

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE ALAMANCE COUNTY BOARD
OF COMMISSIONERS FOR ALAMANCE COUNTY**

**June 5, 2023, 6:30 PM
Alamance County Historic Courthouse
1 SE Court Square
Graham, NC 27253**

Board Members Present: Chairman John Paisley Jr
Vice-Chair Steve Carter
Commissioner William "Bill" T. Lashley
Commissioner Pamela Thompson
Commissioner Craig Turner

CALL TO ORDER - CHAIRMAN PAISLEY

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE - COMMISSIONER THOMPSON

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Moved by: Vice-Chair Carter

Seconded by: Commissioner Lashley

APPROVED UNANIMOUS

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Shawn Francis, Burlington resident, shared pictures of a display that he found in May Memorial Library. He said he had two examples of conspiracies taking place in the country. He spoke that the local legislators were attempting to open an Article V. Convention and Constitution. Mr. Francis said another tactic of the conspiracy was division and that racial division was a favorite of conspirators. He requested that Board allow him to be on the agenda to present a resolution requesting the legislatures rescind all extant applications for an Article V. Convention.

Paul Capps, Burlington resident, questioned why the Board was considering passing the Firearms Ordinance and that it was first because of projectiles leaving the range. Secondly, he thought it was the noise that it had created. Mr. Capps said the gentleman that previously spoke at the last meeting had said that Rad Range should have read a book before opening that gun range was right. He spoke about projectiles leaving the gun range and trying to put an ordinance on the

books that could not be enforced. He asked for help for his community in making Rad Range conform to state law. Mr. Capps yielded the remainder of his time to Sheriff Johnson. Sheriff Johnson said people call the Sheriff's Office all the time about problems with ranges and yards. He agreed that something needed to be done and that County Attorney Stevens knew the law and what needed to be done. Sheriff Johnson said he had no authority to do anything, and the Commissioners had the right to pass an ordinance.

Rudy Cartassi, Rad Range Owner, spoke that the upgrades done at the range was exactly what was prescribed by law. He said they had built the berms higher and added concrete pad. He said that they were a small business doing everything they could.

CONSENT AGENDA

Moved by: Vice-Chair Carter

Seconded by: Commissioner Lashley

APPOINTMENTS/ REAPPOINTMENTS

Juvenile Crime Prevention Council- Jon Berkeley and Wayne Beam

Local Emergency Planning Committee for Hazardous Chemicals- Lloyd Dosser and Benjamin Wooten

BUDGET AMENDMENTS

Budget Amendment-Office of Juvenile Justice

Approval to Apply for Conference Scholarship from the State Library of North Carolina

Grant Request – Recreation and Parks

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Regular Minutes of May 15, 2023

Public Hearing

Public Hearing Manager's Recommended Budget

Commissioner Turner, seconded by Vice-Chair Carter, moved to open the public hearing. The motion carried without opposition.

The following speakers wished to be heard from the floor:

Sheriff Terry Johnson spoke about the turnover rate in his office. He continued that since January 2022, his office had: 30 resignations, 8 retirements, 15 involuntary terminations, 40 vacancies in the detention center, and 10 vacancies in patrol and investigation. Sheriff Johnson stressed the loss of experience within the department. He mentioned that some of the reasons for leaving were salary, forced overtime, benefits, and there had been numerous assaults. He noted

that he was going to have to make a decision within this budget or he was going to have to cancel contracts or bring personnel out of the courtrooms to fill vacancies.

Ed Priola, Mebane resident, spoke that he was a County Commissioner candidate, shared his philosophy that leaders eat last and that leaders should come after the people they served. He spoke that now was not time to raise taxes for foolish matters. He mentioned the large raise the ABSS superintendent had received.

Doug Adams, Graham resident, spoke that the Sheriff's Office was starving for funds. He noted that other surrounding counties were paying higher salaries. He said the county would suffer if money was not allocated where it needed to be.

Adam Covington, Haw River resident, spoke in support of funding the Sheriff's Office.

Chris Crain, Graham resident & Alamance County Sheriff's Office (ACSO) Captain, spoke about the overdoses and the needed resources to combat the problem. Captain Crain shared statistics on overdoses per month and reported fatal overdoses. He expressed they had to have enough people to work these crimes and investigations. He urged the Board to give Sheriff Johnson the resources that he needed in his budget.

Scott Gaither, ACSO Captain, reiterated that the Sheriff's Office had to have enough people to get the job done. He shared that during his 18 year career with the county, salaries and compensation had always been a problem.

Angela Thompson, Executive Director of Alamance Eldercare, explained her agency had lost the in-kind support from Cone Health. She continued that her agency recently had to set up human resources, payroll, IT, and relocate to Graham. Ms. Thompson said some of those client services may not be provided due to the loss of the in-kind match from Cone Health. She asked for the funds that they used to receive from the the county along with the matching funds from the Homecare Community Block Grant.

Joe Wall, Snow Camp, spoke that he was not proud to be in a county with the lowest rate. He wanted the county to budget the amount funds necessary for county operations.

Sandra Cooke, Justine Post, Tanya Klein, Tameka Harvey, Seneca Rogers, Pamela Hale, Alexis Cagle, Amanda Baker, Janet Elklebarger, Jay Kennett, Tiffany Smith and Anita Burton all advocated for funding for the school system.

Medora Burke Scoll, Mebane resident and representative for ABSS Association of Educators, spoke about the improved working relationship between the County Commissioners and the Board of Education. Ms. Scoll asked that the TRC/OSC minutes be published on the website for more transparency. She said as a homeowner, she would like to see the tax rate increase if it meant more funding for schools, the Sheriff's Office and other community agencies. She spoke about teacher retention and sponsoring more teacher work visas.

Henry Vines, Snow Camp resident, said he had listened to the requests for more money and understood the needs of the county. He continued that seniors were concerned about their property taxes increasing. Mr. Vines said most property in the county was revalued almost over 8% and some had doubled. He reminded the Board that they had promised the taxpayers a revenue-neutral tax rate. He asked the Board to live up to their promise of a revenue neutral tax rate.

Marie Rockell, spoke about the property revaluations and her belief that they were based on the housing bubble. She said that she worked at the post office and recently postal workers had received an \$8,000-\$10,000 pay cut. Ms. Rockell said houses were sitting on the market. She supported more funding for the Sheriff's Office and Emergency Services. She commented that Alamance County was a drug corridor. She said the county needed a revenue-neutral budget in order to stay in the county and pay taxes.

Sandy Ellington-Graves, Graham resident & ABSS Board Chair, thanked the Board for their consistency in supporting ABSS. She expressed her excitement about the collaboration of having a school resource officer (SRO) on every ABSS campus. Ms. Graves mentioned that the recommended investment to ABSS was \$2.9 million less than requested but was confident in Dr. Butler's leadership to continue to fund current operations. Ms. Graves said the Board of Education shared Dr. Butler's priority of investing in public education for school safety. She asked the Board to support County Manager York's recommended allocation to ABSS of \$51,259,221.

No other speakers wished to be heard from the floor.

Commissioner Lashley, seconded by Vice-Chair Carter moved to close the public hearing. The motion carried without opposition.

PRESENTATIONS/OTHER BUSINESS

Ordinance Regulating the Discharge of Firearms - County Attorney Stevens

County Attorney Stevens reminded the Board that this was the second reading of the proposed Firearms Ordinance. He noted that no changes were made from the 1st reading of the ordinance.

Commissioner Turner spoke this was the intersection of both rights. He said one was the right to do what you wanted on your property. The second was the right to peacefully enjoy your property without having to worry about projectiles.

Moved by: Vice-Chair Carter

Seconded by: Commissioner Turner

Vice-Chair Carter, seconded by Commissioner Turner, moved for approval of the Firearms Ordinance. The motion failed 3-2 with Chairman Paisley, Commissioners Lashley and Thompson voting in opposition.

FAILED

Vincent Valuations Contract Extension - Jeremy Akins, Tax Administrator

Jeremy Akins, Tax Administrator, discussed the Vincent Valuations Contract Extension. He requested that the Board raise the "cap" on the total payments to Vincent Valuations to \$662,500 to be paid from existing budgeted funds; along with extending the term of the existing agreement by one year to August 16, 2024, to allow for any delays in appeals to be heard by the North Carolina Property Tax Commission.

Moved by: Chairman Paisley

Seconded by: Vice-Chair Carter

APPROVED UNANIMOUS

Reappointment of Tax Administrator for 2023-2027 - Jeremy Akins, Tax Administrator

Jeremy Akins, Tax Administrator, requested reappointment for another four-year term (2023-2027).

Moved by: Chairman Paisley

Seconded by: Vice-Chair Carter

APPROVED UNANIMOUS

COUNTY ATTORNEY'S REPORT

No report

COUNTY MANAGER'S REPORT

County Manager York announced that Alamance County was successful and was awarded the Brownfields EPA Grant.

County Manager York confirmed that the TRC/OSC minutes were available online in response to the public hearing speaker that had inquired.

COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

Commissioner Thompson shared an article on how we see things without knowing the whole story.

Commissioner Lashley said the Board intended to do more work on the budget and thanked everyone for attending the public hearing.

Commissioner Turner echoed Commissioner Lashley's comments.

Vice-Chair Carter spoke this was going to be a challenge. He continued that people did not understand that County Manager York and staff were charged with presenting the Board with what they thought were the county needs. He thanked everyone for coming out that night.

Chair Paisley recognized Senator Galey, who was in attendance. He announced the budget work-session scheduled for the following day at 2:00pm.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Lashley, seconded by Vice-Chair Carter, moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

There being no further business to be brought before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 8:44 PM.

John Paisley, Jr., Chairman

Alamance County Board of Commissioners

Tory M. Frink, Clerk to the Board