

PITTSYLVANIA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS'
BUSINESS MEETING

February 18, 2025

VIRGINIA: The Pittsylvania County Board of Supervisors' ("Board") Business Meeting was held on February 18, 2025, in the Board Meeting Room, 39 Bank Street, SE, Chatham, Virginia 24531.

CALL TO ORDER

Tucker called the Meeting to Order at 7:00 PM.

ROLL CALL

The following Board Members were present:

Robert M. Tucker, Jr. - Banister District
Eddie L. Hite, Jr. - Dan River District
Kenneth L. Bowman - Chatham-Blairs District
Darrell W. Dalton - Callands-Gretna District
Timothy W. Dudley - Staunton River District
William V. ("Vic") Ingram - Tunstall District
Murray W. Whittle - Westover District

AGENDA ITEMS TO BE ADDED

Motion to add Resolution adopting the tax rate as item 13a under Matters from Work Session, and to add the approval of the BEAD Letters of Support for Zitel, Brightspeed, and Verizon to the Consent Agenda.

RESULT: 7-0 (Approve)
MOVER: Dudley
SECONDER: Hite
AYES: Tucker, Hite, Bowman, Dalton, Dudley, Ingram, Whittle
NAYS: None
ABSTAIN: None

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion to approve Agenda.

RESULT: 7-0 (Approve)
MOVER: Ingram
SECONDER: Dudley
AYES: Tucker, Hite, Bowman, Dalton, Dudley, Ingram, Whittle
NAYS: None
ABSTAIN: None

CONSENT AGENDA

Motion to approve Consent Agenda.

RESULT: 7-0 (Approve)
MOVER: Dalton
SECONDER: Whittle
AYES: Tucker, Hite, Bowman, Dalton, Dudley, Ingram, Whittle
NAYS: None
ABSTAIN: None

- a. County's January 2025 Bill List Approval
- b. Resolution # 2025-02-01 (Roadway Abandonment; Portion of Jasper Wood Road); (Sutherlin) Approval
- c. Resolution # 2025-02-02 (Route 311 Berry Hill VDOT Project Road Abandonment) Approval
- d. Resolution # 2025-02-03 Adoption (Honoring First Responders; 1/19/2025 Frozen Pond Incident)
- e. Resolution # 2025-02-04 (Tropical Storm Helene State of Emergency Declaration) Rescission
- f. Service Weapon Purchase Approvals (Barksdale; Callands; Wade; Walker)
- g. Winter Storm Debris Landfill Tipping Fee Waiver Ratification Approval
- h. Appointment: Library Board (Town of Hurt); (Michael Irby)
- i. Certificate of Recognition (Honoring 100th Birthday; Annie Wilson) Approval
- j. BEAD Letters of Support (ZiTEL, Brightspeed, and Verizon) Approval

PRESENTATIONS

The Board recognized Ms. Annie Wilson for her 100th Birthday, and also recognized the Hurt Fire Department and all first responders who were involved in the frozen pond rescue for two teenagers in a pond in January.

HEARING OF THE CITIZENS

Chuck Angier, Callands-Gretna District, expressed disappointment in the Balico project, comparing its scale to other major energy projects and questioning its feasibility. He stated this project is over six times more than Smith Mountain Dam and twice as much as the biggest nuclear plant in the state.

Ken Moss, Callands-Gretna District, shared his opposition to the Balico project, highlighting the massive amount of electricity it would consume and the potential negative impact on the community. Moss stated that the 3,500 megawatts of electricity being generated is equivalent to roughly 35,000 100-watt light bulbs burning continuously, and the consumption of this electricity in one location is unprecedented. He urged the board to vote no.

Paul Johnson, Staunton River District and a member of the Hurt Town Council, shared his support for the Balico project, citing the economic benefits, including tax revenue and support for local fire departments. Johnson stated that Balico has agreed to put a \$3 surcharge on the 2 million gallons of water they will buy daily, with \$1 going to every EMS and firefighting agency in the County, which would amount to around \$21,000 per year. He also mentioned that Balico is not asking for a tax break and that the power plant will provide over \$30 million in tax revenue to the County annually.

Cole Poindexter, representing the Staunton River Watch, emphasized the environmental impact of the project, particularly on water consumption. Poindexter stated that the Balico project will consume 2 million gallons of water per day, which is enough to supply 6,607 households. He highlighted the group's long history of being involved with the Staunton River and their efforts to be good stewards of the resource. Poindexter urged the Board to act responsibly in allocating the precious water resource and consider alternative, less consumptive uses for the data center.

Jeff Love, Staunton River District, shared opposition against the Balico project, citing the negative impact on water resources and the lack of local job guarantees. Love stated that Balico will steal millions of gallons of water per day from the Staunton River, even during drought conditions, which will negatively impact water levels both upstream and downstream. He also mentioned that data centers do not require many local jobs, as they function predominantly through remote access, and that Balico's funding source is unclear.

Darrell Campbell, Chatham-Blairs District, expressed concerns about the Balico project's location and its potential impact on his church and community. Campbell stated that the noise from the project would be difficult to tolerate, and it would impact his church's rental properties and funeral services at the nearby cemetery. He argued that the project is in the wrong location, and he urged the board to reject the project regardless of its size, as he believes it continues to be downsized to make it more palatable.

Jeffrey Blaesing, Staunton River District, shared support for the Balico project, emphasizing the economic opportunities and the benefits to the community, including lower water rates for residents. Blaesing stated that progress and growth are important, and he believes the Balico project represents a significant opportunity for the County. He argued that the project will provide infrastructure improvements and that the water usage is a small portion of the Staunton River's average flow.

Gary Hodnett, Staunton River District and the mayor of the Town of Hurt, highlighted the potential benefits of the Balico project, including affordable water for residents and improved infrastructure. Hodnett stated that the project will provide water to homes along the 29 corridor, which will also benefit the fire departments with fire hydrants and lower insurance rates for residents. He argued that denying this project would be denying the opportunity to help the people of the Town of Hurt, who have suffered from high water rates for years.

Katie Whitehead, Chatham-Blairs District, and a geologist specializing in hydrology, raised concerns about the lack of information on the project's impact on the local hydrology. She questioned how the water will be initially treated to cool the data center, the composition and disposal of the residual water, and the potential impact on nearby streams, groundwater, and wetlands. Whitehead urged the Board to carefully consider these unanswered questions and the long-term welfare of the County before allowing Balico to proceed with the project.

Bob Majure, Staunton River District and a member of the Hurt Town Council, emphasized the importance of the Balico project for the County's tax revenue and infrastructure development. Majure stated that the project represents an opportunity for growth and that the County should be looking to support businesses that are willing to invest in the County's infrastructure, rather than relying on citizens to pay higher taxes and fees.

Tim Reynolds, Staunton River District and representing Balico, explained that the company has refined the project based on community feedback and highlighted the benefits of the project. Reynolds stated that Balico has delayed the public hearing to allow more time to provide additional information to the County and address concerns from the community and county staff.

Lexi Shelhorse, Callands-Gretna District, raised concerns about the Balico project, stating that the rhetoric presented to the public differs from the conversations revealed in FOIA documents. Shelhorse mentioned that Balico has already asked the Board to consider lowering the tax rate on data center equipment, even before going through the rezoning process. She argued that the project will bring major air and noise pollution, as well as drain the County's water resources, and urged the Board to carefully consider the health and quality of life impacts on the community.

Steve Worley, Staunton River District and a member of the Hurt Town Council, spoke in support of the Balico project. Worley stated that he has visited power plants and data centers similar to the proposed project and found that the noise and pollution concerns are unfounded. He argued that the power plant will be powered by clean natural gas and that the noise levels are not an issue. Worley also highlighted the financial benefits of the project, including the \$3 per million gallon surcharge that will provide funding for emergency services in the County.

Alice Bond, Staunton River District and a member of the Hurt Town Council, shared her experience visiting similar facilities to the proposed Balico project. Bond stated that she and others went to two power plants and a data center, and found that the noise levels were minimal, with the road traffic being louder than the facilities themselves. Bond concluded that the noise concerns about the Balico project are unfounded.

Amy Walker, Callands-Gretna District, provided a detailed comparison of the Balico project's scale to other data centers, emphasizing its significant size and potential visual impact. Walker stated that Balico's original proposal was for 84 data centers totaling over 33 million square feet, which would create a complex 14.3 miles long and 220 feet wide if placed end-to-end. She argued that this massive scale would negatively impact the communities of Chalk Level, , Whittles, Sheva, and Mill Creek, as well as the scenic views along Route 29.

Amanda Sink Wydner, Callands-Gretna District and representing Friends of Whittles and Concerned Citizens of Chalk Level, raised several concerns about the Balico project. She stated that Balico hosted an exclusive luncheon with three core messages: money is no object, they have just as much support as opposition, and they will finally do due diligence on the project. Wydner shared information from a letter indicating that a single turbine for the project would require a state major air permit due to nitrous oxide emissions, and she questioned what due diligence the County is doing to protect the health and safety of citizens.

Frank Fox, Chatham-Blairs District and representing Chatham First Incorporated, read a Resolution passed by the organization opposing both the Balico project and the rezoning of the land. The Resolution states that the project and rezoning would not serve the best interests of the citizens and businesses of Chatham and Pittsylvania County, and it urges the board to reject both the project and the rezoning request.

Jennifer East Cole, Callands-Gretna District, raised concerns about the lack of information on the project's impact on the local hydrology. She questioned how the water will be initially treated and

urged the Board to carefully consider these unanswered questions.

The Board recessed at 8:27 PM.

The Board reconvened at 8:35 PM.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

Rezoning Public Hearings

1. Case R-25-002 Nancy Weatherford; Rezoning from R-1, Residential Suburban Subdivision District, to A-1, Agricultural District. The Planning Commission recommended by a 7-0 vote, with no opposition, that the petitioner's request be granted. (Supervisor Ingram)

In Case R-25-002, Nancy Weatherford (Petitioner), has petitioned to rezone property located on State Road 869/Stony Mill Road, in the Tunstall Election District and shown on the Tax Maps as part of GPIN # 1378-18-3524. The applicant is requesting to rezone 8.394 acres, from R-1, Residential Suburban Subdivision District, to A-1, Agricultural District, to allow the property to be consolidated with an adjacent parcel zoned A-1. Once the property is rezoned to A-1, all uses listed under Pittsylvania County Code Section 35-178 are a Permitted Use. The Comprehensive Plan indicates the area is suitable for Medium to High Density Residential uses. Zoning conditions and Ordinance standards shall control the density of allowable development. On January 7, 2025, the Planning Commission recommended by a 7-0 vote, with no opposition, that the petitioner's request be granted.

Tucker opened the Public Hearing at 8:37 PM. Rich Armstrong was present to represent the Petition. No one signed up to speak and Tucker closed the Public Hearing at 8:38 PM.

Motion to approve the rezoning of 8.394 acres, from R-1, Residential Suburban Subdivision District, to A-1, Agricultural District, to allow the property to be consolidated with an adjacent parcel zoned A-1.

RESULT:	7-0 (Approve)
MOVER:	Ingram
SECONDER:	Dalton
AYES:	Tucker, Hite, Bowman, Dalton, Dudley, Ingram, Whittle
NAYS:	None
ABSTAIN:	None

2. Case R-25-003 Janet Brooks; Rezoning from M-1, Industrial District, Light Industry, to A-1, Agricultural District. The Planning Commission recommended by a 7-0 vote, with no opposition, that the petitioner's request be granted. (Supervisor Dalton)

In Case R-25-003, Janet Brooks ("Petitioner") has petitioned to rezone 30.36 acres, from M-1, Industrial District, Light Industry, to A-1, Agricultural District (to allow a single family dwelling to be constructed on the property and to allow for agricultural uses). The subject property is located on State Road 801/Dry Bridge Road, in the Callands-Gretna Election District and shown on the Tax Maps as GPIN # 2416-59-9166. Once the property is rezoned to A-1, all uses listed under Pittsylvania County Code § 35-178 are permitted. On January 7, 2025, the Planning Commission recommended by a 7-0 vote, with no opposition, that the Petitioner's request be granted.

Tucker opened the Public Hearing at 8:39 PM. Janet Brooks was present to represent the Petition. No one signed up to speak and Tucker closed the Public Hearing at 8:40 PM

Motion approving the rezoning of 30.36 acres from M-1, Industrial District, Light Industry, to A-1, Agricultural District, to allow a single family dwelling to be constructed on the property and to allow agricultural uses.

RESULT: 7-0 (Approve)
MOVER: Dalton
SECONDER: Dudley
AYES: Tucker, Hite, Bowman, Dalton, Dudley, Ingram, Whittle
NAYS: None
ABSTAIN: None

3. Case R-25-004 Eric and Ashley Brown; Rezoning from R-1, Residential Suburban Subdivision District, to A-1, Agricultural District. The Planning Commission recommended by a 7-0 vote, with no opposition, that the petitioners' request be granted. (Supervisor Bowman)

In Case R-25-004, Eric and Ashley Brown ("Petitioners") have petitioned to rezone 13.15 acres, from R-1, Residential Suburban Subdivision District, to A-1, Agricultural District (to allow an accessory structure to be placed in the front yard). The subject property is located on State Road 839/W I Powell Road in the Chatham-Blairs Election District and shown on the Tax Maps as GPIN # 1492-77-7513. Once the property is rezoned to A-1, all uses listed under Pittsylvania County Code § 35-178 are permitted. On January 7, 2025, the Planning Commission recommended by a 7-0 vote, with no opposition, that the Petitioners' request be granted.

Tucker opened the Public Hearing at 8:41 PM. Eric and Ashley Brown were present to represent the Petition. No one signed up to speak and Tucker closed the Public Hearing at 8:42 PM.

Motion approving the rezoning of 13.15 acres from R-1, Residential Suburban Subdivision District, to A-1, Agricultural District, to allow an accessory structure to be placed on the property.

RESULT: 7-0 (Approve)
MOVER: Bowman
SECONDER: Hite
AYES: Tucker, Hite, Bowman, Dalton, Dudley, Ingram, Whittle
NAYS: None
ABSTAIN: None

MATTERS FROM WORK SESSION

a. Resolution # 2025-02-05 (Adopting Tax Rate) Approval

Motion to approve Resolution # 2025-02-05, adopting the tax rates as recommended by County Staff.

RESULT: 7-0 (Approve)

MOVER: Dudley
SECONDER: Bowman
AYES: Tucker, Hite, Bowman, Dalton, Dudley, Ingram, Whittle
NAYS: None
ABSTAIN: None

BOARD MEMBER REPORTS

- Ingram noted the passing of Mr. Billy Wilson, a mayor in the Cascade community who was a tremendous supporter of that area. He expressed gratitude to the utility linemen who worked to restore power during the recent ice storm, as well as the volunteer fire and rescue personnel. Ingram also spoke about the tragic shooting of a Danville police officer, emphasizing the need to keep law enforcement in thoughts and prayers as they face difficult situations.
- Dudley thanked everyone for attending the meeting and expressed appreciation for the service of the Board members. Dudley acknowledged the hard work of the county staff in preparing for the meeting, as well as the dedication of the fire and rescue personnel, stating that their lives are on the line every time they respond to emergencies. Dudley also emphasized the need to keep the community and first responders in thoughts and prayers, particularly in light of the recent tragic events.
- Dalton also thanked everyone for attending the meeting and expressed appreciation for the work of the county staff. Dalton specifically recognized the efforts of the utility linemen and public safety personnel, including the Mecklenburg County team, for their work in restoring power during the recent ice storm. Dalton emphasized the importance of keeping the community and first responders in thoughts and prayers, and he encouraged everyone to have a safe trip home.
- Bowman shared that he attended the VACO Government Day at the Virginia General Assembly, meeting with legislators to discuss matters of importance to the County. Bowman was also honored to be selected as the Chairman of the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the 2025 term. Bowman attended a Beautification Committee meeting, where they discussed plans to purchase trail cameras to monitor and report littering offenders in the County. Lastly, Bowman remembered the passing of Mr. Philip Hilton, a member of the Dry Fork Volunteer Fire Department, and expressed condolences to his family.
- Whittle expressed his appreciation for the firefighters and first responders, and wished for safe travels for everyone. He acknowledged the difficult work these individuals do, and conveyed his blessings and well-wishes for them.
- Hite thanked everyone who came out to the meeting, noting their passion and involvement in the community. He appreciated the public's desire to be engaged. Hite also recognized the efforts of the 911 dispatchers and other county staff who worked tirelessly during the recent ice storm to ensure calls were answered and essential functions continued. Additionally, Hite shared that the Laurel Grove Fire Department had invited him to their annual banquet, where he met a couple from western North Carolina who the firefighters

had assisted. Hite expressed condolences for the recent passing of two long-time members of Ringgold Fire and Rescue, Bobby Jean Atkinson and Jimmie Hollie, and asked for prayers for their community.

- Tucker expressed gratitude to his fellow board members, stating that they make it easy to work with and that their communication and collaboration are critically important. Tucker emphasized the importance of protecting the County's brand and image, as it is crucial for attracting businesses and industry. Tucker thanked the county staff, especially those who worked during their three-day weekend to assist in restoring power to residents during the recent ice storm. He acknowledged the frustration expressed on social media but praised the linemen for their tenacity and hard work, recognizing the challenges they faced in getting the power back on. Tucker reflected on the recent natural disasters in other parts of the country, expressing empathy for those who lost their homes and emphasizing the importance of gratitude for the basic necessities many in the County were able to return to, despite the temporary inconvenience.

COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR REPORTS

Shorter reiterated the importance of recognizing the County departments and employees who ensured essential government functions continued during the recent storm event, in addition to the first responders who worked throughout the storm. Shorter expressed his appreciation for the dedication and commitment of these County staff members.

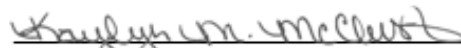
Evans reflected on a quote about the joy we feel having more to do with the focus of our lives than the circumstances. He appreciated the focus, capabilities, competence, and commitment of the Board and County employees, stating that it is great work to be a part of.

ADJOURNMENT

Tucker adjourned the Meeting at 9:00 PM.



Robert M. Tucker, Jr., Chairman
Pittsylvania County Board of Supervisors



Kaylyn M. McCluster, Clerk
Pittsylvania County Board of Supervisors