

At a Closed Meeting and Work Session of the Board of Supervisors of Warren County held in the Warren County Government Center on March 4 , 2025, at 5:00 PM.

Present – Warren County Board of Supervisors and County Staff: Cheryl L. Cullers, Chair (South River District); Jerome K. Butler, Vice Chair (Happy Creek District); Richard A. Jamieson, (North River District); John W. Stanmeyer, (Shenandoah District), also, Jason J. Ham, County Attorney; Edwin C. Daley, County Administrator.

Present Remotely: Victoria L. Cook, (Fork District)

Ms. Cook stated that she is in California for family obligations.

On a motion by Dr. Jamieson, seconded by Ms. Cullers, and the following vote, the Board entered into a closed meeting under Section 2.2-3711(A)(8) for the purpose of the provision of legal advice regarding specific legal matters requiring such advice. The subject matter is the providing of library services.

The Board further entered into a closed meeting under Section 2.2- 3711(A)(7) for the purpose of consultation with legal counsel pertaining to actual litigation. The subject matter is Samuels Library Incorporated, et al of v. Warren County Board of Supervisors, et al CL25000155-00.

Additionally, the Board entered into a closed meeting under Section 2.2- 3711(A)(29) for the Discussion of the award of a public contract involving the expenditure of public funds, including interviews of bidders or offerors, and discussion of the terms or scope of such contract, where discussion in an open session would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the public body. The subject matter is Recruitment services for the County Administrator position and Public Communication consultant services.

Lastly, the Board entered into a closed meeting under Section 2.2- 3711(A)(7) and (A)(8) for consultation with legal counsel pertaining to actual or probable litigation and the provision of legal advice regarding the Industrial Development Authority of the Town of Front Royal and the County of Warren, Virginia (the “EDA”), the Town of Front Royal, the outstanding indebtedness of the EDA, bank actions and potential actions related to the same.

Ms. Cook, Aye; Dr. Jameison, Aye; Mr. Butler, Aye; Mr. Stanmeyer, Aye; Ms. Cullers, Aye

At 6:06 PM, on a motion by Dr. Jamieson, seconded by Ms. Cullers, and the following vote, the Board certified to the best of each member’s knowledge only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements under Section 2.2-3711(A)(7), (8) & (29) of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act and only such public business matters as were identified in the motion by which the closed meeting was convened were heard, discussed, or considered in the meeting by the public body.

Ms. Cook, Aye; Dr. Jameison, Aye; Mr. Butler, Aye; Mr. Stanmeyer, Aye; Ms. Cullers, Aye

6:00 PM – Work Session Item: Tax Deferral for Industrial Property

Mr. Ham stated that Per Virginia Code 58.1-3237 G, a locality may enact an ordinance providing that when a change in zoning of real estate to a more intensive use at the request of the owner or his agent occurs, roll-back taxes shall not become due solely because the change in zoning is for specific more intensive uses set forth in the ordinance. Such real estate may remain eligible for use value assessment and taxation, in accordance with the provisions of this article, as long as the use by which it qualified does not change to a non-qualifying use, and no roll-back tax shall become due with respect to the real estate until such time as the use by which it qualified changes to a non-qualifying use.

The Proposed Warren County Code 160-23 and 160-23.1 would enact such ordinances, applicable to zoning changes to Industrial or Commercial.

In the event that the Board wants to enact such ordinances, Warren County Zoning Code 180-27 and 180-28 would need to be amended to allow agricultural and other uses by right to allow uses that are consistent with the use

value assessment. If enacted, a property owner could rezone their property to commercial or industrial without triggering the rollback tax until the use changed to a non-qualifying use. This may encourage development by removing the financial disincentive to rezone, potentially encouraging more property to be rezoned commercial or industrial. Code 58.1-3231 provides that these proposed amendments, if enacted by June 30 of 2025, would become effective on January 1 of 2026. If the amendments are enacted after June 30 of 2025, they would be effective at a later date.

At a Regular Meeting of the Board of Supervisors of Warren County held in the Warren County Government Center on March 4, 2025, at 7:00 PM.

Present: Cheryl L. Cullers, Chair (South River District): Jerome K. Butler, Vice Chair (Happy Creek District); Richard A. Jamieson, (North River District); John W. Stanmeyer, (Shenandoah District), also, Jason J. Ham, County Attorney; Jane E. Meadows, Deputy County Administrator; Karen Poff, FCS Agent; Eric Belk, Chair of the Warren County Library Board; Zachary Henderson, Deputy Clerk to the Board of Supervisors

Present Remotely: Victoria L. Cook, (Fork District)

Call to Order:

Mr. Butler called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM with a moment of silence.

Ms. Cook stated that she is in California for family obligations.

Adoption of the Agenda:

On a motion by Dr. Jamieson, seconded by Ms. Cullers, and the following vote, the Board adopted the agenda as amended to include item I-5, "Agreement of Cooperation between the Warren County Board of Supervisors and the Warren County School Board.

Ms. Cook, Aye; Dr. Jameison, Aye; Mr. Butler, Aye; Mr. Stanmeyer, Aye; Ms. Cullers, Aye

Extension Office – Quarterly Report:

Ms. Poff presented the quarterly report from the Extension Office detailing the Cooperative Extension System, their state facilities, their mission statement, the staff who serve Warren County, agricultural / natural resources, 4-H youth development, family consumer services, etc.

Public Comment Period for items on the agenda: *(below is a list of Citizens who spoke at the Public Comment Period for Items on the Agenda)*

1. **Samantha Good** – voiced her support for Samuel’s Public Library and clarified the misunderstanding about the claims about a “secret meeting” and stated that it was a special meeting outline in the library’s By-Laws and that it was advertised properly as required by law. Additionally, commented the amendment to Section 10 is in full compliance with IRS Guidelines for such clauses.
2. **Genevieve Elise** – voiced her support for Samuel’s Public Library and stated that the library was “under attack” by individuals who wanted to dictate what people could or could not read and spoke on the ramifications that defunding the library could have on the County and the citizens.
3. **Veronica Blair** – voiced her support for Samuel’s Public Library and expressed her concern that the library is being “dismantled” for the benefit of a small group of individuals that is not inclusive for all citizens.
4. **Aileen Dierig** – voiced her support for Samuel’s Public Library and thanked them for everything they have done for her and her family and voiced her concerns about the Warren County Library Board and the taxpayer dollars that have already been wasted in this endeavor.
5. **Jackie Masella** – voiced her support for Samuel’s Public Library and questioned the Board’s true motives stating that it is not about Transparency but about control.

6. **Bethany O'Neill** - voiced her support for Samuel's Public Library and read a press release from the Board of Trustees and the Library Director urging the Supervisors to weigh tonight's decision carefully and to reconnect for the good of all citizens.
7. **Stene Forman** – voiced his support for Samuel's Public Library and voiced his concerns about more pressing matters in the County and why the Board chooses to focus on spending taxpayer dollars that endanger the benefits that the library has for the community,
8. **Bob Hill** – voiced his support for Samuel's Public Library and questioned the Board's lack of responses to calls and inquiries and further asked about the Economic ramifications and costs on losing the library and what it will mean for taxpayers.
9. **Noel Williams** – voiced her support for Samuel's Public Library and spoke the lack of representation for people of color on the Board and commented on the County's low scores and standards for reading and the consequences of not having a library to improve those standards.
10. **Erin Kennedy** - voiced her support for Samuel's Public Library and stated that this is more about the values of the community instead of books and buildings, and the questioned the motives and actions of the Warren County Library Board that she emphasized are unelected individuals.

Board Reports:

- **Ms. Cook had no report**
- **Dr. Jamison reported the following:**
 - Participated in a Zoom call regarding the Shenandoah Rail Trail Project and commented on it's potential for very significant Tourism traffic for Warren County and the progress being made with a new VDOT study that is hoped to be completed by this Summer and additionally emphasized Warren County's support along with various south bound localities.
 - Requested a list of all real property that the County owns with the intention on having a Board working session to evaluate worth, purposes, protentional sale revenues etc.
 - Started to build a framework for analyzing a sports tourism opportunity associated with the Rockland Parks Complex, stating that youth travel sports is a \$19 Billion dollar market internationally and how Warren County may be able to participate and benefit from it.
- **Mr. Butler reported the following:**
 - Mentioned that he had a conversation with a constituent stating that the brother of John Marshall is buried on the hill just behind the hospital and commented on the "hidden history" in Warren County can truly be benefited from and have a lot of interest.
- **Mr. Stanmeyer reported the following:**
 - On February 19th, he attended the Fire Chief's Advisory meeting at station 3 with Ms. Cullers.
 - On February 22nd, he attended the forum Samuel's Public Library.
 - Commented that he is communicating with VDOT regarding the Emergency Exit Ramp project on 66 and Shenandoah Shores Road.
 - Working on various constituent issues including wildlife, zoning violations in residential areas, and has been receiving input from teachers and constituents regarding the upcoming School Budget.
 - Stated that the next meeting for the Shenandoah Farms Sanitary District Advisory Committee meeting has been scheduled for March 13th at 7:00 PM.
- **Ms. Cullers reported the following:**
 - On February 19th, she attended the Fire Chief's Committee to discuss budget items and equipment.
 - On February 20th, she attended the Northern Shenandoah Valley Regional Commission meeting
 - Attended a viewing of Knocking Down Walls
 - On February 21st, she attended an Emergency Management Training in Staunton
 - Attended a Healthy Living Event in Reitano Vineyards put on by Kaylee Richardson
 - On February 22nd, she attended the forum Samuel's Public Library.
 - On February 23rd, attended her third Community Meeting with Dr. Pense at Skyline High School

- Stated that she had cards made where one will provide contact information for delegates and the other will provide contact info for VDOT to report road issues, Sheriff's Department, and Sanitary Districts etc.
- Met with staff members to learn about the changes in the Finance Department.
- Commented on the current burn ban restrictions stating that people are permitted to burn from 4:00PM to Midnight.
- **Ms. Meadows reported the following:**
 - Reminded the Board that there are 4 positions open on the Board of Equalization and mentioned how to apply directly on the County Website.
 - Stated that Friday the 7th is Employee Appreciation Day and thanked the staff for their work.
- **Mr. Ham had no report.**

Approval of Minutes – February 18th, 2025:

On a motion by Ms. Cullers, seconded by Dr. Jamieson, and the following vote, the Board approved the minutes for February 18th, 2025, as amended to include a correction from Ms. Cullers to Mr. Stanmeyer having a phone conversation with Mr. Dillon regarding Brightspeed's BEAD program.

Ms. Cullers, Aye; Mr. Stanmeyer, Aye; Mr. Butler, Aye; Dr. Jameison, Aye; Ms. Cook, Aye

New Business:

Consent Agenda:

- 1. Amendment to Lease Agreement Hangar A6 to Jeremiah Leonard**
- 2. Amendment to Lease Agreement Hangar A7 to William Sullivan**
- 3. Contract Renewal – Civic Plus, LLC Contract**
- 4. Amendment to Lease Agreement Hangar A2 to Edward Carroll**
- 5. Agreement of Cooperation between the Warren County Board of Supervisors and the Warren County School Board. (Added at Agenda Adoption)**

On a motion by Dr. Jamieson, seconded by Ms. Cullers, and the following vote, the Board approved the consent agenda as presented.

Ms. Cook, Aye; Dr. Jameison, Aye; Mr. Butler, Aye; Mr. Stanmeyer, Aye; Ms. Cullers, Aye

Library Funding Agreement:

Mr. Belk stated for clarification that nobody on the Board of Supervisors or the Board of Trustees is advocating defunding or closing the library and that the mission is to ensure the sustainability and efficiency of a free and open public library system. Additionally, he stated that the Board of Trustees have "raised serious concerns" about the future of the library's assets, governance, and accountability; specifically, a change to the organizations dissolution clause which altered the intended recipient of Library assets that does not guarantee continued use for Warren County Citizens.

Mr. Belk then presented a Power Point that detailed the library's meeting that took place on December 17th, 2024, but could find no record of the meeting or a notice posted for it, and that other meetings for the Board of Trustees have been advertised but nothing for December 17th. As a result, Mr. Belk concluded that the Library Board of Trustees "deliberately chose not to" post the meeting therefore raising concerns regarding transparency and stated that the notice is not compliant with FOIA and citing the Virginia Nonstock Corporation Act as reference.

Mr. Belk then stated that Samuel's Library Incorporated was incorporated as a nonprofit charity organized to manage a free public library for the citizens of Warren County and had a dissolution clause at the time when they began operating all the way up to December 17th, 2024. The clause read upon dissolution of the library, the Board shall distribute all library assets exclusively for library purposes to the County of Warren, Virginia. Under the

articles of incorporation that were in effect, when Warren County contracted with Samuel's Library to operate a public library for the citizens of Warren County, Samuel's Library incorporated articles of incorporation stated that it would hold these assets for Warren County and if at any time it ceased to operate, it would give those assets to Warren County exclusively for library purposes. He then emphasized the differences between the dissolution clause before and after the December 17th meeting that goes from assets going "exclusively for library purposes to the County of Warren, Virginia" to "such organizations organized and operated exclusively for charitable or educational purposes."

Ms. Cullers expressed her thoughts by stating that a Board of Supervisor in Virginia is responsible for establishing policies, enacting laws, and representing the interest of their community, and that is inclusive of everyone in said community. She stated that she is "100% for transparency, financial oversight, and accountability" and reminded the Board that she did not vote to approve the accounts in prior meetings because of a lack of descriptions with which she was "openly criticized by a member of this Board for my refusal to approve the accounts". Additionally, she commented on the double standard of it being acceptable not to have line-item descriptions on the County Accounts and approve them but accusing Samuel's of misappropriations of funds when not being asked for line-item expenditures until recently.

Ms. Cullers then stated that the Supervisors need to be working in a cooperative manner with Samuel's Library Inc and not from a "go-between board." She further stated that she has asked repeatedly to be shown the cost savings of hiring a new library contractor that will provide the same level of services and programs that the community currently receives not been given that information and commented that there is "no way that a new contractor can be brought in without disruption of continued same level services that Samuel's Inc is now providing."

Ms. Cullers then called for a motion that this matter of continued contract provider of Library Services be put on a referendum on the November ballot for the Warren County residents to decide who they want their tax dollars to be used for Library services. Additionally, she called for a motion for the dissolution of the Warren County Library Board and that the Board of Supervisors work with all community agencies.

Ms. Cook stated that the Supervisors all voted on having the Warren County Library Board with the exception of Ms. Cullers, via Ordinance establishing the Board and suggested revising the current contract with Samuel's Library Inc. to include the new Library Board. Additionally, Ms. Cook suggested updating the existing funding agreement and calling for better elaboration on the services that County tax dollar funding will be allocated moving forward.

Dr. Jamieson stated that Library Boards are a normal practice and what the County adopted is what 95-96% of all Counties in the state use and mentioned that the speculation about the elimination of current library services is hyperbolic.

Dr. Jamieson then provided a PowerPoint presentation that detailed the County Financial and Data Acquisition Process and emphasized that they are all public documents that anyone can obtain. This process entails obtaining accounts payable required for any company vendor and report from the Warren County Finance Department who converts it into a spreadsheet. The process then entails matching financial transactions to lines in an accounts payable report, categorizing those reports in the excel file, and then using excel filters to aggregate data according to those categories. He then provided examples of Library construction documents as well as library furniture that detail the dates, amounts that were transferred, and the overall amount of the loan. The total Library construction funds that were disbursed were \$6.7 Million in total, \$6,381,637.27 for construction and \$356,372.00 for the furniture. In terms of the Samuel's Financial Data Acquisition Process, it consists of obtaining IRS form 990, locate Part VII Section B – Independent Contractors, and Record Name / Description / Compensation. Based on those records, there was a total furniture expense of \$804,589 of which 56% was paid by Warren County Taxpayers and not the loan.

Additionally, Dr. Jamieson stated that Samuel's Library Inc has made public statements indicating that Warren County funds are allocated specifically to certain expense categories such as salaries and operations while other

expenses such as materials acquisition are funded through alternate sources. However, Samuel's library's financial statements classify both County and State funding as without donor restrictions and explicitly state that these grants are unconditional and are recognized as revenue received.

Dr. Jamieson stated that tonight's vote is merely opting out of an automatic contract renewal, which preserves options for the County. There will not be one second of time in Warren County when public library services are not funded.

Mr. Stanmeyer stated, in response to public comments, that the library is not going anywhere, and that the community will always have a library. The corporation that is operating it could change but does not foresee the library going away or being defunded or shutdown. He then stated that the real issue at hand is the change to the by-laws and that it gives the impression Samuel's first interest is self-preservation and crowding out any other possible outcome. Warren County taxpayers have put in a lot of money toward those assets and the idea that they could be sent anywhere is offensive to the people who pay their taxes every year to get and use those services.

Mr. Stanmeyer then stated that even though the Library Board is not included in the current MOA, they are still worthy of fair engagement regarding future protentional contract terms. And Samuel's can come to the table and compete

Ms. Cullers stated that what makes the library exist is the heart that the staff and people have in the relationships and passion that they have built in the community and questioned if a new contractor can build those kinds of relationships and she is concerned for some library staff members who are uncertain if they will have jobs in the future and re-stated that this needs to be a referendum.

On a motion by Dr. Jamieson, seconded by Ms. Cook and the following vote, the Board moved that the Library Funding Agreement not be renewed, and that notice of non-renewal be provided to Samuels Library, Incorporated.

Ms. Cullers, No; Mr. Stanmeyer, Aye; Mr. Butler, Aye; Dr. Jameison, Aye; Ms. Cook, Aye

Additional New Business:

Ms. Cullers stated that she would like to add a motion that the Board go back to a single public comment period instead of having them split into two sections, commenting that it was onerous on the people to have to stay later and that it's a burden on them.

Mr. Butler suggested this be discussed at an upcoming work session

Ms. Cullers confirmed the motion with Mr. Ham to amend the agenda to consider revising the public comment period structure, but there was no second and the motion died.

General Public Comment Period: *(below is a list of citizens who spoke during the General Public Comment Period)*

1. **Carol Olson** – voiced her support for Samuel's Public Library, emphasizing the library's caregiver services for her children with Autism who have since become volunteers and urged the Board to maintain their funding.
2. **John Jenkins** – voiced his support for Samuel's Public Library, emphasizing first amendment rights, the separation of church and state, and support from elected officials. Additionally, commenting on the Board "surrendering to the will of a handful of radical religious extremists."
3. **Terry Jenkins** - voiced her support for Samuel's Public Library and thanked Ms. Cullers for her support for the library and questioned the Boards true motives in contrast to claims of not defunding.
4. **Jennifer Ritenbaugh** – voiced her support for Samuel's Public Library and criticized the Warren County Library Board for their efforts to seize control and stated that the non-profit owns the assets and not the County.

5. **James Boissomault** - voiced his support for Samuel's Public Library, emphasizing that while the County has the right to stop the automatic renewal, but the library's articles of cooperation such as the dissolution clauses are private to their organization.
6. **Grant Conette** - voiced his support for Samuel's Public Library and agreed with Ms. Cullers suggestion on having this on a Referendum and questioned the Boards decision on the Communication specialist and suggested spending the money elsewhere.
7. **Samara Thomas** - voiced her support for Samuel's Public Library and questioned why the Board even has public comment periods if they are not going to head what citizens say and make their decisions based on "your own moral compass."
8. **Tim Frances** – commented on the increasingly hostile comments on all sides on social media and various news paper and urged for a way to set the hostility aside and talk this out with Samuel's Public Library, and the Warren County Library Board.
9. **Greg Miscovich** - voiced his support for Samuel's Public Library and commented that a majority of Warren County Citizens support the library and the work they do there and spoke to the "unknown" future and if a new vendor will be able to provide similar services at the same level.
10. **Dr. Onalee McGraw** – spoke as the director of the Educational Guidance Institute and stated that she is heartbroken but the division that has been created in the Country and County but believes in our Country and thanked the Board for the work they have done.
11. **Sunshine Prisma** - voiced her support for Samuel's Public Library and stated that the library has always been a safe haven for her and her family growing up and commented that the Board was trying to take that away and questioned the Board's motives for their actions, claiming that it is rooted in the content of the books.
12. **Hugh Henry** – critiqued the current Public Comment period structure, stating that he is okay with the comment period being split but expressed concerns that, based on overheard comments, this was done to deter people from speaking.

Adjournment:

On a motion by Dr. Jamieson, seconded by Mr. Stanmeyer, and the following vote, the meeting adjourned at 9:36PM