

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

**March 4, 2024, 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 LASHLEY

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Moved by: Vice-Chair Carter

Seconded by: Chairman Paisley

Moved item #6c. Public Safety Compensation to item # 6a. due to Sheriff Johnson and his staff attending a funeral. Item # 5f. Resolution Regarding Residency Requirement of Appointed Board & Committee Members was removed from the consent agenda for further discussion.

APPROVED AS AMENDED

PUBLIC COMMENTS

George Hunt, a former District Attorney, expressed concerns about the jail's underpaid detention center officers and school teachers. He commented that taxes needed to be raised.

Lee Johnson, a Cummings High School graduate, compared pictures of the football fields at Williams High School to those at Cummings High School. He asked the Commissioners to return the \$250,000 to the school system to be used for the football field and stadium at Cummings High School.

Stuart Smith, a Mebane resident, asked the Board to consider the county's most important asset during the budget season: its employees. Mr. Smith shared information that he had gathered about the history of county employee salaries.

Jeff Wood, a Haw River resident, expressed concerns about run-down inhabitable properties within the county. Mr. Wood requested that an ordinance be created and put in place that would require property owners to make their property respectable and livable.

CONSENT AGENDA

Moved by: Vice-Chair Carter

Seconded by: Commissioner Lashley

APPROVED AS AMENDED

APPOINTMENTS/ REAPPOINTMENTS

Nursing Home CAC – Sarah Powell

BUDGET AMENDMENTS

Budget Amendment 9

Audit Contract

Approval of the audit services contract for fiscal year 2023-24 not to exceed \$144,200 and to be filed with the Local Government Commission. This authorizes Susan Evans, Finance Officer, to execute the engagement letter.

Parks Grant Application Request – Complete the Trails

Grant Request Recreation & Parks

PRESENTATIONS/OTHER BUSINESS

Public Safety Compensation

County Manager York introduced the item and reminded the Board that Sheriff Johnson had made a presentation at the last meeting describing his office's difficulties with recruiting and retaining staff. She continued that staff met and put together a plan for compensation enhancements for the Board's consideration.

County Manager York asked the Board to consider paying out balances to all public safety entities their earned holiday leave balances beginning in April. She requested that the funding source for this be lapsed salaries. She said they have verified that all of those public safety departments had enough in lapse salaries to pay out in the April paychecks. She said a balance

down to 40 hours would be paid in order to leave some to use to supplement vacation leave or other uses.

Commissioner Turner asked for the total cost or the total hours. County Manager York answered the estimated total cost was \$444,806.39. She said this was one-time payout, but they would like to bring a policy to the Board for consideration where the payout was maybe twice a year. County Manager York shared that they were continuing to work with Baker Tilly, the consultants on the Phase One Market Study, to look at a separate plan for the public safety employees. She noted they were asking Baker Tilly to help reclassify some of the red-lined jobs. She said the Sheriff's Office was looking to provide a pay differential for those employees working in the Investigations Unit. County Manager York reiterated that she was asking the Board to approve paying out those holiday balances down to 40 hours.

The following compensation strategies and plans for improving compensation were proposed:

1. Payout Holiday Accrual balances for any balances over 40 hours (EMS, CCOM, Sheriff's Office) as of 4/15/2024. Payout on 4/25/2024 from lapsed salary.
2. Staff will propose a policy for paying out holiday accrual balances twice annually (Dec and June) depending on availability of funds in the departmental operating budgets.
3. Compensate all individuals working holidays at time and a half for time worked on holidays. This will also be included in the new proposed policy.
4. Working towards a separate public safety pay scale to be implemented as part of the phase 2 market salary study.
5. Realign job classes to factor in pay differentials and additional compensation for July 1, 2024. This realignment will focus on addressing red-lined positions.
6. The Sheriff's Office will submit a budget request to provide a pay differential for investigation unit assignments.

Moved by: Chairman Paisley

Seconded by: Vice-Chair Carter

Moved for adoption of compensation Strategy 1. The Payout of Holiday Accrual balances for any balances over 40 hours (EMS, CCOM, Sheriff's Office) as of 4/15/2024. Pay out on 4/25/2024 from lapsed salary; and instruct staff to look at including Strategies 2.-6. in the upcoming budget.

APPROVED UNANIMOUS

Event Center Feasibility Study Final Report - Grace VandeVisser, Executive Director, Alamance County Visitors Bureau

Grace VandeVisser, Executive Director of the Alamance County Visitors Bureau, introduced Lexi Cuff, Project Manager for Hunden Partners, who gave a presentation remotely on the final report of the Event Center Feasibility Study.

Alamance County Community Services Agency Update - Danielle Fields, Executive Director of Alamance County Community Services Agency

Danielle Fields, Executive Director of Alamance County Community Services Agency (ACCSA), gave an update on ACCSA. She reported that on December 18, 2023, Governor Cooper designated Alamance County Community Services Agency as the Community Action Agency to provide community services and block grant-funded services in Rockingham, Caswell, and Person Counties, expanding the service area to the four-county region.

Resolution Regarding Residency Requirement of Appointed Board & Committee Members

Commissioner Turner said he did not have an issue with the resolution's intent. He had concerns with the language in paragraph 2. He explained the challenges of the board's requirements for specific industry representatives, particularly with the Tourism Development Authority. He said those positions could be hard to fill and questioned whether the carve-out for the employment exemption was too narrow.

County Attorney Stevens said he understood the concern. He said the desire was to make sure the applicant's interests were more aligned with the Alamance community based on residency within the county. He had drafted suggested language "members of appointed boards who serve only as required by their employment, or as an industry representative, are exempt from this requirement, so long as they are residents of North Carolina." Commissioner Turner offered that would work.

Moved by: Commissioner Turner

Seconded by: Vice-Chair Carter

Moved for adoption of the Resolution Regarding Residency Requirement of Appointed Board and Committee Members with the amended language "members of appointed boards who serve only as required by their employment, or as an industry representative, are exempt from this requirement, so long as they are residents of North Carolina."

APPROVED AS AMENDED

Board of Health Appointment

Commissioner Lashley spoke that the Board of Health had reviewed and met with both applicants for the professional engineer vacancy on the Board of Health. He said that both applicants were qualified. He said the Board of Health had recommended Dan Paist.

Moved by: Commissioner Lashley

Seconded by: Vice-Chair Carter

Moved for the appointment of Dan Paist to the Board of Health to fill the professional engineer vacancy.

APPROVED UNANIMOUS

COUNTY ATTORNEY'S REPORT

County Attorney Stevens spoke that his staff had been in contact with Mr. Wood, one of the public comment speakers.

COUNTY MANAGER'S REPORT

County Manager York informed the Commissioners that the December 2023 Investment Report had been included in their agenda packets.

December 2023 Investment Report

COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS

Commissioner Thompson thanked Mr. Johnson for coming to speak about Cummings High School.

Vice-Chair Carter said many issues have come up with ABSS, and they have not spent the funds.

Chairman Paisley said he had spoken with both speakers prior to the meeting, and he appreciated them bringing this to the Board's attention.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Turner, 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 10:54 A.M.

John Paisley, Jr., Chairman

Alamance County Board of Commissioners

Tory M. Frink, Clerk to the Board