

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

**September 18, 2023, 6:30 PM
Commissioners' Meeting Room
124 West Elm Street
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 - CHAIRMAN PAISLEY

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Chairman Paisley, seconded by Vice-Chair Carter, moved for the additions of the 2023 Junior Police Academy Graduating Class and a closed session from County Attorney Stevens.

Moved by: Chairman Paisley

Seconded by: Vice-Chair Carter

APPROVED AS AMENDED

PUBLIC COMMENTS

No public speakers.

PROCLAMATIONS/RESOLUTIONS

Human Resources Professionals Day - Cheryl Ray, Alamance County Human Resources Director

Chairman Paisley and the Board of Commissioners presented a Proclamation in recognition of Human Resources Professionals Day to Melinda Arey, Alamance County Human Resources Association's Past President.

Moved by: Chairman Paisley
Seconded by: Vice-Chair Carter

APPROVED UNANIMOUS

RECOGNITION OF THE 2023 JUNIOR POLICE ACADEMY GRADUATING CLASS

Corporal Chad Laws, Alamance County Sheriff's Office, gave a brief presentation and introduced the 2023 Junior Police Academy Graduates. Each graduate gave their name, and the name of the school they attended, and shared what they had learned during the program. The Commissioners thanked the Junior Police Academy Graduates for attending the meeting.

CONSENT AGENDA

Moved by: Vice-Chair Carter
Seconded by: Commissioner Turner

APPROVED UNANIMOUS

BUDGET AMENDMENTS

Budget Amendment-War Memorial

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Regular Meeting of September 5, 2023

PRESENTATIONS/OTHER BUSINESS

Capital Reserve Fund Request - Greg Hook, ABSS Chief Operations Officer

Greg Hook, Alamance-Burlington School System (ABSS) Chief Operations Officer, gave an update on the current roofing projects.

Woodlawn Middle School - Roofing and roof drains completed

Graham Middle School - Design Completed / Certificate of Review had been issued by the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) / Bid opened on September 27

Haw River - Awaiting a Certificate of Review from DPI

Graham High School - Core sampling & asbestos testing to be done / 90% plan review submitted to DPI in late September

Southern Alamance High School - Competed for field work and asbestos testing- mid-September / 90% plan review submitted to DPI in late September

Mr. Hook requested \$301,980 to put the roofing projects in design. He said the costs of the roofing designs were for Western Middle (\$108,855), B. Everett Jordan Elementary (\$52,500), and Western High (\$140,625). Mr. Hook said the amounts did not include payments to the engineering firm to manage the projects, host the biddings, and the background checks on the bidders.

Commissioner Thompson asked if the roofs would be patched or if they would be completed roofs. Mr. Hook answered it would be completed roofs. He said the roofs were done in sections that were not connected.

Commissioner Turner asked if the roofing projects that were going out to bid were already funded. Mr. Hook responded the first four were funded. Commissioner Turner asked if the bids could be moved up. Mr. Hook replied they could submit a certificate of review from DPI, and put it out to bid. Commissioner Turner asked if the design was part of the roofs going up for bids in the next few months. Mr. Hook answered yes when the funds were requested from the school systems it included the amount for the design, management of the bidding, and the amount of the construction of the new roof. Commissioner Turner asked for examples of roof designs. Mr. Hook explained the different aspects of roof designing.

Vice-Chair Carter was concerned that prices were constantly going up. He opined that paying more for an engineer to get the job done quickly may be better than paying for an engineer who would take up to 8 months. Mr. Hook said they had to go through a request for quotes (RFQ) process to choose an engineering design firm. Vice-Chair Carter asked if the 3 schools had leaks in the roof. Mr. Hook responded Western Middle constantly had water coming in through the roof. B. Everett Jordan patches were not going to hold on forever. Western High had water that came in all over the school.

Chairman Paisley thanked Commissioner Turner for asking what the design project was about. He encouraged Mr. Hook to look at more than one design. He encouraged him to use the best as opposed to the quickest or the cheapest.

Commissioner Lashley asked if they were required by statutory law to do the design process. Mr. Hook said he could not say for sure, but ABSS wanted an engineer on staff to do the construction projects so they knew they were doing the right thing.

Chairman Paisley said this gave the county the ability to bring their engineers or experts, so they could evaluate what was needed and action upon it would be much quicker than 7 months.

Commissioner Turner asked Mr. Hook if windows should be included in the evaluation to prevent water intrusion in the building. Mr. Hook responded he was interested in the engineer checking everything and it would become a capital improvement plan. He felt that windows should be included in conjunction with the HVAC because they had several schools with single-pane windows.

Commissioner Turner asked County Manager York if they knew how long would it take to approve a bid on this work, and the cost. County Manager York responded the statutes dictated the length of time would be 21 days. Commissioner Turner asked would the Board be able to plan on funding at the second meeting in October. County Manager York said they would try.

Chairman Paisley asked if it was the County Manager's request to include the county's buildings. County Manager York answered it was the recommendation of staff.

Moved by: Chairman Paisley

Seconded by: Commissioner Lashley

Chairman Paisley, seconded by Commissioner Lashley, moved to direct county staff to issue and vet an RFQ under article 3D of chapter 143 of the North Carolina General Statute for a vendor or vendors to evaluate the need for repair or replacement of roof and HVAC equipment for all buildings owned by the Alamance-Burlington School System. He further moved that they used the fund balance to pay for these expenses. The motion carried without opposition.

APPROVED UNANIMOUS

Moved by: Chairman Paisley

Seconded by: Commissioner Lashley

Chairman Paisley, seconded by Commissioner Lashley, moved to amend the previous motion to include the county's buildings. The motion carried without opposition.

APPROVED AS AMENDED

Moved by: Vice-Chair Carter

Seconded by: Commissioner Turner

Vice-Chair Carter, seconded by Commissioner Turner, moved to approve the request to transfer \$301,980 from the school Capital Reserve Fund to the Schools Capital Project Fund to amend the budget for roofing design fees for projects at B.E. Jordan, Western High, and Western Middle.

The motion carried 3-2 with Vice-Chair Carter, and Commissioners Turner and Thompson voting in favor. Chairman Paisley and Commissioner Lashley voted in opposition.

APPROVED

ABSS Update and Report – Lowell Rogers, ABSS Deputy Superintendent

Lowell Rogers, ABSS Deputy Superintendent, mentioned Dr. Butler had to leave early due to sickness. Mr. Rogers said as of that day 32 schools had mold remediation and were now open. He thanked the Board for approving \$20 million in reallocation of funds for mold and remediation. Mr. Rogers shared that the presentation aimed to answer the question of how they were going to keep mold from returning. His staff devised a preventative plan that would focus on HVAC, roofs, dehumidification, water intrusion, windows, and staffing.

Mr. Hook gave the presentation. He said the HVAC maintenance/repair was currently understaffed to provide maintenance. He reiterated that these were ideas, not a financial ask. He shared that last year for HVAC repairs they used contracted services. The cost for those services was \$135,000. Mr. Hook mentioned they agreed with the motion to contract with an engineering design firm to inventory and evaluate the current systems and create a capital improvement plan. He mentioned dehumidification system was important to combat the return of mold.

Mr. Hook said they had not done any preventive maintenance on roofs. They needed staff to clean out gutters, clean debris off the roof, and do maintenance on the roofs. He received an estimate from one company of \$125,000 to do preventive maintenance twice a year on school roofs.

Mr. Hook next discussed dehumidification. He said it was important to read the humidity numbers in the school buildings. He continued that a fleet of portable dehumidifiers could be placed in areas in the summer, from June through this time of year to prevent humidity. Mr. Hook mentioned that ABSS had planned on using the remaining ESSER funds as another application toward this. Mr. Hook said they could rent through a service contract or buy them following the state purchasing procedures.

Commissioner Turner said 8 schools had HVAC improvements underway. He understood the contractual timeline to complete that work was mid-September 2024. He asked if it was possible to complete the HVAC units by Memorial Day so that by next summer the schools would have HAVCS. Mr. Hook responded he could talk to them, but they would be getting different types of equipment around February 2024 for the HAVCS systems. He continued they would be installed through the summer.

Chairman Paisley asked about the cost of renting versus purchasing the dehumidifiers. Mr. Hook replied he had a rough number. It would cost per unit per month to rent a dehumidifier between \$890-\$2,400. He said that purchasing it would be \$2,500.

Vice-Chair Carter had a contact who sent him several different materials on several different processes that would use ultraviolet light to clean air as it goes through the air handling system. He said it may be something they would need to look at because the air-handling system could help kill mold spores.

Mr. Hook moved on to discuss water intrusion. He said they had schools where they had several areas that were below grade. They needed to keep an eye on those areas. He gave the examples of A.O. Elementary and Williams High where they had water intrusion.

Mr. Hook said they discussed windows earlier. He explained they had single-pane windows that were obsolete. He suggested they contact an architectural firm to inventory and evaluate the current windows to determine what was needed. Vice-Chair Carter asked if they had any ESSER funds that they could use towards the window. Mr. Hook said the ESSER funds were all committed except for the million he referred to earlier which they would use towards the rental of the dehumidifiers.

Mr. Hook explained for internal staffing they used to have Building Managers. They would like to go back to having one in every school. That would be a person who would be a supplemental to the maintenance staff. He suggested adding back an Assistant Director who could focus on managing service contracts and monitoring inspection reports. Mr. Hook mentioned the desire to hire service contractors who would provide preventative maintenance on HVAC, roofing, and dehumidification. He said they had 50 chillers and 75 boilers that did not receive preventative maintenance. The estimated cost was between \$250,000-\$300,000.

Mr. Hook explained the summary and estimated costs were:

HVAC:

Design Firm- \$200,000-\$250,000

Replace/Installation/Dehumidification - \$30 million per year (estimated 8 schools per year)

Roofs:

Design Firm- \$250,000-\$300,000

Replace/Installation/Repair- \$15 million per year (estimated 4 schools per year)

Staffing:

Building Managers (41)- \$1,149,548 annual

Assistant Director- \$94,170 annual

Commissioner Thompson requested Mr. Bass, of Builder Services discuss and share pictures of the mold remediation that was done at the schools. He said the mold did not happen overnight. He explained they had over 108 dumpsters pulled out of the school and cleaned 16 HVAC systems. They had replaced 750 filters in the schools they had cleaned. Mr. Bass suggested they needed preventive maintenance to be done on everything because time was not on their side. He continued that renting dehumidifiers was a waste of money. He said it would be more cost-effective to purchase them.

County Attorney Stevens mentioned there was a possibility of putting out RFQs depending on the Board's position on whether or not this was a case for a special emergency involving the health and safety of the people.

Commissioner Thompson explained she wanted everyone in the school system to understand this was a crisis. She said they needed to hear the hard things to get to where they needed to be.

Commissioner Turner asked how soon could the county have an RFQ in the works for the engineering process. Mr. Baker, Assistant County Manager, responded they could have an assessment done relatively quickly. Commissioner Turner asked for a RFQ process for the roofing analysis under the expedited procedure in two weeks. Chairman Paisley said they were requesting that as a Board. County Manager York responded they received the direction and will bring back that information at the next meeting.

County Attorney Stevens reiterated the Board could find by vote that the special emergency involving the health and safety of the people and their property exists here, which gave a lot of weight to the position of not using an RFQ as part of the process.

Moved by: Commissioner Turner

Seconded by: Commissioner Thompson

Commissioner Turner, seconded by Commissioner Thompson, moved to solicit work based on the exception in General Statute 143-64.31 instances where there was a special emergency involving the health and safety of the people or their property thereby limiting the requirements of an RFQ process in certain instances. The motion carried without opposition.

APPROVED UNANIMOUS

Report on School Options - Peter Morcombe, Financial Reform for Excellence in Education (FREE)

Peter Morcombe, Financial Reform for Excellence in Education (FREE), thanked the Board for the opportunity to present ideas on how to save money and improve the schools.

Mr. Morcombe said that ABBS was low-performing. He said some of the things that were upsetting parents were whole language reading instruction, Common Core, critical race theory, dirty books in the library, and gender dysphoria. He compared ABSS schools to charter schools based on education and funds. Mr. Morcombe said ABSS should privatize building maintenance. He shared that most of the growth in education came from private schools. He continued they needed to explore how to use legislation to create more school choices. Mr. Morcombe indicated by February of next year, they could provide a report that could save the county \$100 million. He opined they could provide school capacity for less than the plans they would get from ABSS.

COUNTY MANAGER'S REPORT

County Manager York said they would meet with the bond agency next week to review the current bond ratings and see if there was an opportunity for that to change. This was in preparation for the issuance of the bond in October for Alamance Community College.

COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

No comments.

COUNTY ATTORNEY'S REPORT

County Attorney Stevens asked the Board to move into closed session pursuant to North Carolina General Statute 143-318.11(a)(4) to discuss matters related to the location or expansion of industries or other businesses in the area served by the public body, including the agreement on a tentative list of economic development incentives that may be offered by the public body in negotiations. County Attorney Stevens further asked the Board to move into closed session pursuant to North Carolina General Statute 143-318.11(a)(3) to consult with an attorney employed or retained by the public body in order to preserve the attorney-client privilege between the attorney and the public body. The attorney will advise the Board on ongoing legal matters, including the NAACP et al. v. Alamance County et al.

County Attorney Stevens did not anticipate any action after this closed session.

Chairman Paisley, seconded by Vice-Chair Carter, moved to enter into a closed session. The motion carried without opposition.

The Board reconvened in open session at 10:49 P.M.

ADJOURNMENT

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

There being no further business to be brought before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 10:50 P.M.

John Paisley, Jr., Chairman

Alamance County Board of Commissioners

Tory M. Frink, Clerk to the Board

