



VIRGINIA: A SCHEDULED MEETING OF THE SURRY COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS HELD IN THE GENERAL DISTRICT COURTROOM OF THE SURRY COUNTY GOVERNMENT CENTER ON THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 2025 AT 6:00 PM.

PRESENT: SUPERVISOR ROBERT ELLIOTT, JR., CHAIRMAN
SUPERVISOR BREYON PIERCE, VICE-CHAIR
SUPERVISOR WILLIAM T. CALHOUN
SUPERVISOR WALTER HARDY
SUPERVISOR KENNETH BELL

ABSENT: STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE ZARIAH HARRELL

ALSO PRESENT: MS. MELISSA ROLLINS, COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR
MS. LOLA PERKINS, COUNTY ATTORNEY
MR. DAVID HARRISON, DEPUTY COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR
MR. DELON BROWN, DEPUTY COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OF OPERATIONS AND INFRASTRUCTURE
MS. ROBIN FAULKS, COUNTY ADMINISTRATION
MS. DESERIA CREIGHTON-BARNEY, DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES
MR. MATT WESTHEIMER, BUILDING OFFICIAL
MR. RAY PHELPS, DIRECTOR OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT
MR. HORACE WADE, DIRECTOR OF PLANNING

Invocation

The invocation was given by Rev. Gloria Howell-Mason.

Call to Order/Moment of Silence/Pledge of Allegiance/Adopt Agenda

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Elliott, who then asked for a moment of silence. Following the moment of silence, he asked those present to stand and recite the pledge of allegiance. Chairman Elliott asked for Motion to accept the agenda. Supervisor Bell made a motion to accept the agenda and Supervisor Calhoun seconded the motion. All present voted affirmatively. (Approved)

SUPERVISOR ROBERT ELLIOTT, JR.	AYE
SUPERVISOR BREYON PIERCE	AYE
SUPERVISOR WILLIAM (TIM) CALHOUN	AYE
SUPERVISOR WALTER HARDY	AYE
SUPERVISOR KENNETH BELL	AYE

Consent Items

1. Approval of Draft Minutes – 7/31/2025
2. Approval of Draft Minutes – 8/14/2025

3. Resolution – Eight Manufacturers Combined Opioid Settlement

4. FY26 PSAP Grant Application

Chairman Elliott read the items listed for consent and asked Board members if any items needed to be pulled for discussion. There being none, Supervisor Hardy made a motion to approve the consent items as enumerated. Supervisor Bell seconded the motion.

Vote (Approved):

Ayes: Mr. Pierce, Mr. Hardy, Mr. Calhoun, Mr. Elliott, Mr. Bell

Nays: None

Absent: None

Public Comments

1. Ernest Milburn – Surry District - expressed concern regarding local government's being transparent and appropriate use of tax dollars in Surry County
2. Daniel Shaye, Surry District – discussed public comment procedure with regard to the County's Comprehensive Plan goals

Public Hearing

1. **Conditional Use Permit No. 2025-01** The Board of Supervisors will consider a Conditional Use Permit for a Battery Energy Storage System, and Utility Service/Major for an associated switchyard and substation, as permitted by Article III, Section 3-302, Permitted Uses, subsection (C) of the Surry County Zoning Ordinance. The subject property, Tax Map Parcel No. 54-1, is a 416 acre parcel zoned A-R, Agricultural-Rural, located in the Bacon's Castle District on White Marsh Road (SR 617), south of Colonial Trail East (SR 10). The proposed conditional use permit will allow the Applicant to build a 89-megawatt battery energy storage system and utility switchyard on 32.5 acres in the interior of this site. The Comprehensive Plan Map indicates that the project parcel is suitable for Rural Preservation.
 - I. Presentation by Staff – Horace Wade, Director of Planning and Zoning, presented the staff report on the request for a Conditional Use Permit. He summarized that the Planning Commission and staff recommended approval of the Conditional Use Permit. Ed Rumler, Director of Development for Clenera, provided a brief summary of the CUP application and the proposed project. Chairman Elliott noted that the Board could hold the public hearing for this item in conjunction with the public hearing for the related Facility Siting Agreement. He confirmed there was consensus from the Board to proceed and to hold the public hearings simultaneously. Lola Perkins, County Attorney, provided background information on and reviewed the terms of the Facility Siting Agreement.
 - II. Open the Floor for Public Comments – Chairman Elliott opened the public hearing for both the Conditional Use Permit No. 2025-01 and the Facility Siting Agreement related to the Bear Island Battery Storage LLC Battery Energy Storage System.
 1. Bob Giancosa, Surry District – regarding the battery storage facility, emphasized the potential impacts of constant noise emissions and emergency response specific to these types of facilities
 2. Daniel Shaye, Surry District – expressed concern regarding the proposed project's alignment with the County's Comprehensive Plan and long-term implications on community character

3. Charlome Pierce, Bacon's Castle District – expressed support for the project and encouraged implementation of a more comprehensive training plan for emergency response at the Battery Storage Facility
4. Susan Corvello, Claremont District – asked about post-construction employment at the proposed facility and requested the County take a proactive approach to traffic mitigation related to the project

III. Close the Public Hearing – Chairman Elliott closed the public hearing.

IV. Comments from Board Members – Mr. Pierce asked if the applicant could explain the emergency response in case of a fire on site.

Erica Council, Fire Protection Consultant with Fire and Risk Alliance, explained that in the event of a battery fire, the industry best practice was for first responders to monitor the burn at an appropriate and safe distance and let the fuel burn off. There were no suppressants that could suppress battery fires, so the safest method was to allow it to burn.

Mr. Hardy noted that the County had learned a lot from past projects and other localities' experiences, and he was confident that this application had been thoroughly reviewed and potential areas of concerns had been addressed by County staff and the applicant.

V. Closing Remarks by Staff – Mr. Wade addressed some of the public comments related to jobs, emergency response training, and contact information for the facility. He noted that these issues were all addressed within the conditions of the Conditional Use Permit itself.

Board Action: Chairman Elliott asked for a motion on the item.

Supervisor Hardy moved for approval of **Conditional Use Permit No. 2025-01 as presented**, seconded by Supervisor Pierce.

Vote: 5:0 (Approved)

Ayes: Mr. Pierce, Mr. Calhoun, Mr. Hardy, Mr. Elliott, Mr. Bell

Nays: None

Absent: None

2. **Facility Siting Agreement** Pursuant to Virginia Code Section § 15.2-2316.6 et seq., the Board of Supervisors will consider the terms and conditions of the siting agreement related to the Bear Island Battery Storage LLC Battery Energy Storage System within 32.5 acres on Surry County Parcel 54-1, whereby the Applicant intends to develop, install, build, and operate an energy storage facility and utility switchyard. In accordance with Va. Code §15.2-2316.7, the siting agreement includes terms and conditions related to mitigation of energy project impacts and financial compensation to Surry County. At the conclusion of the public hearing, if a majority of a quorum of the members of the Board of Supervisors present at such public hearing approve of such siting agreement, the siting agreement shall be executed by the parties.

I. Presentation by Staff – The staff report was provided during the presentation for Conditional Use Permit No. 2025-01.

II. Open the Floor for Public Comments – Chairman Elliott opened the public hearing in conjunction with the public hearing for the Conditional Use Permit No. 2025-01.

III. Close the Public Hearing – Chairman Elliott closed the public hearing.

IV. Comments from Board Members – There was no further discussion from the Board.

V. Closing Remarks by Staff – There was no further discussion from staff.

Board Action: Chairman Elliott asked for a motion on the Facility Siting Agreement.

Supervisor Hardy moved for approval of **siting agreement related to the Bear Island Battery Storage LLC Battery Energy Storage System within 32.5 acres on Surry County Parcel 54-1 as presented**, seconded by Supervisor Pierce.

Vote: 5:0 (Approved)

Ayes: Mr. Pierce, Mr. Calhoun, Mr. Hardy, Mr. Elliott, Mr. Bell

Nays: None

Absent: None

New Business

1. School Complex Sidewalk/Crosswalk Project

Melissa Rollins, County Administrator, provided information on the funding for the crosswalk project and asked for Board feedback on how they would like to proceed. She explained that out of the three bids received, staff recommended the County accept the bid from Cypress Woods in the amount of \$82,950. She noted that this project had not been included in the FY26 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) budget; therefore, staff recommended a transfer from the fund balance to cover the costs of this project.

Horace Wade, Director of Planning and Zoning, reviewed the design of the crosswalk project. He noted that this project was being done in collaboration with Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT).

Board Action: Chairman Elliott asked for a motion to approve the transfer from the fund balance in the amount of \$82,950 for the purpose of funding this crosswalk project.

Mr. Pierce moved for **authorization of the Resolution accepting the bid from Cypress Woods in the amount of \$82,950 and preparation of necessary documents to commence with the project, and the amendment to the FY25-FY26 CIP Budget in the amount of \$90,000 from the fund balance to cover the costs of the project**, seconded by Mr. Hardy.

Vote: 5:0 (Approved)

Ayes: Mr. Pierce, Mr. Calhoun, Mr. Hardy, Mr. Elliott, Mr. Bell

Nays: None

County Administrator's Report

1. Human Resources Employee Service Awards – Deseria Creighton-Barney, Director of Human Resources, recognized Surry County employees who had reached milestones of service with the County.
2. Building Official – Department Update – Matthew Westheimer, Building Official, presented an update on the department's work completed in Fiscal Year 25.
3. Emergency Management – Department Update – Ray Phelps, Chief of Emergency Management, presented an update on the department's recent work.
4. Annual Financial Report Update – Ms. Rollins provided an update to the Board and noted they were almost finished with the report; their auditors would present the final report to the Board in October 2025.
5. Surry County Building Official's Office Monthly Report – August 2025
6. Surry County Inspection Performance By District and Pass/Fail Rate – August 2025

Board Comments

Supervisor Hardy – encouraged the public to embrace economic development as it progressed in Surry County. He urged citizens to attend the Board's meetings, which was the most effective way to stay informed and participate directly in the public process. He added that he was glad the

County would be moving forward with the school sidewalk/crosswalk project. He welcomed Supervisor Bell to the Board.

Supervisor Bell – thanked all of their County employees who carried out the essential work in Surry. He thanked the Board members for the warm welcome to his interim position on the Board. He expressed his gratitude to Mr. Wade and Ms. Perkins for briefing him on the Bear Island Battery Storage Facility project so he was well-informed for tonight's public hearings. He agreed with Mr. Hardy that the school sidewalk/crosswalk project was an important safety improvement and he looked forward to seeing it completed.

Supervisor Calhoun—expressed his appreciation to the Bear Island Battery Storage Facility representatives for presenting information during the public hearings today. He congratulated the County employees who received service awards as well as all the employees of Surry County. He thanked Mr. Westheimer for all his department was doing for the County. He thanked Mr. Phelps for everything his department was doing, as well. He was grateful to everyone for participating in tonight's meeting and encouraged everyone to continue to do so. He asked the public to please contact their District Supervisor if they had any questions, as they were all glad to be of service. He welcomed Mr. Bell to his new position on the Board.

Supervisor Pierce – thanked everyone for attending tonight's meeting. He expressed his gratitude to the Board and to staff for making it a very productive and informative Board meeting. He noted that the battery storage project would be providing revenues to the County, which was important in terms of diversifying the County's tax base. He noted that staff had done an incredible job of responding to the questions and concerns of the public, the Board, and the applicant, and he felt they were well-informed due to staff's research and execution of their processes. He congratulated the County employees for their service awards, which spoke to the strong sense of dedication and community they had in Surry County. He added that he toured the hospital recently and was impressed with the facilities, noting that it was an essential component of a good quality of life for all their residents. He thanked the Parks and Recreation Department for arranging a free trip for children to visit the Virginia State Fair this year.

Chairman Elliott – agreed that it had been a very productive meeting and thanked his Board colleagues and staff for getting so much done. He asked the public to please be patient with their local government representatives as they worked through a variety of issues in the County. He asked the public to continue to support and love one another, which was the essence of what made Surry County such a special place.

Reports

1. Surry County Building Official Monthly Report – April 2025
2. Surry County Inspection Performance By District and Pass/Fail Rate – April 2025
3. Surry County Building Official's Office Monthly Report – May 2025
4. Surry County Inspection Performance By District and Pass/Fail Rate – May 2025

For Your Information

None.

Adjournment

Chairman Elliott asked for a motion for adjournment to October 2, 2025, 6:00 p.m. for a regular meeting.

Supervisor Calhoun moved, and Supervisor Pierce seconded.

Vote (Approved):

Ayes: Mr. Pierce, Mr. Hardy, Mr. Calhoun, Mr. Elliott, Mr. Bell

Nays: None

Absent: None

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 pm

This meeting can be viewed in its entirety through the Surry County Government Website:

<https://www.surrycountyva.gov/387/Watch-A-Meeting>