

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

**October 21, 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 TURNER

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Moved by: Vice-Chair Carter

Seconded by: Commissioner Lashley

APPROVED UNANIMOUS

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Jose Molina, an ABSS parent, spoke that he had attended the July 15th meeting and that he was back to talk about the condition of the schools. He shared that he did his research and received reports on the conditions of some of the schools. Mr. Molina commented that the health department had rules and guidelines to follow. He mentioned that the health department staff were health experts, not building inspectors. Mr. Molina indicated that he had sent the Board photos of a clogged gutter at Andrews Elementary and broken steps leading from a school building to the bus lot. He asked the local and state governments to do better with the schools. He said taxpayers were paying and paying, but almost 23,000 students were still suffering.

Commissioners Responses

Chairman Paisley said Mr. Molina was right that the health department does school inspections but could not mandate the school system to make any corrections. He said that was left to the

school board and that the County Commissioners had no way of enforcing or making the school board do anything. He urged Mr. Molina to attend the next school board meeting and provide his comments to them.

Vice-Chair Carter asked Mr. Molina when he sent those photos. Mr. Molina said he sent them right before he came to the meeting. Vice-Chair Carter agreed with Chairman Paisley's comments.

Commissioner Thompson spoke about the paint job at Cummings being a cluster because the correct type of paint was not used, and that paint would peel. She said it was not done right and still not right. She commented that Graham High School and Cummings High School needed to be priorities, and they were often not.

Commissioner Lashley thanked Mr. Molina for coming to the meeting. He said the Board allocated over \$55 million to the school system this year to address those issues. He reiterated Chairman Paisley's comments about going to the school board and asking why the schools were that way.

Moved by: Commissioner Turner

Seconded by: Vice-Chair Carter

Made an exception to add Commissioners' Responses after the Public Comment Period for this meeting.

APPROVED UNANIMOUS

CONSENT AGENDA

Chairman Paisley said that item 5c was pulled from the last agenda because NCDOT had poorly written those easements, and the county could not execute them.

Chairman Paisley asked County Attorney Stevens if the NCDOT had corrected the improvements or revisions. County Attorney Stevens said he had spoken with the NCDOT contractor about the issues they had discussed. He commented that NCDOT had made some of the requested changes.

Chairman Paisley inquired if, with three rights of way, ingress, and egress, they did not have a legal description of the property for which the county was granted an easement.

County Attorney Stevens explained that NCDOT had its own way of drafting these documents that is different than what normally transpired in a land taking. They also have their own statutory framework for the process they have to undertake these takings. And so they have indicated to me in conversation this week that if the county chooses not to accept their formatting, they will not make changes on our behalf and will proceed with filing suit and taking the land.

Chairman Paisley said if they do that, then, under the procedure, they could take the land statutorily, and then the county would have hearings as to the valuation of the taking. County Attorney Stevens answered that was correct. Chairman Paisley asked if he thought doing that was in the county's best interest.

County Attorney Stevens offered that the county could rebut the assertion that the land is potentially for public use and public interest. He did not think they could make that argument successfully based on the land that is actually being acquired. He explained that the real argument they would have is for the value, and he said that based on the value the county was being paid, he thought the county was being paid fairly. He mentioned that any argument to the contrary would be difficult for them to make.

Chairman Paisley asked if County Attorney Stevens had confirmed with the state bar whether the drafters of the documents were not licensed attorneys.

County Attorney Stevens explained that NCDOT purports to have authority for their employees, who are non-attorney staff, to draft the deeds and the easements. Then they have attorneys with the Attorney General's Office who review documents. He said that he would not comment on whether or not their review was sufficient, but this is what the county was left with, and this was the only option.

Chairman Paisley said no one was arguing with the taking or the money being offered. He continued that the deeds were so poorly written and insufficient. He said that it must be in the county's best interest to go ahead and execute the deeds. County Attorney Stevens agreed.

Chairman Paisley said he would leave this on the consent agenda and approve it.

Moved by: Vice-Chair Carter

Seconded by: Commissioner Lashley

APPROVED UNANIMOUS

Grant Approval – Public Health

Update to Fire Prevention Code Ordinance

Approved the first reading of the updated Fire Prevention Code Ordinance.

Approval of Sale of Easements for DOT Right-of-Way

TAX REFUNDS

Tax Refunds, Releases, and Extensions Sept 2024

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Regular Meeting Minutes of August 19, 2024

PRESENTATIONS/OTHER BUSINESS

No presentations or other business.

COUNTY ATTORNEY'S REPORT

No report given.

COUNTY MANAGER'S REPORT

County Manager York advised the Board that the financial report was included in the agenda packet, and Susan Evans was available to answer any questions.

Commissioner Lashley had a couple of questions about the financial reports.

June 2024 Investment Report

COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

Commissioner Thompson said she had spoken with Senator Galey about a resident's kudzu problem. She said she had received many calls about the traffic at Southeast High School and thanked Senator Galey for helping to get traffic lights out there. Commissioner Thompson shared that she had spoken with the local legislators about the traffic due to continuing accidents. She gave a massive shout-out to EMS, the fire department, and the life flight helicopter that showed up to an accident and worked as a team while she was judging a Halloween contest. She said Alamance County had the best that knew what they were doing.

Vice-Chair Carter said ACC had a fantastic nursing program, and the entire class of nurses passed their state exams. He shared that ACC was in the top 10% in the state and the country for two-year colleges. Vice-Chair Carter said they needed to build the Public Safety Training Center and work with ACC to connect the water and sewer.

Chairman Paisley announced that Meridian Waste held a community event that past Saturday. He said he agreed with the prayer for western North Carolina and that he had family with property in that area. Chairman Paisley noted some of the politics had gotten funny and mentioned a billboard that he was on that was supposed to be funny and sponsored by the Democratic Party.

ADJOURNMENT

Vice-Chair Carter, 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 7:00 PM.

John Paisley, Jr., Chairman

Alamance County Board of Commissioners

Tory M. Frink, Clerk to the Board