

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

**August 19, 2024, 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 - COMMISSIONER LASHLEY

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Moved by: Vice-Chair Carter

Seconded by: Commissioner Lashley

Amendment to the agenda to add the appointment of an interim tax collector.

APPROVED AS AMENDED

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Anthony Pierce, Roxanne May, Jessica Evans, Ursula Evans, Jennifer Warren, Jennifer McGowan, Mike Poynter, and Robin Wintringham spoke about proposed changes to the county's youth athletics programs.

Henry Vines, a Snow Camp resident, observed the number of speakers there to talk about the youth athletics programs. He asked the Board to reconsider adding "Commissioner Responses" back to the agenda right after the public comment period. He said folks should not have to sit and wait 2.5 hours for responses to their comments. He shared that he was disappointed that he had to read about the recent resignation of the tax administrator in the newspaper. He thought county officials should have notified the Board of Equalization and Review.

Corrie Shepherd, spoke that she was troubled by the Title IX Policy that the ABSS Board of Education passed the previous week. She said she wanted to make everyone aware that ABSS had passed that policy and had waived a second reading. She said ABSS was only the second school district to pass that policy.

Commissioners' Responses

There was a consensus of the Board to add "Commissioners' Comments" to respond and discuss the public comments.

Commissioner Thompson thanked the parents for being there and speaking up for their children. She said she played softball, and her children played sports. Commissioner Thompson inquired if this should be an agenda item because the Parks and Recreation Department was not treated the same when it came to budgeting. She said she never wanted children to be unable to play sports.

Commissioner Lashley thanked the parents for coming out to speak. He said the Parks and Recreation Director was in attendance at the meeting to hear all of the comments. He thanked Corrie Shepherd for coming to speak out about ABSS. He said he wished the Board of Education and school administration cared more about student scores than the peripheral stuff.

Commissioner Turner thanked the parents and Corrie Shepherd for coming out to speak. He said reducing the amount of competition in sports was inconsistent with the board's policy and work. He mentioned the Board had worked to bring three fields up to measure for teams to play ball at those fields. He asked if there was enough time by the next meeting to review the policy and decide what would affect those games.

Vice-Chair Carter said he played sports and coached soccer. He agreed this was something the Board needed to look at.

Chairman Paisley said he had coached soccer for 18 seasons and softball for 10 years. He thanked Corrie Shepherd for attending the meeting. He said that ABSS had rushed through voting on the Title IX Policy without having two readings. He mentioned that the school board attorney was at the meeting via the telephone and he had encouraged the school board to vote. Chairman Paisley said he hoped the school board would go back and review their decision.

Chairman Paisley called Jamie Merchel, Alamance Parks Director, to the podium to explain this new reorganization of the collaborative league. She shared that in speaking with her staff there would be the same number of guaranteed games for this year as it was last season. She continued that there was one less organization participating this year. Ms. Merchel explained there were five regular conference games where each team played each other, followed by a single elimination playoff game and then the championship game. She noted there were fewer regular conference games because there was one less participating organization. Ms. Merchel advised there was nothing that could be done about the schedule because it was a collaborative league between Alamance Parks, the City of Mebane, and the Town of Gibsonville. She noted

that the league season started on September 9th, and the two municipalities play in this league, and they have to be finished before their basketball season begins in November. She said an eight-game season, including playoffs and a championship, would run into November, possibly December.

Ms. Merchel addressed the rumors of the elimination of football. She explained that her department's budget was going towards tackle football, baseball, softball and basketball. She said they were looking at creative ways with the Recreation and Parks Commission to use the budget to offer more. Ms. Merchel indicated that her department provided surveys after every season of sports and they had been looking at ways to address the concerns about travel time and locations. She suggested having her staff come to a future meeting to present the plan for youth athletics.

It was a consensus of the Board for Ms. Merchel and her staff to come back to the second meeting in September for a more detailed presentation on youth athletics.

CONSENT AGENDA

Moved by: Vice-Chair Carter

Seconded by: Commissioner Lashley

APPROVED AS AMENDED

APPOINTMENTS/ REAPPOINTMENTS

Library Committee – Lynn Merrill & Matthew Roberts

Year End Designations

Parks Grant Applications – RTP and GTSP

Parks Grant Applications – Haw River State Trail – RTP and GTSP

Proposed Employment Agreement

Approval of the employment agreement between Alamance County and James F. Stevens, County Attorney.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Regular Minutes of June 3, 2024

PRESENTATIONS/OTHER BUSINESS

Appointment of a Tax Collector

County Attorney Stevens advised the Board to appoint Cindy Miller as the interim tax collector. He reported that a \$50,000 bond had been obtained for Ms. Miller, as required by state statute.

Moved by: Chairman Paisley

Seconded by: Vice-Chair Carter

Approval of the bond for Cindy Miller and appoint her as the Alamance County Tax Collector under N.C.G.S. § 105-349 until such time as we appoint a new tax administrator.

APPROVED UNANIMOUS

Moved by: Chairman Paisley

Seconded by: Vice-Chair Carter

Approval to charge Tax Collector Cindy Miller with the collection of the 2024 Alamance County property taxes and that we discharge the 2014 taxes that will be time-barred for collection, as well as accept July and August Refunds, Releases and Elderly, Disabled Exemptions, as proposed.

APPROVED UNANIMOUS

Courthouse Space Needs Discussion - Brian Baker, Assistant County Manager

Brian Baker, Assistant County Manager, said they were revisiting the discussion from two weeks ago about meeting the court system's need for additional space. He suggested addressing the long-term needs and options first. He reminded the Board that they had reviewed three iterations of a courthouse addition. Mr. Baker said the proposal was to add a building on the west side of the current JBA Courthouse. He said there was an option of building with two or three stories. He emphasized that the first floor would be all office space, and the additional stories would house the additional courtrooms. Mr. Baker said they had worked with the architect on proposed costs for the courthouse addition. He said a two-story addition was estimated at \$28 million, and a three-story addition was estimated at \$37 million.

Chairman Paisley understood that \$10 million was already set aside for this expansion. He asked how the county would pay for the remainder if that amount were deducted from the price.

County Manager York recommended borrowing funds for the remainder of the project. She said it made more sense to do the project by financing the entire amount minus the \$10 million set aside in revenue replacement.

Chairman Paisley said he was ready to make a motion for the three-story addition.

Commissioner Turner asked if his motion would include a funding method. Chairman Paisley answered that they had \$10 million and that he was not including a funding method at that point because they did not have all of the numbers. He thought they needed to proceed with giving county administration guidance on moving forward.

Chairman Paisley, seconded by Commissioner Turner, moved for approval of the three-story addition to the J.B. Allen Courthouse. Vice-Chair Carter said he still had comments. He agreed that the three-story option made more sense. Commissioner Turner asked Chairman Paisley if he would consider amending his motion to include the financing of the project.

Moved by: Chairman Paisley

Seconded by: Commissioner Turner

Chairman Paisley, seconded by Commissioner Turner, moved for the approval of the 3-story addition to the J.B. Allen Courthouse to include the following payment of the project with \$10 million in revenue replacement, \$5 million in capital reserves and the remaining balance from the \$37 million to be financed for 20 years. The motion carried 4-1 with Chairman Paisley, Vice-Chair Carter, and Commissioners Lashley and Turner voting in favor. Commissioner Thompson voted in opposition.

APPROVED AS AMENDED

American Rescue Plan Act Allocation Update - Rebecca Crawford, Budget & Management Services Director

Rebecca Crawford, Director of Budget and Management Services, reviewed the options available to the Board for expending the remaining American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds by the deadlines for the program. She emphasized that, per the federal treasury department, all ARPA funds must be obligated by December 31, 2024, and spent by December 31, 2026. Ms. Crawford reported that the remaining amount to be spent was just over \$10 million and that \$9.4 million was unobligated. She noted that would be returned back to the treasury department if not obligated by December 31st. Ms. Crawford mentioned that \$750,000 of that remaining balance was already obligated for projects previously approved and in progress. She anticipated that amount to be fully expended by the deadline. She proposed 3 options for obligating the remaining \$9.4 million by December 31st.

Option 1: \$14,000,000

Behavioral Health Center Purchase

\$9,401,171: ARPA

\$2,737,755: ARPA Interest

\$1,861,074: Capital Reserve

Option 2: \$9,401,171

Mobile Radio Replacement

\$4,800,000: ARPA

Emergency Services Infrastructure

\$4,601,171: ARPA

Option 3: \$9,401,171

Mobile Radio Replacement

\$4,800,000: ARPA

Supplant Eligible Expenses

\$4,601,171: ARPA

Commissioner Thompson raised the issue of no permanent security at the behavioral health center. She said the place should not be open without on-site security. She said there was no pharmacy contract and was told it would be six months before the 16-bed unit opened due to licensure. Commissioner Thompson said this was a big deal, supporting mental health addiction. She said she had serious questions about the diversion center and its inability to use it for what it was built for.

Vice-Chair Carter said he had heard about the security issue and did not understand why the municipalities were backing out of trying to help the county with security.

Chairman Paisley suggested tabling this until the September meeting and inviting VAYA and Chad Porterfield.

Commissioner Turner commented that the longer the county waited, the less expensive it was to purchase the building. He said he was leaning towards not purchasing the building and using ARPA funds elsewhere.

Chairman Paisley asked County Manager York for her recommendation. County Manager York responded with either option 2 or option 3.

Commissioner Lashley said he had questions but he preferred option 3.

Moved by: Commissioner Lashley

Seconded by: Vice-Chair Carter

Commissioner Lashley, seconded by Vice-Chair Carter, moved for approval of Option 3. That motion carried unanimously.

APPROVED UNANIMOUS

Resolution: Authorizing Construction Management at Risk Services for the Alamance County Emergency Services Center - County Attorney Stevens

County Attorney Stevens spoke that staff was going to discuss the construction and renovation project for the new Emergency Services Center. He said staff has recommended that the Board choose the Construction Manager At-Risk (CMAR) delivery method.

Sherry Hook, Deputy County Manager, reviewed the construction delivery methods: design-bid-build, CMAR, and design-bid.

- **Design-Bid-Build** – Architect designs, Bids are solicited, General Contractor builds
- **Construction Manager at Risk (CMAR)** – Architect designs with input from Construction Manager, Construction Manager gives maximum guaranteed price
- **Design-Build** – General Contractor designs and builds

Ms. Hook explained that with the CMAR process, the architect designs it, but they work with a construction manager from the very start. The construction manager gives a maximum guaranteed price once construction is ready to begin. She asked for approval to move forward with the Construction Manager At-Risk (CMAR) delivery method.

Chairman Paisley moved for the approval of the Construction Manager At-Risk delivery method. That motion failed because there was no second.

Commissioner Lashley asked if another motion was needed for the other option. Ms. Hook said that the design-bid-build would be the option since the Board did not approve the CMAR.

Emergency Declaration Authorization Ordinance - County Attorney Stevens

County Stevens reminded the Board the county had recently declared a state of emergency. He noted an ordinance already in place that allowed for that to happen, but it had not been updated since 1987. He mentioned the current ordinance gives the Board Chair the authority to declare a state of emergency without trying to convene a board meeting. He noted the updated ordinance just updates the statutory references, and there were no other critical changes.

Moved by: Vice-Chair Carter

Seconded by: Commissioner Turner

Approval of the updated Emergency Declaration Authorization Ordinance. The motion carried without opposition.

APPROVED UNANIMOUS

COUNTY ATTORNEY'S REPORT

No report given.

COUNTY MANAGER'S REPORT

County Manager York advised that the fourth quarter financial report was included in the agenda packet. She mentioned that the closing of the fiscal year 2024 was still unaudited. She said they were still working on the audit, and those numbers would be finalized once they received the audit in November.

4th Quarter Financial Report

COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

Commissioner Lashley said County Manager York had already answered his question about the audit. He said he had been reviewing sales tax revenues, and the number in the report was a little different from what he had. Ms. Evans reminded him that the report did not have the two months of accruals. He complimented Ms. Evans on the earnings interest on the ARPA funds.

Commissioner Thompson read comments a resident had sent her about the county sports programs and maintaining competitive sports.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Paisley, seconded by Commissioner Lashley, moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

There being no further business to be brought before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 9:37 PM.

John Paisley, Jr., Chairman

Alamance County Board of Commissioners

Tory M. Frink, Clerk to the Board