

VIRGINIA: At the Regular Meeting of the Board of Supervisors held at the Bland County Courthouse, Bland, Virginia, on the twenty-sixth day of May 2026 at 5:00 p.m. The following duly elected and qualified members were present or absent:

PRESENT: Keith Costello, Patrick Groseclose, Stephen Kelley, and Randy Johnson

ABSENT: none

ALSO PRESENT: Cameron Burton, County Administrator; Paul Cassell, County Attorney; Linda Miller, Board Secretary and Joel Cagle

#### PLEDGE TO THE FLAG AND INVOCATION

Chair Randy Johnson led the pledge, and Cameron Burton offered the invocation.

#### CALL TO ORDER

Chair Randy Johnson called the May 26, 2026, Board of Supervisors' monthly meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

#### MEETING AGENDA AMENDED

\*\*\*\*\*MOTION to approve the meeting agenda as amended with the resolution to end the burn ban was made by Patrick Groseclose and seconded by Keith Costello. Motion carried unanimously.

#### CONSENT AGENDA/SOCIAL SERVICES/SCHOOLS APPROVED

\*\*\*\*\*MOTION to approve the consent agenda which consisted of the minutes of the regular April 28, 2026 meeting; payroll issued April 30, 2026, in the amount of \$162,701.40, payroll issued May 15, 2026, amount of \$153,400.55, and bills for the month of April 2026, in the amount of \$123,756.17, and bills for the month of May 2026 in the amount of \$556,546.58; reports from the Treasurer's Office, Sheriff's Office, Building Official, Clerk's Office, E911 Coordinator, and Wolf Creek Indian Village was made by Stephen Kelley and seconded by Patrick Groseclose. Motion carried.

\*\*\*\*\*MOTION to appropriate the March 2026 Social Services' report in the amount of \$15,956.72 local allotment was made by Stephen Kelley and seconded by Keith Costello. Roll Call Vote: Mr. Kelley – yea; Mr. Costello – yea; Mr. Groseclose – yea; and Mr. Johnson – yea. Motion carried unanimously.

\*\*\*\*\*MOTION to appropriate the Bland County School Board's June 2026 requisition in the amount of \$1,128,966.42; and approve the minutes for the April 23, 2026, regular meeting; approve payroll and vendor payments for April 2026, was made by Stephen Kelley and seconded by Patrick Groseclose.  
Roll Call Vote: Mr. Kelley – yea; Mr. Groseclose – yea; Mr. Costello – yea; and Mr. Johnson – yea. Motion carried unanimously.

#### BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Ms. Haley Painter, Branch Manager of the Bland County Public Library: "this evening I will be sharing some of the things that the library has going on and what we have been up to. In front of you should have the Summer Reading 2026 programs and shows. I will start with an update about that. The theme is *Unearth a Story*; we will be talking about dinosaurs ... and we would love to see your children and grandchildren." Also, Ms. Painter mentioned working with the school's stem program, various shows and having an art contest. Ms. Painter stated "the library offers some services: a blood drive with the American Red Cross is every three months... donation appointments go fast. The library does go out in the community, to the nursing home, and books are delivered to shut-in patrons as well. At the library, there is a coloring club that meets on Fridays and a senior citizen group that meets every Friday. .... You can follow the library on social media for more information."

#### PRESENTATION

Ms. Sandy Bryant, Executive Director, Mount Rogers Community Services, "wanted to talk briefly and have three members also with me to talk about statistics, budget request and our community services. I do want to say we have a mobile van that comes to the fairgrounds on a regular basis and the next time they will be here is June 3. We do this in partnership with the Health Dept. to provide primary care, mental health counseling, substance abuse counseling as well as psychiatric services. Every time we come, we have a nurse, a nurse practitioner, and

mental health counselor on the van so individuals and families can come that day... We love our partnership with Bland. You have been wonderful to work with, and we hope to continue to serve your citizens the best way we can. Here is Matt Sabo to talk about some statistics."

Mr. Matt Sabo, "about the 5<sup>th</sup> page in your packet are the number we serve here." I'm the Communications and Marketing Director, as you can see going back to 2024. We had 264 people and 254 people last year and this year 246 people in 10 months of the year. So, you can see we are right in that same area maybe slightly ahead for this year and you can see that we serve a lot of the younger people in the community and I'm counting under 45 as younger people, but a lot under 18. We offer a number of services to about 4% of the population."

Ms. Christy Blevins, Director of Financial Services, "I will be going over to budgetary numbers and funding. Before you is the budget for FY26 was about 90.4 million. The majority of that, about half is made up of third party insurance and Medicaid, that's about 46.5% in the 10 months we've collected about 80% so we are on track to make budget, State funding - 33.7%; Federal Funding - 6.7% Usually State and Federal are restricted funding that has to be used for specific purposes and if they are not spent they have to be sent back. Contract Sales - 10.9% of budget .. Local Funds - 0.52% and Misc/Contributions - 1.68%. We strive to have a balanced budget; therefore, we have Revenues and Expenses of 90.4 million dollars. Salaries of Personnel makes up about three quarters (66.15%); Contract Services - 18.66% ... and so on. Our funding agency requires 12 weeks of reserve to cover expenses.... local funding for Bland County is \$13.70 per capita proposed local match is \$84,720. We appreciated your funding for 2026"

Ms. Samantha Crockett, Senior Director of Wellness and Community Engagement, "I want to talk to you about the free services that we offer to Bland County. We try to focus on services that strengthen mental health, reduce the substance abuse risk and support the resiliency across that life span. One of the things that we are really proud of is all the services that we offer is free of charge to anyone in the community focusing on schools, organizations, community groups and local partners. So, through the end of March this current year, our prevention and wellness team has served 600,000 so there are some overlapping of services..... looking for a space in Bland County. "

#### PUBLIC COMMENT

**Mr. Robert Haynes**, "I'm a resident of Ceres, VA, a Marine Corp veteran, last month I came I spoke about the 2A (Second Amendment) Sanctuary Resolution the board adopted, and Sheriff took his stand but that is only a fraction of it. I mentioned the Commonwealth Attorney and the courts need to take a stand. Have we heard anything? No, we haven't. Those are elected officials that we put in those seats.....July 1<sup>st</sup> those laws go into effect. A stand needs to be taken. He has a week to decide. The people need to make their voices heard...." Mr. Haynes also stated "I want to talk about the tax levy...I have a fair offer for the people that want their voices heard. The County can't pay itself, because it goes from the account back into the same account. We can take County owned property taxes and put into a fund...."

**Mr. Carl Williams**, "I will be brief and I want to address the tax situation. I was born here, a lifelong resident, raising a family here and I don't got no plans to go anywhere. I guess I'll die here. But growing up here I always thought Bland County made good decisions for the most part and common sense is a big part of the decision process. Raising taxes without showing any improvement in the county to show for it is not one them in my opinion. I will give you a couple of examples in my opinion the schools and the school system is a joke. Structures are in shambles, falling down and what I have heard really no means or ideas to address to fix it and to the county owned property the land is just sitting there idle is a waste of money. You got to get the businesses to come in to get the revenue and another thing is all these ridiculous salaries that's going on around here that I think it needs to be accounted for... Again, with no signs of improvement why do we have them. The final thing is we have a lot of great small businesses here in the county and you got to help them. We are all struggling and taxing is not going to help them. Run the county like a small business....We the tax payers will remember this come election...."

**Mr. John Owens**, "regarding our tax money you haven't done crap with yet. I haven't seen anything done, no benefits, don't get anything done with my tax dollars. I own lots of property in this county. I ain't seen nothing you do with it. You waste money, waste it. .... ridiculous, if it was your money I guarantee you wouldn't be doing it because you would be filing bankruptcy. If you go more than \$0.32 then you are robbing the people in this county as Carl said come election and maybe even before then an impeachment. We can do that and I think it's about time we all start thinking about it. Because it's starting to be ridiculous if we ask for something and you

don't do it. The county you talk about the federal government owning property. How much does the county own? I asked that question and got no answer. You talk about you want to put a delinquent tax, ....salaries and those that get double salaries as I mentioned last time and I still haven't heard nothing on that. A hundred thousand dollars is missing, so that is enough about the taxes 'cause you're going to do what you wanna do. Like I said if you do more than \$0.32, you don't need more than that. You got more than you need right now.... nothing against these guys from VDOT. It's awful funny that if you want to help somebody out here, talk about roads you went over and paved Hicksville Rd. It's not even 14 feet wide, not even state regulation and in some places only 12 foot. If I want to put a road in, make it a state road it's got to be 16 feet minimum ... how's that fair to me as a citizen? ....You don't want to hear about that you want to hear about what you can do, what you can pocket for yourself, buy another restaurant or buy property to put housing in. That's another issue that we are going to get on is putting in a housing project, shopping mall, the one in Bastian don't even stay full. So, why are you wanting to put more money into it? People in the community wanting to build, I tried it, I was shot down, you can't do this, you can't do that. Rules are made to broken and you can overlook it. That's the thing about it you do it for yourself. You did it when you wasted money on the industrial park that you had. How much money did we waste there? It was grant money that you wasted, and we had to pay out of pocket. Why did you do it and you do it all the time? People are upset about it... You can't get your stuff together we will just wipe you all out and get rid of whole bunch and start over. We will get rid of all this grant stuff. 7 million dollars for your school. I can show you how to do it. They can get 8 million in grants but spend 15. It ain't free money. Outdoor heating, I'm done"

**Mr. Barry Tickle**, "I'm a day late and a dollar short. I haven't had an opportunity to talk to anyone about the reassessment, and I own a piece of property out the road there and it went up 123.04%. .... It's an old house, .25-acre land, no water, and no septic. The roof is falling in, it's not livable and no electricity to the house. They assessed my property at \$42,000. Where they came up with that, I don't know. They sure as heck didn't look at it or think about what it's worth. That's all I got to say. Thanks."

**Mr. Philip Buttery**, Ceres, VA, "Good evening, I hope you all are doing well. I'm glad to stand in front of you and give you some good news. It's a great crowd here that sometimes don't get to hear all the good news that the school system is doing. Ms. Radford couldn't be with you tonight so I thought I would stand here and give you some good things to hear. So, this past weekend we had 58 seniors that graduated from Bland County High School and we celebrated them. Of those 58 seniors, 15 of those students received an associate degree from WCC, which I think we should celebrate that is a wonderful thing. I know we talk about and Mr. Owens talks about wanting a new school and so forth. I think that we do really well with the money that we have and at the moment. It would be nice to have a new school and it is going to be necessary in the future and that's another thing that I want to talk about in my allotted time. But our school system is really doing great things through the STEM program, our athletic program, our students are achieving academically with the the SciTech Academy as well, our virtual academy, virtual students. People don't know, and I want to encourage these folks that are here tonight. I know that these times stir up emotion within us, but this is something for us to do all the time is to be a part of our local government and to come and hear and speak and let our voices be heard. And also at the school board as well, we wanna see you, not just whenever you're mad. But with that, I was wanting to come before the board tonight. And we've got a couple of pressing matters and some dialogue that I think needs to happen. And I know we've typically had some meetings too long too to discuss facility needs, but I was wondering if you all would possibly look at having a full board work session so that we could discuss a few things in an open environment and discuss pathways, things that you see as roadblocks, things that we're seeing that come down the line going forward. I know that we went through our wonderful administrators Ms. Burton and Ms. Radford. But I think sometimes things get lost in communication and we need to break down the walls of communication to understand one another and work closer. Many counties have the school board and the board of supervisors have joint meetings regularly to discuss budget topics, discuss facility needs, discuss academics and how can we be better partners together. So tonight, I just wanna put that forward to you and let's get our calendars in line so that if we can meet together, we'd love just to talk and let's talk about the future of our students. Thanks."

**Ms. Dreama Hatcher**, "Good evening, board, and thank you. Camera doesn't show. We have over 40 people here, which is great. And I just wanna thank you, whether you're upset about

something or something positive. Thank you for showing up because this is how things need to work. We're a community, we're one big county, and whether you like it or not, sorry, we're all family. I just wanted to say something, and I've been very quiet. I am not what people may look at as a perfect person, and nobody was perfect except for Jesus. I'm not mad as I look, I am very well educated, I do a lot of studying, I do a lot of digging and something has really stood out. I have my MBA in economic development and marketing. I have studied this county through all three of my degrees to get there. I have looked at numbers. I have looked at statistics. I have looked at the history. What's happening is really unnecessary. I was going to give you 2 locations that stand out as an increase when we're looking at the desired increase from .32 cents on 100, increasing to .42 cents on 100. The library, and Ms. Burton used to be the director of the library who's now assumed as the county administrator. since 2021 to 2026 in the FYI budgets, and this came from the county's website itself, has increased \$79,481, whereas approximately, I believe it was three years ago, Mrs. Burton took over as county administrator, and I don't know where the extra funds went that was pertaining to her salary to where it is now, okay? Looking at the Indian Village, and we've all known that it's been in the red for years. I don't know how many of you have been to the Indian Village. Just out of curiosity, how many of y'all have actually been to the Indian Village? That's less than half. You can't see this from the camera. It's less than half of the people. I have been there. I've been with my children there. On a personal level, I've never been there on myself. The Indian Village in 2023 had an FYI budget of \$149,334. To date, for calendar year 25-26, it has increased to \$296,688. That is an increase of \$147,354. I think the county owes us an explanation. How is that increase on something that remains in the red? How is it conducive to the residents of the county? And that's just two of the things that I have looked up and I brought forth. There's a bunch of stuff. I don't mind digging. And it does make, my time is about up. I just want to say is my husband does work for the county it does it should not and it better not have anything dealing with him working here. I'm here for the county. Thank you."

#### PUBLIC HEARING – TAX LEVY

Chair Randy Johnson opened the public hearing.

**Ms. Melissa Burnett**, "My name is Melissa Burnett. I have property here in Bland County. I pay the taxes on two different pieces of property. Now I understand that the increase in taxes, that's not the problem, but it's the amount that is bothering me. I have three and a half acres. They want it to increase to 25%. My brother's 17 acres, they want it to increase to 44 and a half percent. That's going to bring my taxes up to \$2,000. I'm a disabled veteran. I don't have that kind of money to pay you. I need to know exactly why these numbers are so high. I know we need taxes. I don't have a problem with taxes. I have a problem with astronomical amount of taxes."

**Chair Johnson**, "Your taxes went up 25%."

**Ms. Burnett**, "yes I pay them pay all the tax every bill that you sent me."

**Chair Johnson**, "If your taxes went up 25 we dropped the levy 30% your taxes will decrease."

**Ms. Burnett**, "Well on the paperwork that you sent me it says my value percent change from 2024 is 25% on the uh 17 Acres it tells me that my tax increase is 44.8% and I am on a limited income and I have to pay these taxes and it's hard when you're disabled vet to pay this kind of money."

**Mr. Ron Stevenot**, "Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the board. I got some information that conflicts with our county administrator here. It's my understanding that the 60 cents per hundred is now equal to the 32 cents per hundred because you had an increased valuation on all everyone's land. So you have to reduce the tax rate in order to commit to the same as we were before. So, the 32 cents a 100 is now the same as it used to be on the 60 cents. So I read on the county's Facebook site that you all had a 6% that ... the cost would go up about 6%. Well, if you do that times the \$0.32, that adds about \$0.02 to the tax rate. So that would make it \$0.34 on that. So, to give a little bit of an illustration on it, if you had a \$500 tax bill at \$0.32, at \$0.34, it would be at \$31. If you had it at \$0.42, it'd be \$656. If you had \$1,000 tax bill at the \$0.32, it'd be \$1,062 at the 34, and it'd be \$1,312 at the \$0.42. So, with that said, what you all we think would be the effect on the delinquent tax rate. In the last 10 tax cycles, the largest budget increase was \$430,000. The average budget increase over the last 10 years has been \$117,000. Based on the \$0.42 tax rate, that would be an increase of \$1,887,000. So, I just don't understand. How did you all arrive at the 42 cents? And the other thing you have is you have an outstanding delinquent taxes on '24 and '25 of 754,000, which is 12 and 1/2% of the ratio of delinquent taxes to the tax limit. My gosh, what are we going to think that is if you raise it to 42? The delinquent tax rate thus far after 24, 25 is 305,000. And I know Mr. Kidd's been working on it to reduce that. And over the past couple of years has collected actually greater than 100% of the tax levy due to that. So, he's been doing a good job. However, I think the board should

consult with if they're paying Mr. Cassell on what options are available to be more assertive and collect more of this money. That's a lot of money. Thank you Mr. Chairman and members of the board."

**Ms. Carol Hall**, "Thank you. I am so short of breath because like I told Steve, I'm just getting over COVID, but if I'm not talking loud enough, let me know because I can get loud even if I'm short breath. Okay, the current I have several concerns. I don't know if I'll get any answers, but I have several concerns. Number one, the fiscal year budget that we're in right now. Which is going to end June 30th. Do you anticipate a surplus at the end of this fiscal year budget or do you think you're going to be operating in the red? Second of all, I used to work for the county many years, okay? The surplus left over from each fiscal year budget went into a fund. You didn't spend it. There's many years of surplus money sitting there. Does anybody know how much that is? What's your plan for that amount of money? Going from the current 32 cents on the levy to 42, I understand it's going to bring in about a million dollars. Within the current budget and the one compared this one versus the ones July 1 that you're looking to adopt, is about a million some dollars difference if you can operate one budget on this amount of money why do you need almost a million dollars more is there a big project or several big projects in this new year budget that you're asking taxpayers to fund this project and we don't even know what is I can't even find a budget online So there's questions that never gets answered. I've heard, I've been to several meetings lately. It's my own fault. Questions haven't been answered. When you look for the county, you know how they got answers? FOIA request. I'm sorry."

**Mr. Gerry Scheppers**, "I know you all want to do what's best for the citizens of Bland County, and I know you have tough decisions to make. My goal is try and provide some input, maybe clarify some things so you can make the best possible decisions. Bland County has a lot to be proud of. The last three years, the county has operated with a surplus. Debt is down, reserves are up. Funding has grown. Contributions from the Hard Rock Hotel and Casino in Bristol has been bringing in almost \$1,000,000 a year to the county. And that will continue. In addition, funding for the schools, the biggest element of the budget, has dropped to about 23% of the county budget. It used to be around 31% of the county budget. So, less money from the county's taxes are being used for the schools and the schools should be complimented on that. They've done a lot of work to bring in outside money. We got a lot of challenges in front of us. The population of Bland County has dropped eight and a half percent in the last 10 years to 6,244. A little bit of positive thing in 25, 2025, it did increase by 27 people, which is at least we turn the corner there. As everybody knows, inflation's high. impacting the county negatively and this will not stop. The reassessment resulted in almost a 90% increase in real property values. This is both a positive and a negative. We can be proud that our property is viewed at a higher rate. However, in many cases, this higher rate increases the burden on many of the citizens, especially the elderly. This increase was not evenly spread, houses increased at a much higher rate than land. In accordance with Virginia law, the tax rate must be adjusted taking into account the new assessed value. This would place the tax rate at \$0.32 per \$100 of assessed value. Since houses increased at a higher rate, virtually all homeowners in the county would see a tax increase. The current proposal is to increase the tax rate to \$0.42. This amounts to a 31% increase from the \$0.32 rate. The proposed rate would generate almost \$1.8 million for Bland County annually. Bland County has roughly 2,376 households. So, on the average, each household would need to contribute \$750 annually. This is in addition to the increase resulting from the home's increase. So, homeowners would see a larger amount. So, what does an additional \$1.8 million annually do for Bland County? There are several options. The worst option is that it gets absorbed into the normal operations with no incremental improvement for the county. Another option is that it is utilized to specific measurable projects. Keep in mind that \$1.8 million is the annual payment on a \$25 million loan, 30-year loan at 6%. So, it is a major amount. You can borrow \$25 million and make the payment with the increase that's being proposed. So, you know, the correct answer, if the county has a project in mind that needs the money for it, we need to know about the project. We need to agree on the project and then agree on how we do the funding."

**Ms. Jennifer Harvey**, "Everything I wanted to say has been covered, but I do want to say that there needs to be more transparency and you need to take into consideration that the rural people are not being treated the same as the people who live in town and have additional services that we do not have."

**Mr. Bobby Collins**, "most of the questions I had was answered, but the thing I do see from these questions and answers is the fact that you increased my tax levy or the property value 213%

before you impose the levy. Be smart. So, I would suggest each one of you understand that your complaints fall on deaf ears. Let's get a petition and write to Congress. Thank you."

**Mr. Philip Buttery**, "Good news, I was wondering if you could speak three times. Really quick this evening, I want to piggyback on Mr. Schepper's 8 years of service. Thank you, sir. It's wonderful service side of him. Really quick this evening, I wanted to speak about the tax increase and decrease through the levy measure. In the high school government class, they quickly told us basically, the government taxes based off of the need of services. And once again, going back to what is somewhat already previously being said, is you pay for what you want through those taxes. But also, we as local government officials have to manage our expenses, right? We have to keep things in line. Ms. Burton's already alluded to certain things that we're not in control of, such as health insurance, building costs, even operational costs in order to stay relevant with today's workforce even. But I will say that we have to apply a fair burden across the landscape of all real estate. We wanna make sure that everybody has reached out to the Commissioner of Revenue to file their appeal and waiting for the Board of Equalization to meet, which if you've not done that, you need to say something. But things that we need in our county, obviously we've talked about a school facility until the cows come home, and that's going to be needed very shortly. And we can't wait 10 years from now to have those discussions. We need to start now in doing something or other, readying a site, getting ready to go in that direction. We're hoping that our school population stays at least steady. The future looks undetermined and partly because of housing that we don't have enough housing in the county. I know that there's rumors swirling around the community about a housing project. What is it? But I'll tell you this from the school board side of it. We have multiple people that work for us as employees that want to move here. They live outside of the counties- the county and they have children that they would like to live here, there's nowhere for them to buy currently. There's nowhere for them to rent. So, I share with you that those things are important. Other things that we need are places to spend our money locally to eat, places to shop, things to produce a product that our children can go to work at and that way that they don't have to move away. I think it's important, like it's already been said, about transparency and us working together. And I hope that kind of relays the same comment that I shared earlier that we need a greater transparency. Let's talk about what's important for us as a community. What do we really need? I know there's many things, but like I said, the transparency of it all, there's much. But like I said, those are my comments. Thank you."

**Mr. Bill Eisenhauer**, "Well, thank you for listening to my speech tonight. want to start off by saying I am Bill Eisenhauer I live on Little Creek Highway I've lived there for 13 years not a long time like many of you I'm retired and my biggest I don't know where my biggest complaint is on this tax levy I understand about the tax rate going up or going down relative to where it was. But the tax assessment, I think somehow the county has to take responsibility for who decides what that assessment, how it's done and who does it. Because I think that these people from Roanoke, Bristol, et cetera, are way out of touch with rural Western Virginia prices. My taxes for my house went up 2 and 3/4 times. That's a factor of 2 and 3/4. That's almost three times what it was before. My land only went up a factor of 1.3, about one and a quarter. That's pretty acceptable. At the rate of 0.6, like it was, I'm looking at almost three times the tax that I paid last year. At 0.32, I'm paying 22% more than I paid last time. At 0.42, I'm looking at 60% more from my house taxes. When I, as a retired person, look at my Social Security COLA I see 2.8%. US inflation was projected this year at 4.5. US wages are projected to be approximately 3% higher for most people. The US stock market is projected to go up about 15%. The stock market is the only thing that is even close. keeping up this type of increase. I think it's unfair, and I think there are provisions in Virginia Code 558.1-3321 that suggest that it shouldn't go up any more than 1% unless the county can tell us why specifically."

**Mr. Robert Haynes**, "All right, good evening to y'all again. And again, I appreciate everybody that's came out and spoke for these. I'll get to the second-half of mine. Like I did say that it would be a great idea if they took their property taxes paid and put it into a fund, divided out evenly, or you can take their yearly budget, 45%. My property tax comes about 2% while my property taxes are gonna be charged to me. Take 2% of the 45 million, 46 million budget. Y'all should be feeling the pain just as much as these people. Problem is, is if we feel the pain, our property's taken away. And again, it's a shame because the enforcer that would collect if you don't pay and take your property from you, isn't even here to face it. Isn't even here to face it. All these people have come out, they've spoke. The decision and the rate has already been made. Before it was made, there was still people coming out and speaking on it, but voices weren't

heard. And like they said, it comes on deaf ears. Well, again, we do vote you in a position. Well, if no one runs against you, you win it by default. the power lies in y'all you want to show the voices were heard some of the recommendations I put I think would be their adjustment to the people here but is it going to be done if it's not done sure you can go wait on your vote but the problem is where our Constitution was run and taxation without representation we the people have the power according to the Constitution If they won't do what you want, you take the power back, sign a piece of paper, bring it forth, and impeach them until your voices are heard. The people have the power. This is not the power. The Constitution, the United States, what our forefathers, our military in the past and everything, all the taxes are coming down from the state. Your property doesn't just increase, the tax on your home, insurance on it. Everything else is increasing. Your voices ain't heard. Take the power back. That's the problem. We're not doing it. The people don't have power no more. The people above us, they have the power and they hold it over you. It needs to be stood on in the county level, the state level, and the government level. The people have the power. And if they don't like it, take your power back. remove them from office and put someone in that will expect that will do everything you ask of me I miss all these lies all these ..... been shared I've been overseas I've seen it in person our forefathers and everybody else government no longer listens to you people have lost the power We've lost our constitution. We're fighting for it. We're fighting for the power, and it's here. It's here at home because we allow the federal government to take it away. We've allowed all this stuff to happen on a state level, and now it's here."

Chair Randy Johnson closed the public hearing.

\*\*\*\*\*MOTION to close the hearing was made by Patrick Groseclose and seconded by Stephen Kelley. Motion carried.

#### PUBLIC HEARING VDOT SECONDARY SIX-YEAR PLAN

Chair Randy Johnson opened the public hearing.

Mr. Philip Buttery, "Sorry, y'all get used to me after a while. Really quick, I wanted to share a little bit of feedback. for these guys. We were fortunate enough this past year, I guess it was on the previous plan to have the road paved in front of our house and we really appreciate that. It looked really great until the first snow came and scraped half the lines off the road. But one of the things, I walked that road just about every day. And one thing, I tried pulling up this six year plan, by the way, and you know, it's really inaccessible. unless it's posted somewhere on the county website that it's hidden. I don't know. But anyways, I'm for sure there's some roads to be repaved. My concern tonight is the quality of the work. Make sure there's consistent asphalt over the complete surface. And I know that's somebody's job somewhere, but making sure we're getting a good product for the money that's being shelled out. It's a lot of money. You don't know how much it is in order to pave a mile of Rd. top. Does anybody know? \$1,000,000 a mile. So it's a lot of money. Ms. Burton just said \$1,000,000 a mile. And so with that, I think the quality, we need to make sure that whoever wins that contract, I know it's under state bid, But also I want to challenge you all not to pave a road and then six months later determine, oh, we can go through and replace all the culverts on that road right after that, like happened down Wilderness Road several years ago. So, a little bit of forethought is really helpful. I know there's some bridge replacement work. So that's my feedback tonight and I hope you'll take it for what it is. But make sure the quality, make sure we're thinking through what's how this stuff is scheduled so that it benefits us as people that have to drive these roads. Thanks."

\*\*\*\*\*MOTION to close the public hearing was made by Stephen Kelley and seconded by Patrick Groseclose. Motion carried.

Mr. James Schwartz, VDOT Residency Advisor, "Oh, yeah, good evening. So I'm James Schwartz with VDOT. And you have your handouts in front of you? All right. So just to kind of talk about or just a follow up from our last meeting to try to explain the plan a little bit better. So, if you look at that top column, that's kind of how the plan sits right now. So, you have the Trails End project, the first one there, and it will be fully funded if you go all the way over to FY30. So, it'll be fully funded in fiscal year 30, which should be July of 2029. And then there was that the other section that trails in and says trails in number two. And I think my understanding is the board has proposed to maybe move that project to Skydusky. So, if, and if you look at that, I've kind of stripped through that column and went down to the second column to where it says proposed plan for FY32. If you'll look at that, that will be the trails in project will be there. Again, it will be funded in FY30. And then if you add one mile, so we can do one mile of

Skydusky. If we add that, it would be fully funded in FY32, which should be July of 2031. That will take all the funds that are available on the six-year plan at this time. And then that last column would be to finish out. So that would leave one mile and a half of Skydusky to finish. And so that could be added next year or at a later date, but there's no current funding available at this time. So I will say this year and if trends continue on, I mean, you can look at that FY31 In that Skydusky column, the last several years, the county has received around \$69,611. That increased this year to \$145,407. So, fingers crossed that trend continues on and that will help us be able to lock out a few more rates. ....“

#### COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR'S ITEMS

##### RESOLUTION VDOT SECONDARY SIX-YEAR PLAN 2027-2032

\*\*\*\*\*MOTION to adopt the resolution of the VDOT Secondary Six-year plan for 2027-2032 was made by Stephen Kelley and seconded by Keith Costello. Motion carried unanimously.

\*\*\*\*\*MOTION to adopt the resolution of the VDOT Secondary Six-year plan for 2027-2032 adding one mile of Skydusky Rd (phase one) was made by Stephen Kelley and seconded by Patrick Groseclose. Motion carried.

##### FY27 LOCAL IMPROVEMENT FUNDING PLAN

\*\*\*\*\*MOTION to approve the FY27 Local Improvement Funding Plan for the County of Bland intends to allocate its revenues approximately 40% designated for Education and 60% designated for Public Safety was made by Patrick Groseclose and seconded by Keith Costello. Roll Call Vote: Mr. Groseclose – yea; Mr. Costello – yea; Mr. Kelley – yea; and Mr. Johnson – yea. Motion carried unanimously.

##### AUDIT ENGAGEMENT LETTER

\*\*\*\*\*MOTION to approve the engagement letter from Robinson, Farmer Cox Associates for the year ending June 2026 was made by Keith Costello and seconded by Patrick Groseclose. Motion carried unanimously.

##### COMMUNITY POLICY MANAGEMENT TEAM (CPMT) APPOINTMENT

\*\*\*\*\*MOTION to appoint Samantha Crockett and Rebecca Martel as alternate from Mount Rogers Community Services to the Bland County CPMT was made by Patrick Groseclose and seconded by Stephen Kelley. Motion carried unanimously.

##### 911 ROAD NAME

\*\*\*\*\*MOTION to approve the naming of private driveway leading to W. Bluegrass Trail as *Pooja Drive* Code Section 44.1 was made by Patrick Groseclose and seconded by Stephen Kelley. Motion carried unanimously.

##### RESOLUTION: SUPPORT AGREEMENT WITH SERVICE AUTHORITY - WASTEWATER

\*\*\*\*\*MOTION to adopt the resolution for a support agreement with the Service Authority for the Bastian Wastewater project was made by Keith Costello and seconded by Patrick Groseclose. Motion carried unanimously.

##### CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT (C.U.P.) FOR TAX MAP NO. 93-A-27

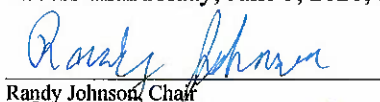
\*\*\*\*\*MOTION to approve the 12-month extension to the CUP for Tax Map No. 93-A-27 Rock Wall Drive project was made by Stephen Kelley and seconded by Patrick Groseclose. Motion carried unanimously.

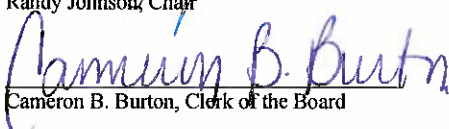
##### RESOLUTION: ENDING THE LOCAL STATE OF EMERGENCY OF A BURN BAN

\*\*\*\*\*MOTION to adopt the resolution certifying the end of the local state of emergency of a burn ban May 26, 2026, at 5:00 p.m. was made by Patrick Groseclose and seconded by Keith Costello. Motion carried unanimously.

##### RECESS

Recess until Friday, June 5, 2026, at 4:00 p.m.

  
Randy Johnson, Chair

  
Cameron B. Burton, Clerk of the Board