

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

**November 6, 2023, 9:30 AM  
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

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**CALL TO ORDER - CHAIRMAN PAISLEY**

**INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE - COMMISSIONER THOMPSON**

**APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

Vice-Chair Carter, seconded by Chairman Paisley moved to remove item # 8.a. Vaya Health Update (the presenter was unable to attend). The motion carried.

**Moved by:** Vice-Chair Carter

**Seconded by:** Chairman Paisley

**APPROVED AS AMENDED**

**PROCLAMATIONS**

**Proclamation: Apprenticeship Week - Bettina Akukwe, Career Accelerator Program**

Chairman Paisley and the Board presented a Proclamation in recognition of National Apprenticeship Week to Bettina Akukwe, Alamance Community College (ACC) Associate Vice-President of Corporate Education and Economic Development.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Barry Joyce, a Burlington resident, spoke about the bonds for ACC and how the interest rates had risen costing more money for the taxpayers. He blamed the ACC President, ACC Board of Trustees, and County Commissioners saying it was totally a political decision.

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

**Moved by:** Vice-Chair Carter

**Seconded by:** Commissioner Turner

**APPROVED UNANIMOUS**

## **APPOINTMENTS/ REAPPOINTMENTS**

**Historic Properties Commission- James Waters and Christopher Copsey**

**Juvenile Crime Prevention Council (JCPC) – Mitch McKinney**

**Board of Health – Eleanor Rodriguez-Rassi**

**Resolution to Appoint Matthew Hoagland as Alamance County Review Officer**

**Extension and Addendum to ETWI Agreement**

**Golden Leaf Foundation Grant - Cooperative Extension**

## **BUDGET AMENDMENTS**

**Budget Amendment – AC Public Libraries (Gardner Trust)**

**Budget Amendment - Public Health**

**DSS – Budget Amendment – APS Essential Funds**

**DSS – Budget Amendment**

## **TAX REFUNDS**

**Tax Refunds, Releases, Elderly and Disabled Exemptions and Extensions**

Approval of tax refunds and releases; a copy of the tax refunds are set forth hereafter.

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Closed Session Minutes of October 16, 2023

Regular Meeting Minutes of October 16, 2023

## **PUBLIC HEARINGS**

**Public Hearing for Proposed Amendment to the Unified Development Ordinance Related to Planning Board & Board of Adjustment - County Manager York**

County Manager York said this was an opportunity to make changes to the Planning Board and the Board of Adjustment. She asked the Board to consider text amendments to the Unified

Development Ordinance (UDO) that would reduce the size of the Planning Board and create a special Board of Adjustment.

County Manager York continued that there were currently 13 Planning Board members and 5 of those members had expiring terms at the end of December which would leave 7 members plus the ex-officio County Commissioner remaining. She said the Board could consider moving those 5 members with expiring terms to the new Board of Adjustment. She said the new Planning Director had discussed these changes with the Planning Board. County Manager York noted that on page 4, they had forgotten to add "in accordance" with North Carolina General Statutes 160D-109(d) which constituted a quorum.

Vice-Chair Carter, seconded by Commissioner Lashley moved to open the public hearing. The motion carried.

No speakers wished to be heard from the floor.

Commissioner Turner, seconded by Vice-Chair Carter moved to close the public hearing. The motion carried.

Commissioner Turner questioned the need for having 3 alternates to the 5-member Board of Adjustment. Matthew Hoagland, Planning Director, explained that if a member would need to recuse themselves because of a conflict of interest, an alternate would be needed to replace the recused member to hear the appeal. Commissioner Turner explained his concerns about having more than 1 alternate member.

Commissioner Turner supported having 9 Planning Board members and 1 alternate member on the Board of Adjustment. Commissioner Lashley agreed with Commissioner Turner on the 9 members and said he would only accept 1 alternate on the Board of Adjustment.

County Manager York advised the Board could choose the number of alternates at a later meeting and did not have to decide on that number at that particular time. She said the text amendment was written to allow the possibility of alternates. She said the number of alternates was not specified as it was written. She advised approving the text amendments to include Commissioner Turner's recommendation of 9 Planning Board members and the appointment and determination of alternates at a later date.

**Moved by:** Chairman Paisley

**Seconded by:** Vice-Chair Carter

Approval of the text amendments as amended to allow 9 members on the Planning Board and 5 members on the Board of Adjustment with the number of alternates to be determined in the future. The motion carried without opposition.

**APPROVED AS AMENDED**

## **PRESENTATIONS/OTHER BUSINESS**

### **Chamber of Commerce Report on Economic Development - Reagan Gural & David Putnam, Alamance Chamber**

Reagan Gural, President of Alamance Chamber, spoke that she was proud of the economic development services the Alamance Chamber had provided Alamance County. She invited David Putnam, Senior Director of Economic Development, to share some updates. He reported on the five-year performance of industrial recruitment and expansion activities.

### **Diversion Center Update - Donald Ruess, Vaya Health**

Donald Ruess, Vice-President of Vaya Health, gave an update on the crisis diversion center. He shared there had been tremendous progress on the building. He mentioned they were now focused on the inside of the building. Mr. Ruess identified areas and benefits of the new center.

#### Benefits of the new Diversion Center

- Diversion from the Criminal Justice System
- Diversion from Alamance Regional Medical Center Emergency Department
- Resources for Alamance Emergency Medical Services
- Centralized continuum of crisis care
- Increased access to care
- Centralized community resources
- Prevention and Recovery Support
- Healthy and well-community

#### Alamance Diversion Center Enhancements

- Expansion of hours to 24-hour access to walk-in crisis services
- Specialized area and dedicated entrance for children, adolescents, and families
- Peer living room with a dedicated entrance
- Pharmacy with a dedicated entrance
- Behavior Health Urgent Care- expansion to 8 chairs and lengthen operation to 24-hour access
- Facility-Based Crisis Center- 16 adult crisis beds

Mr. Ruess mentioned they were moving into the finishing phase of the building in 2024. He shared that as they moved to the interior of the building costs had increased. He said the overall total cost increase would be roughly about \$1.2 million for the interior of the building. He explained that the increased costs would be amortized within the lease agreement for the facility, the property, and the county. Mr. Ruess said the annual lease increase would be \$127,800 a year. He stated that their attorney and the county attorney would work together on an updated memorandum of understanding (MOU) for the project.

Commissioner Turner asked Mr. Ruess to identify some of the services that would be provided in the building. Mr. Ruess responded the building was an alternative to an emergency room for behavioral health. He said they would have recovery groups and peer support to help stabilize patients.

Commissioner Thompson asked questions about security and whether it would be 24/7. Mr. Ruess answered the goal was to have security for the building 24/7. He continued that they hoped that the county and municipalities would help contribute to that cost. Commissioner Lashley expressed concerns about the increase in the contract of \$1.2 million.

#### **DSS – Medicaid Expansion Update - Candice Gobble, Director of the Department of Social Services**

Candice Gobble, Director of the Department of Social Services, discussed the history of Medicaid Expansion. Ms. Gobble mentioned that North Carolina was the 40<sup>th</sup> state to expand Medicaid. North Carolina had a go-live date of December 1<sup>st</sup> for ages 19-64. She said they estimated 600,000 North Carolinians would be eligible for Medicaid coverage.

Ms. Gobble discussed the current Medicaid workload status and the projected workload. She shared that based on current population totals, 30% of Alamance County residents were enrolled in Medicaid benefits. Ms. Gobble said they estimated about 11,733 new applicants. She explained the implementation challenges and state assistance for the Medicaid expansion.

Ms. Gobble reviewed the Medicaid expansion funding. She stated that the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (NC DHHS) provided counties with financial support to help meet the increased demands. She mentioned at the end of the last fiscal year Alamance County had received \$130,378.00. Ms. Gobble explained they had used some of the funds to build infrastructure to prepare for the expansion.

Ms. Gobble requested consideration from the Board of Commissioners for 4 full-time permanent Income Maintenance Caseworkers II; 4 time-limited full-time Income Maintenance Caseworkers II, 1 permanent full-time Income Maintenance Caseworker III, and 1 permanent full-time Income Maintenance Supervisor II.

**Moved by:** Chairman Paisley

**Seconded by:** Commissioner Thompson

Chairman Paisley, seconded by Commissioner Thompson moved to approve 4 permanent Income Maintenance Caseworkers II; 4 time-limited Income Maintenance Caseworkers II; 1 permanent Income Maintenance Caseworker III; and 1 permanent Income Maintenance Supervisor to support the implementation of the Medicaid expansion. The motion carried without opposition.

**APPROVED UNANIMOUS**

**Update on the Roofing and HVAC Assessments for ABSS and Alamance County Facilities - Brian Baker, Assistant County Manager**

Brian Baker, Assistant County Manager, asked the Board to authorize County Manager York to expend \$747,829.84 for the roofing and HVAC assessment projects for ABSS and Alamance County Facilities. He said the funds would be moved from the general fund balance to the county capital projects budget to enter into a contract with REI Engineers (\$295,759.84) and Systems Contractors (SCI) (\$452,070). He stated they would have a completed assessment by the end of the year.

Commissioner Thompson asked whether they had done a mold assessment for the county buildings. County Manager York responded they had done an air-quality test and had taken care of any issues that were found.

Commissioner Turner asked when a report would be given from the two companies on what needed to be done. Mr. Baker answered at the end of January they would have a list of 20 roofs and HVACs prioritized with estimated cost of what needed to be done. Commissioner Turner asked if the list was separated out for ABSS and the county facilities. Mr. Baker replied they were combined with 19 ABSS buildings and 1 county facility to be assessed.

Commissioner Lashley asked if they could use capital project funds instead of the general fund. County Manager York said they could use the revenue replacement fund. Susan Evans, Finance Officer, said the general fund would be the best option to cover the fees for the professional services.

**Moved by:** Vice-Chair Carter

**Seconded by:** Commissioner Thompson

Approval of the \$747,829.84 expenditure from the general fund and the authorization for County Manager York to sign the contract.

**APPROVED UNANIMOUS**

## **COUNTY MANAGER'S REPORT**

(12:49 p.m.-1:54 p.m. Lunch Break)

County Manager York reported that the 1st quarter financials were included in the agenda packet.

## **Quarterly Finance Reports**

## **COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS**

Commissioner Thompson spoke about the cost of the bonds to the taxpayers and about the \$8 million in interest over 20 years. She was hopeful that any future projects could be completed as quickly as possible so they could get better interest rates.

Commissioner Lashley asked about the percentage of the teacher raises.

## **COUNTY ATTORNEY'S REPORT**

County Attorney Stevens asked that the Board move into Closed Session pursuant to North Carolina General Statute 143-318.11(a)(4), to discuss matters relating to the location or expansion of industries or other businesses in the area served by the public body, including agreement on a tentative list of economic development incentives that may be offered by the public body in negotiations.

Pursuant to North Carolina General Statute 143-318.11(a)(3), he further asked that the Board move into Closed Session 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 NAACP et al. v. Alamance County et al.

Pursuant to North Carolina General Statute 143-318.11(a)(6), he further asked that the Board move into Closed Session to consider the qualifications, competence, performance, character, fitness, conditions of appointment, or conditions of initial employment of an individual public officer or employee or prospective public officer or employee.

He did not anticipate any action after this closed session.

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

At 3:51 pm the Board reconvened in open session.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

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

There being no further business to be brought before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 3:52 P.M.

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John Paisley, Jr., Chairman

Alamance County Board of Commissioners

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Tory M. Frink, Clerk to the Board