

**HENRY COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
MINUTES**

July 25, 2023 – 3:00 P.M.

The Henry County Board of Supervisors held its regular meeting on July 25, 2023 at 3:00 p.m. in the Summerlin Meeting Room of the County Administration Building, King's Mountain Road, Collinsville, Virginia. The following Board members were present: Jim Adams, Chairman; Joe Bryant, Vice-Chairman, Debra Buchanan, Garrett Dillard, Tommy Slaughter, and Ryan Zehr.

Staff members present were Dale Wagoner, County Administrator; JR Powell, Deputy County Administrator; George Lyle, County Attorney; Richard Stanfield, Deputy Director of Finance; Michelle Via, Director of Human Resources; Brandon Martin, Public Information Officer; and Jennifer Gregory, Administrative Assistant.

Lt. Col. Eric Hairston, Captain Tim Compton, and Lt. Jason Keller of the Sheriff's Office were present. Also present were Bill Wyatt of the Martinsville Bulletin, Charles Roark of Star News, and Taylor Boyd of the Henry County Enterprise.

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Mr. Adams gave the invocation and Mr. Bryant led the Pledge of Allegiance.

CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Adams called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone. He stated that anyone wishing to be on the agenda for the Board's regular business meeting at 3:00 p.m. must contact the County Administrator's Office seven days before a meeting. Those wishing to speak at the Board's public meeting starting at 6:00 p.m. may do so under the agenda item - Matters Presented by the Public without contacting the County Administrator's Office.

ITEMS OF CONSENT:

Confirmation of Minutes of Meetings

Copy included in Board's File.

- June 27, 2023
- July 11, 2023

Summary of Accounts Payable

Copy included in Board's File.

Mr. Bryant made a motion to approve the Items of Consent, and Ms. Buchanan seconded it. The motion was approved by the following vote:

AYES: Adams, Bryant, Buchanan, Dillard, Slaughter, and Zehr.

NAYS: None.

CONSIDERATION OF A RESOLUTION HONORING LEON TOWARNICKI

Mr. Wagoner said Mr. Leon Towarnicki, Manager for the City of Martinsville and longtime Henry County resident, is set to retire on July 31, 2023. Mr. Towarnicki has been a faithful servant to our community for 41 years, working tirelessly on many joint ventures between the City of Martinsville and Henry County throughout his tenure. Mr. Zehr read aloud a resolution recognizing Mr. Towarnicki's service to our community and its citizens.

On a motion by Mr. Zehr and seconded by Mr. Slaughter, the Board approved the resolution as presented by the following vote:

AYES: Adams, Bryant, Buchanan, Dillard, Slaughter, and Zehr.

NAYS: None.

Leon Towarnicki said he was honored to receive the resolution.

CONSIDERATION OF A RESOLUTION HONORING HILDA MABRY – COMMONWEALTH'S ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

Mr. Wagoner said Hilda Mabry, Office Administrator for the Commonwealth's Attorney's Office, is set to retire on July 31, 2023, with 34 years of service to Henry County. Mrs. Mabry began her career with Henry County in 1989, where she worked for Henry County Public Schools as secretary to the Vocational Director. In 1992, she joined the Commonwealth's Attorney's Office, where she has served faithfully as the Office Administrator. Ms. Buchanan read aloud a resolution honoring Mrs. Mabry.

On a motion by Ms. Buchanan and seconded by Mr. Bryant, the Board approved the resolution as presented by the following vote:

AYES: Adams, Bryant, Buchanan, Dillard, Slaughter, and Zehr.

NAYS: None.

Hilda Mabry was present to receive the resolution.

UPDATE FROM PIEDMONT COMMUNITY SERVICES

Mr. Greg Preston, Executive Director; Sharon Buckman, Clinical Services Director; and Monica Flora, Counselor, updated the Board on their new mobile unit and the services planned for the community through that unit.

REPORT ON DELINQUENT TAX COLLECTION EFFORTS

Mr. Grindstaff noted that 95.07% of 2022 real estate taxes and 90.55% of 2022 personal property taxes had been collected. Since January 1, 2023, TACS has collected approximately \$529,549.81. In addition, there were 36 VRW stops collected in June 2023, and 23 were collected in July 2023.

MONTHLY UPDATE FROM THE MARTINSVILLE-HENRY COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Mr. Mark Heath, President/CEO of the Martinsville-Henry County Economic Development Corporation, was present to make the monthly update to the Board. Mr. Heath reviewed a summary of activities by division (Copy included in the Board's File).

ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATION RE: REGIONAL PLANNING GRANT MATCH – OPIOID ABATEMENT FUNDS

Mr. Wagoner said Henry County and Martinsville were recently awarded a grant of \$20,000 from the Virginia Opioid Abatement Authority to study and identify community-based options for the most effective long-term use of funds for abatement. The City will serve as the project manager and fiscal agent. Both localities are required to contribute a \$10,000 match for the project. Staff asked the Board to approve an additional appropriation of \$10,000 from Henry County's Opioid Abatement funds for the match. The Board must approve all uses of the County's Opioid Abatement funds of Supervisors.

On a motion by Mr. Zehr and seconded by Mr. Dillard, the Board approved the additional appropriation of \$10,000 from the County's Opioid Abatement funds for the required grant match by the following vote:

AYES: Adams, Bryant, Buchanan, Dillard, Slaughter, and Zehr.

NAYS: None.

ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATION RE: CHILDREN'S ACT PROGRAM FUNDS

Mr. Wagoner said Staff is asking the Board to approve an additional appropriation of \$240,000 from various accounts to cover overages in the Children's Services Act (CSA) Program fund. The cost of providing services to certain at-risk youth continues escalating, resulting in expenditures exceeding the budget.

On a motion by Ms. Buchanan and seconded by Mr. Zehr, the Board approved the transfer appropriation of \$240,000 to cover overages in the Children's Services Act Program fund by the following vote:

AYES: Adams, Bryant, Buchanan, Dillard, Slaughter, and Zehr.

NAYS: None.

ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATION AND AWARD OF CONTRACT RE: ECONOMIC IMPACT STUDY – MARTINSVILLE SOUTHERN CONNECTOR

Mr. Wagoner said staff is asking the Board to appropriate \$95,000 in grant funds from the Harvest Foundation for conducting an Economic Impact Study related to the Martinsville Southern Connector route. Sound economic data will help the region make the case for building the road. The Chamber's Partnership for Economic Growth (C-Peg) is serving as a conduit for the contract with a research firm called SIR. Thus, the Board is also being asked to award a contract in the same amount to C-Peg for these services.

On a motion by Mr. Zehr and seconded by Mr. Slaughter, the Board approved the additional appropriation of \$95,000, and awarded a contract in the same amount to the Chamber's Partnership for Economic Growth (C-Peg) for the purpose outlined above by the following vote:

AYES: Adams, Bryant, Buchanan, Dillard, Slaughter, and Zehr.
NAYS: None.

ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATION RE: HOUSING ASSESSMENT PLANNING GRANT – PLANNING, ZONING, AND INSPECTIONS DEPARTMENT

Mr. Wagoner said staff is asking the Board to approve an additional appropriation of \$50,000 in grant funds received from the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development. The funds will be used to assess specific community needs related to housing and infrastructure and develop a plan for addressing the identified needs.

On a motion by Mr. Zehr and seconded by Mr. Slaughter, the Board approved the additional appropriation of the \$50,000 grant received from the Department of Housing and Community Development to conduct a housing assessment by the following vote:

AYES: Adams, Bryant, Buchanan, Dillard, Slaughter, and Zehr.
NAYS: None.

ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATION RE: UNITED WAY PLANNING GRANT – PLANNING, ZONING, AND INSPECTIONS DEPARTMENT

Mr. Wagoner said staff is asking the Board to approve an appropriation of \$10,000 from the Department of Housing and Community Development for the execution of a United Way Individual Development Accounts (IDA) Planning Grant. The funds provided an opportunity for the United Way of Martinsville-Henry County to offer free training to residents on topics related to financial management. The funds should be appropriated to the FY23 budget.

On a motion by Mr. Slaughter and seconded by Mr. Dillard, the Board approved the additional appropriation of \$10,000 as presented by the following vote:

AYES: Adams, Bryant, Buchanan, Dillard, Slaughter, and Zehr.
NAYS: None.

AWARD OF CONTRACT RE: GENERATOR RELOCATION – BUILDING AND GROUNDS DEPARTMENT

Mr. Wagoner said staff is asking the Board to approve a contract of \$235,710 to Fidelity Power Systems to relocate the existing generator providing emergency power to the 911 Center and other emergency equipment within the administration building. Before demolishing the previous jail, the emergency power network, including the generator, must be relocated to an area identified behind the administration building. The Purchasing Department has authorized the use of

Sourcewell contract#092222-KOH for this procurement. Funding for this project was included in the FY24 Capital Improvement Plan.

On a motion by Mr. Bryant and seconded by Ms. Buchanan, the Board awarded the contract of \$235,710 to Fidelity Power Systems for the relocation of the emergency generator by the following vote:

AYES: Adams, Bryant, Buchanan, Dillard, Slaughter, and Zehr.

NAYS: None.

ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATION RE: RETURN TO LOCALITY FUNDS – PUBLIC SAFETY

Mr. Wagoner said Public Safety Director Matt Tatum is asking the Board to appropriate \$55,423 received from the Virginia Department of Health’s Return to Locality Funds. The Return to Locality funds are derived from a fee for each vehicle registered in Henry County. Authorized expenditures of the funds are for items such as emergency medical services training, supplies, or equipment.

The funds are distributed equally between the volunteer rescue squads and the Department of Public Safety. Consistent with that distribution model, the four volunteer EMS agencies are projected to receive \$11,085 each, and Public Safety will receive \$11,084.

On a motion by Mr. Slaughter and seconded by Ms. Buchanan, the Board approved the additional appropriation of \$55,423 received from the Return to Locality Funds by the following vote:

AYES: Adams, Bryant, Buchanan, Dillard, Slaughter, and Zehr.

NAYS: None.

ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATION RE: ASSET FORFEITURE FUNDS – COMMONWEALTH’S ATTORNEY

Mr. Wagoner said Commonwealth’s Attorney Andrew Nester is asking the Board to approve an additional appropriation of \$15,000 from State Asset Forfeiture funds to cover travel-related expenses for FY 24.

On a motion by Ms. Buchanan and seconded by Mr. Slaughter, the Board approved the additional appropriation of \$15,000 from State Asset Forfeiture funds for travel-related expenses in FY 24 by the following vote:

AYES: Adams, Bryant, Buchanan, Dillard, Slaughter, and Zehr.

NAYS: None.

CONSIDERATION OF RESOLUTION RE: SIGNATURE AUTHORITY OF INMATE FUND – SHERIFF’S OFFICE

Mr. Wagoner said Sheriff Wayne Davis is asking the Board to approve the attached resolution to update signature authority for the Adult Detention Center inmate fund. The inmate fund comprises of cash on inmates at the time of their arrest or contributions to them from their family members. These funds can only be used for the health and welfare of specific County inmates. Granting signature

authority to specific sworn law enforcement personnel will ensure the Sheriff's Office can effectively conduct day-to-day transactions related to the fund's purpose.

On a motion by Mr. Zehr and seconded by Mr. Slaughter, the Board approved the resolution to update the signature authority for the inmate fund by the following vote:

AYES: Adams, Bryant, Buchanan, Dillard, Slaughter, and Zehr.
NAYS: None.

ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATION RE: ASSET FORFEITURE FUNDS – SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Mr. Wagoner said Sheriff Wayne Davis is asking the Board to approve an additional appropriation of \$7,200 from State Asset Forfeiture funds to cover the cost of sending two investigators to Cellebrite certification training.

On a motion by Mr. Bryant and seconded by Mr. Slaughter, the Board approved the additional appropriation of \$7,200 from State Asset Forfeiture funds as requested by the following vote:

AYES: Adams, Bryant, Buchanan, Dillard, Slaughter, and Zehr.
NAYS: None.

ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATION RE: VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION – SCHOOL BOARD

Mr. Wagoner said the School Board is asking the Board of Supervisors to approve an additional appropriation to the FY23 budget of \$219,679 received from the Virginia Department of Education. The additional revenue results from recalculations performed by the state using the actual average daily membership (school population) totals for all school divisions. Henry County Public Schools' average daily membership was higher than the count used for the FY23 budget, resulting in additional revenue from the Commonwealth.

On a motion by Mr. Zehr and seconded by Mr. Slaughter, the Board approved the additional appropriation to the fiscal year 2023 in the amount of \$219,679 received from the Virginia Department of Education by the following vote:

AYES: Adams, Bryant, Buchanan, Dillard, Slaughter, and Zehr.
NAYS: None.

BUDGET AMENDMENT RE: REVISED ESTIMATES OF STATE FUNDING – SCHOOL BOARD

Mr. Wagoner said that the School Board is asking the Board of Supervisors to approve an amendment to their FY24 operating budget to reflect an estimated reduction in state funds by \$1,666,062. The School Board has presented a list of recommended FY24 budget amendments to reconcile the funding change.

On a motion by Mr. Zehr and seconded by Mr. Slaughter, the Board approved the amendments to the Henry County Public Schools FY'24 operating budget totaling \$1,666,062 by the following vote:

AYES: Adams, Bryant, Buchanan, Dillard, Slaughter, and Zehr.
NAYS: None.

Dr. Ben Boone, Henry County Schools Director of Finance, introduced Dr. Amy Blake-Lewis, Henry County Schools Superintendent.

**CONSIDERATION OF A RESOLUTION AND ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATION
RE: SOUTHERN VIRGINIA RECREATION FACILITIES AUTHORITY**

Mr. Wagoner said the Board of Directors for the Southern Virginia Recreation Facilities Authority (SVRFA), which operates the Smith River Sports Complex (SRSC), has submitted a letter to both the City of Martinsville and Henry County requesting the dissolution of the Authority and authorizing the transfer of all assets and operations to Henry County. It is noted in the letter from Scott Prillaman, Chairman of the SVRFA board, that their current model of funding for SRSC is not sustainable. He noted that inflation and limited access to top-tier tournaments have restricted their ability to be profitable as a stand-alone organization. He also notes that his Board believes that the continued operation of a premier facility can best be accomplished by Henry County. The City and County must collectively agree to dissolve the Southern Virginia Recreation Facilities Authority. Staff has prepared a resolution for the Board's consideration on this matter, and the City is expected to consider a similar action at the City Council's next meeting.

If the Board concurs with this request, staff recommends that the facility become part of the County's Parks and Recreation Department under the leadership of Director Roger Adams.

Additionally, the Harvest Foundation has provided a \$250,000 grant to assist the County with the costs associated with transitioning SRSC to the County operations. If the Board adopts the proposed resolution, staff asks that the Board also approve the appropriation and authorize the County Administrator to move the funds to the appropriate line items for the purpose of operating the Smith River Sports Complex during the transition.

On a motion by Mr. Slaughter and seconded by Mr. Dillard, the Board approved the resolution dissolving the Southern Virginia Recreation Facilities Authority and directing staff to take steps necessary to make it part of the County's Parks & Recreation Department by the following vote:

AYES: Adams, Bryant, Buchanan, Dillard, Slaughter, and Zehr.
NAYS: None

On a motion by Mr. Slaughter and seconded by Ms. Buchanan, the Board approved the appropriation of the \$250,000, and authorized the County

Administrator to move the funds into the appropriate line items for the purpose of operating the Smith River Sports Complex by the following vote:

AYES: Adams, Bryant, Buchanan, Dillard, Slaughter, and Zehr.
NAYS: None

CONSIDERATION OF SUPPORT RE: NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICES GRANT – BLUE RIDGE SOIL AND WATER DISTRICT

Mr. Wagoner said the Blue Ridge Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) plans to request funds through the Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS) to address needed spillway capacity upgrades for two dams located in Henry County, Leatherwood #2A, and Leatherwood #3. The dams primarily provide flood protection, and the proposed improvements will increase their resiliency and mitigate against future damage from large storms. The Blue Ridge SWCD is requesting the Board's support of these funding requests by agreeing to serve as a sponsoring local organization.

On a motion by Mr. Zehr and seconded by Mr. Slaughter, the Board approved the commitment statements from the Blue Ridge Soil and Water Conservation District for Improvements to the Leatherwood #2 and Leatherwood #3 dams by the following vote:

AYES: Adams, Bryant, Buchanan, Dillard, Slaughter, and Zehr.
NAYS: None

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

Comments from the Board

Mr. Dillard said many great things were happening in the County. He encouraged everyone to catch the wave and be a part of moving the County forward with excitement and enthusiasm.

Mr. Wagoner noted that a new Engineering and Mapping Monthly Report is included in the Board's file under Informational Items. National Night Out is scheduled for August 1 from 5-8 p.m. at Compassion Church, 6871 Irisburg Road, Axton. Smith River Fest is August 19 from 10-4 at the Smith River Sports Complex.

CLOSED MEETING

Ms. Buchanan moved that the Board go into a closed meeting at 4:09 pm p.m. to discuss the following:

- A) §2.2-3711(A)1 for Discussion of Appointees to the Blue Ridge Regional Library Board, Community Policy and Management Team, and Roanoke River Basin Association
- B) §2.2-3711(A)7 for Discussion of Pending Legal Matters
- C) §2.2-3711(A)3 for Discussion of Acquisition/Disposal of Real Estate

D) §2.2-3711(A)5 for Discussion of As-Yet Unannounced Industries

Mr. Slaughter seconded the motion, and it passed by the following vote:

AYES: Adams, Bryant, Buchanan, Dillard, Slaughter, and Zehr.

NAYS: None.

OPEN MEETING

The Board returned to open meeting at 5:25 p.m. on a motion by Mr. Slaughter, seconded by Mr. Zehr, and it carried by the following vote:

AYES: Adams, Bryant, Buchanan, Dillard, Slaughter, and Zehr.

NAYS: None.

CERTIFICATION OF CLOSED MEETING

Mr. Powell read the Certification of the Closed Meeting and took a roll call vote.

Board members voting in the affirmative were Mr. Adams, Mr. Slaughter, Ms. Buchanan, Mr. Bryant, Mr. Dillard, and Mr. Zehr.

Blue Ridge Regional Library Board – On a motion by Mr. Zehr and second by Mr. Bryant, the Board unanimously appointed Donata Worrell, Ridgeway District to a term ending June 30, 2027.

Community Policy and Management Team – On a motion by Mr. Bryant and second by Mr. Slaughter, the Board unanimously appointed Jonathan Martin, Parent Representative to a term ending June 1, 2025.

Roanoke River Basin Association – On a motion by Ms. Buchanan and second by Mr. Slaughter, the Board unanimously re-appointed Michael Ward to a term ending August 31, 2024.

Mr. Adams recessed the meeting at 5:28 p.m. until 6:00 p.m.

Mr. Adams welcomed everyone to the 6:00 p.m. portion of the meeting.

GENERAL HIGHWAY MATTERS

Lisa Hughes, Resident Engineer for the Virginia Department of Transportation, updated the Board on general highway matters.

PUBLIC HEARING RE: BUDGET AMENDMENT APPROPRIATING GRANT FUNDS FOR SITE WORK AT COMMONWEALTH CROSSING BUSINESS CENTRE

Mr. Wagoner said Henry County was recently awarded a grant of \$22,237,705 from the Virginia Economic Development Partnership's Site Readiness Program and a grant of \$6,000,000 from the Harvest Foundation. Both grants will be used to fund the site work on Lot #2 at Commonwealth Crossing Business Centre (CCBC). Since the total exceeds one percent (1%) of the total County budget, the Board must hold a public hearing before appropriating the funds. Following the public hearing, staff requests that the Board appropriate the funds totaling \$28,237,705 for site work at CCBC.

Mr. Adams opened the public hearing at 6:04 p.m. There being no one present who wished to speak, Mr. Adams closed the public hearing at 6:05 p.m. On a motion by Ms. Buchanan and seconded by Mr. Bryant, the Board approved the additional appropriation of \$28,237,705 to assist with the site work on Lot #2 at Commonwealth Crossing Business Centre by the following vote:

AYES: Adams, Bryant, Buchanan, Dillard, Slaughter, and Zehr.

NAYS: None.

PUBLIC HEARING – REZONING APPLICATION R-23-10-HOMESTEAD MULCH & MORE, LLC/ZACHARY S. HAWKS

Mr. Clark said the property is located in the southeast corner of Virginia Avenue and Murry Hill Lane in the Reed Creek District. The Tax Map number is 16.5(40)/A. The applicant is requesting the rezoning of approximately 2.36 acres from Suburban Residential District S-R to Commercial District B-1. The applicant wishes to locate his commercial landscaping sales establishment on this property.

Mr. Adams opened the public hearing at 6:06 P.M. There being no one present who wished to speak, Mr. Adams closed the public hearing at 6:06 P.M. On a motion by Mr. Slaughter and seconded by Mr. Zehr, the Board approved the rezoning request as presented by the following vote:

AYES: Adams, Bryant, Buchanan, Dillard, Slaughter, and Zehr.

NAYS: None.

PUBLIC HEARING – HENRY COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN REVISION

Mr. Clark said at its meeting on May 23, 2023, the Board of Supervisors passed a motion requesting the Planning Commission to start the process to amend the County Zoning Ordinance to limit the total amount of acreage in Henry County that could be permitted for solar panel locations. Specifically, the Board was interested in capping the total possible at 1% of the total land mass area of Henry County.

Henry County has approximately 382 square miles of land mass. If implemented, a 1% cap would limit the total acreage allowed for solar coverage at 2,445 acres. Currently, Henry County has ten approved solar project spanning approximately 1,807 acres of solar coverage. To date, one project has been

completed and is generating electricity, and another is currently under construction.

The process of amending the Zoning Ordinance begins by amending the County's Comprehensive Plan to incorporate the long-range vision for renewable energy in Henry County. This includes guidance in the areas of "Objectives" and then "Strategies" to reach those "Objectives." The Planning Commission recommended an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan under Chapter 3: Community Facilities, Services and Utilities, Subsection I - Renewable Energy - Renewable energy sources are becoming a prominent factor in America's future energy plans. Henry County, alongside Southside Virginia, has become prime real estate for future utility-scale solar projects. Given the proliferation of utility-scale solar projects in Henry County, it's become apparent that good planning practices are becoming more important in the siting of these facilities. It's in Henry County's best interest to plan for these facilities and how they can best be integrated into our land uses with the least impact possible. Objective: Encourage the use of residential, commercial, and utility-scale renewable energy projects while also minimizing the impact on Henry County's view shed, natural resources, and rural character. It's not the County's intention to affect local industries ability to produce solar energy for their own consumption. Strategy: Reduce the impact of solar and wind facilities through fair planning practices: such as proper siting, buffering, screening, density limits, and setbacks. In conjunction with these planning practices, overall limiting of the acreage allowed for utility-scale renewable energy sources should be considered. This language was discussed by the Planning Commission on June 14, 2023, and a public hearing was held on July 12, 2023 to receive public input. The Board of Supervisors must also hold a public hearing on the topic prior to making changes to the comprehensive plan. A public hearing has been properly advertised for this meeting.

Mr. Adams opened the public hearing at 6:09 p.m. Tim Thompson addressed the Board in support of the Comprehensive Plan revision. Mr. Adams closed the public hearing at 6:10 p.m. Mr. Dillard said he would like to know the financial impact of adding the 1% cap in regard to potential revenue lost to the County from solar.

On a motion by Mr. Bryant and seconded by Mr. Zehr, the Board adopted the amendment to the Henry County Comprehensive Plan, as presented, effective immediately by the following vote:

AYES: Adams, Bryant, Buchanan, Slaughter, and Zehr.

NAYS: Dillard.

PROPOSED HEARING – PROPOSED HENRY COUNTY ZONING ORDINANCE AMENDMENT

Mr. Clark said at its meeting on May 23, 2023, the Board of Supervisors passed a motion requesting the Planning Commission to start the process to amend the County Zoning Ordinance to limit the total amount of acreage in Henry County that could be permitted for solar panel locations. Specifically, the Board

was interested in capping the total possible at 1% of the total land mass area of Henry County.

Henry County has approximately 382 square miles of land mass. If implemented, a 1% cap would limit the total acreage allowed for solar coverage at 2,445 acres. Currently, Henry County has ten approved solar project spanning approximately 1,807 acres of solar coverage. To date, one project has been completed and is generating electricity, and another is currently under construction.

The Planning Commission recommended an amendment to the Zoning Ordinance under Chapter 21, Article II – Solar Energy Facilities Section 21-224 – Location, appearance, and operational requirements (k) Project area limit. No more than 1% of Henry County’s land mass, equating to 2,445 acres of solar project area, shall be approved for large scale solar energy facilities. This project area limit shall not apply to local industries producing electricity for their own consumption. The PV (solar) panels must be on-site, adjacent to, or adjoining the user’s property. This language was discussed by the Planning Commission on June 14, 2023, and a public hearing was held on July 12, 2023 to receive public input. The Board of Supervisors must also hold a public hearing on the topic prior to making changes to the ordinance. A public hearing has been properly advertised for this meeting.

Mr. Adams opened the public hearing at 6:19 p.m. There being no one present who wished to speak, Mr. Adams closed the public hearing at 6:19 p.m. On a motion by Ms. Buchanan and seconded by Mr. Slaughter, the Board adopted the proposed amendment, effective immediately by the following vote:

AYES: Adams, Bryant, Buchanan, Slaughter, and Zehr.

NAYS: Dillard.

MATTERS PRESENTED BY THE PUBLIC

There was no one present who wished to speak.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to discuss, Mr. Slaughter moved to adjourn at 6:20 p.m. Ms. Buchanan seconded the motion, and it carried by the following vote:

AYES: Adams, Bryant, Buchanan, Dillard, Slaughter, and Zehr.

NAYS: None.