

At the regular meeting of the Giles County Board of Supervisors held on Wednesday, April 1, 2020, at 3:00 PM in the Giles County Administration Office, located at 315 North Main Street, Pearisburg, the following were present unless noted absent.

Richard McCoy	Chair (At-Large Supervisor)
John C. Lawson, Jr.	Vice-Chair (Western District)
Jeff Morris	Central District
Perry Martin	Eastern District
Paul "Chappy" Baker	At-Large Supervisor
Chris McKlarney	County Administrator
Catherine Ballard	Finance Director
Richard Chidester	County Attorney
Missy Bray	Board Secretary

A quorum of the Board of Supervisors was physically assembled in the Board Room. Mr. Baker participated in the meeting electronically at his request, as approved, due to a pandemic self-quarantine. His voice was able to be heard by all persons in attendance at the location of the meeting.

CALL TO ORDER/INVOCATION

Mr. McCoy called the meeting to order, and Mr. McKlarney offered the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Morris made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 19, 2020, as presented. Mr. Martin seconded the motion. The motion was approved 5-0 as follows: Voting Yes: Mr. Baker, Mr. Lawson, Mr. Martin, Mr. McCoy and Mr. Morris

SCHOOL BOARD REPORT

Dr. Arbogast updated the board on current enrollments. He stated there are currently 2,291 students, which is a decrease of 2 from the end of last month and a decrease of 46 from the same time last year. He stated they would be working on the ADM numbers for the year. Dr. Arbogast reported the meal program put in place had served 23,582 meals since inception compared to 16,001 for the entire summer food program last year. He advised a letter would be going out at the end of the week for continuing instruction and various school services, adding they would continue to provide instruction in the best way possible. Dr. Arbogast anticipates most secondary instruction will be done through Chromebooks and lower grades using packets.

Mr. McCoy stated he has only seen a couple of things done online and the remainder done with packets. He inquired if more instruction could be done online for those with the ability to do so. Mr. McCoy advised parents are not copied on emails to students,

therefore, limiting their ability to assist with any needs their student might have. Dr. Arbogast stated the parent email addresses might not be up to date and will check on the issue. He advised packets for high school students should be sent out the following week. Mr. McCoy encouraged as much online instruction as possible with the ability to see an online teacher through technology such as Zoom. He expressed concern about the students learning the core instruction that could affect SOL testing for the following year. Dr. Arbogast reported SOL testing for this school year had been canceled and more information would be received later in the fall regarding preliminary testing. He advised the preliminary testing could help schools to see what students are lacking, and added summer school is not canceled yet and will depend on the Governor's order.

Mr. Martin inquired about which grades have Chromebooks, and if they could be provided to lower grades at some point. Dr. Arbogast replied eighth through twelfth grades have them, and the schools could push out around 600 additional tablets for fourth through seventh grades, but that would be a tedious process to get done at this time. Mr. Martin inquired about maintenance opportunities during the school closure. Dr. Arbogast stated maintenance could be done in classrooms but there are still materials and belongings that have not been sent back to parents. He reported the lift at Giles High School was done in three days after schools closed. Mr. McKlarney related some maintenance is being done already with the closures.

Mr. McCoy reemphasized the need for online instruction, adding many students have cell phones and wifi available and inquired if teachers are reaching out to students. Dr. Arbogast stated they should be reaching out to students.

VDOT REPORT

Mr. McKlarney related Mr. Clarke had offered to attend the meeting but emailed a report, which was provided to members. He advised he had submitted a request sent in by Mr. Baker. Mr. Morris reported work needed on Green Hollow Road. Mr. Martin related the culvert at McCall Motors needs to be monitored and inquired about the progress of the sink holes. Mr. McKlarney reported Lhoist had filled the one closest to the pier and was starting on putting a sealer in the bottom. He indicated they will continue on these the next day and related potential for coffer dams to divert the water off of it in order to get it fixed. Mr. McKlarney provided information on Candy Darter restrictions and indicated they are as ready as they can be on the project.

Mr. Baker related VDOT had done a good job with the potholes on Big Stoney.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. Howard Nippert – Mr. Nippert provided an update to members regarding the Giles County Community Guard, which approached the Board in February. He reported the muster call had been postponed and small core groups had met on several occasions for planning. Mr. Nippert indicated a Board for the group had been named, and by laws

were in the process of being drafted. He reported on activities of the group, including food being delivered to stockers at the grocery stores in recognition of their service to the community during the pandemic. Mr. Nippert advised the group had spoken with the Sheriff's Office and offered assistance, and stated it is important for the group to keep the Board of Supervisors updated to add to the credibility of the organization. He offered for the group to assist the county in any way it might see fit at this time, adding the group is ready and willing to help the community.

OLD BUSINESS

COVID-19

Mr. McKlarney reported a drive through testing site located in Blacksburg that was established cooperatively with multiple jurisdictions. He advised the site will allow for first responders to be tested immediately upon arrival. Mr. McKlarney related Montgomery County and the VDH had been led the initiative and requested to send a letter to Montgomery County signed by the Chairman.

Mr. Morris made a motion to approve sending a letter of appreciation to Montgomery County as requested. Mr. Lawson seconded the motion. The motion was approved 5-0 as follows: Voting Yes: Mr. Baker, Mr. Lawson, Mr. Martin, Mr. McCoy and Mr. Morris

Mr. McKlarney indicated the Sheriff's Office will be providing some security at the site and the county will pay a portion of the cost. He stated it is one of the only sites in the state. Mr. Lawson inquired if any had been sent for testing. Mr. McKlarney reported there had been no need as of yet. Members discussed turn around times on test results, and how the jurisdictions in the New River Valley had banded together to get this done.

Mr. McKlarney related one issue that could arise is the need for childcare for first responders. He advised the First United Methodist Church in Pearisburg had obtained a license and has volunteers to assist on that front if needed. Mr. McKlarney stated the intent is not to take business away from those already operating a daycare facility, but those can quickly fill up. He related the county is overwhelmed with offers from agencies and people wanting to help.

Mr. McKlarney reported staff has been making calls on the Senior Check program, with approximately 120 calls made on a daily or weekly basis. He indicated staff is finding out the needs and putting together the resources to meet them, noting Smith's Pharmacy in Rich Creek is offering to deliver prescriptions.

Mr. McKlarney advised the gift card program has generated over \$34,000 for local businesses and hopes it will be beneficial to them. He related water bills will be going out on April 13th, but no cutoffs will be done.

Mr. McKlarney reported Celanese had been very generous providing PPE for every police department in the county. He advised Giles is in much better shape in many in that area, and added no masks would be available through the state. Mr. McKlarney reported custodians would be in PPE starting next week, however, it will not be mandatory. He related information on sterilizing masks with hydrogen peroxide or UV light. Mr. McKlarney related all county departments have been outstanding, and stated there is no intention of closing county offices.

Mr. Martin inquired about the June 9th date for elections. Mr. McKlarney reported Ms. Altizer is concerned about the elections but has not received guidance from the state on how that is going to be dealt with.

Mr. Lawson expressed gratitude for Mr. McKlarney's guidance and leadership as well as staff taking care of the needs of the county. Mr. McKlarney indicated it is a team effort.

Mr. Baker inquired about taxes due in June. Mr. Chidester related he is waiting on guidance from the state but advised the county should move forward and attempt to collect. He indicated much of the tax collected will come from escrows and the county will work with others on setting up a payment plan. Mr. Chidester stated the revenue from those taxes will be critical, and if they come from escrow, people have already paid that money to the mortgage company.

PAYMENT OF WARRANTS

Mr. Lawson motioned to approve warrants in the amount of \$639,108.22, and Mr. Morris seconded the motion. The motion was approved 5-0 as follows: Voting Yes: Mr. Baker, Mr. Lawson, Mr. Martin, Mr. McCoy and Mr. Morris

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mr. Morris motioned to go into executive session as permitted by Virginia Code 2.2-3711, A (30) Contracts. Mr. Martin seconded the motion. The motion was approved 5-0 by rollcall vote as follows: Voting Yes: Mr. Baker, Mr. Lawson, Mr. Martin, Mr. McCoy and Mr. Morris

Mr. Morris motioned to return to open session and he certified that in the closed session just concluded, nothing was discussed except the matter or matters (1) specifically identified in the motion to convene in closed session and (2) lawfully permitted to be discussed under the provisions of the Virginia Freedom of Information act cited in that motion. Mr. Martin seconded the motion. The motion was approved 5-0 by rollcall vote as follows: Voting Yes: Mr. Baker, Mr. Lawson, Mr. Martin, Mr. McCoy and Mr. Morris

MEETING OPTIONS

Members discussed meeting options for public hearing and budget purposes during the pandemic. Mr. McKlarney related the distance of separation had been widened to ten feet. He stated he had contacted a PHD at Virginia Tech for her take on the matter, and she had advised to hold as many activities outside as practical. Members discussed options for locations.

ADJOURN

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned. The next meeting will be held on Thursday, April 16, 2020, at 6:30 PM. The meeting will be held at the Giles County Administration Office located at 315 North Main Street, Pearisburg.

APPROVED:

Chair

ATTEST:

Clerk