

MEETING #22 – June 29

At a Joint Town Hall Meeting Madison County Board of Supervisors and the Madison County School Board on June 29, 2016 at the Madison County High School Auditorium located at 68 Mountaineer Drive:

PRESENT

Madison County Board of Supervisors

R. Clay Jackson, Chairman
Jonathon Weakley, Vice-Chairman
Kevin McGhee, Member
Robert Campbell, Member
Charlotte Hoffman, Member
Jacqueline S. Frye, Deputy Clerk

Madison County School Board

Barry Penn Hollar, Chairman
Doreen Jenkins, Vice-Chairman
Karen Allen, Member
Robert Chappell, Member
Absent: Joseph Parker

Agenda Items:

1. Call to Order

Madison County School Board:

Barry Penn Hollar, Chairman, called the meeting of the Madison County School Board to order

Approval of Agenda (SB):

The Madison County School Board moved to approve tonight's agenda by unanimous vote.

Madison County Board of Supervisors:

Chairman Jackson called the meeting of the Madison County Board of Supervisors to order. A quorum was established.

Approval of Agenda:

Supervisor Campbell moved the Board approve the Agenda as presented, seconded by Supervisor Weakley. *Ayes: Jackson, Weakley, Campbell, McGhee, Hoffman. Nays: (0).*

2. Pledge of Allegiance & Moment of Silence

3. Introduction of speaker:

Carty Yowell was present and introduced himself as the Moderator of tonight's meeting session; he proceeded to welcome all to the town hall meeting. Accolades were provided to the Madison County Board of Supervisors and the Madison County School Board for providing the citizens an opportunity to come out and meet with both governing Boards at one time.

Citizens were encouraged to:

- Present questions to the "panel"
- Comments should be kept to a three (3) minute limit
- All topics will be fully exhausted before proceeding to the next item of interest
- Anyone wishing to add comments/questions to an existing topic will have the opportunity to do before moving forward

Mr. Yowell proceeded to introduce all members of both governing boards, herein referred to as 'the panel.'

Mr. Yowell called for opening remarks from 'the panel.'

- *Chairman Jackson thanked all for attending tonight's session; members were encouraged to provide questions as they desire*
- *Chairman Pen Hollar thanked all for attending tonight's session; thanked the Board for initiating town hall meetings, and suggested tonight's joint endeavor be scheduled; both boards work for the public, and it's 'our' responsibility to respond to the public's concerns.*
- *Supervisor Weakley thanked the Madison County School Board for allowing the County to utilize tonight's meeting in the school's facility.*

4. Town Hall Meeting:

Mr. Yowell opened the floor or tonight's session.

The following citizen(s) provided questions/concerns to 'the panel.'

Solar Energy Program

Carty Yowell: Referred question to the Madison County School Board concerning an online article that discussed Orange County Schools having contracted with a solar company that installs solar panels; the school owns the system by way of a twenty-year commitment; electricity is then sold back to the school system at a reduced rate, which has evolved in an a substantial savings; he questioned if the school board has heard of the program, and offered to share the link; asked if this prospect would be considered for Madison.

Responses from the Madison County School Board:

- Chairman Penn Hollar: Advised of hearing of the program; administration has been asked to investigate the concept; program doesn't appear as practical for Madison County; school system is in the midst of performance contracting that involves 3-4 energy saving contractors to perform an analysis; school system would be guaranteed low interest loan in order to fund any improvements deemed by the contractor to be applicable.

Town of Madison Initiating a \$25.00 Business License Fee

Carty Yowell: Advised of the Town of Madison's initiation of a \$25.00 business license fee – suggested the County initiate this type of fee in order to know what businesses are actually operating here; noted that there are local contractors that are required to purchase a business license in localities (i.e. Orange, Charlottesville, etc.) where they perform work because there is no reciprocity ability to show that they have a business license for Madison County.

Responses from the Madison County Board of Supervisors:

- *Supervisor Campbell: Provided highlights from past Board initiation of a business license fee that was rescinded after citizens spoke against the concept; feels it's counterproductive for the Town of Madison to enact a fee when businesses currently leaving the County, and should instead be doing something to encourage business to come here in an effort to be more 'business friendly'; encouraged the County to be more proactive and help folks start a business here and encourages folks to want to come here to spend their money; also noted there is difference between construction and retail – feels the business license fee changes between localities; feels if a contractor is prequalified to perform work in a certain locality, the amount of work and what can be done may also be an issue.*
- *Chairman Jackson: Advised of a recent meeting with a local plumbing contractor; discussions focused on reciprocity between localities if a contractor had a business license in Madison County; also noted that reciprocity will actually call for a contractor to perform a certain amount of business within a locality before a business license can be provided; noted that the Town apparently wants that revenue from the businesses in place within the town limits; noted that Ms. Gardner is working to comprise a list of all businesses operating within the County; noted that 'reciprocity between localities' is actually a misconception.*
- *Supervisor Weakley: Concurred with the aforementioned comment regarding the fact that a contractor has to perform a certain percentage of business; feels that a database of local business would be an asset; also noted that the business license for the County included a two-page list of exemptions that were debated; agreed that the County should look at other avenues; doesn't feel that initiating a business license will be advantageous for Madison; suggested the County look for opportunities to help promote and encourage business; noted that the County is appreciative of efforts initiated by Plow & Hearth, Inc. and is willing to encourage/assist folks who'd like to start a business here.*
- *Supervisor Hoffman: Feels the town and county should initiate a fee of \$25.00 for all business owners to register their businesses only; not in favor of any additional tax on local businesses due to the fact the town and County have lost businesses to date; suggested the County refrain from making people feel that doing business in Madison will ultimately result in them being charged a \$25.00, especially for a small business – doesn't feel the aforementioned endeavor will make folks feel the County is being very 'business friendly.'*
- *Supervisor McGhee: Noted that during a recent meeting, ideas were provided as to how the business license could be beneficial; advised that the County looks to the Planning Commission to work out concerns regarding the license; also reinforced ideas for the County to be more 'business friendly, as many often criticize the County for not being 'business friendly'; encouraged folks not to give up because on starting a business here because on contents contained in the County's ordinances, and to provide their concerns onto the County Administrator or the Board in an effort to assess whether there are additional option to help folks start a business here.*

#2: Computer Spam & Vision for the Future of Madison County (i.e. development)

Herbert Putz (Locust Grove): Comment referred to a SPAM document received on his personal computer; suggested anyone receiving this type of SPAM message refrain from opening the document; feels that county and school expenses are inflated; suggested both entities streamline operations and increase productivity; questioned the vision of Madison County's development; questioned why multiple departments are doing the same job (i.e. EMS, volunteer services, Chamber, Economic Development) and getting paid 'left and right'; referred to the difference in taxation; questioned expenses/revenues for Hoover Ridge.

Responses from the Madison County Board of Supervisors:

- *Supervisor Campbell: Advised that all candidates attended the candidates forum and provided their individual ideas/goals at each forum; feels citizens need to attend meetings to provide their concerns and what type of government they'd like for Madison*

County; resources are limited despite increase in costs; County has reduced spending and there has been no tax increase; County trying to correct problems from the past – feels both governing boards are making an honest effort to work together and discuss all matters of concerns; appreciate citizen input; government is obligated to provide public safety and education; feels the FY2017 budget will reflect funding for the schools, county and Hoover Ridge; also noted personal concerns regarding how Hoover Ridge is funded – property does belong to the citizens; citizens need to attend meetings to express their concerns, (in his opinion) county belongs to the citizens (i.e. buildings, vehicles, property, etc.); all citizens have a right to speak out.

Dr. Putz further questioned if the governing boards listen to what the citizens have to say; referred to his letters to the editor concerning ‘cost control’ and why there are several departments performing similar duties and getting ‘paid left and right’ (i.e. EMS, volunteer services, Chamber of Commerce, Hoover Ridge, etc.), which isn’t saving money; feels the citizens have no say in how funding is spent.

Comments from the Board:

- *Supervisor Campbell: Advised that the Board had a thorough discussion last evening about Parks & Recreation and funding, which he voted disfavor of; explain that he will not vote for something that he doesn’t fully understand; feels the citizens pay enough taxes; all funding utilized by the County (including federal and state funding) comes from the taxpayers*
- *Supervisor Hoffman: Advised that she has been reading letters to the editor (provided by Dr. Putz); takes offense at comments that the school system costs the County too much money (i.e. teacher salaries, etc.); advised that her daughter teaches, she has grandchildren in the school system, and that the teachers don’t leave at 3:00 p.m., but take work home, come back at night, and there are many school employees present tonight because they’re trying to support what the county and school system are trying to do; advised that the school renovations were direly needed*

Dr. Putz proceeded to refer to his educational history; feels the teachers come because it’s the money; questioned past educational techniques versus the present; feels the public sector cannot afford to increase salaries because we have to look at ways to save tax dollars; employees shouldn’t get an increase when the citizens don’t.

- *Chairman Jackson: Referred to commodity prices in the past; advised the schools do an good job and offer cost effective programs to help the children of the County (i.e. joint educational endeavor with GCC) that will allow students to graduate with a diploma and an associates’ degree, which in turn will better equip them to attain a bachelors’ degree at a fraction of the cost, and allow them to enter the world of employment sooner; the goal is to increase revenue, and establish planning that can keep taxes at a low rate for many years moving forward; costs are being controlled; also noted that he has been receiving emails (from Dr. Putz) but will not respond unless it’s FOIA; also noted that FY2017 budget shows PRA with one amount of allocated funding; doesn’t feel the need for all the misconception and feels the County is going in a good direction*

Responses from the Madison County School Board:

- *Chairman Penn Hollar: Advised that his vision is to improve teacher salaries; also noted that salaries are determined by the market; feels it’s his responsibility as a school board member is to ensure that the school system can attract the best possible teachers for our children – we’re in competition with Albemarle, Greene, Orange, Rappahannock, Culpeper, Prince William, Fauquier and Loudoun Counties*

Dr. Putz questioned why school administration staff receive such high salaries local salaries must be high enough to attract and keep teachers in the competitive environment; feels the process is a ‘policy game.’

- *Chairman Pen Hollar: Advised that the school system must do what needs to be done in order to attain the best administrators.*
- *Vice-Chairman Jenkins: Advised that the school system does have information on the school’s website that outlines the school’s mission statement; she feels the school system has made it a goal to accomplish everything it intends to do*
- *Bob Chappell, Member: Feels that ‘vision’ is important; noted that he has witnessed teachers using exceptional techniques to help the children learn at an outstanding level; impressed with administrators and other school staff; feels the joint effort with Germanna Community College that will allow graduates to attain an associates’ degree is a wonderful venture; hated to see the Piedmont Vocational Technical program end as it did provide students with important job skills; noted that not all students will be able to attend college; feels CTE program is an exceptional program and there is a need for more, along with facilities to accommodate the program; suggested the County share CTE programs (currently with Rappahannock County)*

Responses from the Madison County Board of Supervisors:

- *Supervisor Weakley: Advised of existing tax rates by locality:*
 - *Madison: 68 cents per \$100 assessed value*
 - *Greene :75 cents per \$100 assess value*
 - *Orange: 80 cents per \$100 assessed value*
 - *Culpeper: 73 cents per \$100 assessed value*
 - *Rappahannock: 70 cents per \$100 assessed value*

Although everyone would like to have lower taxes, the rate is actually market driven; folks aren’t just coming here for the beauty, but also for the low tax rate and saving a ‘nest egg’ by working in other localities; there are also factors of establishing a good income bracket

for teachers to help retain them; feels the County is doing very well; centralvirginia.org reported an unemployment rate in Madison of 3.9% with Green's rate being at 4.5%; feels things aren't as 'gleam' as some would like to believe; feels there should be focus on capital planning, utilization, the jail, RSA and regionalization of 911 equipment that will expand the County's ability to partnership with other localities; also focused on the County's aging population, broadband inquiries, CSA and other mandates. Noted savings in some areas, importance of public safety and education as a primary responsibility; also noted a necessary increase in some areas of public safety (EMS); accolades to school and county staff for their efforts in being good public servants

- *Supervisor Campbell: Noted that Dr. Putz is a farmer and expressed concerns about what he has to pay; referred to the past reassessment process (2007-2008), increase in property values, and the value for land use remained the same; also referred to the fact that with the reassessment of 2014; a prior Board elected to eliminate personal property tax on farm machinery/equipment; noted that when property values decreased, the value for land use property also decreased, which caused a shifting in the tax burden for the citizens of Madison; feels decisions made by a prior Board actually saved (Dr. Putz) tax dollars; referred to the tax debt for the country; feels that both governing board do understand the predicament the locality is in*

CSA Costs

Robert Legge: Referred to CSA funding used for 'at risk' children; questioned what can be done (by governing entities) to help reduce the numbers; questioned amount of funding being utilized from the state, federal and local dollars.

Responses from the Madison County Board of Supervisors:

- *Supervisor Campbell: Advised all funding is local because any state/federal funding is actually attained from the citizens, who are paying the bill; feels people need to be responsible for their own children; all adults are charged with being responsible; also focused on the funding for CSA and the fact that accepting grant funding actually costs the taxpayers in the long run; urged the citizens to provide input to help solve issues within the locality.*
- *Supervisor Weakley: Referred to the FY2017 adopted budget that shows \$3,000,000 (i.e. non-local funding of \$2,000,020 with local match of \$980,000.00); advised the County tries to allocate funding based on trends; CSA averages about two (2) supplemental appropriations annually; noted the funding needs depends on services that may be needed (i.e. foster care, preventive services, etc.); feels the County has a dynamic team that work with early intervention programs; feels the fault is the parents' and not the child; noted the need for additional foster care parents, and the issue of a drug problem in the County; feels that breaking the cycle would be an asset*
- *Supervisor McGhee: Referred to concerns regarding issues involving CSA; focused on the issue of opioid addiction in the County and the recent drug bust; advised of tonight's Criminal Justice Board meeting in Orange, Virginia that focused on the fact that many inmates entering the system are dealing with drug addiction and mental health issues; questioned what types of services the local jail can provide to those inmates; also focused on what CSA can do to treat mental health patients; noted that a positive step is being made in the turnaround time to assess these folks*

Responses from the Madison County School Board:

- *Robert Chappell, Member: Advised that DSS and the school system are working together on a grant opportunity to develop a program to provide services to at risk children at an early age in an effort to help them from needing extraordinary services as they grow older; feels this is a wonderful attempt on the part of the two agencies involved in an effort to save tax dollars; noted that the school board is here to help children.*
- *Chairman Penn Hollar: Feels the primary factor leading to 'at risk' is poverty which the result of people lacking the appropriate job skills; the Governor has redesigned a high school program that will take a look at what will be expected of a high school graduate in order to be workforce ready for the 21st century; noted support of the endeavor and wants Madison schools to be a pioneer in responding to the direction in which the State is moving, by working on a grant to improve early childhood education, enhance the CTE program, and shifting it towards a school base, simulated experience of being in the workforce*

Lewis Jenkins, Director of Emergency Medical Services, was present and provided input on funding utilized by the County to assist volunteer services; noted that paid EMS career staff is currently housed in a 'shed'; feels the future space for volunteer services will be useful for many years once it's complete; also noted that funding is from taxpayer dollars, but was discussed by several Boards and citizens, who verbalized support of the endeavor. Also noted the future payback will far outweigh the cost; noted that comments made earlier by a citizen were inaccurate; also noted that EMS is currently dealing with problems attracting competitive staff due to competitive salaries offered in other localities.

Responses from the Madison County Board of Supervisors

- *Supervisor Campbell: Provided accolades to Mr. John Barrett who served as the Clerk of the Works for the recent school renovation project.*

With no further comments being brought forth, Mr. Yowell closed out the joint town hall meeting.

5. Closing Statements – Board of Supervisors & School Board

- *Robert Chappell (SB): Thanked all for attending tonight's session.*

- *Robert Campbell (BOS): Honored to serve on the Madison County Board of Supervisors and to have the opportunity to serve the citizens; appreciates citizen's support.*
- *Karen Allen (SB): Noted many good things have been discussed tonight; grateful to be a part of tonight's forum; advised of having faith in the school and county administration and the fact that all are working together to make the County as great as it is and can be.*
- *Jonathon Weakley (BOS): Recognized efforts done by both administrative teams; noted it's a pleasure to serve as an elected official; noted creativity provided by school personnel; suggested that any ideas be brought to the table in an effort to find a solution; thanked the citizens for their involvement.*
- *Doreen Jenkins (SB): Advised that working together with the Board of Supervisors has made tonight's forum very good; also extended an invitation for all to attend school board sessions to see presentations by teachers and students; feels it's an honor to see what's being done within the school system.*
- *Charlotte Hoffman (BOS): Thanked all for attending; encouraged people to 'bring a friend'; also noted that there are several negative citizens, but not everyone feels this way; school personnel isn't making too much and you are doing your job.*
- *Kevin McGhee (BOS): Thanked all for attending; provided accolades to the school and county staff present tonight; also expressed gratitude for the 2016 graduation ceremony and a presentation to the Frye's.*
- *Barry Penn Hollar (SB): Noted that the relationship between the school and county is conflictual in the sense that the school system 'asks for money and they've got the money' – the County has to expend funds carefully; also advised that the school system is charged with presenting a budget to the County that reflects what the school system feels is needed; also noted that the relationship between both governing boards is very good and respect has been earned; also feels both governing boards are committed; thanked the County Administrator for his contribution.*
- *R. Clay Jackson: Thanked all for attending; feels the joint effort between both governing boards is based on teamwork, by all parties involved; feels the County is moving in a very positive direction; concurred that the County is charged with the overall delegation of funding; encouraged more folks to attend future meetings.*

Accolades were also provided to Mr. Yowell for serving as tonight's Moderator.

Mr. Yowell thanked all for attending and asked citizens to support local business here.

6. Adjournment

The Madison County School Board voted to adjourn their portion of tonight's meeting

On motion of Supervisor Weakley, seconded by Supervisor McGhee, Chairman Jackson adjourned the Board's portion of tonight's meeting.

Approved: July 12, 2016



Joint Town Hall Meeting

**Madison County Board of Supervisors
Madison County School Board
Wednesday, June 29, 2016, 6:00 p.m.
Madison County High School Auditorium**



AGENDA

- 1. CALL TO ORDER**, Board of Supervisors & School Board
- 2. PLEDGE AND MOMENT OF SILENCE**
- 3. INTRODUCTION OF MODERATOR – CARTY YOWELL**
- 4. TOWN HALL MEETING**
- 5. CLOSING STATEMENTS**, Board of Supervisors & School Board
- 6. ADJOURNMENT**