

The Smyth County Board of Supervisors held its regular meeting on Thursday, September 12th, 2024, at 5:00 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; Park District Supervisor Kristopher Ratliff; Royal Oak District Supervisor Courtney Widener.

ABSENT: North Fork District Supervisor Rick Billings.

STAFF: County Administrator Shawn Utt; Assistant County Administrator – Development Clegg Williams; Zoning Administrator Becca Creasy.

OTHERS: Smyth County Sheriff's Deputy and citizens

9/12/2024 5:02 PM Chair, Atkins District Supervisor Charles Atkins called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone.

9/12/2024 5:04 PM Shawn Utt, County Administrator led the Pledge of Allegiance and Reverend Alan Gray gave the invocation.

9/12/2024 5:06 PM Chair, Atkins District Supervisor Charles Atkins entertained a motion to allow Park District Supervisor Kristopher Ratliff to join electronically.

- *A motion was made by Saltville District Supervisor Roscoe Call to allow Park District Supervisor Kristopher Ratliff to join the meeting electronically. Chilhowie District Supervisor Michael Sturgill 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, Royal Oak District Supervisor Courtney Widener, and Rye Valley District Supervisor Jason Parris.*

NAYS: *None.*

ABSTAINERS: *Park District Supervisor Kristoper Ratliff.*

ABSENT: *North Fork District Supervisor Rick Billings.*

9/12/2024 5:06 PM Mr. Utt read the following Resolution for the Board's review and consideration:

RESOLUTION OF APPRECIATION TO REBECCA KRESS FOR HER MANY YEARS OF SERVICE IN SMYTH COUNTY'S COMMISSIONER OF REVENUE OFFICE

WHEREAS, the Smyth County Board of Supervisors desires to celebrate public service and community leadership as a critical component in defining excellence and in improving the vision of Smyth County; and

WHEREAS, Mrs. Rebecca "Becky" Kress began public service to the citizens of Smyth County as a Clerk in the office of the Commissioner of Revenue on January 26th, 1990 and retired in April of 2024 having served under 3 Commissioners and as Chief Deputy under the past 2; and

WHEREAS, before serving in the Office of the Commissioner of Revenue, Becky worked with the Department of Social Services assisting those in need receive services such as fuel and emergency assistance; and

WHEREAS, throughout her tenure, Becky partnered with the long-time Commissioner, Jeffery Richardson to improve the lives of the citizens of Smyth County in a variety of ways including working to implement the Veteran Tax Relief Program for both real estate as well as personal property taxation helping those who served to protect our Country's freedom; and

WHEREAS, Becky's tenacity and determination was prevalent in everything she tackled. Her passion to always do the right thing for the citizens of Smyth County was envied by all that worked along her side and for that, we are grateful.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Smyth County Board of Supervisors hereby commend and convey our heartfelt appreciation to Mrs. Kress for her unwavering devotion to the citizens and taxpayers of Smyth County; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Smyth County Board of Supervisors hereby wishes Mrs. Kress nothing but happiness and good health as she continues the next chapter of what has been a well-lived life of service to others.

ADOPTED this 22nd day of August, 2024.

ATTEST:

**SMYTH COUNTY
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

Shawn M. Utt, Clerk of the Board

Charles Atkins, Chair

9/12/2024 5:06 PM Jeff Richardson and Dolly Robinson spoke about how crucial Becky was to the community. They highlighted her stubbornness and determination, noting that her amazing contributions have had a lasting impact on the citizens of Smyth County, even in her retirement. Following the presentation, the following motion was offered:

- *A motion was made by Chilhowie District Supervisor Michael Sturgill to approve the Resolution of Appreciation to Rebecca Kress for Her Many Years of Service In the Smyth County Commissioner of Revenue Office. 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,
Park District Supervisor Kristoper Ratliff,
Royal Oak District Supervisor Courtney Widener, and
Rye Valley District Supervisor Jason Parris.*

NAYS: None.

ABSTAINERS: None.

ABSENT: North Fork District Supervisor Rick Billings.

9/12/2024 5:16 PM Tom Graham presented the Hungry Mother Trail Concept. He noted that the Town of Marion had previously adopted a resolution of support for the project and requested that the Board of Supervisors also consider approving it. Mr. Utt read the following resolution for the Board's review and consideration:

**A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING GRANT APPLICATION FOR THE STUDY OF
THE FEASIBILITY OF CONVERSION AND DEVELOPMENT OF A
BIKING/HIKING TRAIL CONNECTING HOLSTON HILLS GOLF COURSE TO
HUNGRY MOTHER STATE PARK ALONG EXISTING SEWER ROUTE**

WHEREAS, the Smyth County Board of Supervisors continue to work toward improving the quality of life for our citizens and our visitors, including expanding recreational opportunities through trail development; and

WHEREAS, the Smyth County Board of Supervisors are interested in partnering with the Town of Marion in the development of a bicycle/hiking trail connecting Holston Hills Golf Course to Hungry Mother State Park, utilizing an existing sewer route; and

WHEREAS, both the Smyth County Board of Supervisors and the Town of Marion wish to explore grant opportunities to help develop a feasibility study which would design

possible trail routes, identify all adjacent property owners and secure easements, and identify available funding sources for construction.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by this resolution, the Smyth County Board of Supervisors express their support for application for any and all possible grant sources to develop a feasibility study on the proposed Hungry Mother Creek Trail.

ADOPTED this 22nd day of August, 2024.

ATTEST:

**SMYTH COUNTY
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

Shawn M. Utt, Clerk of the Board

Charles Atkins, Chair

- *A motion was made by Chilhowie District Supervisor Michael Sturgill to approve the Resolution Supporting Grant Application For The Study Of The Feasibility Of Conversion And Development Of A Biking/Hiking Trail Connecting Holston Hills Golf Course To Hungry Mother State Park Along Existing Sewer Route. 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,
Park District Supervisor Kristoper Ratliff,
Royal Oak District Supervisor Courtney Widener, and
Rye Valley District Supervisor Jason Parris.

NAYS: None.

ABSTAINERS: None.

ABSENT: North Fork District Supervisor Rick Billings.

9/12/2024 5:16 PM Minutes of the August 22nd, 2024, Board of Supervisors meeting.

- *A motion was made by Saltville District Supervisor Roscoe Call to approve the minutes from the August 22nd, 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,
Saltville District Supervisor Roscoe Call,
Park District Supervisor Kristoper Ratliff,

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

NAYS: *None.*

ABSTAINERS: *Vice Chair, Chilhowie District Supervisor Michael Sturgill.*

ABSENT: *North Fork District Supervisor Rick Billings.*

9/12/2024 5:24 PM Mrs. Richardson reviewed the County financial information.

**SMYTH COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2024**

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE LISTING
August 2024

Request approval of the following payables:

General County	2,244,922.91
Fund 004 EDA	21,246.22
Fund 302 Public Safety Radio	328,854.30
Fund 505 Transfer Station	-
Fund 748 E-Summons	1,480.45
Fund 749 Recovery Court	2,538.42
Regular Checks Total:	2,599,042.30
<u>Fund Accounts - Manual Checks</u>	
Fund 501 Water Deposit Refunds	400.00
Fund 747 Sheriff State Asset Forfeiture	-
Fund 748 E-Summons	1,474.67
Fund 749 Recovery Court	32,997.41
Fund 760 Commonwealth Attorney Federal Drug Asset	-
Fund 770 Circuit Court Clerk - Holding Account	-
Manual Checks Total:	34,872.08
TOTAL ACCOUNTS PAYABLE - August 2024	2,633,914.38

9/12/2024 5:24 PM A motion was made by Saltville District Supervisor Roscoe Call to approve the accounts payable listing as presented. 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,
Park District Supervisor Kristoper Ratliff,
Royal Oak District Supervisor Courtney Widener, and
Rye Valley District Supervisor Jason Parris.*

NAYS: *None.*

ABSTAINERS: *None.*

ABSENT: *North Fork District Supervisor Rick Billings.*

9/12/2024 5:25 PM Chair, Atkins District Supervisor Charles Atkins opened citizen's time.

Mark Chainey with the American Legion updated the Board on current projects and upcoming events.

Smyth County Museum volunteer, Anna Lee Debord of 343 College St. Marion, VA. Mrs. Deboard shared it has been 237 years since the Constitution had been signed. She noted Constitution week is September 17th- 23rd. Mrs. Debord also shared upcoming events at the museum.

9/12/2024 5:37 PM With no one else wishing to speak, Chair, Atkins District Supervisor Charles Atkins closed citizen's time.

9/12/2024 5:37 PM Chilhowie District Supervisor Michael Sturgill read the minutes of the September 5th Ordinance Committee and presented the following recommendations:

- *Atkins District Supervisor Charles Atkins made a motion to recommend scheduling a public hearing on October 10th at 5:00 pm or shortly thereafter to gain comments on a proposed Ordinance for Tax Exemption for Surviving spouses of Line of Duty Deaths. Chilhowie District Supervisor Michael Sturgill seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved by committee.*

After consideration, the Committee recommendation PASSED by the following vote:

AYES: *Chair, Atkins District Supervisor Charles Atkins,
Vice Chair, Chilhowie District Supervisor Michael Sturgill,
Saltville District Supervisor Roscoe Call,
Park District Supervisor Kristoper Ratliff,
Royal Oak District Supervisor Courtney Widener, and
Rye Valley District Supervisor Jason Parris.*

NAYS: *None.*

ABSTAINERS: *None.*

ABSENT: *North Fork District Supervisor Rick Billings.*

9/12/2024 5:40 PM Mr. Utt read the minutes of the September 5th Budget Committee and presented the following recommendations:

- *Chilhowie District Supervisor Michael Sturgill made a motion to recommend a line-item transfer of \$13,800 from The Commissioner of Revenue's line "Salaries and Wages" 001-012090-1001 to The Treasurer's line "Salaries and Wages" 001-012130-1001 to allow*

current salaries to more equally align. Royal Oak District Supervisor Courtney Widener seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved by the Committee.

After consideration, the Committee recommendation PASSED by the following vote:

*AYES: Chair, Atkins District Supervisor Charles Atkins,
Vice Chair, Chilhowie District Supervisor Michael Sturgill,
Saltville District Supervisor Roscoe Call,
Park District Supervisor Kristoper Ratliff,
Royal Oak District Supervisor Courtney Widener, and
Rye Valley District Supervisor Jason Parris.*

NAYS: None.

ABSTAINERS: None.

ABSENT: North Fork District Supervisor Rick Billings.

- Chilhowie District Supervisor Michael Sturgill made a motion to recommend County Administrator begin a salary survey of surrounding localities. Royal Oak District Supervisor Courtney Widener seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved by the Committee.*

After consideration, the Committee recommendation PASSED by the following vote:

*AYES: Chair, Atkins District Supervisor Charles Atkins,
Vice Chair, Chilhowie District Supervisor Michael Sturgill,
Saltville District Supervisor Roscoe Call,
Park District Supervisor Kristoper Ratliff,
Royal Oak District Supervisor Courtney Widener, and
Rye Valley District Supervisor Jason Parris.*

NAYS: None.

ABSTAINERS: None.

ABSENT: North Fork District Supervisor Rick Billings.

9/12/2024 5:41 PM Chilhowie District Supervisor Michael Sturgill read the minutes of the September 5th Building and Grounds Committee and presented the following recommendation:

- Royal Oak District Supervisor Courtney Widener made a motion to recommend approving HS Williams Change Order #1 for the Sheriff's Office Relocation in the amount of \$36,000. Chilhowie District Supervisor Michael Sturgill seconded the motion, and it was approved by the Committee.*

After consideration, the Committee recommendation PASSED by the following vote:

AYES: Chair, Atkins District Supervisor Charles Atkins,
Vice Chair, Chilhowie District Supervisor Michael Sturgill,
Saltville District Supervisor Roscoe Call,
Park District Supervisor Kristoper Ratliff,
Royal Oak District Supervisor Courtney Widener, and
Rye Valley District Supervisor Jason Parris.

NAYS: None.

ABSTAINERS: None.

ABSENT: North Fork District Supervisor Rick Billings.

9/12/2024 5:42 PM Saltville District Supervisor Roscoe Call read the minutes of the September 5th Water and Sewer Committee and presented the following recommendation:

- *Rye Valley District Supervisor Jason Parris made a motion to recommend approval of the updated Water Purchase Contract with the Town of Saltville. North Fork District Supervisor Rick Billings seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.*

After consideration, the Committee recommendation was TABLED until the next regularly scheduled Board of Supervisors meeting due to some potential changes from the Town of Saltville:

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

NAYS: None.

ABSTAINERS: None.

ABSENT: None.

9/12/2024 5:45 PM Mr. Utt discussed the NTIA Grant for the Saltville Library Branch. He noted the library is looking to apply for funding through the National Telecommunications and Information Administration's "Digital Equity Competitive Grant Program" for the Saltville Library. Since the library is not an eligible entity, the County will need to serve as formal applicant and fiscal agent. Mrs. Catherine Van Noy, Millcreek Creative, will provide the grant writing services while the Mt. Rogers PDC will provide grant administration services should we be fortunate enough to receive funding (both of which can be paid for out of grant proceeds). While there are no official requirements for the County Board of Supervisors to pass a formal resolution, we believe it would be proper for the Board to provide a show of support for the grant application and authorize the County Administrator to execute the documents necessary to formally apply.

- *Saltville District Supervisor Roscoe Call made a motion to allow Smyth County to serve as fiscal agent for the NTIA Grant application for Saltville Library Branch and authorize the County Administrator to execute the documents necessary to formally apply.*

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

NAYS: None.

ABSTAINERS: None.

ABSENT: North Fork District Supervisor Rick Billings.

9/12/2024 5:47 PM Mr. Utt provided an update on the Joint Building Needs Task Force meeting held on August 30th to discuss the space needs of the various offices of the County and Schools. They reviewed the recommendations of the building needs assessment (developed by AECOM in 2022/2023) for office spaces and also discussed school board needs. Dr. Carter provided the group with an update on the \$4.8m grant funding that has been awarded to Smyth County School Board for the proposed CHS gym/band/cafeteria expansions and also discussed the proposed MSHS auxiliary gym that could be built in the area of the former Marion Intermediate School. The group agreed the proper next step would be for the school board to move forward and procure an architectural firm who could develop preliminary plans for the 2 projects along with miscellaneous renovations at all 3 high schools to better help the County and School Board understand the full costs associated with the projects (the school board has just over \$1m set-aside that can be used for these plans as well as go toward MHS's gym project). The Committee plans to focus the next meeting on space needs for the County Administration, DSS, School Board, Extension/4H, and Registrar. No action taken, informational only at this time.

9/12/2024 5:50 PM County Attorney Report – Mr. Farthing did not have anything to share during this time.

9/12/2024 5:50 PM County Administrator Report -

Mr. Utt shared various upcoming dates the Board of Supervisors are invited to attend as well as a VACO award Smyth County received for the Smyth Grow Project as well as the Smyth Promise Program.

9/12/2024 5:55 PM Supervisor Comment Time –

Park District Supervisor Kristopher Ratliff shared his appreciation for the Board allowing him to electronically join the meeting. Mr. Ratliff thanked staff and congratulated the County on the award.

Chair, Atkins District Supervisor Charles Atkins thanked staff and the rest of the Board for doing great things to move the County forward. Mr. Atkins shared his excitement about Smyth County's recognition from the tourism awards and the VACO award putting Smyth County in the spotlight.

Royal Oak District Supervisor Courtney Widener thanked staff as well as parents and volunteers for the success of the football program.

Chilhowie District Supervisor Micheal Sturgill thanked the Board and staff for all working so well towards greater things in Smyth County as well as veterans who sacrifice so much.

Saltville District Supervisor Roscoe Call requested County Administrator work with Superintendent Dr. Carter to remove overgrown trees from Northwood High School's football field.

Rye Valley District Supervisor Jason Parris thanked staff for the work that goes into preparing Board meetings. Mr. Parris also encouraged anyone who can to get involved to make Smyth County a better place.

9/12/2024 6:15 PM

- *Royal Oak District Supervisor Courtney Widener made a motion to enter into closed session under Code of Virginia Section 2.2-3711(a)3 Discussion or consideration of the acquisition of real property for public purposes, or of the disposition of publicly held real property regarding HS Williams request for Harwood Drive. 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,
Park District Supervisor Kristoper Ratliff,
Royal Oak District Supervisor Courtney Widener, and
Rye Valley District Supervisor Jason Parris.*

NAYS: *None.*

ABSTAINERS: *None.*

ABSENT: *North Fork District Supervisor Rick Billings.*

9/12/2024 6:15 PM

- *Royal Oak District Supervisor Courtney Widener made a motion to adopt the following resolution and enter back into open session. Saltville District Supervisor Roscoe Call seconded the motion.*

RESOLUTION
CERTIFICATION OF CLOSED SESSION

WHEREAS, the Smyth County Board of Supervisors has convened in a closed session on this date pursuant to an affirmative recorded vote and in accordance with the provisions of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act; and

WHEREAS, Section 2.2-3712 of the Code of Virginia requires a certification by the Smyth County Board of Supervisors that such a meeting was conducted in conformity with Virginia law;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Smyth County Board of Supervisors hereby certifies that, to the best of each member's knowledge, (i) only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements by Virginia law were discussed in the closed meeting to which this certification resolution applies, and (ii) only such public business matters as were identified in the motion convening the closed session were heard, discussed or considered by the Smyth County Board of Supervisors.

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

NAYS: None.

ABSTAINERS: None.

ABSENT: North Fork District Supervisor Rick Billings.

- *Royal Oak District Supervisor Courtney Widener made a motion to authorize County Administrator to pay \$50,000 once invoiced for prior agreement commitment for the former Harwood property dated April 13, 2011. Chilhowie District Supervisor Michael Sturgill 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,
Park District Supervisor Kristoper Ratliff,
Royal Oak District Supervisor Courtney Widener, and
Rye Valley District Supervisor Jason Parris.*

NAYS: None.

ABSTAINERS: None.

ABSENT: North Fork District Supervisor Rick Billings.

9/12/2024 6:20 PM With no further business to discuss, Chair, Atkins District Supervisor Charles Atkins adjourned the meeting.