

At the regular meeting of the Charlotte County Board of Supervisors held at the Administration Building on July 11, 2022, at 1:00 p.m.

Present: Gary D. Walker-Chairman  
Will Garnett-Vice Chairman  
Garland H. Hamlett, Jr.  
Robert L. Shook, Jr.  
Hazel Bowman Smith  
Tony Reeves  
Walter T. Bailey

Absent:

Chairman Walker called the meeting to order.

County Administrator Daniel Witt read the Code of Accessibility.

Supervisor Reeves gave the invocation.

Supervisor Garnett led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Motion was made by Supervisor Hamlett, seconded by Supervisor Garnett, and carried with all other members present and voting yes to approve the agenda as presented.

Motion was made by Supervisor Bailey, seconded by Supervisor Smith, and carried with all other members present and voting yes to approve the June 2023 minutes as amended.

***Committee Reports:***

***Supervisor Bailey*** stated that he and Assistant County Administrator Monica Elder attended the Virginia Growth Alliance meeting and noted the Secretary of Commerce will be visiting. They will be working on a plan to present what the County has to offer to contacts in Richmond. He stated that project Porkchop is moving along. Supervisor Bailey also stated that the Rescue Squad is still struggling with staffing.

***Supervisor Shook*** none

***Supervisor Hamlett*** stated that Dr. Moore, Executive Director from Crossroads was in attendance and wanted to welcome her.

***Supervisor Reeves*** none

***Supervisor Smith*** attended the CPMT meeting and stated they are having a hard time with billing issues and bills may be late. She stated that she had also attended the Planning Commission meetings with the focus being on solar.

***Chairman Walker*** stated that he attended the Commonwealth Regional Council meeting and was pleased with the work they are doing. Chairman Walker also stated regarding the Recreation Committee, Charlotte County ball teams are doing a wonderful job in the state tournaments and advancing through the finals.

***Ms. Petrina Carter*** gave an update on Tri-County Community Action Agency and explained that 2-million dollars of the 3.8-million-dollar budget is for HeadStart, which is not offered for Charlotte County. She stated that most of the remaining funds go toward the needs of those affected by domestic violence, a service they do offer in Charlotte County. Ms. Carter stated that TCCAA is actively looking to hire a Housing Solution Specialist and they have been hiring new employees around the state. She closed by stating things were going well and she appreciated the Board's help.

Supervisor Bailey asked Ms. Carter to elaborate on the Housing Solution Specialist employment position. Ms. Carter stated that the position was created to put boots on the ground and get into the community, their only area would be Charlotte County. She then stated that homelessness in rural communities looks much different than urban communities. Supervisor Bailey asked Ms. Carter if first responders were to find someone in deplorable conditions, would they contact TCCAA, to which she responded yes.

Supervisor Smith stated she saw where numerical data was broken down for Charlotte County for Energy Share and asked if all the numerical data on the handout was for Charlotte County, to which Ms. Carter replied it was.

Chairman Walker asked Ms. Carter if TCCAA provided shelter for domestic abuse situations, to which Ms. Carter replied they did at an undisclosed location.

**Mr. Scott Frederick** gave an update for VDOT and stated that they have been doing routine maintenance, cutting trees, checking signs, fixing potholes/soft shoulders, and have finished the first round of mowing for the year. He stated VDOT will be making an asphalt ditch on highway 47 to solve the problem Supervisor Hamlett reported at the last meeting. Mr. Frederick presented the crash report for Virginia which read there was a total of 968 fatalities: 247 alcohol involved, 234 unrestrained, and 445 speed involved. He compared that to Charlotte County's report of a total of 181 accidents: 6 fatalities, 4 alcohol involved, 4 speed involved, and 5 unrestrained motorist. Mr. Frederick stated that Charlotte County had 0.57/1000 death rate regarding accidents. He stressed the importance of wearing your seat belt and not drinking and driving! Supervisor Hamlett thanked Mr. Frederick for putting new signs on the sharp curve on route 680 and suggested it might be beneficial for VDOT to shave the hill and straighten the road.

**Mr. Brian Tuck and Mrs. Amanda Lee** approached the Board to give a report on Charlotte County Department of Social Services. She stated that CCDSS had lost their second employee in the past month. Mrs. Lee stated that Mrs. Sari Goff, Director, has interviewed each employee at CCDSS and asked retention questions. Mrs. Goff asked that Mrs. Lee stress how important salaries are, and the County is losing good employees at a fast pace to higher paid jobs. Mrs. Lee thanked the Board for including them in the Salary Study and stated that CCDSS is very hopeful that a change can be implemented

Mr. Tuck then addressed the Board saying that Charlotte County Social Services Profile is made up of four different units: benefits, family services, CSA, and administrative. Mr. Tuck stated in 2021 the population of Charlotte County was 11,280 citizens, with CCDSS serving 4,535 of those citizens in the Medicaid, SNAP and TANF services only, which equals 39% of the population. He stated that 17% of all ages and 26% of children are living in poverty in Charlotte County. Mr. Tuck stated CCDSS expenditures for all programs, including CSA, for 2021 were \$41,535,945 with \$754,528 being the cost to the County, which equals 1.8% of the County's budget. Mr. Tuck stated that CCDSS has always been very careful with local funds, even returning monies that aren't used. He then discussed the other programs that CCDSS provides, including but not limited to: food pantries, Thanksgiving baskets, and Christmas presents to children and adults in need. Mr. Tuck stated that CCDSS just received their Dashboard from the State, which he stated is comparable to a report card, and they were pleased to see that they were rated number one in eight out of the ten scoring criteria in the Piedmont region! Supervisor Smith then commented to say that she was the former Financial Analyst and CSA Coordinator of CCDSS and resigned from Charlotte County because of the low pay and the County really needs to do something to retain our workers that we have invested in.

**Mr. Chris Russell** approached the Board and presented the E-911 Report. He stated that in 2021 there were 10,567 calls received for service with 5,947 received through 911. He stated the call volume summary contained 5,292 calls for service with 2,747 calls received through 911, and over 27,000 administration phone calls (calls coming in and going out). He stated that is close to 200 calls a day. Mr. Russell stated that 163 address signs, posts and/or 911 markers have been

replaced, 73 of those being from vandalism, and 23 new addresses have been created in the county. He stated the department has completed their year goal of putting a new communication system in place, which is working effectively. Mr. Russell stated other projects that have been completed or are in process are as follows: completion of the set up the new operation text 911, employees are completing dispatcher training and taking care of burying fiber optic lines. The main goal for the current year is to separate the jobs of Dispatcher and Jailer, as of now employees do both jobs, when they should be doing only one. This is having a big effect on their employee turnover and says he has lost 19 employees in his four years of being 911 Coordinator. Another goal for this year is getting more citizens to sign up for the Code Red system. Mr. Russell offered to give tours of his office to the Board to demonstrate how the system works and show what they need for the future.

Supervisor Bailey stated that some of the citizens aren't getting the Code Red call because of spam blockers. Mr. Russell suggested putting the Code Red phone number in the phone's contacts to avoid the call being blocked. Supervisor Reeves then asked how to enroll in the program, to which Mr. Russell directed him to the County website.

Supervisor Hamlett asked how the signs are being vandalized. Mr. Russell responded the signs are being broken off the pole, slid out of the holders, or the post and sign are both being taken. Supervisor Hamlett asks if the same signs are repeatedly taken to which Mr. Russell answered yes. Mr. Russell stated that the signs used to be fiberglass for \$5 each, then thin metal for \$10 each, now they use a hard metal that is called a "vandal proof sign" for \$38 each. He added it cost the County \$70 when the sign and post are taken.

***Public Comment Period:***

***Kay Pierantoni*** approached the Board and thanked Supervisor Hamlett for speaking up at the Randolph Solar public hearing and showed her dissatisfaction with the remaining members behavior at the hearing. She continued to speak regarding Supervisor Bailey's comments during the hearing and stated that she did not believe his statements were true at the Randolph Solar public hearing.

***Hezidine Foster*** thanked the Board for their support of the Central High Museum, specifically thanking County Administrator Daniel Witt for his time spent at the Juneteenth program. She stated that they have enrolled two students from Randolph-Henry High School into the Legacy program, helping them to start their careers. Ms. Foster stated they are always open to student suggestions and their mission is to uplift Charlotte County.

***PK Pettus*** approached the Board to speak about the adverse environmental impacts of solar developments. Ms. Pettus presented a map that she developed regarding solar projects in Charlotte County. She said that solar is just beginning and the County needs to be aware of the environmental impacts that solar projects will have on land and water in Charlotte County.

Chairman Walker closed the Public Comment Period.

***Mrs. Heather Brown*** presented the bids received for the improvements to Courthouse Square, saying that a grant was received for damages done by Hurricane Michael in 2018. Mrs. Brown explained that three bids were received for new copper gutters at the historical courthouse with Gupton Sheet Metal being the lowest bid at \$17,000. She continued to explain the excavation and landscaping project of 5 locations at the Courthouse Square, with Grounds & Maintenance Solutions being the lowest bid at \$9,875. The last bid was for replacement of HVAC units to remove mold and buildup with Riddleberger Brothers, Inc. being the lowest bid at \$44,745, she stated. Supervisor Smith asked if the original grant was to do HVAC for the old Clerk's Office and Registrar's Office, Mrs. Brown responded that it is the same building and that was the original plan for the grant money. Supervisor Bailey asked where the HVAC company was located, to which Mrs. Brown replied in Lynchburg. Supervisor Hamlett asked when the new HVAC is installed will they also be installing dehumidifiers, Mrs. Brown answered currently the company has a plan to deter water and moisture but was not installing a dehumidifier.

**Chairman Walker and County Administrator Witt** discussed when would be the best time to set the Public Hearing for Love Over Crisis, LLC's Conditional Use Permit Application and decided that the Board meeting on August 8<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 PM would be best.

**Chairman Walker** stated that he is working on a nominee for the Charlotte Court House Historic District Review Board.

**Supervisor Smith** asked County Administrator Witt to review the solar update, broadband and economic development sections in his Administrator's Report for the public to hear.

**Administrator Witt** stated at the Public Hearing was on July 5<sup>th</sup> for Randolph Solar project's CUP and Siting agreement, both were approved. He suggested that the Public Hearing for Tall Pines be held in the auditorium at Randolph Henry High School. He stated that he has discussed the ways different localities are assessing solar projects with Naisha Pridgen, Commissioner of Revenue, and Patricia Berkeley, Treasurer. Currently they assess solar projects once the solar panels produce electricity.

He stated that regarding broadband, contracts have been executed and the County is waiting to hear back from the DHCD. Administrator Witt then explained that the IDA has a meeting this week that will involve discussion about a 50/50 grant for renovations of the Shaw building. He continued to say the County has received a grant to upgrade Heartland Park to a tier four facility. Administrator Witt also stated that Keysville has approached the County about including them in the enterprise zone and he and Assistant County Administrator Monica Elder are currently working on that and hope to be completed in the fall.

Supervisor Hamlett asked if Administrator Witt knew of any other solar projects coming to the County to which he answered he did not. Supervisor Hamlett stated regarding Item 10 in the Administrator's Report, he would really like to see "Welcome to Charlotte County" signs installed. Administrator Witt stated that he has experience with creating a sign program and estimates \$30,000 might fund 2-3 signs. Supervisor Hamlett and Chairman Walker ask Administrator Witt to price some options to present to the Board.

Supervisor Hamlett made the motion to approve the appropriations for FY2022. Vice Chairman Garnett seconded the motion with all other Board members voting Aye.

Motion carried.

Supervisor Bailey made the motion to approve post year FY2022 invoices for payment. Supervisor Shook seconded the motion with all other Board members voting Aye.

Motion carried.

Supervisor Reeves made the motion to approve the refund for building permit number 419. Supervisor Smith seconded the motion with all other Board members voting Aye.

Motion carried.

Supervisor Hamlett made the motion to approve payment of utility checks received after the June 2022 board meeting. Supervisor Reeves seconded the motion with all other Board members voting Aye.

Motion carried.

***Public Comment Period:***

**Kathy Liston** approached the Board and stated that she agreed with Supervisor Hamlett that the County needs welcome signs to present a more positive, better version of Charlotte County. She

stated that this has been discussed at every meeting and it is time for the Board to make a decision.

**Kay Pierantoni** stated that nobody on the East Coast has more solar development than Charlotte County. She asked what will happen to the County's wildlife, the damage to the highways, depreciation of surrounding properties or ground water. Mrs. Pierantoni stated the revenue from the Federal Government to our schools would probably be reduced with the payments Charlotte County will receive from Solunesco.

Chairman Walker closed the Public Comment Period.

**Administrator Witt** stated that Supervisor Smith asked for "Solar Discussion" to be on the agenda to discuss taking a pause on solar projects. He explained that the County Attorney said there are many different options to take and suggested getting a consensus of the Board. He then stated the options include removing solar, halting solar, referring projects to the Planning Commission or Status Quo: continuing handling the way the County is now. He stated that Staff needed direction.

**Supervisor Hamlett** suggested taking a pause, that he is not against solar, but future situations will bring unknown questions.

**Supervisor Smith** stated she is not against solar but there are so many current projects under development. Supervisor Smith then stated she recommends completing Tall Pines Solar Project since it is already so far along, then pausing on solar projects.

**Chairman Walker** asked how long the Planning Commission has to complete the Comprehensive Plan, to which Administrator Witt answered they should be done by July of 2023. Supervisor Smith agreed with Mr. Witt. Chairman Walker asked which of your neighbors you will say no to, as in someone didn't get their project submitted in time, or how the Board would make it fair to all citizens.

**Administrator Witt** stated that the County Attorney recommended not to vote on any of the options today, but rather to choose which ones they might be interested in pursuing, then he would send in more information on those options.

**Supervisor Reeves** stated that he does think the County should pause but doesn't know a fair way to do that.

**Supervisor Bailey** stated the County certainly needs to look at all options, they all deserve consideration.

**Vice-Chairman Garnett** stated that it might be a good idea to only take applications in certain months and determine a start date.

**Supervisor Shook** suggested that we pause until the Comprehensive Plan is complete, then re-evaluate.

**Supervisor Smith** stated she doesn't think the County should remove it as a permitted use because it is so hard to restart.

**Supervisor Hamlett** stated that he agreed with Supervisor Garnett, and it is in line with how the State does business. Administrator Witt stated that listening to the discussion, he recommended getting information on pausing until 2023 or until Comprehensive Plan is complete. Chairman Walker asked to please do that.

Chairman Walker announced that the Board will go into Closed Session.

Motion was made by Vice Chairman Garnett, seconded by Supervisor Hamlett that the Charlotte County Board of Supervisors hold a closed meeting for the following purpose:

1. Pursuant to Virginia Code Section 2.2-3711.A.29, discussion of the award of a public contract involving the expenditure of public funds, including discussion of the terms of such contract, where discussion in an open session would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the Board; specifically, the Board will discuss negotiation of terms for forensic auditing services of the Charlotte County Rescue Squad.
2. Pursuant to Virginia Code Section 2.2-3711.A.8, Consultation with legal counsel employed or retained by a public body regarding specific legal matters requiring the provision of legal advice by such counsel; specifically, the Board will discuss the siting agreement with Tall Pines Solar, LLC.

Roll call vote as follows: Supervisor Garnett-Aye; Supervisor Hamlett-Aye; Supervisor Bailey-Aye; Supervisor Reeves- Aye; Supervisor Shook-Aye; Supervisor Smith-Aye and Chairman Walker-Aye.

Motion carried.

Motion was made by Supervisor Garnett, seconded by Supervisor Hamlett to return to open session and adopt the following certification of closed meeting:

Pursuant to Virginia Code Section 2.2-3712.B., the Supervisors signing below certify that, to the best of each Supervisor's knowledge, (i) only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements under the Freedom of Information Act and (ii) only such public business matters as were identified in the Motion by which the closed meeting was convened were heard, discussed or considered in the closed meeting of the Charlotte County Board of Supervisors.

Roll call vote as follows: Supervisor Garnett-Aye; Supervisor Hamlett-Aye; Supervisor Bailey-Aye; Supervisor Reeves- Aye; Supervisor Shook-Aye; Supervisor Smith-Aye and Chairman Walker-Aye.

Motion carried.

Supervisor Reeves motioned to retain Robinson, Farmer, Cox Associates to complete the audit for Charlotte County Rescue Squad. Supervisor Hamlett seconded the motion with all other members of the Board voting Aye.

Motion carried.

Supervisor Smith motioned to schedule a Public Hearing on August 2, 2022 at 6:00 PM regarding the Tall Pines Siting Agreement and Conditional Use Permit. Supervisor Reeves seconded the motion.

Roll call vote as follows: Supervisor Smith- Aye; Supervisor Reeves- Aye; Supervisor Garnett-Aye; Supervisor Bailey- Aye; Supervisor Hamlett- Aye; Supervisor Shook- Aye and Chairman Walker- Aye.

Motion carried.

Supervisor Hamlett stated that the Commissioner of Revenue has said that she is having problems getting information from citizens regarding personal property and wanted to make sure the Board will be supportive of her.

Being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned.

BY: \_\_\_\_\_  
Daniel N. Witt, Clerk

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
Will Garnett-Vice Chairman