

Grayson County Board of Supervisors
Budget Work Session
February 8, 2022 at 5:30pm

Members attending in person: Michael S. Hash, John S. Fant, Kenneth R. Belton, R. Brantley Ivey and Tracy A. Anderson.

Staff attending in person: William L. Shepley, Mitchell L. Smith, Leesa A. Gayheart and Carl H. Caudill, II.

IN RE: OPENING BUSINESS

Supervisor Fant made the motion to approve the agenda; duly seconded by Supervisor Belton. Motion carried 5-0.

IN RE: PRESENTATIONS OR REQUESTS

William L. Shepley, County Administrator, spoke about the suggested budget priorities for the coming year:

Highest Priorities

- Broadband
- Fries Water
- Emergency Services
- Child Care

Departments/Organizations – increased scope of work

- School System – Quantity and Quality
- Parks & Rec – grow to county wide
- Tourism
- Ag-Economic Development
- GATE Center – fully maximize that facility
- IT – expanding every year
- GIS – continual updating

Ongoing Special Projects

- Mt. Rogers Heritage Center
- Baywood
 - High Tech Education Center
 - Health Care Facility
 - Child Care

Revenue and Tax

- Anticipating an increase in revenue for the County due to our property reassessment which could mean that the County may receive between \$1M and \$1.4M in additional revenue in this next fiscal year. Suggest looking at the tax levy and recommend staff present the Board with an accurate forecast of additional revenue, combined with a possible reduction in the tax levy. This data should be utilized to determine if the additional revenue or some portion of the additional revenue will be needed for any of the “highest priority” items in conjunction with any discussion relating to a possible change in the tax levy. In addition, occurred during COVID will need to be taken into consideration.
- Supervisor Fant suggested a more in-depth discussion after all the presenters have presented to further discuss some of the items Mr. Shepley mentioned. The Board agreed by consensus.

Dr. Dean Sprinkle, Wytheville Community College, addressed the Board and presented the following:

- Members representing Grayson County on the WCC Board are Patsy McKnight and Joe Reeves
- Total Enrollment in WCC Service Region – 1,715 students (1,867 prior year)
- Total Enrollment from Grayson County – 201 students (216 prior year)
- Dual Credit Enrollment – 60 Grayson County students enrolled in college credit classes for fall 2020 (92 prior year)
- Dual Enrollment Credits – a total of 383 college credits were earned by those students (711 prior year)
- Heather Cole is the WCC Career Coach for Grayson County High School
 - Include GPA review/eligibility for dual enrollment courses, placement testing, career and college exploration, assistance with FAFSA and scholarship forms, preliminary advising
 - All services in person at the schools while the facility is open during normal school hours or by telework if due to weather, teacher workdays, spring break, etc.
 - Utilize virtual options when needed (COVID-19) – zoom conferencing, traditional email, phone call outreach.
 - Funded by WCC’s State Operating Budget, not locality funds.
- Josh Floyd is the WCC Dual Enrollment Coordinator
 - 2 Grayson County Dual Enrollment Graduate in May 2020
 - Dual Enrollment students can complete the following pathways concurrent with high school graduation (General Education Certificate, Associate Degree/General Studies)
 - 1 Grayson County Dual enrollment student taking welding classes at Crossroads in Galax

- 63 scholarships were awarded from the WCC Educational Foundation & WCC Scholarship Foundation totaling \$43,313.03
- WCC Educational Foundation awards a \$300 scholarship at each high school in the WCC service region
- WCC Educational Foundation has raised \$55,211.25 so far for the Grayson County Scholarship Program and continues to seek support
- 2 Local Board Scholarships for full fall tuition are awarded to students at Grayson County High School

- Twin County Foundation Scholarship Program
 - Available to high school graduates from Grayson County, Carroll County and the City of Galax who attend WCC
 - Scholarships cover 100% of tuition and fees not covered by federal or state financial aid for students in five health programs: (Dental Hygiene, Medical Laboratory Tech, Nursing, Physical therapist assistant, Practical Nursing)
 - Scholarships cover 50% of tuition and fees not covered by federal or state financial aid for students in other programs of study
 - Students must have a high school GPA of “B” or higher
 - Twin County Scholarships awarded for 2021-2022 (9 students for spring semester 2021 and 2 students for summer semester 2021 and 18 students for fall semester 2021)
- Citizens and Businesses contributed \$48,061.25 in 2021
- WCC Educational Foundation Board of Directors representing Grayson County are Ricky Anderson and Troy Sage
- WCC Scholarship Foundation Board of Directors representing Grayson County is Rodney Halsey
- Workforce Development offers the following certifications/trainings/courses:
 - American Heart Association CPR
 - Basic Contractor Business Licensing Course
 - Dental Radiation Safety
 - Online Provider Courses
 - Veterinary Assisting for Small & Large Animals
 - Customized training can be developed to meet the specific needs of employers
 - CDL Truck Driver Training Program – 12 students
 - Power Line Worker Program – 4 students
 - Underground Power Worker Program – 1 student (includes fiber optic training)
 - Vet Assistant Program – 3 students
 - Welding Program – 1 student
 - WCC is in the process of joining a consortium to offer an Emergency Medical Technician Program at Crossroads in the future

- Free offerings from Workforce Development: Computer Basics, WCC Concert Band, WCC Choir, WCC Theatre
- WCC FY'22 Budget Request is \$19,358.59

Supervisor Fant inquired about general education and Dr. Sprinkle noted it is core subjects if they are going to transfer. Supervisor Fant also inquired about the fiber optic subjects and placement and Dr. Sprinkle noted they are part of the line program and do not have a placement program, but they have no trouble in the students finding jobs – lots of recruiters out there. Supervisor Belton made positive comments on the line programs and the hires he has made.

Mr. Jordan Stidham, Director, Housing-Finance & Development H.O.P.E. Inc. gave the following presentation:

- H.O.P.E. Inc. is helping overcome poverty' s existence which is a 501 c3 non-profit focused on housing and food securities
- Food Securities:
 - Open Door Café – pay what you can café where donations are asked for each meal – if someone can't pay, they can volunteer for 1 hour; others can donate and volunteer for “tokens” to be given to someone who can't pay or volunteer.
 - HOPE Packs – provide non-perishable food packs for children to take home over weekends and holidays. Currently supplying 795 per week and looking to expand into Carroll, Grayson, and Galax.
- Housing Securities:
 - Rapid Rehousing & Emergency shelter – place individuals who are homeless or at critical risk of being homeless into motels while helping them find long term rental and teaching them budgeting and job-hunting skills.
 - Develop and operate rental housing designed as affordable and sustainable housing for 80% AMI and below:
 - 80% AMI for Grayson County with a family of four (4) is \$47,750
 - Designate some housing for critical needs – Mt. Rogers
- Converting old schools into housing for foster care children who are aging out of the system – funding sources are available both public and private.
 - Three (3) Elementary Schools – Elk Creek, Providence and Baywood
 - Elk Creek Elementary School – currently owned by the Fire Department, with county support, would request their support as well – would be known as “Fostering the Future” – converting it to apartments to house young adults aging out of foster care – age 17-24 – partner with DSS and Mt. Rogers and work with them and gets them ready to transition into society. The food bank that is currently housed out of the school would still operate there since it has its own entrance. This project would be looking at DHCD funding, private fundraising along with federal funds and grants.

- Providence Elementary School – convert this one to elderly housing – age restrictions can be set based on county desires and grant requirements. One-bedroom, single level, energy efficient units for elderly individuals to remain in Grayson near their families. Possible funding sources would be DHCD, Virginia Housing and 811 Elderly funding.
- Baywood Elementary School – HOPE would be the non-profit partner and developing assistant to the county. County would retain ownership/operation of the project. Would become a job skills training center and childcare services. Financing options include DHCD, CBDG funds, FAHE regional good jobs grant, business sponsorships, bond issuance.
- HOPE's "ask" and summary:
 - County provide their support in favor of each project
 - HOPE will ask fire department, if County supports
 - County provide a guarantee to donate Providence if the feasibility comes back positive
 - Elk Creek will be done first, then providence (due to capital requirements)
 - Baywood will be done based on County's desire and timeline – can be done side by side with either Elk Creek or Providence
 - Once Feasibilities come back and the fire department and/or county approve of the sale/donation, HOPE will be sole owner and carry the liabilities and maintenance of the schools (Elk Creek and Providence)
 - County will retain ownership of Baywood; HOPE will just be helping the County achieve their goals.

Supervisor Anderson inquired about the food bank operating in this set up and Mr. Stidham responded that it could be designated to operate this way. Supervisor Anderson also inquired about the gym being used for the County and Mr. Stidham noted that it could. Mr. Stidham then expanded on CDBG grants. Supervisor Anderson noted that Mr. Stidham is not asking for funding, asking for support and Mr. Stidham sated that is correct. Supervisor Fant inquired about the percentage of people in Grayson County that meets this criteria for housing and Mr. Stidham responded that they do track that at HOPE but he doesn't know right off. Supervisor Ivey asked how long a study would take and Mr. Stidham responded anywhere from 3-6 months.

The Board broke for a five (5) minute break.

Ms. Joan Bolduc, Director of One-on-One Literacy Program gave the following presentation and noted that Board Chair Gloria Price is also in attendance:

- Requesting \$3,000 for three (3) literacy components to contribute to the operating expenses of the literacy program for FY 2022-2023 – Health Literacy, Family Literacy, and Computer Literacy
- Serving educational needs of adult citizens of Wythe/Grayson since 1987 – providing trained volunteer tutors/educational materials. Tutors generally meet

with their students one (1) or two (2) times per week, trained through a curriculum provided by Pro-Literacy America. Tutoring program was expanded in 2003 to serve adult citizens in the Galax area – tutoring is provided in reading, writing, English, math and computer literacy.

- Each student is evaluated upon entering the program, matched with a tutor and then students are re-evaluated after every thirty to forty hours of instruction.
- All tutoring and educational materials are provided free of charge.
- The One-on-One Literacy Program is the only program in the region that provides free, confidential tutoring to adults who are functioning below the fourth-grade level.
- Program collaborates with the Mt. Rogers Regional Adult Education program in evaluating and encouraging students to transition from the literacy program into the adult education program.
- Funding from Grayson County will be utilized exclusively in Grayson County and used for tutor training sessions, for educational materials for tutors and students, and for partial salary support for the literacy program director. Funding from Grayson County is a crucial component of our budget, providing matching funds for the grant funded projects that we are conducting in Grayson County.

Supervisor Fant inquired about how many folks in Grayson County has been helped on the literacy and Ms. Bolduc responded they currently have 5 or 6 now noting that it's very hard to reach folks who can't read. Supervisor Belton inquired about volunteer tutors and Ms. Bolduc noted they do have a few and they also have a tutor training course as well. Supervisor Anderson asked about serving Grayson County citizens and Ms. Bolduc noted that their main office is in Wytheville, but they do serve Grayson County citizens at the Wythe-Grayson Regional Library here in Independence one day a week.

Michelle Pridgen, Director, Grayson LandCare thanked the Board for bringing the County through the pandemic and for the \$5,000 the Board gave them last year – the funds were key for the work they do for the citizens of our County. Mrs. Pridgen then gave the following presentation and highlights of all their projects:

- Permaculture group – members donated 415 hours, installed a new sign for the entrance to the garden, constructed a set of raised beds for the cross garden at the garden entrance, installed two wooden benches for visitors, added a deer fence around the new annual crop garden, planted a new garden for Janet Braithwaite, the winner of last year's silent auction, and donated sweet potatoes to Food Independence and tomatoes to God's Storehouse, among other activities.
- Free Market – operated safely, when possible, shut down three times when local cases surged. Focused on targeted services to agency clients needing household goods, loaned medical equipment by appointment, and opened two hours a week to receive/process donations. The air scrubber provided a new level of

safety/improved air quality/ventilation when store was able to operate. The Gift Shop was held December 4, 2021, in the GATE Center and the Free Market reopened for a brief time in December.

- Construction of the Timber Frame pavilion in Town Park took place with 60 members of the Timber Framers Guild. Volunteers fed them three meals a day for 10 days. A huge thank you to the County for providing the use of the kitchen for this and for the recent pledge of support toward the pavilion roof. The online market thrived and provided touchless, curbside pickup during the pandemic and continue to set sales records and the Market opened on schedule the 2nd Friday in May with 9 new regular vendors.
- Food Independence – provided an average of 189 boxes to 171 households totaling 373 people per month with an increase expected for the holidays. They are now sourcing food from Feeding Southwest Virginia, local supermarkets and meat suppliers and local/regional produce sources. Fifty+ volunteers deliver/pickup, store, pack and distribute each month. Senator Tim Kaine visited the pantry in April, and they were also awarded a state Community Development Block Grant for \$135,000 through the Town of Independence to purchase supplies, equipment and food.
- Independence Elementary School Garden – construction of 5 raised beds, deer fencing, decorative picket fence and screen door. Beds were planted in spring with 4th graders, and they harvested about 20 pounds of potatoes and 8 pumpkins, along with lettuce, tomatoes and flowers. The program received a \$500 GroMoreGood garden grant to supplement GLC funding and a Twin County Community Foundation grant to purchase a Tower Garden for indoor growing
- Grayson LandFair switched to a Video Challenge and 13 student teams representing 35 students created videos offering solutions to local problems. 500+ voted for the People’s choice winner on the GLC YouTube channel and prizes were awarded at Grayson and Galax school award ceremonies for increased exposure.
- Grayson LandCare held 7 in person presentations and was a primary participant in the new August Clean River Month campaign, thanked the County for providing so much support to that campaign, and held the annual meeting and auction at Eagle View in October.
 - Requesting \$5000 in funding again this year to continue the work in the County.
 - After 7 years of service as President of GLC and 13 years on the board, Kathy Cole has stepped down but will continue to lead the Free Market. Meagan Helmick has taken on the role of President and her role as epidemiologist for VDH has been helpful in safely proceeding with events and several new board members has also been welcomed.
 - Offering monthly presentations including Mr. Shepley in March
 - Kids are excited to growing their first cobs in the Tower Garden and being able to compare indoor/outdoor growing. Tower will be delivered to the

school in two weeks when the seeds they started last week are ready to place in the tower.

- Will continue the Video Challenge for area high school students
- Free Market hopes to reopen safely once the current surge in cases goes down.
- Farmers Market is looking forward to operating under the new pavilion but may be on Courthouse Street for the beginning of the season
- Food Independence continues to meet the needs of the community and has added a backpack program that supplies 7 days of lunch and snacks for kids sent home for quarantine
- Will reenergize the seed library with a seed swap at the library in March and classes in April
- GLC continues to support the County Fair and the kids are excited about entering produce from the school garden this year

Kevin Spurlin, Agriculture & Natural Resources Agent for Grayson County, gave the following presentation:

- Thanked the Board for their support throughout the years and highlighted ways they are funded:
 - First request for funding was in 1916 and it was for \$300 and they are called agents because they were funded through the USDA (federal funding) and still have federal funding today that comes through the state and is appropriated through the farm bill legislation which supports every state's extension system with the majority being at the administrative level. Most of our funding comes from the state level and of course some locally as well. The Extension Office operates with a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Virginia Tech and the County -all of the Extension Agents are considered Virginia Tech faculty and paid through Virginia Tech. The MOU is billed quarterly to the County for a percentage of their salary and benefits. They have three (3) in-house office staff – partially funded through the County and partially funded through the state – Mr. Spurlin is funded two-thirds through the County and Agent Erin Farmer is funded 50%. The secretary is funded 100% through state funds. Travel stipend, office supplies, etc. is all through state funds and the County provides office space and telephones. Have three additional off-site staff with two 100% state funded – Sandy Stoneman (food safety agent) and Bill Worrell (forestry agent) and Ashley Edwards (horticultural crops) and is funded two-thirds through local funds & it's divided by the three counties (Carroll/Grayson/Wythe), so Grayson pays one-ninth of her salary and benefits.
 - This year they have taken out of their budget a position that was jointly funded through the County and Matthew's Living History Farm Museum, approximately a \$44,000 savings; since that's really not under their

umbrella any longer, it has been pulled out of their budget and added back \$2,000 travel and if agreeable with everyone will change/move it to professional services – looking for a coach for livestock, 4H Club, and possibly some other clubs. They partner with FFA mentors, and they are not paid any extra for taking that job on and looking for ways to sweeten the deal either through volunteer(s) or a school employee that's taking on extra duties, so they are requesting \$2,000.

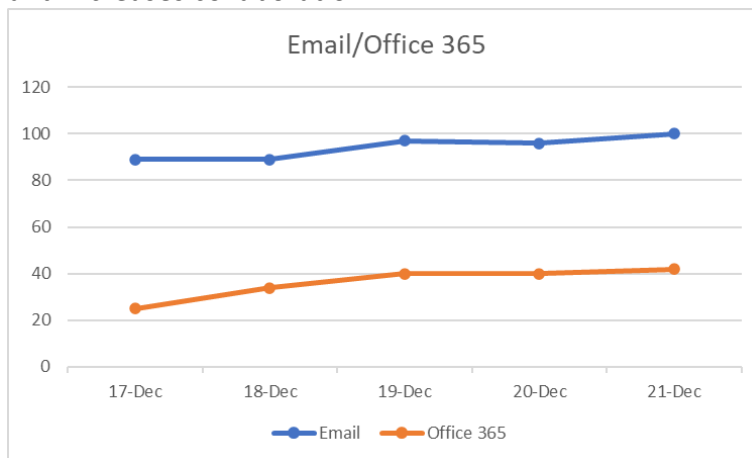
Supervisor Fant inquired about specific funding for the Ag Fair needs and Mr. Spurlin noted that he is working with Lyndsie Young to make sure they don't have multiple line items in different budgets. Supervisor Fant also inquired about the Matthews Farm funded position and Mrs. Gayheart noted that position has been picked up by the Matthews Foundation Board however, Grayson County is still the fiscal agent.

Mary Thomas, Director, Wythe-Grayson Regional Library gave the following presentation by teleconference (zoom):

- Noted that the Board of Directors is looking at the pay scale for the library employees and getting the employees pay up to an acceptable scale. Also noted that supply costs are increasing – trying to keep the pay scale the same in each county.
- Supervisor Fant brought the Board up to date on the agreement between Wythe/Grayson and how the funding happens - the agreement was signed in 1982. Wythe County has a different base than Grayson - currently it's 50/50 and it's being discussed on splitting the 50/50 the regional cost and then the counties would be responsible for the funding of the Grayson Library Director and the three (3) branch employees along with the other employees that work specifically for Grayson County. A library meeting will be held tomorrow to further discuss.
- Supervisor Ivey inquired about the buildings and employees and breakdown of cost and effect from the agreement and Supervisor Fant noted that Wytheville only has two (2) libraries – Wytheville and Rural Retreat with the Rural Retreat building being owned by the Friends of the Library (take care of maintenance/grounds). The library in Whitetop is in the Community Center so it really depends on which branch you are talking about – Grayson has three (3) libraries and Wytheville has two (2) and they are looking to add one (1) in Ft. Chiswell. Mrs. Thomas noted there are some things (invoices/repairs) that she can't divide between Grayson and Wythe such as electronics purchased/data bases purchased – one (1) county pays 1/3 and the other county pays 2/3 – it makes it hard because everyone is benefiting in both counties for that service which is a regional service. Supervisor Fant noted that it's a lot more expensive to run our own library than to stay in the regional system.

Mr. Carl Caudill gave the following budget presentation on the immediate needs for the IT Department:

- Service & Support
 - hardware: Computers/laptops, servers, printers, network devices (routers, switches, WiFi, etc), phone equipment, etc.
 - software: email, Microsoft office, domain services, anti-virus/security, GIS software, website, etc.
- Professional Services – IT
 - Increase in security, HB 2178-2019 Session – Virginia voter registration system; security plans and procedures; remedying security risks – which applies to our Voter Registrar – which is an unfunded mandate (no funding available) – governments are getting attacked and we have to keep things up-to-date
 - Since VR is connected to the main network, it is included
 - Overall best practice for security
 - SolarWinds – network management software for monitoring, discovery, and auditing
 - Multi Factor Authentication (MFA) – requirement for security
 - Microsoft Azure – cloud based application management solution and security
 - Security Solutions – Acronis & FortiGate – antivirus and malware protection
 - Raising the Standards for Network Security
- Professional Services – GIS
 - ESRI – ArcGIS Software
 - Hurt & Proffitt – WebGIS hosting and services – would like to get this in-house so we can do our own correcting and modifications
- Telecommunications
 - Telephone systems for entire courthouse
 - Email/Office 365 dependency increases – users have grown to 100 email addresses
 - Migration from rackspace to government cloud hosting – more secure and increases collaboration



- Equipment
 - Continual expansion has increased the need for more equipment – networking switches and WiFi equipment
 - Includes hardware at courthouse, Sheriff's office, Public Works, Recreation, GATE Center, 1908 Courthouse
- Summary
 - Increase in Professional Services – IT would meet the software demands to increase network security
 - Increase in Telecommunications meets the demands of the increase in the need for collaboration and communications
 - Increase in equipment meets the demands of critical network infrastructure and hardware
 - Increase in salary would reflect years of personnel's experience, education, and job duties
 - Total department request: \$361,474.00

Supervisor Fant inquired about it being a physical limitation or an equipment limitation and Mr. Caudill explained that it's both – no more cables can be run because they are out of room. Supervisor Fant also noted CIP issue, or a budgetary issue and Mr. Caudill noted they have room to expand with the equipment, but they don't have the equipment. Supervisor Ivey inquired if there is an IT request in each department or does everything have to go through the IT department and Mr. Caudill responded that each department has in their budget for computers/hardware and things like that. Supervisor Ivey inquired about the Web GIS and what department it comes out of and Mr. Caudill responded it comes out of his budget and the hosting is done by Hurt & Proffitt and we send any corrections to them to update the site. Supervisor Ivey also inquired about the payment to Hurt & Proffitt and Mr. Caudill responded that the County pays them \$420.00 per month. Supervisor Anderson inquired about the employee that does the GIS, full time or part-time and Mr. Caudill responded that she is part-time – works three (3) days a week – people are contacting her to correct mistakes and she is included in Mr. Caudill's budget request which includes another full time IT person and taking GIS to full time. Mr. Caudill noted that he would like to find a way to host GIS but that's still in the works. Mr. Caudill noted that no one that he knows of that has their own cybersecurity person position. Supervisor Fant inquired about an insurance policy in place if someone does get hacked and Mr. Caudill stated we have Cyber Security Rick which we pay \$40,000 per year and gives us \$1M in coverage – not sure if that's enough in this day and time.

The Board asked to go back to the opening statements by Mr. Shepley. Supervisor Fant noted that the Board needs more clarity on some of the points such as needing an updated financial forecast and with the reassessment that's taken place and ask the accountants to give an update forecast. Supervisor Fant then brought up the budget guidance specifics – letter to the department heads and school on the outlook for the fiscal year and give the school some guidance. Mr. Shepley noted he met with Mr.

Wilmore today, they discussed it a little and Mr. Wilmore noted that their request above LRE would be \$1.1M with a proposed adjusted salary scale and wanted to use all that money for salaries which is the entire \$1.1M. Supervisor Fant mentioned the Emergency Services and all their needs and there are some things we need to be doing every year. Supervisor Fant also inquired about incorporating the ARPA funds into the budget – use it to offset CIP funds for instance and Mr. Shepley noted that in discussing with staff, almost all of the radio expenses can be paid through ARPA funds and Fries water issues. Supervisor Fant noted that there is an immediate need in the upper end of the County and recommended fleshing it out. Supervisor Ivey inquired about additional money that would have to go to the broadband project and Supervisor Fant noted that in the beginning 1 cent of the levy is to go to broadband; last year it increased to 2 cents of the levy going to broadband for that one year. Supervisor Ivey inquired that once broadband is up and going in the County, will it be an ongoing cost for the County and Supervisor Fant noted that 2% of the annual revenue that GigiBeam gets will come back to the County and that is to be reinvested into the network for expansion, equipment upgrades, etc. Supervisor Anderson inquired about when the County would see some of that revenue and Supervisor Fant noted that if it progresses well, we should see some level of it at the end of this year. Mrs. Gayheart inquired about Supervisor Fant’s request to flush out and communicate with each department which will help us figure out what we want to do this year. Mr. Shepley noted that he has met with some of the department heads and one of their concerns is needing someone in communication for placing things on Facebook, ads, and helping get the word out. Supervisor Anderson inquired that if the County sees an increase in revenue and it changes the budget after the advertisement and Mr. Shepley noted that if it changes by 1% either way, another public hearing would need to be held. Discussion took place regarding the levy, economic development and the budget.

Adjourn

Supervisor Belton made the motion to adjourn; duly seconded by Supervisor Fant. Motion carried 5-0.