

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

**May 5, 2025, 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 Pamela Thompson
Commissioner Ed Priola
Commissioner Kelly Allen

CALL TO ORDER - CHAIRMAN PAISLEY

INVOCATION AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE - CHAIRMAN PAISLEY

David Carter, of Baptist Temple, delivered the Invocation.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Moved by: Vice-Chair Carter

Seconded by: Commissioner Allen

APPROVED UNANIMOUS

PROCLAMATIONS

Proclamation: Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month

Commissioner Allen read a proclamation recognizing May as "Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month" in Alamance County and presented it to the Concerned Bikers' Association of Alamance County. Gene Boswell, the association's chaplain, presented an awareness sign. He asked if the Board would display it, so residents could see it.

Moved by: Commissioner Allen

Seconded by: Vice-Chair Carter

APPROVED UNANIMOUS

Proclamation: 2025 Professional Clerks Week

Commissioner Allen read a proclamation recognizing the week of May 4-10, 2025 as "Clerks to the Board of County Commissioners Week" in Alamance County. Commissioner Allen presented the proclamation to Clerk Frink.

Moved by: Commissioner Allen

Seconded by: Vice-Chair Carter

APPROVED UNANIMOUS

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Henry Vines, a Snow Camp resident, spoke about his concerns about the change order for the courthouse renovation project. He wanted to know what the \$330,000 amount was for. He had questions about the design contract and whether the \$330,000 change order increased the project's budget. Mr. Vines asked if adding additional parking increased the project costs. He said it had been stated that the \$37 million added a penny to the property tax rate. He said he did not want this to cost taxpayers more.

Chairman Paisley addressed Mr. Vines' comments and stated that the contract was not to exceed \$37 million. He explained that the change order was a revision in the contract, and anything over \$100,000 had to be approved by the Board. He said the change order was over \$100,000 and that it was part of the \$37 million.

Commissioner Priola indicated that he was still waiting on the methodology for determining the \$37 million. He had learned that the amount did not include the furnishings, which would be an extra cost. Commissioner Priola commented that he would like to see more itemization to ensure the project does not exceed the \$37 million.

CONSENT AGENDA

Moved by: Vice-Chair Carter

Seconded by: Commissioner Allen

APPROVED UNANIMOUS

Lottery Funds Application

Contract with EMS Management & Consultants, Inc.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Closed Session Minutes of April 7, 2025

Regular Minutes of April 21, 2025

PRESENTATIONS/OTHER BUSINESS

Social Services Board Appointment

Two applications were received to fill an upcoming vacancy on the Social Service Board. Applications were received from Tim Britt, the Current Chair of the Social Services, and Corye Dunn, a new applicant. Commissioner Priola commented that he had worked with Mr. Britt over the past five months on the Social Services Board. He said he was impressed with his performance and leadership.

Moved by: Chairman Paisley

Seconded by: Vice-Chair Carter

Reappointment of Tim Britt to the Social Services Board.

APPROVED UNANIMOUS

ACSO Sheriff's Office 2024 Activity Report/Statistics - Sheriff Terry Johnson

Sheriff Terry Johnson presented the 2024 statistics for his office, and he discussed each division within his office. He started with the patrol division statistics which had a total of 89,018 calls in 2024 and 243.8 calls per day. The patrol division made 4,972 traffic stops, that averaged out to 13.6 stops per day. Sheriff Johnson discussed the 1,132,000 miles the patrol division had driven, averaging 24,000 miles daily. He noted the county's 435 square miles was a lot of area to cover.

Sheriff Johnson mentioned the Invictus Task Force, a collaboration of investigating officers from the Sheriff's Office of Alamance, Davidson, Forsyth, and Randolph counties to help fight the exploitation of children and arrest online predators. He commented that the civil division served/returned 10,755 papers in 2024. He said the Alamance Narcotics Enforcement Team (ANET) worked with the Drug Enforcement Administration and the FBI to investigate drug cartels and major drug traffickers entering Alamance County.

Sheriff Johnson reported on the inmate numbers in the detention center. He mentioned the average daily population was 348 inmates. Commissioner Thompson commented that she had asked for the ICE contract to be presented; adding that she did not want taxpayers paying for facilities for the illegal population that had committed horrendous crimes. She asked that it be presented to the County Commissioners before it is signed again. County Manager York responded that they planned to bring the contract for review. She noted that it was an ongoing contract that did not require a vote on what was being negotiated. She said it was not something the Board would need to vote on.

He pointed out that gangs were here in Alamance County, along with the cartels. Sheriff Johnson said they would own and run the county, if they did not use their power wisely. He spoke about a

recent investigation that resulted in identifying and validating multiple gang members in the county.

Sheriff Johnson reported that his office currently had 45 vacancies. He thanked the Board for allowing him the resources to bring his vacancy rates down. He noted that he needed more resources to decrease the vacancy rates further and asked them to decide during budget time. Chairman Paisley asked if the sign-on bonuses were helping to retain the new hires. Sheriff Johnson answered yes, and they were able to attract more applicants. He mentioned that they were waiting to complete the background screenings for several applicants.

COUNTY ATTORNEY'S REPORT

No report given.

COUNTY MANAGER'S REPORT

County Manager York commented that staff was diligently working on the proposed budget, which would be discussed at the next meeting. She said they would schedule some work sessions after the public hearing, per the board's direction.

COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

Commissioner Thompson said she was thankful she could attend the National Day of Prayer at the Word of Pentecost Church.

Commissioner Priola complimented County Manager York and her team. He indicated they had done an outstanding job answering questions in a timely manner, and he appreciated that. Commissioner Priola stated he had two motions. The first motion was to prohibit county employees from training on county time with county resources. He said county employees should not take training unrelated to their job function or job description. Commissioner Priola said that as part of his motion, he asked the county manager to provide language, particularly in the employee handbook moving forward, that any training must be related to that employee's job description, particularly during county time and with county taxpayer dollars. Commissioner Priola continued that he was shocked to discover that 40 government employees had participated in training by the Alamance County Racial Equity Committee. The training was on how to be a "social justice warrior" and how to fight and combat systemic racism and other things like white supremacy. He noted that these trainings occurred during the workday for almost 40 hours and that 17 of the 40 government employees were county employees. He estimated this to be about \$22,000 in training on the county's and taxpayers' time. Commissioner Priola reiterated that the type of training was not consistent with the job descriptions of employees.

Chairman Paisley explained that it would not be a proper motion at that time, because it was not an agenda item. He suggested making a joint directive to the county manager and staff to consider these things when planning future budgets for June. Chairman Paisley requested that it

not be a motion, but a simple directive for county management. Commissioner Allen agreed with Chairman Paisley.

Vice-Chair Carter asked County Attorney Stevens if that action required a resolution in order to be voted upon. County Attorney Stevens explained in order for there to be a vote, there had to be official board action. He clarified that the rules of procedure discouraged the making of motions during Commissioners' Comments, but did not outright prohibit it. He told the Board that if they wanted to see a resolution drafted to that effect, he could prepare one for the next meeting.

Commissioner Thompson inquired about this and the type of training. Commissioner Priola said it was DEI and part of social justice training that county employees should not participate in during their taxpayer work time.

Chairman Paisley reiterated that he did not think a motion was needed and directed the county manager to consider this while planning the budget. Commissioner Priola conveyed that he wanted to make a motion to establish that policy so it would not be forgotten later on. County Attorney Stevens suggested allowing staff time to investigate what training would fall into that category. He said he was unaware of that training and needed to educate himself to capture this as a resolution.

Commissioner Priola asked the county manager to consider the separation from the county library system. He said the county pays \$3.5 million to four libraries and two mobile units that employ 62 individuals. Commissioner Priola suggested a phased-out separation by returning the libraries back to the municipalities. He mentioned he had a problem with not having a consolidated 911 call system in this county. Commissioner Priola continued that municipalities were considering financing pickleball courts, aquatic entertainment centers, and theater reconstruction at the expense of 911 safety. He said that, with options from the county manager, the county could consider what could be done to recoup the \$3.5 million for priorities. Commissioner Priola said he was making a motion to consider several options to phase out the relationship with the county library system.

Chairman Paisley advised that it would again need to be studied before a motion was made. He was unsure of what the motion would be and suggested directing the county manager to look into it. He acknowledged that \$3.5 million was a lot of money and that libraries were extremely important. Chairman Paisley emphasized that kids and adults needed libraries, but they do need a priority system for allocating dollars. He agreed county employees should not be participating in the equity training on tax dollars. Commissioner Priola said he was not looking for a motion, but a consensus that the county manager be directed to consider some options to present to the Board.

Commissioner Thompson cautioned against trying to take over. She opined that she did not like paying for everything going on in Burlington, but that was the municipality that she lived in and voted. She said you could not get upset about pickleball courts and want to take books out of

children's hands. Commissioner Thompson continued that libraries were massively important for people who do not have access to technology, books, or might need a place to hide. She commented that she would not force her opinions on other people just because she did not like something. She expressed that before they started trying to govern this county like a kingdom, remember it was a county. Commissioner Thompson said labels on the books disclosed inappropriate content and high violence. She said it needed to be the parents' decision, and they could not tell parents what to do. She mentioned that if they could tell people what to do, there would not be a person in jail, a child would not be harmed, and everyone would be in a good place. Commissioner Thompson stated that it was not how life was.

Commissioner Allen agreed this would need to be researched. She stated this would take away every bit of the county's control over the libraries.

Chairman Paisley said he agreed with most of what Commissioner Thompson said.

Vice-Chair Carter spoke that he and Commissioner Priola had this conversation. He offered that he had the same idea at times, and he agreed with Commissioner Allen's notion that it would take away any county control. He mentioned that half of the residents who lived in the rural parts of the county used the libraries. Vice-Chair Carter said he did not know the right answer, but their job was to do what was best for all residents. He continued that the library system was an important service for education and that homeschoolers relied heavily on public libraries.

Chairman Paisley commented that the county had no say about what the municipalities do with their taxes. He said he was not advocating for doing away with the library system. He said he used the library, and they were important. Chairman Paisley continued that the question was when they had to pay solely for everything, and whether they were spending too much on the library system. He cautioned that cuts would need to be made with the upcoming budget. Chairman Paisley said they trust the county administration to provide information to help them make good choices.

ADJOURNMENT

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

There being no further business to be brought before the Board, the meeting adjourned at 11:18 AM.

John Paisley, Jr., Chairman

Alamance County Board of Commissioners

Tory M. Frink, Clerk to the Board