

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING

September 19, 2023

A meeting of the Campbell County Board of Supervisors was held on the 19th day of September 2023 in the Multi-Use Room of the Walter J. Haberer Building, Rustburg, Virginia. The members present were:

Matt W. Cline, Chairman, Presiding	Concord Election District
Kenneth R. Brown	Spring Hill Election District
Justin A. Carwile	Timberlake Election District
A. Dale Moore	Altavista Election District
Steve W. Shockley	Sunburst Election District
Charlie A. Watts II	Brookneal Election District

Absent was:

Jon R. Hardie	Rustburg Election District
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Also present were:

Frank J. Rogers, County Administrator
Clifton M. Tweedy, Deputy County Administrator
Paul Harvey, Assistant County Administrator
Tracy Fairchild, Director of Public Safety
Randall Johnson, Deputy Director, Fire Marshal
Michelle Turner, Deputy Director, EMS
Myra Simpson, Deputy Director, Communications
Benny David, Animal Control Officer
Deborah Bush, Communications Officer
Catherine H. Moore, Clerk

Chairman Cline called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m. and announced this would be a meeting to receive an overview of the Public Safety System.

// OVERVIEW OF PUBLIC SAFETY SYSTEM

Administrator Rogers indicated Tracy Fairchild, Director of Public Safety, has compiled a binder to provide an overview of the services provided by the Public Safety Department, how it was structured, and the challenges facing the department especially as the demand for services continued to grow. Looking at the budget, 22% of the General Fund supported Public Safety which would include the Sheriff's Department. The Public Safety Department continues to evolve especially as less services were provided through the volunteer system.

Director Fairchild first introduced her staff mentioning she would reach 30 years of service on October 7, 2023 and spoke to the longevity and commitment by many of her staff.

There were five (5) core functions of the Public Safety Department – 911 Communications/Call Center Services; Animal Control; Fire Suppression, Investigation and Education; EMS Services; and Emergency Management and Preparedness.

The Emergency Management and Preparedness maintains a comprehensive Emergency Operations Plan for emergency coordination in the case of a local disaster and an Emergency Alert System. Administrator Rogers serves as the Emergency Manager, Clif Tweedy as Deputy Emergency Manager and Director Fairchild as Emergency Coordinator. In 2013, Campbell County received a State award for its emergency management website.

The 911 Communications Division has 23 full-time employees and 7 part-time employees, and the FY 2024 Budget was over \$1.6 million. Several State grants were received of more than \$200,000. The Emergency Communications Center provides service 24/7 and operates six (6) CAD/Radio consoles. All dispatchers were required to be Emergency Medical Dispatch certified. In 2022, the Communications Center answered roughly 100,000 calls with 33% being calls for emergency services. The Communications Center answered over 45,000 calls from January to

June 2023. Deputy Fairchild spoke to the successful implementation of the new regional radio system that had increased coverage, interoperability and improved security of the system. The radio system cost approximately \$6 million with an annual cost of \$250,000 which included \$455 for each radio in the system. Liberty University was no longer on the system deciding to use their own system. Administrator Rogers took a moment to commend Director Fairchild for negotiating additional upgrades and devices during the contract process at no additional cost to the County which improved the system.

The Animal Control Division has four full-time employees and one part-time Animal Control Officer, one of which is a full-time Animal Shelter Manager. They maintain the Animal Care and Control Facility, located behind Yellow Branch Elementary School. The facility currently has 17 dog runs, 4 large quarantine cages, 18 cat cages and 1 isolation area. The FY 2024 Budget was \$330,622. To have an idea of how many animals were processed, in 2022 they handled 558 dogs and 731 cats. From January through June 2023, they have handled 278 dogs and 361 cats. In 2022, there were 1,497 calls for service and 810 calls for the first six months of 2023.

Deputy Fairchild applauded two volunteer groups in the County who assist Animal Control. One was the Friends of Campbell County Animal Control (FOAC) who assist with adoptions, essential supplies and provide support to the County employees. In 2022 they were able to place 377 dogs and 543 cats. During the first six months of 2023, they were able to place 179 dogs and 163 cats. Bringing Animal Renovations to Campbell County (BARCC) was dedicated to building a new shelter and have raised approximately \$70,000 towards those efforts. Some dogs and cats were reclaimed by their owners and some of the animals were transferred to the Lynchburg facility.

Administrator Rogers added the Animal Shelter was inspected annually by the State and must meet State standards. It was a challenging facility, but Benny David and his team had managed to meet those standards year after year. The Board needed to be aware the County may not always be able to pass the annual inspections. In answer to a question by Supervisor Watts, Mr. David said their budget had not increased in over 20 years and credited the volunteer agencies for their work to keep those costs down.

Fire Suppression, Prevention and Investigation coordinates response to fire, hazmat and other emergencies, performs fire investigations (in coordination with volunteer fire departments) to determine cause and origin of fire, enforces statewide fire prevention code, performs annual inspections of schools, daycare and nursing facilities, coordinates fire service training and administrative needs for volunteer agencies and promotes education of safe fire practices for citizens and families. In 2022, the Fire Marshal and Assistant Fire Marshal answered 287 calls and so far in 2023, had answered 126 calls. The types of calls were provided in a spreadsheet for the Board's information.

There were eight volunteer fire departments in the County. A spreadsheet was provided that detailed each department and the number of calls answered. Each volunteer agency received an annual contribution of \$49,500 with an additional \$6,000 for Altavista Fire for housing career staff. Both Altavista Fire and Evington Fire were First Responders. In 2022, there were a total of 3,198 fire calls. Deputy Fairchild clarified that for structure fires, more than one agency may receive the call, and each department received credit for responding to the fire. Each agency also received assistance for insurance expenses, fuel, vehicle maintenance, equipment, apparatus and facilities. Total funding for Volunteer Fire Departments in the last budget was more than \$1.1 million. Approximately \$205,000 was received from State grants.

In 2006 when Campbell County hired the first six (6) career EMS providers, there were six (6) volunteer EMS agencies in the County, namely Altavista Rescue, Brookneal Rescue, Citizens Rescue, Campbell County Rescue, Concord Rescue and Rustburg Rescue. Campbell County Rescue Squad and Concord Rescue Squad have remained active. Each of those agencies also housed career staff at its buildings. In the current budget, Campbell County Rescue receives \$55,500 annually because they house a 24/7 truck and Concord Rescue receives \$52,500 annually as they house a truck for 40 hours per week. The County also provides funding support for fuel, insurance expenses, vehicle maintenance and education. Total funding for Volunteer Rescue Squads was just over \$295,000.

The Career EMS Division provides 24-hour staffing to all areas of the County. Each employee was required to be trained in Basic Life Support and Firefighter I. Of the 46 full-time employees and 15 part-time employees, they also had members certified in Advanced Life Support, Certified Advanced Practice Paramedics and EMS Education Training. The Board of Supervisors approved billing for services and a Billing and Collections Process. In FY 2023, the County received more than \$2.9 million in revenue. The FY 2024 operational budget for EMS totaled a little more than \$4.3 million. The rates have remained unchanged since 2016. The County offers a hardship application and/or a payment plan for citizens that needed financial assistance. Director Fairchild was requested to advise the Board the total amount of EMS billing not collected.

Director Fairchild provided detailed information on how the EMS stations were staffed, the process to answer calls, the number of calls, the demographics of calls and response times. The Timberlake area had the highest call volume which correlated with the population density. For the first half of 2023, Timberlake received 2,208 calls for service. Of those calls, the career staff responded to 2,041 calls. The remaining calls were either responded to by both career and volunteer staff or volunteer only. For the Concord area where the only other volunteer agency is located, there were 406 calls for service; career staff responded to 304 of the calls with the remaining calls handled by both career and volunteer staff or volunteer only. It was readily apparent by the diagrams and charts that 70% of the calls were in the Timberlake area. Altavista had the second most number of calls at 770 calls and Rustburg was third with 587 calls for service. Looking at all calls for service, volunteer agencies responded to two (2%) of the calls.

The Board was provided a chart of the calls for service and the response times for the 1st and 2nd Quarter of 2023. The calls in normal print were under 20 minutes. Highlighted in yellow were the response times that were over 20 minutes, orange signified response times of over 30 minutes and red was over 45 minutes. The delays in answering calls could be the lack of available trucks in the area because the responders were answering another call and backup units were called. Many times the responders were not answering the call from the station, but were coming from the hospital or the scene of another call. The national goal for response time is 10 minutes which would be challenging for a county the size of Campbell. Deputy Fairchild added they rotated the location of trucks with the goal of keeping a unit closer to the busier call areas.

Paul Harvey, Director of Community Development, presented a map showing the density of calls in the County during for the first six months of 2023. The highest density of calls was in the area of Candler's Mountain where a rehab facility and an assistant living facility were located nearby. Other hot spots were near nursing homes in Altavista and Brookneal. The two busiest roads for EMS travel were Route 29 and Route 460, and as pointed out earlier, the Timberlake area had the highest call volume. Mr. Harvey remarked how the EMS maps track along the same lines as the zoning maps. The areas with the highest concentrations of people and businesses generated the most EMS calls.

In an effort to demonstrate response times, Mr. Harvey next presented maps showing the drive times from the current EMS locations and a second map of the drive time from proposed locations. It was reiterated the trucks may not be located at the EMS stations when responding to a call. It was already in the County's Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) to move the Brookneal station to Gladys to be closer to the hot spots. The County owns three (3) acres near Route 29 at Yellow Branch where an additional station could be located. Those two changes could increase the number of addresses you could drive to in ten (10) minutes from 66% to 71.5%. However, it may impact the response times in the Brookneal and Gladys areas.

The last slide was a heat map showing the areas of the most fatal and serious injury crashes. These were predominately along the major corridors and north of Route 29. These type of crashes generally required response by multiple units. VDOT has plans to do major improvements to the northern part of Route 29 along Wards Road to improve safety, but VDOT admitted that the improvements may only improve crash data by 10 percent. Locating a station at the Yellow Branch site would position the County well to respond to emergencies up and down the Route 29 Corridor, Route 24 east and west and Route 460 east and west.

In answer to a question by Supervisor Shockley, the County does respond to a small number of calls in the City of Lynchburg. The County has reciprocal mutual aid agreements with all the surrounding localities. Supervisor Moore asked at what point was a new station at Yellow

Branch needed. Administrator Rogers indicated the County was right on the cusp of needing an additional facility and additional personnel. It would be a budget decision the Board would have to consider to proceed with building a new which would include staffing and equipment for the facility.

In conclusion, all areas of Public Safety were important, and staff wanted to provide an overview of the department. There would be challenges in the future with insufficient staffing levels, recruitment and retention, facilities, and availability and delays of equipment and apparatus.

The Board was appreciative of the information provided and the method it was presented. They commended the leadership and staff for the excellent services they provided.

// LIBRARY BOARD

Supervisor Watts asked staff to advise the Board how to dissolve the Library Board and reappointing the membership.

// ADJOURNMENT

On motion of Supervisor Shockley, the meeting was adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

The vote was: Aye: Brown, Carwile, Cline, Hardie, Moore, Shockley, Watts
Nay: None
Absent: None

MATT W. CLINE, CHAIRMAN

Approved: November 9, 2023