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To the Citizens of Russell County;

Several months ago, private developers approached the County with an economic development opportunity. The project, as presented, would be the development of solid waste landfill on property that was once used as a coal strip mine with few residences in the area. The proposed developers are well-known and respected business people from the area.

Upon initial review, the County determined that the project presented an opportunity to the County for significant new revenue and a long-term solution for local government solid waste in the region. Other counties in Virginia have benefitted from such projects.

The County made the decision to hire outside legal counsel (Gentry Locke) and environmental/engineering consultants (David Paylor, Potesta and Associates) to assist the County in reviewing the project proposal and evaluating the opportunities for the County.

The Virginia Department of Environmental Quality provides comprehensive regulations governing solid waste landfills. However, the County would insist on additional environmental protections and financial benefits for the County.

From the outset, the County has made it clear to outside counsel and the environmental consultants that the primary goals for the County would be environmental protection and economic opportunity for the citizens of Russell County.

Review of this project is in its early stages. The County, outside counsel and environmental consultants have had several initial meetings to discuss the project. However, there is much more to review, evaluate and negotiate.

At this point, the County has made no decision with regard to the project. The next steps would be to finish the review of the proposed project and try to negotiate an initial host agreement that would insure protection for the environment and financial benefit for the County.

BEFORE any host agreement would be presented to the Board of Supervisors, there would be a public involvement process where citizens would hear about the proposal and have the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey C. Southard

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