

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

**December 4, 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

CALL TO ORDER - CHAIRMAN PAISLEY

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE - COMMISSIONER TURNER

BOARD ORGANIZATION

Election of Chair

Moved by: Vice-Chair Carter

Seconded by: Commissioner Lashley

Vice-Chair Carter, seconded by Commissioner Lashley, moved for the nomination of Chairman Paisley as Chairman. The motion carried 4-1 with Chairman Paisley, Vice-Chair Carter, Commissioners Lashley and Turner voting in favor. Commissioner Thompson voted in opposition.

APPROVED

Election of Vice-Chair

Chairman Paisley, seconded by Commissioner Turner, moved for the nomination of Vice-Chair Carter as Vice-Chair.

Moved by: Chairman Paisley

Seconded by: Commissioner Turner

APPROVED UNANIMOUS

RECOGNITION OF THE BOARD OF EQUALIZATION AND REVIEW

Chairman Paisley and the Board recognized the Board of Equalization and Review.

Frank Bell, Chairman of the Board of Equalization and Review, thanked the Tax Department, County Attorney Stevens, and County Manager York for the wealth of information and support provided. He said there were many hard decisions made.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Moved by: Vice-Chair Carter

Seconded by: Commissioner Lashley

APPROVED UNANIMOUS

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Ed Priola, a Mebane resident, spoke about the funding to the school system and the failing schools and questioned why the top ABSS administrator earned more than the governor. He said holding the Board of Education accountable was vital.

Leonard Harrison, a Mebane resident, said people needed to be put in charge of departments within the school system that knew how to run budgets and hit targets. He continued that the departments were not meeting budget requirements and needed to be held accountable. Mr. Harrison said was ironic that the people saying they did not have enough funding were giving bonuses to the administrators.

Sandy Lindley, a retired ABSS teacher, responded to what she had heard at the November 20th meeting. She expressed that she was disappointed in the blatant disrespect shown to ABSS administrators.

Shane Roser, a Mebane resident and ABSS parent, said the county was not getting it done with a 19% investment in the school system. He noted that Guilford County invested 46% into its school system. Mr. Roser said excuses and finger-pointing will not fix the problems.

Beverly Orwig, a retired teacher and ABSS grandparent, described the problems the schools had faced in past years. Ms. Orwig asked the Board of Commissioners to stand by the initiative to have a world-class education. She continued that the Board of Commissioners and the Board of Education should work together to solve the budget crises.

Tameka Harvey, an ABSS parent, said she stood in solidarity with the Board of Education. She asked the Board of Commissioners to do what was right for the children and give ABSS funds that were used for mold remediation back.

Sandy Ellington-Graves, ABSS Board of Education Chair, spoke that the school system was back again to ask for more funding. She said they wanted a stronger relationship with county leaders, but they could not continue to defend every decision that was made. Ms. Ellington-Graves continued that they had no support to pay the remaining \$5 million for the mold remediation and to restore the \$3.3 million in their annual funding and more than \$18 million in capital reserve. Ms. Ellington-Graves said when the Board voted that day, they would be letting the taxpayers know where they stood.

CONSENT AGENDA

Moved by: Vice-Chair Carter

Seconded by: Commissioner Lashley

APPROVED UNANIMOUS

BUDGET AMENDMENTS

ACC Capital Project Ordinance

GFL Environmental Franchise Extension

Republic Services Franchise Agreement Extension

Stryker Stretcher Purchase-EMS

Review of the Bonds of Public Officials

Resolution Adopting the 2024 Regular Meeting Schedule

FY2024-2025 Budget Calendar Adoption

TAX REFUNDS

Tax Refunds, Releases, Elderly and Disabled Exemptions and Extensions Nov 2023

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

PRESENTATIONS/OTHER BUSINESS

Vaya Health Update - Cara Dohner, Vaya Regional Director of Community Relations

Cara Dohner, Vaya Regional Director of Community Relations, gave an update on the county's performance in treating people with mental health and substance disorders.

Chairman Paisley asked for information about the diversion center and when it would open. Ms. Dohner replied that the diversion center was set to open in the Spring of 2024. She informed the Board that the building was across from Cone Health/Alamance Regional. Ms. Dohner said they

were working to have transportation from the hospital to the diversion center. She mentioned that the building had two sections, one for adults, and the other for children. An on-site pharmacy will be available in the center of the building.

Commissioner Thompson said did not know how they were going to handle the influx of people once the doors opened to the diversion center. Ms. Dohner offered that the diversion center was a great starting point to help the needs of the community.

Commissioner Turner said they keep calling it the diversion center but the residents did not realize what would be encompassed in the center. He asked if it would be correct to reference it as mental health or behavioral health. Ms. Dohner replied that they wanted behavioral health in the naming of the building because the treatment would encompass the whole person.

ABSS Needs-Based Grant application

Greg Hook, ABSS Chief Operations Officer, said the numbers in the agenda packet were not correct and he had provided an updated sheet with the correct numbers.

<u>Project</u>	<u>Grant Funding Request</u>	<u>Required County Match</u>
Haw River Roofing	\$1,870,000	\$280,500
Everett Jordan Roofing	\$2,300,000	\$345,000
Graham High Roofing	\$5,200,000	\$780,000

Mr. Hook said individual project totals have been increased by 10% from the original budget figures to capture escalation in pricing.

Vice-Chair Carter said that at the Capital Oversight Meeting, it was pointed out that 42 air-conditioning units on the roofs would be replaced and moved off the roofs to the side of the building. He continued that would eliminate walking on the roof to service the units.

Commissioner Turner applauded Mr. Hook for applying for the grants. He clarified that the county had already allocated funds for the Haw River Elementary and Graham High Roofing projects and if they received the grants, the funds would be allocated back to the capital reserve for other projects. Commissioner Turner asked where the match would come from for the B. Everett Jordan Elementary roofing project. Mr. Hook responded that would be a decision that would be determined later after they received the funds.

Chairman Paisley applauded ABSS for applying for the grants.

Moved by: Vice-Chair Carter

Seconded by: Chairman Paisley

APPROVED UNANIMOUS

Alamance-Burlington School System Mold Remediation Update - Greg Hook, ABSS Chief Operations Officer

Greg Hook, ABSS Chief Operations Officer, mentioned the presentation from the last meeting was included in the agenda packet.

Mr. Hook said it would be helpful to look at some of those slides as he summarized the bond projects. He said that all of the bond sites were completed or near completion. He gave a bond funding update and explained additional required expenses.

Bond - Pleasant Grove Elementary

Remaining Work-

- HVAC Tab report and final setup-done
- Cameras Keycard- in progress
- Vestibule and transaction window- in progress
- Completed window replacement- awaiting change order

Remaining Funds-

- Bond Funds -\$1,242,157.20,
- Remaining Expenditures \$696,859.33
- Unprocessed Expenditure- \$150,751.99
- Remaining - \$394,545.88

Bond - South Mebane Elementary

Remaining Work-

- Bid Leaking Roof Sections- Estimate \$850,000
- *will complete the roof system- will be short of funds

Remaining Funds-

- \$628,415.95

Bond - Graham High School

Remaining Work-

- Install door hardware on security wall gates

Bid/Install new cameras and keycard access- estimate- \$350,000
Panel replacement for ACC welders- estimate \$60,000-\$90,000
Paving back driveway- bid in February- short on funds (first bid \$430K)

Remaining Funds-

Bonds Funds- \$4,834,631.32
Remaining Expenditures- \$407,145.79
Unprocessed Expenditures- \$42,320.98
Roof Funds-\$ 3,797,870
Remaining- \$587,294.55

Bond- Southern High

Remaining Work-

Camera replace / Add Keycards- no funds- Est. \$350K
Grading work to control water flow- contractor warranty
Security walls- Estimate \$350K

Remaining Funds-

Bond Funds- \$5,387,168.10
Remaining Expenditures-\$329,738.24
Unprocessed Expenditures-\$11,082.56
Roof Funds-\$4,885,500
Remaining-\$161,347.30

Bond – Eastern High

Remaining Work-

Bid/Install new cameras Keycard access-Estimate-\$350,000
Cafeteria/CTE roofing issue-attorney involvement
Canopy extension to media center door
Additional walkway railing- in process

Remain change orders- Approximately \$100K

Remaining Funds-

Bond Funds-\$1,381,730.85

Remaining Expenditures-\$259,076.27

Unprocessed Expenditures-\$17,825.78

Remaining-\$1,104,828.80

Bond – Western High

Remaining Work-

Cafeteria/CTE roofing issue- attorney involvement

Bid/Install new cameras and Keycard access- Estimate- \$350,000

Keycard entry on security doors- in process

Remaining Funds-

Bond Funds-\$610,813.71

Remaining Expenditures-\$212,115.99

Unprocessed Expenditures

Remaining-\$398,697.72

Bond- William High

Remaining Work-

Awaiting Final Tab Study

Awaiting Closing documents

Camera replace/Keycard- no funds- Estimate \$350K

Remaining Funds-

Bonds Funds-\$610,765.65

Remaining Expenditures-\$518,750.32

Unprocessed Expenditures-\$352.28

Remaining-\$91,654.05

Bond- Cummings High

Remaining Work-

Cameras and keycard installation- in progress

Awaiting furniture for band/chorus

New intercom system- in progress

Band/Chorus storage shelving/racks-Estimate \$65,000

Need HVAC controls for gym wing- Estimate \$70,000

Remaining Funds-

Bond Funds-\$1,980,855.48

Remaining Expenditures-\$697,222.66

Unprocessed Expenditures-\$19,191.19

Remaining- \$1,264,441.63

Bond-Southeast High

Remaining Work-

Cameras and keycard installation- in progress

Completing auditorium sound system- complete end of Nov.

Carpentry CTE- need to complete equipment setup

Final cold weather TAB study

Unspent funds to stock the school- Approx. \$332,000

Remaining Funds-

Bonds Funds-\$4,766,649.12

Remaining Exp.-\$2,351,882.81

Unprocessed Exp-\$418,872.83

Road Widening Payback-\$74,526.20

Remaining-\$1,921,367.2

Commissioner Thompson said they had the decision whether they would fund this. She said she was planting the seed to use funds that were set aside for the courthouse renovation project from the \$10 million revenue replacement from ARP funds.

Commissioner Turner asked about the bond projects and was concerned there was some "project creep". He said he was not discrediting any additional projects but they owed it to the residents of Alamance County to close out the bond projects based on their initial contractual scope. He suggested that it be prioritized.

Commissioner Lashley said 5 years had passed since the approval of the passage of the bonds. He continued that ABSS liked to compare themselves to Orange County. Commissioner Lashley provided some stats on the Orange County Schools Bonds. He said it should be a high priority to complete the bond projects. Commissioner Lashley asked if the bond projects would be completed before the next budget. Mr. Hook responded he was not sure because of the 2 roofing issues but they would be able to provide the figures needed for the budget. Commissioner Lashley said there needed to be a push to get those bond projects completed.

Vice-Chair Carter asked for clarification if the remaining items (security cameras and walls) were included in the bond projects. Mr. Hook replied when they had done promotional materials for the bonds there was a general list of items used for all the bond sites. He said the cameras were not put in the contracts. He said the items were held out to the end to see if funds would be available to process them. Vice-Chair Carter stated he was concerned about the cameras and keycards not being on the original contract.

Chairman Paisley said they kept coming up short. He asked who wrote the open-ended contracts for the mold remediation. Dr. Dain Butler, ABSS Superintendent, responded that the contract with Builder Services was an emergency. It was the only company that came to them and said they could do the job in the time that they needed it done. Dr. Butler asked the Board to take into consideration and fully fund ABSS \$3.3 million to move forward and pay Builder Services the \$5 million they owed them.

Commissioner Thompson interjected that they needed to decide what was needed that day to move forward with the funds.

Commissioner Turner asked County Manager York to review the options. County Manager York reviewed the funding options available.

Option 1 #

Remediation Costs:

\$5,234,458.96 from previously committed ABSS capital reserve funds.

Pay-go:

No additional funding.

Option #2

Remediation costs:

\$2,617,299.48 from the County Fund Balance

\$2,617,299 from ABSS capital reserve funds. To be reimbursed by unspent bond funds.

Pay-go:

Advance \$3,300,000 from the County Fund Balance.

Reimburse the County Fund Balance from sales tax allocation at the close of the year if possible.

Option #3

Remediation Cost:

Appropriate \$5,234,458.96 from the County Fund Balance.

Paygo:

No additional funding.

ABSS may consider unspent bond funds for additional needs.

Option #4 (Commissioner Thompson's suggestion)

Use \$10 million of the revenue replacement (ARP funding).

Commissioner Turner said in 45 days they would need to add a focus on recommendations that would be coming from 2 different engineering firms that will discuss the top 20 HAVCs and roofing repairs needed at ABSS and the county. He said they needed to have funds held back to tackle what was on that list.

Commissioner Turner said he proposed taking the \$5.2 million out of the fund balance and using bond monies for the roofs and HVACs and using Chair Paisley's idea partially towards the \$3.3 million. He suggested using the \$1.8 million balance to cover the Alexander Wilson Elementary and E.M. Holt Elementary road projects, then using capital reserves to make it available to use at their discretion to cover the \$1.8 million.

Chairman Paisley said Commissioner Turner was right in approximately 45 days the engineers will have the report. He said they would have to be cautious about giving away funds before the report was completed. Chairman Paisley commented that they needed to be responsible for the students, the parents, the taxpayers, and the entire county.

County Manager York said that the Board would need a motion to amend the budget so that they could disperse the \$5.2 million to pay for the mold remediation. County Manager York also asked for a motion to allow the staff to amend the budget.

Commissioner Lashley said he would support the \$1.2 million from the county fund balance because he believed it was a necessity. Vice-Chair Carter said he concurred with Commissioners Lashley and Turner.

Moved by: Chairman Paisley

Seconded by: Commissioner Lashley

Chairman Paisley, seconded by Commissioner Lashley, moved to pay \$5,234,458.96 from previously committed ABSS capital reserve funds. To be reimbursed by unspent bond funds and that they do not refund again or repay additional pay-go funds. The motion carried 3-2, with Chairman Paisley, Vice-Chair Carter, and Commissioner Lashley voting in favor.

Commissioners Thompson and Turner voted in opposition.

APPROVED

Moved by: Chairman Paisley

Seconded by: Vice-Chair Carter

Chairman Paisley, seconded by Vice-Chair Carter, moved to allow staff to amend the budget so that they could disburse the \$5.2 million to pay for the mold remediation. The motion carried 3-2, with Chairman Paisley, Vice-Chair Carter, and Commissioner Lashley voting in favor.

Commissioners Thompson and Turner voted in opposition.

APPROVED

Moved by: Commissioner Turner

Seconded by: Commissioner Thompson

Commissioner Turner, seconded by Commissioner Thompson, moved to allocate \$1,247,371.70 from county fund balance to ABSS capital reserves project fund and allow staff to amend the budget to make those funds available. The motion carried 4-1, with Vice-Chair Carter, Commissioners Lashley, Thompson and Turner voting in favor. Chairman Paisley voted in opposition.

COUNTY ATTORNEY'S REPORT

No report given.

COUNTY MANAGER'S REPORT

County Manager York introduced Rebecca Crawford, the new Budget and Management Director.

COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

Commissioner Thompson commented that she wanted Alamance County to be a leader. She added they did not need to compare themselves to other counties to be the best in what they were.

Commissioner Turner said he did not like being in the position of allocating funds to ABSS outside of the budget cycle. He said the vote indicated the county was being responsible for allowing the ABSS to pay its bills. Commissioner Turner said he knew a bill was coming for roofs and HVACs. He commented he would have liked to use more fund balance to in order to preserve more bond funding for the additional projects. He shared he had received calls on both sides of the issue.

Vice-Chair Carter concurred with Commissioner Turner's comments. He thought it was a band-aid on a "gunshot" wound. He said it was part of their job to make sure the assets of Alamance County were taken care of and maintained.

Chairman Paisley said all 5 County Commissioners supported the school system. Chairman Paisley mentioned that 2 of the Commissioners have spouses who had taught in the school system. He said ABSS had overspent funds they did not have, which was identified in their audit. He continued that those things could not happen. Chairman Paisley reiterated that he would never enter into contracts that had no caps on them. He was disappointed that the ABSS press conference was a cheap shot at the County Commissioners by asking people to pack the Commissioners' Meeting Room. Chairman Paisley said he understood they were invited to the press conference, but it was an ambush for them to walk into that meeting and have any success. He suggested getting back to monthly meetings together with the two Board Chairs, the Superintendent, and the County Manager to work things out.

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 12:54 P.M.

John Paisley, Jr., Chairman

Alamance County Board of Commissioners

Tory M. Frink, Clerk to the Board