



## **Botetourt County, Virginia, Republican Committee (BCRC)**

### **Meeting Minutes**

The May 20, 2024, meeting was held at VFW, Daleville, Virginia, and called to order at 6:40 p.m. by Chairman Steve Dean.

#### **Executive Board present:**

Chairman Steve Dean

Vice-Chairman Jim Ludington

Parliamentarian Dr. David Bruce

Treasurer Chris Booth

Secretary Christine Liana

Legal Advisor Attorney Dirk Padgett

Precinct Coordinator Larry Ceola

Public Relations Director Linda Rottman

Magisterial District Chairs:

Amsterdam: Lisa Maydian

Blue Ridge: Daryl Pugh

Buchanan: Brandy Cambell

Fincastle: Don Obenshain

Valley: Tim Amos

#### **Agenda Items:**

Call to Order

Opening prayer

Pledge of Allegiance

Republican Creed

#### **Treasurer's Report – Chris Booth**

Balance on hand: \$16,916.12 as of May 20, 2024.

Linda Rottman moved to approved Treasurer's report; seconded; motion carried.

**The Chairman read the agenda:**

*Agenda to include but not limited to:*

*Call to order*

*Opening prayer*

*Pledge of allegiance*

*Republican creed*

*Treasurer's report – Chris Booth*

*Old Business – Christine Liana*

*New Business:*

- *Discussion and approval of 4<sup>th</sup> of July Family celebration/membership drive.*
- *Discussion and approval of Labor Day Trump Caravan and rally in cooperation with Roanoke Republican Committee.*
- *Discussion and approval of efforts to attract U.S. Senate Candidates come to Botetourt County.*
- *Presentation of the required resources to complete the Colonial Elementary School - Hank Wallace*
- *Any new business as approved by the Chairman.*

*Adjournment*

Linda Rottman made motion to approve the agenda; seconded; voted; motion carried.

**Old Business:**

**Secretary's Report – Christine Liana**

The Secretary read the minutes from the April 29, 2024, meeting.

Mark Tyson made motion to approve the meeting minutes; seconded; voted; motion carried.

**New Business:**

**Discussion and approval of Independence Day July 4<sup>th</sup> family celebration/membership drive:**

The Chairman proposed having this event as an opportunity to get families and the community involved, and for a membership drive, and expects a cost of approximately \$1,000 for this event. BCRC member said he has a bouncy house [play area]. Linda Rottman suggested an activities committee. Chairman asked for volunteer to chair a games committee; Greg Rieley volunteered and Linda will assist. Regina Mannes suggested the band The Love Buzzards who played at community and fund-raising events. Anna Bruce made motion to allow a committee for this event. Michael Guessford asked how to promote the event and commented that Facebook is not used as much by the younger generation. Kim Tyson suggested that members bring a friend, submitting an editorial to *The Fincastle Herald* and other media, and that YouTube is popular with younger generation.

Terri Brockley mentioned having signage at Daleville Town Center and lighted signs that VDOT uses if possible, and that Robert Young has signs. Anna Bruce asked about food; the Chairman said we can bring food or hire people to bring food. The Secretary suggested an option of Rodeo Chico's food truck (no cost if 50+ people buying) in addition to other types of food and raised concern about pot-luck style and compliance the Health Department; the Chairman said they've done it before and it's not a problem. Chairman said he will compile the ideas and get them on the [BCRC] website and social media. Chairman made a motion to approve the event; seconded; voted; motion carried.

**Discussion and approval of Labor Day Trump caravan / rally in cooperation with Roanoke Republican Committee.**

Chairman spoke with Charlie Nave, Roanoke Committee Chair and Sixth District Committee Vice President, who agrees with the idea. Brandy Campbell said she awaiting a reply from Buchanan Town Hall for dates of August 31 or the Saturday after Labor Day, with the route starting near Shenandoah Baptist Church, Route 11/Williamson Road, through Troutville. Senator Chris Head said he can help have it coincide with the event in Buena Vista, Rockbridge County. Terri Brockley made a motion; seconded by Charles Ruhl; voted; motion carried. Chairman asked for a committee chair for this event; Brandy Campbell volunteered and Terri Brockley volunteered to assist. Chairman said that he contacted the Trump organization and was told they'll try to get a representative to join our event. Linda Rottman suggested having a voting registration booth and Brandy Campbell concurred and suggested having a voting registration drive at all BCRC events. Chairman asked for discussion; none; voted; motion carried.

**Discussion and approval of efforts to attract U.S. Senate candidates coming to Botetourt County.**

Chairman was of the opinion having a regular meeting since it's nearly a month away from the election, has the opportunity to use Daleville Baptist Church, and Committee approval is needed before contacting the candidates. Meeting date planned for early June 10. Terry Brockly suggested it's better to have it here at VFW instead of at a church. David Bandy suggested using Attic Productions that can accommodate 300, tiered seating, approximately \$150 to rent, good parking, and will call the contact person. Chris Booth made a motion for the Chairman to get as many Senate candidates as possible for June meeting, and be flexible with date and location at Chairmans's discretion. Kim Tyson suggested having the meeting at 7:00 p.m. Anna Bruce seconded the motion; voted; motion carried.

**Presentation by Hank Wallace of the required resources to complete renovations to the former Colonial Elementary School for the non-profit 640 Corp. as a homeschool co-op:**

In 2023, the 640 Corporation bought the school for \$10.00. Zoning approved; repairs that were made and that need to be made were described. They raised and spent approximately \$200,000.00. They have a matching donor that paid for \$100,00 roof repair and gave a \$250,000 matching grant. They claimed \$100,00 and has \$150,000 to claim before June 30. They received \$90,000 and need \$60,000 more before matching grant is paid. Donations are tax-deductible. Vera Wilson runs Rodeo Thrift with the proceeds going to the school. Information sheets provided to BCRC members. He will lead volunteer crews and provide tours of the school.

**Other New Business:**

**Sally McGuffin mentioned the BCRC Finance, Nominations, Ways and Means, and Public Relations committees need members and asked for contact information for those interested in serving on the committees.**

The Secretary explained the importance of the Public Affairs Committee having members willing to attend and speak at the Board of Supervisors, Library Board, and School Board meetings. The Library Board meetings are a closed loop: from experience, the public is allowed to speak but the board does comment nor answer questions from the public or engage with them after their meetings; we need people to watch what's happening and speak up, as they [e.g. Library Director] has autonomy to do what they want, especially with the library book situation.

Linda Rottman said the work must be done before a three-minute comment time to the boards, and is concerned the budget sub-committees do not represent the voters and suggested the BCRC make a proposal, vote on it, and if approved, inform the Boards of Supervisors of the BCRC's position on the matter.

Mr. Shannon Turner made a motion the BCRC Executive Committee draft a letter to Board of Supervisors in that the BCRC expects a revenue-neutral tax rate by June 1, and Keri Martell said to include a zero-based budget. Mark Tyson said that if BCRC acts quickly, it can get a forum addressing Botetourt County taxation and communicate this to the taxpayers. Anna Bruce was concerned it would take more time than we have, and suggested a draft letter first. Mr. Shannon Turner also advised drafting the letter now, followed by a forum. Linda Rottman advised not mentioning the forum in the letter, since we have support. Chairman asked Legal Counsel Dirk Padgett to draft the letter. Terri Brockly suggested having Keri Martell hand-deliver it to the Board of Supervisors for their May 23, 2024, meeting. It was suggested to also mail the letter; Chairman said to mail it USPS Certified. Kim Maydian suggested also putting the letter on social media. Chairman made a motion to draft a letter to Board of Supervisors, mail certified, hand-deliver, e-mail to all BCRC members, post to BCRC website and social media. The motion was seconded; voted; motion carried.

**Cindy Bandy proposed having a committee to deal with the Botetourt County libraries' sexually explicit books for children and teens, and asked for B.R.A.C.E. to work with her on a campaign, write letters, attend Library Board meetings and put pressure on them and move the books to a separate section where only parents can check them out.**

The Secretary explained the sexually explicit books for children teens are bought and loaned with taxpayers' money by the Library Director and to visit [www.wearebrace.org](http://www.wearebrace.org) for more information on the books, and encouraged BCRC members to join Bandy's committee. David Bandy stated that Cindy Bandy gave the [Chairman] her letter to review that she wrote to be sent to *The Fincastle Herald* explaining the Library Board's agenda for a Library Foundation that allows them to raise money independent of the Board of Supervisors and taxpayers and use the money however they want with no accountability; he encouraged BCRC members to attend the upcoming Board of Supervisors meeting as it will be discussed.

Hank Wallace said he supports Cindy Bandy's efforts, but the 640 school plans a children's "safe library." The Secretary stated the 640 school's "safe" library does NOT solve the problem of Botetourt County buying and loaning sexually explicit books for children and teens with taxpayers' money.

Mark Tyson asked about the possibility of terminating the library director and her deputy county administrator boss. Legal Counsel Dirk Padgett explained that he spoke with attorney and Delegate Tim Griffin who deals with these issues and about the legal parameters.

Charles Ruhl suggested eliminating the Library Director's job and saving the taxpayers' money.

David Bandy said the Board of Supervisors issued a Resolution [in 2023] praising Library Director Julie Phillips. Rhonda Wood asked how many at this meeting saw the books (several hands were raised) and described some of the explicit content of some of the library books for children, and called for BCRC members to get involved to help stop this problem. Applause was given.

Larry Ceola suggested checking the books out and not returning them. Applause was given.

Terri Brockly said that other counties have summer activities for children through their Parks and Recreation departments, but Botetourt County has only *library* programs for children.

Mr. Shannon Turner asked if these books are in the school libraries.

The Secretary explained the loophole in the Obscenity Code of Virginia that allows schools and libraries to distribute sexually explicit books, and in January 2023 Delegate LaRock tried to pass a bill to close this loophole but it reached an impasse and did not pass, which is why we [Chairman, Secretary, BCRC member Wood] are meeting with Senator Chris Head, et al [Congressman Ben Cline, Delegate Tim Griffin] for representation to close that loophole; and, further to Ceola's question, be aware that Library Director Phillips states the statistics of how many checkouts these books have as if to allude these books are wanted by the taxpayers, but whether she realizes it or not, Phillips is stating a false positive [whereby citizens are checking out the inappropriate books to get them off the shelves and away from children.]

Chairman made a motion to form a committee; voted; none opposed; motion carried.

**Vice-Chairman was asked by Executive Committee to present comments to Board of Supervisors on BCRC's behalf regarding the Board of Supervisors' July 2023 Resolution approval of loaning sexually explicit books, the Library Director's denial of Botetourt County's American Library Association membership that pushes the sexual agenda whereby research revealed the County as a dues-paying ALA member, and the formation of a Library Foundation with questionable usage of outside donor funds.**

The Vice-Chairman moved to be allowed to deliver the message to the Board of Supervisors; the Chairman asked for discussion; Charles Ruhl suggested also stating an ultimatum in addition to the facts and the Vice-Chairman replied that he only has three minutes and asked for more of us to speak at the June 28, 2024, Board of Supervisors meeting; and answered a question about holding the Board of Supervisors accountable to the Republican Creed. The Chairman said the Executive Committee voted to have the Republican Creed part of the BCRC by-laws, and anyone who is elected must follow the Creed and if not, the first [consequence] is censorship, then removal from the BCRC, then a primary election.

Linda Rottman mentioned a concern about the letter's comments of calling out homosexuals and suggested just stating the organization and not what they represent. Vice-Chairman stated homosexuality is being forced on children and must be called out, regardless of religion or not. The Secretary suggested a simple way to address this, as the LGBTQ group falsely accuses us of being "haters" if we do not agree with their lifestyle, and that is stating that we are establishing Community Standards of Decency for what is allowed and distributed to children and teens [with our tax money]. BCRC members agreed that this is about opposing all types of sexually explicit material for children and teens. Mark Tyson concurred but expressed concern that it's not a strategy; Linda Rottman suggested that he join the BCRC committee concerning this library problem. Vice-Chairman made the motion; Secretary seconded it; none opposed; motion carried.

David Bandy commented that a strategy is for the community to write letters to *The Fincastle Herald* to help the public understand the issues, and for BCRC members to attend Board of Supervisors meetings to let them know that we are listening, watching, and will act on this and in the elections. Applause was given.

### **Comments from Senator Chris Head**

Senator Chris Head commented on Governor Youngkin vetoing many bad bills; there are many new Legislature members; the General Assembly had 43% turnover due to redistricting; the Governor put forward a budget and both chambers bi-partisan came up with a budget that included new spending, much of which is for teachers and law enforcement and stopped the new taxes, which wasn't the best solutions but was more Republican-looking, although they don't have the votes to stop [the negative parts]. He stressed the need for Republican voters unify and vote, to see our Senate candidates and hold them accountable, and the need to pray. Senator Head also said that he wants to introduce a bill for party registration. Applause was given.

**Keri Martell moved that due to work schedules, all future quarterly, bi-monthly, and/or monthly BCRC meetings begin at 7 p.m. or if the venue closes at 8:00 p.m., begin at 6:30 p.m. as this will also set the example for the County's government meetings.**

BCRC members proposed different meeting times. Martell amended the motion to meeting at 6:30 p.m., Linda Rottman seconded; voted, motion passed.

Mr. Shannon Turner suggested drafting letter to Board of Supervisors to hold their meetings later. The Chairman said that Blue Ridge Supervisor Walt Michael is addressing this with the Board of Supervisors.

**Chairman discussed BCRC meeting venues and asked for suggestions.** Discussion was held, nothing yet decided upon.

**Announcements:**

Larry Ceola announced that he can no longer be Precinct Coordinator due to health issues and has resigned from the position. The Chairman announced that Don Obenshain is now Precinct Coordinator, and Charles Ruhl is Fincastle Magisterial District Coordinator.

The Chairman read what the WHO "Pandemic Preparedness Agreement" is planning to do to restrict citizens' medical sovereignty and urged BCRC's support to stop this tyranny; petition sheets provided and were signed.

The Secretary announced the meeting sign-in sheets are on the front table.

**Adjournment:**

The Chairman moved to adjourn the meeting at approximately 7:45 p.m.; seconded; voted and carried.

Meeting Minutes submitted to Chairman Steve Dean by BCRC Secretary Christine Liana, May 23, 2024.