

VIRGINIA: AT THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE DINWIDDIE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS HELD IN THE MULTI-PURPOSE ROOM IN THE PAMPLIN ADMINISTRATION BUILDING, IN DINWIDDIE COUNTY, VIRGINIA, ON THE 24TH DAY OF AUGUST, 2009 AT 4:00 P.M.

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
PRESENT:

DONALD L. HARAWAY – CHAIR	ELECTION DISTRICT #2
HARRISON A. MOODY – VICE CHAIR	ELECTION DISTRICT #1
MICHAEL W. STONE	ELECTION DISTRICT #5
DORETHA E. MOODY	ELECTION DISTRICT #4
JOHN V. TALMAGE	ELECTION DISTRICT #3

NOTE: Ms. Moody left at 6:00 p.m.

ADMINISTRATION

PRESENT: W. KEVIN MASSENGILL, COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR
ANNE HOWERTON, DIVISION CHIEF OF FINANCE & GENERAL SERVICES
JOHN C. BLAIR II, COUNTY ATTORNEY

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1. ROLL CALL

The Chairman of the Board of Supervisors called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m., followed by the roll call.

PRESENT: Mr. Stone
Mr. Talmage
Ms. Moody
Mr. Moody
Mr. Haraway

Chairman Haraway spoke of the passing of Dr. Richard Vaughn. Dr. Vaughn was Superintendent of Schools from the 1970's to the early 1990's. Mr. Haraway asked to observe a moment of silence in honor of Dr. Richard Vaughn.

2. AMENDMENTS TO AGENDA

Mr. Haraway stated that several people had indicated a desire to speak at this meeting. He stated that normally during a Board work session there is no citizen comment period. He asked that those who wished to speak would raise their hands and seven people indicated they would like to speak.

It was the consensus of the Board that citizen input be allowed. A time limit of three minutes was allowed. Mr. Haraway asked that the agenda be amended to allow for citizen input.

Upon motion of Mr. Talmage, seconded by Ms. Moody,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Supervisors of Dinwiddie County, Virginia that the agenda is amended as stated.

Ayes: Mr. Stone, Mr. Talmage, Ms. Moody, Mr. Moody, Mr. Haraway
Nays: None

3. GENERAL REASSESSMENT DISCUSSION

W. Kevin Massengill, County Administrator discussed the options before the Board concerning the general real estate reassessment and the Request for Proposals (RFP-34-09). He stated that last spring the Board had asked administration the timeframe whereby the reassessment could be reviewed legally to do a new evaluation. At that time staff made a recommendation to develop a new RFP at the beginning of this fiscal year to discuss the general requirements of the real estate reassessment. He stated that the four-year cycle has not been changed. The Board does have the ability to have a special reassessment however. The new process would be that the request for proposals be put out as soon as possible. He stated that the general real estate reassessment process is a little different than the other goods and services that the County procures. One of the main reasons is

because the end result (the deliverable) does not come to the County, the County Attorney or the Commissioner of the Revenue but to the Circuit Court.

Mr. Massengill stated that there had been the thought to add something extra to the general reassessment process that was not included in the last process. The suggestion was to infuse someone into the process with the technical expertise and qualifications with a day-to-day or weekly responsibility to work with the reassessment firm to add quality assurance that what is being done is being done correctly. That person (or board, i.e. Board of Assessors) could report back to the Board of Supervisors. He stated that Ms. Stevens, Commissioner of the Revenue, had been asked to attend the meeting to address some of the new data coming in regarding sales ratio and the real estate market.

Lori Stevens, Commissioner of the Revenue, distributed information to the Board and to the public. She discussed the following: the sales ratio; where the sales were taking place in the county; non-qualifying sales; listing of sales through August 14th; and the fact that the market has slowed in new construction.

Mr. Massengill discussed the options before the Board: a designated employee to work with the reassessment firm; a Board of Assessors; and the possibility of a more in-depth sales analysis; and if that sales ratio is still fairly high, the Board may choose not to do a reassessment. He stated that the reason the Board had stated a desire to do another reassessment was based on the fact that a four-year spread was too long a period of time; and that the Board wanted someone to go out into the field and review what was done. He stated that in speaking with some of the Board members, staff felt it came down to a decision between the first two options: a full or part-time person as an advisor to the Board, or a Board of Assessors.

Mr. Massengill stated that the goal was for the Board to advise staff as to whether to go forward with the General Real Estate Reassessment Request for Proposals that was before them.

Mr. Haraway stated that he had recently been in favor of the County having its own Real Estate Tax Assessment office. However, the building permit information that had been provided showed him that the County is not ready at this time – the cost would be too great; and the tax rate would have to go up (which at this time would have to be passed on to the tax payer). He said he would like to go forward with a different company than the last reassessment; and to have someone who would check on the work done by the company.

Mr. Moody stated that he felt the main thing to be decided at this meeting was whether to go ahead and put out the RFP because of the deadline (December 31, 2010 would be the qualifying year). The firm would need to be hired by late September or early October in order to give them twelve or thirteen months to send out the notices, start the field process, and file the land book by December 31, 2010. Mr. Massengill stated that when the RFP was put out to bid it was the desire of administration that everyone would know the expectation of the County. Those who would put in their bids would need to know there would be a designated County employee (or a Board of Assessors) working with them.

Mr. Stone stated that as Mr. Massengill had stated at an earlier meeting, the State Code does not allow the County to hire an assessor and an outside third party agency to do an assessment at the same time. He said he was in favor of a full time or part time position to work with the reassessment firm.

Mr. Talmage stated that regarding the last reassessment, the County did not pay to have the reassessment firm go out and actually walk property (that would have cost a great deal more). He said that he felt the County needed someone to follow up if a citizen has a complaint – someone who could actually go out and visit the property. He added that he felt a full time person would be needed.

Mr. Haraway stated that it appeared that the consensus of the Board was to go ahead with the Request for Proposals as it was written, and hire a full or part time person as well to assist the firm.

John C. Blair II, County Attorney, stated that one of the aims that would be in the contract with the chosen firm was that the Code does provide for a three month extension. He said he wanted to write the contract this time so that the Board has the ability to say to the assessor that the land book will be filed in the Circuit Court on extension of time so that problems can be worked out (rather than having to be filed by December 31).

(The agenda was amended to add the item below.)

4. CITIZEN COMMENTS

1. John Wamsley – 2619 Oxford Drive – Sutherland – stated that the U-Votid group was asking for fairness. He spoke in opposition to the last reassessment. He said he would like citizens to be able to see and understand their field data sheets. He also asked for a meeting with the Board so he could present some ideas on the RFP.
2. Edward Wells – commented about the Equalization Board and said it was not just. He stated he did not believe the last reassessment firm did their job correctly.
3. Willard Walker – spoke in opposition to the last reassessment firm.
4. Charley Lowry – spoke in opposition to the last reassessment firm.
5. _____ (did not give name) – spoke in opposition to the last reassessment.
6. Robert Hoyle stated that he is against placing any more tax burden on the citizens of the county to pay for someone to clean up behind the reassessment firm. He said if an extension could have been filed last time, it may have nullified some of the problems that are being dealt with now. He asked about home site values on vacant land. He asked for an explanation of the term “termination by convenience of the County” in the reassessment contract.

Mr. Blair, County Attorney, stated to answer Mr. Hoyle’s question that the term regarding termination meant that if the County sees something that is out of kilter, or poorly performed, the County has the right to terminate the contract at that time. That would allow the County to hire another firm to complete the reassessment process.

Mr. Hoyle asked if that meant the County can terminate the contract before the land book is turned in.

Mr. Blair answered right.

Mr. Hoyle said that at last December’s meeting it was said that once a reassessment has been started it cannot be stopped. He asked if a reassessment can be terminated by the County before the land book is turned in. He said he was going to question the fact as to whether everything was done legally.

Mr. Blair stated that if the contract was terminated for cause or for convenience, the County could hire another firm to complete the reassessment

7. _____ (did not give name) spoke against land purchased on Route 460 by the County to build shopping centers, etc.

Mr. Massengill, County Administrator, answered that a large percentage of the land that was bought on Route 460 was bought through funds from the Tobacco Commission. The County’s match was \$250,000, and we received 2.5 million dollars from the Tobacco Commission. Those funds are designated for economic development.

NOTE: Ms. Moody left at 6:00 p.m.

Upon motion of Mr. Stone, seconded by Mr. Moody,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Supervisors of Dinwiddie County, Virginia that the General Real Estate Reassessment Request for Proposals is approved as presented.

Ayes: Mr. Talmage, Mr. Stone, Mr. Moody, Mr. Haraway

Nays: None

Absent: Ms. Moody

Mr. Wamsley stated that he had wanted to discuss the RFP with the Commissioner of the Revenue, the County Attorney, and the County Administrator before it was put out.

It was agreed that they would meet before the end of the week.

The motion will still stand unless there are any significant changes after the meeting.

5. ADJOURNMENT

Upon motion of Mr. Stone to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Talmage,

Ayes: Ms. Moody, Mr. Stone, Mr. Moody, Mr. Haraway

Nays: None

Absent: Ms. Moody

The meeting was adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

Donald L. Haraway
Chairman

ATTEST: _____
W. Kevin Massengill
County Administrator
Clerk to the Board

/wjn