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Prince William Board of County Supervisors Meeting, Tuesday, April 21, 2026

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Place Prince William County Board of County Supervisors, Virginia
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- Official meeting video (Prince William County, Granicus): <https://pwcgov.granicus.com/player/clip/3818>
- Official Board of County Supervisors page (Prince William County): <https://www.pwcva.gov/departments/board-county-supervisors>

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Speech-to-text: whisper.cpp, model large-v3-turbo. Produced 2026-10-27. Each paragraph starts with its time [HH:MM:SS] in the meeting video.

[00:00:10] when the gavel goes down we will be quiet everyone is required to find a seat everyone if you cannot find a seat here we have seating in the atrium if you cannot find a seat in here we have a couple

[00:00:36] seats over here we have if you are sitting next to an empty seat so there's an empty seat right there right on the end and there's one over on that side again we have overflow seating outside

[00:01:11] it is now 702 on tuesday april 21st 2026 this meeting is now in session we are going to begin

[00:01:20] with a moment of silence all rise if you are able for the pledge of allegiance all right we're going

[00:02:02] to go on to agenda item number three and that's public comment time i see a lot of new faces so i'm going to explain things to you first of all we maintain decorum in the board we will have no signs no banners no nothing when someone speaks if you agree with them you can do your jazz hands there is no clapping there are no outbursts i'm going to call people up in groups of five when you are called up you may stand in the back and that's the only time people are allowed to stand please start by stating your name in the magisterial district where you reside again state your name

[00:02:39] and the magisterial district where you reside everyone will have three minutes there is a timer up there you can watch your time we do not do back and forth you can sing you can dance you have three minutes you have three minutes you sing off key don't blame me again name and where the magisterial where district where you reside do not give us your address unless you want us to show up i can show up i might go through your refrigerator but just your name and where first and last name and where you generally reside we start with people who are county residents before we go on to

[00:03:16] non-residents so the person first person we have is former supervisor marty noe deja redding ben Baldwin, Lori Williams, and Donna Bolton. Good evening, Chair Jefferson, members of the board.

[00:03:41] My name is Marty Noe, and I live at 14760 Kogan Drive. Wait, Mr. Noe, please adjust the mic, and you know better to give your address, but okay. You're supposed to be our exemplar in our model. Sorry. So good evening. Ready? Okay. Good evening, Chair Jefferson and members of the board.

[00:03:58] My name is Marty Noe, and I live in the Kohl's Magisterial District. Many of you know that for most of the 16 years that I served on this board, I was the individual tasked with cobbling together a budget compromise that the majority of the board could agree to. It's not an easy job that you have. Every board member comes to this process with their own list of priorities.

[00:04:16] Board members always want to raise or lower some tax rate or another, often in order to ensure funding to a program that they feel is important. When we do this, there's often a lot of talk about the revenue sharing agreement. And a mistake that supervisors often make is the belief that the revenue sharing agreement is a number, a percentage. That's simply not the case. The revenue sharing agreement was never intended to be simply a particular percentage split. It is supposed to be an agreement that the two boards will work together in order to determine what are the most important priorities for our community and establish fiscal and budgetary policies based on that shared dialogue. The Board of Supervisors and the school board are not equal partners in

[00:04:55] this agreement. A fundamental flaw in Virginia's system of local government is that the elected school board members have to operate entirely based on the decision-making authority of the Board of County Supervisors. So in order for them to do their job well, in order to pay teachers what they deserve to be paid, to build the facilities that are needed for our students, to maintain the standards of excellence that parents expect for their children, they rely on honest and trustworthy cooperation from this board. And that lack of cooperation, not in the percentages, is where this board has failed to honor the revenue sharing agreement with this markup. The number one thing I learned over my many years of juggling the annual budget markup was that you don't drastically change the revenue being sent to the school board at the last minute or without giving them a proper

[00:05:34] seat at the table. You need to fix this budget tonight. Your colleagues on the school board deserve better. Our teachers deserve the compensation adjustments that are necessary to keep our best educators here in Prince William County. And the principle of good government and transparent budgeting needs to be protected, not just for this year's budget, but for all budgets in the future. Fixing a budget markup on budget adoption night is not fun or easy. I've done it many times and I'm getting PTSD right now just thinking about it. But you do need to fix it.

[00:06:03] And then, if you still believe that the schools receive too much funding, you can sit down with your counterparts at the school board and begin having a serious dialogue about what our community priorities should be for next year's budget and for the years after that. A lot of people are paying attention

to tonight's vote. Most of you on the board have heard me say this, some of you several times. For those of us who choose to work in local government, people won't remember us, but they will remember the things that we do. Tonight, you as a board get to decide how you'll be remembered. Okay, next speaker. Thought I heard some clapping. I'm not playing. Madam Chair

[00:06:43] Jefferson and members of the Prince William Board of County Supervisors, good evening. My name is Deja Redding of the Woodbridge District, and I'll be sharing remarks on behalf of the Prince William County Alumni Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Incorporated, and we thank you for the opportunity to speak. For over 40 years, our chapter has served Prince William County, Manassas, and Manassas Park.

[00:07:02] We're an organization comprised of mothers, educators, and most importantly, concerned citizens with a deep and unwavering commitment to education justice because we know strong schools are the foundation to strong communities. Today we rise in concern regarding the proposed reduction to the revenue that will be shared with the Prince William County Public Schools. At its core, this issue is about keeping your word. Each year, PWCS builds its budget based on revenue projections provided by this board. Those projections guide decisions around staffing, student services, and academic programming. Yet now, at what seems like the 11th hour, the division is being asked to absorb a

[00:07:38] reduction of more than \$31 million due to cost-saving measures. We recognize that the proposed funding level may still reflect an increase over last year. However, the issue is not simply the total amount, rather it is the change in expectation. After being told what they could rely on, PWCS is now being asked to do more with less. And more importantly, this impact was not unavoidable. The board had an opportunity to lessen this reduction by including the new CMP tax revenue in the revenue sharing agreement. Instead, the decision to exempt that revenue stream has resulted in significant shortfall, one that will be felt directly in our schools.

[00:08:15] Prince William County already ranks amongst the lowest in per-pupil funding compared to neighboring jurisdictions, and reductions of this nature will only deepen that gap. One of the most immediate impacts will be to the teacher and staff salaries, further challenging our ability to recruit and retain the high quality educators our students deserve we cannot continue to operate at or near the minimum expect and expect maximum outcomes meeting the state standard of quality should be the floor not the goal a budget is a reflection of our priorities if we're serious about building a community where students can thrive and eventually afford to live and work

[00:08:51] here then we must invest in the systems that make this possible so today our ask is clear we urge the board to act to remove the proposed exemption on the cmp tax revenue and include it in the revenue sharing agreement we ask the board to honor the commitment made to pwcs by providing the funding they were told to expect and we ask the board to uphold the integrity of the revenue sharing process moving forward because when communities shift at the last minute commitments shift at the last minute it is our students our educators and our families who bear the cost thank you for your time and consideration thank you next speaker please ben baldwin from coles

[00:09:30] I am here tonight to speak in favor of this proposed budget as a resident who you as the Board of Supervisors are ultimately responsible to. For years, residents of Prince William County were told that the tax revenue received from data centers would be used to provide meaningful tax relief to residents. We

were told that all this development had a purpose, and if we were patient, residents would see the results. Now, finally, our faith has a chance to be rewarded.

[00:09:56] Through a strong bipartisan majority, this budget gives substantial, meaningful reduction to residential property taxes. It doesn't rely on gimmicks we've seen in previous budgets where rates get cut, but because of increased assessments, the effective tax rate still goes up. This is an average cut of \$145 per household.

[00:10:15] This is significant and a step in the right direction. Furthermore, the reduction of the meals tax rate from 3% to 1% is another step in the right direction. The meals tax is a stupid tax to begin with. It is a regressive tax which negatively impacts small businesses and makes it more expensive for working families in the county to go out and eat.

[00:10:33] It should be repealed entirely, but at least this is the right thing to do to begin with. I am grateful for the work that this board has done and commend you for how you've managed the budget process so far. The same cannot be said for the schools. Since last week, they have engaged in a dishonest campaign of emotional blackmail and hostage-taking that is unbecoming but unsurprising.

[00:10:55] They have claimed that this budget slashes \$31 million from their operational budget. Only in government cannot receiving as much money as you request to be considered a cut. Worse still, they launch a propaganda campaign to scare parents into thinking that critical popular services PWCS provides around the chopping block unless \$30 million more is added to a budget that's already well over a billion.

[00:11:18] Using my child as a hostage instead of doing the responsible thing and making appropriate adjustments to their operations is unacceptable. Do not reward that behavior. You have done the right thing for residents of this county.

[00:11:34] I encourage you all to stand strong and vote yes on this budget. Next speaker, please. I'm not sure it goes much lower than this. Can't get too much shorter than me. Whenever we're ready. Go ahead.

[00:11:53] You can go ahead. And for everyone, that's Lori Williams. She is the school board member for the Woodbridge District. There's still a little of my thunder there. Good evening, everyone, Chairwoman Jefferson and members of the board. My name is Lori Williams. I am the current elected Woodbridge District School Board member.

[00:12:09] I am also a PWCS grad, class of '95, Woodbridge Senior High. I am the parent of a 2019 graduate, now small business owner in this community, and I have one current middle school student.

[00:12:25] I am PWCS proud. I am here tonight to share my voice, 'cause there isn't one like mine. I am a product of what happens when you invest in education. As I said, I graduated in the '90s.

[00:12:41] It's kind of good, economic times, kind of good. But when you invest your tax dollars properly in public education, this is what happens. It's because of this that I had quality academic programming and opportunities.

[00:12:57] I was able to be the first in my family to graduate from college, have a career, and in turn come back and serve the very county that gave it to me. My PWCS education is the foundation that has enabled me to be so successful as a citizen, but especially as a school board member. Tonight, you are here to approve the budget. The current proposed budget, as of last time y'all met, from my understanding, would cut approximately 31 million

[00:13:33] from the school division. A cut of this magnitude would not only harm our students, our parents, but our community. Because for the first time since I've lived here, our school division has created a community, which is what you see tonight, including members sitting up on the dais.

[00:13:55] It is that community that came together as a whole to develop our budget, to develop our strategic plan. PWCS develops our budget based upon the revenue projections, excuse me, provided by this very board. Since 1998, the revenue sharing agreement has provided both boards the ability to plan and budget effectively. We carry a AAA bond rating in this county. Tonight, you'll hear from many members of the community. They'll come up and plead their case. I'm telling you as a parent, as a resident, as a homeowner, and as a school board member, I don't want to even think

[00:14:32] about taking a vote to get rid of robotics, piloting unified robotics brand new, any sports programming. Salaries, which were in the second year of collective bargaining that we promised we would give, which we need to give. People need to make a livable wage. So I just want to wrap up by saying this is an opportunity to take advantage of the community that's been created and to work collaboratively. We don't all have to be on the same team, same party, same ideals to understand that the best investment you can make is education. And if you don't believe it, you don't have to like everything I do but I know I do good at what I do and it's a result thank you very much before

[00:15:11] I call PWCS proud before I call the next speaker I'm going to call the next group of five but I also have to announce that we have the commonwealth attorney Amy Ashworth with us today in board chambers I have um Jennifer Brokowski Brokowski Brokowski Brian Harris Amy McCarthy Elizabeth Marble, Marlow, and Henna. So if you can make your way to the back. Madam Chair, I'm Donna Bolton from the Woodbridge District. This is my first time. I'm just here to support the Republican women of

[00:15:49] Prince William County, and so I'm here to learn, and I probably will give up the most seconds of anyone tonight. That was easy. All right, next speaker, please. Thank you for coming. Hi, good evening. My name is Jennifer Rakoski. I reside in the Occoquan District. While your proposed budget does increase school funding from previous years, it's still behind our neighboring counties with similar size and population. Have you ever read the Washington Area Boards of Education or WABE Guide? You would see that PWCS has one of the lowest cost per pupil expenditures in the

[00:16:25] Northern Virginia area. Let's look at Loudoun County. Prince William has 90,467 students in 97 schools, almost 10,000 more students in five fewer buildings than Loudoun. And how do we support those overcrowded students, these extra students in overcrowded buildings, was 20 percent less of local funds. Loudoun's school budget is made up of 69.2 percent of local funds, while Prince William is only 48.1 percent. Loudoun's cost per pupil is \$23,825, while Prince William County Schools is \$20,223. PWCS has to do more with less. PWCS also has the highest class sizes in the region

[00:17:05] and still behind in pay compared to our neighbors so please fund the largest employer in Prince William County fund our students next speaker thank you next speaker please Madam Chair and members of the board thank you for the opportunity to speak my name is Amy McCarthy and I am an elementary music teacher with over 20 years experience here in Prince William my husband is also a teacher and we are most importantly the proud parents of a high school middle school and elementary student in Prince William County schools.

[00:17:42] I come before you not just as a constituent, but as an educator who has seen firsthand what high-quality pre-K can do for children. I've taught students who entered kindergarten confident, curious,

and ready to learn. And I've taught students who didn't have that early foundation and spent literal years trying to catch up.

[00:18:04] The difference is real, and it's immediate. Pre-K doesn't just prepare children for school. It changes their entire educational trajectory. That lived experience is reflected in the research. Children who attend high-quality pre-K are 54% more prepared for kindergarten and three times more likely to be reading proficiently by third grade.

[00:18:29] Third grade reading is one of the strongest predictors we have of long-term academic success, graduation rates, and future earnings. Pre-K builds a strong academic foundation, improving early literacy, language, and numeracy, with studies showing an 85% increase in print awareness.

[00:18:50] Just as importantly, it supports social-emotional development, helping children develop self-regulation, confidence, independence, and the ability to follow routines. These are the skills that allow classrooms to function, teachers to teach, and students to thrive.

[00:19:08] Not to mention, identify our special education students before they even get into kindergarten. The long-term impact is equally powerful. High-quality pre-K is associated with lower rates of grade retention, fewer special education placements, and higher high school graduation.

[00:19:27] These outcomes are good for children, but they also represent real and immediate savings for school systems. For families in Prince William County, the benefits are felt right away. Child care and preschool costs often range from \$10,000 to \$18,000 per year, and that is on the conservative end. Universal pre-K eases that burden, allowing parents to participate fully in the workforce and strengthens our local economy and actually is such a greater benefit than the \$145 they would actually save with the real estate tax.

[00:20:04] From a fiscal standpoint, this is one of the smartest investments you can make. High quality pre-K delivers multiple dollars in return for every dollar invested. The question before you isn't whether pre-K works. The evidence is clear. The question is, will we fund it well enough to work for every single child in this county?

[00:20:25] Thank you. Thank you. Next speaker, please. Brian Harris, Nebosco District. I'm here to talk about health care for our community. In this community, health care is something that we're all trying to make sure that we have, because with health care, our students, our families are healthy, but also we have a healthy economy with our health care.

[00:20:51] What's been interesting is for this community right now, we have more and more people showing up uninsured. And you might ask, why is that in the last year? And it's been two things. We as a community health center here with Lanara Health have been doing this for 20 years, providing care for everybody.

[00:21:06] But we're seeing an increase in middle class people who cannot afford health insurance. They're showing up at our door and they're working families. These are not people at home. They have two jobs, cannot afford their health insurance. They show up to our clinic. But we're also finding a reason for that. They're finding our clinic because up north, the clinics up north are no longer seeing them.

[00:21:25] If they find them from Prince William County, they're saying, come back down to Prince William County. We've actually been told that Neighborhood Health won't see them right away because

this is Prince William County's responsibility. So we've been working with how do we take care of this growing number of uninsured. And we're now at about a 67% increase in the number of uninsured that have come into our clinic in one year.

[00:21:44] It's grown, and it keeps growing. And my other concern about this, when you look at the challenges for the middle class in this community, We have the absolute worst prenatal care in the Commonwealth. 17.2% of our women do not get adequate prenatal care. We are trying to build a prenatal care system with a team of providers in this community.

[00:22:04] We've hired people to grow that program. We are the largest provider of prenatal care in this community. But right now we're struggling because our number of uninsured is growing every day. We've also seen an increase. We've seen a doubling in HIV cases in the last few years. And we're also stepping in and work on that.

[00:22:21] The concern I have by not funding the health center with some support, we're going to see more problems for this community. Because what health centers do, instead of letting bodies get in the water, the EMS pulls out, fire pulls out, we keep people out. We do prevention. We keep them healthy.

[00:22:36] We keep women in prenatal care. And we make sure that people are working. And that's what health centers do. And they have done for 60 years. And all we're asking for is support to keep the health center whole. Because right now, we're not whole. We are seeing all the uninsured, but we're not going to be able to keep doing that in the future.

[00:22:53] We may have to cut services, limit access, and not be able to do what our mission is, which is to keep the community healthy, keep our people engaged and working, because we are part of the public health system. We are part of the public services because we are there to serve the community for public health services.

[00:23:11] And we work together to make sure that you get your services you need to health care. We provide medical, dental, behavioral health, pharmacy, patient transportation, all of that. doesn't come for free. And with more uninsured, somewhere, somehow, it has to be taken care of. Thank you for your time. Thank you. Next speaker, please. My name is Elizabeth Marlow, and I reside in the Neabsco Magisterial District. I am a person who wears many hats. I don't just say that metaphorically, as one of the wonderful teachers in my department gifted me with a physical hat

[00:23:50] at the end of last school year with interchangeable Velcro tags to indicate just some of my roles. I am a Prince William County resident, an educator, a department chair, and a member and leader in several local civic and community groups, especially our local VFW as the wife of a disabled veteran.

[00:24:10] My days never stop, and I well know that many of you deeply understand this feeling. But tonight, I am firmly wearing my hat as a proud Prince William County educator. I know you will hear from many of my colleagues this evening who will express varying degrees of emotion, but currently, I have to tell you that my hats and I are tired.

[00:24:35] There is so much we have had to fight for as educators, especially this year, over and over and over again. It seems that everything around me is depleting my two most finite resources, time and money. And I am tired, exhausted, burned out.

[00:24:54] But despite how very tired I am, I knew how important it was to speak today. While I will not pretend to know everything about all the complex calculations that you must engage in to make these decisions, I am an English teacher after all. I know we can crunch the numbers differently.

[00:25:12] I'm going to say something you probably don't hear often. Please raise my taxes, or at least keep things where they are. I will gladly pay my current or increased taxes on my home and meals, not just for me, not just for the teachers in my school, but for all our schools and students in Prince William County. Please, whatever must be done to help this disconnect between the board of county supervisors and the strategic plan for Prince William County schools, please find a way, just as we teachers

[00:25:48] are told that we must find a way each and every day. Thank you. Thank you. Hina, before you go, I'm just going to call up the next group. I have Kaylin, Emily Cherry, Yordi Lopez, Lou Ferrero, and Jess Schaeer.

[00:26:14] I get distracted easily if people are walking around behind me. Am I good?

[00:26:31] You may now begin. All right. My name is Hinae Ansari. I live in the Aquakuan district. And, Ms. Jefferson, if you want to come over to my house, we've got Indian food. It's just really spicy, so you might not be able to handle it. Oh, I can, honey. You know this. I don't know. I don't want you to get sick and be like, well, you know what? The fire ambulance is right down the street from my house.

[00:26:47] They'll be able to get you to the hospital real fast, I think. Anyway, I'd hope to not come back so soon, but since you opted to not renew the revenue sharing with the school system and additionally cutting the school budget, which removes resources that are sorely needed in some of our schools, I felt compelled to come back. And I don't presume to understand all the intricacies of the budget process, but I do have some idea of how detrimental it will be for the school system to completely rework their budget without any prior notice i started to mull over how to best illustrate the dangers of cutting funding to the school system and being a child of the 90s i immediately thought of one of the shows from my youth the simpsons so if you're not familiar with it sorry from the golden age of the simpsons there's an instance where springfield elementary loses all of its funding the way the

[00:27:24] funding is lost is really really funny but i don't want to get sidetracked by that story you can watch it it's on disney plus it's um so we can i can i'm going to give you some examples of their of how the effects happened and what anyway so in a futile attempt to get the funding to the get the school back up and running, Principal Skinner decides to go to Mr. Burns for help.

[00:27:41] They put together a sort of play skit, and in these little vignettes, I think you'll get a little idea of what I'm talking about. So in the first one, they have Nelson, Bart's bully, and he's in a kitchen, and he's making something, and he doesn't know how to read. So he puts rat poison into somebody's soup instead of whatever he's supposed to put in. I mean, can you imagine going to Panera and dying from the seasonal soup? No offense to Panera, because they didn't know how to read. And then the second segment I'm going to highlight is there was an effigy of Mr. Burns in the episode and he gets hit by a car and the ambulance runs over him but because the driver doesn't know how to drive and additionally doesn't know how to read a map, he struggles to get Mr. Burns to the hospital. When they do get him there, he sees a doctor played by Ralph Wiggum, the police chief's son who Lisa Choo Choo chooses in an earlier episode, a Valentine's episode

[00:28:20] and he plays Dr. Stupid. Dr. Stupid decides to operate on Mr. Burns and actually accidentally cuts off his head and it's like, oops! To which Mr. Burns, watching the skit, says I never liked that Dr. Stupid, which is by far my favorite part of the episode. Obviously this is a caricature of what could happen. Do we want people leaving Prince William County because we didn't fund the schools as fully as we could have? There are kids who transfer a commute across the county just to go to a different high school or to prepare for college better. All that is just to say we don't need less education. We need more. Do we want to live in a society of Homer Simpsons or Lisa Simpsons? I'd choose the latter. I'd much rather my tax dollars go to education than data centers. And honestly, how much does \$145 really buy? You can't even get

[00:28:58] enough groceries for \$145. Let's try to be smart about this, folks, or perhaps you too were educated by underfunded schools and were stuck in this vicious cycle. Thank you. Thank you very much. Next speaker. Good evening, everyone. Different heights here. Karen Sosedo, representing Coast District. Would you please bring it closer to your mouth because we really cannot hear you.

[00:29:24] Good evening. Lead in. Maybe you can lean in. Better? Okay. Usually my own trouble, so okay. Good evening, everyone. My name is Karen Salcedo. I am representing Coast District. Good evening, members of the Prince William Board of County Supervisors.

[00:29:43] My name is Karen Salcedo. I am a constituent of Prince William County and an employee of Lunara Health. Thank you for providing me a few minutes of what I already know has been a very long day for you. As you continue to work and thrive to serve the best interests of your constituents, health is something that brings all of us together, and a healthier community makes us stronger.

[00:30:03] In Prince William County, your zip code should not determine whether you can see a doctor. But for too many residents, it still does. Today, I'm here to advocate for Lunara Health and the role that it can play in strengthening the well-being of our community. Prince William County continues to grow, and with that growth comes increasing demand for accessible preventative and cost-effective health care solutions.

[00:30:27] Lunara Health is designated to meet the demand by focusing not just on treating illnesses, but on improving long-term health outcomes, reducing emergency costs, and expanding access to residents facing barriers to care. Importantly, Lunara Health is the only community health center serving Prince William County.

[00:30:48] That means, for many residents, your constituents, it represents a critical access point to essential health services. These are middle-class workers who earn too much to qualify for Medicaid, yet not enough to afford private health insurance.

[00:31:06] Investing a portion of the county budget into Lunara Health is not just an expenditure, it's a strategic decision. By supporting innovative community-centered care, the county can reduce strains in hospitals, improve workforce productivity, and enhance quality of life for residents.

[00:31:21] This is about being proactive instead of reactive. It's about ensuring the families in Prince William County have access to care before small issues become costly crisis. And it's about building a healthier, more resilient Prince William County. I urge you to consider Lunara Health, not as a request for funding, but as a request in delivering smarter, more sustainable health care for our community. Thank you for your time and consideration. Thank you. Next speaker, please. Good evening. My name is Emily

Cherry, and I am a resident of the Potomac District. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to speak tonight.

[00:32:02] I am an English teacher at Ripon Middle School, a proud member of the Prince William Education Association, and a mother of two students here in Prince William County Public Schools. One of my children has an IEP. One has a 504 plan. One receives gifted services. One participates in choral and running clubs before school. And one is a student at the Center for Fine and Performing Arts at Colgan High School. My children receive and participate in a wide range of special services and programs. So in our family, we know what it means when a school system truly sees a child

[00:32:37] and what it means when it doesn't have the resources to do so. As a teacher, I watch students walk into my classroom every day carrying stories, challenges, and dreams. Some need extra time. Some need extra enrichment. Some just need a safe place to express themselves. But all of them need adults who have the capacity to meet them where they are. When funding's inadequate, that capacity shrinks. Teachers stretch themselves too thin. Programs are pared back, and students lose the

[00:33:11] opportunities that they may never get back again. As a mother, I've watched my children flourish Because this county has invested in special education, gifted education, and the arts. Those supports didn't just help my children succeed.

[00:33:29] They helped my children feel seen, valued, and capable. That's what a full funding makes possible. But I also know how fragile these programs can be when a budget falls short. Services get delayed. Class sizes grow.

[00:33:45] Teachers burn out. And children, our children, pay the price. Fully funding the Prince William County School budget isn't just about numbers on a page. It's about whether every child in this county has a chance to become who they're meant to be.

[00:34:03] It's about whether we believe in our potential enough to invest in it. Please fully fund our schools because our students are worth it. Thank you. Thank you. Next speaker, please. Hello. I will be needing a translation.

[00:34:20] Just want to make sure it's ready. All right. We can do that. Give us a moment. This is Perla Torres, the Spanish interpreter. Good evening. Señor, buenas noches. Voy a ser su intérprete de español. Sí, nada más un favor que dé las pausas naturales, por favor, para poder interpretar.

[00:34:42] Good evening, everyone. It's my first time speaking. Sorry if I'm a little nervous. My name is Jordi López. I reside in Prince William County. Buenas noches, miembros de Junta, de la comunidad y maestros. Mi nombre es Jordi López y fui estudiante de Prince William County Schools y gracias a Dios, ahora trabajo para ellos también.

[00:35:04] El momento, perdón, la razón por la que estoy aquí el día de hoy es porque tenemos un problema. No nos quieren quitar ni uno, ni dos, ni tres millones, sino que 31 millones de dólares de nuestras escuelas. Good evening, everyone, members and teachers. I used to be a Prince William student, and so the reason why I'm here is because we're having an issue where it's not one, not two, not three millions, but 71 that they want to take from our schools.

[00:35:42] Estos recortes de millones de dólares no solo son números que están en un papel. Estos van a afectar a nuestros trabajadores, a nuestros estudiantes y a nuestras familias todos los días. Entonces no es

un problema que solo se pueda ignorar porque solo está en un papel.

[00:36:02] Primero, el pre-k universal es para los estudiantes, especialmente estudiantes de familias inmigrantes o familias bilingües. La educación temprana es muy crítica para los niños. Ahí es donde empiezan a comenzar inglés. El pre-K ayuda a los niños a comenzar a hablar inglés muy fácil y más rápido.

[00:36:21] Como estudiante de ESOL, aprender inglés sé que toma tiempo y toma mucho esfuerzo. So, these cuts are counted by millions of dollars, not just numbers, that will affect our students, our workers, and families.

[00:36:38] Every day we can't ignore this. It also involves pre-K and you know it's for all students like immigrant families. Education starts with English and pre-K and this helps children like ESL Children or ESOL to learn how to speak.

[00:37:01] Si quitamos o reducimos este programa, muchos niños van a comenzar atrás y se van a quedar atrás y nadie va a tener tiempo para venir y poderlos ayudar. Y eso les va a afectar no solo durante lo que está en ese año en la escuela, sino que durante su vida o probablemente varios años.

[00:37:20] Segundo, los ESPs, los profesionales de apoyo educativo, ellos pasan todo el día con nuestros estudiantes, pasan cada minuto con ellos. son las personas que son responsables por ellos. Nadie más les va a decir las quejas de los estudiantes, sino que a ellos.

[00:37:38] Ellos son las personas que trabajan directamente con sus estudiantes. If we reduce everything, we're taking away an opportunity for children, and this will be working against them because then it will delay what they need help with.

[00:38:01] So throughout the year, this will affect them. And also ESPS professionals need that support so they can spend the most time with children which are, you know, they're the specialists, they're the ones that are responsible for children and they are the ones that, you know, if someone has a claim, they have to go to them.

[00:38:25] If we make these cuts, it will make them lose their jobs.

[00:38:49] And this is very unfair for these people. Just imagine, you wake up every day, you go to work, and they're doing their jobs, they're doing the best they can, so this is really difficult.

[00:39:04] Esta decisión nos va a definir a Prince William County en general si vamos a preferir e invertir en la educación de nuestros estudiantes y en su futuro, o si simplemente vamos a decidir ignorarlos y voltear a la cara a otro lado y vamos a esperar que algún milagro pase y que ellos sean los mejores estudiantes que pueden ser.

[00:39:27] These decisions will define us in Prince William County. I would want to invest in this, you know, or if we're just looking away and waiting for a miracle to happen just because it best suits everyone.

[00:39:47] So I would just like to say that it wouldn't be fair for students if they have to worry about passing exams instead of graduating. Instead of enjoying school, they have to worry about ESOLs or just meeting some standards. And who set them?

[00:40:04] Who's actually sitting down with our kids and worrying about them? But yet, the people who do go out of their jobs through this don't get paid enough, not even minimum wage. How can someone pay

college, cars, car insurance, food, groceries, rent with barely minimum wages?

[00:40:23] All I ask is to think about the students because I was one of them too. And if I can, any of them can, and I believe in them. So should you, too? Thank you. Thank you. Next speaker, please.

[00:40:54] Good evening, Chair Jefferson and members of the board. My name is Louis Foreo. I live in the Potomac District. I am a patient of Lunara Health, and I also happen to be the chairman of the board for the health center.

[00:41:13] I'd like to take a few minutes to talk about the impact Lunara Health has had, not just across our county, but also on my own family. When we talk about health care, it's easy to focus on numbers. patients served, services delivered, dollars saved. Those things matter, but the true impact of Lunara Health goes far beyond that. It's about access, dignity, and trust, especially for those who might otherwise fall through the cracks. In our county, Lunara Health has become a critical

[00:41:50] lifeline for many residents, working families, seniors, underserved populations. Access to consistent quality care is not guaranteed. Lunara Health steps into that gap. It provides primary care, preventive services, and support that keeps people healthier and reduces the need for costly emergency interventions.

[00:42:11] That doesn't just improve individual lives, it strengthens the entire community. We've seen fewer barriers to care. We see people who once delayed treatment now getting help early. We've seen a system that emphasizes prevention instead of reaction, and that translates into a healthier, more stable county.

[00:42:34] But for me, this is also deeply personal. You see, I'm standing here before you because of this health center. About 12 years ago, I was told I would never walk again. And here I am standing with a cane. That was because of Lunara Health.

[00:42:57] Lunara Health represents the kind of organization you hope is when you need it the most. It brings not just clinical care, but compassion and consistency. Knowing that an organization like Lunara exists in our community provides a sense of security, not just for my family, but for countless others.

[00:43:16] It means that people are treated with respect regardless of their circumstance, It means that care is not a privilege, but something more accessible and equitable. Perhaps more importantly, Lunar Health builds relationships. It's not just about treating illness. It's about understanding patients, supporting families, and being a trusted presence in people's lives.

[00:43:37] So when you think about Lunar Health, I hope you take all those factors into account. And I hope that you will support us in the future. Thank you for your time. Next speaker, please. Good evening, Chair Jefferson and members of the board.

[00:44:08] I am doing something I've never done before. My name is Jess Scherer, and I am a Gainesville resident, or Gainesville District. I'm going off script, so you're getting the whole thing here right now. And I'm going off script because I really want to look at you guys when I'm talking. It's really important.

[00:44:25] I am concerned that in this moment, we are putting politics over good policy. I am a mother who has three kids in Prince William County, and they love their schools. I am so proud of my school. So I am here to say I am PWC proud all the way, and my friends are PWC proud.

[00:44:49] We love our schools. We want our schools well-funded. We see the value in our schools. These are conversations that I've had over and over again as an organizer of Defenders of Public Education, PWC, as somebody who would red, wine, and blue, PWC hunger-free.

[00:45:08] People come to me, and they tell me, what the heck is going on? I thought that they shared our values. Our county values education. Full stop. Full stop. What this tax cut amounts to is two ventes from Starbucks a month that we aren't even going to, it's absorbed in their escrow. 26% of our population are renters. They're not getting this tax cut. They're just getting cuts to their schools. This is bad policy, guys. This is bad.

[00:45:44] it looks good it looks good you want to talk about holding your kids hostage I can pound at this thing oh my kids are held hostage yeah over your two dang lattes a month I'm sorry bro public education is worth it and it is the value of our county we value our kids it is important to us I have people calling me all over the county asking me what the heck is going on I thought they shared our values. Our values are our kids full stop. Full stop. And they're the teachers in this room

[00:46:19] and they're our community. You want to talk about helping out with affordability? Dude, universal pre-K. I don't know the last time you guys put a kid in preschool, but that's hellu expensive. I've been out of that for a while, thank God. But it costs a ton of money.

[00:46:35] That is affordability. That is taking care of your constituents. That is putting policy above the politics saying oh look we cut your taxes no two lattes give me a break do the right thing stand up for our kids stand up for our teachers thank you thank you um first of all we have a couple people who are standing you need to find a seat actually it kind of threw me off you need to i'm going to call up the next group of speakers um i have rena stop steve liga talia fletcher gray blake hurrah and then douglas caston so you are the next group of speakers and

[00:47:12] I ask others. Did you sign up, ma'am? I just probably haven't gotten to you yet, but did I call your name? Well, then I haven't gotten to you, so you can relax. We'll get you. All right, you may proceed. All right, I think I got the mic. Okay. Good evening, Chair Jefferson and members of the board. I'm Rena Stapp, and I live in the Brentsville District. Lack of communication or transparency and not keeping promises is what led to the proposed \$30 million less in the budget for

[00:47:49] PWCS. I was here two weeks ago when the school board presented their budget proposal and answered her questions. Supervisor Angry told him to call off the Beehive or Swifty Army since he wasn't planning on altering the revenue sharing agreement. I listened through last week's budget markup meeting. Setting tax rates and managing the county income is your job, but the unexpected cut to real estate taxes lowered the overall county income by nearly \$48.6 million, \$27.8 million of which would have gone to PWCS. Reducing the meals tax cost the schools another \$6 million. With the revenue sharing agreement that would lead to \$31 million less to PWCS than their budget proposal that was

[00:48:27] discussed the week prior. These cuts averaged to \$145 savings per household. Had the cuts been mentioned to PWCS earlier in the year, they would have planned accordingly. This I would categorize as lack of communication and transparency. But the increase of taxes on data centers from 4.15 to 4.5 and not sharing that increase with PWCS that was proposed by Supervisor Bodie and withheld \$12.3 million of potential funds. Only Chair Jefferson and Supervisor Bailey voted no on that proposal. Thank you, both of you. That money is county revenue. Income from those data centers

[00:49:03] is supposed to help all the citizens and the schools that was all over the marketing when the previous board approved them. I call that not keeping promises. Shame on you, especially those of you who looked me in the eyes and said you were not going to alter the revenue sharing agreement.

[00:49:21] No Swifty beaded bracelets for any of you. And Supervisor Vega, you were very vocal about how a county is only legally required to fund the SOQ, and you would vote to alter the revenue sharing agreement along with Supervisors Gordy and LaCroix. Back in my high school days, kids would say D is for diploma, the bare minimum to pass.

[00:49:41] You were suggesting the county scored a D when funding schools. As a parent of two PWCS students, I find that deplorable. I can agree that technically it was not a cut because no amount was officially promised or approved. But this isn't technically a cut. It's withholding the expected funds from the revenue sharing agreement and not giving PWCS a heads up that taxes would be cut so they would budget appropriately. Well-funded schools lead to well-educated students, higher property values, and families who want to move here. One of the reasons I live in Prince William County is because of the schools.

[00:50:21] I am a graduate of Northern Virginia Public School System. I know an excellent education that a person can receive when our schools are properly funded and provide opportunities for everyone to thrive. Please reconsider the budget and include PWCS fully in sharing all of the county revenue.

[00:50:38] Thank you. Thank you. Next speaker, please. Chair Jefferson and members of the board, my name is Steve Liga, and I live in the Occoquan District, and currently I serve as CEO of the Prince William County Chapter of Habitat for Humanity.

[00:51:04] It's been a while since I've appeared before you, but I've known some of you for years. I'm here tonight because the proposed budget reduces the allocation to the competitive community partners program by \$150,000.

[00:51:20] Small potatoes compared to what everybody else is talking about, but \$150,000. This is done in the name of property tax relief. For the public who is not aware, the allocation this program is starting from is less than \$600,000 as it is.

[00:51:38] This is the tiny pot of money nonprofit partners that are not deemed essential are allowed to compete against each other for. So kids who have been abused can have court-appointed special advocates, widows on fixed incomes can have heat in the winter and roofs that don't leak, and low-income mothers can have access to free diapers, among other things.

[00:52:06] This year, Habitat's community partners funding allowed us to install three new HVAC systems for widows without heat, replace a roof that had been leaking for a decade, restore electricity throughout a home, and replace siding on a house that only had two walls sided since the owner had a stroke seven years ago.

[00:52:31] With approximately 157,000 households in the county, Cutting the competitive community partners program by \$150,000 amounts to \$1.07 in property tax relief per household next year.

[00:52:51] I bet I'm not alone when I say the county can keep the \$1.07 if it means Habitat for Humanity or court-appointed special advocates or women giving back can keep the little bit of funding we get as community partners.

[00:53:08] In fact, I'm sure many of us would agree the services we provide to our neighbors are worth much more than that. Next speaker, please. Good evening. Good evening, Madam Chair and the board and those in attendance.

[00:53:32] My name is Talia Fletcher-Gay, and I am a resident of the Brentsville District. I'm a mother of two elementary school-age children, and for the past several years, I have served on their school's parent advisory council. And this position has allowed me to gain more intimate understanding of how schools utilize their budgets and prioritize their needs based on the funds allotted to them each year.

[00:53:55] Over the years, the principal has detailed the intended programs and hiring based on the needs of the students to include teachers across all grades, math and reading coaches, cafeteria and office staff, language specialists, special education and ESOL teachers, gifted and talented teachers, and all of the resources that come along with those positions.

[00:54:17] Prince William County is the second largest school system in Virginia, serving over 90,000 students. It is the most diverse school system in Virginia and the 10th most diverse in the country, with Fairfax County being number one and Loudoun County being the third.

[00:54:36] Diversity, it is the most diverse school system in Virginia and the 10th most diverse in the country. Diversity in our student population equates to a plethora of needs that must be met by the school system through teachers, programs, and other resources. However, when compared to those neighboring counties in spending per student, Prince William County ranks last behind Alexandria, Arlington, Fairfax, Falls Church, and Loudoun by over \$5,000 per student.

[00:55:02] As informed citizens, we are all aware that public schools are primarily funded through local, state, and federal revenue sources. Specifically in Prince William County, we residents have been ensnared by the building of massive data centers throughout our county with the understanding that a portion of the tax revenue would go towards our school systems through the agreed-upon revenue sharing.

[00:55:22] Imagine the horror that any educator, parent, and student of Prince William County must feel to hear that the Board of Supervisors not only voted to not share the increased tax revenue from the data centers with the school system, but are also planning to ultimately vote to cut the school system budget by \$31 million.

[00:55:39] \$31 million affects teachers' salaries and raises, and being able to hire and retain the talent needed to support our students, resulting in PWCS losing many of their staff to other school systems. \$31 million affects the dire improvements needed for many of the schools, disproportionately affecting those on the eastern side of the county and Title I schools in which resources are already scarce.

[00:56:01] \$31 million affects the programs that would be implemented, such as those intended to strengthen career resources for students and parents, universal pre-K, food pantries, in-school clinics, and organizational investments such as AI training and data literacy.

[00:56:17] The comments in the media from some of the board members have been egregious, likening the school board and educators to toddlers throwing a tantrum for simply requesting the board of supervisors uphold their side of the revenue-sharing agreement and consider the implications of their actions. Your nonchalance to the potential consequences of this significant budget cut shows that you have no clear understanding of what it takes to run and maintain a school system or the value of being educated by.

[00:56:41] Thank you. All right. Next speaker, please.

[00:56:57] Good evening, Chair Jefferson, members of the Board of County Supervisors. Please bring the mic closer to you.

[00:57:13] Yeah, you moved it away. Thank you. Can you restart my time? You may proceed. Good evening, Chair Jefferson, members of the Board of County Supervisors. My name is Blake Hara, and I'm a resident of the Potomac District. Before I begin, I want to state that the comments that were made by the PWCS board and the Kelly Building were probably the worst comments that they could ever say over an official channel.

[00:57:42] They went through multiple media outlets threatening teachers' pay, threatening special programs, that that would be the first thing that they would cut. For anybody who is listening to this, whatever the narrative that the school board has created, The teacher's pay cannot be universally cut.

[00:57:59] Whatever anyone believes, it's protected through the CBA. So they have to go and renegotiate. So either way, the budget has the proposal of the budget not being approved, the budget that they proposed.

[00:58:18] Each year, the Kelly Building has gotten significantly bigger every year. Right now, I'm looking at almost \$2 million that they're adding for more and more positions that they keep adding for more oversight in that building. Toward the point where it has gotten teachers so overwhelmed with they cannot make a mistake and cause without being followed up by the Kelly Building.

[00:58:40] So now while you do control the budget for the PWCS, you don't control their operations. The board has a significant history of poor fiscal responsibility. So just recently when they canceled the 14th High School, they spent \$22 million, \$6 million on the land.

[00:59:03] Some are \$16 million on land, \$6 million for the study. And now they're trying to pawn it off on the county to try and get it off of their hands. So they also, the board is also putting themselves in significant issues to where they, their self-inflicted wounds.

[00:59:21] So the more and more money, the narrative that they are creating, that they are getting a budget cut that was posted in public media, this post in public media that, oh my God, we're going to get a budget cut, that we're getting less than we got last year. They're getting more than what they got this year.

[00:59:36] So whether they accept it or not, they have to be able to work with less. Our taxes went down. The public went and said, we want our taxes lower. The board delivered. When there's less revenue, there's less to give away.

[00:59:54] So PWCS has to be able to operate with lower budget, and they have to be able to pick out things that they can't. They can't just go after the teacher's salary, go after the special programs, and whatever they are proposing. But it's insane what they keep asking.

[01:00:10] Fairfax, I can tell you, Fairfax, as for, what, \$4 billion this year, and they lost over \$100 million this year alone, I don't see them complaining about it. Thank you very much. Before I get to the next speaker, I'm going to call up the next group.

[01:00:26] And I also want to stay, because we did have a young lady who came in here. If your name's not called, please come in. Make sure you sign up on the right sheet, because we have a public hearing after that. And that's really about our solid waste user fee rates. But I guess you're Douglas Cassons. Hold on.

have carinza summers i have um i think it's um talia king you're with lunara health if you can come back if you can come up i have angie um fritola i have katie jefferson and i have mitch

[01:01:01] nason and before you begin to the woman who was in the atrium who came in um who was standing if you are trying to speak on public comment time please come back in she's okay all right you may go. Can you guys hear me? This is good. My name is Douglas Castons. I'm a resident of the Coles District. I'm here to encourage you guys to oppose any proposal that's going to create

[01:01:36] a \$30 million gap in the school budget. These are the most critical resources that our county has. These students are our future. I have two children in Prince William County Schools. My eldest, when she was three and a half, she could not talk yet.

[01:01:52] She could communicate through body language, sign language, but she could not speak yet. As someone I grew up, and I'm still partially deaf, I understand how it feels to not be able to speak and have thoughts, and you want to express them.

[01:02:10] I used to see it in her face. She would look at me, she wanted to say stuff, and she would be crying. I got her into the special ed pre-K program at Prince William County Schools. Within a month, she started speaking. It was like watching a flower bloom. Most beautiful thing I've ever seen.

[01:02:26] And I'm telling you, I do not envy any of you having to go through all these budgets, make dealings and all this. This is not fun. I get it. But if there is one thing too fun, it is our school system. I also teach at Northern Virginia Community College. I see students that come out of the high school systems of all three, Loudon, Prince William, and Fairfax.

[01:02:47] I would say in the last five years, some of the best students I see are from Prince William County. I see students from Fairfax, Loudoun, who don't know what the three branches of government do. They don't know what a dictatorship is. They don't know how the government works. They only are taught these things in our education system.

[01:03:07] And I get it. I realize things are hard right now. You have to tighten the belt. But when it comes to these gaps, I'm not going to call it a cut. Because what it is, it's a gap in what they were expecting. But it must not come out of the school system.

[01:03:24] This is our future. It's our investment. And if we want dividends for our community, if we want the next generation of Prince William County leaders potentially sitting where you are sitting right now, if you want the highest caliber of people doing what you're doing right now, we must invest in them. We cannot let any programs be cut.

[01:03:42] Universal pre-K, subsidized lunches. There are kids. This is the only playtime they ever eat is at school. We must hold on to them. I'm not here. I have no ill feelings towards any of you. Again, I do not envy what you guys have to deal with, but the reality is these schools, these programs, these teachers, they are a critical aspect of our community and we must not let them down.

[01:04:09] And with that, you guys can have the rest of my time. - Next speaker, please. - Can everyone hear me? - Hi, I'm Carenza Green-Summers. I live in the Gainesville District.

[01:04:26] I was a support coordinator for Prince William County Community Services Board and oftentimes we had to work with the school system And I did that for 10 years here. I currently work in Loudoun. I've worked with Prince William County Public Schools and Community Outreach and have seen

the transition from the underfunded lackluster schools we had 10 years ago to one where we have a very much more collaborative and better outcome for our students. I am honestly extremely disappointed in all but two of our

[01:05:01] leadership right now. I am very disappointed and honestly a little bit disgusted because Because \$300 to \$500 in savings a year doesn't even cover two weeks of child care for the majority of this county. I also want to point out that all the cuts that happen are going to be for the programs that actually reduce the number of crimes committed by young children.

[01:05:24] On top of it, when you're talking about cuts, the first thing that gets cut is special education. I don't care what anyone says, it is. I've seen it. Our schools have been playing catch-up to the 30 years they were underfunded. we have schools that still have asbestos. We have schools that have lead paint. And those are all things that have to be fixed. But yeah, let's cut \$31 million from their budget because, oh no, we want to give you a fake tax cut, which isn't going to save anyone any real money because the values of our homes continue to go up. However, I will tell you something that will negatively

[01:06:01] impact all of your real estate. I know quite a few of you do not have children in public schools here, but I do. And I do understand how that works. So whenever the school ratings go down, your home values go down, and then you have an increase in renters. Increased renters often come with a lot of other issues like a continuous budget shortfalls. If you want your values to continue to go up and maintain the investment in our communities, you have to invest in the schools.

[01:06:27] I am sick and tired of trying to nickel and dime everybody. How about this? Leave the tax rate as it is. Secondly, keep the meals tax, maybe drop it down to 2%. But how about this? Do an environmental tax on all those damn data centers that have been dumping toxic waste everywhere. How about that?

[01:06:47] An environmental tax, that and the golf courses that have been putting harmful chemicals into our groundwater. Do that. Stick it to the people who have a ton of money and whose kids do not go to our public schools so they could give two craps about what happens. With that, I say thank you.

[01:07:03] And again, if your kids don't go to public schools, I do find it very hypocritical for you to be okay with cutting our funding. Good night. Next speaker, please. You may begin.

[01:07:26] Good evening, Madam Chair and members of the board. I am Dr. Tina Felica King. I'm employed by the Aquawan District. I'm sorry. I'm going to have to restart you. Move it down or move it closer to you. Is that better? Yes, much. Thank you so much. Again, good evening.

[01:07:44] I am employed by the Aquawan District. I provide obstetrics and gynecologic services to the residents of Prince William County through Lunar Health. I hope to amplify comments that were said earlier so that I have your attention in full consideration.

[01:08:00] Your budget shows your priorities. I'll double down on that even more by saying to whom much is given, much is required. I presented to you all several weeks ago with regard to my concerns about what is currently going on in our county as it relates to providing OB-GYN care for your residents.

[01:08:20] Right now, our health center aims to provide health care as a human right to the residents, and that means we treat everyone. Our center, although we do treat those that are uninsured, we treat those that are underinsured, we treat those that are insured.

[01:08:36] If anything that we've learned over the last several years, even those who work for the federal government can find themselves out on their ear and without insurance. That is the tune of what my CEO was sharing with you earlier.

[01:08:54] Many people who had insurance no longer have it. And Prince William County carries the lion's share of that burden, and we're asked to assume the cost of caring for those patients. We do it. My oath has been to not do any harm. That means providing care in a way that's meaningful for the patients that I take care of.

[01:09:13] I provide OB care to women who are sometimes three times more likely to die in the United States of America. Not okay. We have a means to do it, and with your help, we can do better. We've asked for your help before, and to be removed from your budget says a lot about what you believe we need to do or what we should be doing.

[01:09:41] I implore you, I implore you, please reconsider having a budgetary allowance for Lunara Health so that we can continue to provide quality health care to the patients of Prince William County. If everyone, regardless of their circumstance, is entitled to a certain modicum of care, you should expect that when you go and see your doctor that you will get that.

[01:10:08] It shouldn't matter what insurance you have. It shouldn't matter what race you are. It shouldn't matter what gender you ascribe to. Everyone should be entitled to that health care. and mothers will die and babies will die. Our emergency rooms will be overcrowded if we're not able to provide this care, but we need your help to do so.

[01:10:31] Thank you, next speaker. And I also want to, I'm not sure if I have this or if this was a mistake. There was a Lauren M. Ivey on here. I don't know if there's a Lauren Ivey. That's you, all right, you can join the queue. All right, next speaker. Good evening, my name is Angie Trerotola.

[01:10:50] I'm a graduate of URAHS, class of 2005, and I'm a Prince William County teacher. Tonight, though, I'm a parent of a Fairfax County School student who watches over and over our Fairfax County School Board and Superintendent beg our Board of Supervisors to help them find the funds to meet the needs of their most vulnerable.

[01:11:07] They don't have our revenue share agreement, and it shows up most furiously when parents have to fight for their children to get specialized services. My kindergartner is an only child born in the pandemic, so we relied on his pediatrician to give us the recommendations we needed to make sure he was thriving. Instead, we ended up having to take him to be evaluated in 2021 right before he turned two because he could still only say three words.

[01:11:30] The staff at Fairfax Infant-Toddler Connection immediately recognized that this wasn't something he could figure out on his own when he was ready, but it required direct, explicit instruction from qualified professionals like his amazing ITC speech-language pathologist, Jeanette. The ITC also caught the vision issue his pediatrician missed that was making things worse.

[01:11:49] The hour a month Jeanette, the glasses, and being in preschool wasn't enough. He still wasn't singing or dancing like the other kids in his age group, and finding private therapy is time-consuming and expensive. In the fall of 2022, as his services were transitioned to FCPS, I encountered pushbacks every step of the way because Sparefax prefers the flexibility of developmental delay IEPs to triage the amount of direct speech-language services for its youngest students.

[01:12:12] I would have never imagined finding the help from my son that he was legally entitled to could be such a nightmare. By challenging FCPS's preferred process, I almost cost my son his IEP. Instead of an ounce of early intervention, they waited to be sued for a pound of cure. It took me looping in every connection or resource I knew to get what my son was entitled to in one of the richest counties in this country.

[01:12:32] Can you imagine, though, a toddler who isn't singing or dancing at three? By fighting, I was able to get him qualified for an IEP under developmental delay and get him direct speech. And it still makes my blood boil to this day because I do not know from growing up in this county and watching my students how so many of my students' parents would know how to do the things that I knew how to do.

[01:12:51] I only know from my job. My kindergartner is thriving because of the benefits of early intervention. I am begging you to continue your revenue-sharing agreement so we can begin the rollout of universal pre-K as the county planned. Universal pre-K will save families tens of thousands of dollars that can be reinvested into the community.

[01:13:08] Think of the perk that this will be to new businesses that are looking for strong schools to use as an incentive to encourage to move and to build families in the 10th most diverse district in the county. Students of all ages and zip codes deserve to be taught in classrooms by licensed professionals who are well compensated, even as preschoolers.

[01:13:24] My son's success story sadly entails all the time. One is privilege. This is why it is more imperative than ever to make sure these little ones have access to additional resources through Prince William County schools. The benefits of the real estate tax cut will not outweigh what investing in our community will do for all students, whether they live in Dumfries or Haymarket.

[01:13:40] This fall, I bragged about how this revenue share gave Prince William County extra funds to catch up while FCPS cut \$121 million from theirs. Honor the RSA. Let me brag about your commitment to Prince William County again. Thank you. Thank you. Next speaker, please. There we go.

[01:14:02] Okay. Good evening, Madam Chair and members of the board. My name is Katie Jefferson, and I've been a speech-language pathologist for 19 years, 13 of those years right here in Prince William County Public Schools. I am one of those employees that's school-based but funded through central office.

[01:14:21] Over the years, I've worked in just about every setting that you can imagine, elementary school, middle school, high school, K-8, a traditional school, all the things. And every day, I work with students across a wide variety and range of needs.

[01:14:38] Some are practicing a single sound, like the dreaded R, and others are using eye gaze technology to access just a basic want or need. Many of my students are in special education classrooms, like students with autism or intellectual disabilities.

[01:14:54] Students who rely on us not just for support, but for access. Access to learning, access to connection, and access to the outside world. And I want to take you back a moment. 11 years ago, I was maxed out, literally and figuratively.

[01:15:11] I had 68 students across five schools. I was doing everything that was required of me. Evaluations, meetings, IEP, taking work home every night, even though I don't agree with that, but I had to

do it. I vividly remember trying to type in IEP while pumping because I bought a special bra that didn't need hands, and rocking my baby with one foot after a full day's work.

[01:15:39] It wasn't sustainable. And most importantly, it wasn't fair to myself or what the students deserved. But today it looks different. And what I'm about to say doesn't mean there isn't room to grow. But because of intentional funding and smart KID investments, my caseload is more manageable. I'm serving students at just two schools. I have access to assistive technology specialists that help me. They're support staff and I can collaborate, and most importantly, I feel like I can give my students what they mean. That means progress, not just on paper, but in real life. We've also made meaningful strides in supporting staff through our CBA, improved

[01:16:18] compensation, salary scales aligned with years of experience, and honoring the level of education required for this work. There are some great things and we have more to do, and I'm going to put in a shameless plug here, like an unencumbered 30-minute lunch. Here's the truth. None of this happens without consistent and reliable funding. When you fully fund the proposed budget, you're funding possibilities. You're funding the moment a child says their first clear word. You're funding the confidence that a student can participate in class. You're funding relief for families who know

[01:16:53] their child is getting what they need. So I urge you, fully fund the proposed budget. Our students and their families are counting on you today thank you next speaker please thank you so much for the opportunity to speak madam chair and the board i am a lauren ivy i've been a registered nurse now for 21 years and a midwife now for seven and when i first started at uva the health care that women received was superior to what it is now which is concerning considering we have so

[01:17:30] much technology, data centers, things that people prioritize over women's health. Women's health is a very stressful job because you take it home with you. Women are coming to Lunara Health, seeing us for their whole pregnancy, and then they show up at whatever hospital they've chosen to have their baby, but not with one of us. Community health systems in Virginia itself have no full scope obstetricians. Can you imagine you already have low socioeconomic status, less education, less funding, less insurance, and now you're at the mercy of whoever happens to be on call.

[01:18:10] And I can tell you personally, having had two children, that is not a really good place to be. It's terrifying, honestly. The fact that we say there are healthcare disparities and nobody does anything about it, it's kind of like going to a bar and telling everybody that you're an alcoholic and doing nothing about it.

[01:18:28] I agree with Dr. King, who says your focus and your budget shows what you truly think. The most vulnerable people in our county are women, children, elderly, minorities, people with no insurance.

[01:18:48] You guys, the big, beautiful bill, which sucks, but whatever. We can pay, you know, a million dollars for a bomb to shoot down a drone that's \$20,000, but you can't fund schools, our future, our children. They've proven the technology in schools has ruined education.

[01:19:07] If anything, our kids are dumber. How is it possible that we have this much technology and we still suck? At the end of the day, you either support women, children, the elderly. There are women living in their cars that are elderly because they can't board a nursing home because they don't have insurance.

[01:19:28] They live in their cars. At some point, there's got to be something to give. If we don't support our most vulnerable population, essentially what we're saying is you don't matter. I joined Lunara Health because I want to reduce disparities in women's health and become the first community health center that

is full scope, i.e., the people that you see every day for your prenatal care are also those beautiful faces that you trust at the hospitals.

[01:19:57] It is putting a significant strain on our emergency departments. They're still going to get care. That just means that we have less funding. And with less funding, that means we have to cut programs that are vital already. And we are woefully underfunded. I really encourage you to please reconsider the budget.

[01:20:16] Next speaker, please. Good evening. Good evening, Madam Chair, members of the board. My name is Mitch Nason. And while a resident of Stafford County, I'm a 21-year veteran of your fire department.

[01:20:33] I'm also the president of the Prince William Professional Firefighters. You all already know that. I've been here advocating for a couple decades, and I will continue to do so tonight. But before I do, let me say to my fellow county staff, both executive leadership team, the budget staff, and then everyone else that's assembled, thank you.

[01:20:52] I'm proud to stand alongside those that work day in and day out here. But specifically this time of year, the work that's being put in by our county budget staff and our executive team is remarkable, sometimes lasting well into the early morning hours. So thank you for that.

[01:21:07] To the elected officials that are carrying out a solemn duty, thank you all as well as you deliberate incredibly difficult decisions of weighing competing priorities and initiatives, all of which are incredibly worthy. I thank you for that commitment to our community.

[01:21:27] But let me get to the advocacy that I promised you, and really at this point I feel like I've promised to my brothers and sisters, and that is to continue to come forward and ask you all to allocate funding to expand medical physicals for your firefighters here in Prince William County.

[01:21:44] This is something that I've been asking for for about five years, ever since we started privately funding these screenings ourselves and finding cancers and cardiac emergencies that were life-saving, life-threatening, career-ending. As I mentioned two weeks ago, these health problems we're running into and we're finding are actually covered under presumptive laws, which at the end of the day means it's the cost to the county through the Workers' Compensation Board.

[01:22:12] And that's whether this is a member of our career fire department or the volunteers that serve alongside of us. And so I'm not asking you all to allocate funding towards this because tonight, because this budget season specifically has seen you all have to really make some tough decisions of competing priorities.

[01:22:32] But what I am asking is that you all work with staff, direct our department staff to really dive into the data. Because we have been participating in some studies through Inova and through some private studies, we have some pretty good information, I think, that would suggest that this could actually be cost neutral. And so if we were to put together a pilot program of some sort, maybe a half-year or a quarter-year funding or something along those lines to really look into this, I think this would pay dividends back through a decrease in workers' comp claims.

[01:23:02] Of course, it also would give us the possibility of talking about the successes that we have. You know, I can point – I shared an email with you all last week that I've got two brothers, both of which are

going to have scars on their neck where they had their thyroids removed. one last week and one coming up in two weeks but it's only because they were lucky enough to go through this study so please if you can try to find an innovative way for us to address this in the future and again thank everyone for their hard work this budget season thank you very much i'm now going to turn to my colleague supervisor vic ingry for remote public comment time thank you

[01:23:38] madam chair we have uh six online are they still with us uh good evening uh vice chair and the board yes they are uh our first speaker will be gabriel yosek all right uh go ahead sir hello

[01:24:01] hey hey chris we can't hear anybody can unmute right now um uh i'm gonna go to the next speaker if that's okay yes that's fine next speaker will be uh vita carol hey also chris can you adjust your volume a little bit i don't know if that's on your end but just uh yeah i will try thank you okay hi can i can i can you guys hear me yes yes i can hear you okay let me go ahead okay i'm sorry

[01:24:39] I couldn't be there in person tonight, but I wanted to log in and get my comments on the record. First off, I agree with many of our teachers. Our teachers are underpaid. Our speech pathologists are overworked. Our special needs and ESOL students are not having their needs adequately met. And Kelly's leadership takes way too much money off the top with little to no oversight. But tonight, the board is voting on the board's budget. They are not voting on the school's budget, they have no oversight over the school system's budget. And I encourage every single person who spoke tonight to advocate directly to the school system and ask for those

[01:25:19] changes in their budget process. The school's budget is fully funded tonight by what the board is proposing. And they're proposing over \$1 billion of funding to the schools, more than in the past. For Prince William County schools to threaten teacher salaries is insulting and teachers deserve more than to be used by pawns by Superintendent McDade and Chair Lateef. I applaud this budget. This budget provides real relief to families like my own. My family has not had a consistent income since February 13th due to the government shutdown. And I also say this as a

[01:25:57] family with a child with a rare genetic disorder. This tax relief may only be two lattes a month, as a speaker said earlier, but we need to start somewhere. And this is a positive step in supporting residents who are struggling with the rising costs that we are seeing across the board in 2026. And I want to share a quote from last season's budget cycle, so fiscal year 2026.

[01:26:24] It was contentious and supervisor Bob Weir had a lot of thoughts. He wrote an excellent letter and I wanted to read from some of it because it holds true. Quote, several colleagues and I were unable to cut through enough wasteful spending and deliver meaningful tax relief to the taxpayers.

[01:26:40] Meaningful relief was promised by supervisors who voted for every data center application presented, touting their revenue benefits. Did those data centers deliver additional revenue? Absolutely. Unfortunately, the majority of the board used it on a spending spree and an expansion of the county government rather than delivering on their promise of tax relief.

[01:26:59] Several of my colleagues suggest that cuts to the budget or tax rates would jeopardize critical programming and or the education of our children. I could not disagree more. They ignore the cumulative impacts of year after year increases in the tax bills and costs of ever expanding government operations, costs that would be unsustainable without even greater tax increases.

[01:27:21] We appear to have lost this round, but I will never surrender my principles and stop fighting for all the residents of Prince William County. End quote. Bob would be proud of this budget. Bob would be proud of how you developed this budget. And please pass this budget with bipartisan support. Thank you so much. Thank you, ma'am. Next speaker.

[01:27:38] Yes. Good evening. Our next speaker is Gabriel Yasik. Go ahead, Gabriel. Hi. So my name is Gabe. I am a resident of the Brentsville-Matchesville District. I want to thank all the amazing speakers who spoke before me about the proposed budget and how it will affect them and their community.

[01:27:59] And for every speaker who came out today to talk to you, the Board of County Supervisors, there are hundreds of tens of hundreds or maybe that much. But there are a lot of people in this county who are going to be feeling the pains and the pitfalls of this proposed budget. And at the end of the day, with the election happening as well, there's a lot happening, but this budget affects everyone equally.

[01:28:21] The county executive did an amazing job proposing a budget that incorporated taxpayer relief, tax increases on data centers, and most importantly, funding for our schools. I sat through the entire 12-hour session last week, and for the lack of me, I don't understand why we're shooting ourselves in the foot by cutting Prince William County's future.

[01:28:38] As a 23-year-old who wants to one day hopefully start a family, ideally in Prince William, we are cutting attractive programs that incentivizes people like me to start a family here in Prince William. Universal Pre-K is a, and speakers before me did a much better job of articulating these thoughts.

[01:28:55] Speakers before me mentioned that this is a long-term cost-beneficial program. And also, it's just a very attractive program, period. And so, I'm asking you guys, the Board of County Supervisors, to adopt a measure in line with what the county executive is proposing. I've gone through, I'm a graduate of the county school system.

[01:29:13] I know how great our schools are. I'm a son of a military veteran. I know how other school systems in the country function, and Prince William is one of the best school systems I've had the fortune of participating in. And so, again, cannot ask you guys enough. Please keep the funding for schools, and please adopt a proposal in line with what the county executive proposed.

[01:29:32] Thank you. Have a great day. All right. Thank you, sir. Next speaker. Here is Jessica Grove. Ma'am, go ahead. Hi. Good evening, supervisors. My name is Jessica Grove, and I live in the Gainesville District.

[01:29:50] I do not envy your position tonight. I know you have worked very hard to come up with these numbers and to try to cut back where possible. I think you've done a satisfactory job.

[01:30:07] I appreciate that we are finally getting some tax relief, especially in the Western end when we are being burdened with all of the data centers in our district and in Brentsville also. I know that teachers deserve the best salary possible, but I don't think it's fair for the newspapers and the media to be portraying this as if they are going to get a budget cut or if they are going to get a salary cut or that programs are going to be cut.

[01:30:36] They are receiving more money than they got last year. It's just not as much as they were hoping, I guess. I appreciate the meals cut tax. That was a terrible tax to begin with, and I appreciate that you're trying to lower it as much as you can.

[01:30:55] That's awesome. And I think that will bring a little bit of tax relief to the residents of Prince William County, which we have been begging for for a long time because our assessments keep going up and we still keep paying more and more taxes. So I do appreciate the hard work that you've put into this.

[01:31:11] I know that teachers deserve great salaries and great pay. And I think you are accommodating that to the best of your ability within this budget. And I appreciate it. So thank you very much. All right. Thank you, ma'am. Next speaker, please. next speaker is rachel ellis evening rachel ellis gainsville district um prince william county residents want and deserve tax relief we were told that all these data centers will bring in additional revenue and the residents would see relief residents are getting hit with higher

[01:31:46] electric bills higher gas prices higher cost of goods higher insurance everything continues to go up how many families in prince william county are on a fixed income retirees and by the way my in-laws are in their 80s. They live in the Coles District. They own their own home. They are on a fixed income. They watch their money, and they do not go and get lattes. Personally, our family has health insurance through Virginia Marketplace. Our rates have increased 30% for the exact same

[01:32:20] plan as we had last year. That is an extra \$400 per month, so \$4,800 per year, that we are paying in addition to every other increase across the board. And our family cannot be the only family in Prince William County with Virginia Marketplace health insurance facing a 30% increase.

[01:32:40] While I believe the importance of funding our schools, I agree with the bipartisan approach of several supervisors where the schools are getting an improved budget of \$1.087 billion while also lowering the real estate tax to give relief to all county residents.

[01:32:59] that one billion dollar investment in our schools is historic and should be recognized it is over ninety million dollars more than last year's budget and interestingly while i don't have kids in prince william county schools currently i did receive an alarming email from them about a potential reduction of more than 31 million dollars to their budget i did the math they would be getting a three percent reduction in what they were asking for i think a responsibly run school district could find savings of three percent without immediately stating it will ask pay increases after school programs and specialty programs and if school leadership cannot

[01:33:39] responsibly trim three percent of a school system budget without first going after those increases especially programs ask yourself why is there absolutely no waste especially when it's already receiving a budget increase of over 96 million dollars from last year with declining enrollment this board has a responsibility to consider all prince one county residents when they decide on their budget there's actually bipartisan support for this budget because it's not as outrageous as the schools have led people to believe i support the current budget of giving the schools

[01:34:14] over 96 million dollars more even with declining enrollment i support a tax real estate reduction of 85 cents increasing the cmp to 450 reducing the meals tax and increasing investing in our public safety funding thank you thank you ma'am next speaker please here is bob marshall uh go

[01:34:37] ahead bob sir uh bob are you with us sorry hello yes yes we can hear you oh thank you sorry bob marshall coals district please defer consideration of the client rezoning at prince william parkway and liberia which rezones 87 agricultural acres including 25 acres from parks and open spaces for

[01:35:12] 240 mostly attached residences scheduled for May 12th. First, we need the hard data that will be available from a three-year Prince William study on what is going on in the groundwater in Mid-County

with dealing with hundreds of wells that are near Klein, modest homes. Lack of accurate data impacted Stanley Martin's development. Selma Estates in Loudoun, where 25 homes had dangerous flooding from an outdated FEMA floodplain map, storm water flowing through windows and doors and into basements. Quoted, to approve a rezoning effort near hundreds of possibly thousands of

[01:35:49] wells without sufficient groundwater data could be considered negligence. In 2016, Stanley Martin commissioned a hydrological study discovering 126 wells near Klein. We live in Hinson Knolls, built in the 1970s on one acre lots with well and septic on the first street across from the Klein Farm, we were not given the formal notification. Despite documenting 126 wells surrounding Klein, Stanley Martin's proffer agrees to baseline test only a few within 800 feet.

[01:36:20] If well problems arise within six months, fine, they'll be retested. EPA states testing should be a minimum of one quarter of a mile. Also, Stanley Martin's six-month cutoff is way too short because impervious surfaces will not be completed. When former Planning Commissioner Moses Nett asked what residents would do if their wells had problems after Stanley Martin's six-month limit, Stanley Martin's representative said, well, they could litigate it against us. But remember, Stanley Martin denied any responsibility for flooding in their Selma estates, saying the

[01:36:54] county approved the project. A study by Dignan with U.S. Geological Survey Assistance identified nitrates that traveled thousands of months and over five years. Prince William will be risking Occoquan Reservoir supplied drinking water. Prince William drivers will be surprised that they have to stop for blasting. You can find many online videos with fly rock accidents. Government-committed blasting produced flying rocks on Route 522 and I-66 and Front Royal, leaving eight cars damaged and one person hospitalized. Drivers started calling 911. In Loudoun, another government

[01:37:32] blasting and sterling curled stones and boulders a half a mile away leaving one person injured 10 years ago employees were required to but failed to inform the virginia department of mines about the accidents just say no to the client rezoning thank you thank you sir next speaker uh good evening we have no more speakers thank you all right chris thanks a lot thank you all right thank you so very much we are now moving on to agenda item number four that's the public hearing for the solid waste user fee rates do we have anyone who signed up so we have no one who is so signed

[01:38:11] up in person or online so i am opening it i am now closing because we do not have anyone signed up to speak online we are now moving on to agenda item number five and that is county executive time mr shorter the floor is yours nothing for me this evening madam chair all right thank you very much we're going to go to agenda item number six county attorney time madam county attorney thank you madam chair members of the board this evening we will have consultation with legal counsel and briefings by staff regarding the probable litigation by the circuit court judges against the board of county supervisors regarding space in the courthouse along with the accompanying consultation with legal counsel and briefings by staff members regarding specific legal matters

[01:38:50] requiring the provision of legal advice by such counsel pertaining to courthouses where such consultation discussion or briefing in an open meeting would adversely affect the bargaining position negotiating strategy or litigating posture of the public body this item is appropriate for closed session pursuant to 2.2 dash 3711 a seven and eight of the code of virginia move for approval second all right let's go ahead and take our votes unanimous all right thank you very much

[01:39:28] we are now moving on to agenda item number seven madam chair oh yes we have coia statements i just wanted to didn't want to get ahead of you too far madam chair before the board considers adoption of the levies fees revenue sharing policy tax policy the school's budgets appropriations cip and five-year plan 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 our members of group which is affected by these matters i will be participating in these matters because i will do so fairly objectively in the public interest thank you all right madam chair before the board considers adoption of the levies

[01:40:01] fees revenue sharing tax policy with the school's budgets appropriations cip and five-year plan 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 a member 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 all right thank you so very much so now we are going to move to our um main event so to speak of the evening first on the agenda is 7a can i get a

[01:40:37] motion. So moved. Second. It's improperly moved and seconded. Supervisor Bode. Yeah, thank you, Madam Chair. Just first, I wanted to thank everyone who came out today. I know that we've had a lot of folks who have expressed a lot of interest in the budget and where we are in terms of tax rates, spending, what have you. Heard from a lot of teachers. I thank all of you for your participation, your advocacy before and during this process. I want to thank all the other residents who have reached out for various things um you know i sort of came away from last week uh somewhat

[01:41:13] crestfallen because i think that there was a better way for rebalance things so i would like to offer for my colleagues consideration of a substitute motion to set the real estate tax rate at 865 that's 0.865 and to maintain the meals tax at three percent second that has been properly moved and seconded let's have discussion supervisor vega thank you madam chair um for purposes of the general public understanding and for those on the day is because obviously we haven't been previewed to these conversations that you all have been having behind the scenes what exactly is going to be the order of business so are we going to rehash everything from the cmp rate we

[01:41:52] started last week our budget deliberations with the understanding that if we set the real estate rate first it was going to dictate the rest of the budget so if you're asking right now for this board to consider changing the real estate rate that means that we're going to engage in dialogue for everything that we agreed in the majority last week.

[01:42:10] Am I understanding that correctly? I will let you respond. Sure. Thank you, Sue Razrega. To some extent, what I would say is I did at a couple different intervals last week ask for us to go back and revisit tax rates because of where we landed in terms of spending and what was left on the bottom line and, frankly, where the schools were left.

[01:42:29] That request was denied multiple times by my colleagues, so I would just ask that we would go visit at least the tax rates right now. Supervisor Angry. Thank you, Madam Chair. This is pretty much discussion, correct?

[01:42:45] Yes, this is discussion. I want to talk to you all. My sole intent with this budget cycle was to lower the real estate taxes because we've raised revenue on the data centers that made sense that this is the time to do it.

[01:43:04] I've been saying this for the last seven years. I will simply say this, running the numbers, going through everything, I wish we would I had this discussion last week because I understand at the 85 mark. Now, I understand also, I said 86 because I knew the number was 85 to 87.

[01:43:23] I said 86 in the middle. A lot of 85s went to 85. Running the numbers, numbers made any sense. Literally got into the C&P tax, which I voted no against, to raise that to 450. But the discussion was we can use that money to offset the balance of the tax being lowered at that time, which was a good idea for me because that got us whole to where we were in the issue of this discussion.

[01:43:52] Not looking at what, you know, and I'll back up by saying this, I'm a chess player and I'm no one's pawn on anyone's board, but I recognize that everyone has a position on this board of where we're going to go, so I'll just simply give you mine. This is a chess game in the sense of the word, and I will applaud the chairman of the school board for using his biggest move ever, which is his queen, to come out here and fight for what he believed is what we were denying the schools of that.

[01:44:25] And I will say, I'm going to point out, that number is actually \$28.4 million, which was the real estate assessment that I was looking at. The meal tax got nothing to do with it, didn't want to lower that anyway. But to that point, it was taking away the revenue that would go to the schools of that.

[01:44:45] But my intent was simply to take care of all residents of the county. So I don't want to get into a discussion about whether or not I support schools, teachers, children. I support all the people of Prince William County, which is what my intent of this was. It clearly proves that that is not the mark at 85, and that mark clearly is what Supervisor Bode here has recommended at 86.5, which will make everyone in the scenario settled, I'll call it.

[01:45:16] So with that, I will agree with the 86.5, and I will agree also to put the mills tax back at 3%. Maybe that's the discussion for next year. I believe there's more revenue coming to this county that will help this scenario in the later years, particularly next year, and we'll address that bridge when we get to it.

[01:45:38] Supervisor Gordy, then Stewart. Thank you, Madam Chair. I will say highly disappointed that we're having this conversation after all the work that we did last week. After 12 hours of deliberations on a budget, it was a difficult process, but it was a good process. And I will say that, you know, as I've said from the beginning, and I've been saying now for the third year, we've been making a promise to our residents because of these data

[01:46:10] centers, we're going to give them tax relief. While we have reduced the rate of growth of real estate taxes, we have not given them a cut. And so every single year, it continues to go up.

[01:46:28] And if you take a look over time, families are spending \$4,000, \$5,000 more in some families going back to 2020 because of the continued increase on their real estate taxes. This is not about lattes every year we pass a real estate tax it gets affected for the next year and it gets compounded over the next few years as it continues to go forward and if this and as we're looking at these budgets that we have I've looked at the school's budget it's increased nearly 73 percent

[01:47:06] our allocation to the schools has gone up 73 percent since 2021 how many people have gotten a 73% pay raise in that time. Nobody. But they've gotten 73% and we've gotten nearly 60%.

[01:47:27] Our families are struggling. We talk about affordability. People run and campaign on affordability. But when will we actually deliver it when we have the chance to make living, having a

lifestyle in this county more affordable? I spoke to a lady today who says, I'm on a fixed income. These taxes, they are really, I am struggling to pay my home. It is

[01:47:58] paid off, but I'm struggling to pay the taxes. And so \$0.85 is meaningful, meaningful relief to these families. It's not just \$145. If you go and you do the math, and I went and I started looking at properties throughout the county. For some people, it's \$600, \$700. And if you're a senior citizen on a fixed income that's that that's important if you're a parent with kids

[01:48:31] and you providing child care yeah that's important so i am hopeful that we can stick to what we committed to last week because it is meaningful it is real it is not just merely slowing the growth of tax uh of real estate taxes on our citizens but it's actually allowing them to have a reduction from what they paid last year for what they will for this year it will be reduced for next year lower. And I think they deserve that. Data centers, again, \$550 million that they're

[01:49:07] contributing now to our revenues. It's time to give that money back to our citizens as it was promised. Supervisor Stewart. Thank you, Madam Chair. It's hard. It is hard. It is hard, but all we have to do to guide us are our principles. As a former active duty person in the United States

[01:49:41] Navy. I've been around the world three times, and I can say this. Any society is judged by how well you treat the weakest members of those societies. That would be the elderly, and that would be children. As a father, girl dad, and a grandparent to a beautiful grandson, I would want to see them

[01:50:13] educated. My daughter, my eldest daughter, works in the school system, not here in Virginia, but in Canada, in Vancouver. And she has a tough job. She works with at-risk youth. And I'm proud of her for doing that. I pushed for 85 cents. I wanted it because I wanted that relief for homeowners.

[01:50:48] I also pushed for \$5 from the data centers. Unfortunately, we got stopped at 450. What I am going to pledge, though, is that coming forward in the forward years, that we're going to go get the money. I have said it once. I maybe, yeah, I'm a broken record now. This is the wealthiest industry on the planet. God goes to them for financing. They can afford it and I'm going to

[01:51:24] get the money. But what we're going to do this year is we're going to learn from the lessons of the mistakes that even I made last week. And we're going to set things straight. And I'm going, and I promise you here and now that I'm going to work diligently to make sure we get the money because supervisor gordy is right promises were made when the door was open for the data center complexes to come in the selling point was think about the money you're going to save on your property taxes and that has yet to be delivered dribs and drabs but we're going to get that money

[01:52:04] if i got to knock on the door of every data center myself to get it but what we do here tonight is we protect one well actually two we we we protect two of the of our weakest citizens the least among us but the best among us our children teachers have a tough job they're stressed out teaching kids that are also stressed out who have so much coming at them stuff that i didn't have coming at me in

[01:52:41] the 19th thank you um and and we need to set it right it's not going to be happy but I get it amongst all of my colleagues, but we just, somebody told me today, follow your principles.

[01:53:05] And I got to say, as a parent, as a grandparent, and as a dad of somebody who works in schools, as a homeowner and as somebody who knows that he can talk to this industry in a language that they can understand, I worked as a trader on Wall Street. And I know how these people think. I know how they

work. It's just everything can be worked out in conversation. We have to get this done. And I know we spent forever time here last week, but we can get this right today. We can get

[01:53:44] this right today. Thank you, Madam Chair. Supervisor LaCroix. I think this is a sad day for us on the board. And I know you guys think it too. And the reason is I represent Woodbridge and I've had so many of the small restaurant owners ask me, please get rid of this meals tax. A lot of my people or my businesses have closed because of it and it is a tax that is just completely unnecessary

[01:54:20] and we can afford to get rid of that meals tax and it's sad that we can't. I actually woke up last Wednesday proud of us working as a bipartisan board. I was proud that we didn't touch the split. That's what I thought. We did not touch the split. And we were still making sure you all made an additional \$97 million. So it went up to roughly \$1.1 billion, which is

[01:54:57] historical, historical for this county. And it's a huge tax raise for the education. And I thought we were you all would be so happy and then of course I've been wearing the citizens hat forever and I have been listening to this board or a board over and over again saying that they would be

[01:55:27] giving tax breaks to the citizens and I echo Supervisor Gordy that I have talked to a lot because I have been the one who's been recently door knocking and I've been talking to a lot of the older people that have lived here non-stop for many many years and have retired here and can no longer afford their homes because affordable living is not affordable anymore in Prince William County with not just the tax cuts we're doing right now but all the taxes that are coming at us

[01:56:04] at once. I want all the people in this room to know that the board doesn't decide that teachers don't get paid. That's not what happens with us. And anybody who sent out that letter, because I got the letter too, because people kept giving it to me, and I was shocked and horrified at us being bad guys instead of good guys. And I'm deeply, deeply sorry that anybody felt intimidated because

[01:56:40] this was my first month and the amount of intimidation that came my way was disgusting when I thought we were doing such a good job for everyone. Not just the kids. Absolutely we should support the kids. But we need to support their parents too because like I said last week, what good is it that we do a new gym or whatever if the kids can't afford to live here anymore?

[01:57:10] and we really need to focus on everybody in the county and so you know today was a sad day for me a win for y'all and a win for the school board but a sad day because I watched every one of us get bullied every one of us and that's disgusting all right before we go on to people we've got a few people going on for their second round you can stay in I want to go to everyone who hasn't spoken supervisor bailey you haven't spoken i have not spoken thank you madam chair um i want to say

[01:57:48] that um i i try to in all my leadership endeavors i try to uh practice win-win but not win-win for myself how can we achieve a goal uh in a way that everybody wins healthfully and uh i i am a public school kid and i said before you because i'm proud of that and like someone said earlier um i've achieved because of that um and i think that supervisors uh bode's recommendation i'm going

[01:58:28] to support it because it is a win-win it'll stop us from being in the whole uh the board's uh budget in 28 and 30 and 31 so that's being fiscally responsible and how we manage our monies our budgets. It'll also support our schools, but it will also give our citizens an opportunity to have relief in their real estate tax. Someone mentioned that people want to live in Prince

[01:59:07] Wheaton County. It's a great county. My aim is that it's not going to be number two, it's going to be number one because of our schools. That's imperative. That is imperative. When I went back to our staff to get the numbers, the numbers will keep us in the green or the blue or the good color.

[01:59:31] And so when we start talking about this budget, my scale was 0.88 to 0.86. And I lost my way with the 0.85, just going to be honest about it, because it wasn't as bipartisan as it could be.

[01:59:51] This can be bipartisan if we let it. If we let it. And we will protect our citizens, give them a tax break, protect our citizens' children. We will protect our community health. We will have an opportunity that everybody will have a win-win.

[02:00:09] So I'm going to support .865 because it's a healthy thing to do, and it's not a political thing to do. And we don't always agree on this dais, and we don't always agree with our citizens, but we work for our citizens.

[02:00:27] And I am very much in support of the direction with this tax rate. We've always been able to make firm decisions and not politicize it. So I won't do that tonight, period.

[02:00:43] But what I will do is focus on making sure that the least of us will feel like they are kings and queens. And I will focus on, I don't have children in the school system. My baby has grown, grown. But he has gone to public school.

[02:01:01] He has gone to private school. He's gone to military school. And the best lessons that he's learned in public school. So that's kind of where I am. I hope that my colleagues will embrace my decision like I've embraced theirs.

[02:01:17] And I wanted to keep us in the blue, green, and the nice colors. So thank you, Madam Chair, for the opportunity to speak. All right, I'm going to jump in before I let people go to their second round. First of all, I've got to say, there is a very high cost to low taxes.

[02:01:36] We all want services. We want good schools. We want the best teachers. We want the best fire. We want police officers who are connected to our community. We want community health services. So there is a high cost to low taxes because when we have low taxes, we cannot do everything we want.

[02:01:55] We cannot do everything that we want. I have been very strong in my support for revenue sharing because I believe that our schools are the bedrock of our community. Our schools are what make people want to live here and what makes businesses want to recruit here, come here as well.

[02:02:16] And so I could not, in good faith, lower taxes and balance our budget off the backs of our school system. And I also want to say, we've heard you. We've heard a lot of people.

[02:02:31] We've received a lot of phone calls, emails. We have a lot of people who are sitting here who are taking their time to come here tonight and to speak to us. We hear you. We hear your concerns. And trust me, I share them. I am first-generation college.

[02:02:48] My parents grew up in Jim Crow, Mississippi. They didn't have a chance to get the education that I was able to attain. My dad was functionally illiterate. My mom grew up in the Mississippi Delta, picking cotton. They did not have the opportunities that I had.

[02:03:05] And they really stressed the importance of schools and education as your way up. Our schools provide more than an education. And the strategic plan that Superintendent Latanya McDade presented

was amazing.

[02:03:25] All of us were applauding her. But then to take away money from our schools, that's unfair. I think she's a wonderful, I think she's done a wonderful job in transforming our schools, but she's not a miracle worker.

[02:03:40] When you take away \$30 million, and it was a cut, it was a cut because they were expecting a certain dollar amount from us and they didn't get it. So that's called a cut. But I also want to say with taxes, reducing the rate of growth is actually a cut.

[02:03:58] That can be considered a cut. And that is something. That is something. We will never be able to do all the things that we want. And that's why the budget has to be a statement of our values. I value education. I value the work that our teachers, our custodians, our lunch ladies, our bus drivers, and everyone else does day in and day out to educate our students. I value that. That is why I want to fund it.

[02:04:32] I am not a fan of the meals tax. I have been very, very outspoken on that. And if I had a chance, a choice, I would have gone for the meals tax over the residential, I'm sorry, of the real estate tax. But the cut, that was only \$6 million compared to \$28.6 million.

[02:04:50] But that's still too much. And I've had to eat crow. I've had to reach out to people and let them know that I apologize. This is something I pushed for. But I am going to have to walk it back because schools are the priority. Schools are the priority.

[02:05:07] I'm not a fan of the meals tax because the meals and beverage tax, because I do think it's hurting our small businesses. I think it's hurting our family-owned businesses. I think it's hurting immigrant-owned businesses. That's another hill that I would die on. But compared to schools, schools will always win.

[02:05:27] For me, I've always said that schools are our most important investment. And very closely behind that is having a safe and secure community. So I'm proud that we've been able to have conversations, that we've been able to hear from the community and reexamine the budget to see where we can make our schools whole.

[02:05:50] There will still be a short fall for schools, but we've closed the gap tremendously. And I'm hoping that we can continue to have conversations with our counterparts on the school board so that we can truly make sure that we're meeting their needs next year.

[02:06:06] For me, this is called being responsive. I know people disagree with the steps that we're taking. And yes, Supervisor Bodie and I, we had talked about, let's go back and look at the tax rates because we came up too short and we were making cuts at the last minute that we shouldn't have been making. So again, I appreciate everyone who's come out here and everyone who's made their voices heard on both sides.

[02:06:28] But for my one-eighth, I cannot shortchange our schools. Supervisor Vega. Thank you, Madam Chair. You know, folks, I'm sitting here wondering where my colleagues' principles and morals were last week when we're debating this budget. I really am. It is astounding that they're sitting here on their high horses talking to you all about, I got it wrong. The budget process was flawed. It shouldn't have gone this way. And I would say that the bulk of you here watching in chambers and those watching

[02:07:02] at home perhaps didn't even watch last week's meeting. You know, scripture tells us, let your yes be yes and your no be no. Since we like to quote scripture up here, I'm quoting scripture. And I want to let you all know that the dishonesty coming from my colleagues on this dais is the part that is the most troubling to me.

[02:07:25] Because I've always said there is no greater threat to our constituency than a politician that will look at you in the face and lie to you. And that is what you're seeing from this dais. That is what you're seeing from this dais.

[02:07:40] We had very good conversations. We worked in a bipartisan fashion to achieve a budget that would produce relief to the taxpayers while still fully funding our schools to the tune of over \$1 billion.

[02:07:58] Folks, that is not a cut. When the school board came to present to us, we agreed on a C&P rate of \$4.15. That is what the school division expected. During our negotiations, it was proposed by Supervisor Bodie that we all go to \$4.50 so that we can generate new revenue in order to be able to fund our priorities on our side.

[02:08:23] This is not a debate as to whether or not the Board of County Supervisors support students and educators. That is not a question. We all do. And for those wondering, I'll remind you all, I am a mother of two children that attend Prince William County Public Schools. I have a senior and a junior.

[02:08:41] I am a product of public schools, I myself, but what I'm not going to do is I'm not going to sit here and allow them to get away with the cowardly behavior that we've seen going on behind the scenes because you deserve better. And what I ask of you is question everything. Even if you're part of the teachers union, question everything because I get emails from educators, and I said this when the school board came to present, where teachers are still using their own money to fund their classrooms. That is unacceptable. Teachers are still not getting paid enough, and that is unacceptable. So when I question the school budget, it's because the people that need it the most are

[02:09:20] not getting the money that is being requested. So question that budget. Question it all. Don't get stuck in this echo chamber where you're being fed something that is not accurate. We've worked in a bipartisan fashion to deliver for the taxpayers, to ensure that our educators are getting their fair share of the pie and to ensure that our children are actually being educated properly and that that translates when it comes to the data. Record investment, even though enrollments are at an all-time low. Yes, we supported Dr. McDade in the presentation that they gave, and kudos to Dr.

[02:09:56] Lateef. I told him I would buy a clunker from you because you're good at what you do. There is leadership. You advocate for what you believe is right, and they've completely taken that opportunity from us the board of county supervisors it is not us against them it is not about that it is about being fiscally responsible but i don't blame the general public i never will i never will i blame this flawed process where we allowed the county executive to present to us a budget that spends every single penny in new revenue generated by one industry alone that is 550 million dollars

[02:10:34] and so while i understand that we have challenges in the school division we also have challenges and commitments to the general public. We cannot look at our constituents in good faith to a single mom, to those on a fixed income, when they're asking us, why are our taxes continuing to go up when we generate \$550 million in new revenue?

[02:10:54] Every penny is spent. Government grows more rapidly than the growth of our population. So we have to question everything. For those wondering about their principles, I'd like to know where they left them last week because I sure know where mine were when we were having this conversation and I know where mine will be after this vote is over tonight it is clear that we're going to have to go back to the drawing board that they're going to change everything because of the political pressure that they were under but they don't have the courage to tell you that they don't have the courage to tell you that they're not beholden to you the people they're beholden to other special interests that are telling them what to do and how to vote

[02:11:32] and that is why you see the change that you're seeing here tonight and that is shameful that is shameful all right before i move to the next speaker i actually need to acknowledge two people school board member tracy blake and our public defender tracy lennox we have two tracys thank you all right supervisor stewart yeah so a couple of things that have been brought up by the last several speakers number one the meals tax so you know cutting that by one percent you know i don't think anybody's going to run out and buy lobster because one dollar comes off the bill so we have

[02:12:10] to take another look at that. And again, how we balance that from aggressively going after the data centers as aggressively as they've come after Prince William County. You know, somebody bandied around the word bullying. I'll say this about that. I'm an only child from the Bronx. I'm not bullied. Bully is transactional. Somebody's got to offer bullying and then somebody's got to accept it. I don't play in that game. There's a young man in this room tonight. He and I grew up in the

[02:12:50] same neighborhood he knows exactly what i'm talking about i see you okay but there's a way that he and i both comport ourselves as gentlemen i do have a problem with the last seven days and how certain folks have been comporting themselves certain people that i'm i'm now going to have to go back and have conversations with about instead of picking up the phone and having some conversations

[02:13:26] like a leader they run to social media and media outlets instead of having a conversation they call us thieves that took money from from children in the middle of the night i've heard a lot from educators in the county about how maybe it's difficult to talk to this individual i'm not

[02:13:57] calling any names but i'm gonna have a talk with them vigorously so that that's coming up and i do question the budget that the schools put forth, and I get it, but the process is flawed. And we're going to have to look at that as we go forward over the next year. We have to have not just us

[02:14:31] as a dais responsibly handle the budget, but we have to have those entities that we're responsible for funding responsibly handle their budgets as well. It goes both ways. Thank you very much, Madam Chair. Supervisor Angry. Thanks Madam Chair. So we don't have supervisors time so I'm going to spend my time now speaking to you the public so you understand me. I don't talk to you

[02:15:08] during board meetings because you're here for transparency as I address my colleagues as we discuss governing this process. So I don't talk to you. I listen to you during your public comment time. I take that. I come back and we have a discussion. But I'm going to talk to you because Because this process and what happens here, it's very disturbing for me because I'm not here to talk to you.

[02:15:34] I'm not here to tell you these statements. And for my board, it's the one thing I keep saying all the time. I wish this was a horseshoe shape so we can look at each other because I'm not here to talk to

them. They're here to hear us govern. The deciding factor for me in the decision of where we are now, and let me back up and state this.

[02:15:56] I don't like changing my mind, and I was at \$0.85 last week, and there's only one reason why I'm not. I've talked to my Commonwealth attorney. We never involved her in the process when we made those moves. I've heard from the school board that we never invited them in the process.

[02:16:13] We never set that rate to a point where you all were in the process that said, even though I said, I'm going for a real estate tax that's lower for the people, that means your revenue is going to be lower. Had you probably known that budget, you could have done different things with.

[02:16:30] I'm not a fan of how you all ended up here because I think that's very disingenuous of us as leaders to talk together and figure this out. So here we sit discussing your budget, my Commonwealth Attorney's budget, my Sheriff's office, who was upset about their budget, and every employee in this county who's upset about the cuts that we did to them in a straight-up 12-hour, last couple of Tuesdays meeting.

[02:16:59] Went down. I'm trying to get us to the finish line. I'm a leader. I make decisions. That's what I did. meaning throughout the week, to my colleague Supervisor's vagal point, as you all, first of all, don't threaten me with running me out of office. It just doesn't work for me. I'm not here to be in office. I'm here to make tough decisions. That's what I do. That's what I will continue to do.

[02:17:27] Secondly, don't ever associate me with the word rape. I heard that I was raping the schools. Rape is a horrible word. Many people have gone through horrible experience. That is not a word that you should ever do in your passion, and I'm speaking to you now because I don't do this.

[02:17:44] This is who I speak to. This is what we should be doing, but I want to spend this time to tell you how this works. I'm not new to this. This is okay for me. I've served 23 years in the army. I've sent people to combat. People have died. I've had parents in my office who kids and family members aren't coming back. Those are tough conversations. This isn't a tough conversation. This is easy for me. This is what we do as leaders, make decisions. But I would appreciate if every leader comes to the table so we can have these discussions without it being political. It turns very political all

[02:18:19] the time, and that doesn't get us anywhere. So I would hope that from this process, we can function as a board to work, and you can function as citizens to watch and witness us do our work. Thank you, Madam Chair. Supervisor Gordy. Madam Chair, I just want to address something that you said and not to in any way demean anything that you said, but I just want

[02:18:52] to highlight the challenge it presents for us going forward. When we talk about expected revenues and people build budgets on expected revenues before we have a chance to even mark up our budget, it means every year they're going to get a cut. Every year. If we decide to give any tax relief to our citizens it's going to mean that we're going to be cutting the schools. The process that we're under everybody goes into this knowing that when this board comes together and we start

[02:19:27] to mark up our budget that the potential for tax reduction is there. I talked to the chairman of the school board and I talked to our own county executive and to Mr. Sinclair in my in my meeting and I said you know I think there's probably going to be between 40 and 70 million dollars of tax relief sought. We landed at 55 million exactly in the middle of those two numbers based on what we had been kind of in all of our individual conversations about, you know,

[02:20:02] just kind of what people's priorities were. And that's where we landed. So it's not a surprise to the chairman of the school board because he and I spoke about it. Look, we're going to find tax relief. But the other piece that I would also remind my colleagues is that for the two previous budget cycles, they received significant amounts of money over and above their budget request.

[02:20:32] Where's that money? It exceeded \$30 million. Where's that money? Has anybody asked? What happened to it? I didn't hear anybody offering it back to us, to the county, so we could meet our priorities on our side. Instead, it went and it sat in a count. Our families didn't get tax relief, but the school sat on cash. And so this year they planned to the top line number. And now

[02:21:08] because they chose to take that approach this year, anything that we do is going to be construed as a cut. Well, given the fact that we mark our budget after them means anytime we want to give our citizens back something means going forward, it will always be a cut to their budget. I make this statement and saying our process isn't a good process. If that is now going to be the line,

[02:21:45] if they budget to the full expected revenue that has been estimated, and again, it's an estimate, then anything that we do to reduce those revenues to give back to our citizens means we're going to be cutting schools. That is putting a line in the sand that I believe going forward just basically demonstrates to our citizens that they're not going to be getting tax relief from this board.

[02:22:14] And that's got to be something that we've got to figure out a different process. But again, I go back. Our citizens deserve this. Our citizens deserve tax relief. And I am hopeful that we as a board can ensure that we're going to provide something for them. And again, just as has been said, \$97 million increase is not a cut. \$1.088 billion over \$988 million. That's significant

[02:22:52] increase in revenue. And again, where's the surplus funds from the previous years, and why cannot that not be used to fill the gap in the \$31 million? The cash is there. Thank you. Supervisor Bailey.

[02:23:11] Thank you, Madam Chair. I want to congratulate Dr. McDade, Chairman Lateef, and his board, and Dr. McDade and their staff, because when they come and present to us the strategic plan and present to us about the budget that they want, they've had collaborative conversations with the county prior to that, thorough collaborative conversations.

[02:23:38] And so in full transparencies, they're not keeping money. They're not hiding money. When we ask the question, one of my staff used to say the dumb question, we get the smart answer. And they are very transparent in where the money is, why they're holding it in a space, why people work in Kelly Building as opposed out in the field.

[02:24:02] That was a question. It was answered. We either have respect and trust or we don't. And so I feel very secure with your children, my babies, that I didn't birth, that Dr. McDade and her staff is being very transparent and respectful of being collaborative with us.

[02:24:24] And I think there's an opportunity, as I mentioned to my colleagues, that we didn't follow up on in meeting with them again and letting them know what we want to see as we collaborate with them and give them the revenue share portion of what they deserve.

[02:24:41] Now, if we want to change that, we have to change policy. We have not done that yet. Everybody up here knows that. And so that's an opportunity as well. But in my conversations with the school

superintendent, there's an opportunity for us to partner with housing, with training, with mental health, a plethora of things that we've not explored.

[02:25:07] So I see that that's an opportunity when we're looking at the funding for revenue share if we want to see something different. But once we make that transfer, we have no control over the money. We just hope and pray that we can collaborate.

[02:25:24] And the school superintendent and the board, the school board, has been very upfront about doing that with us. We just need to have the hard conversations. The other thing that I want to do is I want to congratulate the county exec. He has created a budget process that we've never had before, that is very transparent, that has absolutely helped me as my one-eighth, and I've talked to other colleagues, to understand the budget a little bit better so it's not so complicated that we do make bad decisions.

[02:25:54] And so when we make bad decisions, that's on us. It's not because we don't have the tools or the information. And Mr. Sinclair, we call him Mr. Fun, he's always answering our questions when we don't want to make bad decisions. So we are very much astute in the county and in the school if we just collaborate and partner together.

[02:26:14] This is an opportunity for us to do that. But we have to take that leap and ask the school board and the superintendent for that opportunity. The other thing I want to talk about, someone mentioned tonight to this wonderful community that came in and talked to us about communication.

[02:26:29] I think one of the places that this board, both the previous board and here, we have an opportunity to communicate a lot better with y'all and bring you along with the process. That's something that has not happened for years.

[02:26:47] So the most transparency that you see now is a more transparency that you've seen for years before 2020. Now, the other thing I want to say is the illustrious, wonderful data centers have been here since the mid-90s.

[02:27:05] There has been a lot more transparency from this board, previous board, from 2020 to now, than it's ever been as it relates to data centers. We're not there yet, but we need to communicate more with the community about that as it applies to dollars.

[02:27:24] Last thing I'm going to say, I've got 48 minutes. The monies that the additional money. Oh, y'all paying attention. Okay. The last thing I'm going to say is that we have just come to a point where the data center money or any industry money as it relates to a commercial tax base has began to show its wonderful head so that we can share with our community. This will provide us to share with the citizens and the schools. Thank you, manager supervisor bode yeah thank you madam chair i'll save a lot of my school comments once

[02:28:00] we get to the the parts of the agenda that deal with the school's transfer but i'll just say this one of my colleagues mentioned earlier and i agree with her that it's frustrating when we start this budget and everything's spent down to the penny but i will also reaffirm something i said last week which is we have never given the county executive guidance to do something different so if we want to do like with other counties do and have the county exec reserve some amount some amount we can discuss and talk about in probably finance and budget committee that's my pitch um we can do that we can give chris shorter guidance on where we want to go with our budget so i don't like the idea of sort of faulting him for doing something that we never guided him to not do

[02:28:37] so i'll start there um i will also say that yeah ever a lot of comments on both sides of this issue are absolutely right super gordy i appreciate your comment around this is how the process always been. We get an opportunity to have the initial budget presented to us in mid-February. It's usually around my birthday. Great time. It's been my birthday getting a budget presentation, but here we are. And those are rough numbers. Then by the time we get to early April, those numbers are sharpened. That's when it's best and most opportune for us to do markup because we have the best information on the actual revenue projections, and we also have the best information on the actual tax implications to our residents.

[02:29:17] It's hard to kind of do anything broader, sweeping earlier than that because we don't, frankly, know exactly where we're going to land. So it's a flaw in the process, but it's also a flaw, frankly, how well our finance folks are able to be able to see the actual implications.

[02:29:33] That's not their fault. It's literally more information that comes in month by month on revenues. So there's not groundbreaking transformational change we can do around that, but there is some, right? We can have conversations at Finance and Budget with the school division and with other partners throughout the year as we've discussed in the past.

[02:29:50] That hasn't happened yet. Finance and Budget Committee is still relatively new. But I would hope that my colleagues would support us in requesting that the school division come before us not too far after budget adoption to have that conversation. Because to me, there's two conversations we have to have as a board.

[02:30:07] One to the point that Suarez Agordi made. Every single time this board wants to try to have any kind of meaningful tax relief, That means because of the revenue sharing agreement, there's going to be a cut to the budget. But we can have a conversation about that earlier on in the process, so there's more planning to be done with that. The second part, talked about before, I'll be a broken record, is debt.

[02:30:27] We share the same credit card school board. And so when you guys are doing all these great programs and projects, refurbishing schools, HVAC systems, new schools, new buildings, that's on our credit card too. Limits how much we're able to put towards new fire stations, new parks, new libraries, new things that I'm sure all you teachers would like to see in the community too, but we're constrained by it because we haven't had a good collaboration with the school board on how we manage that debit card, that credit card.

[02:30:53] So that's something else we have to discuss too. But again, we can have all those discussions midway through the year and be able to be able to better collaborate with them. So the last thing I'll just say moving forward is we do have to talk. We have to communicate more. We have to provide the public and our colleagues and the school board more transparency because the last thing I'll say is that when four members on this board ran on and won on lowering the meals tax, it should not be a surprise that then we moved to go lower the meals tax. I will give all my colleagues credit on that.

[02:31:24] That is not a surprise. People ran on it. They won. They're going to move to do it. We did it last year. If we start this budget cycle, my colleagues who has a rangy said it well, and we wanted to focus on lowering taxes and doing tax relief, it should not be a surprise that we went down that road. Now, I understand from the folks here that we went farther than people thought. The school board felt like we went farther than they could have really managed around in terms of planning but to say that it's a complete surprise when several people have met several comments from the dais months in advance that we were looking at doing these things i think it's a little disingenuous to say that it's a complete surprise

because the daylight's somewhere in between there um so again last thing i'll say and real last thing i'll say is i'm looking forward to our

[02:32:04] future finance and budget committees because it'll allow us to have more advanced conversations around these things as opposed to the slapdash that we've had in the last couple weeks thank you Madam Chair. Supervisor LaCroix. The last thing I want to say is I am just once again so disappointed because I am used to people saying things and meaning what they say and I don't even know as a citizen how they can trust us when we say that we're going to give them some kind of

[02:32:34] meaningful relief every single year and we never ever do it and when we try to do it because we have lots of money and we can do it while still giving the school board 97 million dollars over last year 1.1 billion dollars i just it's shameful that we are going on and on about how this was

[02:33:09] about supporting the children we we could not have supported them any more than we did this year so much more than we ever have. It's just shameful that we can't keep our word. I'm new here. I wanted to keep the word of the people before me, and we're not doing it. I'm just disappointed.

[02:33:38] All right. So guys, no speaking. I know passions are strong. We all have our opinions. We all have our thoughts, our values, our principles. But I'm going to start because I want to respond to some of things my colleague said. Where are our principles and morals? Well, I'm a big fan, and in my dining room, I have a small canvas with 1 Corinthians 16, 14. Let all that you do be done in love. That's it. Let all that you do be done in love. The people who need the most help aren't

[02:34:16] getting it. Well, cutting funding is not going to help them. It's not going to help. And what you were saying, Supervisor Gordy, about how much, you know, cutting taxes, wherever we cut taxes, schools are going to get a cut. Yes, but it depends how much of a cut. Because right now, the real estate rate is at 0.906. And going to 0.886 was a rate cut. It's a rate cut. It would have kept taxes essentially flat from the year previously. And I would say that our schools have been underfunded for a long time. It is when we raised our C&P tax or computers and peripheral tax that data centers mostly pay, they started getting the funding that they need. And that is

[02:34:55] something that I have disagreed with my Democratic colleagues and allies on. We should have. We should have raised that rate sooner, but it didn't happen. So this board, we took care of that. We have raised that rate. But I also want to say this. The school board came before us. McDade and Dr. Lateef made their presentation, and we had the chance to ask questions, and we did. And we have also kept asking them for a needs-based budget. So what is it that we want from them? What is it exactly do we want?

[02:35:28] We have traditionally given them, this is what you can anticipate, and that's what they budget to. And my colleagues have said that that's not the right way to do things. But now we want to cut that. I have a lot of questions. We've already had, we're going to continue this, okay, because I see people getting in for their third time.

[02:35:48] We're going to do twice because we're going to be here until, oh, dark 30 already. We might. I'm just saying, and I am going to call for the vote because we're going to have additional time for people to make their comments.

[02:36:05] But we have kept asking them for a needs-based budget. And so then when they give it to us, they're like, oh, well, you don't need that. Everyone's suddenly an expert on the school's budget, but they were an expert, again, when the schools were here and we could look at them in the eye and ask questions.

That's the time to prove if you're an expert. And the questions that I asked, I received answers that were satisfactory, that made sense.

[02:36:25] I am not on the school board. I'm on the board of county supervisors. And I have to respect my colleagues, some of here who, on the school board, some of who came here tonight, although they had their own event, they had an award ceremony, but some of them still came here tonight. to listen to us. I have to respect that they too were democratically elected, that people went to the polls, showed up, and selected them as their representatives. I have to respect that. I have to respect the work that they are doing, just like I am asking them to respect the work that we are

[02:36:59] doing. We do not have control over the school's budget. We do allocate money for them, but what they do with that money is at their discretion, and I trust the guidance that I've seen. And I will say superintendent mick dade has done an amazing job i am happy with the direction that schools are going into because i haven't always been happy with the quality of education and yes we can do more the one thing i'm going to add and i'm going to call for the vote is that when people talking about running schools like a business there's a very big difference businesses are

[02:37:37] profit driven schools are mandated to serve everyone so in businesses if something is not working out, if something is a loss, they can cut that product line. We cannot give up on students who are struggling. We cannot give up on students who are English language learners who have IEPs.

[02:37:57] We cannot give up on them. And I have been very consistent. I support revenue sharing. And to my friends on the dais, if it were up to me, we would be giving 60 percent. But we're not. Our schools have the lowest per people spending. And people keep mentioning declining enrollment. Well, guess what? It's called an opportunity. It's an opportunity for us to catch up. It's an opportunity for us to do renovations to schools. It's an opportunity. Let's take it. Let's seize it. Let's do better for our students. I'd like to call for the vote now. The resolution, Supervisor Bodie,

[02:38:34] would you please? Sure. The substitute motion was 0.865 for the real estate tax rate and to maintain the meals tax at 3%. Motion passes 5 to 3. Supervisors Gordie, LaCroix, and Vega voting nay we are moving on now to agenda item 7b can i get a resolution i'm sorry can i get a motion so moved madam chair second it's been properly moved and seconded any discussion supervisor

[02:39:10] gordy i guess not all right any discussion all right i'd like to go ahead and call for the vote motion passes seven to one supervisor vega voting nay all right we are moving on to 7c can i get a motion yeah thank you madam chair and so this one for the transparent for the public and for my

[02:39:47] colleagues so we don't get confused on what's going on. I'm going to vote that we deny 7C, and here's why. 7C is actually lopping off that extra \$0.35 for the computer and peripherals tax and only us keeping it. So by denying it, we're going to revert it back to revenue sharing. So I want to make a motion to deny that. Second. It's been properly moved and seconded. Supervisor Vega. But still keeping the C&P rate at \$4.50? Yes. All right. I just want to go on the record saying that the first time that we were asked to increase the C&P tax, it was under the agreement that we were going to give the taxpayers meaningful tax relief, and here we are not doing that.

[02:40:22] And so last week when we were having good faith conversations about going to \$4.50 and keeping that \$0.35 so that we could give meaningful tax relief to our taxpayers, that was the reason why I

think some of us agreed on the \$4.50. And so because now we're going back on that, I will not be supporting this.

[02:40:41] Supervisor Boating. Thank you, Madam Chair. And Supervisor Vega, I appreciate that. I know there were several conversations that were had, and I understand why folks sort of sat that way. What I'll just say is one of the reasons why I brought this up a couple times, and again, I'll just go back to the idea that this is not a surprise.

[02:40:57] I've been talking about this issue for a couple years now, is that for those folks that come here from the schools, I hear you 100%. That should be our top priority. At the same time, we as the Board of Sewers have other priorities that we need to look at every single year. Police and fire, public safety, CPS, health care.

[02:41:15] We have other things we need to pay for. Transit. We talked about the least of the, there's a lot of people in this county that do not have enough personal funds to have multiple cars to be able to get around, including to the hospital, including to their doctors, including to their jobs. And we have not been able to find a way to pay for those things yet because there's so many other things that we have to pay for that those other things that are still important fall under the stack.

[02:41:37] So my idea was, to the point that Supervisor Vegas said, is twofold. One, we have an extra set of revenue that we are able to then do meaningful tax relief. And two, be able to invest in things that we historically have needed to do that we have not been able to do.

[02:41:53] Again, transit, health care, housing, your basic needs that, again, are important, but we haven't been able to get there yet. I see now that, you know, based on where we are and based on the uncertainty, and I said this last week from the federal government last year, threatening cuts to the Department of Education and some of the uncertainty on the state level that they still have not resolved yet.

[02:42:16] they still don't have a budget the schools could be facing 40 million dollars shortfall from the state we don't know that yet um so i i don't necessarily want to add to that uncertainty by us making a move that that would require folks to continue to scratch their heads now i will say this we still need to find a way to pay for those things health care housing transit all those things that i know people on this board and people out there care about but that's not a zero-sum game We can find a way to make sure that we're still fully funding our schools, supporting our teachers, supporting our children, but also finding more ways and innovative ways

[02:42:53] to make sure we're raising the revenue to pay for other things. Speaker said earlier, hey, environmental tax on day centers. That's great, but frankly, we don't have the authority to do that because the General Assembly has not given that authority. They did. I would welcome it. So my friend, George Stewart, let's bring the money in. We have an industry that's come in that has more money than God.

[02:43:11] Let's find innovative, creative ways to bring revenue in. Right now, the schools get \$312 million in data centers. Let's make it more. But we have to be able to do that in ways that also allow us as board members to look after the things that you all have to deal with as teachers that you shouldn't have to.

[02:43:29] We know that there's spillout effects. When we're not able to fund things properly on our side, whether it's mental health, whether that's my colleagues who are as a Bailey, whether that's public safety, looking at my colleagues here, whether it's other things, Y'all in the classroom are forced to deal with societal issues that were never supposed to be yours to deal with.

[02:43:45] But again, this is all a balancing act. So if we're able to do more by ourselves to be able to fund those other societal issues that you were supposed to never be able to have to take up, it'll helpfully give you some relief in the classroom as well. That's why we continue us having this conversation, us finding more ways to do it.

[02:44:01] But right now, I'm going to pull back my idea and have that 450 be fully revenue shared with the schools. Thank you, Madam Chair. Supervisor LaCroix, then Bailey. So, Supervisor Bodie, that tax does bring in some data center money, but it also affects a lot of the small businesses.

[02:44:28] And we all knew this, and it was your idea, your very clever idea, to not hurt the schools and go up on these taxes so that we could keep the money and not touch the school percentage.

[02:44:43] And so I know, being the representative for Woodbridge, that I reluctantly went up to a point where we were uncomfortable so that we could make it work.

[02:45:02] And I feel as though now when you're saying you take it all back because you want to give it to the schools, I get it. But then I think we should bring that tax back down to a reasonable amount so it's not going to hurt the people.

[02:45:22] Because I thought leave it at 415. They'll get the same amount that they had, the same split as last year. And then it doesn't hurt everyone else. But we went up because that was an idea that you came up with that we supported.

[02:45:38] And I would request us to go back down to 415. and I'd like to make a substitute motion to do so. I support that. You support it? All right, hold on. No, the queue just got closed.

[02:45:54] I'm going to call Bailey and then I have something to say on this. You want me to speak? Yeah, go ahead because you're in queue. So what I want to say is in all truth and fairness, my hat goes off to you, Supervisor Bodie, for recognizing when you made this suggestion that you did not include the revenue share agreement in that.

[02:46:19] And I want to also salute you, which we had a discussion that may not be a good idea. Your intent was pure in that you wanted to make sure that we did have additional funding for transportation and resiliency, but that still left out the revenue share agreement, which does not invest in the schools because the policy says we must invest in the schools.

[02:46:53] So I don't want the citizens to think that we are trying to leave them out of anything, because that's not true. There is an opportunity with the eight, as we just voted upon, the .865, and there's an opportunity with the directive that I've brought forth, whether my colleagues support it or not, to give an energy tax to citizens going forward.

[02:47:18] So you are constantly on our mind as we're going through this process. So I don't want y'all to leave out here a citizen that's watching to say that we're not thinking about you because we are. We are at a physically responsible place where we can think about you when we weren't before.

[02:47:37] So I just want to say that because I think there needs to be clarity there. Sometimes things are painted a different way when it's just not true. So I agree with Supervisor LaCroix and the direction that we went in to support what he said.

[02:47:54] But then, because it was a straw poll, which is another thing I'm going to bring back later, we said that wasn't a good idea. So industry is aware that potentially this is going to happen. I know they're not

going to be happy, but they live here too.

[02:48:13] So they want good schools. They want good stuff, but they've got to be partners in our community. That's the bottom line to this. So I just want to say that, and I've got two hours and 38 minutes left.

[02:48:31] Madam Chair, members of the Board, you already voted to approve Resolution 7A, which includes the programmable computer equipment and peripherals employed in a trader business at 4.50. You've already voted on that. 7C is just the policy that would be going forward of the additional 35 cents to not be shared with the school.

[02:48:52] So the motion on 7C is inappropriate because the Board has already approved the 450 rate in 7A. Madam Chair. Oh, wait, hold on. Supervisor LaCroix, would you like to redraw that? Yes.

[02:49:09] All right, so we're going to redraw that and return to the original motion. I'm sorry, did you have something else to add, Bailey? Oh, we're returning to the original motion. Yes. We don't have to. Okay. Yeah. So I hold on. Let's see. So I do have to say this. Data centers, yes, the C&P tax went up.

[02:49:28] I just want to say this real quick. And there are some small businesses that are impacted, but not to the degree that data centers are impacted. And the real estate tax rate, they get that cut too. And they're becoming a larger part of our real estate tax pie.

[02:49:47] The real estate tax rate is the mother of all taxes. That's our largest tax rate. It's our most enduring, our most durable. So come cry for me, Argentina. Don't cry for me, Argentina. Don't cry for me, Argentina. And as to raising, continuing the racist C&P tax, I mean, we've raised it significantly.

[02:50:07] I do, in all fairness, and God, it's hard for me to say this, Because if anyone has seen what my stance on the industry has been, I've taken a very hardline position. But we've also got to, as a board, learn to work within our limits. And if we need to make additions, you know, make additions. But we also, the real tax that makes the biggest difference, too, is our real estate tax rate.

[02:50:27] I just have to say that because I want to make sure that I'm on the record with what I'm saying. We have to be careful. Every decision that we make has a consequence. Every cut that we make has a consequence. And our county staff, Mr. Fun in particular, you have done an amazing job of having the slides, giving us the information, running models, running different scenarios for us.

[02:50:50] We can go back and forth and agree, disagree, whatever. But when we cut the real estate tax, data centers do feel a piece of this. I just want to name that. I will call on you, Mr. Stewart. I don't see anyone else in queue. At that point, I will call for the vote.

[02:51:07] All right. So I don't think we have to be careful with the computer and peripheral tax. They can afford it. they can afford it, they can afford it. Where are they going? I said it before, and especially in Gainesville, where I represent. We're locked in there with them, but they're also locked in here with us. They can't just move. It's not a lemonade stand. They inhabit nuclear bomb-resistant buildings. Who's going to grab the other end of the couch? I'm not. They can't move, right?

[02:51:47] So once again, the bill of goods that's been sold to Prince William County for at least the last 10 years is if you bring this industry in, it's going to provide tax relief. And that's what we've got to do.

[02:52:05] And we've got to be bold. We've got to be audacious. We've got to be brave. And we've got to go get the bloody money. Supervisor Vega. Like, there are no excuses here.

[02:52:22] I watched CNBC. I got it on in my office every day. And if that's not working like it was today, for some reason, I'm watching Bloomberg. Every conversation is about data centers. Everything ties back to it, right?

[02:52:38] They have the money, the amount of data that's ringing that cash register inside of those buildings. It's astounding. They wouldn't miss \$10. And if we advertise \$10 next year, and I'm going to say that, if we advertise \$10 next year, That doesn't mean that we have to go take the \$10.

[02:53:00] But that gives us a very powerful lever as we are figuring out how to handle the budget. You know, maybe we start, okay, look, you know, we're going to do this at \$5. You know what? We need a little bit more money. \$5.50.

[02:53:15] Oh, you know what? We're falling a little short. \$7.50 because we've given ourselves enough runway. This year, we've tied our hands at \$4.50, even though I cried for \$5. This is it.

[02:53:31] We need the money. You want to have great schools? we can still split that revenue with the schools we can we can pass every county in the region as if they're moonwalking like they're moving backwards they're here this was the bill that was sold now it's time to make the move in next budget season to do the thing that that we need to do i have no problem myself like like like spearheading that next year but but it's it's

[02:54:11] what we got to do. We got to go for the money. We can't, it's absurd that we have trailers and parking lots of schools where kids have to learn. So when we have Icemageddon, somebody's got to bundle up to go to the bathroom, do what they got to do, bundle back up to Sherpa back outside to the classroom. It's not right, but we need to go. And you know what? And if other data centers don't

[02:54:43] want to come because it's ten dollars fine by me i think fine by all of us they pollute our air they dirty our water when they fire up those diesel generators it smells like bigfoot's toe jam right so we we need to do what we need to do but it it it's going to take a little bit of steel in our spines and some gunpowder in our belly to get it done and that's all i got to say about that

[02:55:22] all right we got a couple people jumping the queue supervisor vega then bailey thank you madam chair and to address some of the comments made the industry has shown up and they've shown up in a big way to the tune of 550 million dollars and so when folks ask where is the revenue the revenue is here and I will keep saying it we don't have a revenue problem in this county it is a spending I wouldn't call it a problem but an opportunity to address the spending and the way that we're spending that and I will caution my colleagues because I know that some of you don't think that it's a significant impact. But what I hope the general public understands is that the CMP tax

[02:55:58] doesn't just impact the data center industry. It impacts any business that has the same type of equipment that the data center industry has. So while we're trying to get more money from the data center industry, we're impacting small businesses in Prince William County. And that also matters to the point that Supervisor LaCroix was trying to make. So we can go to \$10. We can go to \$15 if that's the wish of the majority on this board but at the end of the day what are we doing with that new spending with that new I'm sorry with that new revenue that's being generated so you know it's one thing that we want to go ahead and hold them accountable for whatever it

[02:56:35] is that you know you're passionate about or advocating against or for but at the end of the day it comes down to budgetary decisions how are we managing the new revenue that is being injected into

Prince William County that's the center of the conversation what we need to be mindful uh moving forward so it'll be interesting to see where we are next year right and um again 550 million dollars we can't ignore that because it's substantial supervisor bailey thank you ma'am sure uh let me correct something that i said earlier i said energy tax i meant energy rebate that's what i meant not energy tax because i know it's a lot of cameras in here and i want to make

[02:57:14] sure i correct myself on camera yeah huh energy yeah well i meant that's okay y'all know what i mean i don't mean energy tax on the data centers because we don't have permission to do that but here's here's the thing that i i do want to say is i wanted to ask the um county attorney if you could please repeat what we're doing what this is what this is because what is on here for us to vote on is not what my colleague said i want to make sure that it's clear madam chair members of

[02:57:52] the board. Item 7C is to adopt and implement a new tax policy. The motion is to deny this resolution before you. So therefore the board would not be adopting a new tax policy going forward and would not be adopting a policy to direct the county executive to bring future proposed budgets back with an additional 35 cents that would not be shared with the schools. So the motion is to deny so the motion is to deny the motion is to deny to deny this policy correct okay thank you

[02:58:30] so I'm going to give it to Bodie then I'll say something sure thank you and I appreciate my colleagues seeing the clarify and I guess I know it's kind of counterintuitive but since the motion since the actual resolution is to change the policy therefore to not share that 35 cents with the schools voting to deny that is to then say no we want to share that 35 cents with the schools So I'm going to speak, and I just want to touch on something.

[02:58:58] Where is that money going? The money is going to schools, it's going to county operations, but it's also going to quality of life initiatives. And that's not something we've really touched upon. It's quality of life. Libraries cost money. Improving our parks and trails costs money.

[02:59:15] Giving money to our affordable housing trust fund costs money. Building a new rec center, which I think we really should have one in the western of the county, that's going to cost a lot of money. Transportation improvements, roads, you know, building new projects, that cost money. As I had said before, there is a high cost to low taxes. We want to also improve our quality of life, and that is what some of the money is being used for. We have a lot of needs in the county, a lot of things that have been ignored for too long. Need a new fire station? That's going to cost money. Want to pay down our debt so that we have better debt capacity? That's going

[02:59:53] to cost money. Want to boost our reserves? Guess what? It's going to cost money. So we have a lot of things that are costing money, but is improving our quality of life or improving the financial health of our community. Those are things that aren't as sexy. Those aren't things that we're necessarily talking about and sharing. But I want to mention that I named that. I also want to say, once this budget is finally adopted, I'm going to sleep. But after that, I am going to start having town halls because I want to hear people. One of the things that has been said to me many times is that we need a better vision for the county. Who are we? What does that look like?

[03:00:31] I can sit and meditate and come up with my own thoughts, but I want to make sure that I'm hearing from the community. So that's very important, because we have to think about what is our way forward. One of the things that we talked about, you know, possibly deferring was a bond referenda. There are a lot of concerns about debt, and I will say I have a lot of concerns about debt.

[03:00:51] But we have to think about who we are as a community and what we want to look like. And again, the budget is a statement of our priorities. Ms. Madden, can we go ahead and take our vote? Ma'am, just to clarify, it's a vote to deny. a vote to deny the motion passes five to three supervisors gordy vega and la croix voting nay all right thank you so very much we are now moving on to 5d can i get a motion

[03:01:26] so move ma'am chair 7d sorry 7d oh 7d 7d we're moving on to 7d move to approve 7d ma'am chair second but it's a clarification if i could and that's then amended based on the decisions that we've made with the previous resolutions madam chair can we understand what the impacts of those decisions have been on our budget. Mr. Fun? A real estate tax rate of 865, computer equipment

[03:02:01] and peripherals at 450, that revenue shared with the schools now, and food and beverage at 3%. That results in a five-year plan balance of just over about \$10.1 million in fiscal 27 to the good and \$2.9 million in fiscal 28. The county has a positive balance in all five years.

[03:02:30] and what is the impact on schools the county transfer to the schools will be 1 billion 115 million now i'm going to answer that two ways if i may that is a 123.5 million dollar increase over the fy 2026 school transfer that would be a 12.5 percent increase over fiscal 26 it is also a 3.9

[03:03:04] million dollar decrease compared to uh the county transfer at budget recap so to clarify that's 3.9 million dollar cut it's 3.9 million dollars less than all right i believe it's been properly moved and seconded it were there any questions oh wait hold hold on i didn't call for the vote yet because i know that there's going to be some discussion around this supervisor voting thank you madam

[03:03:44] Madam Chair. And I guess my question is, would this be the appropriate time to consider adding some things back that we cut last week? So the answer is yes. Okay. In that case, I'll start with something. We've had some folks from Lunair Health come before us today, and folks have mentioned it. There's been major cuts and issues around the health system, health care, other things um so knowing that lunaire health is a sort of anchor of supporting community-based

[03:04:21] health care um i would like to see to consider with my colleagues if we can give lunaire health two million dollars and because um you know again we normally do all these discussions during markup should we go ahead um mrs madden and do a straw but i mean i know people want to chat on that well we i was wondering what was the best way to proceed because we have to see what people want to add what they actually want to add and then we vote on it i'm asking the parliamentarian if you would like me to do straw polls on yeah because we have a few things yes i think that

[03:04:57] that would be and then at the end we will go ahead and say yes we will incorporate that into the resolution that we will vote on i'm sorry mr sinclair may i ask the supervisor bode would the two million dollars for lunera health be one time or recurring throughout the five years it would be one time. And actually, yes, I guess you have a few things. So we'll just take them one by one.

[03:05:27] Wait, hold on. I'm sorry. People are asking too many questions. First of all, yes, I have people in the queue and you can speak to whether or not you would like to give \$2 million as a one-time cost to Lanara. We have a chance to speak to that. We are going to take a straw poll. After that, if there's any other additions, people are going to have a chance to speak to them and we will take a straw poll. Everything that we favor will be included in the resolution that we will ultimately vote on. Does that make sense? Does that work? All right. Supervisor Vega. I'll call a point of

[03:06:03] order, Madam Church, just so that I can get further clarification. I think it would be easier, even though I completely disagree with opening Pandora's box all over again. It's unfair to staff. It's unfair to the rest of us who were not informed about these changes. And it's unfair to folks watching at home that if there are going to be substantial additions that we get those out of the way from the very beginning because we're asking Mr. Sinclair to give us numbers as to whether or not we're operating in the red or in the green and then we have to find money from somewhere in order to fund this stuff and so if there are additions aside from this one that are going to have a substantial ask I think we need to know that ahead of time so that we know what we're

[03:06:43] working with. I you know what I'll give that to you okay Supervisor Bode just perhaps I think it would be easier if he reads off some of the things because so that we all know it's going to be supervisor bode's request well no everyone else i'm going to go start with him first because he's opened it first so there you go supervisor bode what else would you like us to discuss sure um i'd also like us to look at the uh the the million dollars for the um physicals for the firefighters that's 1.8 i believe yes anything else and also the uh the commonwealth's attorney

[03:07:18] positions that we removed during recap so you were at 3.8 million with that last edition where are we at now wait hold on so you wanted 2 million from lunara health yes 1 million for the firefighters is it 1 million or 1.8 so 1.8 million for fire and commonwealth attorney and that is i had the resolution i believe that's 100 i mean 320 320 i am personally also interested in 125 for community partners to bring them back to recap. Does anyone else have anything else that they want to

[03:07:57] bring up? Additions. One-time cost because as we've seen we cannot. So Supervisor Bailey did you have anything else you want to add to this list? I do Madam Chair. My staff is getting my list so I won't belabor until she gets back in. But I have one thing that I'd like to add back in that was in the budget originally was the revaluization and redevelopment assemblage fund.

[03:08:24] So we added, it's already in there. Did you add that in already? That was in there from markup. Okay, five minutes, okay. All right, Supervisor Stewart. I'll come back. I'll have to circle back also because it's not a one-time expense. So I just want to, from the numbers for next year, we don't have much margin.

[03:08:43] What was it, I'm sorry, for next year, it was what, how much do we have? 2.9. So things that are recurring costs, to me, I feel it's going to be very hard to add right now. So if we have one-time costs, do you have something? I mean, it is a recurring cost. And, I mean, simply put, it's \$735,000 for the BOCS office budgets to equal all offices to the \$630,000 level for staff.

[03:09:13] Wait, what was that expense again? \$735,000. So that will actually go. that's not going to you want that for the next fiscal year that yes okay for 27 what's that again 735 000 okay anything anyone else jump in queue if you have a supervisor bailey you madam chair yes one of the things uh that i'd like to add is the uh the one fte for the uh the bless you

[03:09:46] the barnes house and the um dumfries museum baitstown museum at 93 000 okay 93 000 barnes house and that's a recurring cost so i'm just going to put recurring anyone else please jump in the queue take yourself out if you are done anyone else all right so i poor dave because some of these are a couple of these it sounds like we have lunara health is you want one-time cost right

[03:10:22] um the county attorney is going to be recurring i'm sorry commonwealth sorry too many attorneys not enough i don't know who has the larger paycheck i don't know i'll take that so it's the fire

physicals is that recurring wait hold on is that recurring so guys hold on i just have to say this again because we're getting back into this trap we have 2.9 million dollars for next year we may have more we would probably will have more but we have to be careful about making decisions on recurring costs, because we don't know what next year is going to bring. We don't

[03:11:01] know what the economy will look like. We don't know how much we're going to be having in new tax revenue. So now that everyone has laid it out on the table, I would like to get calculations, because this is going to put us in the red, which we cannot be. We have to balance five years out.

[03:11:18] And then we are going to have discussions about each of these points. And I'm going to ask my colleagues we can't have everything okay we let's we have to be realistic some of these things we may have to get to next year so with that if we took all of these things mr sinclair where would we be in fiscal 27 we are to the good 5.1 million in fiscal 28 and fiscal 31 we are unfortunately in

[03:11:52] the red by about a hundred thousand dollars so not a lot but i am asking my colleagues again we We have to think, hold on, really about the things that we want. Supervisor Bailey. Ma'am Chair, we can take the \$93,000 out.

[03:12:09] Would that suffice? We still need to cut something else. So, Mr. Sinclair. If it's hopeful, Chair, and I realize I might be making things worse, on the DFR medical physicals, while it's correct that Mr. Nason had a cost of \$1.8 million, In the budget recap presentation, when we broached the subject with DFR staff, the cost was a million.

[03:12:37] So which one would you like to go with? The million-dollar level. I think that was pretty quick. Million dollars. Thank you. All right. Supervisor Vega. Madam Chair, I can't help but to highlight the obvious.

[03:12:54] We literally went from real tax cuts to now our wish lists. This is crazy. You mentioned that we needed more money in our reserves, right? that we needed to make additional cuts, and I don't understand why now all of a sudden everybody's pulling their wish lists.

[03:13:11] Last week during negotiations, some of you talked about some of your priorities that you wanted to be included in the budget, and in good faith we committed to that and agreed to that. And now here we are changing quite literally everything and now adding additional expenses. I think that these things can wait for next year.

[03:13:28] Supervisor Gordy. Thank you, Supervisor Vega. This is becoming a Christmas tree. I mean, you know, we just told our citizens, you don't deserve a tax cut. And all of a sudden now we're going to go through earmarking projects for special interest.

[03:13:51] When will our citizens become our special interest? I mean, the message that we're sending to our community tonight, our residents, our voters, is that you're just our bank account. and that your financial ability to live in this county is not of our concern.

[03:14:18] Even though everything is going up, the cost of everything is going up, we're just going to keep taking more and more and more. And now we're demonstrating that we are just going to take more and we're going to spend more. Tax and spend. I feel like I'm working back on Capitol Hill.

[03:14:37] In fact, some of the language I've heard tonight is very reminiscent of Washington, D.C. politics instead of Prince William County politics. and it's highly disappointing um and i also think it's somewhat

of a you know i think about you know our adc colonel west is here he's been fighting to try to get uh pay raises for his folks the sheriff was here last week trying to get pay raises we took away comp and class from our civilian employees put it into next year's budget we're not we're not cutting the spending we're

[03:15:12] just front loading it all into next year's budget or uh passing it on to next year's budget so that we can create more wish lists in this year. That's what we've done. So we've told all of our employees, the people who support us each and every day, that you're also not important.

[03:15:31] And so, you know, I'm dumbfounded at how we got here. Dumbfounded. And the message we're sending tonight, it's actually embarrassing in my view. All right. Before I go on, Mr. Sinclair, with cutting, with the fire physical calls at \$1 million and taking away the \$93,000 for the barns house where does that leave us uh the balance is 5.8 million in fiscal 27 less than

[03:16:08] 700 000 in fiscal 28 uh the low point we are good in all five years the low point is 450 000 in fiscal 31 all right so that means there are things that still have to be cut i actually want to respond to that when will our residents i'm sorry go i'm sorry we are positive in all five years okay we're positive all right when will our residents become our special interests i would argue that they are i would argue that we're being responsive they people have come out and said that they want us to spend a revenue sharing people i'm not going to argue with giving physicals to

[03:16:47] the fire department i'm not going to do that these are people who are putting their lives on the line for us and they are susceptible to certain types of cancers so that's that's not a special interest Our community partners are doing work that the county is not always able to do.

[03:17:04] So that's not a special interest. Ludera Health is giving health care to the most vulnerable, to the least among us. That's not a special interest. For me, it's about our values.

[03:17:21] I had just talked about quality of life. I've just mentioned that. But I'm also going to mention, and again, I respect the work that our sheriff on the ADC does, but we have the commonwealth attorney who people were gleeful about taking away positions that were already accounted for so how are we going to take positions away from her because she's part of our you know our public safety if we're hiring more police then we should hire more prosecutors that's common sense now if anything that's political cutting from her was political it

[03:17:57] made no sense i didn't support it so i'm not changing what i said on markup i'm not changing that we should not have cut from her that made no sense i'm not trying to disparage anyone else because the work that you do is very important it's very important but i also don't want to be hypocritical what the commonwealth's attorney had was actually in our budget it was baked into our budget and we went and cut it out that made no sense we had other people who had requests that

[03:18:32] were not in the budget who i wanted to take care of recap and we're still giving them the sheriff three more positions so i do have a hard time hearing that these are special interests i have a hard time with that i have a very hard time with that because it's not it's continuing to operate our government yes we are growing because we're becoming a growing county we're becoming a more sophisticated county and we need certain needs and we're trying to meet those needs the one thing i do regret that we cannot put in is a class and comp study we went too low on the real

[03:19:08] estate tax rate. We went too low. We went too low. You know what? I'm sorry. Please refrain from side conversations. You are in the queue and you will have another chance to speak. You can refute

me. You know, go ahead. But when we, in my opinion, how we got there is when we went so low on the real estate tax rate, we had to make a lot of cuts. We've gone up slightly. So people will still see a small reduction in their taxes. It may not be as deep as the, what we would have gotten with 85 cents but we've made a lot of cuts and we are making compromises i don't agree with

[03:19:48] everything there are things that we cut that i really didn't want to see that meals tax meant a lot to me because it meant a lot to our restaurants our especially our smaller ones especially our immigrant owned ones it means a lot to them that 3.9 million i have spoken with our schools they are going to find a way to make the numbers work i respect that i would have rather that they received what it is they requested so we've all had to make sacrifices we've all had to cut things i want to see a restaurant week it's not in the budget i think we should have in the budget money for cultural heritage resource of festivals like juneteenth we attracted a lot of

[03:20:28] people last year the city of manassas has the african-american heritage festival and the latino festival those are great events and revenue drivers and they show cultural pride we're the most diverse county in the commonwealth, but we don't have money for that. I don't ask for very much in the budget. I don't. I don't have a Christmas list. I let other people drive it, but in my mind, our residents are our special interests, and we're doing things to give them a higher quality of life and to keep their money in the county, to keep them in the county.

[03:21:02] That's a quality of life issue, and it's hard to put dollars and cents on it. Again, we can debate. We can go back and forth. I'm here for it, but that's where I stand, and if I wasn't clear before, I hope I'm clear now. Supervisor Bailey. Wow.

[03:21:19] Madam Chair, you said mostly of what I wanted to say, and you said it very well. So I'm not going to repeat, but what I am going to say is I don't want any citizens on camera or in this room to think that we have forgotten about you. That narrative keeps coming out, and that's furthest from the truth. That's furthest from the truth.

[03:21:36] We are in a good place in the budget. That's why we have Mr. Fun down here to make sure that we are in a good place, and he tells us the truth. He tells us the truth so we don't get in a bad place in our budget. We're taking care of ADC. We're taking care of our county attorney.

[03:21:53] We're taking care of our prosecutors. We are in a good place. We are in a good place. And what we're trying to do in this good place is to right a wrong and be more fiscally responsible so that we are covered going forward.

[03:22:11] And we're also, just by a small piece of an imagination, trying to take care of people and make them healthy. And that is fiscally responsible. That is quality of life. I agree with some of my colleagues.

[03:22:28] We can't spend all of the money. But what we can do is recognize when we are blessed with addition, not subtraction, how we use it. And so I beg to differ with some of my colleagues when they say we are looking at the people.

[03:22:45] That's what we just did with that .865. That's what we just did. I'm going to keep saying it. We can play racquetball, volleyball, pickleball, I don't care. But we are in a good place as the second largest county in the state of Virginia.

[03:23:02] And people are watching how we do that. We learn from other counties' mistakes. So thank you. That's all I've got to say. Supervisor Bodie. Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm not going to retread too much ground that's already been said, because I think a lot of things have been said well.

[03:23:19] With where we are, based on the last sensitivity chart that we received from county staff, and Mr. Sinclair, you can correct me if I'm wrong, with a .865 real estate tax, the average taxpayer would still have a real estate tax bill relief of \$56. Is that correct?

[03:23:41] On average, the tax bill would decrease \$56. okay so i know that isn't again isn't as meaningful as where we were at eight five but a lot of folks have said you know suddenly we're not giving any relief the average taxpayer is still going to see relief and it's still hundreds of dollars less than where we started in february and it's still hundreds of dollars less than we started in recap um appreciate all the work the county exec has done but we disagreed with where he landed in recap and we're still lowering it from where we were so this idea that somehow we've completely forgot about residents we haven't given them any relief just isn't true. So I'll say that. The second thing I'll say is, like Madam Chair

[03:24:20] said very well, health care isn't a special interest. Our firefighters getting physicals isn't a special interest. Us taking care of our commonwealth's attorney whose positions were originally in the budget, we stripped them out, isn't a special interest. I said health care already. So that all said, we are in a place where we have added a few things. And I hate to muddy the waters but i i appreciate that that madam chair brought up the class and comp um i

[03:24:56] hate to make this request but is there any way that we could calculate what it would do to do a four-year phase versus a three-year phase and see what that would be for that first year cost okay we don't have that okay i just leave that because okay i understand okay i just wanted to say that but um i think we've landed a pretty good place because i don't think this is a christmas tree at all. I frankly, and I recall Supervisor Stewart, bring up Lunair Health right before we adjourned last week, and we didn't get to it. We were here for eight hours or something like that, 12, and we just didn't get anything. So this idea that we're suddenly adding things after the fact,

[03:25:34] we didn't get to everything we talked about. We talked about the fact that we wanted to get to more of the requests, the community benefits that we wanted to talk about, and we just didn't get there. So to me, to now say, well, we can't go back, to me, is bad governance because we just frankly didn't get there, and now we're getting back to what we didn't get a chance to discuss last week. Thank you, Madam Chair. Supervisor Gordy, then Vega. Thank you, Madam Chair. I just, I do want to point out one thing, that when I met with Luminaria Health, I was told that about the children that are coming into their facility that don't have health care. And I asked

[03:26:09] this, Virginia has the CHIPS program. There's no child in this Commonwealth that should be without health insurance. And the answer that I received is they are undocumented. So I just want us to know we're providing health care for undocumented citizens. That's what we're about to do. I just want the public to know that that's where their taxpayers are going to go. Just be aware. And then the other thing that I want us to understand is that we are also going back to how we got to

[03:26:45] the deficit was not because of, you cannot have a deficit because of revenue. You have a deficit because of spending. When you spend more than you bring in. And when we created the deficit last week, it was when we took the comp and class from this year, from 27, and we moved it to 28. That's how we got to the deficit. It wasn't because of the tax cuts. It was because of the way that we

[03:27:21] wanted to handle comp and class instead of doing it in three years, we did it in two. And so I just want to be clear that it wasn't because of the revenue and because of the tax cuts that got us to a deficit. It's because how we decided to do our budgeting and how we ended up with growing expenditures. Supervisor Vega. Thank you, Madam Chair. Nobody's saying that we can't go back.

[03:27:54] You all have gone back and then some. And I just want to be very clear in terms of the special interests. I definitely don't think that the CA's office or that the adult detention center or fire PD is a special interest but let's look at the requester of the two million dollars you want to talk about health care just be mindful of the door that you're opening because next budget cycle when life first that is health care comes asking for two million dollars I'll be interested to see how that conversation goes so you're opening this door today just be mindful that come next budget cycle folks that fall in that same category are going to be calling and asking for the same thing

[03:28:30] And I hope that that same energy to fund this group this year is there for next budget cycle. And if it isn't, it will be very telling as to who the special interest really is. But I also want to clarify something, Dave. The \$56 in savings, average savings, how is that impacted by assessments?

[03:28:50] That factors in the fact that the average residential assessment increased 3.6%. So if a property assessed value increased by more than 3.6%, that \$56 average savings would be less.

[03:29:12] And would go up. I hope I answered your question. You did. And so I bring that up because we shared a map with zip codes of all of Prince William County. And Madam Chair, the Montclair area came very high. And they are probably more than likely, take this to the bank, going to see an increase.

[03:29:29] They're not going to get a decrease. Folks in the Gainesville District, they're not going to see a decrease. So make no mistake about what's happening here and the message that is being sent. You're not going to see a decrease across the board throughout this county. Some of you, most of you, will actually quite indeed see an increase because it is based on assessments.

[03:29:51] I truly hope, Madam Chair, that next budget cycle, there is a more organized process, a better way to do things, because I believe that we acted in good faith. I really do. And when I left Chambers on Tuesday, I've never felt prouder of a board.

[03:30:09] Because finally, I believe that we had reached a point where we're working truly in a bipartisan fashion to deliver for the taxpayers of this county. Something that we haven't done in the last four years. And I've said that before. And the shenanigans that have been happening behind the scenes, it's got to stop.

[03:30:28] I've spoken to all of you and I've said one thing and one thing only. Just tell me the truth. Don't lie to me. Don't lie to the taxpayers. Be forthcoming with your intentions, and all of this could have been avoided, all of it. So I hope, Madam Chair, that there are lessons learned from this process and that next year it's much smoother and that we don't spend budget adoption going back and forth, opening the door to everything and anything, because it's not fair to us, it's not fair to staff, and most importantly, it's totally unfair to the taxpayers of this county.

[03:31:03] Thank you, Madam Chair. All right. I just want to remind everyone we are going to have two bites of the apple, And then after that, so Supervisor Stewart, then Bodie. Thank you, Madam Chair. So one of the other things I do want to look at when it comes to class and comp, for the A bans and B bans only, because these are the lowest paid individuals, could we do something in and around that?

[03:31:33] I mean, see Mr. Fun is calculating while he's looking that up. Yeah, I think that Lunara Health is important.

[03:31:50] I do, you know, life first. I mean, look, if they're taking care of county residents and they need the money, that's, I'll just say it now, it's paramount, you know.

[03:32:09] But, yeah, so, I mean, yeah, those are the only two things I wanted to kind of look at. The other part is, again, you know, I'm going to say it until the cows come home and go back out again, C&P tax.

[03:32:27] But, Mr. Fun? Yeah, the cost to do the A and B bans only in fiscal 27 would be \$11.6 million. Sorry, that's out of our scope.

[03:32:53] Sorry. Supervisor Bailey, you've had your twice. Thank you. No, I'm sorry, you've already had your twice. Oh, have I? Yes. Oh, I'm sorry. You've done your twice. So I'm going to say this. I just want to make sure that I go through a few things. First of all, Life First has a different mission than Lunara Health.

[03:33:09] Life First is an anti-abortion group. They do some things like parenting and prenatal counseling. They're also, they offer spiritual counseling. They have limited sonography, I can't speak at this time, services. But Lunara Health has OBGYN, pediatric, dental, behavioral health, pharmacy, STI, and family medicine.

[03:33:31] So they offer a wider range of services that are open to everyone, yes, including people who are living in this country in the shadows and without papers. that's a very different mission than someone who's just anti-abortion i just want to name that if you say it is health care it's health care but for me that's a very different mission i also want to talk about process the process is only flawed when people are not happy last week some people were happy this week some people are unhappy i try my best to run a meeting and to try to hear people out were there places or was confusing or could have done better yes i will watch i also watched last year to see what could have been done better but i also gave you the

[03:34:11] opportunity you wanted to move a few things around supervisor vega i gave you that opportunity you know and so i allowed it if you want to run a tighter meeting then i can be tighter we're not going to be able to have the conversations that we've had and we have talked and i appreciate i've spoken to nearly everyone on this board and i was clear about what i wanted i didn't get what i wanted oh well i'm an adult i have on my big girl pants my big girl pants i wear big girl pants They're getting a little smaller because, thank God, I am losing the weight.

[03:34:45] It is hard. However, the process only seems to be flawed when people aren't getting their weight. There's room for improvement. But we need to have these discussions. And as adults, as responsible and accountable leaders to the community, we need to hear from folks.

[03:35:02] We've heard from a lot of folks. A lot of people were not happy with what it is we've done. Now, we've talked about the things that we have, and I'm going to give people an opportunity. If there are people who we could take all of these as a block vote or people have things that they want to disagree.

[03:35:18] Maybe they want to agree to the fire physicals and maybe not, you know, increase spending for something else. So in order to be fair and transparent, that's why I said we can take straw votes and then we can vote on the entire resolution.

[03:35:33] That's called fair. You may not like the process. You may it may add on a little bit more time. But I want to see where people are at because, again, I'm giving people an opportunity to vote for some

things and not others. So, Supervisor Bode. Yeah, and all I say is that last part because I appreciate that.

[03:35:50] Because just me, one, my one-eighth, a lot of things were added. And the only thing that I have trepidation about is that we weren't able to get to the classic comp. And then, Supervisor Stewart, and I don't disagree with you on adding it, the increase of the office budget.

[03:36:06] I don't think we should be doing that in the same way that we said, sorry, staff, we can't get to the classic comp. So that's the only part of the attribution. So then what we're going to do, I'm sorry, I'm going to cut you off. We're going to take all of these as a roll call and then we'll vote on the winners in the part of the resolution. So first thing, please do a roll call on Lunara Health.

[03:36:23] Supervisor Angry. Yes. Supervisor Gordy. Supervisor LaCroix. Supervisor Stewart. Yes. Supervisor Bailey. Yes. Supervisor Bodie. Yes.

[03:36:40] Supervisor Vega. No. Chair Jefferson. Yes. 6-2, that motion carries. All right, let's next do the fire physicals, the enhanced physicals at \$1 million. Supervisor Stewart? Yes. Supervisor Gordy? Supervisor Angry?

[03:36:57] Yes. Supervisor Vega? Yes. Supervisor LaCroix? Yes. Supervisor Bailey? Yes. Supervisor Bode? Yes. Chair Jefferson? Yes. Vote unanimous. Let's now doing \$125,000 to community health partners, or I'm sorry, Mrs. Sinclair, is that the correct number to bring them back up to recap?

[03:37:19] Yes. Okay, Mr. Shorter said yes. So let's go ahead for \$125,000 for our community partners. Are you coming back to the commonwealth attorney? We're going to get to that. Okay. I just had him in the different order. Very good. This is the community partner in Chris.

[03:37:34] Yes. Supervisor Gordy? Supervisor Stewart? Yes. Supervisor Bailey? Yes, Bailey. Yes. Supervisor Angry? Yes. Supervisor Bode?

[03:37:50] Yes. Supervisor Vega? No. Supervisor LaCroix? No. Chair Jefferson? Yes. That motion passes 5-3. All right, the next one is \$320,000 for the Commonwealth, I'm sorry, Commonwealth Attorneys.

[03:38:07] Yes, ma'am, two attorneys. Supervisor Angry? Yes. Supervisor Stewart? Yes. Supervisor LaCroix? No. Supervisor Gordy? No. Supervisor Bailey? Yes. Supervisor Bode? Yes. Supervisor Vega?

[03:38:23] No. Chair Jefferson? Yes. That motion passes 5-3. And the final one is \$735,000 for Board of County Supervisor offices. I do want to speak to this one quickly because I do have more in my budget. I'm not opposed to it.

[03:38:39] It was because in my office I had an administrative system that was paid for for many years by the county. I have moved that under my office so that I have direct chance to do hiring, firing, promotions, changing the pay grade. So that is why the discrepancy of other offices wish to have extra money, I will not fight it.

[03:39:00] So go ahead for the roll call. Supervisor Angry? Yes. Supervisor Bailey? Yes. Supervisor Bode? No. Supervisor Gordy? No. Supervisor LaCroix? No. Supervisor Vega?

[03:39:17] No. Supervisor Stewart? Yes. Chair Jefferson? Yes. That is a 4-4 and a failed vote. Thank you very much. So what will be included is the Lunara Health, \$2 million, \$1 million for the fire physicals, \$320,000 for the Commonwealth Attorney, \$125,000 for community partners.

[03:39:42] And so, God, we've gone through so much. We already have the motion, or do we need to amend it? Do we need to amend it or anything, or no? So, yes, we're going to take a formal vote.

[03:40:00] So it's going to be amended, but again, do I need a new motion for that, or no? Just no. Bodie, accept the amendment. You accept the amendment? Okay. All right, let's go ahead and take our vote. I saw Mrs. Sinclair, sorry.

[03:40:15] Oh, Mr., yes. It's amended for the straw polls. Yes. And the increased transfer to the schools. Yes. Yes, sir. Based on decisions already made. Yes, thank you. Motion passes five to three.

[03:40:36] Supervisors Gordy, LaCroix, and Vega voting nay. All right, thank you very much. We are now moving on to 7E, and that is to budget and appropriate our fiscal 27 school budget. I know that that's going to need to be amended to reflect the changes we've made tonight.

[03:40:54] Can someone give me a motion with the amendment? Madam Chair, I move with including the amendment for item 7E to be approved. Second. It's been properly moved and seconded. Any discussion? I don't see any, so let's go ahead and take our votes. Motion passes 5 to 3.

[03:41:17] Supervisors Gordy, LaCroix, and Vega voting nay. All right. We are now moving on to 7F. And before we do that, I do have to ask Mr. Sinclair, with all the changes, where are we with the budget? We have a positive balance in all five years, \$6.6 million in fiscal 27 and \$1.5 million in fiscal 28.

[03:41:44] I can read through the rest of the fiscal years if you like. What is the low point? Do we go below \$1.8 million? Still positive. We are at a low of \$1.3 million in fiscal 31. All right.

[03:42:02] Supervisor Boating. Yeah, I was just going to ask if my colleagues had any appetite for FY27 only subbing out the use of NVTAFunds for the transit fund for general fund balance. Personally, I just go ahead and make the motion, and then we can have it in discussion.

[03:42:22] I'm sorry. If I, that would have needed to occur on the previous all funds budget resolution. All right. So let's go ahead and make a motion on this as it is. so moved second it's been probably moved and seconded any discussion all right let's go ahead

[03:42:43] and take our votes motion passes five to three supervisors gordy la croix and vega voting nay all right we're now moving on to 7g can i get a um can i get a motion move for approval madam

[03:43:09] chair second any discussion seeing if not i'd like to call for the vote motion passes five to three supervisors gordy la croix and vega voting nay all right moving on to 7h and this is continuation of hiring incentives planned for hard-to-fill positions with recommended changes and authorized changes to the incentivized retention period for the adult detention center sworn personnel. Can I get a motion? Move for approval, Madam Chair. Second. I'm sorry, I'm

[03:43:46] sorry. Second. All right. Supervisor Vega. Thank you, Madam Chair. Is Colonel West still here? There you are. Sir, I just want to commend you for your extraordinary efforts in reducing the vacancy how many vacancies do you have now roughly i think it's two compared to like over 100 at one point close enough uh well congratulations um i've been a big stickler on you know folks asking for additional new positions to be funded when they can't even fund the ones that um have been

[03:44:19] funded in previous years so i just wanted to commend you publicly uh for your efforts i don't see another speaker so let's go ahead and take our vote motion passes six to two supervisors LaCroix and Vega voting nay.

[03:44:41] All right, let's move on to 7-I. For approval, Madam Chair. As amended. As amended. Second. All right, any discussion on this item? Madam Chair. Supervisor, wait, put your, come on, tap it.

[03:44:58] Yeah, there you go, Gordy. Well, it's not working. It's not working? It just, so, you know, one of the things that we talked about when we talked about our, when we had revenue surpluses is we talked about building up our reserves. So could you, Dave, give us a little indication of, you know, remind us of what this does and how this is going to help us build up that reserve in order to address our issues with our AAA bond rating?

[03:45:27] Sure. So based on a presentation that the chief financial officer provided to the finance and budget committee, Leslie Weldon laid out some options for the committee's consideration at the time.

[03:45:46] And the direction that staff received was that we would begin a long-term process of increasing the county's unassigned fund balance from the current policy of 7.5% to a long-term goal of 15%, effectively doubling it.

[03:46:05] This would be viewed very favorably by bond rating agencies as Prince William County. While we are a AAA-rated community, which is the highest crating rating available to municipalities, we are lower than AAA-rated peers both nationally and Northern Virginia.

[03:46:29] So what this resolution does is it gives the chief financial officer the authorization to use the entire projected general revenue surplus at the end of the current fiscal year and putting that into unassigned fund balance as we begin that journey to 15% of general fund revenue.

[03:46:56] Okay. It also gives her the authority at the end of fiscal year 2027 to use general revenue and putting that towards unassigned fund balance as it is available.

[03:47:13] Thank you, Dave, for that. And I think this is an important thing that while it's not sexy in any shape, form, or fashion, it's something that we have to do in order to ensure that our debt, our liabilities, and what we pay for debt is maintained at the lowest possible level by protecting that AAA bond rating.

[03:47:38] And so this is where the one thing I can say we're being very disciplined on, and I'm looking forward to us maintaining that discipline going forward. Thank you, Dave. All right. Since there are no other speakers, let's go ahead and take our votes.

[03:47:57] Motion passes 6-2. Supervisors LaCroix and Vega voting nay. All right. And 7-J, can I get a motion to move that forward? 7J or I?

[03:48:13] I'm sorry, 7, you're right, 7J. 7J, okay, just clarifying. Move for approval, Madam Chair. As amended. Move for approval, Madam Chair, as amended. I'm sorry. All right, it's been properly moved and seconded. Okay, thank you.

[03:48:31] Wait, I apologize. There was some confusion regarding 7I. Can we, I'm sorry, we're going to have to rescind the motion because there was confusion. Supervisor Vega. Yes, Madam Chair, I'd like to redo the vote. All right, let's go ahead.

[03:48:50] We're going to have to get a new motion. Move for approval as amended. Second. Thank you, Madam Chair. This is item 7-I. 7-I. I'm sorry, Supervisor Bailey.

[03:49:12] No, this was not amended. So, just as it reads. 7-I is not impacted by the FY27 budget. I did not think it was. Move for approval, Madam Chair. It's been moved and seconded.

[03:49:30] Gordy gets a second. Any discussion on this item? Supervisor Vega. I just want to thank Dave for that clarification. All right. Let's go ahead and take our votes. Vote unanimous.

[03:49:45] Madam Chair. All right. If I can, I just want to thank Supervisor Vega. We were seeing eye to eye that time. I appreciate you. All right. We're moving now to 7-J. Wait.

[03:50:02] Yes. Move for approval, Madam Chair. Second. As amended. Yes. As amended. All right. As amended. Any discussion on this point? All right.

[03:50:17] Let's go ahead and take our votes. Five to three, Supervisors Gordy, LaCroix, and Vega voting nay. All right. Now moving on to 7K. I'm sorry.

[03:50:35] Oh, yeah. No. We just did J. K comes next. Can I get a motion? Move for approval, Madam Chair. Second. It's been properly moved and seconded Supervisor Vega. Thank you, Madam Chair. Just a clarification. How is this different than what Supervisor Stewart asked for?

[03:50:53] This is effective in 2028. Okay. Got it. Ah. Yeah. All right. Let's go ahead and take our vote. And this does not, let me mention, affect the current board.

[03:51:10] Motion passes 5-3. Supervisors Gordy, LaCroix, and Vega voting nay. And let's go on now to 7-L. Madam Chair, if I may, please. Please excuse me. Okay. I just wanted to make mention that this is something that we did in previous years for 2023.

[03:51:29] Okay. So I just want to make note of that on camera, that it's not out of the ordinary for this board. All right. 7-L. Can I get a motion? So move, Madam Chair. Second. I love the question. Any discussion?

[03:51:47] All right, then. Let's go ahead and take our votes. Motion passes 5 to 3. Supervisors Gordy, LaCroix, and Vega voting nay.

[03:52:05] All right, everyone. We are going to now go into closed session. So I'm going to give everyone a 10-minute recess. I know people don't like that, but we need one. So I will see everyone in the back in 10 minutes. Thank you.

[03:52:41] Are we rolling?

[03:53:17] Because I'll gavel. All right. We are back from closed session. If I can get a motion to certify. So moved. Second. It's been properly moved and seconded. Let's go ahead and take our vote. Is it on my side?

[03:53:41] Vote unanimous. All right, and we have one thing to report out. Yes, ma'am. Madam Chair, I move to direct the county exec to reallocate the circuit court clerk office for jurors who pursue and to use, excuse me.

[03:54:09] I move to direct the county exec to reallocate circuit court clerk office space for jury use pursuant to the circuit court letter dated April 13, 2026. Second. It's been properly moved and seconded.

[03:54:25] Let's take our votes. Motion passes 6-2. Supervisors LaCroix and Vega voting nay. All right. I would now like to adjourn the meeting. Can I get a motion?

[03:54:41] So moved. Second. All right. Let's take our votes. I think it wants you to stay.

[03:54:57] There you go. Please let me leave. Vote unanimous. All right. Thank you very much. We're adjourned.



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