

The Smyth County Board of Supervisors held its regular meeting on Thursday, October 10th, 2024, at 4:00 p.m. The location of the meeting was held in the First Floor Board Room of the County Office Building, 121 Bagley Circle, Suite 100, Marion, Virginia.

PRESENT: Atkins District Supervisor Charles Atkins; Chilhowie District Supervisor Michael Sturgill; Rye Valley District Supervisor Jason Parris; Saltville District Supervisor Roscoe Call; Royal Oak District Supervisor Courtney Widener; North Fork District Supervisor Rick Billings.

ABSENT: Park District Supervisor Kristopher Ratliff.

STAFF: County Administrator Shawn Utt (electronically); Assistant County Administrator – Development Clegg Williams; Assistant County Administrator – Operations Lisa Richardson; Zoning Administrator Becca Creasy.

OTHERS: Smyth County Sheriff's Deputy and citizens

10/10/2024 4:00 PM Chair, Atkins District Supervisor Charles Atkins called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone.

10/10/2024 4:01 PM Lisa Richardson, Assistant County Administrator - Operations led the Pledge of Allegiance and Reverend Justin Hall provided the invocation.

10/10/2024 4:03 PM Minutes of September 26th, 2024, Board of Supervisors meeting.

- *A motion was made by Saltville District Supervisor Roscoe Call to approve the minutes of the September 26th, 2024, meeting. Rye Valley District Supervisor Jason Parris seconded the motion.*

After consideration, the motion PASSED by the following vote:

AYES: *Chair, Atkins District Supervisor Charles Atkins, Vice Chair, Chilhowie District Supervisor Michael Sturgill, Saltville District Supervisor Roscoe Call, North Fork District Supervisor Rick Billings, Royal Oak District Supervisor Courtney Widener, and Rye Valley District Supervisor Jason Parris.*

NAYS: *None.*

ABSTAINERS: *None.*

ABSENT: *Park District Supervisor Kristoper Ratliff.*

10/10/2024 4:03 PM Mrs. Richardson reviewed the County financial information.

SMYTH COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 10, 2024

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE LISTING

September 2024

Request approval of the following payables:

General County	3,323,999.16
Fund 004 EDA	36,254.04
Fund 302 Public Safety Radio	11,723.48
Fund 505 Transfer Station	52,902.76
Fund 748 E-Summons	-
Fund 749 Recovery Court	11,414.04
Regular Checks Total:	3,436,293.48
<u>Fund Accounts - Manual Checks</u>	
Fund 501 Water Deposit Refunds	-
Fund 747 Sheriff State Asset Forfeiture	-
Fund 760 Commonwealth Attorney Federal Drug Asset	-
Fund 770 Circuit Court Clerk - Holding Account	202.96
Manual Checks Total:	202.96
TOTAL ACCOUNTS PAYABLE - September 2024	
	3,436,496.44

10/10/2024 4:04 PM A motion was made by Chilhowie District Supervisor Michael Sturgill to approve the accounts payable listing as presented. Saltville District Supervisor Roscoe Call seconded the motion.

After consideration, the motion PASSED by the following vote:

AYES: Chair, Atkins District Supervisor Charles Atkins,
 Vice Chair, Chilhowie District Supervisor Michael Sturgill,
 Saltville District Supervisor Roscoe Call,
 North Fork District Supervisor Rick Billings,
 Royal Oak District Supervisor Courtney Widener, and

Rye Valley District Supervisor Jason Parris.

NAYS: None.

ABSTAINERS: None.

ABSENT: Park District Supervisor Kristoper Ratliff.

10/10/2024 4:04 PM Chair, Atkins District Supervisor Charles Atkins opened citizen's time.

Sarah Taylor of 604 East Coyner Ave, Marion, VA expressed concerns about residents in Sugar Grove lacking cell phone service. She also inquired about past projects related to this issue.

Rose Likins, Executive Director of the Smyth County Libraries, provided updates and noted that her staff is assisting citizens with completing FEMA forms and is willing to continue supporting them throughout the process.

Melissa Dalton of 696 Cedar Springs Road, Sugar Grove expressed concerns about the lack of cell phone service, as well as landline and internet outages lasting 14 days. She emphasized her worry for older citizens, particularly in emergency situations.

Donnie Cullop, a Smyth County bus driver also spoke with concerns about lack of communication in the Sugar Grove area.

10/10/2024 4:43 PM With no one else wishing to speak, Chair, Atkins District Supervisor Charles Atkins closed citizen's time.

10/10/2024 4:43 PM Emergency Services Coordinator, Curtis Crawford requested review and consideration of the following resolution to ratify the declaration of emergency in Smyth County.

**RESOLUTION OF DECLARATION OF STATE OF EMERGENCY FOR
SMYTH COUNTY, VIRGINIA**

WHEREAS, by the Code of Virginia, § 44 - 146.21. Declaration of Local Emergency, a local emergency may be declared by the local director of emergency management with the consent of the governing body of the political subdivision; and

WHEREAS, due to hurricane/tropical storm Helene, Smyth County Public Safety and county resources have been overwhelmed; and

WHEREAS, due to hurricane/tropical storm Helene, Smyth County Public Safety is seeing and forecasting further financial and continual altering conditions that will hamper essential services and cause loss of financial stability to the County of Smyth for an extended period; and

WHEREAS, due to hurricane/tropical storm Helene, Smyth County Public Safety has witnessed conditions of peril of life and property to citizens of the County; and

WHEREAS, the Director of Emergency Services as appointed by this body, has declared a provisional *Local Declaration of Emergency*; and

WHEREAS, the Smyth County Board of Supervisors prides itself in responding to the needs of its residents and communities; and

WHEREAS, the County of Smyth has incurred a historic disaster that has long-term impacts to our residents and communities; and

NOW THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY PROCLAIMED, that the Smyth County Board of Supervisors ratifies the provisional *Local Declaration of Emergency* by the Director of Emergency Services; and

IT IS FURTHER PROCLAIMED AND ORDERED, that the Smyth County Emergency Operations Plan is active, and the Emergency Operations Center is active and operational.

ADOPTED this 10th of October 2024.

ATTEST:

**SMYTH COUNTY
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

Shawn M. Utt, Clerk of the Board

Charles Atkins, Chair

- *Rye Valley District Supervisor Jason Parris made a motion to adopt the Resolution of Declaration of Emergency in Smyth County, Virginia as presented. Saltville District Supervisor Roscoe Call seconded the motion.*

After consideration, the motion PASSED by the following vote:

AYES: *Chair, Atkins District Supervisor Charles Atkins,
Vice Chair, Chilhowie District Supervisor Michael Sturgill,
Saltville District Supervisor Roscoe Call,
North Fork District Supervisor Rick Billings,
Royal Oak District Supervisor Courtney Widener, and
Rye Valley District Supervisor Jason Parris.*

NAYS: *None.*

ABSTAINERS: *None.*

ABSENT: *Park District Supervisor Kristoper Ratliff.*

Mr. Crawford then provided an update on the response timeline and actions related to Hurricane Helene, highlighting efforts to ensure community safety. He mentioned ongoing

initiatives and visits from government officials as well as FEMA staff who are addressing the destruction in the area.

10/10/2024 4:50 PM Mr. Williams discussed requests received to waive the transfer station tipping fees for debris related to Hurricane Helene.

- *Royal Oak District Supervisor Courtney Widener made a motion to waive tipping fees for storm related damages and to revisit the fee-waiver at the November the 14th Board meeting. Saltville District Supervisor Roscoe Call seconded the motion.*

After consideration, the motion PASSED by the following vote:

AYES: *Chair, Atkins District Supervisor Charles Atkins,
Vice Chair, Chilhowie District Supervisor Michael Sturgill,
Saltville District Supervisor Roscoe Call,
North Fork District Supervisor Rick Billings,
Royal Oak District Supervisor Courtney Widener, and
Rye Valley District Supervisor Jason Parris.*

NAYS: *None.*

ABSTAINERS: *None.*

ABSENT: *Park District Supervisor Kristoper Ratliff.*

10/10/2024 5:02 PM Mrs. Richardson reviewed the second quarter appropriations as follows:

• General County	\$ 10,500,000	Fund 001
• General EDA Expenses	\$ 725,000	Fund 004
• Schools – Operating Fund	\$ 16,717,117	Fund 009
• Department of Social Services	\$ 1,920,923	Fund 013
• Public Safety Radio Bond	\$ 2,000,000	Fund 302
• Recovery Court	\$ 44,625	Fund 749

Total for 2nd Qtr. – FY24/25 **\$ 31,907,665**

- *Saltville District Supervisor Roscoe Call made a motion to approve the second quarter appropriations in the total amount of \$31,907,665 as presented. Rye Valley District Supervisor Jason Parris seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.*

After consideration, the motion PASSED by the following vote:

AYES: *Chair, Atkins District Supervisor Charles Atkins,
Vice Chair, Chilhowie District Supervisor Michael Sturgill,
Saltville District Supervisor Roscoe Call,
North Fork District Supervisor Rick Billings,*

*Royal Oak District Supervisor Courtney Widener, and
Rye Valley District Supervisor Jason Parris.*

NAYS: None.

ABSTAINERS: None.

ABSENT: Park District Supervisor Kristoper Ratliff.

10/10/2024 5:03 PM Chilhowie District Supervisor Michael Sturgill exited the meeting due to prior engagements.

10/10/2024 5:03 PM Mrs. Richardson then reviewed the request from VACO for each county to designate a representative of its Board of Supervisors to cast its vote at the Annual Business Meeting. She noted it was customary for the Board Chairman to serve that role if he/she attends the VACO conference.

- *North Fork District Supervisor Rick Billings made a motion to designate Atkins District Supervisor Charles Atkins as primary and Chilhowie District Supervisor Michael Sturgill as secondary to vote on behalf of the Smyth County Board of Supervisors at the VACO annual meeting. Rye Valley District Supervisor Jason Parris seconded the motion, and it was approved.*

After consideration, the motion PASSED by the following vote:

*AYES: Chair, Atkins District Supervisor Charles Atkins
Saltville District Supervisor Roscoe Call,
North Fork District Supervisor Rick Billings,
Royal Oak District Supervisor Courtney Widener, and
Rye Valley District Supervisor Jason Parris.*

NAYS: None.

ABSTAINERS: None.

*ABSENT: Park District Supervisor Kristoper Ratliff and
Vice Chair, Chilhowie District Supervisor Michael Sturgill.*

10/10/2024 5:03 PM Royal Oak District Supervisor Courtney Widener exited the meeting due to prior engagements.

10/10/2024 5:05 PM County Attorney Report – Mr. Farthing did not have anything to share during this time.

10/10/2024 5:05 PM County Administrator Report -

Mr. Williams requested the public hearing date of the Tax Exemption for Line of Duty Surviving Spouses be moved to October 24th due to the advertising deadline being missed.

- *Rye Valley District Supervisor Jason Parris made a motion to reschedule the public hearing to October 24th at 5pm or shortly thereafter to gain comments on a proposed Ordinance for Tax Exemption for Surviving Spouses of Line of Duty Deaths. Saltville District Supervisor Roscoe Call seconded the motion.*

After consideration, the motion PASSED by the following vote:

AYES: Chair, Atkins District Supervisor Charles Atkins, Saltville District Supervisor Roscoe Call, North Fork District Supervisor Rick Billings, and Rye Valley District Supervisor Jason Parris.

NAYS: None.

ABSTAINERS: None.

ABSENT: Royal Oak District Supervisor Courtney Widener, Park District Supervisor Kristoper Ratliff, and Vice Chair, Chilhowie District Supervisor Michael Sturgill.

10/10/2024 5:55 PM Supervisor Comment Time –

Saltville District Supervisor Roscoe Call thanked everyone for their efforts during this difficult time.

North Fork District Supervisor Rick Billings shared his wishes for cell coverage in the Sugar Grove area matched those throughout the community, but noted the Board is only able to do so much. Mr. Billings thanked lineman and first responders for their support and work during the hurricane response efforts. Mr. Billings also shared the following request from Mr. Sturgill who was unable to stay at the meeting:

- *North Fork District Supervisor Rick Billings made a motion to nominate Ann Margaret Utt to the Library Board to represent the Chilhowie District serving the remainder of Nellie Harmon's term, set to expire June 30th, 2028. Saltville District Supervisor Roscoe Call seconded the motion.*

After consideration, the motion PASSED by the following vote:

AYES: Chair, Atkins District Supervisor Charles Atkins, Saltville District Supervisor Roscoe Call, North Fork District Supervisor Rick Billings, and Rye Valley District Supervisor Jason Parris.

NAYS: None.

ABSTAINERS: None.

ABSENT: Royal Oak District Supervisor Courtney Widener, Park District Supervisor Kristoper Ratliff, and Vice Chair, Chilhowie District Supervisor Michael Sturgill.

Chair, Atkins District Supervisor Charles Atkins shared his wishes for cell phone service in Sugar Grove as well. He stated the Board does want to help. Mr. Atkins also commended neighbors on helping each other during the storm response and its aftermath.

Rye Valley District Supervisor Jason Parris thanked staff and leadership for leading the county through such an awful storm as well as continuing to navigate all hurdles but noted they have done an excellent job.

Due to the tragic events surrounding the hurricane response, Chair, Atkins District Supervisor Charles Atkins allowed time for other staff to comment:

Mrs. Richardson shared her appreciation for seeing such acts of kindness in a tragedy and a lot of good can be said about our community.

Mr. Williams shared stories about the many citizens who have stepped up, including Chris Alexander of HS Williams who had his construction crews working in the community to help clean roadways, open driveways and in many cases rebuild access to their homes.

10/10/2024 5:23 PM With no further business to discuss, Chair, Atkins District Supervisor Charles Atkins adjourned the meeting.