42:02] responsibility that comes with this position. This position is not just about enforcing policy or procedure. It is about the great impact and the work that we have, that we do to assist individuals, families, and the community, and the belief of the justice, that justice can be both firm and fair. I am inspired by the dedication of those who serve in the field, and I am committed to collaboration, the use of evidence-based practices, and making continuous improvement

[01:42:35] as we strengthen our system and uphold justice, integrity, courage, and compassion. Together we will pursue innovation, strengthen accountability, and ensure our system supports both public safety and human dignity and i am grateful for this opportunity and look forward to meeting all the challenges ahead building upon our successes and continuing to make a meaningful difference thank you again so much for this opportunity all right and thank you so very much i don't know

[01:43:13] i don't have anyone who is in queue so let's go ahead it looks like people want to go on to agenda item number 11 i'm getting a death stare second any discussion around this topic is it really true is it non-debatable okay i gotta look that up all right well then let's go ahead and take our votes all right thank you so very much our next meeting is on tuesday january 20th thank you



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