

AT A MEETING OF THE MIDDLESEX COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
HELD ON TUESDAY, JANUARY 6, 2026, IN THE BOARD ROOM OF THE HISTORIC  
COURTHOUSE, SALUDA, VIRGINIA:

Present: Wayne H. Jessie, Sr., Jamaica District  
Don R. Harris, Saluda District  
Reginald A. Williams, Sr., Harmony Village District  
Randy Crittenden, Pinetop District  
William A. Harris, Hartfield District

Matthew L. Walker, County Administrator  
Ann Marie Ricardi, Assistant County Administrator  
Heather W. Lewis, County Attorney  
Shanae Hammond, Executive Assistant /Deputy Clerk

### **CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Walker called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

### **ROLL CALL**

Attendance was taken by Mrs. Hammond with the following roll call: Supervisor Williams – Present; Supervisor Bill Harris – Present; Supervisor Crittenden – Present; Supervisor Jessie – Present; and Chairman Don Harris – Present. There was a quorum. Supervisor Williams led the group in prayer; Mrs. Hammond led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

Mr. Walker called for nominations for Chairman. Supervisor Jessie nominated Don Harris for Chairman, and it was seconded by Supervisor Crittenden. No other nominations were made.

A motion for Don Harris to serve as Chairman for the current year was made by Supervisor Jessie, seconded by Supervisor Crittenden, and carried by the following roll call: Supervisor Bill Harris – Aye; Supervisor Crittenden – Aye; Supervisor Jessie – Aye; Supervisor Williams – Aye, and Chairman Don Harris – Abstain.

Chairman Don Harris called for nominations for Vice Chairman. Supervisor Bill Harris nominated Supervisor Williams for Vice Chairman, and it was seconded by Supervisor Jessie. No other nominations were made.

A motion for Reginald Williams to serve as Vice Chairman for the current year was made by Supervisor Bill Harris, seconded by Supervisor Jessie, and carried by the following roll call: Supervisor Crittenden – Aye; Supervisor Jessie – Aye; Supervisor Williams – Abstain; Supervisor Bill Harris – Aye; and Chairman Don Harris – Aye.

## **2026 DRAFT REGULAR MEETING CALENDAR REVIEW**

Mr. Walker asked the board for approval of the draft regular meeting schedule as presented.

- ❖ February 3<sup>rd</sup>
- ❖ March 3<sup>rd</sup>
- ❖ April 7<sup>th</sup>
- ❖ May 5<sup>th</sup>
- ❖ June 2<sup>nd</sup>
- ❖ July 7<sup>th</sup>
- ❖ August 4<sup>th</sup>
- ❖ September 1<sup>st</sup>
- ❖ October 6<sup>th</sup>
- ❖ November 4<sup>th</sup>, (moved to Wednesday for Election Day)
- ❖ December 1<sup>st</sup>
- ❖ January 5<sup>th</sup> 2027 (Organizational and Regular meeting)

Supervisor Jessie made a motion to approve the 2026 draft regular meeting calendar as presented, which was seconded by Supervisor Crittenden. The motion was carried by the following roll call: Supervisor Jessie – Aye; Supervisor Williams – Aye; Supervisor Bill Harris – Aye; Supervisor Crittenden – Aye and Chairman Don Harris – Aye.

## **COMMITTEE APPOINTMENT ASSIGNED BY CHAIRMAN**

The board reviews their current committee appointment assigned by the Chairman. No changes made.

Supervisor Crittenden made a motion to approve the committee appointment assigned by the chairman as present, which was seconded by Supervisor Bill Harris. The motion was carried by the following roll call: Supervisor Williams – Aye; Supervisor Bill Harris – Aye; Supervisor Crittenden – Aye; Supervisor Jessie – Aye and Chairman Don Harris – Aye.

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

The Consent Agenda included approval of minutes from the December 2, 2025 BOS and December 8, 2026 BOS Special Meeting; disbursements dated December 3, 2025 – January 6, 2026, numbered 107420-107600, totaling \$1,011,498.37; and payroll dated December 15, 2025, numbered 1068500-1068513, totaling \$539,445.15.

Mrs. Lewis advised the Board that there were two additions to the agenda which are as follows. Mrs. Lewis asked the board to consider adding an additional topic under closed session, subsection 11. B, to address the acquisition of property and the disposition of county-owned property. This would result in two closed sessions: one for personnel matters and one for property matters. (2) Supervisor Bill Harris addressed a correction to December 2, 2025 minutes, on the last page, board packet page number 20

under Public Hearing, the motion was not completed. *“Supervisor Bill Harris made a motion to authorize the sale of the County-owned property identified as Tax Map No. 40-214, located at 318 Paradise Lane, Deltaville, Virginia, for \$350,000, conveyed by special warranty deed, to Mr. Martin and Mrs. Miss Arthur.”*

He informed the board that the change had been made before the meeting.

Supervisor Bill Harris made a motion to approve the consent agenda, as amended, which was seconded by Supervisor Jessie. The motion was carried by the following roll call: Supervisor Bill Harris – Aye; Supervisor Crittenden – Aye; Supervisor Jessie – Aye; Supervisor Williams – Aye and Chairman Don Harris – Aye.

Chairman Don Harris opened the public comments period at 3:12 p.m.

There were no comments at this time.

Chairman Don Harris closed the public comment period at 3:12 p.m.

## **CONSTITUTIONAL OFFICERS**

Traci Wright, Treasurer, was not present at the meeting. Report Only.

Mae Burke Diggs, Commissioner of the Revenue, was not present at the meeting. Report Only.

## **AGENCY AND STAFF REPORTS**

### ***VDOT:***

Report Only.

### ***SCHOOLS:***

Dr. Seitz addressed the Board with two items. First, a Budget Supplement Request FY 2026-08 to appropriate grant funds from the Virginia Department of Education, for restraint and seclusion training and an emergency procurement for a hot water tank.

Supervisor Crittenden made a motion to approve Budget Supplement Request FY 2026-08, to appropriate grant funds from the Virginia Department of Education, for restraint and seclusion training and an emergency procurement for a hot water tank, which was seconded by Supervisor Jessie. The motion was carried by the following roll call: Supervisor Crittenden – Aye; Supervisor Jessie – Aye; Supervisor Williams – Aye; Supervisor Bill Harris – Aye and Chairman Don Harris – Aye.

Secondly, Dr. Seitz explained that the HVAC replacement for the high school cafeteria was removed from the FY 2026 CIP after updated vendor pricing exceeded the available funding, leaving approximately \$80,000 remaining with the County. The project will be added to the FY 2027 CIP. She added that the emergency procurement was

required for a failed hot water tank at the elementary school. The lowest bid, of \$36,568.66, was selected, and the work was completed over the Christmas break with no disruption to school operations.

Chairman Don Harris asked for an update on the Governor's proposed budget. Dr. Seitz responded that she and staff are cautiously optimistic, noting that the slight decrease in the Local Composite Index (LCI) is good, along with a proposed 2% SOQ-funded salary increase and the likelihood of receiving more state funding than the prior year. She advised that while enrollment is slightly down, primarily in kindergarten, she does not anticipate significant reductions in state or federal funding. Dr. Seitz explained that the School Board's budget submission will be based on the most conservative funding scenario once the General Assembly concludes its session.

### **SOCIAL SERVICES:**

Report Only.

### **REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS**

#### ***PPE Grant Award Acceptance – Emergency Services:***

Mr. Layman informed the board that Middlesex County was awarded a FY 2026 Personal Protective Equipment grant through the Virginia Department of Fire Programs for \$60,532.96. The grant will fund the purchase of 16 full sets of turnout gear, with four sets allocated to each volunteer fire department to replace aging equipment. He explained that the grant requires a \$16,000 local match, which is fully budgeted within his department and does not require additional funding. Mr. Layman requested Board approval to accept the grant.

Supervisor Jessie made a motion to accept the FY 2026 Personal Protective Equipment grant through the Virginia Department of Fire Programs for \$60,532.96, which was seconded by Supervisor Bill Harris. The motion was carried by the following roll call: Supervisor Jessie—Aye; Supervisor Williams - Aye; Supervisor Bill Harris - Aye; Supervisor Crittenden - Aye; and Chairman Don Harris - Aye.

#### ***Permit Fee Waiver:***

Ms. Ricardi stated that Habitat for Humanity requested that permit fees be waived for the entire subdivision, consisting of six lots. She explained that the original waiver has expired, and Habitat for Humanity is requesting Board approval to waive the permit fees for the remaining two lots. The total cost of the waiver is \$471.50.

A motion to waive the permit fee for \$471.50 was made by Supervisor Jessie and seconded by Supervisor Crittenden. The motion was carried by the following roll call: Supervisor Williams – Aye; Supervisor Bill Harris – Aye; Supervisor Crittenden – Aye; Supervisor Jessie – Aye and Chairman Don Harris – Aye.

***Surplus Item:***

Ms. Ricardi asked the board to authorize staff to dispose of or sell the old airport terminal building along with all the contents inside the building on GovDeals.com.

Supervisor Bill Harris made a motion to declare the terminal building surplus and to authorize staff to dispose of or sell on GovDeals.com, which was seconded by Supervisor Jessie. The motion was carried by the following roll call: Supervisor Bill Harris – Aye; Supervisor Crittenden – Aye; Supervisor Jessie – Aye; Supervisor Williams – Aye and Chairman Don Harris – Aye.

***Citizen's Appointment:***

Ms. Ricardi reported that two reappointment terms were expiring on January 31, 2026, for Doug McMinn and Hallie Holmes. Both serve on the Economic Development Authority board. She added that there is a vacancy on the Board of Zoning Appeals for the Jamaica District.

Mr. Kretz shared with the board that two members from the Wetlands board had resigned. Mr. John Boyd and Mr. Wesley Dolezal.

Supervisor Bill Harris made a motion to approve the reappointment of Doug McMinn and Hallie Holmes to the Economic Development Authority, which was seconded by Supervisor Crittenden. The motion was carried by the following roll call: Supervisor Crittenden – Aye; Supervisor Jessie – Aye; Supervisor Williams – Aye; Supervisor Bill Harris – Aye and Chairman Don Harris – Aye.

**ADMINISTRATOR UPDATES**

***Cigarette Tax:***

Report Only.

***Staff Report:***

Report Only.

Mr. Walker reported an additional item under the Administrator's Report regarding the Paradise Lane property. He advised that following the public hearing held last month, the Board voted to sell the property; however, the prospective buyer withdrew the offer the following day.

Mr. Walker said that a newspaper article incorrectly reported the property as sold and stated that a correction is being addressed. He further advised that a new offer has been received and will be discussed in closed session, noting that any action to pursue or accept an offer will require a new public hearing.

Ms. Ricardi asked for approval for the county to purchase a table for the Kiwanis annual Mardi Gras fundraiser for \$1,000.00. The date of the event will take place on February 28, 2026.

Supervisor Jessie made a motion to approve the purchase of the table for \$1,000.00, which was seconded by Supervisor Crittenden. The motion was carried by unanimous vote.

### **COUNTY ATTORNEY UPDATE**

Mrs. Lewis had no reports at this time.

### **UNFINISHED/NEW BUSINESS**

#### ***Unfinished Business:***

None.

#### ***New Business:***

None.

### **MATTERS PRESENTED BY THE BOARD**

Supervisor Crittenden addressed the board with the following.

- He toured the new Airport terminal.

Chairman Don Harris addressed the board with the following.

- He toured the new Airport terminal.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Chairman Don Harris opened the public comment period.

There were no public comments.

Chairman Don Harris closed the public comment period.

### **CLOSED SESSION**

A. Pursuant to Virginia Code Sections 2.2-3711(A)(1), for the discussion of personnel matters regarding the County Administrator.

B. Pursuant to Virginia Code Sections 2.2-3711(A)(3) and (A)(8), for the purpose of discussion about the acquisition of real property for a public

purpose where discussion in an open meeting would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the public body; and for consultation with legal counsel regarding specific legal matters, procedures, and questions about the acquisition of said property.

A motion to convene in closed session pursuant to Virginia Code Sections 2.2-3711(A)(1), for the discussion of personnel matters regarding the County Administrator and the County Attorney, and pursuant to Virginia Code Sections 2.2-3711(A)(3) and (A)(8), for the purpose of discussion about the acquisition of real property for a public purpose where discussion in an open meeting would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the public body; and for consultation with legal counsel regarding specific legal matters, procedures, and questions about the acquisition of said property was made by Supervisor Jessie and seconded by Supervisor Bill Harris, and it was carried by the following roll call: Supervisor Williams– Aye; Supervisor Bill Harris– Aye; Supervisor Crittenden – Aye; Supervisor Jessie– Aye and Chairman Don Harris – Aye

### **RETURN TO OPEN SESSION**

A motion to return from closed sessions, with the following statement, was made by Supervisor Jessie, seconded by Supervisor Crittenden, and carried by the following roll call: Supervisor Bill Harris – Aye; Supervisor Crittenden – Aye; Supervisor Jessie – Aye; Supervisor Williams - Aye and Chairman Don Harris – Aye.

To the best of the members' knowledge, only public business matters lawfully exempted in the motion by which the closed session was called were considered or discussed in said closed session.

The board took a break at 5:44 p.m. and reconvened at 7:00 p.m. for the public hearing.

### **PUBLIC HEARING**

1. **2026 Capital Improvements Plan for FY 2027-2031.** Mr. Kretz explained that the FY 2026–FY 2031 Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) is a strictly advisory planning document intended to assist the Board of Supervisors with long-term capital facilities planning and budget development and does not represent a funding request. He reported that the Planning Commission voted 7–0 to recommend approval of the CIP, with the addition of including operating cost impacts in each project overview, which staff has incorporated into the document. Mr. Kretz noted that projects are scored and prioritized by the CIP Committee using established criteria and highlighted major plan elements, including public safety radio improvements, county facilities rehabilitation and replacement, public school capital

needs, and airport projects. He added that the CIP and facilities inventory will continue to be refined annually to improve clarity and accuracy.

Chairman Don Harris opened the public hearing public comment period.

There were no public comments.

Chairman Don Harris closed the public hearing public comment period.

Supervisor Jessie made a motion to approve the 2026 Capital Improvements Plan for FY 2027-2031, which was seconded by Supervisor Crittenden. The motion was carried by the following roll call: Supervisor Crittenden – Aye; Supervisor Jessie – Aye; Supervisor Williams – Aye; Supervisor Bill Harris – Aye and Chairman Don Harris – Aye.

- 2. Ordinance Amendment #2025-05.** Mr. Kretz said that the Middlesex County Subdivision Ordinance needs to be amended to comply with recent changes to the Code of Virginia. He explained that the amendment removes the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors from subdivision review, designating the Planning Director as the reviewing agent and modifying review timeframes as required by state law. Mr. Kretz noted that the Planning Commission voted 7–0, with four absent, to recommend approval and that the amendment is considered housekeeping to align the subdivision ordinance with zoning ordinance changes adopted in August. Staff recommended approval of the ordinance amendment as submitted. He added that if the board did not approve, then the county would violate state code.

Chairman Don Harris opened the public hearing public comment period.

There were no public comments.

Chairman Don Harris closed the public hearing public comment period.

Supervisor Crittenden made a motion to approve Ordinance Amendment #2025-05 as presented, which was seconded by Supervisor Bill Harris. The motion was carried by the following roll call: Supervisor Jessie – Aye; Supervisor Williams – Aye; Supervisor Bill Harris – Aye; Supervisor Crittenden – Aye and Chairman Don Harris – Aye.

- 3. Ordinance Amendment #2024-05 & 4. Ordinance Amendment #2025-01**

Mr. Kretz presented two related ordinance amendments addressing water connection requirements, one for the Subdivision Ordinance and one for the Zoning Ordinance, which must be acted on separately but are closely connected.

- *Subdivision Ordinance* - He explained that new developments with 25 lots or more, or new homes directly adjacent to public water lines within the Water Authority service area, would be required to connect to public water and construct systems to Water Authority specifications, while existing homes with wells would not be required to connect.

As an example, he noted that homeowners with existing wells may drill a new well if their current well fails, rather than being required to connect to public water.

Mr. Kretz emphasized that the amendments apply only to certain new developments and are intended to prevent unnecessary private systems where public water is already available.

Chairman Don Harris opened the public hearing public comment period.

Mr. Doug McMinn from Wake addressed the Board and expressed concerns regarding the proposed water connection ordinance amendments, stating that public perception and timing could negatively impact community trust. He cautioned that residents value self-reliance, referenced past experiences with well and septic systems during major storms, and warned of potential unintended consequences based on prior water system expansions. Mr. McMinn recommended delaying action to allow for additional public input and discussion, while acknowledging the Board's recent accomplishments and expressing appreciation for their service.

Mr. Hal Muller addressed the Board and expressed concerns regarding the proposed water connection ordinance amendments, citing his long involvement with county meetings and the history of the Water Authority. He stated that past assurances regarding taxpayer impact and mandatory water connections have changed over time and raised concerns about Board credibility and public trust. Mr. Muller cautioned that future actions could lead to expanded mandatory connections and encouraged the Board to carefully consider the long-term implications of its decisions, while also acknowledging the Board's positive work in the County.

Mr. Davis Wilson addressed the Board and expressed opposition to the proposed water connection ordinance amendments, stating that reliance on stated intent is insufficient and that only the written language of the ordinance can be relied upon. He cautioned that the amendments could create unintended consequences in the future, potentially leading to mandatory connections or additional financial burdens. Mr. Wilson emphasized concerns about fairness, personal responsibility, and the impact on residents who invested privately in wells, while acknowledging and thanking the Board for its service to the County.

Chairman Don Harris closed the public hearing public comment period.

After much discussion, Supervisor Jessie made a motion to approve Ordinance Amendment #2024-05, to amend the Middlesex County Subdivision Ordinance as presented, which was seconded by Supervisor Crittenden. The motion was carried by the following roll call: Supervisor Williams – Nay; Supervisor Bill Harris – Aye; Supervisor Crittenden – Aye; Supervisor Jessie – Aye and Chairman Don Harris – Aye.

- *Zoning Ordinance* - Mr. Kretz provided an overview of the proposed zoning ordinance amendment requiring new construction to connect to the Water Authority system when located within the designated service district, unless an

exception applies. The amendment would be added to the supplementary district regulations as Section 15-30, Border Connection Requirements, outlining required connections, exceptions, development standards, multifamily housing provisions, updated definitions, and service area references. He noted that the Middlesex County Comprehensive Plan would be amended to support the ordinance through updated language and/or mapping.

Chairman Don Harris opened the public hearing public comment period.

Mr. Muller questioned statements suggesting that expanding the Water Authority customer base would eliminate the related tax assessment and asked how many additional connections would be required. He also requested clarification on how Water Authority service districts are designated or expanded, including who authorizes changes and whether public hearings would be held, and expressed concern about potential future expansion without clear procedures.

Mr. Wilson stated that the intent of the proposed ordinance was unclear and expressed concern about requiring connections to the Water Authority system. He noted that some property owners are satisfied with their current water sources and suggested that large developers should contribute more toward system costs. He also commented that rate adjustments for existing Water Authority users could be considered to reduce the burden on taxpayers who do not receive service.

Ms. Moore addressed the lack of clear public engagement regarding the Water Authority and emphasized the importance of town halls and community outreach. She stated that she and other residents do not receive benefits from the water and sewer systems yet continue to bear the tax burden, which she described as unfair. Ms. Moore supported the need for water service in Deltaville but suggested incorporation like Urbana and expressed opposition to countywide funding for services benefiting a limited area.

Chairman Don Harris closed the public hearing public comment period.

Supervisor Jessie stated that the proposed requirement would apply only to new construction within the Water Authority service area and would not affect existing homeowners with wells. He noted that population growth is occurring regardless and argued that requiring new connections would help reduce the level of county subsidy over time by spreading costs among additional users. He expressed the view that continued development and participation in the system would support the Water Authority's long-term sustainability and lessen the burden on current taxpayers.

Supervisor Crittenden said that the public comment concerns related more to potential future decisions by later boards and his focus was on making decisions he believes are in the best interest of Middlesex County residents at this time.

Supervisor Williams stated that he generally supports establishing a connection fee for new dwellings, but his concerns were about understanding the true costs involved.

He asked about affordability for existing homeowners, particularly seniors, whose wells may fail and who may wish to connect at minimal cost. He also questioned whether fees should apply to properties with access to the system that choose not to connect and noted that paying down Water Authority debt and achieving financial sustainability would take considerable time, requiring careful decision-making.

Mr. Walker provided historical context on the creation of the Water Authority, explaining that the Board chose to invest in a full water and fire protection system rather than a limited drinking water system. He stated that the Water Authority was designed to serve long-term community needs, including fire protection, and noted that all areas of the county benefit from hydrant access during emergencies. Mr. Walker expressed support for the Water Authority and the proposed ordinance, emphasizing long-term planning, public safety, and accountability to the Board.

Chairman Harris thanked residents for their participation and stated that public input is considered in Board decisions. He emphasized the Board's conservative fiscal approach, noting stable tax rates and the importance of long-term planning. Chairman Harris highlighted the role of the Water Authority in supporting fire protection, addressing failing water systems, and providing necessary infrastructure to attract residents and businesses, while clarifying that the proposed ordinance would not require existing homeowners to connect.

Supervisor Jessie made a motion to approve the zoning ordinance 2025-01, establishing water connection requirements within the Middlesex County Water Authority service district areas, which was seconded by Supervisor Crittenden. The motion was carried by the following roll call: Supervisor Bill Harris – Aye; Supervisor Crittenden – Aye; Supervisor Jessie – Aye; Supervisor Williams – Aye and Chairman Don Harris – Aye.

Chairman Don Harris opened the public comments period at 8:49 p.m.

There were no comments at this time.

Chairman Don Harris closed the public comment period at 8:49 p.m.

## **ADJOURN**

Supervisor Jessie made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Supervisor Crittenden. The motion was carried by the following roll call: Supervisor Crittenden—Aye; Supervisor Jessie — Aye; Supervisor Williams — Aye; Supervisor Bill Harris; and Chairman Don Harris—Aye.