

MEETING #44- September 4

At a Public Hearing of the Madison County Board of Supervisors on September 4, 2014 at 7:00 p.m. in the Madison County Administrative Auditorium located at 414 N. Main Street:

PRESENT: Doris G. Lackey, Chair
R. Clay Jackson, Vice-Chair
Jonathon Weakley, Member
Robert W. Campbell, Member
Kevin McGhee, Member
V. R. Shackelford, III, County Attorney
Ernest C. Hoch, County Administrator
Leo Tayamen, Finance Director
Jacqueline S. Frye, Deputy Clerk

Agenda:

1. Call to Order

2. Pledge of Allegiance & Moment of Silence

The Board of Supervisors commenced their meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence.

Chairman Lackey advised the purpose of tonight's meeting is to hold a public hearing to discuss an ordinance to change the current polling place of the Madison precinct from the Administrative auditorium (414 N. Main Street) to the Beth Car Church (411 Mud Road); an additional item for discussion will involve the post office closes – public comment period will commence after the discussion.

3. Determine Presence of a Quorum

Chairman Lackey advised that a quorum was present.

4. Adopt Agenda

Chairman Lackey called for a motion to adopt tonight's Agenda.

Supervisor Jackson moved the adoption of today's Agenda as presented, seconded by Supervisor McGhee, with the following vote recorded:

Doris G. Lackey	Aye
R. Clay Jackson	Aye
Jonathon Weakley	Aye

Robert Campbell Aye
 Kevin McGhee Aye

a. Public Hearing: Ordinance #2014-3 [To Change the Polling Place for the Madison Precinct]:

The County Administrator provided a brief overview of several discussions pertaining to moving the voting location from the administrative auditorium to a more suitable location for use as the Madison precinct. After discussions between the Madison Electoral Board and Beth Car Church, an agreement has been attained to use the church for the November 2014 election. Virginia Code denotes that any proposed location change must be in place within sixty days (60) of an upcoming election, with an advertisement for the public of the proposed change, which have all been accomplished as required.

It was also noted that Beth Car Church has polled many of its members about the proposal, but will need to conduct a formal vote on Monday, September 8, 2014; the County Attorney has been advised of the fact the Church members will not vote until Monday, September 8th; therefore, Item #3 was added to denote the proposed Ordinance would be effective after the Church approves the request. In the event the request isn't approved by the voting majority, the voting location will remain as is for the upcoming location in November.

Jody Shelatz, Electoral Board member, was present and advised of the Virginia Code requirement regarding the fact that should tonight's Ordinance be passed by the Board tonight (September 4th), but not passed by the Church until Monday (September 8th), the effective date will be noted as the date the Church takes action instead of tonight's date so as not to violate the Virginia Code's sixty day (60) time frame. In closing, he advised it's the recommendation of the Madison Electoral Board that Ordinance #2014-10 not be approved by the Madison County Board of Supervisors at this point.

Reverend Huelskoetter of Beth Car Baptist Church, was present and explained the confusion stemmed from the Church; a select amount of Church officials were polled regarding the request and a full business meeting wasn't held. In closing, he doesn't see the issue as being divisive within the Church.

Supervisor Weakley expressed appreciation of the congregations' support and expressed the Board's desire to have sufficient space for the upcoming election process.

Chairman Lackey advised the Board wasn't aware of tonight's recommendation. It was noted the County Attorney had assessed the Church's desire for an emergency meeting and verbiage has been added to the Ordinance to denote a meeting will be held on September 8, 2014. In closing, she questioned if the verbiage could be added to denote that although the Ordinance could be approved tonight, it would

become effective contingent upon Beth Car Church approving the request next week.

Supervisor Campbell feels it's presumptuous of the Board to pass anything until the Church has acted on the request being presented unto them; he also doesn't feel it's imperative for the County to begin work at the administration building prior to the November election day.

Supervisor Jackson feels the wording in tonight's resolution is contingent upon approval by Beth Car Church; he also stressed the importance of the need for the Registrar to have adequate space to accommodate the election process and to do what's best for the citizens of Madison County.

Chairman Lackey advised that if the Board approves tonight's Ordinance and the Church doesn't, the Ordinance will die, which she feels will clearly define the County's situation. In closing, she questioned if it would be possible to have legal counsel review the email presented tonight from the State Board of Elections' representative.

Mr. Shelatz advised the State Board of Elections is also concerned about causing confusion for the voters as to where the polling place will be located if the Board approves tonight's ordinance versus the action that would be undertaken by the State Board of Elections should the Church not act until September 8th.

Supervisor Campbell suggested the Board tread lightly on tonight's issue and adhere to the legalities involved, as all County Ordinances have become effective on the day they've been passed by the Board.

Supervisor McGhee advised it isn't the County's intent to place undue pressure on the electoral board or cause confusion for the Church over this issue; he suggested the Board set this issue aside and work on implementing changes for next year's election instead.

The County Administrator advised the Ordinance could include language to advise that if the proposed change wasn't upheld based on legal ramifications, the polling location would remain as is. In closing, he advised that renovations on the auditorium could be placed on hold after the election, should the Board decide. He further recommended the Church consider the Ordinance as suggested and follow through with the change for next year's election process.

Chairman Lackey opened the floor for public comment.

The following citizen(s) provided public comment:

Steve Hoffman: Suggested the Board strike Item #3, pass the Ordinance, and take action to rescind the Ordinance if Beth Car Church doesn't vote favorably; however, if they do vote favorably, the election will remain at the auditorium.

Pat Hanson: Agreed with the suggestion from Mr. Hoffman; if the Ordinance is passed and not contingent upon Beth Car Church voting favorably, this will be in violation of the State Board of Elections' requirements.

Diana Eanes, Registrar: Advised the proposed change will need to come before the State Board of Elections' Attorney; he has advised the request will not be approved as presented, which has been explained in today's email that has been provided due to the sixty (60) day requirement. In closing, she advised that any change in the polling place will need to be advertised and new voter cards will need to be issued within fifteen (15) days of any proposed changes.

Supervisor McGhee moved that Ordinance #2014-3 [To Change the Polling Place for the Madison Precinct] not be approved, as recommended (by the Madison Electoral Board), seconded by Supervisor Weakley, with the following vote recorded:

Doris G. Lackey	Aye
R. Clay Jackson	Aye
Jonathon Weakley	Aye
Robert Campbell	Aye
Kevin McGhee	Aye

b. Post Office Hourly Reduction in Madison County

The County Administrator provided a brief overview of the proposed postal plan by the Postal Service to implement a reduction in hours of operation at the some of the local facilities in the County; a diagram was also provided to show the various closings over the years and reductions in hours of operations.

At this time, the County can:

- Elect to do nothing
- Send a letter to postal service representatives
- Request that proposed part-time hours will not provide adequate service to the citizens

Chairman Lackey questioned how many of the proposed post offices have citizens that utilize general delivery or use post office boxes to receive their mail.

Discussions also focused on the fact the public hearings held by the Postal Service weren't heavily advertised; a proposed reduction in hours of service may seem efficient, but will impose a hardship on many citizens who still purchase money orders to pay their bills; it's also felt that in time, the stations being proposed for two (2) or four (4) hours of operation may well close permanently, leaving only one (1) main post office in Madison County.

Scott Leake of Congressman Hurt's Office was present and advised that staff members from Congressman Hurt's Office will be in Madison County on Friday, September 6th at 9:00 a.m.; he suggested citizens provide a letter of concern on the matter to be passed onto the Congressman. In closing, he advised that it seems the Postal Service imposes simple 'across the board' reductions; if there is a consensus on this issue, he suggested the citizens relay their overall concerns and not focus on an individual postal facility.

Chairman Lackey advised that although the post office issue wasn't announced as a public hearing, it's something the Board decided to take up as more information was received. Once the Board has devised an effective plan, it will be forwarded on to our legislative representatives for review.

Chairman Lackey opened the floor for public input on the matter.

Tim Thompson: Advised the Brightwood post office is owned by the government so there will be no rent; population for Brightwood should include citizens of Leon; facility is convenient; doesn't see any advantage to shorten the hours of service from eight (8) hours to six (6) hours.

Peggy Frye: Operates a home business from her farm; uses the Brightwood post office; if hours are reduced, this will place a huge hardship on her business; also feels a County the size of Madison should have more than one post office open for a full eight (8) hours per day.

Paul Frye: Advised he is a rural letter carrier for Culpeper County; has been advised that Amazon will begin initiating delivery of parcels on Sunday throughout the region starting in October; questioned if names of postal service representatives could be provided so citizens could write letters; doesn't feel there will be a drop in the need for service since Amazon will be using the postal service instead of using delivery service by UPS or FedEx.

Pauline Clatterbuck: Advised that she received and submitted a survey and asked that hours remain intact; feels the service she's received at the Brightwood post office and the Madison post office are 'top notch', and she sees no reason why the Brightwood post office's hours should be changed in any way.

Kit Johnston: Advised that her local post office closed some time ago; operates several businesses out of her home and mails/receives packages on a regular basis; agrees with the County Administrator's statement regarding the concept of having more than one Postmaster/Postmistress in the County [she suggested there be at least four (4)] based on the County's size and topography; expressed appreciation for rural delivery and would like to see the Reva facility operate at least six (6) hours a day and see the current Postmistress (at the Reva station) be appropriately compensated for the work she does.

Pat Hanson: Advised her family has a 'general delivery' address and have to physically pick up their mail from the Brightwood post office; a reduction in operating hours would make it difficult to receive/send mail; feels it would be best for the County to offer an alternative solution rather than to do nothing at all.

Steve Hoffman: Thanked the Board for holding discussions on the proposed closing of the Brightwood post office; agrees with the County Administrator's suggestion and feels it would be reasonable to hold the hours of operation at all the local post office locations, as opposed to sacrificing some in order to benefit others; feels that a letter from the Madison County Board of Supervisors will be more acknowledged and carry more weight.

Caitlin Henshaw: Suggested the post office remain open as is.

Chairman Lackey advised it appears the Board will need to research two (2) things:

- The volume (i.e. packages, letters, etc.) that go through the post office
- The amount of revenue generated from services rendered

The County Administrator advised information is being compiled regarding:

- How many post office boxes are being used
- How many folks receive mail by general delivery

Which may be factors that weigh upon the importance of services being provided. It was also noted that less than six (6) hours of operation will call for the elimination of a Postmaster/Postmistress and will be staffed part-time. It was also noted the Brightwood station is convenient based on its location on Route 29; although it's understood there are smaller post offices in our area and the postal service may be under pressure, Madison County would like to sit down with figures and discuss the matter with a representative, as it's felt it would be possible to defend the effects that will transpire should the operating hours be reduced.

Comments from the Board included the following:

Chairman Lackey: Suggested the County show the 'value' of each postal facility; get our local legislators involved; and possibly initiated a signed petition in place for each postal location that is in jeopardy of being closed or a reduction in hours of operation.

Supervisor McGhee: Questioned if a 'suggestion box' could be in place, and also possibly visit with the existing Postmaster/Postmistresses to attain their thoughts.

Supervisor Weakley: Advised some insight has been provided in that a lot of residents from Reva, Leon and surrounding localities use the Brightwood post office.

Max Lacy: Advised the Postmasters are limited as to how much they can push this issue on their own; advised that community meetings were held in the past to discuss alternatives to closing other postal facilities here; feels the Postal Service is using 'revenue' as a determining factor instead of focusing on the workload handled by staff. In closing, he advised that local stores are selling postage stamps and this should be handled to the local post offices, and also noted the postal service is anticipating healthcare payments for the future, when in fact, future plans for postal locations may never be in place.

Chairman Lackey: Suggested the County look at the fact that Amazon will begin sending packages through the postal service; she also questioned how the postal service compares (in the amount of deliveries made) to UPS and FedEx.

Supervisor Campbell: Feels the proposed reduced hours will still call for the postal staff to perform the same type of work, but with fewer employees in place.

Paul Utz: Advised that postal carriers will have an increased workload and suggested some of the existing facilities remain open in order for the citizens to receive services, as the Madison Office will be unable to serve the entire community; if the proposed reduction in hours is initiated, two excellent Postmasters will be lost; he also noted that local carriers also currently deliver packages for FedEx and UPS.

Supervisor Weakley: Questioned whether techniques used in the past involved letters of support and/or petitions were presented to show support in keeping postal stations open.

Lisa Kellison: Advised the Brightwood post office is easily/readily accessible due to its convenient location and she uses this station constantly; she suggested that letters of support be provided on Friday to Representative Hurt's staff and also have something published in the local newspaper.

Supervisor Jackson: Feels there's more information the County will need to attain before some viable options can be developed; feels the citizens can berate the postal service as to why we're opposed to the proposal, and then develop some reasonable alternatives to be presented. In closing, if nothing is done, the Postal Service will follow through as proposed.

The County Administrator advised some of the options presented do call for consolidation of some local postal facilities based on County geographic areas; options provided by the Postal Service weren't the best options, as many factors weren't considered in the process. In closing, he suggested the County denote the poor planning, the fact there wasn't much thought put into the process, and the fact there may be other suggestions/alternatives that can be discussed. In closing, he suggested the County be a part of the process and not accept going from four (4) Postmasters down to one (1) for the entire County.

It was also suggested the community look to see if a plan could be devised to salvage some of the proposed changes suggested by the Postal Service instead of allowing them to divide/conquer the County in the future.

Jonna Crigler: Advised that if resident’s didn’t select an option on the survey or if they denoted an additional option other than what was originally provided, the survey wasn’t counted.

Supervisor Campbell: Feels tonight’s issue is a classic example of how ‘we take too many things for granted’....once things are gone, we often wonder what happened.

In closing, Chairman Lackey advised the Board will prepare to write a statement and present it to our legislators before November, and possibly schedule an additional public hearing after all information has been compiled.

5. Information/Correspondence (if any)

None.

6. Adjournment

With no further action being required by the Board, on motion of Supervisor Jackson, seconded by Supervisor Weakley, Chairman Lackey adjourned the meeting, with the following vote recorded:

Doris G. Lackey	Aye
R. Clay Jackson	Aye
Jonathon Weakley	Aye
Robert Campbell	Aye
Kevin McGhee	Aye

Doris G. Lackey, Chairman
Madison County Board of Supervisors

Clerk of the Board of Madison County Board Supervisors

Adopted on: October 14, 2014

Copies: Doris G. Lackey, R. Clay Jackson, Jonathon Weakley, Robert Campbell, Kevin McGhee, V. R. Shackelford, III & Constitutional Officers

- a) *Ordinance #2014-3 [To Change the Polling Place for the Madison Precinct, Madison, VA]*
Ordinance not approved



Agenda **(Amended)**
 Public Hearing
 Madison County Board of Supervisors
 September 4, 2014 at 7:00 p.m.
 414 N. Main Street
 Madison, Virginia 22727



Agenda Items

1. Call to Order
2. ***Pledge of Allegiance & Moment of Silence***
3. Determine Presence of a Quorum
4. Adopt agenda
 - a. Public Hearing: Ordinance #2014-3 [To Change the Polling Place for the Madison Precinct]
 - b. Post Office Hourly Reduction in Madison County

Public Comment Opportunity (will be as close to 7:00 p.m. as possible)

5. Information/Correspondence (if any)
6. Adjournment