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Prince William Board of County Supervisors Meeting, Tuesday, April 7, 2026

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[00:18:58] All right, everyone. It is 2 o'clock, and today is Tuesday, April 7, 2026. Let us begin with a moment of silence.

[00:19:15] Thank you. All rise, if you are able, for Pledge of Allegiance.

[00:19:35] All right, thank you, everyone. Before we move on to agenda item number three, I want to waive the rules of procedure because we have a couple of things to add to the agenda.

[00:19:53] First, Supervisor LaCroix has some appointments that she would like to make, and I would like to add as 12d the resolution to appoint austin haynes to the industrial development committee i mean authority 12e appoint michael garcia ii to the prince william on water board of directors and 12f and as the point brian landham to the planning commission also supervisor angry would like to add autism acceptance month to commendations and proclamations and that will

[00:20:30] now be 4L. So with those changes noted, I know we have a lot of people. If you can, please find a seat. We have a few seats. I call it infill development. So we have a few seats. And if there is not a seat, if you would like to sit on the atrium, you still will be able to be heard. And when it's time to come in and speak, you will be able to do so. So I'm going to give people a minute

[00:21:02] to get settled we got a couple seats on this side in the you know front over there yes people have their hands up we got a couple seats over here brother i think your feet people are over there they're waving for you but she's waving all right so moving on to agenda item number three um can i get a motion to um approve the minutes so move madam chair second it's been properly

[00:21:38] moved in second is there any discussion all right let's go ahead and take our votes vote unanimous - All right, thank you very much.

[00:22:00] We are now moving on to agenda item number four. That's where most people, I assume, are here for. So again, adding Autism Acceptance Month. Can I get a motion for 4A through 4L? - So moved. - Second. - It's been properly moved and second.

[00:22:16] It looks like, before we go down, Supervisor Vega. - Thank you, Madam Chair. I am on the agenda to introduce the Scottish American Heritage Month proclamation. However, I will defer to Supervisor Gordy since he is of Scottish descent. - All right, thank you. i will invite all of you down all right let's go ahead and our votes and anyone who wants to join us for scottish american heritage month let's go to the front the vote is up there bro

[00:22:49] all right so i'm gonna move down again everyone for 4a please come on down if you're with the 4a

[00:23:01] please meet us at the podium all right i promise i will not read this in scottish brogue so we can

[00:23:35] understand it. All right. Millions of Americans traced their roots to the Scottish Highlands, Midland Valley, and the Southern Upland. Scottish immigrants endured several hardships to build new lives, transformed our largest cities into centers of commerce and industry, and made great cultural, spiritual, and economic contributions that exemplified the diversity of our nation.

[00:23:56] Scottish Americans played an important part in creating the fabric of our history through their service in the government and military, and also through their faith and family values. To this day, Many Americans of Scottish descent continue to play a vital role in shaping our history and culture, enriching all aspects of our lives.

[00:24:13] Today, the Prince William Board of County Supervisors proclaims April 2026 as Scottish American Heritage Month. Thank you. Good afternoon.

[00:24:30] Thank you to the County Board of Supervisors for the opportunity to recognize Scottish American Heritage Month. Today, we honor the generations of Scottish immigrants and their descendants who helped shape this country through service, innovation, strong sense community.

[00:24:45] From the earliest days of our nation, Scottish Americans have played a role building our institutions, defending our freedoms, and contributing to the cultural fabric that defines who we are. Their legacy is seen in values that still resonate today.

[00:25:02] Hard work, resilience, education, and civic responsibility. whether in public service, industry, the arts, or local communities like ours. That influence continues to make a lasting impact.

[00:25:19] Sky's heritage is also something we celebrate through tradition. Music, language, athletics, and gatherings that bring people together and keep history alive for future generations. As we recognize this month, we not only look back with appreciation, but also forward with a commitment to preserving those traditions and continue that legacy of contribution and service.

[00:25:46] Thank you again for the opportunity. I neglected to say we'll do this photo, but then the rest of them we're going to hold towards the end because we have a lot of photos.

[00:25:59] If we can have everyone associated with 4B and that's Sexual Assault Awareness Month.

[00:26:51] Sexual Assault Awareness Month calls attention to the fact that sexual violence is widespread and impacts every person in every community.

[00:27:19] Statistics show that more than 53% of women and more than 29% of men reported experiencing sexual assault in their lifetime, with many reporting that the person who harmed them was someone who they knew. Prince William County must join with others around the world in committing to prevent sexual abuse, assault, and harassment.

[00:27:37] Therefore, today, the Prince William Board of County Supervisors hereby proclaims the month of April 2026 is Sexual Assault Awareness Month and each day of the year as an opportunity to create change for the future. Is anyone, one person, like to speak on behalf of this proclamation? Good afternoon, Chairwoman Jefferson, thank you, and members of the board.

[00:28:03] My name is Paige Mead. I serve as a volunteer and board member for ACTS, Action and Community Through Service, and I'm also the co-chair of the 2026 Sexual Assault Awareness Month Steering Committee. But today I'm here to share something with you that is far more personal.

[00:28:21] In 1992, I was sexually assaulted here in Prince William County, our community, the place that I call home. For a long time, I carried that quietly, and like many survivors, I didn't know if I'd be believed or supported or judged.

[00:28:39] I eventually found help through acts. I found people who believed me without question, who walked alongside me without judgment, and who helped me see that my experience did not define me. But if I chose, I could use that experience to help other people. And so I got involved.

[00:28:56] This proclamation is deeply meaningful to me, not just as a board member or a steering committee member, but as somebody who was victimized by a serial predator in our county. This proclamation tells me and every other survivor that Prince William County cares. You see us, you stand with us, and you're committed to doing better.

[00:29:17] Healing doesn't happen in isolation. It happens when communities like ours decide that survivors matter and then act like it. I hope that everyone in this community who's quietly carrying something heavy today knows that they are not alone, that help is available, and that this community believes you.

[00:29:37] So I'm going to give you the proclamation, but we're going to take our photo. So everyone hang around until we're done, and we're going to be like an assembly line. It'll work. Thank you. We are now on to 4C, and that's to proclaim April 2026 as Financial Literacy Month.

[00:29:57] will everyone associated with that proclamation please come forward and this is financial literacy

[00:30:38] month as a nation our life expectancies have grown it's great that we're living longer but our medical bills and retirement are often higher than they were or higher than they were for our parents and grandparents we need to know how to invest we need to be financially literate by taking ownership and building wealth through financial planning we can also achieve the american dream and make it possible

for our children and grandchildren too we need to save of our futures, whether it's buying our first home, going on family vacation, paying for our kids' braces or college tuitions, and retiring with dignity.

[00:31:12] Financial planning, financial literacy is extremely important for everyone in the community. Therefore, today, the Prince William Board of County Supervisors hereby proclaims April 2026 is Financial Literacy Month in Prince William County. Would anyone like to say, offer some words?

[00:31:29] Paige. Madam Chair, good afternoon. Madam Chair, members of the board, Mr. Shorter and Ms. Roble. I'm Paige Thacker with Virginia Cooperative Extension. And with me are Margie Leon, our Financial Education Program Manager, Joelle Hewley and Scott Mingabier from United Way National Capital Region, David Hunn from Skillsource, Northern Virginia Career Works, and Captain Castilla.

[00:32:02] And I just wanted to say a few words about the importance of financial literacy and appreciate the opportunity for the proclamation. I'll keep it brief. Financial literacy is a foundational skill that directly affects household stability, workforce reliability, and long-term economic resilience.

[00:32:23] It influences how residents budget, manage debt, handle emergencies, and plan for housing, education, and retirement. Although Prince William County has a high median household income, financial security is uneven. More than one-third of county households, over 55,000 households, fall below the ALICE or the Asset Limited Income Constrained Employed threshold, meaning that they earn above the poverty level but still cannot meet basic living costs.

[00:32:55] Nearly 30% of households are housing cost burdened, and many working families lack emergency savings despite steady employment. These pressures matter to the county. Financial instability contributes to housing insecurity, workforce turnover, increased demand for public services, and reduced economic mobility.

[00:33:14] Financial literacy serves as a preventative strategy, helping residents better manage rising costs, reduce high interest debt, and prepare for financial disruptions before they become crises. Prince William County is already demonstrating leadership through partnerships with schools, nonprofits, libraries, cooperative extension, and community organizations.

[00:33:38] Prince William County supports financial stability through such programs as the Prince William Financial Empowerment Center, which is made up of Northern Virginia Career Works, United Way, and cooperative extension, offering free financial coaching, housing counseling, small business support, and tax preparation in partnership with community organizations.

[00:33:59] These efforts align with county priorities related to economic development, equity, and residential well-being. Prince William County employees also receive support through the Total Money Makeover Information Sharing Group that was founded in 2011 by Captain Ruben Castilla.

[00:34:19] Through his help, employees and their families have improved their financial stability, and since its inception, participants collectively have paid off over \$19 million in debt. Supporting financial literacy aligns with the Board's priorities around economic development, equity, and quality of life.

[00:34:37] Continued emphasis on financial education strengthens the local workforce, stabilizes families, and reduces long-term strain on county systems. In short financial literacy is not just an individual benefit it's a strategic investment that contributes to a stronger more resilient prince william county thank you all right and next one 4d we are actually going to do that one in the evening um so i'm

going to hold that for the seven o'clock meeting so then we are going to go to 4e and that is proclaim april 2026 is earth

[00:35:14] month so katab if you and your team anyone associated with earth month wants to come on down We were here, they made fun of you because you were suited up, I believe.

[00:35:40] I remember I had a clap back for Bob. Okay, so you speak. All right, 4E, Earth Month. Since 1970, Earth Month has been observed globally as a way to increase awareness about sustainability and the responsible stewardship of natural resources.

[00:36:00] Here in Prince William County, we are committed to preserving our natural resources, protecting water quality, enhancing green spaces, and promoting sustainable practices that support a healthy environment and quality of life. The county's Master Strategic Plan and Community Energy and Sustainability Master Plan encourage environmental stewardship, community engagement, and long-term sustainability for future generations.

[00:36:25] Therefore, today, the Prince William Board of County Supervisors hereby proclaims April 2026 as Earth Month in Prince William County. And we encourage everyone to participate in activities that promote conservation, environmental education, and the protection of natural resources throughout our community.

[00:36:43] Would you like to offer some remarks? Thank you, Madam Chair, members of the board. My name is Lucas Heisman. I'm here today serving Public Works. I'm the Deputy Director of Public Works.

[00:37:01] And behind me, we have our partners with the Office of Sustainability, Risk and Wellness, as well as the Cooperative Extension. And I consider myself blessed to be here to introduce the man that's going to talk to you and to introduce all these fine people that I've had the opportunity to work with hand-in-hand for this earth and for a better Prince William County.

[00:37:25] And to further that, I want to introduce Mr. Andrew Ugalov. He is our MS4 coordinator. Thank you. Good afternoon, Madam Chair and members of the board.

[00:37:40] My name is Andrew Ugalov, stormwater coordinator, MS4 coordinator for Public Works. And I'm pleased to accept this proclamation recognizing Earth Month in Prince William County. Earth Month reminds us how important it is to keep our county safe and clean. by reducing trash and preventing pollutants from entering our creeks, streams, and drinking water sources.

[00:37:59] April also coincides with National Native Plant Month, highlighting the value of plant and native species and education around the harm caused by invasive plants. We are grateful for the many partners and community members who make this work possible, including the Prince William Wildflower Society, Prince William Trails and Streams Coalition, various civic associations, youth groups like the Scouts and 4-H participants, The Band-A-Long Crew, you know who you are.

[00:38:23] Keep Prince William Beautiful, Prince William Conservation Alliance, Prince William County Public Schools, Prince William Water, Parks and Recs. Keep Prince William Beautiful. And then our partners, Prince William Solar and Water Conservation District and the Virginia Cooperative Extension and many other organizations that I did not name.

[00:38:42] We want to highlight the important resources available at our county landfill for residents and recognize the litter crew for their ongoing efforts to keep our community clean by removing 194,000

pounds of debris from our roadways in 2025 alone, along with other members that we have probably well over exceeded 200,000 pounds.

[00:39:05] We are proud to partner with the Office of Sustainability, Public Works, and the Risk and Wellness Services to host a series of Earth Month activities for our employees throughout the month of April. Earth Month is an opportunity for each and every one of us to reflect on how we can better protect our environment and work together toward a cleaner, healthier Prince William County.

[00:39:23] Protect our storm drains, protect our streams, protect our drinking water, because with you we can. Thank you to all the volunteers and staff. I'll take a photo at the end. Thank you. All right, next we have Child Abuse Prevention Month.

[00:39:40] Phyllis, if you and your team can step forward.

[00:39:53] What a wonderful group of people in blue.

[00:40:16] Children are our most precious resource. They deserve to grow up in safe, nurturing environments. But unfortunately, just last year, over 2,000 cases of suspected child abuse and neglect were reported in Prince William County. And we must do better to care for our community's children.

[00:40:31] And we are committed to supporting families through programs that help prevent child abuse and neglect. Because prevention is the best defense for our children and families. During the month of April, we display pinwheels to serve as a reminder that together, we can prevent child abuse and neglect and keep children safe.

[00:40:48] I would also like to take a moment to thank Director Phyllis Jennings-Holt and the entire Department of Social Services for their leadership and tireless effort on behalf of children and families. Therefore, today, the Prince William Board of County Supervisors proclaims April 2026 as Child Abuse Prevention Month.

[00:41:06] Director, do you have any remarks you'd like to offer? Good afternoon, Madam Chair Jefferson, Vice Chair Angry, members of the board, County Execs Mr. Shorter, and County Attorney Michelle Roble.

[00:41:23] Phyllis Jennings-Holt, Director of Social Services. Today with me, I have Lori Wilson, Chair of DSS Advisory Board, Jacob Mosner and Chrissy Falls, members of the DSS Advisory Board, Deputy Director Holly Handy, Assistant Director Lena Purifoy, Program Managers Clyde Portis and Teresa Wilson, Senior Human Services Caseworker Fiorella Dench, and several Human Service Caseworkers, Alice Stern, Afua Manu, Maria Allman Gonzalez, Angie Wanique, Yael Washington, and Charlene Govan.

[00:42:01] On behalf of the department, thank you for the proclamation and recognizing April as Child Abuse Prevention Month. Child abuse prevention is a shared responsibility it takes all of us, families, neighbors, and community partners working together to ensure every child grows up safe, supportive, and nurtured.

[00:42:21] I would like to take time to thank my dedicated staff and community partners who do this work every day with compassion and care. Each of you have a little blue bag at your space that's filled with items that provide a powerful message about protecting children.

[00:42:39] Some of you have a football, which represents connection and teamwork. Just like a team works together in the field, protecting children takes a community. Some of you have a rubber duck, which represents caring, nurturing, and safe environments. It symbolizes the importance of attentive care

each of you have a pin which represents having a voice and advocacy speaking up for children is important each of you have a lanyard that represents responsibility and visibility it symbolizes accountability and the role each of

[00:43:14] us play in being alert present and ready to help children and lastly each of you have a key chain Keys can open doors and connect families to resources, services, and support systems that can positively change the life of a child.

[00:43:31] Finally, I hope each of you like your items, and thank you again for the proclamation and your continued support for the department and Prince William County community. Thank you. Next is 4G, and that is Public Safety Telecommunicator Week, and that's April 12th through April 18th.

[00:43:57] If people associate that, come on up.

[00:44:28] When today? Come in. I just want to say, these are the group of people.

[00:44:45] 911, where's your emergency? Thank you so very much. It is so great to have you all in here today. And with that, the Public Safety Telecommunicators of Prince William County Public Safety Communication Centers are the first of the first responders who answer our 911 calls.

[00:45:06] They are virtually on the scene providing emergency medical instructions and moral support to college in distress while dispatching firefighters, police, paramedics, and other first responders. 2026 marks both the 58th anniversary of 911 service in the United States, and our community was the first to have 911 service on the East Coast 58 years ago.

[00:45:29] So today, the Prince William Board of County Supervisors proclaims the week of April 12th through April 18th, 2026 as Public Safety Telecommunicator Week. Thank you to these dedicated women and men who keep our county and our residents safe.

[00:45:46] Would you like to offer a few remarks? Good afternoon, Chair Jefferson, members of the Board, County Executive Shorter. On behalf of the Department of Public Safety Communications, I want to sincerely thank you for recognizing National Public Safety Telecommunicator Week with this proclamation.

[00:46:05] Our telecommunicators are often the first of the first responders. They are the calm voice in the chaos, the ones who answer when someone's world is falling apart and provide instruction and assistance before anyone else arrives on the scene. They carry the weight of 1,000 calls, some routine, and some are world life-changing.

[00:46:24] And they show up again the next shift to do the exact same thing over and over again. We are proud to serve the residents and visitors of Prince William County, and we're grateful for the recognition. Thank you for your support of the Department of Public Safety Communications. And just a note to staff, when we take our photos, I would like to go with the public safety telecommunicators first because I know they're working.

[00:46:48] Thank you. Madam Chair. Supervisor Vega. Thank you. Wait one second, please. I know that we're pressed for time, but I saw a moment during our break that I think deserves public acknowledgement. Where's mom? The mom of this young man right here. Where's mom? Where's mama?

[00:47:06] She's out there? So, I was in my car calling my husband and kind of being a little emotional about my daughter turning 18 next month. And I saw, what's your name? Octavian. Octavian? Hugging his

mom and mom talking about how proud she was that he was working for Prince William County.

[00:47:23] And I heard her say, all right, love you, I'll see you in chambers. And we began to chat a little bit and she told me, you're 18 and how many hours? How old are you? I just turned 18 July 27th. And she shared with me that I think you are the youngest.

[00:47:41] Is that correct? One of the youngest. Well, we just want to welcome you. I know your mom is proud, and we're all proud, and we are thankful for the service that you all provide to county residents. So welcome. And thank you for choosing Prince William Town. And Madam Chair, Madam Chair, Madam Chair, I'd also like to point out that that young man used to attend Veterans Commission meetings when his mom was staying late to help support us.

[00:48:09] and so he's been a help to us for quite some time. Oh, wow. That is beautiful. All right, now we have 4-H, and that's Crime Victims' Rights Week. I'm just now noticing we have our Commonwealth attorney, Amy Ashworth, joining us.

[00:48:37] Crime tears at the social fabric of society, and it has a devastating impact on both victims and survivors. No one should have to endure the trauma of victimization and its impact alone, whether it's physical, financial, emotional, spiritual, or social.

[00:48:57] Countless allies work together to help crime victims and survivors by identifying their needs and providing collaborative and comprehensive services. During the 2026 National Crime Victims' Rights Week, we commend ourselves to promoting and strengthening the dedicated community that supports victims and survivors of crime.

[00:49:19] Today, therefore, the Prince William Board of County Supervisors hereby proclaims the week of April 19th through April 25th, 2026 as Crime Victims' Rights Week in Prince William County. Would you like to offer us some remarks?

[00:49:37] Good afternoon, and thank you, everyone, for this proclamation. You know, our office deals with people who unexpectedly find themselves in the criminal justice system as victims, And it's so important that we deal with them with respect and transparency and help them through one of the most difficult times of their lives.

[00:50:05] And I can tell you as a prosecutor for over 25 years, there is nothing better than standing in court and advocating on behalf of victims of crime for justice for what happened to them. And I want to thank our director of victim witness, Tammy Thomas, who's here, and others who have joined us in recognition of this important week.

[00:50:29] Thank you. All right. We are up to 4I, and that is National Volunteer Week. If you are associated with that, please come on down.

[00:50:46] I think it's you again, Paige. What you got for us, Madam County Attorney?

[00:51:08] All right. This is a big group. Oh, I'm big.

[00:51:25] all right fire rescues outside all right we've got a lot of folks volunteers across prince william county serve the community with pride and commitment their dedication makes our community a better place to live and helps us be a community of choice in 2025 more than 4 000 prince william county volunteers donated more than 340 hour 40 000 hours of their of their free time to countless programs. If

we were to put a number on how much that time is worth, it would be equivalent to 175 full-time staff and nearly \$12 million. Today, therefore, the Prince William County Board

[00:52:03] of Supervisors hereby proclaims April 19th through April 25th, 2026, this National Volunteer Week, and thanks all of our dedicated volunteers who lend their time, talent, voice, and support to our community. Paige, would you like to offer us some remarks? Madam Chair, members of the board, Ms. Shorter, Ms. Robel. Thank you again for this opportunity, another opportunity to recognize amazing individuals in the community. With me are several directors and volunteers

[00:52:39] that are doing wonderful things in the community, and their enthusiasm, skills, and experience bring to our county agencies truly invaluable services and expertise. This year, We're proud to recognize 4,190 volunteers across the county, within county agencies, representing multiple generations, reflecting the rich diversity of Prince William County.

[00:53:08] These volunteers include distinguished veterans, teens, adults, youth, parents, grandparents, both working and retired professionals, many who could not be here today. Each person generously shares their time and expertise, helping agencies meet performance measures and advance your strategic goals.

[00:53:26] Their service strengthens Prince William County as a true community of choice. I wanted to recognize that we have 1,375 volunteers supporting the Safe and Secure Community Quadrant. That's Fire and Rescue, Office of Criminal Justice Services, Clerk of the Circuit Court, the Adult Detention Center, the Police Department, Animal Control, and the Sheriff's Office.

[00:53:52] More than 2,700 volunteers who support health, well-being, and environmental sustainability quadrant, including the Libraries, Area Agency on Aging, Parks and Recreation, and Historic Preservation, Social Services, the Health Department, and Virginia Cooperative Extension, and over 50 volunteers supporting public works in the Mobility, Economic Growth, and Resiliency Quadrant.

[00:54:14] Together, as Chair Jefferson mentioned, these volunteers contributed over 244,000 hours, which is the equivalent of 175 full-time positions, and the estimated value of their service is over \$12 million, or almost \$12 million.

[00:54:34] Their level of generosity and commitment to the community is truly remarkable. Volunteering offers many personal benefits as well. It creates a sense of purpose. It helps people learn new skills, build confidence, reduce stress, improve mental health, and strengthens community connections.

[00:54:53] And beyond these individual benefits, volunteers make a meaningful difference in the lives of families, neighbors, and community residents every single day. We're incredibly grateful that they choose to invest their time back into Prince William County. To all of them, thank you for your dedication, your passion, and your commitment to service.

[00:55:14] And again, thank you to the members of the board for giving us the opportunity to highlight and celebrate these outstanding volunteers. And now we're on to International Compost Awareness Week.

[00:55:34] So everyone from Public Works, if y'all can come on back, we got another one.

[00:55:51] So what is compost? Compost consists largely of decayed organic matter and is good for crops and soil.

[00:56:10] Instead of filling up our landfills, leaves, branches, fruit scraps, and other organic materials can be converted into compost. The Prince William Composting Facility has been successfully composting

since 1994. In fiscal year 2025, roughly 59,000 tons of yard waste were successfully diverted to the county compost facility.

[00:56:33] Therefore, the Prince William Board of County Supervisors, in recognition of the efforts of soil conservation stewards, homeowners, landscapers, farmers, recyclers, public workers, composters, gardeners, and plant growers everywhere, declares the week of May 3rd through May 9th, 2026, as Compost Awareness Week, and proclaims May 9th, 2026, as the official recognition of Prince William County Compost Awareness Day.

[00:57:00] Would you like to offer us some remarks? Thank you, Madam Chair, members of the board, Mr. Shorter. Again, here today, Lucas Heisman, representing Public Works for Mr. Sumut. And also with me today is Ms. Renaud Urie and Ms. Deborah Campbell.

[00:57:19] I really can't explain how awesome the compost facility is. I've had places reaching out to meet, like DeKalb County, Georgia, reaching out, trying to come see and tour our compost facility because we set the example. So I will let Renaud explain further.

[00:57:37] Thank you. Thank you, Luke. Madam Chair, members of the board, my name is Renaud Uri. I'm the county's Recycling Program Manager. Thank you for recognizing Compost Awareness Day and for your continued support for our sustainability efforts.

[00:57:54] Composting helps reduce landfill waste and improve soil health in our community. On May 9th, we will host a Compost Awareness Day event at the County Compost Facility, featuring tours alongside our contractor, Convertis, who also will be providing attendees with free compost samples.

[00:58:14] Additionally, county partners, including Virginia Cooperative Extension Master Gardeners, will provide guidance on composting and gardening, and Keep Prince William Beautiful will share volunteer opportunities to help keep our community litter-free, along with a few other partners who will be joining us to expand community knowledge on composting and food waste reduction.

[00:58:33] We hope to see you all there. Thank you. All right, Supervisor Bailey and those associated with the organizing Northern Virginia branch of the Association for the Study of African American Life and History, if y'all can come on up.

[00:59:10] Good afternoon, everyone. This afternoon, we're going to commend the Organizing Northern Virginia Branch of the Association of the Study of African American Life and History. The study and preservation of African American life, history, and culture are essential to understanding the full and rich narrative of our nation.

[00:59:32] The establishment of the Organizing Northern Virginia Branch of the Association of the Study of African American Life and History, also known as ASALA, Found in the town of Dumfries, advances this mission throughout Prince William County by fostering scholarship, civic education and engagement and cultural enrichment throughout Northern Virginia.

[00:59:54] Therefore, today, the Prince William Board of County Supervisors hereby recognizes and commends the organizing Northern Virginia branch of ASALA and extends its sincere appreciation to all those whose efforts have brought this important initiative to fruition and those who work will continue to strengthen understanding the African American history throughout Northern Virginia. Good afternoon my name is Dr. Joseph P. Butte. I'm

[01:00:30] the president of the organizing chapter or branch and I just want to extend my thank you to all the members of the board and especially our Potomac district supervisor for bringing us here today and recognizing the importance of history for our future, for building community and building this branch from the Potomac all the way down to Fredericksburg, from the Eastern Shore all the way over to West Virginia side.

[01:00:56] So we look forward to highlighting all the history in our county, which is very rich, and extending that history to the folks all across Northern Virginia, Fairfax, Arlington, Alexandria, Gainesville, Loudoun County, Stafford, and the list goes on.

[01:01:13] So we're very excited. In September, we'll formally be chartered as the Northern Virginia branch of ASALA, the Association for the Study of African American Life and History. And on my left here are members of our board, our members, and interested members, and other folks from across our large geographic region.

[01:01:39] And we say thank you again for recognizing us. Don't forget to tell people about us. Thank you. All right, and Supervisor Ingrid and everyone with Autism Acceptance Month, please come on down.

[01:02:08] First of all, thank you, board members, for allowing the waiving of the rules so we could add Autism Acceptance Month to the agenda.

[01:02:40] It's been over four years since we've recognized this month, and so I'm happy that we were able to capture it and start it out correctly. So with me in chamber, I have the Associate Superintendent for Special Education for Prince William Schools, Dr. Ashley Rayner, all right, and I have the Acting Director of the Arc of Greater Prince William, Christina Nicole, all right.

[01:03:07] So Autism Spectrum Disorder, ASD, encompasses a range of developmental differences that shape how individuals communicate, learn, and understand their surroundings, and according to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, about 1 in 31 children in the United States have been identified with ASD. An estimated 5.4 million adults in the United States are living with ASD.

[01:03:32] Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Prince William Board of County Supervisors does hereby proclaim April 2026 as Autism Acceptance Month in Prince William County and encourages all residents to acknowledge the contributions of individuals on the spectrum, on the autism spectrum and those who support them. Thank you. I have a couple of speakers. Good afternoon. I'll apologize now. I'm no Karen Smith. So she was a great public speaker. The ARCA greater Prince

[01:04:11] William would like to thank Prince William County Board of County Supervisors for the proclamation is not just a statement is a commitment to understanding inclusion, respect for and respect for individuals on the autism spectrum. We lost our executive director, Karen Smith, a little almost a month ago. She would have been so pleased and so very proud of the Board of County Supervisors for putting forth this proclamation. Autism is not a limitation. It is a different way of experience and interacting with the world. Individuals with autism bring unique strengths, perspectives, and talents that enrich our community every day, from creativity to innovation

[01:04:48] to honesty and deep focus. These qualities serve as recognized and celebrated. However, awareness is not enough. We must move forward to acceptance and meaningful action. This means creating environments where individuals with autism feel supported, valued, and empowered.

[01:05:09] To reach full potential, it means ensuring access to education, employment, opportunities, healthcare, and community resource. It also means listening, truly listening to the voices and expertises of those on the spectrum in their families. Karen Smith spent 58 years fighting for people with disabilities to be seen and accepted. With her passing, it is now our shared responsibility to build a more inclusive community. Let us create a space where differences are not just accepted

[01:05:42] but embraced. Together, we foster a future with every individual, regardless of neurological differences, is to be treated with dignity, respect, and kindness. Thank you for your time. Thank you, Supervisor Angry, Madam Chair, and members of the board. Before I begin, we would also like to extend our condolences to the staff and family at the ARC. On behalf of Prince William County Public Schools, we are deeply grateful for this proclamation alongside our partnership that

[01:06:17] is longstanding with the county in supporting our students and families of individuals with autism. In Prince William County Public Schools, we provide educational services to our students with autism and we know that the county does even greater work than that by providing comprehensive wraparound supports for not only our students and children with autism but also their families representing a true comprehensive systems approach within our community. Our school system serves over 2,700 students with autism. That number is significant because it is greater by 800 students

[01:06:52] than it was just three years ago. This growth demonstrates how significant it is that we continue to enhance our supports for this population within our community. We are proud to partner with the county and receive this opportunity to support the proclamation this afternoon. We look forward to continued opportunities to help individuals with autism thrive within our greater community. Thank you very much. All right, everyone, we are going to take a 15-minute recess for photos, and if you would like to join in the photos, please come out

[01:07:28] to the atrium thank you we're missing supervisors angry and bode i'd love to see your faces again

[01:07:53] we got one all right supervisor angry if you can come back in we are back from recess and i'm moving on to agenda item number five and that is the consent agenda if anyone has does anyone have anything that they would like to pull off while you're looking through i just wanted to welcome

[01:08:29] manassas city mayor michelle davis younger thank you thank you for joining us all right i don't see anything so i'd like to go ahead and entertain a motion for items 5a through 5n so moved second it's been properly moved we'll give the second to supervisor bode any discussion supervisor bode thank you madam chair just very quickly wanted to highlight um item 5j which is the adoption of

[01:09:06] the princely american solidated housing community development annual action plan for fiscal year 2026 i know it's a mouthful but i wanted to thank joan duckett uh for what working through that that uh report every single year it highlights a lot of issues and and challenges we have around housing in the community and what prince dream county is is doing with that kind of slides under the radar every single year but it's important work and helps inform a lot of our other policies so i want to just i like that thank you madam chair thank you supervisor gordy thank you madam chair um just wanted to point out um item 5c um this issue related to special use permit validity

[01:09:41] Really appreciate the county staff in working trying to resolve the challenges and issues related to our special use permits, which do have expiration dates on them if they are not executed in a certain

time frame.

[01:09:56] But given some of the events that have happened with COVID and other things over time, some of these expiration dates have slipped for good reason. But really appreciate the county staff in working to try to help resolve that going forward and look forward to their resolution.

[01:10:13] I also want to point out item 5F in relation to the \$4.2 million that will be provided by Stanley Martin Homes for the Sedley Manor Interchange. This interchange will be, we should be getting a contract for that here within the next three months.

[01:10:30] But this is to help resolve the issues related to the Karen Johnson intersection with Wellington Road. And I look forward to our transportation department working with the community to come up with the right solution in this location. Thank you, Madam Chair.

[01:10:45] Thank you. Supervisor Bailey. Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, I'd like to comment on item 5C. Again, just the importance of us being able to have the predictability of business going forward in the county with our SUPs is very critical. So I appreciate staff acknowledging that and making efforts to improve that.

[01:11:05] And then on 5G, this is great progress with our expert transportation department team and being right on time as we extend and widen Route 1 in the Dumfries area. So I'm very appreciative of the work that we're doing there and to make our lives easier as we transport from the south to the north on Route 1.

[01:11:27] That's real important. And then on item number 5N, a great demonstration of identifying issues and analyzing them and moving in strategic direction and problem-solving with our internal audit plan. And so I really, really appreciate that.

[01:11:44] And then to the county exec, your team, for the focus and the training that we had for the IPO journey with the audit committee. It works hand-in-hand when we sit on the audit committee and making these decisions as we improve processes. So thank you, Madam Chair, for the opportunity to comment.

[01:12:03] All right, thank you very much. i don't see anyone in queue so let's go ahead and take our votes unanimous all right thank you so very much we are now moving on to public comment time while i'm waiting for the sheets for those of us who are doing public comment i ask that you're going to be standing in the back i'll call

[01:12:37] people up in groups of five you will have three minutes to speak please begin by saying your name and the magisterial district where you reside thank you so first up i have ashley studham neil kelly i'm so sorry i think it's irene kelly rachel ellis and marilyn carp if the three of you

[01:13:04] can go to the back good afternoon madam chair jefferson members of the board my name is ashley studholm with the occoquan district and also welcome of course um supervisor la croix uh and it's nice to to see you on the dais today um so i my name is ashley studholm i'm representing the Prince William Conservation Alliance. We are an environmental non-profit who focuses on creating

[01:13:44] equitable, sustainable communities throughout Prince William County. And, you know, with today's declaration of Earth Month, I was thinking that it was a good opportunity to reflect on what it means to be a good steward of this wonderfully phenomenal and complicated pale blue dot that we find ourselves living on and what it is to be a good steward on our little piece of the planet

[01:14:16] here in Prince William County. And we're so fortunate here that we have such a wealth of resources from our two national parks, state lands, wildlife refuges, and we have so much to offer the residents of this community but also abroad and really attract attention to these wonderful protected areas that we have. And our land also provides drinking water both as

[01:14:50] groundwater and as surface water to the Occoquan Reservoir to up to a million residents throughout this region. And all of that has been one of our concerns about how the changes in land use have been occurring in this county is all of that has been put at risk at the explosion of a single industry, and that's the data center industry. But we have found ourselves in a really unique

[01:15:21] position with the recent court opinion from the Virginia Court of Appeals. And I think that we have an opportunity to pause, and it would be wise to do so. And rather than continuing to industrialize our lands next to our national parks, perhaps we could rethink what could be appropriate there and re-imagine something different and attract a different way of

[01:15:57] protecting these lands that supports and diversifies our economy while also ensuring that these natural resources continue to benefit all communities. so i just wanted to offer that as um as as this decision has been made and we look to a future i think that there is a brighter future and we have an opportunity to do so and take advantage of that so thank you so much thank you next speaker please good afternoon members of the board my name is neil kelly and i'm from the gainsville magisterial district and i'm not going to use up my whole

[01:16:35] three minutes today i'm just going to say please take this opportunity to let's rewrite history here in Prince William County and withdrawal from the Digital Gateway lawsuit. If you have \$2 million that you've already spent on this burning a hole in the budget, I'm quite sure you could find some department or some of the NGOs that were here today or some of our union people that are looking for a little bit more of an increase in their hourly wage and benefits to absorb that \$2 million.

[01:17:00] So let's try to take that money and spend it someplace. I'd also like to know what is the status of the water survey that was supposed to have been conducted, and we will promise that under the Wheeler administration, we haven't heard anything back on that. So maybe some of that money could be used to get the water study completed and find out what's happening. Because once we run out of water, then we're going to have a lot of problems here in Prince William County.

[01:17:26] So with that, I'm going to say thank you for this opportunity for me to speak. I know you don't have to listen to me. That's what our county attorney's office has said in the past. But at least I have the opportunity to speak. So thank you. Thank you. Next speaker, please. Good afternoon. I'm Irene Mignani-Kelly from Gainesville.

[01:17:46] Been here before. Four years ago, I requested please slow down on the data centers. You didn't listen to me then. I hope you hear me now. And please just withdraw from the lawsuit. Let it go.

[01:18:02] We already have proof. The data center said they'd take on the risk if it didn't work. Let them pay for it. I don't want my tax dollars to help them fight a battle against me. Prince William County is David.

[01:18:19] The data centers are Goliath. They have much more power, much more money against us. But you know what? We're on the right side. We don't want data centers near our kids. We don't want data centers near our homes. We don't want them ruining our water source.

[01:18:36] We don't want them ruining our air. We are on the right side. Let's keep that battle going, David. Let's hope. I saw all these positive people here today. I really would hope that my supervisors can maintain that positivity for all of the Prince William County people. That money, like my husband just said, can go for better housing, help some of our people in the food pantries. Let's do something really good for our folks and let's not hurt them. So I appreciate your time. I wish you well.

[01:19:13] thank you next speaker please rachel ellis gainsville district um it is time that the board withdraws from the prince william digital gateway lawsuits stop any appeals stop spending taxpayer money funding something that four independent judges have ruled was an illegal hearing the virginia court of appeals cited supreme court cases in their unanimous ruling the same cases that any other court during the appeals process has access to and will continue to use to uphold

[01:19:50] this ruling. Enough is enough. You are no longer serving the residents that elected you if you continue the appeals process. I know that three of you, Supervisor Bailey, Supervisor Bodie, and Supervisor Angry, were present when Supervisor Weir attempted to have this digital gateway hearing rescheduled for improper notice. He knew that the county had failed to advertise legally. And thank you to Supervisor Vega for voting yes to his motion. Any continuation of this appeal on behalf of the board is corruption at its best. Only two of you actually voted for

[01:20:24] this destruction. One of you abstained. \$1.66 million of taxpayer money with another 400,000 approved has been spent trying to defend what has been ruled illegal. You can continue to double down and defend your illegal actions. Again, four judges have ruled it was illegal while wastefully spending residents' money, or you can put your constituents first and recognize that it is time to rebuild trust and accountability in the community. Hold an open public vote and withdraw from the digital gateway lawsuit. And I find it timely that here we are discussing budget season.

[01:21:02] I don't have a problem with my taxes going towards EMS, towards schools, towards county programs, but I do have a problem with my money going to defend something that has been ruled illegal. This is a new board. I'm asking this board to hold an open vote in the public and withdraw from the Digital Gateway lawsuits.

[01:21:24] Thank you. Thank you. Before I call the next speaker, I would like to get the next lineup, and that's Patrick Carters, Paige Kenyon-Page, Meg Haddo, Elena Slosberg, and Margarita Moyland. If you guys can step to the back, Madam Butterfly, you may begin speaking.

[01:21:49] The butterfly is back to talk about the Digital Gateway lawsuit. You were warned on November 30, 2023, 12 days before you voted, your own county attorney, Michelle Roby, sent a memo warning you that the public notice for the Digital Gateway hearing was defective.

[01:22:18] She told you there was significant risk of a legal challenge. Former Supervisor Janine Lawson said it was made crystal clear in writing and in closed session. She and the late Supervisor Bob Weir argued the case should be re-advertised.

[01:22:36] You voted anyway. That memo is public record. Anyone in this room can read it. Your own attorney told you the notice was defective and you went ahead. Two courts have now confirmed exactly what she warned you about.

[01:22:53] In August, Prince William Circuit Court Judge Kimberly Irving declared the rezoning's void. She ruled that you violated state law and your own zoning ordinance. Last week on March 31st, a

unanimous three-judge panel of Virginia Court of Appeals upheld that ruling.

[01:23:15] Three judges, no dissent, a 53-page decision that says your ordinances are void abo initio, legally void from the beginning. You broke the law. You were warned you were breaking the law.

[01:23:31] Two courts have said so now. Now let's talk about what that has cost us. One year one of this lawsuit, you spent nearly \$500,000 of taxpayer money.

[01:23:48] Last December, on a 5-3 vote, you spent another \$400,000. As of mid-December, this county has spent more than \$1.66 million in legal fees, defending or rezoning your own attorney told you was defective.

[01:24:05] That is our money, our tax money spent by you to sue your own constituents to defend a vote you were warned not to take. The plaintiffs are your residents, the people who voted you into this room.

[01:24:24] You have 30 days from March 31st to decide whether to appeal the Virginia Supreme Court. I am here today to tell you, stop, withdraw the appeal, stop spending our money to sue us.

[01:24:40] You lost in circuit court. You lost unanimously in the court of appeals. The Supreme Court is not going to save you. It is going to cost us hundreds of thousands more and you will lose again. direct the county attorney to withdraw cease all taxpayer funding of outside legal counsel on this matter restart the process lawfully and transparently your time is up but please state

[01:25:09] your name and where you're in carp gainsville thank you next speaker good afternoon page kenyan page coles district so here we are again i feel like it's been a decade we're still fighting Although every time I drive down 234 Bypass or Wellington Road, there's another huge monstrosity of a data center that's taking up millions of square feet.

[01:25:45] And it has got so many people frustrated because we come here and we tell you constantly that it's destroying our beautiful county. But I don't think you can hear us. I don't see how you cannot. It's time for the elected leaders to turn the page and to quote Elena Schlossberg, there's an opportunity to chart a new path, one that moves us away from the industrialization and instead focus on future that prioritizes our natural and cultural resources like the

[01:26:21] Manassas National Battlefield. To be spending \$1.6 million in legal things to defend this is ridiculous. This is our hard-earned money. How dare you? Everybody talks about how much energy that the data centers use, but nobody's talking about the heat that it leaves behind. A new study has found that AI data centers are warming the land around them by up to 16 degrees Fahrenheit for miles in every direction. Researchers at Cambridge published a study on it, and they

[01:26:56] analyzed satellite temperature data from across 6,000 data centers over the last 20 years. They focused on centers built away from cities so the heat couldn't be blamed on traffic or factories. Too bad ours are in our backyards by our schools. What they found after data center starts operating, the land around it gets 2.7 degrees Fahrenheit to 4.3 degrees hotter on average. In some cases, up to 16 degrees hotter. The heat reaches up to six miles in every direction.

[01:27:33] More than 340 million people live close enough to be affected at this study. Data heat island effect is what they're calling it. You need to be aware of this. The cooling systems push server heat outward into the surrounding air. The same concept as standing behind an AC unit outside a building, except this

AC unit is the size of a warehouse. And it gets much bigger. Global electricity use from data centers is expected to more than double by 2030. Infrastructure spending

[01:28:11] And these facilities tripled in the last three years alone. They're building on nuclear sites. This is absurd. The concern isn't the electricity or the water. It's the temperature and the air we breathe and the land that we live on.

[01:28:28] Thank you for your time. Do your job. Next speaker, please. Patrick Harters, Gainesville District. Chair Jefferson, Board of Supervisors, and Jeannie LaCroix, congratulations on your position. It's not often in life that we have an opportunity to do something over again we don't get mulligans as we say in golf and when we do get that opportunity we need to take advantage of it so often I've heard people say if I had to do my life over again I wouldn't change anything and

[01:29:03] That's a prideful person I look at conversations I've had things I've done wrong and it takes a person with humility to say I made a mistake or I would have done things differently when we look at the Prince William Digital Gateway. I don't care where you were in 2021 or 2023, everybody will admit that this is the most divisive issue in Prince William County over the last five years. Nothing comes close. It simply has torn apart a community. The Gainesville District for so long didn't have a supervisor, and it really ripped a hole right down the center of

[01:29:43] It. And so you have an opportunity to make a difference and to make a change. And if you look to the right or left on either side of you, you'll see this is not the same board. There are four new members on this board. There's been a different tone on this board. It's much different. And Prince William County should not be known as a pay-to-play county. Prince William should be known as a county that stands for integrity, that stands up for people. And you are the ones that will make that decision. And you are the ones that are leading this next generation. It's one thing to cover up your own mistakes. It's another thing to look back at the previous board or the previous

[01:30:22] generation and try and cover up that one. There's no reason you have to do that. It's very simple. This was not a good decision. This was rushed through. Everybody knows it was rushed through. And this has cost our community and our county everything. It's cost our integrity. It's cost us business opportunities. We lost a pharmaceutical company because we just simply didn't have places so we need to have the supervisor or supervisors that come forth with a vision to say, what does good development look like?

[01:30:54] What does reinvestment look like? What does redevelopment look like? And how do we protect some of our open space and open land? Whether it's in the east side or the west side, the supervisor should want the same thing, a beautiful, wonderful Prince William County to give to the next generation.

[01:31:10] The first step in doing that is to not fund this lawsuit. The second step is to pull out of it. There's going to be consequences to that. We know that. But that's what standing firm will look like. And then from there, having a vision for a better Prince William County. So I wish you luck and encouragement, and I hope you do this in an open format so we can all see and gain the trust of the people of Prince William County.

[01:31:35] Thank you. Next speaker, please. My name is Matt Caddo. I live in the Gainesville District. In the decision by the appeals court, Bob Weir was mentioned and has been referenced here today about how he came out of closed session on December 12th of 2023 and warned the board about the defect in the

advertising. It was however ignored. It was prophetic that three judges in the appeals court unanimously ruled that in fact that notice was defective and it should have been observed. Those three judges I think were joined by Bob Weir

[01:32:14] from his place in heaven, although some may dispute where he is, that he agreed that this was a defective notice. If you look at the decision, the 53 pages, you will see that the judges affirm the standing argument, which is a critical part of any litigation. And I would direct your attention, particularly Supervisor Angry, and thank you for recognizing in your proclamations earlier, the autism community. One of the plaintiffs in this action lives in Oak Valley, has an adult autistic son, who's one of the few joys in his life is to be able to go outdoors,

[01:32:53] and particularly when the weather permits to be able to swim in their backyard pool. That plaintiff will have to move from her home because the sound effects that not only just affect autistic children and individuals, but also affect senior citizens and has dramatic safety issues along the way. The pollution and the host of other impacts referenced by this decision should guide this board. Secondly, the Board of County Supervisors has met its obligation. You've gone through the appeals court. The only things that is left today for the Supreme Court to adjudicate are issues that have impact on the data center developers. They will take their

[01:33:32] Hail Mary pass. It doesn't need any help from nor financial assistance of this Board of County supervisors. Those issues are adjudicated. The test on whether there was proper notice has been determined conclusively. I know there's the argument that was made by the county attorney that you should protect your reputation in the processing of applications. The best way to do that now is to simply invite these applicants to come and resubmit properly notice a hearing and hear them out. And if they can make the case that they can place these data centers near residential communities with all of the adverse impacts that were granted standing by this appeals

[01:34:11] court, then let them do it. And God love them if they are able to do it. Redemption is here. Rehear the application. Withdraw from this lawsuit. All issues that impact the county are resolved. The remaining issues, as I said, only apply to data centers. The data center operators said they would accept all the risks. Let them do that. Reimburse the county for the two million plus dollars that have been spent. They committed to that. And if you're looking for ways to spend that money and you don't have a place in the budget, reimburse the Oak Valley community for us having to stand up against the board that made the wrong decision. Thank you. Next speaker, please.

[01:34:48] Good afternoon. My name is Elena Schlossberg and I'm a Gainesville resident. Just take a breath because truly this opportunity, how many times do you wish you could get a do-over? What I tell my

[01:35:23] kids is you can't go back. You cannot change what has already occurred. All you can do is move forward. But in this case, there are three supervisors who can, actually one, yes, three, can make a different decision. And it's okay to do that. It is okay to reflect on all this new

[01:35:57] information. I understand you didn't believe the community then. You can legitimately say, you thought you made that vote with the best information you had on hand, but now you have new information. Now you know about the diesel generators. You know about the air quality impacts.

[01:36:21] You know that there is an impact to our water for everybody in this room, whether you're in the west and you're on well water or you're in the east and you're drinking from the streams that come from

the west i want to say thank you to yes lee vega because we do know why this vote occurred and this is in i mean these judges were if you have not read the 53 pages i recommend you read it after you vote to withdraw um given that the descend this is this is from the judges and the appellate

[01:36:58] court given that the december 13 2023 vote was four to three with one abstention mr bode however it is unclear whether the board would have approved the rezonings if the question had come had been postponed to a later hearing date to satisfy the advertising rules. Chairman Ann Wheeler cast the deciding vote, and her term ended in 2023.

[01:37:19] At least one supervisor suggested at the December 12th meeting that the vote was being rushed through so Chairman Wheeler could vote on the rezonings before the Board of Supervisors was reconstituted. Thank you, Supervisor Yesli Vega. I am asking each and every one of you to return trust to this Board of Supervisors to vote not one more dime on this failed lawsuit.

[01:37:50] It's okay to admit that you've made a mistake, withdraw from the lawsuit, and redeem your reputation. I believe you can do it. Thank you. Next speaker, please. Hi, my name is Margarita Moylan, and I reside in the Gainesville District.

[01:38:17] And first, I want to welcome Jeannie LaCroix. It's nice to have a new face up there. I've spoken in front of many of you many, many times, And I thought this was a good time to speak in memory of someone who would undoubtedly be leading the fight against the Digital Gateway and the rezoning of the Royal Crescent, were she still alive.

[01:38:43] Annie Snyder, an 80-year-old mother of six, spent her life farming 180 acres on Pageland Lane in the Gainesville District. while becoming one of Northern Virginia's most formidable defenders of rural and historic land.

[01:39:05] A 53-year resident of Prince William County, she took on powerful developers, corporations, and government agencies and won. From rerouting highways to protecting the Manassas battlefield in the 1950s to defeating proposed theme parks by Marriott and Disney in the 1970s and beyond, Snyder built a legacy of preservation.

[01:39:42] Most famously, she led the successful fight against the massive shopping mall proposed near the battlefield by developer Till Hazel in what became known as the Third Battle of Bull Run. A Marine Corps veteran, former law student, farmer, and lifelong civic activist, Annie Snyder combined grit, strategy, and an unshakable belief in doing what was right.

[01:40:12] Her motto, never, never, never give up. Guided by a movement that ultimately secured federal protection from historically sacred land, Annie Snyder helped stop a mall, a highway, a major theme park development.

[01:40:34] Her efforts preserved not just land, but history itself. If she were still alive, this project would likely never have seen the light of day. Honor her legacy. Protect the land she fought so hard to save.

[01:40:53] Please, remove yourself from this lawsuit. Do the right thing. Thank you. Thank you so very much. We do not have anyone else sign up to speak in person, so I'm going to turn it over to Supervisor Angry for remote public comment time.

[01:41:10] Thank you, Madam Chair. Do we have anyone remote? Good afternoon, Vice Chair and the Board. We have one person. We have Jessica Grove as our first speaker. All right, thank you. Ms. Grove, go

ahead. Hi, good afternoon. My name is Jessica Grove.

[01:41:25] I live in the Gainesville District. I also would like to ask you to remove yourself from the Prince William Digital Gateway lawsuit. I think it's very appropriate that today was declared Earth Month.

[01:41:42] And as much as I would like to read exactly what was came from the proclamation i'm driving and i can't do that um but you made a promise to prince william county that you're going to protect our air and our water and our quality of life and the biggest step forward you can make real quick is pull yourself out of this lawsuit and protect our air our water and our quality of life um i saw a news article recently about

[01:42:12] um i believe it was louisiana um meta asked just asked for 10 gas plants to be installed for their data center 10 and that's for one data center campus we would need six nuclear reactors for prince william digital gateway we don't have that we don't want that um please stop spending our taxpayer dollars to fund this lawsuit that is against us and will harm us. I recently came

[01:42:52] across a Native American proverb that I would like to share, and this you should carry with you at all times, not even related to Digital Gateway, but it says, we do not inherit the earth from our ancestors. We borrow it from our children, and we're at a tipping point where we're going to leave them an abysmal planet earth so i ask you to please change your minds reverse course be humble and say that was a mistake we are not going to push this through and pull out of the

[01:43:28] lawsuit thank you for your time thank you all right thank you i'm sorry i'm sorry we have no more speakers i apologize all right thank you um before i move on to agenda item number seven i want to turn the microphone over to supervisor bode thank you madam chair um i don't know if Ms. Ashley Studdholm is still here, but it's my understanding as of an email that was sent out, I think, last week, she's going to be leaving the county as the head of the Prince William Conservation Alliance. Ashley, if you're still here, just wanted to say thank you for your collaboration. Thank you for your advocacy over the years, even before you took the executive

[01:44:07] director role. I know we've sparred on things. I know we've collaborated on things, but this county definitely owes you a debt of respect and gratitude for your service and wanted to make sure that She heard that before she left. Thank you, Madam Chair. All right. Thank you so very much. For the public hearings, there are a couple things I want to note, and I'm not going to go ahead and open them because we may have some questions, but I wanted to bring to attention 7D, the proffer amendment.

[01:44:32] And it's been brought to my attention that the ownership has changed. I'm sorry? 7C. Oh, I have, I'm sorry. 7C, I put on the wrong thing. 7C, thank you. 7C, and that's for the courts district in Neabsco.

[01:44:48] The ownership has changed, and the proffers should reflect the new ownership. And this change happened after the Planning Commission. So we do have the applicant and their attorneys here. Does anyone have any questions or need any clarification on 7C?

[01:45:06] Supervisor Vega. Thank you, since it's a really thick packet. It's impossible for us to read through this, and it was just handed to us, I think, an hour or so ago. I would appreciate a summary just for the public's knowledge and for ours as well. Ms. Jonel? Yes, absolutely. My name is Jonelle Cameron with Walsh, Colucci, Lubelai, and Walsh here today on behalf of the applicant.

[01:45:24] The only change is just the entity name for one of the names. And so the proffers that were in the staff report, the first entity reads SKWVA, Inc. The correct entity name is now SKWVALLC.

[01:45:45] That is the only change that was made, was changing that entity name. Madam Chair, members of the board, when you get to item 7C, if you're going to take them all, I would just recommend for the board's consideration that the motion read that you're moving to approve or deny the item with an amended ordinance showing the correct name of the owner as SKWVALC.

[01:46:11] Madam Chair, I have that language, so I was going to make that motion and read that language. Thank you. So what we're going to do is I'm going to go ahead, and I'm going to break this up. I'm going to do 7C and 7E separately, because I know those are going to have discussion.

[01:46:27] But I am going to open the public hearings for 7A through 7D. So I do not have anyone signed up to speak in person. Do I have anyone signed up remotely?

[01:46:44] There is no one signed up in person or remotely from 7A through 7D. So what I would like to do, and I'm going to move 7C and 7E, and I'm going to do 7E public hearing separate. I would like a motion for 7A, 7B, and 7D.

[01:47:02] So moved, Madam Chair. Second. Supervisor Vega. Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm not opposing your desire to move 7C and 7E. I just want to verify with the county attorney that if we're opening up public common time, public hearings, does it all have to be at once, or do we have to wait for C and E, 7C and E, to hear from the speakers in regards to these two items?

[01:47:24] I'm going to do the speakers for 7E separately. That's going to be completely separate. Right. I understand that, Madam Chair. I guess my question is, is that going to happen before in the order that you're doing these others or after? It's going to happen. I'm sorry. It's going to happen after. I'm going to do, we have a motion on the floor. We're going to do those. And then I'm going to do 7C because there's a special motion, there's a correction, and Victor's going to read it.

[01:47:48] Then I'm going to go and open the public hearing for 7E, and then we will vote on that separately. Gotcha. Thank you. Madam Chair, can you, I didn't catch who the second was for that. I had Supervisor Bailey making the motion, but, oh, did you make it? Okay. Did anyone, I did not, did anyone, who's, okay, so it was made by Supervisor Bailey. Did anyone second?

[01:48:10] all seconded supervisor okay supervisor bode seconded thank you so is there any further discussion on the motion that is on the floor if not let's go ahead and take our votes all right thank you very much supervisor ingris uh thank you madam chair i'd like to move item 7c with an amended ordinance to correctly show the move of the owners so skw as you heard skw VAINC has changed

[01:48:50] their names to SKW VALLC therefore by motion therefore my motion is to show the correct name as SKW VALLC second I guess we're properly moving to second it any discussion Madam Chair I would simply say Jonel maybe you should just gave us that top sheet and not this whole packet so thank you alright I see no further discussion so let's go ahead and take our vote on this Vote unanimous.

[01:49:29] All right, thank you very much. I am going to go ahead and open the public hearing for agenda item number 70. I am going to call speakers up. We have a lot of new people here. I'm going to call people up in groups of five. You have three minutes to speak. One person will be allowed to speak on behalf of the organization for five minutes.

[01:49:50] So first and again, you're going to go to the back. Please adjust the mic so that we can properly hear you. You will see a timer at the front. So first I have Laura Perez, Melinda V. I shouldn't know your name by now. I'm sorry, Melinda.

[01:50:06] Patrice Summers, Brenda Petlis, or Detlis, Lenorel Thomas. And I love that we have a little person with us.

[01:50:28] She may join you. I do apologize. I'm sorry. No worries. We're not going anywhere. My name is Laura Perez.

[01:50:47] I'm in the Potomac District, Madam Chair, board members. I do appreciate the time. Last week when I was here, there was a young lady here who was 37 weeks pregnant.

[01:51:04] And I remember, you know, the board was really impressed with that. I was impressed with it because my daughter was 37 weeks pregnant the day before. And that night we went late into the night because it was an important thing that we had to show up for. And I did.

[01:51:19] I showed up. I was in my pajamas that night, came in, dressed, ready to talk to you all and hope and pleading that you all would listen to us as employees regarding the verbiage of the 12-month rule with signatures for the union.

[01:51:39] That night, we left here at 11 o'clock. I got home. By the time I settled in, it was 12.30. 6 a.m., my daughter calls me. Mommy, I'm in labor. Which is why my 4-year-old granddaughter is here with me. because I am now surrogate mommy while she is with newborn baby.

[01:51:57] So I'm frantic trying to get this all done, and I realized I needed to be here. So no matter what, I was going to be here, because the union is important to the employees. The union is important to the county. The union is important to me, okay?

[01:52:13] As a mother, a grandmother, a county employee who started back in 2000 and then left and went to another county and then went to Florida, came back, and the only place I wanted to work was here in Prince William County. This union means something. It means something to all of us here. You've seen purple coming in and out. I didn't prepare anything because I was so frazzled.

[01:52:37] I've been in baby mode for the past week. So I just wanted to say every single time that we get close to being able to file, that 12-month signature rule, the verbiage in that prevents us, becomes an obstacle to, and is just a hindrance to the future of the county employees that you see here, and the county employees that we all represent. A lot of us are county employees.

[01:53:08] I've taken the day, half the day here, to be able to do this, and still run around and do everything I have to do, okay? But this is that important to me, okay? That even with my granddaughter, who normally is bouncing off the walls, praise Jesus, she is not today, okay? And who, as soon as I'm done here, I got to go take her to dance. So I live here. I work here. It was my goal to work here. It was my goal to live here. And because of the lack of representation that we have when

[01:53:42] it comes to negotiating what we get, our wages, it's almost prohibitive to live here. So I need you to consider that for all county employees, because we want to be here. Thank you. Thank you. Sorry, we are not allowed to clap and other things.

[01:54:03] Next speaker, please. I actually hadn't attended to speak today. You've all heard me before. Bring it closer to you so we can, you need to speak more. I'm sorry, allergies are killing me.

[01:54:22] I originally wasn't going to speak today. You all have heard me. We've had conversations. But thank you for your attendance and attention and your support of all Prince William County employees. My message is the same as when I stood here a few weeks ago.

[01:54:39] Prince William General employees are coming together as a family. We are working to ensure that General County employees have a voice and a seat at the table. It is time that those who come to work each day and every day ready to provide services to those who live here, work here, and visit Prince William County.

[01:55:07] Did you know that there are employees that feel bullied by their supervisors? Do you know we have employees who have never been told that they're eligible for FMLA? Those type of situations need to stop.

[01:55:26] Hundreds have signed interest cards so that they may vote to form our collective bargaining unit. Collective. We come from a diverse background, from a multitude of programs and departments.

[01:55:42] Bargaining. Our county employees need to have representation at the table. Unit. Together, we will have one voice to negotiate actionable changes. At a recent meeting, one of you asked, are other counties, do they have an expiration date?

[01:56:05] I ask, does Fairfax have an expiration date? No. Does Loudoun County have an expiration date? No. Does Richmond City have an expiration date? No. We have an expiration date.

[01:56:23] We didn't have an opportunity to help write our ordinance. Thank you for your time and attention to the removal of the one-year expiration date from the Ordinance for Collective Bargaining. This will surely tell all employees that the board really does care about them.

[01:56:45] Please, before you go, say your full name and the Magisterial District will reside. My name is Melinda Vicasienne, and I'm from Coles District. Thank you. Next speaker, please. Madam Chair, board members, and Mr. Shorter.

[01:57:03] Good afternoon. My name is Patrice Summers. I've been here several times before as well. I am a county employee and a resident. I took time off to be here to talk about the importance of collective bargaining rights for Prince William County general employees.

[01:57:19] Collective bargaining ensures that many voices of the general employees are being heard and their rights protected. We are a part of the Prince William County community, and as county employees, we want our voices to be heard. The current 12-month expiration date on the authorization cards has been a hindrance in our efforts.

[01:57:39] This expiration date has frustrated the many, including myself, because we have to go back to county employees year in after year in. Many are online right now, unable to attend, and many took off to be here in the chamber and have pledged their support and signed the cards several times over.

[01:58:02] There are many agencies that work remotely. Some folks just aren't here in the county. Therefore, it's very, very hard and cumbersome to constantly keep going back to employees that made the commitment to resign and or even sign.

[01:58:19] Please consider removing the restrictive language that has been a hindrance for the general county employees from being able to file a union election. I want to thank you all for your willingness to listen and hear me as I advocate on behalf of my fellow county employees.

[01:58:38] Thank you. Thank you. Next speaker, please. Good afternoon. My name is Brenda DeHawes, and I'm a social worker for Prince William County Child Protective Services. In my role, I work with some of the most vulnerable children and families in our county, children who rely on protection, advocacy, and support of the very system we represent.

[01:59:02] I'm here today to share why the opportunity to form a union and participate in collective bargaining is deeply important to me, not only as an employee, but as a mother and the sole provider for my family. I'm a single mother of four children.

[01:59:19] Three of my children still live at home with me. Two are currently in college. Like many families, I work hard every day to move forward. But the rising cost of living has made that increasingly difficult, despite working full time in a profession that I truly love. I cannot afford to live in Prince William County.

[01:59:37] I can't even afford to live in the state of Virginia. Health care costs alone have become overwhelming. Myself, along with two of my children, live with ongoing chronic medical conditions that require frequent visits to specialists, sometimes multiple times a month.

[01:59:54] The co-pays for those appointments, along with the cost of necessary medications, add up quickly. Each month, I face difficult decisions about how to stretch my paycheck to cover housing, medical care, educational expenses, and basic living costs.

[02:00:10] At the same time, I'm still paying back my own student loans, loans I took out to pursue the education necessary to serve this community as a social worker. I chose this profession because I care deeply about helping vulnerable families and children. Every day in CPS, I see firsthand how important stability and support are for families.

[02:00:31] It's meaningful work, and I'm proud to do it. But caring about the work should not mean struggling to survive financially. Right now, I'm living paycheck to paycheck. My goal is not to become wealthy. My goal is stability. I want to earn a livable wage that allows me to raise my children with dignity, support them through college, manage the medical needs of my family, and save for retirement so I'm not a burden on my children later in life.

[02:00:57] Forming a union would give employees like me a voice and a seat at the table. Firefighters and police in our county already have the ability to collectively bargain, and I believe other county employees deserve that same opportunity. Collective bargaining would allow us to work collaboratively with leadership to address wages, benefits, health care costs, and working conditions in a constructive and transparent way.

[02:01:21] I truly value working for Prince William County and the community that we serve. I want to continue doing this work for many, many years. But in order to sustain this career and support my family, I need the opportunity to advocate for fair compensation and better benefits alongside with my colleagues.

[02:01:38] Allowing county employees to form a union is not about conflict. It's about partnership, fairness, and ensuring that people who serve this community can also afford to live and care for their families while building a secure future. Please consider taking the next step today to support Prince William County General Employees.

[02:01:56] Your time is up, but I need to, where do you live for records? I live in Falling Waters, West Virginia. All right, thank you. Next speaker, please. Good afternoon, Chair Jefferson, Vice Chair Angry, and members of the board.

[02:02:14] I request the five minutes, please. Granted. My name is Lenorel Thomas. I am a Brentsville constituent. Hi, Supervisor Gordy. And I'm excited tonight because I see my neighbor down there waving her hand. Hey, neighbor.

[02:02:30] And I'm also the proud president of SEIU Virginia 512. I'm here today on behalf of thousands who serve Prince William County every single day to ask you to vote yes on removing the expiration date language. I want to start by grounding us in what we are really talking about. As you all know very well, Prince William County is not a small operation. It is one of the largest and fastest growing counties in the Commonwealth. Our general county unit is large and diverse,

[02:03:03] made up of workers across dozens of departments and well over 100 work sites. These workers are spread across a county that stretches more than 30 miles from one end to the other. That means long drives, different reporting structures, and being creative in how we connect with workers across locations. And yet, despite that size and complexity, these workers have come together to do something powerful. They have organized. They've had conversations. They've built trust across work

[02:03:36] sites, across job titles, across miles. That is not easy work, it is not quick work, and it is not accidental work. And that is exactly why this provision must be addressed. Right now the ordinance says that an authorization card expires after 12 months. On paper that may seem like just a simple administrative rule, but in practice in a county this large with this many work sites and this many workers, it creates a barrier that undermines the very voice that this ordinance is

[02:04:14] meant to protect. Because let's be clear, an authorization card is not just a piece of paper. It is a worker saying, as so many of these workers have said today, I want a voice. I want representation. I demand a seat at the table. That choice does not simply expire because 12 months have passed. What happens instead is that workers who have already done this hard work of organizing are told, start over again. Year after year, start over again. They have to go back across miles of

[02:04:50] county roads, across dozens of work sites, and ask the exact same co-workers to sign again. Not because their support has changed, but because the clock ran out. These workers have been organizing for the last three and a half years and each year they are being forced to start over simply because of this provision. That is not about fairness. It's about delay. It delays certification. It delays stability and it delays the ability for workers in the county to move forward in a

[02:05:24] constructive relationship. It also creates an unnecessary administrative burden. Tracking dates, rejecting valid cards, processing repeat filings, all of that takes time and resources that could be better spent actually building strong labor management relationships. And most importantly, it risks invalidating the true will of workers. We are not asking for a broad rewrite of this ordinance. We are not asking you to change the structure. This is a narrow, targeted amendment.

[02:05:58] Remove this provision. Remove the expiration language. That simple change aligns Prince William County with other jurisdictions across Virginia. It respects workers' voices. It reduces unnecessary delays. And it creates a more efficient and consistent process for everyone involved.

[02:06:16] At the end of the day, this is about trust. Do you trust workers when they say they want representation? Do we trust the process we have put in place to reflect their will? And do we trust that in a county as large and as complex as Prince William County, we should not be creating additional barriers to participation?

[02:06:38] I believe the answer is yes. I believe this board has the opportunity to strengthen this ordinance in a very real and practical way. And I respectfully, underline, underscore, respectfully, ask that you adopt the recommended motion to remove the 12-month expiration language.

[02:06:59] Thank you for your time and for your commitment to the workers who keep Prince William County running. Thank you. I have one more person. If you would like to speak, please give me your name, first and last, as well as your Registerial District.

[02:07:16] I'm Stephen Keaton, and I'm from Manassas City. Wait, can you bring it closer to you? You said Stephen Keaton? Stephen Keaton, K-E-A-T-O-N. All right, you may go. Fellow Prince William County employees, County Board of Supervisors, and community members, my name is Stephen Keaton.

[02:07:38] I have deep roots in Prince William County. I was even born at Prince William Hospital in 1965 in Manassas. I was the first state-licensed plumber hired at the hospital there. I am a state-certified master plumber, gas fitter, backflow preventer worker.

[02:08:01] I accepted significant pay cut to come work for the county, and I don't doubt we need representation. I understand that many employees feel that joining a union is the only way to improve their working conditions. I believe that if the county will maybe look outside just a little bit out of what they've been shown, I believe the county will fully honor their commitment that employees are their greatest asset.

[02:08:32] And the union may not even be necessary, but while I respect the right of my colleagues to organize, I have decided not to join this union. This particular union, for the reason that I believe that this specific union, the SEIU, is too involved in our political system, and it favors one party over another.

[02:08:53] And I urge my fellow employees not to join this union. As a public servant, I'm committed to serving everyone in Prince William County, regardless of political affiliation, and I wish to remain neutral in my service, but I thank you all for your time, and we've heard about vision, and I think if you take the 30 out and listen to the 70, maybe you'll get a greater vision of what the board could do.

[02:09:23] There's different things, like we already have a labor relations administrator. We have the Employee Advisory Committee, Employee Engagement Team, Office of Equality and Inclusion, and even the TMO office. But the transformation, y'all might be able to help me with that.

[02:09:42] Management office. I've only been here a year and a half, but there are very smart people here that work in the county. I've been in awe. I've only been here a year and a half. And it's amazing the staff that you have. If you might want to, I just gave you like four or five entities that are here in the county that may be able to help you wrap this up so we do something new.

[02:10:08] Don't look like, you know, you want to be like Loudoun County or Fairfax, or you want to be a nationwide leader. And I think Prince William County, this is a critical moment that you have an opportunity to be the leaders that you really have vision.

[02:10:25] So thank you so much for listening to me today. God bless you. Thank you. Supervisor Henry, do we have anyone remotely? Chris, do we have any remote speakers out here?

[02:10:42] All right, thanks. All right, we do not have anyone remote, and I'm sure if I can ask everyone, please have a seat, if you want to have a seat. All right, so I'm going to go ahead, and I'd like to get a motion to move 7E4. So moved. Second. It's been properly moved and seconded. Any discussion?

[02:10:59] Supervisor Vega. Thank you, Madam Chair. I have a few questions and some comments. Who do I address my questions to? Okay. So just a little bit of history for those that have recently joined or watching at home, don't really know what's going on.

[02:11:18] What is being asked of us here today, the core of this request, is the deletion of Section 2-217, Clause B and 3, which currently authorizes cards or employee signatures that do expire after a 12-month period. By removing this section to reserve, as it's stated in the motion, the ordinance would effectively allow signatures to pretty much indefinitely be used, and if that is not correct, I ask to be corrected, to be used as evidence of a desire to certify or decertify a union.

[02:11:52] Why this clause is extremely important is because these signatures pretty much give an indication of the general workforce's interest, if you will, in being a part of this union. We know that this is a clause that the police department, The fire department follows, and they seem to not have any issues in regards to getting to the 30% that is required because it shows that there is a great interest in being a part of the union.

[02:12:22] Now, my questions are, Mr. Shorter, if a signature is two or three years old, does it still accurately reflect the employee's current desire to be represented by a specific labor organization? Supervisor, very difficult for me to answer that question.

[02:12:39] I will say, in terms of expiration, I believe at the time when the county is approached, we do a crosswalk to make sure that the employees that are listed are current employees. But in terms of the intent of the employee, it would be very difficult for me to answer that question.

[02:12:56] Thank you for that. My next question is, without a time limit, how does the county protect employees who may have changed their minds, but whose signatures remain active indefinitely? Madam Chair, members of the board, that issue has not been...

[02:13:17] fleshed out in the ordinance that would be up to that individual employee to come forward if this goes forward and the 12 months is removed and a unit provides signatures we will have to go through and verify every signature to make sure they're part of eligible to be part of the bargaining unit and valid we will if employees come forward to say that they do not want their signature there we will discuss and figure out what we're going to do.

[02:13:50] It's not addressed in the ordinance. Thank you for that, Ms. Robel. That's a good segue into my following question. Does this ordinance anywhere address how employees can go about doing that? No. The ordinance, there are various ways to show the statement of interest if employees want to organize.

[02:14:12] The 12-month time period does not apply to evidence of currently effective dues payment authorization, so that is one way that an employee can show their interest in joining, being organized, but there is no provision in the current ordinance if an employee signed their name and then 12, 13, 14 months later said that they don't want to.

[02:14:38] Thank you for that. And then the last question that I have for this round is, while the Virginia Code section 40.1-57.2 permits local collective bargaining ordinances, Does removing this standard align with the conformity requirements mentioned in previous board actions?

[02:14:56] I'm not quite sure what your question is. The current Virginia code with regards to this discretionary option for governing bodies does not have very much information in it.

[02:15:12] And, you know, localities that did go forward kind of created their own territory with regards to their own ordinances. As we discussed last week, the General Assembly has passed legislation in both houses. We are awaiting the governor's signature as to whether she's going to sign, amend, veto, delay it with an reenactment clause, et cetera.

[02:15:35] And if it goes forward as has passed both houses, in 2028, we will be looking at a new provision with regards to a statewide collective bargaining ordinance. Thank you for that, Ms. Robel. That's all I have for now, Madam Chair.

[02:15:50] Thank you. All right. I wanted to address a couple of those things. So first, the signatures that they have are less than 12 months old because they have to start the process over and over again. So right now, we're looking at cards that are less than a year old. And also, you know, is the collection of signatures the final step to form a bargaining unit?

[02:16:08] No, it is not. Because according to the ordinance, PwC code 2-217.b.6-11, there is an employee-wide election that will take place to determine whether bargaining unit employees wish to be represented by the union.

[02:16:29] So this is not the final step. They actually have to have an election. And to Mr. Stephen Keaton, I don't know if you're still here, you know, if you believe the SEIU is too political, you don't have to participate. And I just want to remind everyone, we are a right-to-work state.

[02:16:45] We are a right-to-work state, so people don't have to join the union or pay the dues. If anything, the people who are in the union, doing the work of the union, and supporting the union, are really carrying the lift for all county employees or everyone in that bargaining unit.

[02:17:04] I think that there's a lot of fear there that is misplaced. We see a lot of purple and gold, but not everyone's wearing purple and gold. This is a right to work state. It is the employees who will have a vote after this process. If we remove the time period, it doesn't mean that collective bargaining is now in place. There will be an election. So I just want to make sure that I named that for everyone so that to clear up any confusion or misinformation.

[02:17:38] Supervisor Bode. Thank you, Madam Chair. You actually went down the beat I was going to ask, and so just to either the county exec or the county attorney, once that threshold of the cards are signed, there is then an actual election to elect the bargaining union as their, the actual organization as their bargaining union, correct?

[02:17:55] Madam Chair, members of the board, yes. Once there is a statement of interest, an election is held, and if a majority of those who vote, whether it's 3,000 that vote or 10 people that vote, The majority will determine. And with regards to the police, there weren't that many people that voted, but there is an election afterwards, after this step, yes.

[02:18:18] So in theory, if someone may have signed a card, for example, then decide, hey, later on, I don't really want either to be represented by a union at all or I don't want to be SEIU, they could then vote against them being represented by SEIU, correct? So they still have a voice after that card set is set. So I appreciate the clarity there.

[02:18:34] All I will say is piggybacks a little bit on what was just said. We're talking about completely different bargaining units when you talk about police, fire, and then general service employees. As one of the speakers eloquently said, we're talking about sort of centralized fire and rescue and police staff that are at certain locations.

[02:18:53] There's a lot less of them, frankly, as general employees, a lot easier to get a hold of folks to bring them in to have those cards signed in a relatively short manner. When you talk about a county as big as ours, and Ms. Thomas talked about it earlier, some of them are in secure facilities some part of the day. Other ones are out in the field all day talking to clients.

[02:19:09] There's a much different vibe there and a much different level of service. And to have such a diverse set of folks and have them have the same standard, you know, we started this Collective Barney Ordinance, and we wanted it to be sort of a smaller, more narrowly tailored thing, and we sort of expanded that over time.

[02:19:27] We've already revised these ordinance once before, and this time I believe that we're actually improving it in a way that creates more equity for the broader set of employees to allow them to get through the process to actually have a voice. So that's why I'm supporting it, and again, as was said before, if someone leaves the county, that court is no longer valid, or again, if someone may have expressed interest 12, 13 months or even six months ago, and then now suddenly the election is held, that person can then decide, hey, I don't want this organization to represent me, and they can vote nor in the election.

[02:19:57] Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, members of the board, just to clarify the distinction between showing the statement of interest and then the election. Mr. Bode, you said if an employee changes their mind, they can vote no in the election. If the election is successful, though, they will be part of the bargaining unit, and they will be organized part of the bargaining unit.

[02:20:18] They cannot be forced to pay dues and be a member of the union, but they will be part of the bargaining unit. So are there any additional questions or comments? All right, Discussion. Supervisor Vega, do you have anything else?

[02:20:34] I do, Madam Chair, because transparency and accountability matter. First, I want to thank members of the union that showed up today and those that have actually taken the time to reach out to my office in a respectful manner. I believe it was the president that made a request and talked about respect.

[02:20:51] Respect goes a long way, and I firmly believe that respect is not something that you just give randomly. Respect is something that you earn. Why do I say this? Last week, there was a request made for a survey to be conducted, a survey that would allow members of this governing body to hear from the entire workforce, and that initiative was shut down.

[02:21:12] While in theory, I thought the survey was a brilliant idea, I can't take credit for it because it wasn't mine. It was Supervisor George Stewart's idea. His office reached out to my office because he wanted to hear from everybody in the workforce, and I thought it was a good idea, and I was asked to lead the charge.

[02:21:30] What was brought to my attention really has left me in complete and utter shock. And many of you that are here today wearing the shirts probably have no idea the conniving, the harassment tactics that have been used behind the scenes to convince members of this board to vote against their original desire.

[02:21:53] It is astounding. It is short of disgusting. And if I describe it as such, it's because that's what it is. That's what it is. And it's not just from those that represent the union. It is not just from leadership. It is from members of this governing body.

[02:22:11] That's why you always have to be very careful when you send a text message. Because once you send it, you can't take it back. You have to be very careful about the phone calls that you make and what you say to people. Because in Virginia, it's a one-consent party state. You can be recorded and you don't even know that you're being recorded.

[02:22:29] And these things have been shared with me. They've been brought to my attention. And we have members of the media here. So I encourage you all to issue a FOIA request so that you can see for yourself so that members of this union wearing the purple shirts know exactly the tactics that those who are the face of your organization use to intimidate, bully, harass elected officials into doing something that, quite frankly, they don't want to do.

[02:22:52] And I would hope, Supervisor Stewart, that you would have the courage to share that, that you would have the courage to say what transpired, who showed up to your office, who on this day has threatened you, has bullied you, has harassed you into doing something that you initially didn't want to do.

[02:23:09] Members of the board, folks that are here in chambers and those that are watching at home, it is our responsibility as elected officials, as public servants, to ensure that we are putting forth policy that takes into account everyone's voice.

[02:23:27] Last week, there were so many mixed signals, words being put into people's mouths that certain folks don't appreciate our workers, this, that, and the other. That couldn't be further from the truth. But when you really come to the table with transparency, with a genuine heart, with good intentions, I believe that we can meet halfway and reach an agreement that's going to be for the greater good of the entire workforce.

[02:23:49] What I will not do is support any individual or any group that uses these tactics or those that use the position that has been entrusted by them, by the people of Prince William County, to bully and intimidate members of this board. We were elected by the people of this county to be their voice, to be their representatives, because they respected our ability to do so.

[02:24:12] And to have anybody on this day has diminished that responsibility and diminished accountability. It is quite frankly insulting, and I will not tolerate it. For the members of the union that have always come to me with an open mind, I thank you. And I remain committed to having an open door policy.

[02:24:29] I want to speak to the general workforce as well, because believe it or not, we've had some of your peers, for those that work in the county, come to department heads who have stated, and to members of this board, that they feel harassed, that they feel that they're being pressured into doing something that they don't want to do.

[02:24:48] People have the right to come to work and to serve the people of Prince William County, be left alone and go home. They have that right. They do. But I want to leave you with this. If I've seen those text messages, if I've been previewed to phone calls, all right, imagine what is happening behind the scenes to those employees who have come forward and do not want to be made public because they fear retaliation.

[02:25:13] If folks are willing to do that to elected officials, ask yourself what is happening behind the scenes. I am here willing to work with anybody, but make no mistake, I will truly, truly be an ear for every voice in this county, whether they are a part of the union or not.

[02:25:32] I respect you as much as those who do not wish to be a part of the union. I thank you all for coming, and to members of the media, you can talk to me after this meeting. Thank you, Madam Chair. Supervisor Stewart. Thank you, Madam Chair.

[02:25:48] You know, I didn't think there was any harm in asking with the survey. However, in seeing how the process plays itself out, you know, taking away this time period and having people sign the card, that's an indication of interest in a survey in and of itself, right, as Supervisor Bodie just recently pointed out.

[02:26:20] As far as any harassment or intimidation or bullying from anybody, that wasn't anything that I experienced. For the most part, everybody has been the epitome of professional, including the members that came to my office to visit me, and everybody that I'm up here on the dais with.

[02:26:49] Everybody has been, you know, fine with me. You know, so, you know, as far as bullying is concerned, like, that hasn't been my experience. So all I got to say about that.

[02:27:07] Supervisor Bailey. Thank you, Supervisor Stewart. I harass you with cookies, so I'm sorry. But I want to say to the members of the union that came to represent your organization today, thank you for coming out, spending time from your day.

[02:27:28] and not from your jobs because I know some of you have been harassed about spending time from your jobs in the newspaper. So I apologize for that because as elected officials, a lot of times recordings are made, harassment is done as a tool to sway votes, period. And so if anyone on this dais has done that to you or to any employee, not just SEIU, we apologize. But it's politics.

[02:28:04] And that's how politics is done. But when you talk about people's lives, I'm a union kid. The two-family flat that I grew up in was built by bricks by the union.

[02:28:22] So I'm sensitive to that, but I'm also sensitive to people that were not fortunate to be a part of the union. We have spent, along with Madam County Attorney and the county exec, a lot of time, a lot of resources.

[02:28:38] We've started, we've backed up, and we've started again because we're trying to make it right for employees. We spend a lot of time not just with the unions, but also when it comes to classification and compensations for our employees. It's all encompassing to make sure that we keep the best and the brightest in our community of the county to do the work for the people.

[02:29:03] Someone mentioned, I think it was Ms. Thomas, about partnership. That's the era that we're in right now, partnership. And when there is disagreement on this dais or not on this dais, that's hard. Why? Because it's a change. And so we need to learn how to partner, even when we disagree.

[02:29:26] And so I don't want to play to the cameras or to you. But what I want to do is if you have been harassed and intimidated or anything on my behalf or the dais, allow me to apologize. but we hear you we

hear you because we have to have everybody's voice not just one and when we make decisions it should appear as a partnership and that's evergreen for us we're going to keep working on that but uh we i appreciate and i know the board does too your time taking off from your

[02:30:04] hard-working jobs your efforts and teaching us what unions are supposed to be about to the county attorney and the county exec I know this is not easy for y'all yeah I know it's not easy but it's an evergreen learning thing because it's new for Prince William County. Prince William County is going through change and change is not good but one thing change is inevitable so I just wanted to say that and respecting my colleagues and how emotional and how concerned we are I don't take

[02:30:38] that for granted I respect that but when we make decisions it's about not just a few it's about everybody everybody and so madam chair thank you for the opportunity to speak thank you i don't see anyone else in queue so let's go ahead and take our votes motion passes five to three supervisors gordy la croix and vega voting nay all right thank you so very much i am now i'm going to move

[02:31:18] thank you for everyone who's come out we're going to move on to agenda number eight and that is county executive time i believe that you have a presentation thank you very much madam chair members of the board. We will go initially to item 8A, but before we go to 8A, I have just a few announcements. As always, I want to talk through directives. There were no directives issued during your last meeting. There was one directive closed since the last meeting in that directive last week. Staff provided the board with an update on research and strategy options

[02:31:54] related to restaurant week programming for consideration, and I've also included that information in the recap slides that we'll talk about later on this afternoon. Last month, I shared a memo updating the board on the strategic plan that reflects our progress on our strategic plan priorities, including key initiatives, accomplishments, and ongoing work aligned with each strategic plan goal area. We are obviously very excited about the work happening around our strategic planning efforts and just want to really appreciate all the staff involved really from across the county in the work that we are doing around our strategic plan.

[02:32:35] We are soon to go live with our strategic plan hub on the PwC Works platform, and we will certainly keep the board updated as we move forward with the strategic plan. I also provided the board with an update on the establishment of the Temporary Racial and Social Justice Task Force, which was formally adopted by the Human Rights Commission last month.

[02:32:59] And yesterday I sent the board a message letting the board know that the residential solar permit fee program reduction program will end on July 31st. So happy to answer any questions about that program and all of the great work that the team did to support residents who were installing solar panels on their property.

[02:33:23] And with that, Madam Chair, that is all in terms of... I have Supervisor Vega, then Bodie. Sure. Thank you, Madam Chair. Mr. Shorter, thank you for getting back to my request about live streaming our board meetings via Facebook. We got that information. In terms of next steps so that that actually happens, what do we need to do?

[02:33:41] Do we just need a consensus from the dais? Because it wasn't very clear. I don't remember what I said in the memo. I'll circle back before the meeting is over. Okay, thank you. And in lieu of the

conversation that we were having, I want to ask you, It is my understanding, based on some information that has been shared, that the unions get to promote, right, certain things via flyers.

[02:34:05] They put them on, you know, employee boards and whatnot. Do we do the same in regards to giving employees a voice if they want to report anything to the county government side, whether it's HR, human rights, and not directly to the union? Do we advertise that in the same manner that the unions do?

[02:34:23] I am not sure on the general government side that we have advertised a sort of a grievance process or some other process to notify management because we just haven't gotten to that point yet in this process. I will say that employees have the right to display information on the same public areas that the unions do at this point.

[02:34:47] But I hear you that you're looking for a more confidential process and that we would have to design. I don't know. I don't think it needs to be a directive. I'm not sure if you want to talk with the team and then come back to us with a proposal for our consideration. I want to also turn it over to Michelle in case there's.

[02:35:04] Thank you, Madam Chair, members of the board. I was just going to say the county-wide has the internal audits, fraud, waste, and abuse, which can be anonymous if you want. So anybody could report those. And then when the board's internal auditor gets them, whether it's part of an internal audit or not, they'll turn it over to the county executive and the board to say, here's some information.

[02:35:25] So that is one avenue that anyone can report a concern that they have. And that's fair. I don't think we need to reinvent the wheel. However, you know, these things are brought up during orientation and then they're never brought up again. And so I do think that there needs to be a proactive effort for folks to be reminded that there are other avenues that they could have access to in order to report whatever it is that's going on.

[02:35:46] That's fair. What I'll do is I'll send the board an email. We'll work together to figure out what the options are, and I'll send via memo or email to the board to let you know. Thank you. Supervisor Booty. Thank you, Madam Chair. Just very quickly, thank you, the county exec, on the update.

[02:36:04] I really appreciate your comments around the strategic plan, the implementation there, bringing on the PwC Works. I think that's a great idea. I appreciate that. Going another direction on PwC Works, I know that the agribusiness agritourism study is on there. I know that separately you also have the maritime study going on.

[02:36:22] The next few weeks ago, would you be able to give us an update on those two initiatives and see where we are in terms of time frames for that? Sure. I actually just got a presentation, a great presentation from Christina Wynn and the team on agribusiness and agritourism. She will be coming around to each of your offices to talk you through that presentation.

[02:36:42] I also have, as part of the recap presentation, an opportunity for the board to weigh in if the board wanted to make some decisions around committing resources to recommendations associated with. That's it. Now with Maritime, I will need to go back to the team that we will provide an update.

[02:37:02] Thank you so much. All right. No other questions. You may proceed. Thank you. All right. With item 8A, Madam Chair, we'll ask Rick Canizales to provide an update on Route 28 widening. Madam Chair, members of the board, Rick Canizales, your director of transportation.

[02:37:19] Thank you for the opportunity to talk a little bit about our Route 28 project. Okay. All right. Just as a matter of a little background, back in December of 2024, the board did direct county staff to take a look at a way to formally take action to cancel the Route 28 bypass project.

[02:37:50] So on February 4th, the board passed a resolution actually canceling the Route 28 bypass project and asked staff to work on widening, to do the widening of Route 28, and able to authorize and work some of the bond funds that were authorized through the public for the 2019 Mobility Road Bond.

[02:38:14] In February of 2025, that same month, later that same month, The board directed staff to prepare a resolution to initiate a comprehensive plan amendment to remove the Route 28 bypass project from our comprehensive plan and add the Route 28 widening to the plan.

[02:38:30] So we came back in April and took an action to transfer budget and appropriate the money that was owed back to NVTa for the cancellation of the project. In May, we came back and passed a resolution to initiate that comprehensive plan amendment that was directed by the board.

[02:38:47] And then in January of this year, the board actually passed a resolution and passed the Comprehensive Plan Amendment to remove Route 28 bypass and include the six-lane widening of existing Route 28. So that's kind of where we were, and so we started looking at the Route 28 project.

[02:39:08] Just a little background on the 28 project. It's a widening of Route 28 from four to six lanes. This goes from the city of Manassas to Fairfax County. It's approximately two and a half miles of road work that need to be done. The last estimate was about \$400 million when we estimated this back in 2020 as one of our alternatives to move forward with.

[02:39:29] As you know, since 2020 up to 2026, six years later, that project has increasing cost. We're working through with VDOT right now to do a design and a project on this to look at what that new cost estimate would be. Again, we're currently working with VDOT, so that typical section and cross-section is not yet known.

[02:39:50] But we do have the \$200 million that were authorized by the voters as part of the 2019 bond referendum to be able to do some work on it. Now, that money and the way to pay back that money is currently not included in your CIP. So right now, there's no identification of if we took out that debt, how we would pay that money back.

[02:40:10] Some of the challenges that we have with this corridor, as you can tell from the bottom picture, we have limited right-of-way. The right-of-way is right up to some of the existing businesses there, so there's not a lot of room to do. So it would be a very high, like Route 1, a very high cost in right-of-way, as well as utility relocations.

[02:40:30] If you see in the picture on the top right, you see that we have some transmission lines going through this corridor. Moving those transmission lines, it's very expensive, and as you can tell, the transmission lines are right up against the right-of-way needed for this project. The last thing, oh, not the last thing, but property impacts.

[02:40:50] Property impacts, last time we identified about 90-plus businesses that we would be impacting as part of this road project, so we do have a major impact on right-of-way and businesses within the corridor. The biggest problem is that we have no allocated or approved funding to move forward with this project at this time.

[02:41:09] And we would need jurisdictional agreements, which, as you know, was one of the reasons we had to cancel the project initially between Fairfax, Manassas, Manassas Park and ourselves. The Route 28 project continues here. And what we're looking at with VDOT, as I mentioned earlier, that we are looking at a design and a concept with VDOT right now.

[02:41:29] This concept looks at the corridor from Liberia Avenue out in Manassas all the way out to the Fairfax County line where their 28 improvements begin. So that is past the Bull Run Bridge. It includes widening the bridge and improving that bridge.

[02:41:45] And it will develop that typical section that I had mentioned that we don't have yet. This, again, is still in preliminary engineering and design. We have just started this with VDOT, and VDOT is taking the leadership on this in order to have that coordination between all the jurisdictions involved.

[02:42:06] So, the approval of the 2019 Mobility Referendum and what that means. The question to do the Route 28 bypass or widen Route 28 was included in there. So, the question was set so whether we decided to do the bypass or the widening, that money could be used.

[02:42:23] It was approved, the mobility road bond or the mobility bond was approved at a 73% rate by the public here in Prince William County. The bond referendum authority allows the county to take out those bonds from eight years from 2019, so up to 2027.

[02:42:41] But it also allows us to get two additional one-year extensions to take us out to 2029. The success of that approved vote for the referendum does not require the board to issue that debt and fund this project. So be clear with that. That's just an authority that we got from the people of Prince William to take out the debt, but it's the board's decision to approve that debt to move forward with the project.

[02:43:07] With all that in mind and with all that's been said, we as staff have a couple questions for you and would like some board direction on where we go with this project. Number one is, should staff continue to move forward with this project? And again, the reason we ask that is the funding and the challenges that we mentioned earlier.

[02:43:25] So if we do move forward with the project, will the bonds be utilized to fund this project? Those are the \$200 million that was allocated in bond funds to do this project. And if we do use those bonds and get those bonds to move forward with the project, we need to identify some funding.

[02:43:41] Like I mentioned earlier, there's no funding identified in the CIP to be able to cover the debt of the \$200 million at this time. And again, once we determine that, and if we don't determine that, then should we continue to work with VDOT in doing this design and moving this project forward, or should we tell VDOT to maybe put a halt on it for now as we're not, as a county, ready to fund this project?

[02:44:06] So those are the four questions I have for you today, and looking to see if I can get some guidance on where you would like me to go and how would you like me to move forward with this project, and if we do move forward with this project, where we anticipate the funding to fund it would come from.

[02:44:23] All right. Thank you. Supervisor Vega. Thank you, Madam Chair. Rick, welcome back. Thank you, ma'am. I hope the sun treated you well. You know, while I appreciate the question, I think I don't want to speak for my colleagues on the dais, but I think that there is a consensus that something has to be done about Route 28.

[02:44:40] It's an issue that predates my time on the board and one that is long overdue. I think that the biggest challenges, as stated in the presentation, the funding, where is it going to come? But also, I just want to make sure that we don't run into the same challenges that we did with the bypass and Fairfax County, Because even, you know, this proposal is also dependent or involves the, no, the bridge, the Bull Run Bridge, correct.

[02:45:18] And so, you know, obviously I want to hear what my colleagues have to say, but I want to keep that at the forefront of our discussions. Because we have to make sure that we are collaborating with our neighbors in Fairfax County so that there is some sort of buy-in. so that, one, we achieve the end goal, which is to improve traffic, alleviate traffic along, you know, Route 28, while also being mindful of not pushing that bottleneck into an area in the other county that has already spent millions of dollars improving.

[02:45:46] Yes, ma'am, and just to get to that point, that is the reason I mentioned that VDOT is actually taking over the lead on the design of the project. They would be taking the lead in order to coordinate as the state agency within the four jurisdictions.

[02:46:04] So that agreement would be made through VDOT, and those agreements would be made through VDOT as the design process moves forward. The other thing that VDOT has done as part of the design process is that they will be breaking up the project into phases. So each individual phase will look at perhaps the phase in Fairfax County, the phase in Prince William County, and the phases in Manassas and Manassas Park, and break it up into those phases in order for us, if we're able to fund the project, to fund the phase that corresponds to the county at that time.

[02:46:31] So that's a strategy that VDOT has taken in order to design this in a way that all jurisdictions can be collaborated with. And thank you for that. And so when we talk about the phases, is there a priority given to said phase, depending on how bad it is in certain areas?

[02:46:50] Because there are some, or how is that? That hasn't been determined yet, ma'am. like I said, we're at the very beginning stages, and that's why I wanted to come to the board to get guidance. We wanted to make sure that the effort that VDOT was doing wasn't just something that was going to be shelved. It was something that we, the county, could use as they're trying to move forward, so in the anticipation that we were going to use some of the bond funding, and that's why they're trying to move quickly on this. They were waiting for us to pass our comprehensive plan amendment in order for them to be able to do this in an appropriate manner, but that was the thought.

[02:47:22] The thought was that they were trying to design something before the time ran out on the bond referendum so we could use some of that money. But if we're not going to be able to use some of that money, then VDOT doesn't have to go as fast as they're going, and obviously that's part of the questions that we have for you here today.

[02:47:37] Okay, thank you. Supervisor Gordy. Thank you, Madam Chair. So in terms of funding, can't we just get the city of Manassas to pay for it? Hi, Mayor. Hi.

[02:47:55] Welcome, Mayor. No, we love Mayor Younger Davis and really appreciate her being here today and listening into this conversation.

[02:48:11] Now, I agree with Supervisor Vega. You know, I've been looking at 28 now since I moved to Prince William County in 2007, and it was a problem in 2007, and it hasn't gotten any better. So I think in

terms of the question of related should we continue, I really don't think we have a choice.

[02:48:35] We really have to move this forward. This is, to me, one of the biggest challenges for transportation that we have, particularly in the western end of the county. The other, in terms of funding, I think that's what we would continue to have to work on.

[02:48:50] But I think, as you've expressed, working with VDOT continuing, and now that they're taking over some of these things, maybe that will help us overcome some of the challenges that we've had in the past because of the interjurisdictional challenges that we've experienced along the way.

[02:49:10] So I do want to lend my support for continuing the project and then, you know, We're looking at potential funding sources as we move forward to see what we can do to accomplish that. Thank you. Supervisor Bode.

[02:49:26] Thank you, Madam Chair. To piggyback on what just said, you know, Supervisor Vega and I also share a lot of mid-county residents that take 28 every single day. I know the Western folks, Bristow, no disrespect there, but there are a lot of folks that are in the Coles District and the Western part of the Occoquan Drisco that go up that every single day.

[02:49:43] Some days I take it to work because I work and rest, and so depending on what the Gaza 95 and 66 and 28 are saying that day, it has to be going up Clifton or through there or both. It's all an interesting little weaving area of a network of transportation, but I agree it has to be dealt with, and I think we're at the cusp of that.

[02:50:00] But I did have a couple questions for you, Rick. Yes, sir. Can you tell me about how, now that we're looking at this sort of freshly, even though it's been some bond referendum money has been approved for it, How is this and the project and how they're scoping it out at VDOT going to interact with other things that are already going on with 28?

[02:50:16] So I'm talking about the innovative intersection projects that are already sort of going on, the BRT action plan by NVTa that sort of imagines a 28 sort of BRT route that goes through there. How is that going to interact? Or even the Yorkshire Small Area Plan, all those other things that are being done and studies that have already been completed, how is this going to interact with those pieces?

[02:50:37] That's a great question, Supervisor Bode. What we've been talking to VDOT, like I said, we're at the very preliminary stages in this and we have been scoping the project with them, letting them know some of the challenges that we have out there, some of the things that are coming up and some of the issues that may be at hand when they get out there to start designing this.

[02:50:56] we've talked about uh reducing typical sections we've talked about meandering paths or sidewalks around uh utility facilities uh those kinds of things have been discussed as part of the scope to to look at the corridor and and and make sure that we're following along with not only like you said the small area plan that's looking to be developed for this quarter and we're looking to develop that as well as part of that uh with with with planning in order to be able to facilitate the road design, but VDOT is taking those things into consideration, and they are discussing these things with us to ask us our opinion on what they should consider in our part of the project.

[02:51:34] Appreciate that. Now, I could, Madam Chair, a couple other questions. Talked about phasing, and I appreciate Senator Zorvega, you bringing that up. It makes a lot of sense to sort of phase it based on

jurisdiction, what have you, but is there an opportunity for sort of sub-phases? So, for example, narrowing the project scope, you know, at least temporarily between like Compton Road and Orchard Bridge Road, where some of those other improvements are coming in, things like that? Yes, sir. Actually, we have talked to Virat. That's one of the things we did mention to him. We understand that the possibility of widening from the bridge all the way out to Manassas may become more than \$200 million. So they're willing to look at that what

[02:52:12] if we decide to use our debt capacity that was approved by the public, that we are able to phase it in a way where we're able to use that money in a certain phase. Appreciate that. Next question is in terms of how to fund it, obviously we've talked about bonding, we've talked about some other things. Can you talk a little bit about how we funded the Route 1 widening? Because to me, that's the closest corollary we have to something that is this big and this ambitious. Well, with the Route 1 widening, sir, as you know, that's been a work that I have started since the beginning of my career here in Prince William County in 2002. Since 2002, we've been widening Route 1 in small

[02:52:50] pieces like they say you know how do you eat an elephant one bite at a time and that's the approach we've been taking at route one uh we've been taking it about a mile and a half to two mile segments at a time that have been costing somewhere between a hundred to two hundred million dollars per segment uh if we want to take that approach in 28 uh we can but it does not provide the relief that you have discussed about you know getting the relief of the six lanes throughout the corridor to get that traffic off, it'll create bottlenecks kind of like we have created on Route 1 in certain areas like in the Cardinal Drive to 234 area.

[02:53:27] But we have funded those with NVTa and Smart Scale funds. That's to answer your second question on the funding. And it's taken many years to do so. It'd be one year of Smart Scale funding, two years of NVTa funding to fund one project. And then we try to fund the next one down the road and then we try to fund the next one down the road And that's, again, taken 20-plus years to do on the Route 1 corridor.

[02:53:49] On this corridor, again, to fund the corridor, it's a very expensive project. It's like Route 1. It's very similar to Route 1, if you understand the business impacts that we're going to be creating here are similar to the business impacts that are created in Route 1. In Route 1, we decided to underground our utilities, and that's going to be the cost of moving some major transmission lines here.

[02:54:10] So it's a very similar approach. We can approach it that way, but again, talking to you today, if we're breaking it up into mile-long segments, this is going to be a 10-, 15-, 20-year project. Thank you, Madam Chair. That's all for now. Supervisor Bailey. Thank you, Madam Chair.

[02:54:27] Rick, I know we're in a strange climate now, and thanks for all your efforts, first of all, you and your team, and working with VDOT to bring forth recommendations to us. and I want to support the endeavors going forward, but what other nontraditional funded resources, seeing that, you know, the federal piece is kind of wonky right now, and, you know, we're working with VI, but what other, can you suggest to us any other nontraditional funding arms that we can use to support this endeavor going forward? Again, I think we can go, I don't know about much about

[02:55:07] nontraditional. I think I would say that the traditional methods of doing this are going out to NVTa and asking for the funds there, like we did before, and we had funding to do the bypass, maybe that funding or more funding can be approved to this. Adding that to the bond funds would probably get us

there, and maybe even working with SmartScale. The only reason I don't like working with SmartScale as much as I like NVTA is a SmartScale project usually makes that project federal, which will make the project cost 20% more and take 20% more, 25% more time to complete.

[02:55:43] So by doing that, you're basically just getting smart scale money to fill in the gap of the money you need to cover a federal job. So I'd like to get NVTA money and local monies to be able to do this in a quicker manner. But again, we don't have the money to pay back the debt financing for it now.

[02:56:00] What I would say to you is that you still have, and I mention it every time I'm up here, but you still have the CNI tax available to you. And that C&I tax would collect enough money to cover this project and maybe some other stuff like transit and other stuff that we're looking for in doing that.

[02:56:15] And that available route is still there, and that would be maybe a little nontraditional to go that route in order to pay the debt capacity on the bonds. Or we could collect that from the C&I tax throughout the years and build the sections as in sub-faces or faces as was mentioned before.

[02:56:32] So I'll go there since you mentioned it. Do you think that the potentiality and the possibility of us applying again to NVTA is a probability? It is a probability, but as you know, NVTA funds projects six years out.

[02:56:47] Yeah. So right now we have already gone through the NVTA cycle. We will be getting an NVTA decision on the six-year program here in the next couple months. So we don't go back to NVTA for another couple years. So when we go back to NVTA in 2028, that funding won't be available until 2034.

[02:57:08] So it's a six-year cycle. So even if we go ask NVTA for those funds, NVTA will not be able to give us those funds until six years past the time of the ask and the request. Okay, and then my last question in reference to something that Supervisor Vega said about our partnering with our regional partners like the great mayor and Fairfax.

[02:57:31] And, you know, can you suggest to us those kind of conversations that we need to put on the table so everyone is a part of the decision, not just Prince Wheaton County? And I think, ma'am, that's what VDOT is trying to do at this point in time.

[02:57:47] That's why they've taken over the design and conceptual design of this project, because they want to make sure that we have the correct and ample conversations that need to be had in order to collaborate together between the four jurisdictions in order to get this project completed. Great, great. Madam Mayor, thanks for your presence.

[02:58:04] All right, thank you so very much. I have a couple more people, but I'm going to go to Supervisor Ingrid first since he hasn't spoken. Thank you, Madam Chair. Hey, Rick, you're here for direction, but I heard you bring up CNI tax. when you leave here today, you need guidance on just pursuing to get this done, too.

[02:58:27] How to pay for it, sir. Okay. That's what I need guidance on mostly because if we can't pay for it, we shouldn't be moving forward. That was my question to you. My comment to this board is clear that everyone sees this as a priority. We don't have a means of funding it. We can't get back into MBTA for a couple of years.

[02:58:45] It sounds like that CNI taxes discussion we need to be having, so I just throw it out there. Thank you, sir. All right. I'm going to go to Bodie and then Vega. Yeah, thank you, Madam Chair. I'd refer to the

strategic supervisor.

[02:59:04] Thank you. I just want to land this ship because Supervisor Victor, you know, said he want direction. I have proposals to answering the four questions that you have here. And then obviously I want to hear from my colleagues if they're kind of aligned with what I'm proposing. But, you know, certainly since the mayor is here, I've been thinking about this.

[02:59:23] And I really do think that we would benefit from establishing a Route 28 committee. and here's why. We're trying to piece this together kind of as we go, and there is never really any true collaboration between the City of Manassas, City of Manassas Park, and Fairfax until like way down the road. And when it's brought to us to make a decision on it, we're trying to catch up. There's so much information, and so I believe that there's value in being a part of these discussions as soon as they begin. And so, Madam Mayor, food for thought, I wish you weren't retiring, but we're going to try to collaborate and do as much as we can before you depart, or maybe you reconsider, who knows.

[03:00:04] But with that being said, the first question is should staff continue to move the project forward? My response is absolutely yes. There's not a world where it's a no. But I do, you know, want to see a cost-benefit analysis that compares the widening to, say, lower cost operational improvements, which is what I think Supervisor Bailey was trying to reference.

[03:00:26] I say that because folks that travel on 28 email our office all the time, and they're like, if we could just synchronize the lights, you know, for starters, that would keep traffic flowing in certain parts along 28. And so I, you know, would like to see something like that in regards to quick improvements, and that, in my opinion, wouldn't really require a significant investment up front.

[03:00:52] Two, will bonds be utilized to fund the project? I would like to see for us to use the 200 million in the 2019 mobility bonds. I understand the NVTa timing restriction that we're under, but I will make the argument every day and every chance that I get that Route 28 is a regional artery.

[03:01:11] It is. And I need to remind people of that. It is. Because we need everybody to come to the table and to help us improve this, you know, congestion on 28 and to get traffic moving. And so if we can get any type of matching funds, you always get credit and praise because of your ability to find money under rocks.

[03:01:31] And so, you know, I think that we need you to do that, to continue to do that, whether it's through matching funds or through grants. You know, every little bit helps. Three, what funding will be used to pay the debt financing? Again, I want to see every approach possible to grants.

[03:01:50] I believe VDOT does have a revenue sharing programs. Yes, Rick? They do, ma'am. Revenue sharing programs only give \$10 million every two years to match with another \$10 million. So for every two years that we do it, we can get \$10 million from VDOT, \$10 million from us, \$20 million.

[03:02:08] Okay. Again, every little bit helps. And then the last question you have for us is should VDOT continue working on preliminary engineering designs? And I will say yes, but I'm also very much um wanting to see what that right of uh way is going to look like like what is actually going to be impacted because right now it's very speculative and i think that once we have something set we'll be able to make a better decision if if this is the the direction that we want to go in just to get to some uh some of your comments number one uh as supervisor uh bode alluded to uh there are some uh intermediate improvements being done as you know uh that

[03:02:47] that we're doing uh intersection uh innovative intersection improvements uh in a couple different locations one that's being uh being done by vdot uh for the city of manassas uh and and uh that's moving forward right now we have talked to our federal partners they have told us that we can move forward with that project and even if we come back and widen and have to take some of that out that they're okay because they feel it's a temporary improvement as it is anyway we also have money from NVTa to do other intersections a little further down the road on Route 28. So there

[03:03:20] will be some interim relief in the next few years that will start being constructed in the Route 28 corridor. Again, those are just intersection improvements and operational improvements. They do not add capacity to this corridor. So what they do is, what you just said, ma'am, they will look at the signals, they will look at the intersections, they will better the intersections to better the flow of traffic, but it doesn't add any capacity, so it doesn't add for the traffic congestion that's there currently that comes up.

[03:03:51] So we will be doing that. We can continue to work with VDOT. I think VDOT's very open to continuing to do this kind of effort. Like I mentioned earlier, I can find the money under rocks. I can go try to get some money from NVTa. It's just the timing. The timing doesn't match up with the timing of what we could do with \$200 million initially Because, again, the \$200 million would come in at the latest in 29, and we would probably not get funding from NVTa unless we got some forward appropriation until 29 at the earliest.

[03:04:23] If not, it would be out to 2034 where it's the actual improvement. Same thing with SmartScale. SmartScale funds are six years out, so anything that we apply for this year for SmartScale, which we already did and did not include the Route 28 corridor, is six years out.

[03:04:39] So anything that we would get for 28 could possibly not be given until 34 or 35. So it's just a timing issue. It's not finding the money. It's just when would we get that money. Again, the bond funds, they are there and available for the board to take advantage of up to 2029 if we do ask for the two extensions necessary, which I know that Dave's here to talk about that perhaps on the two extensions.

[03:05:03] But again, we have to find a way to pay for that debt. And like I said, I suggested to you a couple different methods and what we could do, but that right now, currently, it's not in the CIP. And I'll let David talk a little bit more about that.

[03:05:21] Thanks, Rick. Dave Sinclair, Office of Management Budget, also known as Mr. Fun. I'm sure the board understands this. The projected debt service for widening Route 28 is not in the county executive's proposed five-year plan.

[03:05:40] nor is there a funding source. In terms of existing funding sources, the only way to service the annual debt service, the principal and interest payments for \$200 million currently is NVTa 30% revenue. We've had conversations with the board about this, Mr. Canizales, myself, and others for the past two or three years. Staff does not recommend tying up that revenue to pay debt service for 20 years on \$200 million. The only other alternative is to start

[03:06:20] building that capacity into the five-year plan. But as you've heard from the chief financial officer this morning, as well as our financial advisors, there are debt capacity concerns about the county overall. And as the board is having also considerations for a future parks and open space and library referendum, as well as Route 28, staff will do what the board wants,

[03:06:55] but it is starting to add up, and we'll work with the board, of course, in the future about programming this in the five-year plan. All right, thank you so much. I'm sorry, Mr. Canizales, one of the things that you're mentioning, some of the operational, I believe Senator Rome was the one who did the STAR study to synchronize the lights, correct?

[03:07:15] Do you know anything about this? We did the STAR study, and, yeah, Senator Rome was kind of leading that effort. Again, she also led the effort in trying to get the monies from MBTA in order to do the innovative intersections. So it's these two different innovative intersection projects that will do some operational improvements on the existing corridor, ma'am.

[03:07:34] I was going to ask a question about, you know, can we do another bond, but, again, I just have to say this. I do support this, but I want to be very clear to everyone on the dais. We have a lot of needs and wants. We're going to have to be realistic about what our priorities are. And we're going to have to stick with those priorities.

[03:07:51] We absolutely have to stick with those priorities. Because if we are going to do a bond for parks, libraries, potentially, and indoor sports, that's going to be a lot of money. If we're going to say we want to put a lot of money in reserves, we're going to have to actually really prioritize. And I'm asking everyone ahead of next week, you know, I reach out to people.

[03:08:11] Let's talk. I generally don't come in on Fridays. I will meet folks on Fridays because I want to get a sense of where folks are because we're going to have to make tough discussions. In order to have things, we have to pay for them. We have to have the money to pay for them.

[03:08:27] And so I want people to think about that as we look at potential tax relief, as we look at things that the county needs, as we look at things we simply want. We are going to have to have some financial discipline. So tough choices. With that, Supervisor Bode.

[03:08:44] Thank you, Madam Chair. I appreciate the bead you're taking there. A couple more questions, Rick. Yes, sir. As part of the scoping, and I know that VDOT is still sort of really sizing this out, are we going to look at the parallel road of Mathis Avenue and Old Centerville Road as part of this?

[03:09:01] No, sir. Or not? Okay. Appreciate this. I think that as we talk about Sue Ras Vega's idea around having sort of a joint 28 committee, I think that's something that folks should think about, maybe as a separate project, but knowing that that's another stretch of road right along parallel that is going to be affected by this one way or another.

[03:09:18] So I just wanted to leave that. I also like that idea. So I just wanted to say that a joint committee makes a lot of sense. I know that Loudon and Fairfax did it on other parts of the corridor way further down towards Dulles. So it's not unheard of. My other question is, you know, we're talking about trying to fund it.

[03:09:34] Can you talk a little bit about the opportunity for maybe a transportation district or a CNI district that's only sort of for a contiguous area around this to help pay for it? Sure. As you know, a transportation district, we've done a few projects this way where we have taxed the local businesses on what the improvements will be.

[03:09:57] We have done that for both the Prince William Parkway in the east end towards the Miniville side. And we also did it towards the parkway out in the west end on the Brentsville interchange to Sudley

Manor interchange area as well. That's something that we haven't done in about 20 years, though.

[03:10:15] And the necessary funds for this project compared to the necessary funds that we needed for those projects, it's just a lot different. It's a very big number here, and trying to tax and pay that off in a 20-year frame is almost like paying off the \$200 million bond, if you understand.

[03:10:35] So I'm not sure where that would lead to. On the CNI district, I know that that's been talked about. You know, as a county, we'd like to see the CNI tax be all over the county and be able to do different things with it. But the CNI district would only tax those businesses within that district.

[03:10:53] So would that generate enough funds to do this entire project rather than countywide? I just don't see it. But Dave, again, Mrs. Sinclair could tell me different. But it's just that, again, by making that district, you would just be taxing those people around that area.

[03:11:09] and I'm not sure if the funding is enough to cover the amount needed for this project. Sure, and I appreciate that, Rick, and I wasn't thinking about it being an all-encompassing that's the one silver bullet to do it. To me, to the earlier point, you're looking at sort of combining different funding sources and, frankly, making a Frankenstein's monster of different ways to do it.

[03:11:28] I just throw that out there as a possibility, knowing that I know that some folks have sort of concerns about CNI, so just broadly, because it's sort of countywide, we're not really talking about sort of specific benefits here and there, But with this, I think there's a much more tangible thing to go to talk to folks about and really advocate for how it will improve everyone's quality of life and access to businesses and what have you if folks are able to flow better and have better sort of visibility into that corridor.

[03:11:55] I completely understand and agree if that's something that the board would like to do. The other thing I would just add to this, because you mentioned again the 28 committee that was brought up by Supervisor Vega. I will bring this to VDOT. I'll actually say that we had this conversation. They're probably aware that we're having this conversation right now, but we'll bring that to VDOT and see if maybe we can start that committee through this design process.

[03:12:17] That way we can start maybe how we did, if you remember how we did the initial bypass, where we had a steering committee that kind of led the effort, and then we had a technical committee that kind of did the work, right? And maybe that's something I can bring up to VDOT that we can start, and that way we can start this 28 committee that sounds like a good idea.

[03:12:35] Appreciate it. And just the last thing I'll say, and I alluded to earlier, is as we talk about this, I really hope that as part of the scoping of this and as they continue to design and what have you, they really look at this as a transit-oriented corridor. Because the last thing, frankly, from my position we want to see is just another one.

[03:12:51] There's widened the road, and there's no really thought about how this interacts with connectivity around transit, bike pad, all these other multimodal things that you and your department have been really leaning in on over the years. This is not 2002. This is now 2026, where everyone acknowledges with all the studies that have been done, the BRT, other things, that if we're going to do this right, it has to be a multimodal corridor, and I hope that's part of the work.

[03:13:14] It will be part of the work, and we'll also make it part of the work of the Yorkshire Small Area Plan, which will guide this design as well. All right. Is there anyone else? I'll say, Madam Chair, if I can, just

to Supervisor Vega's point, if there is an interest in moving forward with a 28 committee, this is certainly within scope for the interjurisdictional.

[03:13:36] And so if there is an interest, then we could certainly come back and put that on agenda for some discussion. Supervisor Vega. Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm not opposed to it. It's just that this topic takes so much time. But again, I don't want to have to establish something else.

[03:13:53] I get it. I think that we should give it a try. um madam chair i do not have any objections again fairfax is going to need to have a seat at the table if we're going to talk about that yeah so they're not a part of that that committee and and there's so many other things too that us city of manassas and city of manassas park have to discuss as much as i hate to stand up something else because we need fairfax at the table yep and i would say that they're really our most important player in some respects because making sure that we cooperate. I don't want to have a repeat of anything else.

[03:14:27] And Madam Chair, I'm not sure if the idea of us doing it through the VDOT process of design and having, like I mentioned earlier, that committee kind of lead the effort as VDOT and the jurisdictional staff work the technical part of it, I think that we can do it through them and they can kind of bring everybody together in this inter-jurisdictional way to lead this effort and have those conversations, those hard conversations at that level that will trickle down to the technical folks to let us know what we need to do and guide us in what we need to do.

[03:15:01] The only follow-up that I have, Rick, is how is that different than what we've tried in the past? Again, it's a different corridor, different plans coming into effect, and it would be us bringing together all the groups. Again, this would be, when I'm talking about the steering committee, I'm talking about someone like yourself and the mayor and the other representatives of the counties coming together to talk about this that would guide the technical efforts of the staff underneath.

[03:15:30] So you would be kind of like our guiding star up with VDOT kind of bringing us all together, and then VDOT and us would implement what you're looking for. I'm fine. All right, well, I guess we can try that approach.

[03:15:48] We'll discuss it with VDOT. There's an issue there, or they come up with an issue. we'll come back to the board and let you know, and then we can go about it a different way. Thank you. Thank you, ma'am. All right. Anything else you need from us, Rick, or? Yes, we'll continue on.

[03:16:05] My plan and what I heard here today, just to reiterate and make sure that we're all on the same page, is the fact that we will continue to work with VDOT in doing this design. We will try to get VDOT to establish a 28 steering committee made up of elected leaders from the jurisdictions that could come together and discuss this that will give guidance to the technical aspect or the technical committees underneath it.

[03:16:30] We will continue to look for funding sources as applications come through in the next couple years and the opportunities for MVTA and smart scale funding sources come up. We'll be looking for those as well as some non-conventional, as Ms. Bailey mentioned, non-conventional ways of funding the project.

[03:16:49] We will continue to look if there's a way to get the debt service, and you will continue to discuss if there's a way to get the debt service needed to fund the \$200 million. And if there's a way to do that, we

will look with VDOT to see how we can face a project to take advantage of those funds. Is that where I'm at?

[03:17:10] Supervisor Vega? I just want to know what the timeline then now looks like. Well, again, it all depends on, you know, which way we go. There's some decisions to be made here. We've got to talk at a technical committee. You've got to determine whether you do want to take out the debt service and there's some funding sources that we might want to implement to be able to take care of that debt service, we'll be able to do things sooner rather than later.

[03:17:29] If we go about it the traditional way of going out for grants and going out for additional funds or doing districts or that sort of thing, that's probably going to take a little longer and we'll probably be looking at funding this facility in the 2030 time frame to be able to move forward from there.

[03:17:45] Yeah, I think it's important just to reiterate, without a clear funding source, this becomes very difficult. And so we'll certainly go back and be as creative as possible and always come back to the board with some recommendations.

[03:18:06] But it will be difficult without a clear source of funding for this project. I agree with you, Mr. County Executives. Can I just say one more thing? All right. I know, I know. You know, to Supervisor Bodie and Ann Gray's point about the CNI tax, you know, I have mixed feelings about it.

[03:18:24] But when you come back to us, or maybe this is something that we can touch again in our Finance and Budget Committee at our next meeting or whenever. Can we get some projections? Because while we talk about designating a certain percentage, I mean, the price tag is quite large, right?

[03:18:41] And if we're talking about \$10 million, \$12 million, you know, it seems like we're never going to get there. And so I just want to make sure that when you do come back to us with options, that we have what's projected in terms of revenue that may be generated.

[03:18:58] And I'll look again to Mr. Sinclair, but what I was insinuating when I mentioned the C&I tax was that the C&I tax gives you a mechanism to pay back the debt. So it would be something that you can use that amount of money to pay back the debt that we're taking out up front for the facility.

[03:19:14] Okay, gotcha. Thank you. Mr. Sinclair would like to add to that. Yeah, just for perspective only, annual debt service on \$200 million would be about \$17, \$18 million a year, roughly, in principal and interest costs, just for perspective only.

[03:19:39] Mr. Funn? His name is Mr. Funn? Mr. Funn. Mr. Funn. Now, this is going to be an expensive project. again to everyone you know ahead of our markup next week we're really going to have to think about what are our wants what are our needs and taxes do pay for things that we want tax taxes pay for things that we need so we're going to have to i'm not going to lie i'd love to target that meals tax and i'm meeting with some restaurant owners but i'm going to have to be really judicious about that and even though looking through this recap packet what are the things that we're going

[03:20:16] to have to say no to there's going to be a lot of people who are mad don't like us i don't have any friends I don't care but I'm just saying you know we have to make some really hard decisions we have to make some hard decisions and I would mention to you ma'am as Mr. Sinclair has mentioned that the only funding source that we have available now to do anything with is the NVTa 30 percent but as you know

and as it's coming forward to you in the next item OmniRide is looking to get funded as well and they're looking to dip into that 30 percent fund as well so there's a lot of needs

[03:20:48] There's a lot of competing things and projects for these funds and just making sure you're aware of that. All right, Mr. Sinclair. Yes, and I apologize to the board for not being clear on this earlier.

[03:21:05] It's unlikely that the debt service associated with the \$200 million of voter-approved debt on Route 28 would impact the FY27 budget. We're talking about the out years of the five-year plan.

[03:21:21] I'd rather, I don't think staff would ask the board that this is going to throw the upcoming discussions on the budget in turmoil. It will not. Okay, thank you. All right, you look scared.

[03:21:42] Any additional questions or can we allow Rick to relax? Run, run for your life. All right, we are going to move on to agenda item number nine and that is county attorney time. Thank you, Madam Chair, members of the board.

[03:21:57] This afternoon in closed session, We will have consultation with legal counsel and briefings by staff members pertaining to the acquisitions of real property for a public purpose to include parks and recreation where consultation, briefing, or discussion in an open meeting would adversely affect the bargaining position, litigating posture, or negotiating strategy of the public body.

[03:22:16] And then we will have consultation with legal counsel and briefing by staff members pertaining to actual or probable litigation with the related legal advice regarding public nuisance and possible legal claims in response to the manufacturer, marketing, sale, and distribution of opioids, and regarding a potential settlement with Associated Pharmacies, Inc. and American Associated Pharmacies, J.M. Smith Corporation, Louisiana Wholesale Drug Company, Inc., Morris & Dixon Company, North Carolina Mutual Wholesale Drug Company, Inc., and United Natural Foods, Inc., including its subsidiaries, Super Value, and Advantage Logistics,

[03:22:53] the six remnant defendants, all for the role in the distribution, manufacture, and sale of the pharmaceutical opioid products, where consultation, briefing, or discussion in an open meeting would adversely affect the bargaining position, litigating posture, or negotiating strategy of the public body. These items are appropriate for closed session, pursuant to 2.2-3711A378 of the Virginia Code.

[03:23:15] Move for approval. Second. It's been properly moved and seconded. Let's go ahead and take our vote.

[03:23:33] Unanimous. All right, Supervisor Bailey, did you? Yes, I do, Madam Chair. Thank you so much for indulging me. I just want to take an opportunity to recognize my new appointee that will be approved later on after we come back later on tonight. Mr. Russell Young, thank you for coming in.

[03:23:49] We appreciate your service, sir. Thank you. We forgot to note he is a member of the Dumfries Town Council. So thank you for joining us. All right, Mr. Schroeder, we're going to have some fun. It's up to you. Thank you very much, Madam Chair, members of the board.

[03:24:05] So with item 10A, we're going to have a presentation. This is our budget work session item or presentation from Dr. Bob Snyder, and this is OmniRide's proposed budget. Thank you, Madam Chair, members of the County Board of Supervisors.

[03:24:25] So we are here today to present to you on our budget, but first thing I wanted to do before turning the floor over to our Chief Financial Officer, Mr. Phil Perella, is just give you kind of a rundown of

where we are in some recent initiatives. First and foremost is last year was very interesting for us with the federal return to work after about a five-year period of the COVID pandemic.

[03:24:45] We adapted our services extremely well. We had some severe overcrowding out of Pentagon, et cetera, but our planning team, fortunately, very wonky, which is very appreciative when it comes time to looking at the granular impact of trips, et cetera. We were able to restore some eliminated trips out of the Gainesville and Lakeridge corridor and have maximized grant funds, And it's a really good example of how we use state dollars to expand our footprint to Front Royal.

[03:25:11] But that Front Royal route, that Warrington route, stops in the Gainesville district. And it stops right there at the university route. And it loads up with more residents from Prince William County traveling into D.C. So we're, again, using state-level funding to provide services right here in Prince William County.

[03:25:28] And we have ongoing system-wide growth. It's not just the express routes. We have this on our routes that we operate in Dale City, that we operate in Lake Ridge, etc. We also launched our transit app. And you say, well, real-time tracking, that should be easy. Not when you have a 1,500 square mile service footprint from Front Royal to D.C., from D.C. to below Fredericksburg.

[03:25:50] It's a very large service area. It makes it more complex. But now we have that operating successfully. You can track your bus, your trip. It's not theoretical. But it also, in early or mid-summer, we'll be launching real-time surveys from passengers. They can tell us real-time how full the bus is, is it clean, et cetera, how is the shelter, how is the bus stop, things of that nature.

[03:26:13] One of the other important things we've established is an unlimited ride pass for commuters at \$285. We target this to be around 90% of what the federal government allotment is. And the reason we do this in a monthly pass is, for example, in fall when the federal government had it shut down, we did not lose revenue.

[03:26:30] When we had a Monday a few weeks ago where we were threatening tornadoes and a lot of people did work from home that day, OPM shut down, etc., we received our full slate of revenue. When we had the Ice-Mageddon for the month of January into February, we did not see a dip in revenue.

[03:26:46] So it's very beneficial in that we have established and consistent funding patterns and that pays dividends over and over, plus it also encourages that utilization of services. Because that way, for example, if you're paying by the trip at the end of the month, people might look to slugging instead of coming out of their pockets in the Gainesville District or in Lake Ridge or out of the Potomac District, et cetera, including Woodridge.

[03:27:09] So it's one of the things that we've done. It encourages that use, but we also have to maintain our facilities and we have to maintain our equipment. Two major projects that have impacted us operationally, it's impacted our workflow, et cetera, have been our stormwater management and bus yard. These are multi-million dollar projects that have created a tremendous, tremendous amount of staff attention and direction.

[03:27:31] And so while we're taking care of our infrastructure in the present and making sure we're maintaining a state of good repair, we're also looking to the future, working closely with the Department of Rail and Public Transportation inside the Virginia Department of Transportation to do regional coordination collaboration, talking with our partners at Fairfax County, active participant in the DMV

Moves program, which I believe you were briefed on in the past few weeks, active involvement with SJ28, which was a joint Senate and House of Delegates funding package to look at how we could fund transit in the near term.

[03:28:04] Unfortunately, that did not get passed through General Assembly. However, we are constantly working and trying to identify not only how can we fund our organization, how can we continue to expand services and meet needs, but also look to the future and how the county is changing. A great example of that is we are very active in the innovation district.

[03:28:22] We do not have any localized services there. We don't have any commuter express services there. However, George Mason University has approached us. We are now part of their SciTech Campus Advisory Board, and we're also part of the innovation district. So they're recognizing the opportunity and what is forthcoming.

[03:28:39] So with this, I'd like to turn the floor over to Phil Perella, who is our chief financial officer, been with us for now about four years and has a very, very strong understanding and approach to how we fund our operation. Mr. Parilla. That's okay. Thank you, everybody. I would just want to start off with how our budget process, how we started our budget process. What we do is work with our commission going back into the fall. We try to get out very early, set clear expectations of what it is that we think we're going to need and try to do. But our budget proposal always start with a continuation of the exact same service levels as they are today.

[03:29:17] Then what we do is we provide a variety of options where if additional funding were to become available, how could we enhance services as well as show root by root what the expenses of the services are. So if we need to potentially reduce services to balance our budget, we lay out what those options would be as well so we can delineate sort of between the various fund sources.

[03:29:37] Some routes are 100% state funded, as we'll talk about. They wouldn't necessarily save the county money. But other routes, they would save the county money, so we try to break that stuff out. But we really try to get out very early in the fall, set clear expectations of what we need, and be consistent with those throughout the process.

[03:29:54] So jumping right into it, here's a look at our operating revenues. A couple things I'd like to highlight and point out here right away is the passenger revenue has increased pretty significantly for us. As Bob has mentioned, the return to work has taken place, and that has been very, very helpful.

[03:30:09] I do want to point out that because these commuter routes that are charging these fares are roughly half funded by Prince William County and half funded by the state, those fares get reimbursed half to Prince William County and half to the state. So that's just part of the obligation of receiving those grant-level funds.

[03:30:28] What you will see with those is that in that state grant, there's a slight reduction in that number, and that works with what I just said, is that we have to reimburse them for those funds that they provide for the services. So as a result, we use less of what is technically the grant itself and more of the customer's share of that.

[03:30:45] And then moving into the jurisdictional subsidies, which is obviously a significant part of our budget. In the operating side, we are asking for roughly \$700,000 more. You see the Prince William County figure here. That does assume that the budget is approved as has been proposed at Prince William County.

[03:31:02] But you can clearly see the other jurisdictions and what their support levels are as well. Obviously, this is Prince William County's system overwhelmingly, and I think that everyone here has been around or has heard from us enough to understand that. On the expense side, if you highlight the blue area here, that is our bus service contract.

[03:31:22] That is the operators. That is the mechanics. That is the management for Keolis, who we have to contract with in order to provide these services. But when you factor that in with the van pool services as well as our fuel, we're about 75% of our expenses are really for putting services out onto the street.

[03:31:40] We do have a variety of other expense items in here there to support information technology and a variety of other, you know, services that we need for our enterprise systems and keeping our facilities maintained and all those items as well. On the capital side of things, this changes year to year depending on our fund sources.

[03:31:58] This particular year happens to be a heavier federal side. We've been using more federal grants. Actually, Prince William County has allowed us to reap the benefit of some CMAQ funding that is helping us replace some vehicles. And there's jurisdictional match in there as well as some state match.

[03:32:15] What we do try to do is limit the jurisdictional share of the capital to match wherever possible so we can really leverage the funds that are coming in from the jurisdictions and to get the most out of those. But on the expense side of this, we are what you would probably expect. we're replacing vehicles is you know five commuter buses six of the local buses as well as some paratransit microtransit vans we also have some shelter projects that are being done looking to replace our shelters that have you know well past their useful life as well as some facility rehab and improvements as bob has mentioned at the transit center there are some you know it's an old it's becoming 30 year old facility there's work that needs to be done there and we're trying

[03:32:53] to keep up with the preventative maintenance on that and and doing our best to keep that facility in a state of good repair. So getting right down to, you know, the last three years, we have been in a very similar situation here, and that the motor fuels tax is no longer keeping up as the sole source of local jurisdictional funding for the local share. And as you can see, the second line of the motor fuels tax earnings, these numbers come from Virginia State Department of Taxation. You know, we're relatively consistent figures there, so it's not growing along with collective bargaining ingredients, along with maintenance, along with inflation, all those other sorts of things and you see from the last three years here where Prince William County has

[03:33:32] and what fund sources were used to help us balance the budget in those three years we are asking for about a million dollars more than last year it's about a half a million more than two years ago and we acknowledge that that you know creates prioritization exercises for you we certainly appreciate you deliberating those on our behalf and you can see here the various fund sources that the commission has approved to use to fund this but we do also want to point out that you know 2025 we had 30 million approved it went down to 28.9 and now it's about 28.9 that we're asking for again so we're trying very hard to be consistent manage our expenses bring grant

[03:34:10] funding in the customer revenue side of things has really helped out and has helped let that be a more level number and so we are doing the best that we can to manage those those figures and this just gives some perspective here there is a lot of detail on this but as i said before this This is Prince William County's system, right?

[03:34:27] When we talk about the local share, you can see Prince William County funds the overwhelming majority of it. There is participation from the cities of Manassas and Manassas Park for some of those western routes. And the southern jurisdictions, Stafford, Spotsylvania, Fredericksburg, they fund about 1% on the administrative side.

[03:34:44] They really just receive 100% state-funded grants. They don't receive any local services in that regard. They do have, not from us anyways, they do have some local services that come through FXB Go, but we do not participate in those.

[03:35:01] And so just want to, again, lay out the total jurisdictional subsidy requests, you know, from all the jurisdictions. And, you know, we are, again, we're trying to stay in line and be, you know, as flat as we can be. And, again, the customer revenue increase has certainly helped offset some of that.

[03:35:19] We do what we can to manage our expenses and, you know, try to bring good budgets forward. And so, you know, it is certainly it is more than what was approved last year. It is a little bit less than was two years ago. But again, we're just, you know, we are trying to manage our expenses and keep things in line year over year.

[03:35:37] We understand these are difficult prioritization exercises. So moving forward, just going to touch a little bit on the services. What you see on this chart here is not meant to get into these line by line necessarily. But what these are are potential service enhancement options, and they show what the cost of those would be.

[03:35:55] There is a lot going on there. Hopefully that information has made it to you. But the idea here is not that we have not proposed any of these in our budget. But what we are saying is that if funding is available, we are ready. And here's the things that we would do if that were to be the case. And so we just want to make sure that we point those things out.

[03:36:12] And, you know, we work on that list year over year. And we just want to make sure that we have something on the ready should the opportunity present itself. Getting into the local roots and why this is going to be important is because the local roots are entirely funded by Prince William County. And what we want to point out here is that some of our routes, you know, they have lower trip frequency.

[03:36:33] So we sometimes use the term lifeline-level services. And what we're referring to here is some of these routes that you see with a lot of clocks there. And what that's basically showing is that a bus is coming every 90 minutes. And when a bus comes every 90 minutes, that is a lifeline level of service, and the productivity is likely going to match that lifeline level of service.

[03:36:52] We have reorganized, and likewise, by the way, with the other routes, as the higher you go. 35-minute frequency, there's 30 people per trip. That's 100 people per trip that are being circulated out on that Route 1 route. We have restructured our local routes recently.

[03:37:09] We're approaching about a year and a half of that. We are going to be going in and digging in on these, looking at each route to see what makes sense to continue, where it makes sense to reallocate, where we could potentially look at certain segments that are doing very well and certain segments that might not be doing as well and what options potentially could be available for those.

[03:37:26] So we did this, but we wanted to give them a year or two, and we're in that time frame, and so we'll be making that evaluation coming up this summer and looking at potential options for what would

make the most sense moving forward. And you see here on these local routes, there is one trip on the Route 1 that is funded on a grant, but overwhelmingly these services, these local services, are all funded by Prince William County.

[03:37:49] And so if we were in a situation where we were looking to reduce services as a way of balancing budget, this would be one grouping that we would potentially look at. Our commission has chosen in the past to not focus on these because they oftentimes represent lifeline-level services for constituents.

[03:38:04] And so the folks that maybe utilize these routes perhaps might not have another option to get to their job or their school or the hospital, et cetera. So they have not been historically looked at in that regard in the past. These routes right here represent routes that are both locally and grant-funded commuter services.

[03:38:23] And this is where in the past, if we've needed to potentially make some reductions to balance the budget, we've looked here. As Bob has talked about, we've utilized state funds to help get to commuter lots within Prince William County from outside. That helps the bottom line here. We've done that where we can.

[03:38:39] And we would try to find other creative options, if necessary, if we looked at these routes for potential reduction to balance the budget. And so, you know, you see here it is overwhelmingly funded. These are Prince William County funded routes. And so, you know, there would be savings should we need to go down this path in the future.

[03:38:59] And then this last grouping here, just to show, you know, we do have a variety of routes that are 100% state funded. They would save Prince William County nothing if we were to reduce those. And so but we still want to show them here and want to make sure it's clear that there are grouping of routes here that, you know, frankly, don't don't help the bottom line in terms of the local jurisdictional subsidy.

[03:39:17] So we just wanted to, you know, want to share that here to make sure that we're showing every route that is as available to us. So moving forward here, you know, we will incorporate what comes forward from the Prince William County budget and put that into our budget and move on to our public hearing process in May.

[03:39:35] After that, we bring the full budget with public comment to our commission in June. And then hopefully it gets approved at that point. And then July 1st would be the beginning of our fiscal year, and we would start the process. You would hear from us again in September, where we, again, would start the next budget cycle, and we would go from there.

[03:39:54] So with that, I'll certainly entertain any questions at this point. All right. Thank you so very much. I was just going back and trying to look at some page numbers. But one of the things I just wanted to be clear on, because I didn't fully capture that we're paying more, but some of the other jurisdictions that are paying into this are paying a little less.

[03:40:13] Why is that? It depends on the type of service that's being offered. In one case with the city of Manassas and Manassas Park, what we had budgeted for flexible services, which is paratransit and our microtransit services, those are on-demand services.

[03:40:28] So, frankly, our budget was more than we'd proven out that we needed. When we reduced those figures, it provided them, the savings for them, frankly, stands out a little bit more than it would in Prince William County. But Prince William County also did receive some of those savings. All right. So slide 12.

[03:40:46] Manassas Park Local. You're saying that, and I look up that route. Does that route go into Prince William County at all? It goes into Prince William County? Yes, it does. It looks like what? Passenger per trip is around 8, and then it's 90 minutes between buses.

[03:41:02] Is that considered a lifeline service? Yes. When we're operating service every 90 minutes, the best perspective I can give is imagine your car only worked every 90 minutes, and you typically have to walk to between a half mile to a mile to get your car. So anyone who can ride, has no other options, is riding.

[03:41:20] Other individuals who have other solutions, whether it's using an Uber, a Lyft, et cetera, they're using those other resources. So this is considered that lifeline volume of service when a route comes every 90 minutes. All right. So, Paige, slide six, I just want to know, what is driving up the jump in professional services from last year to this year?

[03:41:43] Yeah, we have a variety of things going on. We have a transit asset management plan that we are required to do as part of the federal government. We also have to have an upgrade on our financial software, and we need to do additional, and this also plays with the other supplies and services as well.

[03:41:59] We have a Title VI survey that needs to be done, and we also, I mentioned the transit asset management plan, and I think that's it, yeah. So a variety of things in that regard that we need to do to be compliant in most cases. All right, then my other question. What is OmniRide doing to capture new riders other than commuters?

[03:42:19] We are everywhere. And one of the most important things that we are doing is we are meeting in local communities beyond just our traditional focus on the commuter express. We are meeting with the Hispanic community. We have dedicated outreach in the Dumfries community. We are all over the region in terms of growing, offering new services. We've done things. One of our most important things we did last year was called One Perfect Route. We're going granular, looking at individual routes one by one to identify how can we improve timing, getting away from traditional hard-to-read bus schedules, posters, promotion. And one of the other things we do is we offer a zero fare local service,

[03:42:54] which radically increases ridership. So it removes a barrier. And it's one of those things that we've presented in years past, opportunity to look at local fares, not look at local fares. We even partnered with the Department of Rail and Public Transportation, that if we were to introduce a fare, what would happen in terms of our allocations if ridership were to decrease?

[03:43:14] If there's an elasticity model that when you charge for something, you get lower utilization, we would actually end up losing money in some of our grant allocations as a result of that. So we focus on growing ridership. We say lovingly, cheeks in seats. We are very, very focused on growing the number of passengers who utilize all of our services, local as well as express.

[03:43:35] But the express and the commuter buses are the ones where you typically get revenue from, correct? Yes, ma'am. Current fare is \$11 per one-way trip, but we do have the unlimited ride pass for \$285, which is price.

[03:43:50] It was set at 90% of the federal allotment for commuters. The federal government has since increased that, so we're going to be examining that over the next couple of months to see if we maybe make an adjustment. but it is still much, much below if you were to pay \$11 per one-way trip for a 22-day work month.

[03:44:08] It's still a fantastic deal for any express rider. And real quick, this is a hard one, but, you know, if you have the information, you know, what percent of your operational costs, you know, whether it's professional services, advertising, that aren't directly tied to a specific route?

[03:44:26] I would say 75% of the costs are directly tied to services, whether it's the van pool, our fuel costs or the bus contractor costs and the maintenance associated with that there there's the salary and benefit component of staff and then all the other support functionality like the facilities and those things as well all mixed into that 25 gotcha thank you very much i will go to bode thank you madam chair thank you phil and dr snyder for the presentations good to see you a couple questions so phil um you talked a little bit about the motor fuels funding earlier and That's been sort of the bedrock funding for Prince William County to put into the system.

[03:45:03] So can you talk a little bit about the history of that, the model that's been used for OmniRide? I know that a number of years ago the General Assembly established sort of a floor to make sure it wasn't as volatile. But could you talk a little bit about that and any recent attempts to fix any issues with it? I'm actually going to refer that to Bob because he worked directly on that issue, if that's okay.

[03:45:20] Yes. When I came to the organization low nine years ago, the number one issue was the motor fuels tax. And immediately we went to work to try to establish the floor. At the time, it was tied to a percentage of the cost of gasoline. So right now, we would be rolling in money.

[03:45:35] If we were to go back in 2017 time frame, we would have a lot of money flowing in. But when the price of fuel would drop, it was famine. So very much feast or famine, and it was very hard and very difficult to predict. By putting in the floor you referenced, we now had a baseline that it wouldn't go below, I think at the time, \$2.83 per gallon was that baseline.

[03:45:55] At the 2020 General Assembly, they unhinged it from that feast or famine model altogether and made it really tied to the index to inflation. So they established a baseline of whatever inflation is. Now, it's not the inflation of fuel. It's the inflation of the consumer price index.

[03:46:11] So when we start collecting more money, it's because inflation has grown. So it's designed to be a dollar amount that would grow if consumption increased. However, any growth you get is tied to inflation. What we have identified since the pandemic is motor fuels consumption in Prince William County and the surrounding areas is flat.

[03:46:32] We are, in essence, pumping the same number of gallons of fuel today as we did in 2019. So as a result of that, because we have not had a change in the amount of consumption, and really what's happening is any increases are tied to inflation, we are actually at a flat revenue stream.

[03:46:51] And we're leaving around \$22 million per year in formerly collected motor fuels tax on the table. Just because it's a combination of the rise of electric vehicles, the rise of telecommuting region-wide, it also has to do with more fuel-efficient cars.

[03:47:06] That is all part of it, and we do have the cost of living for our workforce. And as Phil mentioned, 75% of our costs are directly tied to delivering those services. So it's a disproportionate element of revenue. So even if we collect an extra million dollars due to inflation, it's going right out the door to the inflationary components of delivering that service.

[03:47:26] So we're not actually backfilling any holes. We're not even pothole filling. It's just we're just maintaining exactly what we currently have. There have been efforts over the past few years to tackle that. There has not been any success to look at that. And quite frankly, the state has identified that motor fuels tax is not the way forward.

[03:47:45] And we've discussed DMV moves, SJ-28, the complexities of some of those things that have been discussed at our commission meetings of how to fund that that aren't tied to motor fuels tax. But nationwide, everyone is identifying that motor fuels tax is just kind of like trying to fund the post office on a postage stamp.

[03:48:04] Email radically changed it. EVs are doing a similar thing in the motor fuels industry. Thank you. Second question, looking at sort of state funding versus local funding, I know that you all have done a pretty good job sort of seeking those state grants and what have you.

[03:48:21] But frankly, an overwhelming amount of those grant and state funding goes towards routes that are outside of Prince William County, right? You have your Stafford route, Spot C, Front Royal that's newer. How do these services benefit Prince William County when so many of those folks are going farther and farther out in the rest of the Commonwealth?

[03:48:40] I think that there's two main ways. I think the primary way is that people utilizing those routes are off the roads that Prince William County residents would use, such as I-66 and I-95. So I think that's really the primary way. The additional way is that because we're allowed to charge those contract costs to those grants, it does help spread the cost of the operation out among some of these state grants as well.

[03:49:01] And then third is when we do have the opportunity to have those routes start from outside of Prince William County, but hit a park and ride lot within Prince William County and still charge that to the grant, the residents of Prince William County benefit from those as well. I appreciate that. My last question is you had that chart up of sort of that Madam Chair talked about as well, sort of that differential between frequency of service and ridership.

[03:49:23] Do you all do sort of a benefit analysis of that as we work on frequency, if we're able to get some of these more services in place, how much ridership may grow? Can you sort of talk about that relationship? Absolutely. We do this process on a yearly basis where we look at all these routes.

[03:49:39] What we do know is every route in the system is seeing increased ridership, whether it's a local route or a commuter route. We expect that to continue based on the pace we're going through today. But we will look at all of our routes and determine where it makes sense to maybe ask for an additional investment or where maybe it makes sense to unwind an investment that's not performing as well.

[03:49:58] So this is a yearly process. We typically undertake it in the summertime, and we anticipate doing the same thing again this year. All right, Supervisor Vega. Thank you, Madam Chair. And I agree, Prince William County does pay a good portion while our neighboring jurisdictions pay a lot less than we do.

[03:50:24] I want to start by talking about rising operational expenses. In the presentation, you highlight that we are going to see an increase, a projected increase from \$64.6 million in FY26 to \$69.7 million in FY2027.

[03:50:44] What is driving that \$3.1 million increase? Sure. If you look in that blue line there, you see over \$3 million of it is tied to the bus contract. About \$2 million of that is actually a proposed 100% state-funded route from Culpeper into Union Station, I believe.

[03:51:01] Outside of that, it is essentially the cost of collective bargaining agreements. We do not directly employ those collectively bargained employees, but we do contract with Keolis, but that certainly has an element there, as well as staff as well and those sorts of elements, yes.

[03:51:18] Thank you. The chair referenced slide 12, and I would like for us to go back to it. I just want to make sure that I am reading this chart correctly. So on the left of the chart, it shows how many passengers per trip, and on the right, it shows how many trips per day, correct?

[03:51:35] On the right, what it shows is how many trips come in a certain time frame. So in this particular case, that is one trip for every 90 minutes on that lowest route right there. But it's in one day? No, no, no. Or just? Every 90 minutes. Every 90 minutes. And that is in the peak time frame. So obviously when service is done at the end of the day, those are not running, but in the peak, which we consider to be our most busy times, that's the frequency where the bus will come to each individual stop.

[03:52:00] Gotcha. Thank you for that. So my question is, have we made efforts to perhaps reevaluate low-performance routes? We have done that historically, and in fact, we did just undertake the local route restructuring. that is a again approach we're about a year and a half in and we will be evaluating all those again to see what makes sense we do want to be careful to give a little bit of time to see what marimates and what works and i think that we have the data now to then make these determinations which we intend to do over the summer that's fair uh thank you for that just want to highlight again based on

[03:52:32] the presentation we have um 51 uh dumfries local um and that uh has eight passengers per trip um at what one point um it's over one point almost 1.1 million dollars in local funding right and so i bring this up because then we have uh 67 manassas south that has eight passengers per trip at almost 800,000 um considering the fact that prince william county um has most of the financing um burden i think that it would be in our best interest uh to ensure that we continue down this road to see where we can make certain modifications so that we can perhaps save a bit of money.

[03:53:11] You know, you talked about the services that are 100% grant-funded and how they don't cost anything to Prince William County. Have there been any conversations or considerations about perhaps expanding on those services to, again, save some money?

[03:53:28] So one of the challenges that Prince William County faces is you were ahead of the curve. by decades in comparison to VDOT DRPT, you were funding commuter routes 30 years ago. What happened is when they moved into the I-95 toll lanes and the I-66 toll lanes, all the new funding that comes eligible for services only applies to new services not existing.

[03:53:56] So the challenge that Prince William County now faces, and we've had some very direct conversations with DRPT, the newly appointed director, had a direct conversation about this. So what's able to happen is we're able to launch new services out of Front Royal at zero cost to Prince William County and complete benefit to the state.

[03:54:14] But services that right now Prince William County is paying 100% of, the state is enjoying 100% of the benefit of. So we're asking them to relook at models where as new dollars come available, we can apply them to legacy services. That would require a change in state law. That would require CTB.

[03:54:30] So we have to have appetite for doing that at the state level. But we have an administration that right now is willing to listen. Previously, there was no interest in that for the past few years as we've discussed it. But right now, there's at least open ears to the concept. And we're explaining that what that would do is that would free up those dollars that we're spending on commuter express services to then apply that to the local services.

[03:54:51] The other element, as I cannot stress enough, the dollar amount of the motor fuels taxes provided by the state legislature. You have the power to allocate it, but ultimately it is a state resource. So what the state has done is not given the powers and the tools to collect new dollars.

[03:55:08] And so as a result of that, the other thing we've asked the state to do is please continue to find a mechanism to fill that \$22 million hole that the state has ended up creating by leveraging only the motor fuels tax. So those are ways that we're trying to leverage it. Prince William County should be extremely proud in that you operate the largest system that I can identify on the East Coast that has neither a dedicated funding stream nor general fund investment. We are raising about \$30 million a year off of passenger fares and state grants.

[03:55:41] That's nearly 50% of the entire operation. Then when you look at \$20 million coming in from the motor fuels tax, it's down to about a \$10 million bite. Prince William County operates a state-of-the-art facility right off I-66. We serve, I think, right around 7,000 park and ride spaces in the region.

[03:56:01] We are in every one of your districts, and we are doing it for an outstanding deal. And the Prince William County Board of Supervisors, I joke with Supervisor Angry, after the budget session, you do go behind closed doors and high five. Because Fairfax County is spending a quarter of a billion dollars to do the same thing. \$250 million a year in general fund allocations to do that. And that's because they have to pay for their metro bill, and they have to pay for Fairfax Connector and all the supporting services. So that is one of the advantages that we have, is we leverage a tremendous amount, a disproportionate amount of state and federal resources to bring right here

[03:56:38] to my community, our community. All right, Supervisor Vega, you got one more? Thanks for that. And then the last question that I have is, is there an actual cost-sharing formula? Yes. Okay. When was the last time that was renegotiated?

[03:56:55] We have 2018 was our last survey. We were doing a survey this spring with Manassas and Manassas Park. The history on that is we did a survey every year. We spent about \$50,000 on the survey, and the dollar amount moved less than \$10,000 per year. So we were spending more money on the annual survey than we were getting in the revenue sharing agreement.

[03:57:15] And what is the survey based off of? We survey the passengers in the western part. So that would be Manassas, Manassas Park, and Prince William. So the Route 67, 65, and our microtransit service, and then our Route 60. So we surveyed, asked where you live, and we get all the way down to your address, because you can live out by Colgan High School, and it's a Manassas address.

[03:57:39] So we get granular in terms of that address, and then based upon that, we reallocate the distribution. When the pandemic hit, we had just redesigned our services, so it didn't make sense to do

that. We are now going to broach that this spring. it's budgeted and we wanted to wait till we had our peak ridership to maximize the actual data set and then we bring that in it'll be part of next year's budget proposal thank you all right supervisor angry then bailey thank you madam chair and good evening gentlemen um first of all i just want to comment you know a thriving community has a thriving public transportation system this is

[03:58:14] ours we can only work with it to make it better um going back to slide 12 when we were when we talking about, you know, modifying bus routes. I know we went through that a few months ago. Can you tell me, and I don't know if you noticed, how many times have we done that, at least in your years here, Bob, it's nine years, how many times have we had to modify our routes to actually try to find a better performing route for the passengers? We do it every year. It's part of our annual process. The last time we did a major radical service design was June of 2024. And,

[03:58:52] you know tell the story is typically when you do a major service design you hope to rebound in six months we were optimistic because our growth was was so strong that maybe we you know we did it on a good with dates june 10th 2024 we hope to rebound by labor day instead we rebounded by independence day which is stunning our we didn't believe the numbers to the point that we actually went back and verified and validated the ridership was just that strong and part of that is for example, introducing microtransit. Microtransit is half the cost of big bus. So we deployed microtransit in Dumfries, took those hours, and put them in a new route. So we've been able to

[03:59:30] allocate resources. So Route 51, Dumfries Local, is actually the newest route in the system. So to have eight passengers per hour when you already have a successful Dumfries route is a fantastic number in a low-density area. That is serving the Fetter Park area. And when you look at Prince Williams County's development along Route 234, we look at what are the zoning plans.

[03:59:51] We look forward, what is the development going to be in 24 and 36 months? We do not want to be the icing on the cake. We want to be an ingredient that goes into it. Because what we've learned is, for example, in the Innovation District, you build all that housing right now, everyone who lives in that housing has to have a car. Instead, if there were, for example, transit services there, people could move there with a car or not. But then we become a higher rate of utilization. So when we look to the Fetter Park area, we look to the development of 234, we're identifying places where there are grocery deserts. Dumfries is a grocery desert, not anymore, due to Route 51, due to the

[04:00:28] microtransit option. So now there's multiple access to health care, education, our partnership with Centara, Inova, deep conversations with UVA Health. Those are all things that we're looking at, which is why we really do focus on those routes that do have the lower ridership. They also have the least frequency because we understand our services intimately. If we recognize that a section of a route is not performing and we're already identifying this, we're going to go through and identify which segment is hot, which segment is not, and look at how can we turn the bus around where it's hot and redeploy things like microchance. I only have five minutes. Okay, sorry,

[04:01:07] I apologize. You literally jumped into my second question, but to answer another part of that first one is the fact that when you when you make those changes we get those calls i'm happy that it speeds up faster that people are comfortable because a lot of people get frustrated because you've changed their route and now they got to go a new place because you're trying to get efficiencies out of these buses and i get it and so but you know i i appreciate that to your second piece when you talk about microtransit one

thing that i know for sure and in the neapso district and i'm seeing it in new developments that we're doing is we have deep communities that buses don't go into i was

[04:01:43] really amazed at microtransit because it really did solve a problem of getting a lot of our seniors i'm going to speak to and our large families maybe with kids or whatever or someone in a wheelchair they don't have to get all the way out to the bus stop on the corner we've got microtransit coming in can you tell me a future of microtransit like what is omni-rides plans with microtransit so right now on that list do you have the clicker i do so for example is it before this or after this with the route. Phil knows the slide deck in order. Okay. So for example, in terms of innovation and things we would do immediately, Microtransit Innovation District, Microtransit

[04:02:19] Dale City, Microtransit Lake Ridge Proffer Zone. There's a proffer for development right at Old Bridge Lane, not Old Bridge Road. So if you look at this list, Microtransit in the Gainesville Haymarket area, it's the hottest development area in the community. So we're actually looking at microtransit as a solution we're also looking at are there existing routes and times of day for example we're having a conversation with our planning group we're going to start looking is there a time where we're going to move the microtransit in the evenings and fixed route maybe stops in key areas so we're able to maximize and leverage those resources but what's great

[04:02:53] about it is you don't have to have a cdl it's got a quick cost of vehicle acquisition we're using evs so it's environmentally friendly and it's about half the price because you know we're not we're not running maintenance on big bus where labor is a little bit less expensive because you don't require the CDL so those are the innovations. Supervisor Bailey. Thank you so much Madam Chair and Mr. Rice Chair thank you so much for that micro transit question because it is the way of the future for our communities as we're developing these small area plans and trying to connect people

[04:03:28] to live work and play so that's the wave of the future. My question going back Bob to something you said earlier in terms of the state funding. Are we just as we're going as we are in our budget season now but are we in the midst of what's going on in terms of grant funding what's going on in the GA in terms of getting the funds that we need because I know VRE is and where are we with that just to give us a touch point. We are very very very status quo in terms of there is not new

[04:04:08] money flowing in from the General Assembly to the Department of Rail and Public Transportation, they have something called the Commonwealth Mass Transit Fund. It is like a highway trust fund. It is your standard amount of money that if you pump gas or do whatever, in this instance, it's tied to a blend of taxes at the state level. There's a blend of sales tax as well as other taxes at the state levies that goes into that mass transit fund, and then it's distributed by performance.

[04:04:33] We do well in that. We are actually a very strong performer. It's called Merit. It's a performance measurement program. We perform better than our regional peers, so we're doing well. The problem is there's no new dollars going in, so the size of the pie is stagnant, and the piece that grows might grow by a percent. We're not seeing radical change or impact, so the most important thing we're doing is keeping consistent funding, which is why we're able to deliver that on a consistent basis. The opportunity for leverage and growth is to do things like expand to Culpeper. Well, how does expanding to Culpeper help? Because what we're doing is we're leveraging that service from

[04:05:11] Culpeper up through Warrington, which stops off right there at the university lot. Now that service is being filled with Prince William County residents and taken into D.C. So that is not something

that Prince William County has to fund. We're leveraging 100% state-level resources for that, and we do it better than anyone else in the region. Almost all of our grant applications get approved especially from the state and we're typically in the top five highest scored of the projects so the state recognizes that we are exceptionally valuable partner that we are very

[04:05:45] efficient with our services and we maximize and leverage those state resources on a consistent basis where we are quite frankly is waiting for the general assembly to take action as i mentioned the motor fuels tax is a 22 million dollar hole we've identified that hole and if the general assembly had taken action we'd be in a completely different conversation right now but unfortunately they have not it did not even make it out of committee in terms of because it's went in through both transportation as well as appropriations and the funding package did not make it out of the general assembly it was hb 1179 so the other question i had is um uh in reference to uh when

[04:06:25] you do the surveys could you clarify again what those triggers are to in doing this in doing the surveys yearly because as we're doing land use and transportation projects, you know, and what brought this to mind was what we just discussed about Route 28. And as we're going to grow and revise there, what kind of information, just briefly, what kind of information will you need from the board as it relates to that? And what are the triggers? So the good news is it's already

[04:07:01] funded in last year this current fiscal year's budget it's already been approved there's no action to be taken we're going to take care of that what we do is we collect the data and all we're simply asking is where do you live where that's that's all we ask of the passenger okay because then by percentage and apportionment then the dollar amounts get adjusted between manassas manassas park and prince william county for those three routes i got one more quick question 52 seconds uh we've gotten our our own little omni uber thing going will that impact our budget cycle at all how are we doing with that or is it the only thing it's it's static

[04:07:41] it's it's stacy's we're in good shape okay that's all i need thank you madam chair supervisor gordy thank you madam chair and uh thank you phil thank you bob for for being here and uh giving us this update um just you know uh you know taking a look at just kind of going back to you know what's happening on the development side and you you mentioned innovation um town center uh university village and then we also have you know the you know uh you mentioned culpepper and you have all those the housing that's being built out there but we also have a lot of that traffic come from

[04:08:15] pepper coming up 28. um and so uh in thinking about you know how do you tie that traffic to potentially getting to VRE, you know, at the Broad Run Station, you know, these are also some things that, you know, I think it's how do you tie all this together to support one another from different transit organizations. The other piece, when I look at what's happening with the Innovation District and with what's happening with just kind of as we look at our economic

[04:08:52] development you know part of the challenge that we have in uh right now within innovation park is you know really the lack of places to eat uh so everybody had for lunch have to get in their car and they have to go somewhere else but looking at you know as we start to look at the growth both economically as well as on the residential side within that area um you know it almost seems that we need to start kind of looking at a whole hub and spoke model where people can go to a hub and then launch out from there to different places because right now we're just kind of going in a circle with no necessarily a place to connect.

[04:09:30] And so what are you seeing as sort of as that growth takes place in that area, sort of that approach to further encouraging more use of these resources going forward?

[04:09:46] So I'll tell a story to answer the question. Once upon a time, the center of the universe was Manassas Mall. We pulled the center of the university that hub and spoke out of Manassas Mall to downtown Manassas because we recognized the development. It also brought the buses closer in. It made us more efficient, did all those things.

[04:10:03] Plus, we recognized from a land use and development standpoint how much opportunity there was with Micron, George Mason. And just look at the development just since 2018, 2019, two silos, malarkey. It's not just the classic eight to five.

[04:10:18] It's also weekend. It's entertainment, all of those things. What we're looking at right now is, okay, our hub and spoke is downtown Manassas. Should it be at the George Mason campus? So that's where we're looking in terms of an organization. Maybe it's both. Maybe we do have that downtown footprint for sure.

[04:10:34] But when we look at the connectivity of 234, the work that Mr. Kenizales has done along with VDOT to reconfigure and reduce the volume of traffic lights and the massive backups that occurred from Balls 4 Road. Now, it's Southern Manor. But to work through those kinds of things, we can reduce congestion.

[04:10:51] We can work with George Mason and Micron because they are recruiting out of the Shenandoah Valley. Can we get people on a bus out of Front Royal to bring them all the way to Micron without impacting traffic whatsoever? But it takes them to George Mason, which is really the center of the universe of that innovation district.

[04:11:10] And it's a fantastic partnership, and we're excited to be part of it. Excellent. Thank you very much. All right. We don't have anyone else in queue, so thank you very much for this. we are going to move over onto budget recap Chris is not here but we'll have you guys read your oh there he is alright you moved over you move fast alright Koya time thank you Madam Chair before budget recap I need to declare a personal interest in this matter my wife is a school's employee as a school's employee my wife and I are members of the group which is affected by this matter I will participate in this because I am able to do so fairly objectively in the public interest thank you Madam Chair

[04:11:49] Madam Chair before budget recap I need to declare a personal interest in this matter. My wife is a school's employee. As a school's employee, my wife and I are members of a group which is affected by this matter. I will be participating in this matter because I am able to do so fairly, objectively, and in the public interest.

[04:12:07] Thank you, Madam Chair. All right, Mr. Shorter, the podium is yours. All right, thank you very much, Madam Chair, members of the board. I am Chris Shorter, your county executive.

[04:12:24] I know you all have been sitting through a lot of presentations today, so appreciate very much the time. I'll also say I'll start, as I always do, we were talking at the start of the afternoon about brain trust, and I have absolutely benefited from a great brain trust here in the chamber and certainly out in the assembly area with the leadership team, our cabinet, and, of course, the finance and budget team.

[04:12:51] So I just want to thank them for being at this point in the process. I also want to thank each of you. I know we've had an opportunity at this point to engage a few times since the proposed budget was presented in February. Tonight or this afternoon, we will really talk through where we are now as compared to where we were when we presented the budget.

[04:13:17] Primarily, we'll talk through what has happened in terms of the revenue changes and updates, as well as some of what we've heard from public hearings, public comment time, and from you all individually in our one-on-one sessions.

[04:13:33] I'll also note that this presentation will not include state and federal impacts. I'll just remind each of you that we did include in the proposed budget an additional \$4 million in contingency as proposed for what will be unexpected changes or could be unexpected changes from the state or federal level.

[04:14:01] So to review, and this is, I'll move relatively quickly because I know I want to be sensitive to time. This is a review of what was presented as part of the proposed budget in February. So just as a reminder, we left the tax rate unchanged at 90.6 cents based on a 3.5% assumed appreciation rate.

[04:14:29] We also included a fire levy that was slightly reduced from 0.07 to, from 0.072 to 0.07. And we also recommended a reduction in the mosquito levy by 17.2% or \$2.

[04:14:48] In the table on the right, again, not a stranger to you all. This is what was advertised. Personal property vehicles was advertised at \$350. Personal property general class was advertised at \$4.50, and personal property computer and peripheral at \$4.50.

[04:15:07] We did not advertise food and beverage, but assumed food and beverage would stay the same at 3%. All right, so this slide, again, not a stranger to you all, our five-year financial plan, if you will.

[04:15:26] And so what this slide shows is where we were in February in terms of, oh, I was going to use the pointer, but I will not do that. No, that's okay.

[04:15:45] But you all see it. So general revenue, I'll go down this column in terms of FY27 for general revenue. This is where we started, less the, based on school revenue share, where the school revenue share is. Ultimately, that 836-2 is where we started our county share of general revenue.

[04:16:07] Then we add agency revenue and county resources, agency revenue such as administrative costs associated with HR, county attorney, finance. That added together brings us to a total county revenue and resources available for us to use for this year's budget at that time of \$1.1 billion.

[04:16:31] Our expenditures based on the proposed budget of \$1 billion, along with the county CIP expenditures at \$44,500, that is the debt service that we just talked about, along with one-time costs such as capital reserve.

[04:16:49] And that brings us to the available capacity. This is important because in a few slides we're going to be talking about additional items that were added since the budget was proposed. and we'll be pulling funds from the 545 here listed on the bottom line.

[04:17:06] If you go across the table, this is what we've had to do for every single year for the next five years as part of our commitment to presenting a balanced budget. This is where we were in February as presented.

[04:17:26] Now based on new appreciation assumptions, based on new rates, we have essentially lowered based on the discussions that we've had with the board and certainly that we've heard from community, there's an appreciation that is assumed now, a final assessment of 3.61%.

[04:17:54] And so if the pointer would point, I would, there we go. So can you all see, maybe, yeah. So there we go, 3.6% now. Now we were at 3.5%, as discussed, at 3.6%. If our rates stayed the same at 90.6 cents, that would increase the amount on average that the taxpayer would pay by \$186 versus the 181.

[04:18:26] Based on the board's feedback and what we have heard, again, from residents, we are recommending a two-cent reduction in that amount to \$88.6. And so what that does, instead of the average taxpayer paying \$181,000 as presented in February, or \$186,000 based on the new revenue estimates or real estate estimates, they are going to be paying an additional \$68 over the current year.

[04:19:02] All right, that is a 1.32% increase over current year rates. You also see on this slide where we are with the fire levy, and I'm happy to take any questions there.

[04:19:19] And we did not make assumptions, any assumptions about changes to C&P. So C&P is still in our revenue estimates here. We did not make, even though the C&P was advertised at 450, we are still, our numbers show revenue associated with the 415.

[04:19:40] All right. In terms of this slide, this is really a depiction of where we are with the new assumption. So again, assuming an 8.66 rate, our revenue increases by \$112,000.

[04:20:05] That is 64, based on a school revenue share, that would be \$64,000 for schools and \$48,000 going to the county. And that is where essentially where we are now based on the new rate.

[04:20:20] All right. So back to the the earlier slide where we talked about the five forty five that fell to the bottom line in February and the forty eight thousand that fell to the bottom line based on the new rate.

[04:20:36] What we are adding to the budget for the board's consideration based on an audit for cash proffers is a development services fiscal specialist. This came out of the audit that the audit committee and the board saw last month related to cash proffers.

[04:20:59] That is one FTE valued at \$100,000. We are also recommending an increase of an FTE for legislative affairs. This is funded currently as a temporary employee.

[04:21:14] Given the complexity in the work that we do in Richmond to make sure that you all are prepared and the increased attention and influence that decisions in Richmond make here in the county, we are recommending an increase to a full-time FTE to better support the board with legislative affairs.

[04:21:38] Also, increasing board salary by 4.5%. This is consistent with what we have done this year or recommended this year for general service employees or general government employees. I'm happy to talk a bit more about that.

[04:21:55] It will not impact the FY27 budget to make any changes this year, as you all know, because we've had the discussion before publicly that this would not take effect until the new board was in place. All right. All right. In addition to those items, we are also recommending consistent with Senate Bill 87. This was a mandate from the state and not on cycle with the state budget. So this is off cycle and will likely be decided on by the governor on April 18th, on or

[04:22:32] before April 13th. And so we are in preparing for what might be a mandate that we need to meet. We assume, based on this bill and the language in this bill, that that will require 208, approximately 208 AEDs across our system, parks and recreation system. And in order to purchase the equipment and get the specific sites prepared for the AEDs. We are assuming these costs so there

[04:23:03] would be in FY27 a \$200,000 cost associated with design and permitting and you could see the costs associated with FY28. This will get us prepared to be effectively implementing this Senate bill's request by July 1 of 28. In terms of our public safety radio infrastructure, so this system essentially is our public safety communication system. The towers around the county that help

[04:23:41] our police officers, school system, and other public safety personnel communicate, including our public safety communications call center, this system is in nearing a end of life or end of service life as well. And so with that said, we are recommending that we begin to plan for the replacement of this system. It would not impact our FY27 budget, but we thought it best to start to include this and make sure that the board is aware of the need to begin to replace

[04:24:20] this critical system. I want to be clear that the system is fully operational now. There are no issues, but we think it best to begin to properly plan for and prepare for the replacement of the system. And so you see the multi-year investment that would be required in order for the system for us to meet the 15-year end-of-service life for the system, all right?

[04:24:48] And so this is just a summary of the previous few slides. General revenue, we are assuming that \$48K, so that \$48K is added to the \$545 that was at the bottom line or available capacity in February.

[04:25:08] We are assuming in terms of budget recap expenditures, all of the FTEs and costs that I just went over, that leaves an additional \$200,000 on the bottom line after this recap. And so what you see on this slide is FY27 through FY31, what remains on the bottom line for balancing our budget.

[04:25:33] All right. In terms of other budget changes that will not impact the FY27 budget, but have an impact ultimately on what is going to be approved, the board acted in FY26 this budget year on a number of appropriations.

[04:25:57] And you could see four community services, budget reconciliations that the board has already approved. One, the performance contract funding and youth and young adult peer recovery services. These items have already come to the board for approval as FTEs and to support the programming cost.

[04:26:21] Again, none of this will hit general fund. These are not general fund costs. all of the costs are recovered by the state, but wanted to make sure that it was included. In terms of the finance and risk and wellness, the business services administrator, this position will be covered by our insurance. And so no, again, no impact to the general fund, but important to make sure that it is noted as part of the budget and happy to take any questions

[04:26:54] on that one. Okay, so this essentially ends my part in this process. And what we're about to go into now are a few slides where we're going to just highlight some of the things that we heard from you all directly and or that we heard from the public during the public comment time and or during public hearings. Let's see. We will also, as part of this section of the presentation, talk a bit about the revenue assumptions and adjustment options.

[04:27:30] So we've talked quite a bit about sensitivity analysis. We'll have one here, and we'll be happy to take any questions after about other options in terms of revenue. Okay, what you see here is the start of a listing of some of the items that came up during our discussions.

[04:27:50] So this is not the first time we've heard a revitalization, redevelopment, and assemblage fund. This has come up a few times for you all collectively. We have heard from multiple ones of you about this fund.

[04:28:06] And so you see here a \$2 million to \$5 million and would probably need more board direction on where we would land in terms of and the actual scope of this fund. So we will want to be clear. We've heard a number of different things. But if the board is interested in moving in this direction, we will want to be clearer about the scope.

[04:28:26] of the fund and how much we would be setting aside. In terms of Lunara Health, Brian Harris did come to the Finance and Budget Committee to present, and this was the number that was socialized with the board, and so we have it here represented.

[04:28:44] In terms of the sheriff compensation, we recommended in February 8.2% increase for market adjustment for the sheriff. We have heard from a board member an interest in seeing that increase be 15% to 16%.

[04:29:01] And so you see here represented the \$1.1 to \$1.2 million impact that that would be on the budget for your consideration. We have also heard, not for the first time, an interest in employee down payment assistance program.

[04:29:19] That program would be limited to \$25,000 per recipient. And we would need to essentially pass a local ordinance in order for this kind of program to, for us to administer this kind of program here locally.

[04:29:34] But we certainly have the ability to do this locally. And we are assuming \$1 million in terms of cost for employee down payment assistance. Purchase development rights program. This is, again, not new to the board.

[04:29:51] You may recall that back in FY25, we did set aside one-time funding of \$1 million for a PDR program. What this additional \$1 million would be is the ongoing funding that we would need year over year for this program to get off the ground.

[04:30:11] We heard also during, I believe, public hearing from the Fire and Rescue Union about the desire for expanded medical physicals, and this is our assumed cost for those medical physicals, and happy to take any additional questions about this.

[04:30:34] This would really be an opportunity for us to get ahead of, make sure that our employees are doing regular physicals, get ahead of cancer and other diseases, other medical issues that would ultimately require a lot more from us in terms of employee support.

[04:30:54] All right. Digital Prince William. This is really a technology literacy for broadband and literacy program administered by DOIT. You may recall that this program was initially funded via ARPA funds that are nearly run run out.

[04:31:19] This program will end in July of this year. And so certainly board interest, if there is board interest in continuing this program, wanted to make sure that the board had it here for consideration.

What also came up during our discussions, one-on-one discussions with you, is an OmniRod shuttle from the VRE garage to Route 234 park in the park and ride lot.

[04:31:44] We have not talked to OmniRod about this shuttle, so we were not able to assume any specific cost. But we'll certainly do that if there is interest from the board in us exploring this. In terms of animal services, there were three FTEs that were mentioned as part of public comment time from Animal Services.

[04:32:08] I believe the Animal Services Commission. And so we have those here represented, and I'm happy to sort of talk about those three FTEs if needed. I also sent an email responding to responding on this earlier today. There was also a request for two additional sheriff positions.

[04:32:29] These were non-swarm positions, and they are included, we assume, a \$210,000 cost associated with those two FTEs. A food service coordinator was also discussed in our one-on-ones.

[04:32:45] This came up during the Capital Area Food Bank's presentation to the Committee, Finance and Budget Committee, back in March. And so it's included here. We assume \$155,000 for costs associated with the coordinator.

[04:33:01] And then we have the historic preservation at African-American historic sites. This came up during our one-on-ones, and we're assuming \$93,000. This is for an FTE to support programming at both these sites. All right.

[04:33:18] Okay, this came up a bit earlier today, actually. You all have not seen yet the final study for agro-business and agro-tourism. You will be doing one-on-ones with Christina Wynn.

[04:33:36] I saw a great presentation from her just last week. And so you all will be doing one-on-ones with her and the team. That said, we know that the recommendations will likely come after the budget is adopted.

[04:33:51] And so I wanted to provide an opportunity for the board, if interested, to provide funding now, knowing that there will be specific recommendations associated with the agribusiness agritourism study. You also heard earlier, actually earlier today, we talked, I made it during CXO time a comment about restaurant week.

[04:34:15] And so this came by way of directive and then up again during our one-on-one discussions with you. what you have here are options, various options that were laid out in the memo associated with the restaurant week. And I'm happy to talk a bit more about that. I think the team's preference was option two, but they are certainly, I think Christina Wynn is here to talk a bit about it if needed. Okay. Now in terms of revenue assumptions, I want to thank really Dave and Leslie and the

[04:34:51] team again for all of the responses they have made, questions that they have answered over the last few weeks. This is really just a sample of some of the responses that have gone out to you and certainly to the community for those who've asked questions. This is a sensitivity analysis. It really ends with where we are now. So 88.6 is the baseline

[04:35:19] now. And what you see going up is what we assume the impact will be with every cent change in the tax rate. And so looking at the table at 88.6 cents, this would be an average increase of \$68 for taxpayers, essentially what we went over a few slides ago. At \$88.5, you see the change.

[04:35:55] And ultimately at \$88.74, I think is where we saw, and it's not represented on the table, actually, yes, at \$0.874 is where we see the first essentially change where taxpayers would not, their bill would be less than it is this year.

[04:36:22] So it was essentially a change of three, it decreased by \$3 a long day. So, and you see also the impact on the general revenue for each of these changes.

[04:36:40] And so what we've done is divided that revenue up by the school revenue share agreement. And so happy to talk about this. I'm sure we're going to have many conversations about this kind of analysis and this table. So happy to come back to it if needed or when needed.

[04:36:58] Okay, in terms of food and beverage, not much new here. As it currently stands, based on the current rate, this represents \$36 million in overall revenue.

[04:37:15] We assume for every percent change in the meals tax, it is a \$12 million change. And so we also assume that if we are going to make a change to the meals tax, that we would need time to notify restaurant owners and others that that change is occurring, give them time to make changes to their point-in-time system, am I saying that right, point of sale, point of sale system.

[04:37:51] And so that will take a bit of time for us to get the word out and then for them to make the appropriate changes. And so we're assuming that any change in the food and beverage tax will occur on January 1 of the following year. What you see represented at the bottom of this slide is essentially what we assume the change will be each budget year.

[04:38:17] And on personal property, computer, and peripheral, again, I said this at the start, we did not assume any change from current year revenue. So our assumptions are that this is at \$4.15.

[04:38:35] We advertise that \$4.50. What you see here is nickel-by-nickel increase in what we assume that additional revenue will be. And so happy to come back to this and answer questions about the revenue once we get to that part of the discussion.

[04:38:53] And then finally, the remaining budget calendar items. And so budget presentation, obviously, this evening. We will do public hearing, a public hearing this evening.

[04:39:10] There will be an additional public hearing on April 21st. We also assume next week budget markup. We will certainly be available over the next few days and next week during budget markup to answer whatever questions based on whatever scenarios the board might have associated with the revenue options.

[04:39:31] And then finally, on April 21st, we'll have the official public hearing and hopefully budget adoption. And with that, Madam Chair, I think that is all, and I'm happy to go back for any questions. I have a couple of questions, but I just want to say that we are brushing up against 7 o'clock.

[04:39:49] So if this is going to be a lengthy discussion, if people have a lot of questions, then maybe we can come back to this because I do want to give people a chance to eat before 7 o'clock. Slide 15, the foods and security coordinator. Can that be included in the volunteer coordinator and liaison for strategic partnerships?

[04:40:10] Can we put that as part of the responsibilities for that role? We certainly can. I think it was our vision that... Once we actually put the job announcement out, that it will be, food service coordination will be included in the job.

[04:40:27] Thank you, because that was, yes, also in the budget. Employee down payment assistance program. If we have the funds, I'd love it. I would actually like to see a lower grant for each homeowner so that we can, rather than \$25,000, maybe \$15,000. So that way they also put some skin into the game because it's a tough market.

[04:40:44] And it allows us to serve more people. The other thing is the restaurant tax, I'm sorry, the restaurant week. I didn't see option three. Maybe I'm missing that in the memo. That is something I will say I do strongly support that if possible.

[04:41:00] I think option two, that was the one that was recommended. That may work best for the county, but I'm going to see if there's anyone else. Supervisor Bode. Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you, Mr. County Executive, for the presentation. I'll be quick also. Just a couple questions. Just top level, is there any concern by the fact now that we'll be adopting our budget before the state adopts theirs?

[04:41:26] This is the timeline every year. So the state ends up adopting their budget. I should say we end up adopting our budget locally before the state adopts its budget. And I think that's been happening for a few years now. I'm fully understanding that there are a number of issues that are very much top of mind for us in terms of front burner.

[04:41:49] I would not suggest that we delay our budget process. As I mentioned, we have increased our contingency, so I'm hoping that if we need to come back, that we can come back in line with the contingency in terms of impacts.

[04:42:06] I don't know if there was more. Madam Chair, members of the board, the county executive is right. There's been times in the past when the General Assembly has not adopted their budget, but there's other provisions in the Code of Virginia that require you to approve the annual school budget by May 15th and then the timing with regards to when you have to approve your budget for staff to be able to work on the billing issues, et cetera.

[04:42:29] And there are issues with regards to the public hearing for each of the fees and the ordinances in the budget. And the way this timeline has been crafted by the county executive and Office of Management and Budget, We've hit the sweet spot with budget adoption on April 21.

[04:42:47] If you move budget adoption any further, you're going to have to have more public hearings. Thank you for that. And my last question is in regards to when we change the meal tax, as you said, it takes some lead time, what have you. Do we have any data on costs in time or potential vendor fees to restaurants when they have to change the percentage?

[04:43:09] I would need to come back to you. I very much understand the question you're asking. But we will come back to you with the response. All right, Supervisor Bailey, or did you want to hold? I just want to know, does anyone else on the dais have questions?

[04:43:24] Because I would like to give us a short recess. You have questions? All right. Jeannie, I'm looking at you. Questions? You have questions? You're in takers? Okay, then Bailey. All right, go. For the economic development assemblage piece, You said you would like for us to tell you the scope.

[04:43:48] Could you be a little more clear with that? Sure. So revitalization, redevelopment, and assemblage all represent different things. And so we would need to be clearer about, and we could maybe provide a recommendation, we would need to be clear about what this fund would actually do.

[04:44:09] Would it be responsible for using government dollars to pull together property that is otherwise in various ownership stages in terms of assemblage?

[04:44:24] Or would we be focused on revitalization and redevelopment, and that is really taking parcels that are already assembled and essentially creating an opportunity where there isn't one? So revitalization means something different on, let's say, Route 1 than redevelopment does, let's say, the western side of the county.

[04:44:48] So we would really, you know, there are a number of things that we could do with the fund like this. We just would want to be as specific as possible so that we're not running out of money or getting asked to do a whole bunch of things with the one fund. That's costly. Yeah. Okay, I got it.

[04:45:04] And just so the dais would know, that's one of my requests in reference to the presentation that Christina had given us. So I understand. I understand. All right. I'm going to say this quickly. We are going to have to make some changes because we're right up, you know, almost at 7 o'clock.

[04:45:22] So we are going to do supervisor's time later after everything in our evening session ends as well as a closed session. With that, we are in recess until 7 o'clock. Thank you. I know we still have a few people signing up, but we have some seats.

[04:45:45] You can sit on the side. It is 7.06, and we are back. I want to begin. We have a proclamation from our 2 o'clock meeting, and if everyone who is associated with Sikh and Punjabi appreciation, please come forward.

[04:46:07] And if there's anyone else on the dais who wants to join me, please come down as well.

[04:46:20] All right. Thank you, everyone, for joining us.

[04:46:36] Oh, we have more people coming down. All right. And this is 4D. It's to proclaim April 2026 as Sikh and Pujami Heritage and Appreciation Month. Despite their rich history in the United States, Sikhism is still often misunderstood.

[04:46:57] Sikhism is a monotheistic religion that originated in the state of Punjab, located in what is now divided between modern-day India and parts of Pakistan. There are more than 25 million Sikhs around the world, which makes Sikhism the world's fifth largest religion.

[04:47:14] Approximately 35,000 Sikhs live in the Washington, D.C. metro area, and Prince William County is home of the Sikh Center of Virginia. Every April, we honor the rich history, culture, and contributions of our Sikh American friends and neighbors within our community.

[04:47:30] Today, therefore, the Prince William Board of County Supervisors hereby proclaims April 2026 a Sikh and Pujambi Heritage and Appreciation Month. And I have to say to my dear friend, Man Simaran, thank you every year for helping coordinate this wonderful opportunity.

[04:47:46] Thank you. Would you like to offer some remarks? As a person of Punjabi and Sikh heritage who's been residing in Prince William County since 2012, I want to say thank you to the county, to everybody that makes this county operate and fully function, that you guys have been a key role in hosting said sick population in the county so thank you so very much we are proud to be Prince William County residents and I particularly wanted to

[04:48:26] thank Madam Chair for hosting this proclamation for a second time for a second year consecutively and we hope to keep this going and I right behind me there are members of the community of the Princeton County. I just wanted to say thank you but also we would like to get more involved. We would like to be part of Prince William more than you already see the Sikh businesses, the Punjabi heritage, the Gurdwara. We would like to see more involvement from us so I would like to reach out

[04:49:00] to every single member of the board, the staff, and say that anytime that there's anything that you guys feel like some residents can step up we would like to be those first volunteers so thank you so much and we look forward to working with you guys madam chair just told us that we're going to go outside for photos for those who couldn't hear and bro don't ask about being put to work okay you know me better than that and uh madam chair you think it'd be a good time for me to

[04:49:34] start reading so when we get back we will have koya statements okay because we have no quorum

[04:49:43] All right. Thank you, everyone. Before we begin, we have a couple of statements. Supervisor Angry.

[04:51:54] Thank you, Madam Chair. Madam Chair, before the school board's budget presentation and the public hearing on the proposed budget, I need to declare a personal interest in these matters. My wife is a school's employee. As a school's employee, my wife and I are members of a group which is affected by these matters. I will be participating in these matters because I am able to do so fairly, objectively, and in the public interest. Thank you, Madam Chair.

[04:52:16] Supervisor Bode. Thank you Madam Chair. Before the school board's budget presentation and the public hearing on the proposed budget, I need to declare a personal interest in these matters. My wife is a school's employee. As a school's employee, my wife and I are members of a group which is affected by these matters. I will be participating in these matters because I am able to do so fairly, objectively in the public interest. Thank you Madam Chair.

[04:52:35] All right. Thank you so very much. I would now like to welcome our school board. We have members of the school board joining us today. We have school board member Justin Wilk from the Potomac District, school board member Lisa Zargarpur from Coles, school board member Richard Jesse from Occoquan, school board Lori Williams from Woodbridge, and school board member Tracy Blake from Niasco, as well as chairman Dr. Lateef.

[04:53:06] I don't know if you had anything to say, Mr. Shorter. Otherwise, I'll just kick it off to let them begin their presentation. Thank you. Good evening, Prince William County Board of County Supervisors. I am Dr. Barbara Lateef, the proud chairman-at-large of the greatest school division on planet Earth.

[04:53:24] So thank you for having us here. And on behalf of the school board, I want to express, as always, my deepest gratitude, Our deepest gratitude for the constant support and resources you provide for our students, our families, and our school division every single year.

[04:53:40] Together, we are building a brighter future for our community. Madam Chair stole some of my thunder and introduced some of my board members, and so that's great. I have also Superintendent Dr. Latanya McDade here with us this evening, Shaquille Youssef, our CFO, Kathleen Addison, and Joe Mondora, also in our finance office and budget office, and Dr. Carol Flanard, our Deputy Superintendent, and I don't think I missed anybody.

[04:54:07] So thank you for everyone joining us. We will jump right in and get started here. You know, at Prince William County Public Schools, we have a singular and unified vision. As defined in our newly adopted Elevate 2030 strategic plan, every student will graduate on time with the knowledge, skills, and habits of mind to create a thriving future for themselves and their community.

[04:54:29] We will briefly highlight some of the key results of our prior strategic plan, which was Vision 2025, and the lessons learned. The vision is what drives our comprehensive strategic plan, and it's comprised in four key commitments.

[04:54:47] These commitments are laser-focused on directly impacting our students' learning outcomes. Learning and achievement for all is our most critical commitment. It represents our promise to provide academic excellence for all students. positive climate and culture is our promise to provide a welcoming, supportive, and safe environment for teaching and learning. Family and community engagement represents the commitment to build collaborative, meaningful partnerships and trusting relationships to foster the success of all of our students. Organizational coherence, our last commitment, represents a conscious commitment to align the entire school division as one team, united in a singular commitment to support all

[04:55:26] schools, students, and families. Before I move on to the advertised budget, I wish to present a few highlights from our past strategic plan, Vision 2025, which you all helped us develop, helped us resource for, and helped support us in the success I'm going to share with you this evening.

[04:55:47] And this is not a, certainly not a comprehensive list, but representative of the high impact of our collective effort. We currently boast an all-time high graduation rate of 94.8 percent, which is the highest graduation rate the school division has seen in recent years.

[04:56:04] Chronic absenteeism decreased by 6.7 percent to 16.4 percent. Dropout rates decreased 2.2 points to 3.8 percent. English learner dropout rates decreased 10 points to 14.9 percent. SOL performance improved in all categories across the board, notably in math, writing, and science.

[04:56:25] And at the conclusion of 2025, 45.7% of every graduate earned early in college and career credentials, while 65% of all CTE graduates earned a post-secondary credential, totaling over 27,000 credentials earned.

[04:56:42] We also saw a 16% increase in advanced coursework participation by underrepresented student demographics. the AP exam rate rose 68%, up 12 points for a score of three or higher. What that tells you is we have more students than ever taking advanced coursework and more students than ever achieving higher scores on those exams.

[04:57:05] You all have helped us create a more rigorous and a more demanding curriculum that our students are successfully succeeding at. These achievements are a testament to the hard work and dedication of our students, teachers, and staff. We can continue to deliver, achieve, and improve these results by continuing to adequately fund initiatives as identified in our new strategic plan, Elevate 2030. Prince William County Public Schools, and you all know these numbers, but we'll repeat them here, is the second largest school division in the Commonwealth of Virginia. We take pride in being the most diverse school in Virginia

[04:57:40] and the 10th most diverse nationwide. With almost 89,000 students currently enrolled, Our community reflects a rich tapestry of cultures, backgrounds, and experiences. Our student population is

represented by 159 countries with over 170 languages spoken at home.

[04:58:00] You saw this earlier here this evening with the Punjabi Sikh community. There are many of them that live here in this community, and I'm proud to also say that I'm a proud Punjabi along with them. And we really appreciate their commitment and efforts in our school division with many of their students doing extremely well, winning science fairs, spelling bees, and achieving at the highest levels.

[04:58:22] And we are very proud of the diversity that they bring to our school division and the diversity that we represent overall. This information is crucial as it shows significant diversity in our student population and needs affecting school funding and resources. Specifically, we have 26,691 identified students who are English learners.

[04:58:43] This is our fastest growing population in Prince William County. This is an increase of 3,000 students over one year. Our students with special needs have increased to 13,309. Almost 29,000 students are identified as economically disadvantaged by federal criteria.

[04:59:01] We have nearly 13,000 full-time employees. If you add our temporary staff and substitutes, that gets us up over to 17,000 employees, making Prince William County the largest employer in the county. Together, these facts underscore the strength, diversity, and the school division's commitment to excellence.

[04:59:20] Going over enrollment trends, PWCS is observing enrollment trends that align with those reported last year. Since 2014, the division has experienced an overall decline in birth rates, a factor that continues to influence future student enrollment. Additionally, population growth from migration, which was once prominent in Northern Virginia, has shifted to the region's exurbs in the Richmond metropolitan area since the pandemic.

[04:59:46] Due to continued trends, PWCS anticipates a notable deceleration in enrollment growth over the next five years. Current projections estimate an enrollment reduction of approximately 3,000 students, or 3% of our current enrollment. When translated to the classroom level across the division, this equates to 0.6 students per classroom that we will be losing.

[05:00:08] We will continue to refine, update, and proactively respond to ensure present and future student success. However, let me be clear, the urgency of our situation. While enrollment is decelerating, the needs of our students and resources to serve them continue to skyrocket.

[05:00:25] This chart depicts the five-year increase in investments needed to serve our economically disadvantaged students, our students with special needs, and our English learners. While the overall enrollment trend shows a decline, resources and supports for our students in these membership categories have increased.

[05:00:42] In 2025, we invested \$14.4 million just to meet the needs of our economically disadvantaged students, an increase of 112% over five years. In 2025, we invested \$74.8 million just to meet the needs of our children with special needs.

[05:00:59] That's an increase of 70% over the last five years. And in 2025, we invested \$23.1 million just to meet the needs of our English learners. That's an increase of almost 60% over the last five years. To summarize, while enrollment trends for the division overall are trending toward decline, the needs of our students are increasing dramatically.

[05:01:22] PWCS needs funding to meet the demands of a rising population of students with special needs, our multilingual population, and the sharp rise in social and emotional support and resources for our students. Regional comparisons, and I show these slides every year because I think it's important to know how we sit relative to our competition. While PWCS serves one of the most diverse student populations in the region, our division receives significantly less funding per student when compared to surrounding districts. Our goal has been at a minimum to meet or exceed the investments Fairfax County puts into their children, but we continue to fall way behind,

[05:01:59] and Prince William County Schools is at the bottom of per-pupil funding relative to our regional neighbors. I am grateful for the continued investments in our PWCS students. However, for our children to be competitive with the children of Fairfax, Alexandria, Loudoun, and Arlington, we must invest in long-term strength, stability, and prosperity for all PWCS students. This slide I wanted to show this year is a little different than before. This slide highlights, I think in a very visual way, the additional funding Prince William County's children would receive if we were to fund our students competitively with our neighboring school divisions. So if we were funding

[05:02:35] our students at a per-pupil basis similar to Fairfax County, we would be receiving another \$157 million. If we were to do it relative to Arlington County, that's \$460 million. They are at the highest per pupil in the state. And so, you know, when you look at percentages of contributions of the locality to each school division, I didn't include that in the slide here, but Alexandria, for example, their city council contributes 79% of the entire school budget. Arlington contributes 79% of their budget goes to the schools. Loudoun is 72%. Fairfax gives 69% of their budget to the

[05:03:15] school division, and Prince William County Schools is about 50% of the budget goes to schools. Now, our new strategic plan, Elevate 2030, is an ambitious commitment to build a future-ready school division that equips every student with the knowledge, skills, and habits of mind to shape their own success and contribute meaningfully to the community and the world around them.

[05:03:35] We are proud that this plan was adopted unanimously by the school board, and we appreciate those of you celebrated with us with Dr. McDade at the launch of the plan. So getting into the budget, the 27 fiscal year budget total operating and debt budget amounts to \$2.1 billion, reflecting an increase of \$182 million from the approved 26 budget of \$1.9 billion. The budget reflects steady growth and investment in education. County and state contributions continue to be the largest funding sources, and I have them listed here. And I know many of you have seen the slide deck before and certainly we'll have a chance if you have any questions about the specifics on those

[05:04:14] to go through them every cent of our 2027 budget is tied directly to the priorities outlined in our strategic plan which we built with your input the input of our community the input of our teachers our faculty our staff our students and our families similar to what we did in 2020 for the 2025 plan we did the same thing for the 2030 plan and so we're proud to have your support and your efforts as we built that plan. And we have committed \$64.5 million to new strategic investments

[05:04:49] in this year's budget. Starting off first in the first main category is learning and achievement for all. When we talk about learning and achievement for all, we are talking about preparing students for a future that is both globally connected and rapidly changing. Strategic plan funding for 27 budget is dedicating \$52.7 million for learning and achievement for all initiatives. That means strengthening global competencies and multilingual skills so our students can compete and lead in a diverse world. It means

building clear career clusters and IT pathways so students can move away from, move from awareness to exploration to real preparation for

[05:05:27] high-wage, high-demand fields. It means creating space for careers, entrepreneurship, and student businesses so young people are not only ready to enter the workforce, but also ready to innovate and create opportunities. It means investing in augmented reality, virtual reality, and other emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence alongside innovation zones and teacher learning, so instruction keeps pace with the world our students are entering. Universal pre-k reflects our commitment to building a brighter future for every student. And when we talk about universal pre-k, we are talking about one of the smartest long-term investments a

[05:06:05] community can make. Study after study shows that high quality early childhood education produces a strong return on investment over time. In fact, national research points to returns ranging up to \$9 for every \$1 invested. Those benefits include stronger academic outcomes, reduced remediation costs, better workforce readiness, higher earnings, and stronger communities. So when we invest in universal pre-k. We're not preparing children for kindergarten. We are making a long-term investment in the future strength of our entire county. Our next commitment is positive culture

[05:06:43] and climate. You've heard a lot about this over the years. A strong school division also depends on a strong culture for both students and staff. Under positive climate and culture, this budget proposes more than \$7.5 million in new investments to support student wellness, staff well-being, and strong school leadership. It includes the principal residency program because leadership matters, and great schools require great leaders. It includes the Housing Options Made Easy or Home Residency Initiative, which recognizes that workforce stability is connected to whether employees can afford to live in the communities they serve. It includes smart buildings because

[05:07:19] safe and efficient, well-managed learning environments support both operations and instruction. It includes outdoor learning environments, which reflect a broader vision of student wellness, engagement and innovative learning spaces. All of these pieces work together to create the kind of climate and culture where people want to learn, work and play. Family and community engagement. Our next commitment. We are proposing more than 1.7 million in new investments to strengthen the partnership between schools, families and community resources. School-based health clinics will remove barriers that can stand in the way of attendance, wellness and readiness to learn. School-based pantries support families who may be experiencing food insecurity with a

[05:07:59] goal of 40 pantries by 2030. Student mentors provide young people with trusted relationships, encouragement, and guidance that can shape both confidence and direction. A workforce readiness initiative that allows students and families to learn together through CTE programs, industry credentials, and GED preparation supporting long-term success beyond the classroom. Together, these strategies recognize that real engagement means more than communication alone. It means building systems of support around students and families so that they can fully participate in the promise of a public education. Our last commitment, organizational coherence. It is what ensures

[05:08:38] that the priorities are not just aspirational, but truly operational. Under organizational coherence, this budget includes more than \$2.4 million in new investments to strengthen the systems that support the work of the entire division. Data dashboards and data literacy are about making sure decisions are informed by evidence that leaders across the division can understand and act on what the data is

telling us. Enterprise resource planning or ERP is about having aligned systems that allow the organization to function more effectively and efficiently. A focus on return on investment means we are asking hard but necessary questions about whether resources are

[05:09:14] producing meaningful results for students and the community. Advanced AI training reflects a need to prepare our workforce and our organization for the realities of a changing world. This commitment is really about alignment, discipline, and capacity. We are making sure the division is built to deliver on the vision it has set. Taken together, these slides show that Elevate 2030 is not simply a vision statement. It's a roadmap for how PWCS intends to build stronger outcomes for students, stronger support for families, and a stronger, more future-ready organization.

[05:09:53] Compensation highlights. We are in a competitive market. In retaining and recruiting, the best teaching talent is critical, and we must invest in our own. A significant highlight of the fiscal 2027 budget is implementing the second year of a historic two-year wage agreement totaling more than \$160 million. This includes last year's average pay raise of almost 7 percent and this year's average salary increase of 6.27%, as well as adjustments to the certified pay scale and supplements at or above the regional median. Adjustments to the certified pay scale and supplements will ensure compensation remains competitive across the region. PWCS is proud

[05:10:32] of our investment in our staff salary increases over the past five years. All teachers, including a bachelor's degree, have seen a salary growth between 31 and 51%. What does that mean? For example, a newly hired teacher with zero experience and a bachelor's degree was earning \$51,000 in 2022. Five years later, they are now earning \$72,000, a 40.6% increase. All teachers holding master's degrees have also seen salary growth range between 30 and 48%. For example, a teacher with 15 years of experience and holding a master's degree was earning \$72,000 in 2022. Five years

[05:11:11] later, they are earning \$106,000, a 46% increase. We are making great strides to be regionally competitive and showing our teachers that they are truly valued because we all know when you invest in your people, you secure your own future. The total budget across all funds amounts to \$2.9 billion. These funds are allocated across various operational, instructional, and support services to ensure the efficient functioning of PWCS.

[05:11:39] The budget prioritizes instruction, infrastructure, student services, and employee benefits. Here I have it broken down by budget category that the state likes to see it in, and that's included in your materials as well. As you can see, the largest investment, as always, is and continues to be an instruction.

[05:12:02] Our capital improvement plan for the 2027 to 2031 reflects current enrollment trends. it includes new facilities such as the Potomac Shores Area Elementary School and the Global Welcome Center, additions at seven facilities, renovations at six facilities, and facility modifications which include track replacements, parking lot upgrades, and interior building modifications. The CIP also focuses on necessary maintenance such as replacement and upgrades to the HVAC systems, roof replacements, and repair and sustainability projects. Many of these have been deferred from the past. We also have some innovative projects like the Unity, Reed, and Garfield High School Robotics Centers, which will transform our school buildings from places of

[05:12:42] learning to learning places. Examples of projects I have here listed on the slides are listed by Magisterial District, and you also have that included in your materials. With bond funds totaling \$815 million and general fund transfers totaling \$263 million over the next five years, we expect our total to be

\$1.08 billion. In the U.S., in the United States, estimates suggest school construction costs have risen roughly 20 to 35 percent since the early 2020s. For example, pre-covid a new elementary school might cost around three to four hundred dollars per

[05:13:20] square foot by 23 to 24 that can be 400 to 550 dollars per square foot depending on location and materials. Some high demand areas with major material shortages saw increases closer to 40 percent. PWCS is not immune to these increases and you see that reflected in our CIP. The school board is committed to ensuring fiscal responsibility in our CIP and this is demonstrated in our action to cancel the building of the 14th high school. In the past six years, frankly it's the last eight years that I've been on the school board, we have conducted ourselves with fiscal integrity

[05:13:55] and with clean audits and no material findings contributing to the country's coveted triple AAA bond rating. We have been recognized for excellence in financial services, reporting, and management as demonstrated by these achievements seen here. You know, many times BOCS members will ask me, you know, what have you left on the table? What is unfunded?

[05:14:21] What are your critical unfunded needs? And so, as you all know, we abide by and work within our revenue-sharing agreement, but we do have unfunded needs, and we continue to have them. And some examples of our high-impact unfunded needs are listed here. For example, if we were to fund our schools at the best practices level nationwide for psychologists and social workers, we would need 103 new psychologists and 274 social workers. If we had funded at the ideal number for math coaches, we'd need 32 more FTE math coaches, reading specialists, 11, instructional coaches,

[05:14:58] dual immersion, high intensity tutoring. So if you were to ask me, hey, doc, what else do you need? These are the dollars that would contribute to the work that we believe would, you know, get us on par at sort of best practices at which we believe our students and families would definitely benefit from.

[05:15:18] The Board of County Supervisors, as I started my presentation, has been gracious in approving additional funds for PWCS initiatives in the past several budget cycles. These funds have helped us better serve our students in each of your districts. Tonight, we have presented you with a budget within the confines of our current revenue sharing agreement.

[05:15:37] On this slide, you will see additional, you know, as I point out, the high-priority needs, and those are the examples that, again, I wanted to point out where would be left unfunded. To summarize, our public schools are committed to strategic investment through our Elevate 2030 strategic plan, ensuring that all students have the resources they need to succeed.

[05:15:56] Despite increasing resources for 27, PWCS remains behind regional peers in per-pupil funding, even as student needs continue to grow. With a rapidly diversifying student population and critical unfunded and underfunded needs, securing equitable funding remains essential and my highest priority.

[05:16:14] An additional headwind PWCS faces, and many of you know this as well, is a potential for adjustments to the Local Composite Index, or the LCI, which may reduce state funding to school divisions like Prince William County schools, which benefit from data center revenues.

[05:16:31] This would potentially impact us dramatically in the next biennium. It could be up to \$40 million a year cuts from the state. PWCS continues to operate within the revenue-sharing agreement, and maintaining this investment ensures stability for our students and our community.

[05:16:48] We are, because of you all and your support, an award-winning, what I say, the number one school division on planet Earth, that you should be immensely proud of. You've helped make this possible through our partnership. This slide represents only a snapshot of state, regional, national, and global awards and recognitions we have received in the past four years.

[05:17:10] The investments from the Prince William Board of County Supervisors allows us to deliver on the promise of thriving futures for our children. Simply put, PWCS students achieve because PWCS families, businesses, and communities truly invest in them. As we move forward, collaboration and strategic decision-making will be key to maintaining excellence and equity in education.

[05:17:31] Our new strategic plan in this budget set the foundation for our schools to adapt, innovate, and thrive in the years ahead. Thank you very much. Thank you so very much for this presentation. Supervisor Bodie. Thank you, Madam Chair. Thank you, Mr. Dr. Chairman At-Large Lateef.

[05:17:51] appreciate their presentation as always the way you're sort of able to flow through everything pretty quickly a couple questions um as you discussed earlier you know we we last year gave you guys a little bit more money than was in your original budget asked by about about 40 million dollars looking back at fiscal year uh 26 could you talk about were you able to expend all those funds and sort of where we stand with those initiatives yeah sure dr mcdade no i mean you

[05:18:22] You know, yes, so if you remember last year, we came with a budget that we always, by the way, budget conservatively into the revenue-sharing plan, right? And so we base our four-year plan, our strategic plan, on what we expect you all to fund us with based on the strategic plan or based on the revenue-sharing agreement, right?

[05:18:42] And so each year I come to you with a request that is within the revenue-sharing agreement. And some years, we get more tax revenues than expected, and last year was one of those. And we were able to take that \$40 million. And I had a slide last year that showed you our unfunded needs.

[05:18:59] Dr. McDade will remember that much more clearly than I will, but we went and used that money towards all those unfunded needs. Dr. McDade. We also just, we had to spend about \$25 million for new curriculum for mathematics because the new standards came out. So that helped us to be able to cover the cost of all of the materials for all schools for mathematics.

[05:19:19] Appreciate that. And my second question, appreciate that, is talk to me more about your twice-exceptional supports. We know that's sort of a new emerging thing for kids who are sort of identified as both gifted but also having other special needs and how rare of a population that is and a need to really service them and how much more they take to support than other populations.

[05:19:42] Well, I think you'll recall that we talked about that in the new 2030 strategic plan, and we have that as an investment. So as we look to the upcoming year and beyond, we are earmarking specific investments in twice exceptional, but we've invested large amounts of dollars for special education overall as well as gifted, and our gifted education has grown by double digits across all demographic groups.

[05:20:08] So you'll see specifically outlined in the strategic plan where we document where we want to continue to bolster our twice exceptional, but we have significantly increased the amount of funding that has gone towards both gifted education as well as special education.

[05:20:25] Thank you for that. My third question is, you know, Dr. Lateef, you had that unfunded needs slide that you brought up, and I appreciate you doing that. Talk to me, of course, also, Dr. McDade, talk to me about the psychologist's need and sort of where that goes and how that fits in everything.

[05:20:41] So with the psychologist, what Dr. Lateef was referring to is in all of the clinician clinician feels it identifies what best practice is in terms of clinician to student population for psychologists best practice is one to 500 right now prince william county stands at one to 1191 for social workers it should be one social worker for every 250 students currently prince william county is at one to 1103 for behavioral specialists the the gold standard is one behavioral

[05:21:15] specialist to every 700 students we're currently at one to 3172 so a lot of work to do there i appreciate that let me add mr bode you'll know this very well in 2018 when i got on the school board our counseling ratio for students in the high schools was around one to 475 so one counselor to 475 students the ideal range i think dr mcdade is one to 250 for high school and we just um we've been working on that year over the year for the last four years and this is the first year we've actually now met that. So for our high schools we're at one to

[05:21:50] 250 and for high needs high schools where we have larger populations of students who are English learners or special education they're at one to 190 so we're a little bit below which is even better. For high school with moderate needs we're at one to 210. Middle school we're at one to 278 and then elementary one to 325 so we're at the at the standard but we had to intentionally invest year over year in counseling and we have not had the funds to do the same thing with the clinician support so some of last year's monies went to new counselors to get us over the top on that high school number and the receipts are our graduation rates our test scores our

[05:22:28] post-secondary success our students winning awards with more counselors in the building we're able to have our students realize more of the opportunities that they see here and really take full advantage of them that's how that works appreciate that i'm about to run out of time madam chair so i had two more do you want me to wait until the next round or okay we'll do thank you supervisor vega thank you madam chair uh dr latif dr mcdade school board members welcome supervisor vega i wanted to be the first one to ask questions to say you're good dr latif i see really good um want to give a shout out i'm well coached from a great team and a great board um i

[05:23:06] I know that board member Tradenек is feeling a little under the weather, but I know that she's watching, so just wanted to acknowledge that. I want to start a little bit on the side of enrollment. Based on the presentation, by your own numbers, we see that enrollment is projected to decline by 3,000 students.

[05:23:25] For folks here in chambers and those watching at home, and of course the folks that have emailed us individually, can you help us better understand why is it that the budget is increasing by 9.4 percent or 182 million? Sure. While our enrollment is dropping, our needs of our students continue to increase. And our students that are the most expensive to educate, the ones that require the most resources, continue to increase at a rate that is very high. And that's what costs the school division quite a bit of money. Secondly, I'd sort of point out that we've been

[05:24:05] you know, so far behind in where we have been that we are investing in our students. And we're still, so while we're doing \$20,000 per pupil, you know, our neighbors are doing \$23,000, \$24,000, \$25,000. And so we're not even investing the similar dollars that they are doing at that level. And so we

continue to make the investments that we believe should have been made 10, 15 years ago, and we're doing that to catch up. And we're seeing the results of that.

[05:24:32] supervisor Vega I would just to put a finer point on that although we are losing enrollment and the 3,000 is over multiple over multiple years projected out as well the problem is is that across all schools it's not concentrated in one particular classroom per se right so whether you have a classroom with 10 kids or 20 kids they they have to get the same quality of education and so therein lies kind of the problem so even though you will see a decrease so if you take some of our smaller schools they have smaller schools so they're they're gonna get less money per pupil however you have to meet the same

[05:25:09] standard of excellence and quality and education that the school that has 600 or 700 kids have the same programming that they have if they've got music education the smaller school that has less money has to also have music education so that kind of explains even when you look at this chart so if you look across the entire school system you see the numbers going down but sometimes that only equates to maybe a loss of one or two kids in a particular classroom so the only way to address the decline would be to say that if you have less students in the school then you don't get the same level of programming that other schools have and so when you can't do that so we still

[05:25:46] have to fund at a level where every school adequately has access to equitable programming across the board so the experience that you have shouldn't change because you have less students in your school thank you um for that dr. Lateef if you kind of gave me a good segue into the next question, the presentation compares Prince William County schools to the wealthiest neighboring localities.

[05:26:10] How does our \$20,223 per people's spending compare to the national average? There isn't a national average because it all goes by, you know, the locality and how much revenue each locality brings in.

[05:26:27] Well, I did do a little bit of research, which is why I was asking, and there is, and that is I got my information from the National Center for Education Statistics and the U.S. Census Bureau, and I'm happy to share that with you all. Sure. What is that number? Give me just one second because I had a follow-up, and why is it that we're only comparing it to neighbor jurisdictions and not other metrics?

[05:26:47] Because those are the school systems that we are competing with in our region. Okay, that's fair. Right, and even when you look across the United States, each school system always compares themselves to the localities within their region and their state. So even more similar than that, like, you know, if you make it on a sports level, we're competing with those schools in that region in sports.

[05:27:09] We're competing them in science fair. We're competing them with grades. You know, we're competing them for residents. So every physician that I practice with at the hospital here in Prince William County, the vast majority of those physicians live where? Anybody want to tell me? Fairfax, Arlington, right?

[05:27:28] Because they want to go where their kids are getting the investments. They want their kids to be the next wave or generation of AI specialists or physicians. and they want to go to those kind of places. And so that's who we're up against. And so when most doctors move to this area, they're like, oh, I'm going to go live in McLean.

[05:27:44] I'm going to go live in Montgomery County. I'm going to live in Arlington, you know. I chose to live down here, and I'm very proud of the fact that our students are, I believe, you know, very competitive.

We have a ways to go in certain areas, but we are getting much better than where we were when I moved here in 2002.

[05:28:02] But yes, that's who we're going to compare it to. I mean, look, I can compare us to failing school districts all day long and we'll look like rock stars but that's not what you're paying me to do and that's not what the residents of Prince William County elected me to do. I have other questions but just to wrap up the question that Dr. Lateef asked in terms of the data the most recent national average for current expenditures per pupil is approximately \$16,280 and that is including inflation to roughly \$18,600 in total and that came from the National Center for Education Statistics. I mean that's great but like you have to you're comparing that to the vast majority of the country doesn't live in an area that I have to pay this kind of salary to to recruit a teacher.

[05:28:41] That's the problem I'm up against. I just want to be very clear. The purpose of this meeting is to ask these questions. Absolutely. Because these questions are asked of us from our constituents who we have an obligation and a duty to. And I'm not here to rubber stamp anything just because it's being presented to me and take it as facts or factual without verifying it.

[05:28:59] So I appreciate you explaining and answering the questions along with you Dr. McDade and I'll reserve the other questions that I have manager for my second round I mean I don't mean to be in any way no and this is not towards you this is towards um I I do want to remind madam chair that we do have to quorum rules here in chambers and I I'm trying to be very patient we also don't allow signs and every time that I'm speaking they're putting signs up and distracting me I have a job to do and this is serious business I will ask I'm sorry I didn't notice the signs I will ask that people please keep the signs down thank you very much and adhere to decorum so with that

[05:29:38] we are going to go on to supervisor gordy thank you madam chair um so uh just to go back and to celebrate you know our students and their success i just want to call out stephen kuprek from brinsville district high school who just uh was in the top one percent of the cambridge exam very exciting news for him and his family so I want to congratulate him on that um so you know where I'm going and it goes to exactly what you just talked about um uh Superintendent McDade um

[05:30:12] it's you know when we have these schools that uh have lower enrollment um and you and I had this conversation when I first came on on to the board and we talked about what happens to a school when it gets down around two-thirds to 50 percent of enrollment it actually becomes a less efficient school and it actually it costs you more money um and yet within our uh in in the area that i represent um we've got two things going on we've got schools that are declining enrollment while we have schools that are over capacity by nearly 120 but at the same time we've also approved a lot

[05:30:49] of development that's going to be coming over the next 15 years um that are all zoned to the schools that are already over capacity can you give me an indication of when you are looking at conducting some boundary changes to rebalance these enrollments and to make these schools more efficient so that you're not having to i mean i saw enrollment for one school i think it was mountain view that's like 50 capacity and then haymarket elementary is 120 so and but i can't all the development is around haymarket and i can't put any more students there so how can you

[05:31:24] help us with that well the board can help you with that because redistricting is a function of the board but i will say that you are you are correct it we do need to right size the school system um there is a need to do redistricting so that it will it it is a mitigation strategy and it does support making sure that

we're not having to um put fillers when i say fillers meaning that funding for adequacy, making sure that if a school is not made whole by their per-pupil budget, that then we have to fill in the gap for that because, you know, they don't have the enrollment to cover the full cost of what the excellence in education they should have.

[05:32:04] So, yes, there is a need to redistrict, especially considering what you just described. I do know that I can't speak for the board. I'll have Dr. Lateef talk about the timeline on that, But I do know that we have had very spirited discussions about the need to do that.

[05:32:21] Well, first of all, Supervisor Gordy, I want to thank you for your support over the last couple of years in helping us do some micro-targeting with some of these developments and some of the school issues that you, as you point out, we have some undercapacity and overcapacity issues that we're having to redistrict, and you all have made it a lot easier for us, especially with our impact statements and sort of, you know, trying not to be so general about the way things are.

[05:32:48] The Potomac District and the Brentsville District are growing dramatically still. They continue to be growing, right? Our other districts, some of them are contracting. And so we do have to look at redistricting. When we did our board-to-board meeting, we told you all that, you know, none of us wanted to shut down this high school project.

[05:33:03] It was a beautiful project. It's amazing. It would have been spectacular. But it wasn't the responsible thing to do, both from a fiscal standpoint and from a future sort of future ready standpoint for the school division. As you point out, Mountain View, there's other schools.

[05:33:19] We have real problems there, right? And so there are going to be some very highly unpopular decisions this school board will have to take. And one will be redistricting across the county at the high school level. That has to be done. That was done in Fairfax. They've just gone through that. That will be highly unpopular for all of us.

[05:33:36] So it won't be happening next year, during election year? We are working hard to do the right thing. We voted to cancel a high school in a non-election year, right? Like, so, you know, like, right, like we are, you know, some people might say that's an election year.

[05:33:55] I mean, will I take a hit in that personally? Yeah, there's a lot of people that wanted that high school built. And so, but the right thing to do is sometimes going to be the difficult thing to do. And you have supported us, as you all have, and brought up the good points about what do we do for this. You know, we closed Potomac View Elementary School as part of this last redistricting in Woodbridge.

[05:34:15] Now, that's one of our oldest schools, extremely costly to maintain. We're moving all those students to the new elementary school that opens. What can we do with Potomac View? There are some options, some opportunities, maybe universal pre-K classes, maybe some other things. Maybe we repurpose that. Do we think about those things in the West?

[05:34:30] Do we think about those things in mid-county? Those are ways to sort of accomplish a lot of our goals. And I think, you know, working with you all, and we appreciate every time you call us, text us, yell at us. It is helpful, and it does work. Madam Chair, I know my time is out, but I just want to end by saying I've really appreciated the conversations and the partnership with us trying to find a pathway forward on this.

[05:34:56] And I really do appreciate the more dynamic approach on the impact statements that help us better see the bigger picture of what's happening as opposed to everything done in isolation. So I really appreciate that, and I'll wait for my other series of questions for the next round.

[05:35:12] All right. I'm going to jump in. Thank you so very much. So I've been doing a survey to get a sense of where people are, and schools is a very important investment. But one of the questions that have come to me is about administrative costs at Kelly Leadership. that they've grown. Can you help us understand that? Sure. Boss. Jinx. Sure. So Kelly Leadership, one thing that I do, and I kind of brought this up for those of you who may remember this conversation that we had before. We have taken on more centralized funding at Kelly Leadership Center as opposed to site-based funding for certain roles. So you'll see that there are a

[05:35:50] large number of positions that we pay for at the Kelly Leadership Center, but they are directly servicing or living in schools. So for example, if you have instructional coaches, they live in schools working with teachers and working with principals every day. We have behavioral specialists. Those are housed in the Office of Special Education, but they directly support students in schools every day. Just giving you some examples of that. Our MTSS supports for interventions, behavior, attendance, and academics. They all live in schools in supporting them every single day so while we pay for them centrally so that they are not showing up in the

[05:36:30] school budget where the school has to necessarily pay for that they are directly supporting instruction additionally i just want to add that when you look at growth in the kelly leadership center that's also including bus drivers food nutrition support services for example when i came in um in 2021 it was right in covet and we had lost a lot of our bus drivers because of covet so we were like maybe at a little over 500 bus drivers today we're at 706 so we've we've hired you know almost 200 bus drivers over the last four years and that shows up in the kelly leadership

[05:37:04] center budget so everything that's in the kelly leadership center even even our clinicians the psychologists the social workers they are all showing up in the kelly leadership budget so everything that's showing in that budget because we pay for it centrally and it's not taken out of the school's budget it appears that it's just sitting as administration and all of it is not administration if you look at our new resources about 64 million dollars in new resources equates to about 132 positions total 122 of those positions that you see sitting in kelly

[05:37:41] Leadership Center's budget are actually in schools and servicing schools. There was only 10 of them that actually are like coordinators and things like that in the Kelly Leadership Center. And let's talk about your actual administrative staff in Kelly Leadership. Are you guys staffed appropriately? No, we are not. So we, there was a study done the year that I came. The board had already done a study of the Kelly Leadership Center's support to schools looking at, you know, how many math specialists literacy specialists science that we have to support schools and

[05:38:16] teachers and students compared to other jurisdictions in the region and we were severely understaffed for example in science alone um coming out of the pandemic that was one of the lowest academic areas for us and that we were struggling in but we only have we have 100 campuses and we only have two science specialists one for for all 62 elementary schools and one for our secondary schools all right and i want to go back to lci um dr latif what's up doc you're saying that we'd lose what 40 million yeah so by our estimates if the the senate version of the budget

[05:38:54] passes with the adjustment in the lci calculation that they're doing there's a potential that prince william county schools would lose 40 million dollars based on the new way they calculate the local composite index because they're going to say prince william county is a richer county because of the data center revenues. So that would decrease \$40 million. So if you think about our budget, we're getting about 50% of our whole budget comes from you all, and about 50% from the state. We get like 2 or 3% from the federal government. That's continued to shrink, and that never goes up. They just don't fund schools anymore. And so it's really,

[05:39:31] so if we were to lose \$40 million, that's a significant hit to the schools. There are some in the Senate who tell us, you know, that that will be made up by, you know, if because that's tied to the repeal of the data center incentive. So that money that they get to collect, they would give back to schools, and so they somehow say that that will offset it.

[05:39:51] It's unclear whether that's true or not. But we are worried about the new version of calculating the LCI. We'll tell you that the rest of the state doesn't like to see our data center money benefit Prince William County. They want to share in that as well, and so they're trying everything they can to do that.

[05:40:09] While we've had to suffer and struggle for years while Alexandria, Fairfax, and Arlington get these great commercial revenues that they decide not to share with the rest of the state, right, we are catching up with sort of data center revenues with the work you all have done by taxing them more and putting a lot of that money back into our community.

[05:40:26] You have all done that significantly at a rate that has dramatically improved our ability to bring competitive salaries to our teachers in this region. The rest of the state doesn't like to see us being the only ones who get that. They want a piece of the action, and this is one of the ways.

[05:40:42] And I personally, and I can't speak for the whole board on this, but I absolutely oppose the Senate version of the budget because it does impact our LCI, and that can hurt us. And that will then impact you all dramatically more because then you're going to have to make up those gaps, or we're going to make real cuts.

[05:41:00] I appreciate that. Thank you, Supervisor Bailey. Thank you, Madam Chair. Woo, this is getting pretty deep, and I love it, and I love it. First of all, let me start off by saying kudos to you for doing 50% as it compares to the rest of the region.

[05:41:21] I think that takes a lot of integrity and physical responsibility and accountability. That's the page. I can't read it without my glasses. But what I wanted to say to you, Doc, was when you talked about your strategic investment, you talked about how we had input on that.

[05:41:40] And so to me, I translate that as partnership with you. And so I want to know how can we partner with you so this is a collective effort as we go forward to make sure that not only our students, but our teachers, our families, our communities are really benefiting from the investments that we're making in our students and let me just say this further when when i first started coming to the board meetings and not a part of the the dais

[05:42:13] our our our amount per student was at like seven seventy five hundred per student in 2018 okay and we're now at 20 and still lower than our regional partners so how can we how can it make sense so that we can explain to our communities, our districts, that the partnerships are important to provide for them.

[05:42:34] So, you know, I think you all should be very proud of the investments you've made in the school division, even if we are running behind these other districts, right? We have shown you the receipts year after year on what your investments have done, the highest graduation rate we've ever seen in recent times.

[05:42:54] We are looking at improved scores. You know, while everyone else says, oh, schools across America are reducing rigor, they're giving easy A's, you know, on the standardized testing, we are having more students take those tests and we're having more students do better on those tests than we ever had before.

[05:43:12] So the receipts are there on your investments. We have continued to work within the revenue sharing agreement. And, you know, the revenue sharing agreement cuts both ways. You know, when I first started, it was really, it was awful. I mean, it was, you know, we just didn't have a lot to work with. It has gotten better because of the work you all have done to increase revenues and find creative ways to bring in more dollars.

[05:43:34] That has benefited the school division, and your investments have shown real receipts. And people love it. Like, I don't know if you know this, but, you know, last year on the real estate, there's a way to measure where people Google to live based on school districts.

[05:43:52] Prince William County was in the top 30 nationwide of places people were Googling because they wanted to move to because of the school district. That was out of Realtor.com. That's a real stat. We can provide that to you. But those are real statistics that show people are interested in the schools and they want to invest.

[05:44:09] And so, look, we've done, I think, a really good job of taking your dollars and doing a good job of spending it in a way that provides receipts. If I came here and told you our graduation rate was dropping, our scores were going down, then you should be hammering the school board on the fact that we're not doing a good job with your dollars.

[05:44:28] But I think we're doing a great job with the dollars of this community, and I would ask you to continue your greatest program. Your greatest program in this county is your schools. That is what you are all responsible for, right? You invest that money with the school board.

[05:44:43] We take that and give it to Dr. McDade to make sure she operationalizes a great program that you all helped us create with Elevate 2030 and 2025. And so that's how we get to where we are. But, you know, as you look at your programs and you evaluate the police and the Commonwealth Attorney's Office, you know, your evaluation of your schools should make you all very proud.

[05:45:03] You have put together a really great program here, and it funded us in a way that we are able to deliver on what you expect. So the other question that I have, because I got 52 minutes again, I only got one in, Doc, hold on. The other question that I have was your universal pre-K.

[05:45:19] I was a nursery school kid, and it bode me well matriculating into elementary school as well as high school. What does that do in terms of investment for our future generation? I'll give that to the pro. Dr. McDade.

[05:45:37] Well, Dr. Lateef gave kind of the financial investment, what that looks like long term. But there are a wealth of studies around preschool period, early childhood education. The most notable is the

Georgetown study that was a 20-year study on pre-K, which shows that students who attend pre-K not only fare better in K-12 education, they have stronger life outcomes.

[05:46:01] So they have higher degree attainment, they earn higher wages in higher graduations from high school, And even during K-12, they have better attendance, higher reading and math achievement. And so we know that those students who have early childhood education have a stronger foundation and it's a stronger student coming down through the pipeline from kindergarten all the way to 12th grade.

[05:46:22] But the most important is the post-secondary outcomes that measure success in life after they leave the K-12 institution. Even within K-12, it also improves discipline, lowers chronic absenteeism, lowers discipline problems, and I think long-term there's been studies show less incarceration rates.

[05:46:43] Mm-hmm, yeah. I mean, it's an easy investment. And, you know, I point out five states have universal pre-K, Florida, Oklahoma, West Virginia, Wisconsin, and Vermont. And a lot of major cities in the country do it too.

[05:46:59] New York, San Francisco, Austin, you know, Nashville. It's interesting, just very quickly, it's interesting when we first came to the board in 2020, the old heads up here. When we first came to the board, we talked about pre-K, and it was swept under the rug. Now, just like mental health, it's surfacing again. So nationally, it's a bipartisan.

[05:47:20] Everyone believes in it. All right. Thank you. Supervisor Stewart. Thank you, Madam Chair. So, you know, one of the great things that, well, makes America great is our diversity and bringing the best ideas from and best viewpoints from around the world to one place i believe makes that place better just inherently um i also see here and i think it's the 10th most diverse

[05:47:55] county in the country out of 30 000 counties approximately um you know one of the things that concerns me i mean great job in lowering the dropout rate with english learners by 10 points what else is needed um to get that you know to crush that even further i think um a lot of what we're doing right now um in making sure that when students come into prince william county they're placed appropriately that they're receiving the right amount of credits um and going into the

[05:48:32] right grade level and then if they are coming into prince william county and they're overage so we do have that situation where we have students who are what we consider overaged and under-credited, but they enroll in the system, making sure that we're not misplacing them and that if they're to go into a traditional high school, that they actually can graduate on time, and if not, making sure that there's alternative pathways that are available to them.

[05:48:57] But what I will say is earlier, I noted that when I gave the counselor ratio, I noted that we had high-needs high schools who have a lower counseling ratio, so they have specific supports for english learners especially as it relates to counseling and making sure that we're getting them through their high school experience so i mentioned those which the three with the top highest english learner enrollments is garfield freedom and unity read and so their counseling ratio is not one to 250 is one to 190 so we we're doing that we currently have 645 esau

[05:49:32] teachers so there's a lot that's being and we've reduced the race ratio for ESOL teachers as well we did that significantly last year so there's a lot of work that's going in to support our our English learners and we do have an graduation task force this year and next year we're focusing on the freshman cohort making sure that as soon as they come into high school and transition into high school that they have

supports to bolster them that freshman year because that freshman year really does determine how well they're gonna do to make it through high school successfully on time. So a lot of supports you'll see are in place for

[05:50:07] our English learners, and we're continuing to see their specific graduation rates rise, as well as a reduction in dropout. Got it. And how does that, because I know we talked a little bit about this one-on-one, how does that work when it comes to reaching out to their families, like, you know, things that are going on at home? I know for first-generation Americans, life can be, you know, a little bit hardscrabble, you know, you don't know the language, you don't know just the flow, you know, and it can make things difficult. So how does that also reach home?

[05:50:45] Well, we are proud that we invested in having a parent liaison in every single school. And so the parent liaison is that single source of support that bridges the gap between home and school in supporting our students, especially where there may be language barriers. We also do have translation services for our families. We have our family engagement series to educate families. And then we have our global welcome centers. And now at our global welcome center, we also have a parent liaison and social worker at the global welcome center so that we can connect wraparound supports and services to families. Thank you. Thank you very much. Thank you,

[05:51:24] Madam Chair. All right. I know some other people in queue, but Supervisor Angry hasn't had a chance. I'm going to jump to him. Thank you, Madam Chair. Good evening. It's good to see you guys again. Earlier today, we recognized April as Autism Acceptance Month, and your associate superintendent, Dr. Ryer, is amazing.

[05:51:48] So clearly is the right person for that job, passionate about everything she spoke to. She had gave some stats, and I don't want to mess those stats up, but it sounded like there was a growing number of autistic children. And so I noticed on your markup additional investments, I don't see any in the form of more teachers and more support.

[05:52:07] And I'm here to tell you that if there's anything on this list that we definitely need to be supporting, and you got my vote on, is increasing that population of instructional needs. So I just want to ask that question. We actually do.

[05:52:23] We've had heavy investments. We currently have about 400 level two programs. And in this budget alone, we added 59 two-teacher assistants for every level two program. And that was a \$2.8 million investment. And I will say, to your point of the fact that maybe the population has gone down, but the need of the schools and the need is still there, if there's more need and growth in that area, this board would love to hear more about that.

[05:52:55] All right, thank you. Supervisor Bode. Thank you, Madam Chair. A couple more questions. Appreciate the conversation so far. So let's go to the 14th high school for a second. It got mentioned a few times, and it piggybacks off of sort of a question that Sue Reza Gordy was talking about, where you have these schools, like a Woodbridge High, for example, way over capacity, Colgan, way over capacity, but we have, and I ask this in some way every state per year, that you have a situation where the people that are there love this school.

[05:53:22] For programming, for other things, they go there, but then you have the flip side of that where you have some of these schools where people sort of love it there, but they also see that there are capacity

issues there. So when you do things like cancel a school, talking about redistricting, what have you, how are you also then adjusting and uplifting those other schools that folks are frankly sort of transitioning out of and transferring out of because they see higher value programs in these other schools that are already way over capacity?

[05:53:51] So, one thing that we're doing right now is doing an audit of all of our specialty programs, right, to make sure that they're all meeting the criteria for high quality. So, that's number one. And then, two, looking at equity in access across the school system.

[05:54:09] So, where there's a high concentration of one program and then no program at another school, right-sizing that. So, for example, you'll see in our Elevate 2030 strategic plan that we have a goal to have an IT pathway in every single high school. Right now, we have an IT pathway at Forest Park, and we have one at Battlefield, and they are all high demand with wait lists in the hundreds.

[05:54:31] And so making sure that that's a pathway at every high school does exactly what you described. And then taking a look at across the board where we need to maybe make a shuffle, where interest is high in one particular area and low in another area, How do we service programs in schools based on parent and student interests?

[05:54:48] So we have, Hanover Research has done already a study for us, an audit for us, and so now we're synthesizing that and making determinations on where programming should be placed with keeping in mind, you know, surveys and interests, collecting interests from what parents and students want to see in their local schools.

[05:55:06] I appreciate that. I guess follow-up question is, how much are you all doing outreach and communicating that? Because, again, I'll just be frank with you all. I have a lot of angry constituents that you guys canceled at high school. Again, I get why, but then when they're like, hey, you guys are going to reprogram that money for things that don't actually fix the capacity issues at like a Woodbridge High, people are asking me questions, so I would love to hear how you guys are translating that message out there.

[05:55:29] So now that we've launched Elevate 2030, we will be doing a public presentation on specialty programming, so you'll see that coming up soon. And I will just say to you, in terms of the 14th high school, beyond programming, as you talk about capacity, even schools like Woodbridge, when you look at them looking out to 2030, Woodbridge, their overcrowding has continued to decline with the decline.

[05:55:56] There are cohorts that are coming in from ninth grade, and schools like Woodbridge, they're coming in with lower cohorts year over year. So some of these schools will self-correct, and as a matter of fact, in the next four years, they too may be actually underutilized. So the capacity thing, I think that's already a situation where it's correcting itself and we need to do some redistricting starting with the high school level.

[05:56:20] But as far as programming is concerned, we will be doing a public presentation on what we found from the audit on specialty programs, and we will be sharing how we will phase the IT program pathway throughout all of the high schools year over year. Appreciate that. And the last question I have is in terms of some of our older schools that I know you guys have been doing a great job of sort of instituting new systems around, making sure that those are getting up to a state of good repair.

[05:56:45] But we saw some old schools that have leaky bathrooms, things like that, that I hear from teachers sort of frequently on that. So how are you all sort of addressing that as well? So with Vision 2025, one of the first things that we did was to have a facility conditions index study done.

[05:57:06] And so now we have a full report that shows us the condition of all of our facilities, like red, yellow, green, or orange, with, of course, red being the most deteriorated. And so we have used that to prioritize the need in our site CIP. So those schools that have the lowest rating, we put them first in the CIP, and then that's how we're phasing year over year with the CIP.

[05:57:30] We also have spent significant investments in what I call safe, warm, and dry, which were deferred maintenance. So where you see roof replacements, HVAC systems, all of that, you'll see, matter of fact, for HVAC, you'll see to the tune of about \$222 million just on HVAC.

[05:57:48] And so we have dedicated now in our CIP removing kind of like that old deferred maintenance of just pushing things back so that aging facilities get the attention that they need. And that's what you see in the current CIP. So we are correcting that as we speak.

[05:58:06] Appreciate that. Thank you. All right. Thank you so very much. Supervisor Gordy. Thank you, Madam Chair. I just want to kind of piggyback off that conversation. Just today, and over the last few weeks, as we're kind of looking at our budget, we've been talking a lot about debt and the impact of debt on our AAA bond rate, our AAA bond rating. And, you know, of course, your debt is our debt and counts towards all of that. And, you know, and so when we look at the two things that we're trying to address as a board, you know, first of all is we know that we need to beef up our reserves.

[05:58:44] We have one of the lowest reserves for any jurisdiction that's within this category. And then the same, but the other impact is debt that we're going to be accruing over the next few years.

[05:59:00] And granted, we're looking at, you know, about \$815 million in debt coming from the schools. And so, you know, when we, and I'm just, I'm really, you guys know kind of what we're talking about, but this is a broader conversation for the public, that when we start talking about revenue sharing agreement, you know, when that revenue sharing agreement continues to go up, that delta between what you receive and what we receive continues to get wider and wider and wider, just because it's a percentage basis.

[05:59:32] And so while we have needs as a community, as a county, we're struggling to meet those needs. And at the same time, we're trying to balance out this debt issue so that we can make sure that we don't lose that AAA bond rating, which then increases our debt service by \$18 million a year.

[05:59:52] That's money that just literally goes to pay debt. Could have been used for something else. So fiscal responsibility is something that we have to do and that we have to attack. We have to do this in a partnership with you guys and so I think as we continue to move forward over the next next couple years particularly as we're looking at the increased debt that you guys are going to be taking on because that's the largest wedge of debt it's it's significant um it's it's about two-thirds of the debt um that you know we're going to have to manage this closely with each other um and I appreciate our staff I appreciate your staff and and trying to work this

[06:00:28] together as we go through. But as a community, this is something that we really need to be paying attention to. On the universal pre-K, and Dr. Lateef, you and I talked about this a little bit. I asked if an economic impact study was done on this, because while I support the notion, and it's very well

intended, in places where it's been implemented, privatized and non-private pre-k systems shut down and and they provide child care in times when the schools are not open

[06:01:01] so how do we how are you helping the community not in in prince william county not in child care is a crisis issue in this country how do we ensure that we don't adversely impact our child care centers that are also providing these services so that they can also take care of kids when schools are not in session thank you i appreciate that question and it is something that we have discussed even with the virginia department of education we met dr latif and i met with the virginia department of education to talk about our plan for universal pre-k and we did discuss that and

[06:01:35] they did share with us like all of the um you know the birth to five um centers that offer child care to families as well as the numbers and what i will tell you in prince william every jurisdiction looks different every locality looks different in prince william county we haven't done a full economic study as you just described but we have looked at the research of all of the other states and cities that have done this and what the impact has been here in prince william county on average don't quote me on this because this is a rough estimate it's about 150 um you know

[06:02:08] centers that offer um child care uh whether it be private or faith-based and when you look at the cohort just the cohort of kindergartners that come into Prince William County that numbers are roughly around a little over 5,000 so that means that if we offer universal pre-k it would not have a significant and we're only offering full day for four-year-old so that that won't impact the two and three the two and three-year-olds that are probably current in full day daycare as it stands today but what what will happen is that you got two things happening here you have vpi

[06:02:48] and head start which right now vpi has we have a wait list almost 400 um vpi is a preschool initiative and then which funds low socioeconomic families so we offer pre-k for them already there's a there's a criteria for both vpi and head start that is a economic criteria And so, basically, you have the private that costs around \$15,000 to \$20,000 per year to be able to pay for private child care.

[06:03:17] Then you have this middle group of families, right? They're working class, but they don't meet the economic criteria for VPI or Head Start, and they can't afford to pay \$15,000 to \$20,000 for child care, right?

[06:03:32] So then they're sitting in the middle here and they have nothing. And so we don't, we wouldn't be negatively impacting. And we will be working collaboratively with the Ready Region board as well, which I'm on the board. We'll be working collaboratively with them to make sure that there aren't negative impacts.

[06:03:52] And there's still that, you know, pre-K is not compulsory, right? It's not compulsory education. So there's still choice. Individuals who choose private daycare for religious reasons or, like you said, the timing, whether they need six to six, they're still going to choose that.

[06:04:09] It's these families that have really no real option because they can't do either one. And so that's where universal pre-K in Prince William County will really play a huge role. But when you look at the market share of kindergartners that we get in public school to the tune of 5,000 in Prince William County, we don't have enough centers to even meet that demand if that same cohort as four-year-olds really wanted early childhood education.

[06:04:38] Thank you for that. And I think it's important because, I mean, there's a lot of great preschools out there in Prince William County. And, again, it's proven that it's essential for the success of these kids. And I remember when I first came to Prince William County, standing at a parade in Manassas, somebody said, my daughter was two years old, where are you going to preschool?

[06:04:59] And it's just like, I don't know, I just moved here. But it is something that has been very important as part, just ingrained in this community. And so I appreciate your answer for the work to make sure that we create the right balance across the board for our community.

[06:05:17] And I want to say this publicly because I do want our birth to five providers to know that we are here to be partners and in many ways even when we were talking with the BDOE you know they informed us that because we have a wait list for VPI when we go full day four-year-old we can even share some of our VPI slots with some of the what some of the private providers which would we would be you know kind of trading off seats there so it will definitely be a partnership because the goal is not to hurt the community but to be a benefit and meet some of the demand that currently is not being met all right thank you supervisor bailey

[06:05:56] thank you madam chair uh and and supervisor gory thank you so much for just putting it out there i really appreciate you just putting it out there because the other audience that we we seldom talk about that you have to serve are the veterans the veteran community that you've been successful in partnering with as well and providing not just pre-k but in the schools as well so i just want to be an old Navy guy. I just wanted to thank you for that. The other thing that, two things I wanted to say. One is the terminology partnering and partnership keeps coming up. And so as we grow

[06:06:34] together, some of the, I was just looking at some of your, first your capital investment programs. Thank you for going back to the older schools and to my school board representative, all y'all really, but to my guy, I want to thank you for keeping Dunfrey's Elementary on the list. I appreciate that. But to reinvest in those older buildings and see how you can repurpose them, I think that's a great fiscal accountability and responsibility. So I just wanted to acknowledge that. The other thing, going back to the partnership part, as I look through your

[06:07:09] presentation, there are opportunities because one of the things, and I want to take a page out of Tom's book that we need to do we have these wonderful meetings where y'all feed us good and we come and talk about your strategic plan and we talk about what you've done and what you're going to do but we don't talk about the elephant in the room and the elephant in the room is how can we partner together to satisfy the greater good the greater vision so you're not doing it by yourself we're not struggling to see how we're going to fulfill our budget how do we make that come together. And if you could speak to, I'm just going through your presentation,

[06:07:48] housing. You have teachers, a program, Madam Superintendent, that you came up with bringing foreign teachers in here to teach students to transition, matriculate in the environment. Housing. They need housing. The other thing is food insecurity. We just talked about that. The county exec just mentioned today about the opportunity of having a person to manage food insecurity potentially. You made that presentation. How do we partner together to do that? Mental health has really grown in your environment as well as ours. Our kids and COVID

[06:08:23] went through a lot of anxiety. What does that look like when we bring those resources together? I think there's a lot of opportunity here for partnership. I'll start with the first one that you

mentioned in terms of housing with our international teachers and even looking at teachers who are just wanting to relocate, because we have a lot of relocation in Prince William County when we hire year over year, and housing affordability is one of the big sticking points in terms of, especially for our international teachers, and so in our strategic plan, we do have the home initiative, housing options made easier, in which we would

[06:09:01] like to have by 2030, 150 residential units that Prince William County would kind of be the manager of if you will um subleasing to teachers that relocate to prince william county at an affordable rate and so that is one way that i think um it's a big opportunity to partner uh with you in terms of offering affordable housing um as far as the food pantries are concerned we already have actually i thought it was 10 but i checked we're now up to 14 already um food

[06:09:34] pantries. And just from October to February, we have served 3,262 families. So that is continuing to grow. So any way that we can get support there as we continue to build out the food pantries that we have, those are a few of the ways that I think we could continue to partner. And then when it comes to mental health, we are providing mental health support through Hazel Health for our students. And now this year, going into the new strategic plan, we'll be offering support to

[06:10:11] staff. But I don't have a way to support families. So when you provide mental health support to students, oftentimes it's also a need in the family as well. And so any ways that we can partner there where you know Prince William County schools can do their part in supporting the resources that families can have to support the students who are getting mental health resources through the services that we provide thank you supervisor Vega thank you madam chair I was telling chair

[06:10:49] Jefferson that she took two of my questions and Tom took another two so they've done a good portion of the work for me I do want to emphasize a little bit more on what the chair was asking in regards to the positions over at KLC I appreciate your explanation that although it probably shows as it being out of the KLC building it doesn't necessarily mean that that's the case that they're spread out throughout different schools I want to talk a little bit about that because I appreciate the investment that's being made in in our educators compensation and this is why I say that whether it's direct emails to me I don't want to speak for anybody else or being a member

[06:11:28] of these community chatter groups on Facebook our educators frequently go on social media to voice concerns their displeasures on whatever it may be and you know why I want to make sure that people know right and you made it very clear as to the distinction as to what's happening at the Kelly Leadership Center is because there is a difference in regards to how much of the budget is is going towards classroom instruction and towards our educators versus more bureaucratic positions.

[06:12:00] Does that make sense? It makes complete sense, and I'm actually grateful that you asked the question because I do think that there's more that we can do in terms of the narrative of how we communicate this. We do have right now, if you look at what I call just kind of like the circular graph, 80% of the budget does go directly to school-based.

[06:12:24] Central office only makes up 8.2% of the total actual budget. And then, you know, facilities has their percentage. Transportation has their percentage. And so I do appreciate you asking the question because there are so many staffing positions that we pay for and support, especially since we've centralized a lot of things now that weren't centralized before so that we freed up more money in school budgets so they wouldn't have to pay for those things.

[06:12:51] You'll see an increase in positions there. But I do appreciate the question and the opportunity for us to publicly explain what that looks like. I recall early, I don't even think I was in the seat, but I remember sitting in the atrium and hearing some educators talk about having to use their own money to purchase school supplies.

[06:13:11] This is why it's critical that when we ask for accountability, right? We get those questions answered because it's 2026 and we're still hearing from educators saying that they have to use their own money to purchase supplies. And so it kind of makes you wonder, right? Where is the money going? Why is it that you have educators that have to buy supplies or use their own money, right, for anything pertaining to the needs that I believe the division through their budget should be funding? And not a question, just a comment. The other thing that I did want to ask you about since you know you

[06:13:45] were talking about a universal pre-k the high ROI figures that you know are usually cited and Dr. Lateef mentioned some of them in the presentation usually come from very small intensive you know programs or pilots if you will. While I think there is some consensus on the dais that is something that is needed and that is supportive, can you talk a little bit about you know the focus that we're going to implement here in the division um when we scale it to a to a universal level to ensure that that quality that is being utilized in a smaller setting um remains here in the county the quality of the actual programming correct yes so one of the things that we're the way we're

[06:14:24] starting with universal pre-k is really first starting with curriculum so um we were already slated to um overhaul curriculum in early childhood education that was already on the docket but we're still going to continue that in the first phase and then next year the goal is to just start with full day so it's being that that is a part of quality programming as well so just starting with full day before we look at you know complete expansion we won't get to universal until it's really going to take all the way until 2030 to get to that point so the focus right now is really on bolstering the curriculum quality training and support for teachers and then moving from half

[06:15:04] day to full day. That's where our current focus is going to land. But interesting that you asked that question because we've been really laser focused on the curriculum aspect of it, which speaks definitely to the quality that you're asking about. Thank you. And then 30 seconds. I want you guys to brag about, for example, I'm a huge fan of the cadet program with the fire department. I partook in the signing ceremony of one of our students and actually saw him graduate and cross the stage and now is an actual firefighter for Prince William County I can't say this enough how many programs that we have that people have no idea about and that we have to do better at letting people know the

[06:15:43] programs that you know the school division and the county on vice versa have so that you know what is the purpose of having great programs if people don't know about them and don't benefit that from them but I was told by the principal over at oh gosh unity read which is where the program runs out of that they were going to make improvements to this program.

[06:16:03] So it wasn't just to be like a firefighter. Now there's like another element. So can you talk a little bit about that? Correct. So now we're adding the EMT component, which we're really excited about. And it'll be at hopefully at Brentsville as well. So now they'll have like the full programmatic functions at Unity Read.

[06:16:23] And it is an outstanding program. And it's high demand for it. Usually all of the students that apply I can't even get a spot at Unity Reed, so we're really excited about it. Will the new addition or

component to the program allow for more students?

[06:16:41] Well, it'll be more students able to take the EMT component, but that will also free up some opportunity for space in the firefighter program at Unity Reed as well. Thank you. Thank you, Madam Chair. I just had a question because you were mentioning federal funds. You said you have very little.

[06:16:56] So what is it mostly that you get federal funding for? Or is it Title I? Is it Head Start? Title I, Title IV, Title II, Title VI. So, okay. Yeah, food, yes. Nutrition, food and nutrition.

[06:17:11] My colleague was talking about some of the great programming you have, but if there are cuts, like if the state budget does have, takes money away from us, what are some of the things you're going to have to look at cutting? One, we'll have to reprioritize a lot of things. But I hate to say this because, you know, people will start throwing stuff at the screen if they're watching.

[06:17:32] But, you know, the first thing that typically goes are your extracurricular type, you know, sport. We, you know, we've invested a lot in middle school sports, non-traditional sports. So things that make for a well-rounded educational experience because education isn't just, you know, reading, math, writing and science and social science.

[06:17:51] It's the full experience that students have, whether it's sports, whether it's clubs, academic clubs, robotics. And we've invested a great deal in robotics, and those are the kinds of programs that usually get cut first.

[06:18:08] And, no, I appreciate that, and that's something that I hope that we don't get to. And, obviously, we're going to be watching the state budget very carefully. Because you're right, for a lot of students, that's why they come to school if someone, you know, is engaged in sports. And the teamwork, you know, the camaraderie that builds, it really does make for a whole person.

[06:18:28] I appreciate you guys for coming out. Thank you so very much. I think this was a very informative presentation. I enjoy it when you come out and be able to answer our questions so that we understand exactly what is at stake. Hold on, Supervisor Angry. Are we done? Do you have a question?

[06:18:44] Because I'm about to wrap. Yeah. Okay. All right, so he wanted to give a statement. I guess, too, while I have the mic, I'll give a statement, too. I am very much a supporter of our schools and our revenue-sharing agreement because strong schools mean strong communities.

[06:19:02] And, quite frankly, that's what's going to allow businesses to want to come here. it's going to want people to as you made the point people want to live here if we have strong schools and you know i appreciate all the points made you know and yes we are seeing a slight dip in enrollment but our needs are not just numbers based from what you're telling us we have some harder to educate students like english language learners or special ed students and to be quite frank when you have a really small piece of the pie even if we give you guys like 70 it's still a very small piece of the pie. And that's why I'm glad that now that we have higher data center

[06:19:40] revenue, that we're able to give more of that out, because I feel like you guys are paying catch up. I've gone into some of our older buildings. They need work. They absolutely need work. And I have spoken to people who have, I have friends who have children who have special needs. And that's, it's really tough. So I appreciate everything that you guys are doing. Supervisor Angry.

[06:20:05] Thank you, Madam Chair. So, Dr. McDegg, Dr. Lateef, and school board team, I want to thank you all for this presentation. It really, this is a lot different than last year's, and what I understand more now is the student-to-pupil ratio of the funding, which makes a lot more sense.

[06:20:26] I want to shout out my Neapstall District school board, Tracy Blake, because since our time on this together, he's educated me a lot on the process. Now, I have a request, because we're going to address the elephant in the room, to your beehive or Swifties or whoever the group is that really gives you all the major support to address the elephant in the room.

[06:20:49] And I know where it came from. I am not interested in getting rid of the revenue shared agreement. So I would ask if you could turn them off from sending me all those emails. That would be greatly appreciated. And I just say thank you. Can I wrap with one quick story or comment?

[06:21:07] And it goes to Madam Bailey and Supervisor Gordy's points about collaborating, right, and corroborating. I've been on the school board now eight years. And our strategic plan and the work that Dr. McDade does and the school board does has really been about getting all of our students to collaborate, work together, to achieve together.

[06:21:31] You know, and there's a story, and you might have heard of this, these two men in the woods and a bear, they walk into a bear. And they have to run, right? And before they start running, one of the men decides to put on his running shoes. And the other guy says, dude, why are you putting on your running shoes?

[06:21:47] He goes, you know, this bear is going to catch you. You can't outrun this bear. He's going to catch you. He goes, I don't need to outrun the bear. I only need to outrun you, right? I, you know, I have appreciated the fact that you guys haven't tried to outrun us.

[06:22:03] We're not trying to outrun you. It is a collaboration that we work together so that the two of us run from this bear or deal with this bear directly, and we work together to do that. And that's how we ask our students to work in the classrooms. We ask them to do that, and I would ask, and I know that our board is willing to do that moving forward on any issue, no matter how daunting it may be.

[06:22:25] We understand your tensions and your stresses. We have our tensions and our stresses. I commit to working with you in all of that and what we do. sometimes it's not going to look nice sometimes it's going to be ugly sometimes you're going to get ugly emails well i get them all the time okay just so you know i get the most um but i i'm i'm very happy very happy to work with you so that we can um i'll run this bear together thank you very much all right thank you so very much for that wait no clapping guys sorry yes jazz hands or whatever you call it all right so we are going to i'm going to get people who want to leave

[06:23:02] thank you to our school board our school board members so because we are going to move into agenda item number 15 and that is public hearings all right so i'm just letting it clear out a little bit more and do we have um so here we go we got so i also want to be very clear because i

[06:23:42] see a lot of people signed up there is a difference between the public hearings and public comment time so public hearings you're going to be speaking to agenda items number 15a through 15i public comment is if you want to come in and talk about whatever you can sing waltzing matilda so um not that i encourage it but you can so i'm going to go ahead and open the public hearings for agenda items and we have the agenda in the back if anyone needs one 15a through 15i i'm going to call people up in groups of five please please please please state your name and the

[06:24:21] magisterial district where you reside you do not have to give your address unless you want us to show up for dinner i'm a picky eater and i am allergic to chocolate so with that um i'd like to start with emily cherry mina acuni joseph marshall gloria jordan and katie weston you all have three minutes start by saying your name and magisterial district the timer is up at the top

[06:24:50] Good evening. My name is Emily Cherry and I reside in the Potomac District. Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you tonight. I'm here tonight to encourage the board to honor its commitment to the children of Prince William County by funding the division's fiscal year 2027 budget and continuing the revenue sharing agreement with Prince William County Schools.

[06:25:20] I am a teacher in Prince William County. I work at Rippon Middle School and I have a fifth grader at Henderson Elementary School and a ninth grader at Colgan High School. Our family moved here nine years ago, and when we moved to the region, we specifically moved to Prince William County for the school division. We wanted to live in a place where our children could attend one of the most diverse school systems in the country, but we also wanted innovative art, music specifically by Kid at Colgan, and STEM programs, and we wanted teachers and curricula that would prepare our students to be global citizens in an ever-changing world. But great schools don't happen by accident.

[06:26:00] Great schools hire teachers by paying competitive salaries. Great schools have funding to implement innovative training and programs. In short, we can only have great schools if we prioritize funding our school division. And our county demonstrates our commitment to education and our children through our revenue sharing agreement. Our children deserve the investment in their future that adequate funding provides. The revenue sharing agreement specifically is so important because it allows the school division to implement their five-year strategic plan due to consistent and predictable income. The division's Elevate 2030 plan includes some

[06:26:38] important next steps. Increased CTE programs, a commitment to our twice exceptional students, and I have one of those at my house, a renewed commitment to emerging technology, And universal pre-K, which is such a huge step for the families of Prince William.

[06:26:54] I wish my kids had had that when I had four-year-olds at home. Even with the current revenue-sharing agreement, Prince William County School currently spends less per pupil than our neighboring counties. Weakening our agreement would further that deficit and would weaken our schools.

[06:27:10] Our children deserve to be our priority. Please honor and maintain our revenue-sharing agreement. Thank you. Thank you so very much. Next speaker, please. Hi there. Good evening. My name is Hina Ansari.

[06:27:26] That was a very exciting pronunciation of my name, Ms. Jefferson. That's the first time I've ever had a Q in my last name. I don't have that many letters, but, you know, it's okay. And before I go into my prepared statements, and I hope this doesn't get me in trouble, Ms. LaCroix, congratulations on your victory. It was like March madness watching the election results come in.

[06:27:42] I was like, what's going to happen? What's going to happen? And then you won. I was like, oh, it didn't even matter who was running. I was like, oh, I'm just happy everyone had a good time. All right, so I don't presume to fully understand or know how revenue sharing works exactly with respect to the county or school system, but I understand the impact cutting funding to the school system could have, and that's why I wanted to come and voice my concerns.

[06:28:00] When I think about what makes Prince William County a destination for people to live, to work, to raise a family, I think of three things, and it's not an exhaustive list by any stretch of the imagination, but they're the first three things that I could think of, and unfortunately, I think you've heard them already tonight, and I'm sorry. So, firstly, is the cost of living.

[06:28:16] Is it affordable to live in Prince William County? I'd say no. The average cost of a single-family home in some parts of the county tips to close to half a million dollars, and if you're living paycheck to paycheck or you're living close to minimum wage, you can't afford to live here. Not to mention the soaring costs of power with the abundance of data centers littering the western part of the county. Secondly, is it safe? This one was not an easy statistic for me to extrapolate because I used it based off of the Potomac News and it seems like every 24 to 48 hours on my news feed I see either a shooting or a multi-car crash that ends up with somebody dead. So safety, that's 0 for 2, we're

[06:28:52] already at 0 for 2. And then the third one I had was, are the school systems good? And on this one I kind of had to push on that one and say, kind of. With the proposals in place, we're talking about cutting more resources to a school system that is already amongst its neighbors having the lowest per student spending.

[06:29:08] How can we possibly compete with the likes of Fairfax if we're paying our teachers less and giving them fewer resources? Would you want to move your family to a place where the school system isn't a priority? Not everyone can afford a private school for their children in New York like the former governor. At this time of year, we also see a great exodus. This is the time when people start making plans based around the school calendar.

[06:29:25] This is when good teachers get poached to other school systems keeping in mind earlier this year the school board woke up one morning and chose violence and arbitrarily decided to extend the school day with no plan for that extra time or compensation wanting to match the neighboring jurisdictions if we want to be a destination for people to want to move to then we need to continue funding the school's system at or above what we're already spending when Dr. Latif cited a 94 graduation rate at the beginning of the school year graduation is great but we need to make sure the students are being educated fully prioritizing the school system and providing its funding is the only way to ensure that just state the magisterial district I'm not sure if you said that sorry aqua kwan thank you very

[06:30:02] much next speaker please honorable board of supervisors good evening my name is Joe Marshall I'm a citizen of the Coles district and the current chair of the Prince William County Trails and Blueways Council tonight I'd like to talk about needed funding for trails throughout Prince William County regular physical activity results in both physical and mental health benefits Spending time outdoors has also been found to reduce stress, boost mental health and well-being.

[06:30:36] Surveys of county residents have shown that trails, parks, and open spaces are a high priority to them, and better active mobility networks will cut down on short automobile trips. The Sustainability and Resilience Comprehensive Plan Amendment being developed in parallel to better address sustainability and resilience also focuses on parks, open spaces, and interconnected trail networks. So the mobility section of the comprehensive plan shows maps of existing planned and proposed trails and blueways throughout our county and it directs a trail

[06:31:11] master plan be created. That plan expertly crafted by county staff in a draft form so far finally enumerates and prioritizes what is needed to realize the networks of recreational and active mobility trails

throughout the county. Thus, the county has a vision for each network with over 400 miles of active mobility trails and over 200 miles of recreational trails connecting all parts of the county, additionally creating canoe and kayak launches from appropriate points among rivers and creating several blueways. In the 10-year horizon of the plan, hundreds of millions of

[06:31:51] dollars will be needed to realize these networks. Thus, it's important to fund this incrementally each year, as well as consider bond funding. I thank you for what's already in the budget, but ask you consider adding. Some funding, of course, comes from road projects, proffers, and grants, but again, this is not sufficient. Prince Williams County's geography blesses us with outdoor areas throughout that form a natural set of greenways that are often not developed and are proffered or kept as open space. Many of these fit into the trails of the plan. Nearby

[06:32:28] residents often create paths through these areas. Thus, to lower the cost of building these trail networks, volunteers can be utilized to finish these trails and maintain them at a cost much lower than what's estimated in the trails plan. To leverage this opportunity of small projects, DPR needs an additional planner to address these and direct the efforts in concert with local trail volunteer groups. Please consider adding this position to the budget. To fund this and additional trails next year, I ask you to consider directing more of the data center funds in this direction

[06:33:05] since they are the antithesis of parks and open space. Please continue to support and fund the network of trails and blueways planned for the county for the health and wellness of its residents. Thank you. Thank you so much. Next speaker, please. Good evening, Chair and Supervisors.

[06:33:27] My name is Gloria Jordan. I am the parent of three Prince William County graduates, a nurse who has served within our school system, and I currently serve as co-chair of Potomac Dems, a board member of Equality Prince William, a member of the NAACP, and I also sit on the Superintendent's Advisory Council on Equity, where we work directly to support Dr. McDade's Elevate 2030.

[06:33:50] I speak tonight on my own capacity. When we talk about fully funding schools in Prince William County, we have to be honest about what that actually means. It's about whether we are meeting the real needs of our students. Yes, Prince William County Schools currently has a \$1.9 billion budget. Yes, over half of the county's general fund goes to education, which Dr. Lateef already demonstrated is the lowest percentage out of all the surrounding counties. And yes, we've made important investments in teacher pay, mental health staff, and special education, but fully funded schools are not defined by effort. They are defined by outcomes. Fully funded

[06:34:30] schools mean smaller class sizes, fully staffed mental health teams, multiple language and gifted learners are being met. Special education and twice exceptional services are proactive and not stretched to compliance. They mean universal pre-K aligned with Elevate 2030, ensuring every child starts with a strong foundation. They mean competitive salaries that retain great educators and equitable funding. Right now, too many of our schools are operating in a gap between what is

[06:35:01] funded and what is actually needed. And that gap shows up clearly. A proposed \$141 million cut would be devastating. It would not just widen that gap, it would institutionalize it. And let's be clear. This is not just an educational issue. It's a workforce issue, a public health issue, and an economic development issue. Because when we underinvest in our schools, we underinvest in the future of this county. This is why revenue sharing matters. Revenue sharing is not just a budget mechanism. It is a commitment. A commitment to stability, predictability, and protecting our

[06:35:40] schools from political and economic swings. It ensures that education funding grows with the County so our schools are not left behind while our community expands or the federal government defunds the Department of Education. Tonight, I am asking you to support revenue sharing as a safeguard against instability and potential federal disinvestment in education. I am asking you to move beyond incremental increases and towards intentional sustained investment. Close the gap. Fund staffing ratios based on real need, not minimum formulas. Prioritize equity and how resources are distributed and ensure that every child in Prince William County regardless of zip

[06:36:20] code has access to a fully funded fully supported education because our students don't just deserve adequacy they deserve excellence thank you oh and vote yes April 21st all right I am going to before the next speaker Kibi you got some time there are other people ahead of you I'm going to call up our next group, we have Arlene Watkins, Susan Tibbs, and I apologize, Arum Sareem, Reena Stepp, and

[06:36:52] Matthew Brooks. All right, ma'am, you may proceed. Good evening, Chair and Supervisors. My name is Katie Weston. I'm a resident of Potomac, and I stand before you tonight as both a parent and educator in Prince William County, two roles that give me a front row seat to what is at stake in this budget proposal. I also serve the community as co-chair of the Potomac Democrats Magisterial District. We are living in an unprecedented moment. The federal department of education

[06:37:26] is being systemically dismantled. Federal and state funding streams that our schools have depended on for decades are uncertain, delayed, or disappearing entirely. Title I funds, special education dollars, mental health grants, all of it is now in question. We cannot wait to see what comes from Washington and Richmond. We cannot budget on promises that may never arrive. That means you, this board, are the last line of defense for our kids. The revenue sharing agreement isn't

[06:38:01] a luxury. It is the foundation that allows us to pay teachers competitively so we don't lose them to neighboring counties. It is what keeps class sizes manageable so that every child, including those with learning differences, gets the attention they deserve. It has the potential to better serve our food insecure families. And with 43% of Prince William County households experiencing food insecurity, this is a priority. It also has the potential to fund universal pre-K, which would be

[06:38:36] a game changer for our county. Thank you for honoring the revenue sharing agreement. Fund our schools fully. Thank you. Next speaker, please. Good evening. First off, I want to congratulate you guys. It is now my bedtime, so I'm not sure how you're staying awake, but my name is Arlene Watkins. I'm in the Coles District. I have had the most rewarding opportunity volunteering at the Prince William County Animal Shelter. I started in November of last year and have gained great

[06:39:10] admiration for the staff at that facility as well as the volunteers it's admirable to see how much love and care they give to each and every animal regardless of how they come to the shelter you would never know that they these animals were ever in a bad space based on the way that they they act when the staff is there they just the animals just love them my ask is that we provide more funding for additional staff to ensure that these animals continue to get the care that they deserve. If you, if you ever go to the shelter, which I highly encourage everyone to do, um, you

[06:39:50] will see the, the, the animals are just excited. The dogs, I'm a dog person. Um, when they see the staff, oh, they don't want to talk to anybody else. They want the staff because those are the people that they know and it's it's really it's really great um so one thing i ask is to please elect to add the three optional positions that were identified in the updated budget proposal for the shelter i think that would be

beneficial if there could be more positions that would be amazing but i know that's a lot to ask but baby steps um also there's no noel shot and i apologize

[06:40:29] if i'm butchering your name i really am sorry um i saw some of the slides she's presenting it's really shocking the level of funding that goes to our other counties loud and fairfax compared to what prince william gets it's uh they really know how to spend their money though prince william kudos to them yeehaw um so anyway i that that is my request and i do encourage everyone on the board to please take a little bit of time maybe 30 minutes 45 minutes the shelter is right down the road um to go and see the great facility and the great people that are there just don't go on

[06:41:04] Mondays, they're closed. Thank you. Thank you so very much. Next speaker, please. Good evening. My name is Susan Tibbs. I'm from Noakesville, the Brentsville District. The care of homeless animals is the responsibility of all of us, and presently, Prince William County can definitely do better. I'm also a volunteer at the shelter, spend a lot of time there, and it is a great place.

[06:41:31] The staff works really hard, but we definitely have opportunities to do better. I wanted to also thank Noelle Schott, who's going to speak a little bit later, give a presentation, and has already provided a lengthy paper to the board on the disparities in services and staffing compared to other relevant jurisdictions. Definitely worth your time to go through that. But in short, it's really that there's an increase in the number of animals needing care. There are no real services

[06:42:04] offered by the shelter and we had supervisor bailey and and supervisor gordy you know really talk about in the the school board here talking about partnerships and and how we can do better well the shelters are a fantastic opportunity the animals are a liability but they're also a resource we can be doing more we can have programs where we're helping in the mental health space where we're helping in the school space we're having programs for youth we're doing more to service

[06:42:41] with with what we have and it would just take a small amount of additional staff to be able to reach some of the the opportunities that are available in these other jurisdictions and really create a better community as we interact more with the community the community gives back more and it's definitely a win-win. So some of the issues faced by the shelter are the high surrender rates and the high returned adoptions. The staffing, the behaviorists, for example, could help prevent that. Delays in animals being processed and reaching the adoption status,

[06:43:21] more staff can help to remedy that. Long lines for residents who come to the shelter and especially when they're adopting animals. Wait times for surrendering animals lead to increases in strays out in the community. As animals are dumped, we definitely want to decrease that. Broken equipment for long periods of time lead to further problems. So really the request is to add the three optional positions that were added to the budget for the shelter and to consider a longer proposal to

[06:43:56] increased staff over a three-year period to close the gap in services and staffing that are available to our surrounding communities. So in short, we need help, we need staff, and we welcome you all to come in and visit and see for yourselves. Thank you.

[06:44:13] Thank you. Next speaker, please. I think there are a few others, but I don't know if they're here anymore. Hi, good evening, Madam Chair and Supervisors. I'm Rena Stapp from the Brentsville district. I guess I should have worn all my beaded bracelets tonight. I did not bring all my Swifty stuff with me, but I can do that for next time. I'll remember then. All right. So with regard to

[06:44:45] the revenue sharing agreement in the budget, the over 50% of the property tax, it creates a dependable budget for planning to support all students, educators, and many more people as PWCS is the largest employer in the county, but the funding allows for more than just desks and whiteboards and markers. As has been presented tonight, the school board, the school budget includes activities, sports team coaches, equipment facilities, nutrition and transportation services, and all the folks that work at central office that keep the trains running on time.

[06:45:19] But it's more than just numbers. It impacts the people who live here. I am a parent of two children in Prince William County, and one of whom is twice exceptional. So I am very, very familiar with IEP meetings. I'm very familiar with the extra activities that the gifted system has at the different schools. I substitute in a lot of the SPED classrooms at the elementary school that my kids go to. I am one of the high-dose tutors that was hired to help close the education gap from COVID times. I am a robotics coach. I am at the school so much, and I see what's going on there.

[06:45:59] And it's not just supplies. It's people. That's what we're wanting to make sure is realized. We're not just a spreadsheet. I'm a community member who went down to Richmond to talk to the state legislators to lobby for more public school funding from the state. And what the federal and state levels can't or will not fund, that's what we need you all to do for us.

[06:46:20] And we depend on you to consider not just numbers, how the public schools help the property values of everyone in the county, how the schools will bring in people who want to move here to live here. I grew up in the Northern Virginia public schools in Fairfax County schools, but I stayed here in Prince William because I love the community here to raise my kids.

[06:46:44] And I think this might be for 15.B, but I'm just going to throw it in now since I've got a moment. I was here at the Finance and Budget Committee meeting where Supervisor Bode proposed increasing the taxes on the data center, the BTPP, but not sharing that with schools.

[06:47:01] And there was no decision at that point, and I'm not sure. I went through a bunch of transcripts, and I couldn't find any further action. But a step like that would open a whole new can of worms where data centers, if they eventually do get appropriately taxed, and that additional income would be withheld from schools.

[06:47:19] I think that is not a great step for keeping us a competitive county for people to want to work and live. So thank you for funding schools. And I will remember, maybe I'll bring some extra blingy bracelets for everybody next time. Thank you so very much.

[06:47:36] So it looks like we did have a couple people drop off. I'm going to read your names again and call up everyone else. Arum Sorine, Matthew Brooks, Keeby Schneider, Noelle Schott, and Mitch Nason, if you can all make your way to the back. Thank you.

[06:47:52] I apologize. I was supposed to be on the tax assessments speaking, and somehow I asked to change my name to that list. Do you want to speak with both or just one? Just about tax assessments. We also have you, well, the 16A is a proposed real estate property increase.

[06:48:12] Yes. You wanted to do that one? Yes. Can we do that now? Yeah. I'm going to call that in a minute. So I'll go ahead with the next speaker. All right, you may proceed.

[06:48:30] Hi, my name is Kibi from the Gainesville District. The following is a segment from a set of stories I have been developing designed to promote internet reform called Saving Electric Ladyland.

[06:48:47] Suddenly we realized this was not only about us. This was about the communication system of the entire planet. There was an integrity issue. A massive and growing quantity of dark, deviant sexual data was tearing apart the innocence of their subconscious that once helped them all understand themselves as one family.

[06:49:07] The male-female yin-yang balance of their minds was being torn apart. What message could we possibly send to them to let them know that now is the time to stand up for all humanity? We now have an official federal definition of illegal data.

[06:49:30] The Take It Down Act of 2025, a near-unanimous act, defines non-consensual, sexually explicit data, both authentic and computer-generated, as illegal. This material could be 25% of our total amount of stored data.

[06:49:53] A study can determine how much illegal data exists. Please allocate funds that may be used to assess the illegal content in our data centers. We can then make that study public and demand the illegal content to be removed.

[06:50:10] Not simply from the search engines, but from the actual data centers. The Golden Gate Bridge and Flying to the Moon were once far-fetched ideas. Prince William County has the power right here and now to guide the internet to a higher level of integrity simply by taking this first critical step. Please allocate funds that might be utilized for his study. I have sourced a company in Centerville that is able to perform such a study,

[06:50:43] save our electrical grid, save our environment, and save our sanity. I had the distinct pleasure and honor to introduce myself to Dr. Lateef on his way out. He thinks it's a great idea.

[06:50:55] thank you very much for this time hello could i get the projector on please okay hello i'm noelle schott aquaquan district appointee to the animal advisory committee and vice president of the prince william spca tonight i am bringing my experience as a volunteer with the animal

[06:51:34] services center thank you for the review that the county staff has done of the budget requirements since the public hearing on march 17th the budget recap earlier today makes me hopeful i'm here tonight to foot stomp the data shown on these two slides as you make your budget decisions and recommend that you execute the option Mr. Shorter briefed you on earlier which would start to close the disparity in positions shown on this slide. Loudoun County has 18 more FTEs even with lower intake. Fairfax has 61 more FTEs even with similar intake numbers of Prince William County. Also you

[06:52:09] can see both counties grew their staff over three years. The save rate is an important metric to monitor over time to see how adding the positions will help reduce the rate of euthanasia. One of the three positions listed in the option you have in the budget recap is for a behaviorist.

[06:52:26] This is critical because 50% of the animals entering the shelter have behavior issues. As our county continues to develop and grow, so do the services offered to our pet owners.

[06:52:42] You can see from the table, our county does not have sufficient resources at the Animal Services Center to provide comprehensive services like our surrounding counties. Nationally, an average of 30 percent of all shelter intakes result from owner surrenders. These vital services would support our

community and reduce unnecessary intake by preventing our community's pet owners from having to surrender their animals in the first place. In closing, I want to thank everybody who works and volunteers at the Animal Services Center. They all perform an outstanding job and provide amazing care to the animals and again I recommend that you approve the option that Mr.

[06:53:20] Shorter briefed earlier to add three positions to the FY27 budget and continue to look at a comprehensive staffing plan that would close the gap in disparity in our FTEs. Thank you.

[06:53:46] Good evening distinguished board members and executive staff. My name is Mitch Nason. I live across the county line in Stafford but I'm a 21-year veteran of your fire department. Before I get into my remarks, I'd like to welcome Supervisor LaCroix to the board. This is my first time testifying with you here on the board.

[06:54:04] You join a dedicated group of individuals that balance delicately supporting the county taxpayers while also judiciously spending their well-spent funds. And so you're in good company. Look forward to working with you. So I'm a 21-year lieutenant in the fire department, but I'm a president of the Prince and professional firefighters representing 700 firefighters, paramedics, and support staff here in Prince William. Tonight, for the first time, certainly in my history, I'm joined by members of various volunteer fire departments from around the county. President Todd Hewitt's with OWL,

[06:54:40] President Luke McBride's with Buck Hall, President Smith is with Stonehouse, and Vice President Rubino is also with Stonehouse. They represent fire departments from the east end of the county to the west end of the county, and the other volunteer organizations would have loved to have been here, but quite a few of them are actually staffing this evening.

[06:54:57] We come to you tonight to follow up on a letter that we signed jointly that was sent to all the board members and also to the county executive, urging you all to expand our medical physicals. The county executive included that in his budget presentation this afternoon, and I'd like to talk about that in two different ways.

[06:55:19] One is probably an easy way, and that's emotional. And that's just getting to say that what we're talking about is including some funding to expand our physicals for things like cancer screenings, for more enhanced cardiac screenings, for mammograms for our female firefighters, both career and volunteer.

[06:55:39] And at the end of the day, we're talking about saving lives. It's been proven. We have some studies that some of our folks are able to take advantage of right now. And we've had over a dozen cancers caught in firefighters in Prince William County in the past 12 months. Now let me switch away from an emotional stance and rather just to a dollar and cent stance.

[06:55:56] The county executive actually hinted at this a little bit. Because a lot of these cancers are workers' comp claims, these are a cost to the county. We replace the oil, we replace the tires on fire trucks when they wear down. And in a weird way, we're kind of like an asset like that.

[06:56:12] Career or volunteer, if one of us develops a disease that's considered to be a workers' comp claim, that's a cost to the county. A stage one cancer is more easily treated than a stage four cancer. Unfortunately, we've had deaths recently. Our brother Lance McClintock only made it about less than a year into his retirement.

[06:56:29] As a worker's comp claim, this county's paying. That shouldn't be the rationale, the reasoning why we're doing it, but at the end of the day, it also comes into consideration. Out of respect for you all's time, we've consolidated our voices and our comments into one, but believe me, it is as one.

[06:56:45] Cancer and cardiac does not care if you're compensated to protect this county. Our volunteers are just as at risk as are your career firefighters, and we encourage you and ask you all to support that initiative. Thank you for your time. Thank you so very much.

[06:57:00] We don't have anyone else signed up in person, so Supervisor Angry, do we have anyone online? Do we have any online? Good evening, Vice Chair and the rest of the board. We have one speaker tonight. We have Jill Norcross.

[06:57:16] Okay. Go ahead, Jill. Thank you. Thank you so much to the Board of County Supervisors for allowing me to speak this evening. My name is Jill Norcross, and I serve as the Prince William County Director for the Northern Virginia Affordable Housing Alliance. I appreciate and support the county has included an unbudgeted \$5 million contribution to the Affordable Housing Reserve Fund to support further implementation of affordable housing initiatives in our community. We know this has been part of your long-term strategy to include five million dollars per year to build up the fund

[06:57:51] to two point to 21 million we are excited to see the release of the affordable housing fund competitive application process kicking off this summer with the anticipated award coming this fall for the first round of funding and expect that this will help create a pipeline of affordable housing projects to address the county's affordable housing shortages we also want to thank you for your investments and increased staffing levels in the office of housing and community development and the planning office to assist with the policymaking and administration of the affordable dwelling unit ordinances and the affordable housing fund programs. And we're excited to learn more about the housing fast track resolution to expedite housing development by accelerating

[06:58:31] zoning reforms, prioritizing affordable housing, and expanding options like accessory dwelling units. Just want to also mention we're supportive of the buyer side tools like the county's down payment assistance program introduced in tonight's budget update for county employees and excited to hear about potential housing units for teachers and public school employees.

[06:58:52] We feel like Prince William County is well positioned to take advantage of some of the pro-housing and affordable housing legislation that we expect to be signed by the governor on April 13th. We would like to acknowledge that despite the county's investments in housing for all, we recognize that many working residents and families in Prince William County are severely cost burdened by unaffordable rents that are mismatched to their incomes. There's a strong need to house our most vulnerable residents through permanent support of affordable housing, and there's a strong need to protect vulnerable residents of mobile home communities to prevent displacement. We know there's a lack of opportunities for home ownership and wealth

[06:59:30] building for residents earning low and moderate incomes. Basically, we know our housing solutions will need to come from a variety of policies and programs. But on behalf of Navaja and our Alliance partners, we want to thank you for your investments in affordable housing, and we look forward to working on a comprehensive strategy to address the housing needs of communities of Prince William County residents across all income levels. Thank you. All right. Thank you, ma'am.

[06:59:56] All right. So we, this is going to conclude. I'm sorry, I'm going to close the public hearings for items 15A through 15I. We are now going to move on to agenda item number 16, and I am going to go ahead and open the public hearing for item 16a mr arun serene if you can make your way up and again i apologize if i butchered your name if you can state it and the magisterial district where you live we would greatly appreciate that thank you sir well i live in fairfax county but i own

[07:00:35] a lot of property in this county and i literally live in the county because i'm spending 12 hours a day, seven days a week. Working in Manassas, Virginia at Serene and Associates CPAs, we do taxes and accounting for a lot of small businesses and individuals. And I'm here during tax time to let you guys know that the economy right now is not doing good. And average Joe is hurting because of the tax prices, because of the food prices, because of delivery costs going up,

[07:01:13] because of every single thing going up and now you guys want to assess people a flat 6.2 percent increase in property values and another 6 percent increase in taxes to cover your 12.2 percent budget that's fine at a county level but my clients and your constituents are going to be hurt by that 12.2 percent or 6.2 percent they can't even afford a two percent increase right now

[07:01:45] look at all the costs that have gone up for them. Not everybody got a 12% increase. Nobody even got 6% increases. During COVID, costs shot up. Nothing has come down. And every year, this county keeps increasing the property taxes. Look at all the people on fixed income. Look at all the people that their Medicare benefits or their other benefits will go away because the net worth goes up when the value of the property they own, they've been here for 40 years. They can't get out

[07:02:24] of those houses. And you keep increasing the value of everything. Doesn't make sense. And then the county goes and says, I'm going to do a flat 6.2 percent. That's laziness. Find a method to the madness. If somebody is building on the property, some property is reselling, then doing that makes a lot of sense, right? Same thing with land. Land is something if I own a lot of land here and to develop and rezone it now takes three years. So look at the net present value of that land. You

[07:03:00] should be reducing that price, not increasing it because of nothing else. County just goes and assesses. Oh, this data center bought it for 3 million an acre. So your land is worth 3 million an acre. It doesn't work that way and that's already approved. Unapproved properties take three years at least and millions of dollars to get it to an approval level if you accept the proffers. It's not easy owning land and land values should be discounted to net present value

[07:03:36] not to what it will be one day. You're basically going to hurt I don't care that much but I think that the poor people and who are basically they're breaking even you're gonna break their backs by adding so thank you so much your time is up i appreciate you though thank you for coming all the way out here um do we have anyone available online good evening yes we do our speaker is

[07:04:07] steven amato all right thank you go ahead steven i look like i'm coming in blurry can you see me um can we adjust your volume how's that better uh no just a little more i don't know if we can help you in the back as well but yeah good evening board or county supervisors and madam chair i'm steve amato from the aquapon district sir um chris we can't hear you you're very you're very low i don't know if you can max your volume and maybe in the back we can help you

[07:04:43] as well if you can come closer to your mic how's that is it even i mean it's getting better but it's still not quite there yeah can we do what they got a max in the back okay all right i don't know if your bar is

your mic is max but yeah you got to lean in a little bit more uh try try again we'll let you go there we go yeah just we'll let you go from there just kind of speak up a little bit if you could okay hi everybody supervisors and madam chair this is steven marron from the occoquan district and one thousand seven hundred and fifty two dollars this is the total

[07:05:22] amount of my property taxes which have risen over the past 10 calendar years in prince william county That is a 27% increase in my property taxes. These property taxes are near the level of California, and Virginia is no California.

[07:05:38] For my fellow Prince William County residents in attendance here this evening, the proposed county fiscal year 2027's budget revenue is 51% of that will be from real estate taxes, and 24% will be coming from personal property taxes.

[07:05:58] So 75% plus of the county's budget revenue for 2027 are from property taxes. That is way too much. You've heard all these other advocates wanting additional resources, but I question them.

[07:06:16] Are they property owners? Do they realize how much revenue comes from property taxes? I do not agree with county executives' proposed fiscal year of Prince William County 2027 property tax increase of 6.2% to make it a \$0.906 per \$100 assessed property value.

[07:06:41] That's way too much. We need to lower the property base. The tax base has to be lowered to at least 0.84. War. These property taxes are pushing people out of the county and making it more and more unaffordable to live in this county and overall in Virginia. The state general assembly is not helping. They could have gotten rid of the personal property tax several years ago, but they didn't.

[07:07:14] They kept it. And in fact, more taxes are going to be levied upon all citizens of Virginia. We need to lower the tax base in my discussion at public comment time i'll give further data on why we should reduce the base real estate property tax to 0.84 thank you thank you sir all right if we don't have anyone else this is going to close i'm going to close the public hearing for 16a and i'm going to move into agenda item number 17 and that's public comment time do we have anyone

[07:07:51] And then after public comment time, we will do supervisor's time, then closed.

[07:08:09] All right. So Antoinette McDonald, Monsimaran Kalin, I think he has already left, and Cozy Bailey. And Mr. Bailey's left as well. So you have three minutes. Please state your name and the Magisterial District where you reside.

[07:08:27] Antoinette McDonald, and I reside in Potomac. Great evening, Chair at Large, DeShondra Jefferson. My Potomac District Supervisor, the Honorable Bailey. members of the board, and members of the community. My name is Antoinette McDonnell, and I am the co-owner and CEO of Forever in a Day Publishing, LLC, where we focus on God, family, career, and finances. We are a woman-owned publishing company serving authors, entrepreneurs, and organizations who have powerful stories and educational resources to share. Our mission is

[07:09:05] simple, to amplify voices and turn meaningful ideas into published works that educate, inspire, and strengthen communities. Before launching this company, I spent more than two decades in education serving as both a principal and a teacher here in Prince William County Schools. That experience taught me something very important, and that is that stories matter. Representation matters. And when people

see their experiences reflected in books and resources, it changes how they see themselves and their futures. Through FAB Publishing, we work with authors and organizations

[07:09:45] to develop books, educational materials, journals, and anthologies that address real-life topics like marriage, resilience, financial literacy, and health awareness. Many of our projects bring together multiple voices to document lived experiences and lessons that benefit others.

[07:10:03] As the company continues to grow, we are intentionally exploring ways that our services can support local government initiatives, schools, nonprofits, and community programs. For example, publishing can support community storytelling initiatives, literacy and youth writing programs, historical documentation of local communities, and educational resources created by local experts.

[07:10:29] I am currently pursuing certification as a woman and minority-owned business, and a part of my goal is to ensure that companies like ours is not only just visible, but available when the county seeks partners for creative, educational, and community-focused projects.

[07:10:46] So tonight, my ask is simple. First, I just wanted to introduce myself. This was a great meeting, too, as a local small business resource, and second, to ask that when opportunities arise in Prince William County related to publishing, educational materials, community storytelling, or collaborative projects, that Fab Publishing be considered as a potential partner and vendor.

[07:11:10] I also welcome the opportunity to connect with any type of departments or committees or initiatives that may benefit from this type of service that we offer. So thank you for your work that you do for our community, and thank you for allowing me this opportunity to introduce myself tonight.

[07:11:27] Thank you. Thank you very much. Do we have, Supervisor Ingrid, anyone online? I believe we do. Yes. Service Amato, are you there? Yes, sir. Mr. Stephen Amato will be speaking online. Yeah. Could you still just kind of speak up just a little bit? And thank you. Go ahead, sir. The floor is yours.

[07:11:47] Thank you, Board of County Supervisors and Madam Chair. Steve Amato again from the Occoquan District. Can you hear fine? You know, it's still a little bit rough, but sorry about that.

[07:12:00] That's okay. As I mentioned in the public hearing, I do not support the raise of the property tax to 0.906. Through various Freedom of Information and Privacy Act requests, I have obtained the following data from the county, which I'd like to share as a reminder on why we should reduce the real estate tax base rate to 0.84 per \$100.

[07:12:33] Over the past eight fiscal years, Prince William County owners have paid significantly high property taxes. And over the past eight consecutive fiscal years, to include 2026, Prince William County budgets have generated large amounts of surplus revenue.

[07:12:53] For example, in FY19, \$17.6 million was generated, in FY20, \$21.7 million was generated, in FY21, \$28.2 million, in FY23, \$42.3 million, in FY24, \$68.7 million in revenue, in FY25, \$21 million, and in FY26, a surplus of \$65 million is projected.

[07:13:23] As a result, a total of \$342.3 million in revenue has been generated. None of the funding from these surpluses was used to refund taxpayers in Prince William County. The majority of the tax revenue was from real estate tax and personal property taxes.

[07:13:43] The only personnel in Prince William County that have benefited from these surpluses have been Prince William County government and school employees who've received salary increases to

include the Board of County Supervisors and Madam Chair. The other statistic that has shown an increase that we need to control is the total number of full-time equivalents. 922.25 full-time equivalents are going to be the total number of increase from fiscal year 2019 to fiscal year

[07:14:22] 2027, a 19.2% increase. We need to control that. That's way too high, growing government. So again, I propose the tax base rate to be 0.84. We need to tax the data centers as much as possible, reduce or freeze these full-time equivalents that keep populating the budget.

[07:14:46] That's a must-pay bill that we will never get rid of. Thank you. Thank you, sir. I believe that's it. Yes, sir. That was the last speaker. If that is the last speaker, then we are going to move on from public comment time.

[07:15:05] We are going to go back to supervisor's time because of time constraints. We had to put that towards the end. So, again, as I stated earlier, we have some additions to vote on. That's 12D. That's appoint Austin Haynes to the Industrial Development Authority.

[07:15:24] 12E, that's appoint Michael Garcia II to the Prince William Water Board of Directors. 12F, which is appoint Brian Landrum to the Planning Commission. I am going to pull off 12F. I'm going to pull that one off separately, but can I get a motion for 12A through 12E?

[07:15:42] So moved. Second. It's been properly moved and seconded. Any discussion? All right, let's go ahead and take our vote on those items. Vote unanimous. And for 12F, I'd like to go ahead and get a motion to move that one forward.

[07:16:03] So moved. It's been moved by Bailey and seconded by Vega. Any discussion? Let's go ahead and take our vote. Motion passes 5 to 2.

[07:16:24] Supervisor Stewart and Chair Jefferson voting nay. Supervisor Bodie abstaining from vote. All right, thank you so very much. I am now going to go around the horn. I'm going to start on the other end with Mr. Supervisor Gordy. Madam Chair, I'm going to pass for the late hour.

[07:16:42] Thank you, ma'am. All right. Supervisor LaCroix. I'd like to give notice of intent to appoint Stephanie Babcock to the Solid Waste Committee and Brent Thomas to the Weapons Control. And I believe that their resumes have been submitted to the – okay.

[07:17:03] Thank you. Anything else? All right. Yes, I'd like for that to be put on the agenda for next week, if possible. That's going to be a tough one. So I just want to say this real quick, because I want to have a level of transparency. When we voted to move up or move up the date that we release our agendas, we were asking, and I've been trying to work with the clerk about having certain deadlines for when we turn things in.

[07:17:33] It puts a lot of pressure on our staff, and quite frankly, it's the same thing with proclamations and commendations. I know people want to do things, but we've published a schedule that people don't want to seem to adhere to. And it's not something that my office is policing or trafficking. There's a schedule.

[07:17:49] And if we don't adhere by that schedule, we're putting additional time on staff. So I just want to name that so that everyone understands it's not Chair Jefferson policing things. You're putting additional burdens on staff. So we did, with all due respect, Supervisor LaCroix, we did move up your appointments because the Planning Commission is so vital.

[07:18:10] But, you know, unless it's truly time-sensitive, I would ask if you would work with staff to find an appropriate date for us to vote on that. Is that something that you can hold on, those other two you mean? Sure. I really appreciate that. Sure. Thank you so very much.

[07:18:26] And, again, with proclamations and commendations, my office works to route that with the clerk's office. We have a schedule. I respectfully request that people realize that we have a schedule. Supervisor Vega.

[07:18:42] Thank you, Madam Chair. I do want to make a comment though just today the school board didn't have their presentation ready and the agenda is quite frequently not respected so if that's going to be the standard I think it needs to be applied across the board well a supervisor LaGroix agreed to you asking her to postpone her appointments she just got elected so this is not a common thing and I think that she deserves a respect that any newly elected supervisor deserves and so she has to make her appointments to fill these positions but you already both settled that and I just want to be clear it you know I've never said that you're policing you know the agenda but you know when

[07:19:19] the asks come also from your office and then everybody else in between it only makes it fair that if one asks we honor the other's request. So I do want to say that I have put these on for today and I spoke with Supervisor LaCroix because I want to give her a chance particularly for planning commission even though I voted against it I wanted to make sure that she had that opportunity. Now, yes, I have been accused of policing, how we do proclamations and commendations. We have a schedule. I know everyone's busy. I understand that. But you've also yourself mentioned that, you know, making staff do extra work and extra things. I'm giving

[07:19:56] grace to Supervisor LaCroix. The other people, and I've spoken to her about who she wants to put on for the next week's agenda. Unfortunately, one of them's for a commission that we really haven't met in a while, and I know you have a directive going on for that. So I'm really trying to work with the clerk's office. I'm the only one with an office in McCourt. I see how late they are.

[07:20:18] I see what time they come in, and I see oftentimes how late they're here. And so I really want to respect our colleagues. You know, Supervisor LaCroix and I can speak about that directly one-on-one, but again, I just want to emphasize this since this came up. Please, this is not a Chair Jefferson thing. This is working with our staff who is already overworked, who comes and early who is here late if we can just be mindful and respectful of that not just in terms of appointments but in terms of proclamations and commendations i would greatly appreciate that because there's no point in having a schedule if people are going to do what they want to do

[07:20:56] so um and then i do have a directive but i for the sake of time i don't have to read it i've sent it out unless i unless you guys want me to i believe you have to yes i have to go ahead All right, we're starting your time.

[07:21:12] Go ahead, do your directive. Madam County Attorney, do I have to? To make sure the board knows what their point is. Is it legally required? I would advise it. Just go ahead. I want to get out of here. And staff does too. They're overworked. You've added on another minute. Go.

[07:21:27] Ay, ay, ay. Let me find it. All right, I'm going to skip you. I'm going to go to Supervisor Angry. Madam Chair, without objection, I would like to direct the county executive to work with staff to review the inventory developed pursuant to the Board of County Supervisors October 28, 2025 directive. and identify

any boards, committees, commissions, advisory bodies, or working groups that are not legally required in that they are created in the discretion of the board and that have been inactive in that they have not met within the last 365 days from the date of this directive.

[07:21:57] The county executive is directed to prepare draft resolutions for the board's consideration in an upcoming board meeting to dissolve any such BCCs. The county executive will work with the chair as to the date of the board meeting for consideration of the resolutions. The county attorney's office is directed to review the information and recommendations for any legal issues. all right i'm just gonna reject some so let's move on supervisor angry i don't have anything but i would like to thank staff for uh working with me to get the proclamation for autism acceptance that was important and special because it's april i didn't want to push that to may so

[07:22:31] i want to thank you for the inconvenience you put forth to help us get that done so thank you manager supervisor bode all i have is i want to put in my notice of intent to reappoint noel shot to the animal advisory committee you all should have her resume from previous years that's all i have madam chair supervisor stewart thank you madam chair um so number one happy easter everybody secondly um my office is hosting a dumpster day this saturday from 8 a.m to 2 p.m

[07:23:09] um at suddenly elementary and we will have a shredder truck available um for all oliver north qualified shredding. Thank you. Supervisor Bailey. So, Madam Chair, I see the perplexed look on your face. I just wanted to say two of the directives that you have, the health directive and the human trafficking directive, is the ones that I said I postponed to today. They've been sent out two weeks ago. So, without objection, I would like to initiate them, the health directive, to the

[07:23:45] Madam Chair, without objection, I'd like to direct the county exec to work with the staff to review and propose a possible county-wide maternal health action plan focused on prevention, screening, referrals, and coordinating a review of serious maternal and infant health outcomes.

[07:24:02] And I don't want to insult you by reading the whole thing. You got it in advance. I don't have to. Okay. And the other one is human trafficking. Without objections, Madam Chair, to direct county exec to work with staff, including Police Department and Office of Community Safety to review the establishment of a comprehensive human trafficking education program.

[07:24:21] That's it. So that's the top part. The other two are directives that I sent to you at 624 this evening, just in it yesterday, just in advance so that you could take a look at them. I would like to bring them back next week, if possible, for your support.

[07:24:40] One is a household energy rebate fund for our citizens that's been reviewed by the county exec and the county attorney. To my colleagues, I'm interested in exploring the county creating, establishing, and administrating a household energy rebate fund.

[07:24:58] I'm contemplating that the fund could be established with between \$31 to \$34 million with a maximum of \$200 per household energy rebate and that it would be available to all citizens of Prince William County with disbursement of the energy rebates within three months of the FY27 budget going into effect as soon as possible.

[07:25:22] And I don't want to read it. You can read it yourselves, but I just want to introduce it today for the upcoming meeting, because I know you haven't had a chance to digest it. And then the other one is a directive, Madam Chair, in reference to a cannabis tax option.

[07:25:41] It's something that has been approved in the General Assembly. As you know, there has been a lot of discussion and proposed legislation with regard to regulating the marijuana and cannabis programs. I would like to explore the ability of establishing a local marijuana tax in Prince William County.

[07:25:59] As such, Madam Chair, without objections, I'd like to direct the county exec to work with staff to review the county's legal authority under the current federal and state law to implement such a tax to include any 2026 General Assembly legislation signed by the governor, which I'm sure she has already, an assessment of potential revenue impacts with any administrative requirements associated with such tax, consideration of how peer jurisdictions in Virginia are approaching this issue, and any policy considering or implementation challenges the board should be aware of.

[07:26:36] So just for your consideration, and please review, I know you haven't read it. It was sent to you yesterday, and with my little one minute and 43 seconds, I want to thank Dr. McDade and her staff and my school board representative for meeting with me in terms of the presentation tonight and their priorities, and to my colleagues that had the time to sit and talk with me about their priorities and my priorities as it relates to the budget cycle.

[07:27:08] I thank you so much for your time. Coming up on 4-8, I will be participating in the Woodbridge Pickleball. National Pickleball Month, y'all, is now. And then on the 9th, Patty Elementary will be having with Principal Luchiati. Her team will be talking to her students about demonstrating their etiquette, confidence, and ability to engage in meaningful conversations, which is a part of her curriculum at her school.

[07:27:34] And then on the 25th, I will be having Dumpster Day at 9 to 1 p.m. at Grand Park Middle School. Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm sorry, Mr. Shorter, do you have something? Because I'm going to speak real quick. So I just want to let everyone know I have a virtual town hall next week, Monday. Next Monday, 6.30.

[07:27:52] You can sign up on Facebook. That's it. Mr. Shorter, did you have something you want to add? Yes, thank you very much, Madam Chair. I just wanted to follow up. Earlier this afternoon, Supervisor Vega asked about the Facebook Live streaming and our capability.

[07:28:07] I passed out the memo that was sent around and would like to just make sure that I answered her question around what was the next step. I've asked Nikki to come down just to talk a bit about the recommendations that Supervisor Vega has asked and then next steps.

[07:28:27] All right, Nikki. members of the board I will go very fast uh the long and short is that uh it is possible technically to do Facebook live there are some considerations we just want to make the board aware of um and so happy to go through those if you'd like but really um the biggest issue is right now um we use Granicus the that stream is on our website we put that on Facebook to put people and kind of guide people to that stream um if the board would like to do facebook live we would need to be directed to do it just be aware that um i think our biggest concern is that

[07:29:06] folks would be allowed to comment on that um and on those especially land use items where there are a lot of comments um it would require some staff to be able to if the goal is to do like kind of live answering an engagement that could be a challenge it is part of the public record as public comment so just know that we could always put something out that says we're not going to monitor those comments

that is doable as well so there are options for sure but I would just ask that the board kind of read through the the memo and happy to answer any questions Supervisor Vago.

[07:29:45] I was just going to say, so our recommendation was that we continue to use the platform that we are directing residents to now. And obviously, in terms of next steps, we would need either via directive or resolution for the board to ask us to move forward.

[07:30:03] Madam Chair, my intent is not to create any more work nor to fund any new FTEs. Stafford County does not monitor their comments. They just transmit to their board meetings live on Facebook. I think that today you were live on your page.

[07:30:20] Supervisor LaCroix, you were also live. But this is about accessibility, right? The more folks have access to these board meetings, the better it becomes, in my opinion. And so I would recommend that we just live stream our board meetings on Facebook and that we do not, if people want to comment, they can comment, but that we're not going to have staff responding to questions or engaging.

[07:30:43] uh just to do a stafford county doesn't and if there are other localities that are doing it i mean you want to bring those localities um to us for our consideration to adopt something similar since we are very inclined into doing what our neighboring jurisdictions are doing i'd be more than happy to continue the conversation but i am not advocating for additional positions nor to create more work for county staff to monitor and respond to comments so my team just did a snippet and then a lead-in where they can watch on the county site. Supervisor Bode.

[07:31:16] Yeah, just very quickly, I did see in the memo, you guys did talk about at least making a Facebook event that then points. I think that regardless if we're doing Facebook Live or we're going to just use Granicus only, I think a Facebook event is a really good idea because anyone who's subscribed to the Facebook page for the county will then get alerts to that, and I think that's helpful for transparency too. Exactly.

[07:31:36] We do do that, so there is a Facebook event um and we again guide people to the stream that we currently have i would also just for full transparency um if obviously something happens with facebook we i don't know that anybody actually works at facebook because you can't really ever reach anybody at facebook so uh we have no ability to kind of call somebody and help them get the feedback up live whereas with granicus we do so just full transparency like happy like if that is the direction the board we can we can do that from a technical perspective, but just to manage expectations.

[07:32:13] Obviously, like, if something happens from the Facebook Live perspective, we won't be able to necessarily fix that like we can with Granicus. So it's just something to consider. Prince, sorry. Yep, and I just want to make sure to be clear that we, so we did this memo without a directive, would want either be via directive or resolution for us to move forward to streaming.

[07:32:41] We would want to do this via director so I could work with you. I have Supervisor Bailey. Did you want something vote as well? Okay, Supervisor Bailey I just want to make sure that we are protected into So that you know, I'm gonna say Tom. There's no Pornographic on We are protected in that way technology wise. That's very important. Please assure me of that. Yes So this would be a direct stream we would actually use the stream that we are streaming for our website would be a direct stream to Facebook.

[07:33:15] So, yes, ma'am. Thank you for your assurance. All right. Supervisor Bodie? Yeah, thank you. I just wanted to, you're right, I didn't notice that until just now. There is meetings for every, events for the

meetings. Thank you for doing that. All right. Is there anyone else? I'm sorry. Madam Chair, members of the board. I'm a proud boomer, so I'm not going to talk about it.

[07:33:34] But if they're commenting on Facebook, they can comment with pictures and add anything on there. So they could be putting inappropriate pictures on there. And from a legal standpoint, we wanted to make clear that we don't want people to be confused thinking that they can participate in a legally required public hearing through Facebook.

[07:33:56] So if that's the board's direction, we would be putting those disclaimers on there. The only way that they're going to participate in a legally required public hearing is coming here or through the county's sign-up for the virtual. I have to ask, is there a way that we could turn off the commenting?

[07:34:12] There is. I would not necessarily recommend that. I feel like the perception of that might be obviously that we're not interested in hearing from folks. So we could turn them off for sure. We could put the disclaimer. Just that is a good point.

[07:34:29] Thank you, Michelle, for noting that. It is really just managing expectations. I think probably for meetings that don't have a lot of items, it's not probably a problem. I think it's those that have very interesting items that folks want to comment on, that there could be a lot of comments.

[07:34:48] We did look at Stafford. They don't, you're right, they don't monitor. There are some pretty intense comments on there. And so we would just need to, again, be very clear with the public about if you're going to comment, we're not monitoring. It is we're not providing that a response so if you ask a question we're going to need you to ask it in a different way and then of course as Michelle said like your public comment does not count towards a public hearing so there's just some language we would need to include in that to make sure we're clear. Thank you. Supervisor Vega. I understand when it's a public hearing I think that the solution that you've offered is fair when we do have a public hearing on the agenda

[07:35:26] a disclaimer is put but as it stands right now whatever the county is posting whether it's a video a post an advertisement or whatever folks can upload a video they could comment they could do whatever as it stands right now so I don't want us to um you know act like they don't have that ability to do it right now and or to limit um you know a further reach if you will by going live on Facebook so Mr. Shorter you'll follow up with me and then we'll talk about a directive and language and then share it with the rest of the board it could be done via directive or resolution but yes, I will follow up with you directly.

[07:36:00] Thank you. All right, that is it. So let's go on to the back for our closed session. Thank you very much.

[07:36:33] All right, we're going to settle down, guys. Are we rolling, Andrea? All right, we are back from closed session. First of all, I'd like to get a motion to certify.

[07:36:49] So moved. Second. It's been properly moved and seconded. Let's go ahead and take our votes.

[07:37:06] Unanimous. All right, thank you. And we have a motion. Yes, Madam Chair, thank you. I move that we authorize and approve Prince William County's participation in the proposed combined settlement agreements resolving opioid-related claims against Associated Pharmacists, Inc., and American Associated Pharmacies, J.M. Smith Corporation, Louisiana Wholesale Drug Company, Inc., Morris and Dickinson Company, North Carolina Mutual Wholesale Drug Company, Inc., and United Natural Foods,

Inc., including its subsidiaries, Super Value, and Advantage Logistics, collectively referred to as the six remnant defendants, and direct the county attorney and or the county's outside legal counsel,

[07:37:43] execute the documents necessary effectuate the county's participation in the settlement on magisterial districts second it's been i'll give it to bailey you did good faith calm good faith all right in any discussion let's vote move to adjourn second uh no i just wanted to say next week is markup so if anyone wants to talk budget please let me know and so that we can

[07:38:16] hopefully have a smooth markup with that let's vote all right motion passes six to one supervisor Mr. Vega voting nay, Supervisor Angry abstaining from vote.

[07:38:33] Oh, really? Okay, Vega is the first one to leave. All right, thank you, everyone. We are adjourned.



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