

Greg Edds, Chairman
Jim Greene, Vice- Chairman
Mike Caskey
Judy Klusman
Craig Pierce



Aaron Church, County Manager
Carolyn Barger, Clerk to the Board
John W. Dees, II, County Attorney

Rowan County Board of Commissioners

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MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ROWAN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS June 1, 2020 – 3:00 PM

**PLEASE NOTE: DUE TO THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC
THE MEETING WAS HELD BY REMOTE PARTICIPATION FOR THE BOARD OF
COMMISSIONERS, STAFF AND THE PUBLIC**

Commissioners Participating:

Greg Edds, Chairman
Jim Greene, Vice-Chairman
Mike Caskey, Member
Judy Klusman, Member
Craig Pierce, Member

Also participating were County Manager Aaron Church, Clerk to the Board Carolyn Barger, County Attorney Jay Dees and Assistant County Manager/Finance Director Leslie Heidrick.

Chairman Edds convened the meeting at 1:00 p.m.

Chaplain Michael Taylor provided the Invocation.

Chairman Edds led the Pledge of Allegiance.

CONSIDER ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

Chairman Edds added a Closed Session to the agenda as item #5b for attorney-client privileged communication to discuss matters relating to leases at West End Plaza and concerning a tenant at the Mid-Carolina Regional Airport

Chairman Edds added a presentation as item #2a. The presentation pertained to resources that were available during this time of Pandemic.

Chairman Edds added an item to the agenda as item #5a to request that the Board of Commissioners authorize the County Manager to Issue an RFQ to obtain professional services from an Engineering firm for the Northeast Rowan County Water System. The purpose of the RFQ is request qualifications of engineering firms to provide on-call services and to design a chemical booster pump station.

CONSIDER DELETIONS FROM THE AGENDA

There were no deletions from the agenda.

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Commissioner Klusman moved, Commissioner Pierce seconded and the vote to approve the agenda as amended passed unanimously (4-0).

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Commissioner Klusman moved, Commissioner Pierce seconded and the vote to approve the minutes of the May 18, 2020 Commission Meeting passed unanimously (4-0).

1. CONSIDER APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Klusman moved approval of the Consent Agenda. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Pierce and passed unanimously (4-0).

The Consent Agenda consisted of the following:

- A. Transit Vehicle Decals
- B. Resolution to Adopt Iredell-Rowan Hazard Mitigation Plan
- C. Detention Center Food Service Contract
- D. Request to Extend the Due Date for Annual Performance Evaluations
- E. Salisbury-Rowan Community Action Agency, Inc. Intent to Apply for Community Service Block Grant CARES NC Act Supplemental Funding for FY 2020-22
- F. Kannapolis City Schools – Equipment Lease 2020
- G. WT Group Proposal and Agreement – ADA Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan
- H. Purchase of Vehicle for the Rowan County Sheriff's Office
- I. Schedule Public Hearing for Z 01-20 for June 15, 2020

2. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

Chairman Edds opened the Public Comment Period to entertain comments from any citizens who had either called in or submitted an email request to address the Board via electronic means. With no one wishing to provide comments, Chairman Edds closed the Public Comment Period.

ADDITION

2a. PRESENTATION FROM ECONOMIC RECOVERY TASK FORCE

James Meacham, Executive Director of the Rowan County Tourism Development Authority (TDA), expressed appreciation for all the Commissioners were doing during this time of Pandemic. Mr. Meacham said there had been continuous meetings with the TDA, Economic Development Commission (EDC) and the Chamber of Commerce

(Chamber), along with other various community leaders. Mr. Meacham provided a brief update of the efforts underway.

Pete Teague, Chairman of the Economic Recovery Task Force, said the purpose of Task Force was to help local businesses reopen as effectively, safely and responsibly as possible.

Mr. Meacham said as the economic impacts were considered, the focus was on key issues for economic resources for both workers and businesses. A website was created to provide information and business resource kits were also pulled together. Mr. Meacham discussed the importance and efforts underway to encourage folks to support local businesses. In closing, Mr. Meacham said the first process was to get information to local businesses; the second step in the process was to get the resources in the hands of the businesses they need to open back up; and step three of the process was to begin marketing for more commerce locally.

Rod Crider, President of the EDC, highlighted the outreach efforts for manufacturing businesses and other trade and sector employers across the County. Mr. Crider mentioned that Chewy had begun its hiring process when the COVID-19 Pandemic first started. Mr. Crider reported Chewy had hired approximately 600 employees so far and was looking to hire an additional 800 to complete the hiring for the facility. Mr. Crider noted the number exceeded Chewy's initial commitment to hire 1200 employees.

Mr. Crider said the EDC had initiated an economic impact survey, in conjunction with 250 other economic development organizations, to compare businesses locally to what was happening nationwide. Mr. Crider described the results as frightening; however, he noted the results were improving.

The EDC also implemented a digital tool called Zoom Business, which was an online directory to see what businesses were open, safety protocols undertaken, delivery /curbside services, etc.

Mr. Crider discussed EDC marketing initiatives, that included promotions sent to sixty-three (63) site selection consultants. The EDC was also getting ready to launch virtual reality and drone tours of buildings.

Mr. Crider said the EDC was shoring up its properties and implementing best practices for brokers.

Elaine Spalding, President of the Rowan County Chamber of Commers, said the Chamber had focused on business advocacy efforts. Ms. Spalding said the Chamber had been working at the federal level on all of the small business loan programs that had been announced. Ms. Spalding said the Chamber had been working with the legislature to ensure all rules and regulations for business community could be as smooth as possible. Ms. Spalding said the Chamber had also been working on the Payroll Protection Plan (PPP) and loans at the federal level to make sure that

businesses who receive the forgivable loans know what type of records they need to keep. Ms. Spalding continued by discussing the focus for future job fairs, as well as how the Chamber was making calls to see how it could help businesses.

Chairman Edds expressed appreciation for the work by the Task Force and its efforts to help the business community.

3. CONSIDER SNIA 01-20

Assistant Planning Director Shane Stewart provided the staff report for a Special Non-Residential Intensity Allocation (SNIA) request from Empire Excavating LLC. for the construction of an 8,400 square foot conditioned space warehouse at 1160 Gateway Drive in Mooresville. The property owner of Tax Parcel 230C-034 was PAM Holdings LLC. Approval of the request would allow the project to exceed the administrative allowance of 12% built-upon area limitation requirement of the Coddle Creek watershed and allow up to 70% built-upon area for the project. A total of 10% of the watershed acres may be removed from the 12% limitation and permit up to 70% built upon area.

Mr. Stewart said the request met all standards to be considered for approval.

Commissioner Pierce moved approval of SNIA 01-20. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Klusman and passed unanimously.

4. CONSTRUCTION BID AND BA FOR THE DAN NICHOLAS PARK CONCESSION STAND PROJECT

Facilities Management and Parks Director Don Bringle said the process for a new concession stand at Dan Nicholas Park (DNP) had been ongoing for approximately three (3) years. Mr. Bringle said Architect Pete Bogle would provide a recap of what had been proposed.

Mr. Bogle provided a power point showing the layout and location of the concession stand and he also discussed the materials to be used.

Mr. Bogle said while there had been twenty-one interested bidders, only seven (7) bids were received.

The bids were from:

Contractor	Base Bid	Total (with alternates)
Encompass	\$909,000.00	\$938,000.00
Garanco Inc.	\$924,000.00	\$921,500.00
Hostetter & Son	\$1,144,000.00	\$1,257,600.00
LaFave's Construction	\$993,600.00	\$977,743.00
Liles Construction	\$904,900.00	\$900,547.00
S&S Building	\$1,056,000.00	\$1,105,000.00
Salcoa Construction	\$856,000.00	\$886,800.00

It was the recommendation of The Bogle Firm, along with Finance and Facilities Management Staff that a contract be awarded to Salcoa Construction to construct a new concession stand at DNP at a cost not to exceed \$886,800 and the association budget amendment be approved. With approval of the budget amendment, the project would be within the approved fiscal year 2020 budget.

Mr. Bogle reviewed the alternates and said the contract, which had already been signed by Salcoa, had been emailed to the Board and the project would be ready to start if the Board authorized the County Manager to sign the contract.

Commissioner Klusman questioned Alternate #1 and whether to use the metal roof or asphalt shingles on the concession stand. Mr. Bogle said most of the other buildings at DNP had a metal roof.

Mr. Bogle discussed the type of siding and explained that at the request of Commissioner Pierce, the existing architectural language was for brick veneer in order to provide a more long-term product.

Discussion ensued and the Commissioners preferred to use materials with a longer life and that would require less maintenance. When asked about his preference for the roof, Mr. Bringle also supported the metal roof and agreed it would blend in with the other buildings at DNP.

Assistant County Manager/Finance Director Leslie Heidrick provided clarification for the funding. Ms. Heidrick said the budget amendment increased the budget by \$86,800; however, the \$41,800 had to come from county funding. The Parks had a donation of \$45,000 additional dollars to put towards the project. Ms. Hedrick said the total expenditure increase, adding the \$24,725 (alternate #1) would take the budget amendment to \$111,525 with the County picking up the \$66,525.

Mr. Bringle asked if the Board would consider authorizing the County to execute the contract so DNP could move forward with the process.

Commissioner Greene moved to approve the construction bid for DNP concession stand with the metal roof, brick veneer, and the figures as outlined by Ms. Heidrick, and to give the County Manager the authority to execute the contract. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Klusman and passed unanimously (4-0).

5. CONSIDER APPROVAL OF BOARD APPOINTMENTS **CENTRALINA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD**

Mike Beaver and Lewis Goldsmith applied for reappointment. Their term would be for two (2) years, effective July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2022.

Commissioner Pierce moved, Commissioner Greene seconded and the vote to reappoint Mr. Beaver and Mr. Goldsmith passed unanimously (4-0).

HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION

Jonathan Barbee applied for reappointment for a three-year term that would expire on April 30, 2023.

Commissioner Pierce moved, Commissioner Klusman seconded and the vote to reappoint Mr. Barbee passed unanimously (4-0).

JUVENILE CRIME PREVENTION COUNCIL (JCPC)

The individuals below applied for appointment and/or reappointment for the following seats:

- **Juvenile Defense Attorney:** John Basinger for reappointment for a two-year term, effective July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2022.
- **Sheriff's Designee:** Christopher "Scott" Flowers has been serving on the Council filling a seat as a member of the General Public. Sheriff Kevin Auten has requested Sgt. Flowers be appointed to serve as the Sheriff's designee. The term will expire November 30, 2022.
- **General Public:** Jenny Lee with the Rowan County United Way applied for the General Public seat vacated by Scott Flowers. The term would be for two (2) years, expiring June 30, 2022.
- **Non-Profit Agency:** Jason Scott Hinson for reappointment for a two-year term that will expire June 30, 2022.
- **School Superintendent Designee:** Carol Ann Houpe applied for reappointment for a two-year term that will expire June 30, 2022.
- **Mental Health:** Tressy McLean-Hickey applied for reappointment for a two-year term that will expire June 30, 2022.

Commissioner Pierce moved the appointments as requested above. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Klusman and passed unanimously (4-0).

ROWAN-CABARRUS COMMUNITY COLLEGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Michelle Patterson applied for a four-year term. If approved, the term would be effective July 1, 2020 and expiring June 30, 2024.

Commissioner Pierce moved, Commissioner Klusman seconded and the vote to appoint Michelle Patterson passed unanimously.

ADDITION

5a. AUTHORIZE COUNTY MANAGER TO ISSUE AN RFQ TO OBTAIN PROFESSIONAL SERVICES FROM AN ENGINEERING FIRM FOR THE NORTHEAST ROWAN COUNTY WATER SYSTEM

County Manager Aaron Church requested that the Board of Commissioners authorize the County Manager to issue a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to obtain professional services from an Engineering firm for the Northeast Rowan County Water System. The purpose of the RFQ was to request qualifications of engineering firms to provide on-call services and to design a chemical booster pump station. If approved, Mr. Church said the County would issue the RFQ this week and hopefully have contract back before the Board in July.

Chairman Edds moved for the management team to put out an RFQ for the Northeast Rowan County Water System. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Pierce and passed unanimously (4-0).

Before entering Closed Session Chairman Edds reminded everyone the Board would recess following the Closed Session and reconvene at 6:00 p.m. for the public hearing for the proposed budget.

ADDITION

5b. CLOSED SESSION

Commissioner Pierce moved the Board enter Closed Session at 3:56 p.m. pursuant to North Carolina General Statute § 143-318.11(a)(3) for attorney-client privileged communication to discuss matters relating to leases at West End Plaza and for attorney-client communication regarding a lease at Mid Carolina Regional Airport.

The Board returned to Open Session at 4:24 p.m. No action was taken.

Chairman Edds recessed the meeting at 4:30 p.m.

6. 6:00 P.M. PUBLIC HEARING FOR PROPOSED FY 2020-21 OPERATING BUDGET

Chairman Edds reconvened the meeting at 6:01 p.m. for the public hearing regarding the proposed FY 2020-21 operating budget. (Commissioner Caskey, who was serving in the National Guard, was able to join the Board for the public hearing).

Due to the Pandemic and unusual circumstances, Chairman Edds said the Board would continue to accept written comments via email at Budget.Hearing@rowancountync.gov through 5:00 p.m. on June 12, 2020.

Chairman Edds stated the length of comment for each caller during the public hearing would be three (3) minutes and comments must be restricted to the subject as advertised.

Chairman Edds then opened the public hearing. The following citizens had dialed in to comment regarding the proposed budget:

- Cindy Fink, Executive Director of Meals on Wheels, spoke in support of the requested allocation in the amount of \$83,530.

At this point in the meeting, Chairman Edds said the County Attorney had advised the Board would need to vote to officially extend the written public comment time through 5:00 p.m. on June 12, 2020. Chairman Edds moved, to extend the deadline for written comments regarding the proposed budget to 5:00 p.m. on June 12, 2020. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Pierce and passed unanimously (5-0).

- George Benson, a member of the Board of Elections, asked the Commissioners to fund the Board of Elections in the full amount that had been originally requested from the Director and the Board of Elections.
- Geoffrey Hoy encouraged the Commissioners to support the requested budget as presented by the Board of Elections.
- Pam Bloom expressed appreciation for an earlier discussion concerning getting broadband into the rural areas of the County (particularly the Scotch-Irish community). Ms. Bloom shared her displeasure at what she felt was inadequate funding for the Board of Elections.

The public hearing was not closed at this time due to the earlier vote to extend the written comment period through 5:00 p.m. on June 12, 2020.

ADDITION

Chairman Edds asked the Board to consider an amendment to the agenda to allow him to discuss a letter for submission to the Governor's Office.

Commissioner Pierce moved, Commissioner Klusman seconded and the vote to approve the amendment to the agenda as requested passed unanimously (5-0).

Chairman Edds explained that he would like to provide the Governor with a letter to inform Governor Cooper of the actions being taken in the community during this time of Pandemic. Chairman Edds read the letter as follows:

On behalf of the wonderful people of Rowan County, I would like to thank you for the hard work that you and your team have provided throughout this COVID-19 Pandemic. We send you well wishes as you continue to make difficult decisions that are in the best interest of every citizen of North Carolina.

During the economic downturn a decade ago, Rowan County really took it on the chin. While most North Carolina communities faced considerable challenges, economic hardship hit our community especially hard. Single-day job losses that numbered in the thousands contributed to Rowan County being one of the hardest hit communities in the nation. Our families, children, schools, and spirits took quite a hit.

Not long ago, we rallied together to begin the hard work of renewing our community. We rebuilt our Economic Development team, invested in our airport and critical infrastructure and created an aggressive branding and marketing plan. We embarked on creating a new K-12 platform that would reimagine the educational experience for every student in the Rowan-Salisbury School System as North Carolina's only renewal district. We're streamlining and bringing best-in-class efficiencies to our development process, systematically addressing our employee pay structures, investing heavily in our community college workforce development facilities and programming, and creating collaborative educational partnerships between our public schools, our community college and private four-year colleges. These initiatives are designed to address current workforce demands and also help us attract needed high-quality employers and jobs of the future. And thanks to the NC DOT, the completion of the I-85 expansion in southern Rowan County will help greatly improve safety and facilitate jobs for our community.

Finally, our jobs are coming back, our economy is coming back, but most importantly, our positive spirit is coming back. For the first time in a long time, there is a real sense of hope and optimism in our municipalities and throughout our county, and this new spirit has encouraged people to take steps to improve themselves, their families and their futures.

We've seen a significant business resurgence in our community. Restaurants and badly-needed retail are now investing in Rowan County, helping put a significant dent in our retail leakage numbers. New small businesses, powered by the passions, dreams and sweat of hard-working entrepreneurs are bringing renewed hope and opportunity to every corner of our community.

Governor, our progress has not come easy. It has taken a tremendous amount of dedication, commitment and work from a lot of good people and organizations.

However, as the fruits of our labor are finally being realized, the COVID crisis has slammed the brakes on our resurgence. Once again, we are experiencing the loss of thousands of jobs, watching businesses close and seeing dreams shattered.

We understood the initial need to shut things down in North Carolina. This disease was largely unknown and we all accepted the advice of Federal and State leadership based on the models that were initially available. But as real data replaces models and as each county begins to understand their own specific, localized data, we believe it is reasonable for counties to be given the latitude to design and implement a more tailored, localized approach to their reopening strategies.

Governor Cooper, it is with great respect that we request you allow our Board of Commissioners, County Health Department, Emergency Services Personnel, the leadership of our Novant and Salisbury V.A. Hospital, Chamber of Commerce and other appropriate organizations to decide, based on our specific data, experience and circumstances, how to reopen our community. In short, we know our community.

Since this crisis began, we have been conducting virtual meetings every morning with the elected leaders from across the County, all ten of our municipalities, key non-profits and partner organizations, Health Department and Emergency Services. In addition, a management team meet every afternoon to discuss data, trends and guidance. County leadership communicates with the press routinely to discuss recent data and with the leaders of Novant-Rowan Regional

Medical Center and the Salisbury V.A. Medical Center to check on their staff, current patient, bed and ventilator count, PPE supply levels and employee morale.

Sadly, Rowan County's numbers have been tragically hit by significant breakouts in a few of our congregate living facilities, accounting for 210 of our positive test results and all but two of our COVID-related deaths. As we continue to mourn the loss of these valuable and loved members of our community, our local and State Health Departments have been working diligently with our congregate care facilities. In fact, our local Health Department has created dedicated a full time Congregate Care Specialist position to work directly with these facilities to assist them in any way we can.

In addition, there are 6 testing locations, including drive-in sites, to provide quick and easy access to testing in our community.

Our Chamber of Commerce, Tourism authority and Economic Development Commission has partnered together to create an Economic Recovery Task Force, producing free, high-quality Business Resource Kits containing safety signs, awareness signs, social distancing floor decals, hand sanitizer, employee face masks, "Know Your W's" signs and Emergency Capacity signs. They have provided significant education and instruction on best practices for our businesses to employ upon reopening.

Governor Cooper, we know our community and we want what's best for our community. We are working night and day to provide for the health and safety of our citizens. But we also fully understand that a community's health and its economy are inseparable. According to a study published in the Journal of Health and Physics, being unemployed increases the risk of death by 4% and reduces life expectancy by 1.4 years. The unemployed are more likely to have heart attacks, strokes, drug and alcohol-related problems, suffer from depression and anxiety, and are more likely to commit suicide. While reopening our county certainly comes with risk, keeping many of our businesses in lockdown means keeping many of our people unemployed and being unemployed also presents our citizens and our community with considerable health risks.

We need your help to move Rowan County forward. You can do that by empowering our local leaders, Health Department, Emergency Services professionals and hospital leaders to work together to make determinations on how to reopen our communities and economies in a safe and thoughtful way.

Again, we want to thank you for the work and guidance that you and the members of your team have provided during this critical time.

Chairman Edds moved to send the letter to Governor Roy Cooper, Dr. Mandy Cohen with the Department of Health and Human Services, and Ken Eudy, Senior Advisor to the Governor. The motion was followed by a second from Commissioner Pierce.

Commissioner Klusman felt the Board should reassure the public that if the County was granted permission to reopen, the County's Emergency Management Department and Health Department would be very involved in the process. Commissioner Klusman said while she may personally continue to remain at home, she would support sending the letter.

Chairman Edds said he had talked with both Chris Soliz, Chief of Emergency Services, and Nina Oliver, Director of Public Health, and everyone understood the County's reopening would be a team effort.

Commissioner Pierce agreed it was difficult for the Governor to have a state the size of North Carolina and have a "one size fits all" for every county. Commissioner Pierce felt Rowan County should not be held back because of the larger metropolitan areas. Commissioner Pierce said the larger counties had larger populations and their circumstances were different from Rowan County's rural areas.

Upon being put to a vote, the motion on the floor passed unanimously.

Chairman Edds said it was good to have Commissioner Caskey participating in the meeting. (As noted earlier, Commissioner Caskey was serving in the National Guard).

Commissioner Greene noted that Commissioner Caskey had been on the front lines during the COVID-19 Pandemic and he expressed appreciation for Commissioner Caskey's commitment to service.

7. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board, Commissioner Pierce moved to adjourn at 6:34 p.m. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Greene and passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,



Carolyn Barger, MMC, NCMCC
Clerk to the Board