

MINUTES
REGULAR SCHEDULED MEETING OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
OF EDGECOMBE COUNTY
OCTOBER 2, 2023 AT 7:00 P.M.
IN THE JONATHAN FELTON COMMISSIONERS ROOM
COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE BUILDING
TARBORO, NORTH CAROLINA

1. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER BY CHAIRMAN LEONARD WIGGINS AT 7:00 P.M.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mr. Leonard Wiggins, Chairman, Rev. E. Wayne Hines, Vice-Chairman, Mr. Donald Boswell, Mr. George Thorne, Mrs. Viola Harris, Mrs. Evelyn Powell and Mr. Ralph Webb.

MEMBERS ABSENT: None.

OTHERS PRESENT: Mr. Eric Evans, County Manager, Mrs. Natalie Bess, Deputy County Manager, Mr. Michael Peters, County Attorney, Mr. Michael Matthews, Assistant County Manager, Mrs. Linda Barfield, CFO and Ms. Frangie Mungo, Clerk to the Board.

2. SAFETY INSTRUCTIONS.

Safety instructions provided by Mrs. Bess.

3. PRAYER.

Prayer provided by Rev. Hines.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING PRESENTED FOR APPROVAL.

Rev. Hines moved to approve the minutes of the September 5, 2023 as presented. Mrs. Harris seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

5. PUBLIC HEARINGS:

1. Mr. Wiggins called a public hearing to order relative to the proposed Schedules, Standards and Rules to be used in the 2024 reappraisal of real property in Edgecombe County.

Mr. Peters read the public notice.

Mr. Evans stated that presented for Board consideration and review at the last meeting the new Schedule of Values. We are in the revaluation process so now we have to give the opportunity for our citizens to respond to those Schedule of Values at the public hearing tonight. He asked Mrs. Tarasa Lewis, Tax Administrator, if she needed to add anything.

Mrs. Lewis did not.

Mr. Wiggins called for public comments. There being none, the public hearing was adjourned.

2. Mr. Wiggins called a public hearing to order to receive citizen input regarding a rezoning request for property located on Colonial Road, Tarboro from AR-30 to R-20.

Mr. Peters read the public notice as published.

Mrs. Katina Braswell, Planning Director, stated that Mr. C. B. Daughtridge request to rezone property located at Colonial Road near US 258 South intersection from AR-30 Rural Residential to R-30 Mixed Residential District. The purpose of the request is to allow for development of single-family dwellings. The principal use must meet zoning requirements in the R-20 zoning district per Unified Development

Ordinance Table 4.2.1 Principle Use Table. The Planning Board voted unanimously to forward the rezoning request to the Board of Commissioners with a favorable recommendation.

Mr. Wiggins called for public comments. There being none, the public hearing was adjourned.

Mr. Boswell moved to approve the rezoning request as presented. Mrs. Powell seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

- 3. Mr. Wiggins called a public hearing to order to receive citizen input regarding a rezoning request for property located at 12615 US 64 Alt. West, Rocky Mount from AR-30 to B-2.**

Mr. Peters read the public notice as published.

Mrs. Katina Braswell, Planning Director, stated that Ms. Donna Matthews and Ms. Elizabeth Hill request to rezone property from AR-30 Rural Residential/R-30 Single-Family Residential to B-2 General Business District. The purpose of the request is to allow for commercial use at the property. Applicants plan to sell property for establishment of a commercial business. The principal use must meet zoning requirements in the B-2 zoning district per Unified Development Ordinance Table 4.2.1 Principal Use Table. The Planning Board voted unanimously to forward the rezoning request to the Board of Commissioners with a favorable recommendation.

Mr. Wiggins called for public comments. There being none, the public hearing was adjourned.

Mr. Webb moved to approve the rezoning request as presented. Rev. Hines seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

6. SCHEDULED APPOINTMENT(S):

- A. Tanya Heath, Cooperative Extension Director, recognized 4-H Youth for their participation in district and State competitions. She stated that some will be going to National competitions.**

Presentation participants: Abby Bradley, Thomas Bradley, Emma Britt, Savannah Dail, McCrae Kiser, Payden Kiser, Seth Peele, Jada Smith, Jolyna Sundbom. Logan Sundbom, Faith Womble and Levi Womble, and Jaileea Knight

- B. Todd Gardner, Tar River Transit and Betty Battle, Edgecombe County Social Services Director, responded to concerns regarding non-emergency medical transportation.**

Mr. Evans stated that at the last regular meeting we had a number of citizens come with some concerns and complaints about our non-emergency medical transportation. He stated that concerns for them are certainly concerns for us so follow-up will be provided tonight. Mr. Evans stated that Medicaid provides transportation for medical related needs and is provided through outside contractors. Tar River Transit is the regional transportation provider for us and many other entities and the primary provider of that service for the County. He stated that we have had a secondary contract to supplement that service. Our procurement policy and procedures require that we go out to seek other proposals. This was done recently based on a rating system and we went with a new contractor. That transition from one contractor to another inevitably can be a little bump in the transition. Our goal has been for our staff to work with both Tar River Transit and our new secondary provider.

Mrs. Battle discussed the bid process. She stated that RFP went out to the newspapers and was posted on the County's website. They received RFPs from five providers and they were rewarded points for qualifications, experience, costs, and understanding and

approach. Several providers lost points on the understanding and approach because they did not submit the requested documents. On August 28th letters were sent out to the bidders notifying them that the contract was awarded to another provider. September 1st a contract was awarded to **Flow by** and on September 12th letters were sent out to all of the riders informing them that the contract had switched from Fountain Transportation to **Flowvi**. Mrs. Battle stated that this is the process they have always used for bid proposals.

Mrs. Harris stated that she talked with Mrs. Battle and expressed her concerns that the residents were not told about the change until after the change had happened instead of alerting them that this was coming up. She also asked Mrs. Battle several questions regarding the bids.

Mrs. Battle answered questions from the Board.

Mr. Gardner stated that he was present to address the concerns that were displayed by the citizens relative to transportation by Tar River Transit and to correct any misconceptions about the service they provide in Edgecombe County. He provided a background of what they do. He stated that every county has a Community Transportation provider designated and they are supported by the NCDOT. He stated that part of his job as director is to apply for State and Federal funds on behalf of Edgecombe County for expenses that are associated with providing transportation in the area. Mr. Gardner stated that he reviewed the video of the last meeting and he heard some disparaging comments about Tar River Transit that he would like to address. He stated that he heard of accusations of passengers being treated like trash, did not address the issue of a damaged wheelchair, they do not allow passengers with weight issues to utilize wheelchair ramps, they pick up passengers when they feel like it and they ask passengers to be ready at 3 a.m. for a 6 a.m. appointment. He stated that any time Tar River Transit falls short the issues are immediately addressed. By large they provide safe and reliable transportation. To hear the remarks, he took them personally because that is not the type of organization that he is the head of. The citizens have the right to their opinion and he respects their opinion, but he categorically denies that they treat passengers harshly or that they fall short of providing safe and reliable transportation.

Mr. Gardner answered questions from the Board.

Mr. Thorne asked Mrs. Battle if she received any of those same complaints.

Mrs. Battle stated that they received complaints on Flovi and they have investigated them and the complaints are more regarding the transition, which will eventually smooth itself out.

Mr. Jonah Williams, DSS Adult Protective Services Supervisor, stated that he has done several site visits to Flovi and they have 7 to 8 vehicles consisting of vans, buses and cars. He checked the cars after the concerns were voiced and did not find anything. They were raising funds to add tee shirts to the company and decals to the cars. He stated that one of his transportation workers has been appointed to continue to do site visits.

Mr. Evans stated that he thought things have progressed and improved a great deal.

7. **PUBLIC PETITIONS.**

Angela Bryant, 717 West End Street, Rocky Mount, stated that she was here to speak to the Board on the issue of school demerger or merger. She stated that she is one of the community leaders who has been working on the issue for the last year and an urgent issue has come to their attention and wanted to make sure it comes to the Board's attention. This is a matter regarding involving the redistricting of the Edgecombe County School Board as a result of the school merger. A problem has arisen in that in the legislation that most recently set the date for the merger to happen and other parameters, including the

authority for the Edgecombe School Board to redistrict. There was an oversight in that they did not realize that the Edgecombe County School Board election occurs in March. The merger will occur in July. The people who are merged in July cannot vote in an election in March and they would have no way to participate in 2024 elections for representation. She stated that a second problem is that, even if we move the election to November and you still had the same set of districts that you have now, the only districts up for election in 2024 are in East Tarboro and Macclesfield. That would be Worsley, Privette and Ellis. The citizens in Rocky Mount would not be able to vote for any representation for the people in Rocky Mount anyway. There are two oversights to this problem. A legislative action is needed in order to provide representation for the citizens of Edgecombe County that will be merged into the Edgecombe County School district in 2024. Move the election first and foremost to November at least and require a plan that would allow all the districts to be elected in 2024. There are 10,000 residents in Rocky Mount that will merged into the Edgecombe County Schools district and asked that the Board take action for this to happen with the legislature and for the School Board to have the authority to do what they need to do.

Mr. Wiggins stated that there was a community meeting on Friday and our State Legislatures were there, Mr. Willingham and Senator Smith. Mr. Wiggins stated that he did request that they look at it and possibly seek legislation that would take some corrective action, but not take the authority from the school board to draw their lines. He still wants the school board to have the authority to draw their lines.

Ms. Bryant stated that they need not only the authority to redistrict, they need the authority to change the district plan so that all the seats would be open.

Mr. Wiggins asked the Board if this was something that they could support and they were in support.

Curmilus Dancy, 127 Midway Lane, Tarboro, P O Box 1391 Pinetops, asked the Board to take whatever action they can to influence the Edgecombe County Board of Education, because until the Rocky Mount residents can vote they have no representation on the Edgecombe School Board that will decide their rights and their fate. The only representative they have elected that can help them are on the Edgecombe County Board of Commissioners, the Rocky Mount City Council, the Nash County School Board and their State legislators. He asked the Board to please take action now to make sure they can vote for school board representation in 2024 after they get annexed. There has to be legislative action in the next few weeks to move the election and require the school board to redistrict with the plan that allows Rocky Mount to elect representation in 2024. He stated that the Board is one of the only elected voices that these citizens in Rocky Mount have and we need the school board to demonstrate the same transparency and concern for the Rocky Mount Edgecombe residents that have the right to vote for their new school board as they have shown for the assignment of students to the newly merged school facilities in the district.

Natalyn Ohree, 1713 Beverly Road, Rocky Mount, Edgecombe County side of the Nash County School system, stated that since Nash County has decided that they would no longer be embracing us and they are releasing us into your (the Board) loving care. She stated that they are relieving us of their responsibility for our children. Therefore, we are raising the alarm because we do not want this policy to come into effect without the voting t opportunity for the citizens in the Edgecombe County area. A lot has gone on and a lot of people have been asleep at the wheel and they are waking up after the fact. We do not want that to happen and we appreciate the Board's attention and anything they can do to help in this process to make sure that those 10,000 Edgecombe citizens, who have a right to vote, are considered in the future in a timely fashion so that they will not be behind the wheel.

Mr. Wiggins stated that the Board has shown their willingness to address that along with the School Board.

Kelvin Barnhill, Owner and Operator of Flovi, Inc., stated that he wanted to introduce himself and the company and to let the Board know that they are here to help, support and help serve the individuals in Edgecombe and Nash County in transportation. They have been doing transportation for quite some time. Doing services with Mental Health Service called MTM and they provide service for transportation for those individuals as well. They are grateful to know that they are able to come here and support Edgecombe County doing their transportation along with DSS. Working together as a team is very important and supporting individuals that they are serving. There may be a few transitional issues, but granted those issues have been smoothed out and they are moving forward. He stated that they are here to support the individuals everyday along with DSS in doing what they need to do.

Brenda Lyons, 201 ??, Pinetops, stated that “she” said that she did not get that complaint about transportation. She stated that she was the one who told them about, when she was riding Transit, and the arm of her chair got damaged and if her arm had been there it would have gotten hurt. She stated that she called in and told them what happened and what was told to her that they don’t have insurance to cover her chair and on the second time they messed up the cord and she called in for that and once again was told they did not have insurance. Ms. Lyons stated that “she” said she sent out notices and she did not get a letter stating that she could no longer ride Fountain Transportation. When she called to say she would like to ride Fountain Transportation she was told that if she rides Fountain Transportation she will pay for it. Ms. Lyons stated that she felt that she had the right and authority to ride the van she liked to ride. Why is it a problem if they want to ride Fountain Transportation. When Fountain Transportation came in she stopped riding Rocky Mount Transit and starting riding Fountain Transportation and she has been satisfied. She felt that as long as she is was satisfied she should have been able to keep riding with them. She stated that she was scared when riding (Tar River Transit) and that should not be.

Mr. Todd Gardner, Tar River Transit, stated that he did not want to speak again to refute the citizen’s claims all he wanted to do was explain their process.

Anthony Davis, 625 East Holley Street, Rocky Mount, stated that he was here with a complaint about the new Transportation system. He stated that it sucks. He stated that he was supposed to have surgery last week, called in a week ahead of time and was told that someone would be there. He stated that at 11:30 the people at the hospital had canceled the surgery and rescheduled him, they say that they have ample transportation. He stated that the other day they sent out a van with a broken windshield, dirty, stinking, the front door would not open, the guy was stinking, and Jonah Williams said he inspected the vehicles. The driver said that he was just hired that morning. Mr. Davis said that they they say they are providing adequate transportation. He did not agree. The first time he rode with this company the driver said they were in front of his house in Tarboro, but he lives in Rocky Mount. This company has more than just some flaws they do not have the courtesy to call you until after your appointment is over. He stated that last week the van had a flat tire. Who inspected their vehicles? He stated that they are unsafe and they don’t strap you in like they should. Mr. Davis stated to the Board that this company needs to be investigated more before someone is seriously hurt.

Tameka Brown, 1029 Moore Street, stated that Mrs. Betty Battle does not know what she is talking about. She is not telling the truth. She is smart mouthed. She stated that her being from New Jersey she is going to give it back to you harder. Rocky Mount Transit does not need to be working. They say they pick you up according to your appointment. The gentleman she lives with gets up at 3 a.m. for a 6:15 a.m. appointment every day and most of the time he does not know they are out there. They do not blow the horn or call. The only time they call is after they leave and tell you they are not coming back. The other transportation Flovi, her pick-up was in a woman’s car with tinted windows, smelled like sex and weed. When they are out in the field he does not know what they are doing. She

stated that Mrs. Battle mentioned a point system. There is no point system. Money talks. She sits in her office pushing papers and she is not out here and she does not care. Ms. Brown stated that the older people do not like riding with Rocky Mount Transit, but they are scared to speak up. She stated that no one wants to ride with Flow Ride because of the nastiness and rudeness.

Stephanie Cherry, 3769 US Highway 64, Mildred, NC, stated that she has to have transportation because of surgeries. When she called Social Services to set it up she asked if they had anybody other than Tar River Transit because she did not like having to be ready two hours early, which is a bit much. She was told by the worker about Fountain Transportation. She stated that she likes Fountain's professionalism and they call to let her know that they are on their way. With not having Fountain now and in her switching, she had some appointments Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday in Raleigh and she called Social Services to set it up the worker was professional at Social Services and she knew that she sent the information over to the new company. Ms. Cherry stated that when she did not hear from them she thought that maybe they would do like Fountain and call her Monday morning and say that they are on their way to pick her up. She called them and was told that they did not get the information and blamed it on the worker at Social Services, which was not true. She had to get somebody to drive her because the appointment could not be cancelled. She stated that she had to get a ride on Tuesday also and Social Services was again blamed. She stated that she has not had a good experience with them. She stated that Fountain Transportation is very good with good customer service. She stated that she would like to have them back.

Brenda Wiggins-Davis, caretaker and wife of man in the wheelchair, stated that every complaint and concern heard today is real. They did not know that Fountain Transportation was no longer going to pick them up. They got that message the morning they called to confirm that they would be on the way and they said they cannot come, they lost the contract. She stated that they called Social Services and was told they would send somebody out, but when they got there it was too late for him to go to the appointment. She felt that DPSS should have given them notice before September 1st. They did not get notice until September 12th. She stated that she called all of the people on the letter and nobody ever seems to be at their desk. She left messages with Mr. Williams, Ms. Stewart, Ms. Fox, Ms. Mayfield, Ms. Dupree and Ms. Mary Harper. Ms. Mary Harper has called her back and Mr. Williams has called her back. Mrs. Wiggins-Davis stated that these are serious issues that her husband has and these people. She stated that she heard someone say that they have 400 to 500 people a day that they have to address. That is an overload. Why don't we have two companies assisting DSS or change Flovi out until they can handle the load.

Mr. Evans stated that he thinks the 400 to 500 number was from Mr. Gardner of Tar River Transit and referring to their entire service area. Not just Edgecombe County and not just Medicaid transportation. They provide transportation for other things as well.

Mrs. Harris asked Mr. Gardner if he has only the one vehicle that comes to Edgecombe County for the Medicaid citizens.

Mr. Gardner stated that they have at least 5 to 10 vehicles that serve Edgecombe County. They have 32 vehicles within their fleet, with 29 being wheelchair equipped.

Mrs. Harris stated but not particularly all five do the Medicaid transportation.

Mr. Gardner stated that all of the vehicles perform Medicaid transportation.

Mr. Wiggins stated that it does appear that we do have some issues and they are change. They followed the process to get the bid and Flovi is our contractor based on the staff investigations and what is brought back to the Board.

8. OTHER BUSINESS:

A. Approval of budget amendments.

Mrs. Powell moved to approve the budget amendments as presented. Mr. Boswell seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

B. Approval of land transfer to the Edgecombe County ABC Board.

Mr. Evans stated that it was brought to the Board's attention at the March meeting that the Edgecombe County ABC Board has requested land from the County for the purpose of constructing a new warehouse. The ABC Board asks that the County donates part of a parcel the County owns at the corner of Anaconda and McNair Roads. The Board authorized him to proceed with determining the exact location and layout and bring back for consideration. Mr. Evans presented both an area map, as well as a preliminary site layout map. Mr. Shelly Willingham, Chairman of the ABC Board was present to discuss the proposed use of the facility and to answer questions. Mr. Evans recommended that the Board approve the donation of the lot to not exceed 3 acres to the Edgecombe County ABC Board and to authorize the County Attorney to prepare and the Manager to execute the necessary documents.

Mr. Willingham stated that they are requesting this land to build a warehouse and what this will do for the ABC system will allow them to buy more products that they can sell at prices that they can get when the liquor goes on sale. Every other month liquor goes on sale for ABC systems. The distributors and distillers have discounts that they give so if they can purchase more and have somewhere to put it they can sell it. He stated that right now they get a truckload every week.

Mr. Boswell moved to excuse Mrs. Powell from voting because she serves on the Edgecombe County ABC Board. Mr. Wiggins seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

Rev. Hines moved to approve the land transfer as presented. Mr. Webb seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

C. Approval of option to address fleet needs.

Mr. Evans stated that as discussed at the last meeting, we are considering options to meet the fleet needs we have, especially for the Sheriff's Office. Sheriff Atkinson has a relatively large percentage of high-mileage vehicles on the road. Based on the information he and his team provided, we need to acquire at least 20 new vehicles to get his fleet to a more reliable state. One option that has been presented is to lease those vehicles. At the special meeting on September 19th, the Board received a presentation from Mr. Benjamin Krautheimer with Enterprise Fleet Management. He shared the benefits of leasing vehicles and the potential costs. The Board asked that a more specific proposal be done to see the actual costs for the specific vehicles we would lease if we choose to go that route. That update is provided in the agenda packet. Mr. Evans stated that he also included a copy of the proposal presented to the Board at the last meeting so they can refer to the details of the lease program. There are benefits to leasing vehicles to meet our fleet needs including: assistance with finding vehicles to purchase; assistance with the management of the fleet; and more frequent turnover of vehicles. However, the ongoing, annual cost of leasing, in this case \$434,340 for 28 vehicles, in light of the additional costs we just incurred with the implementation of our Compensation Plan, prompts him to recommend another approach. Mr. Evans stated that we plan to soon sell our ownership interest in a building in Rocky Mount that has been occupied by Eastpointe to Nash County. The offer for our 45% share is \$2 million. He recommended that we use \$1 million of that, plus the \$125,000 we already have budgeted for cars, to purchase approximately 20 new vehicles for the Sheriff. We can also internally improve our tracking, maintenance and turnover of our fleet moving forward. He and staff certainly stand ready to implement whichever option the Board chooses.

Mr. Thorne stated that being the most proponent for leasing vehicles on the Board he is still in favor of leasing the vehicles. The system that we have now is not working. With the sale of this building we have the ability to fund a lease program for 20 vehicles plus the other County vehicles that Enterprise is requiring and see if it works. Mr. Thorne stated that we have not had that ability in in the past. We never had that ability with how we budget for vehicles in the past, so why wouldn't we give it a try and see how it works. Every other county, every other municipality around us is doing it. There must be some validity to the program. The City of Rocky Mount has taken their entire fleet to it, so they obviously believe in this program. He stated that would be his recommendation to the Board. Mr. Thorne stated that his other recommendation to the Board, if we want to go with the lease program, since we have the upfit cost to do the upfit, we should pay for the upfit not in the lease. We should not finance the upfit in the lease because then you are paying interest on the upfit. We have the cash to pay the upfit and then finance the vehicles just like you would finance a normal vehicle. If you look at the menu pricing, you see where they broke out what the actual car is versus what the lease is with the upfit.

Mr. Wiggins stated that he takes the position of the Manager's recommendation. While the budget is the Boards, but the Board charge the Manager with making sure that the budget is balanced. He stated that he is supporting the Manager's position and the Board needs to give the Manager direction.

Mr. Webb asked Mr. Peters in regards to the money that should be coming from Nash County, if he could give the Board any timeline on that.

Mr. Peters stated no. We hope it will be soon, hopefully the next several months. We are having ongoing discussion with Nash County.

Mr. Webb stated that he is on board with Mr. Thorne. Mr. Evans wants to get off the list and he does too. We have been talking about the Sheriff's needs we have been waiting and seeing every since he has been on the Board. If we can go ahead and lease then let's do it.

Rev. Hines stated that we cannot do anything until we get the money from Nash County.

Mr. Wiggins stated that the Board will give the Manager a sense of direction.

Mr. Boswell stated that he spent a great deal of time figuring back and forth on this, but he supports the leasing plan. It is going to cost a little money, but it is a long-term gain overall and help improve our cashflow instead of taking \$1 million dedicating it to cars. In an attempt to continuously have cars that are at least reasonably in good shape and for the Sheriff's Department and eight other departments.

Mrs. Harris stated that she believes the Manager has taken all into consideration before he made his recommendation and that is what she would be voting on.

Mrs. Powell stated that she too can go along with the Manager's recommendation.

Rev. Hines stated that he was supportive of getting the vehicles for the Sheriff and whatever the Manager is recommending.

After further discussion Mr. Wiggins moved to authorize the Manager to proceed with the purchase of 20 vehicles this budget year for the Sheriff Office. Mrs. Harris seconded the motion. Motion carried by a vote of 4 for (Wiggins, Hines, Harris, Powell) and 3 against (Webb, Thorne, Boswell).

D. Approval of corrections to the Compensation Plan.

Mr. Evans stated that at the September meeting, the Board approved the implementation of our new compensation plan. Since the new compensation plan is such an overhaul from our previous ones, we have continued to review it to see if there are any errors to fix or changes to make. Mr. Evans stated that after a review from Department Heads, we have updates for Board consideration to address those corrections and changes needed. He presented a summary of those changes, which present no additional appropriation needed to the budget.

Mr. Boswell moved to approve the updated Compensation Plan Ordinance as presented. Mrs. Powell seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

E. Approval of the URP23 Funding Agreement.

Mr. Evans stated that Edgecombe County has been awarded \$67,000 by the North Carolina Housing Finance Agency (NCHFA) under the 2023 cycle of the Urgent Repair Program (URP). The goal of the project is to assist at least 5 very-low and low-income families with special needs in addressing housing conditions that pose imminent threats to their life and/or safety or to provide accessibility modifications and other repairs necessary to prevent displacement.

Mrs. Harris moved to accept the award by approving the grant agreement and project ordinance as presented. Mrs. Powell seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

F. Approval of application from Tar River Transit for FY-24 Rural Operating Assistance funds.

Mr. Evans stated that Edgecombe is eligible to receive funds to assist residents with transportation through the Rural Operating Transportation Fund (ROAP). We partner with Tar River Transit to apply for and administer these funds for us. We will have available a total of \$166,284. This covers three categories of funding: Elderly & Disabled Transportation Assistance, Employment Transportation Assistance, and Rural General Public assistance.

Mrs. Harris moved to approve the submission of this ROAP application and authorize the Manager to execute the forms as presented. Mrs. Powell seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

G. Approval of surplus vehicle and computer equipment.

Mr. Evans presented for Board approval to surplus a 2000 Ford E-350 XLT Super Duty, 12 passenger van, 104,277 miles vehicle and a list of computers and related equipment that have now exceeded their useful life.

Mr. Boswell moved to approve the surplus of the vehicle and list of computers and related equipment as presented. Rev. Hines seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

H. Approval of Resolution to Accept the 2022 Water Asset Management Grant Award.

Mr. Evans stated that we received notice from the NC Department of Environmental Quality of a grant award for the 2022 Water Asset Management Plan. The award, which are federal ARPA funds, totals \$307,255. The project will locate and survey locations of all water distribution assets not currently mapped, in-field inspections of hydrants, storage tanks, booster stations and chemical feed stations and create a hydraulic model of the system.

Mr. Boswell moved to approve the resolution and accompanying grant project ordinance as presented. Mrs. Powell seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

I. Approval of Resolution to accept the 2022 VUR Sewer System Study Grant Award.

Mr. Evans stated that we received notice from the NC Department of Environmental Quality of a grant award for the 2022 VUR Sewer System Study. The award, which are federal ARPA funds, totals \$561,000. The project will locate and survey sanitary sewer, smoke testing of various sewer mains, CCTV inspections along with various inspections and assessments.

Mrs. Harris moved to approve the resolution and accompanying grant project ordinance as presented. Mr. Boswell seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

J. Approval of calling for a public hearing for a Special Use Permit request for property located off Ellis Lane.

Mr. Evans stated that Barnhill Contracting Company has submitted an application for a Special Use Permit to expand their permitted sand mine off Ellis Lane. A public hearing is required.

Mr. Boswell moved to call for a public hearing to be held at the Board of Commissioners November 6, 2023. Mrs. Powell seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

K. Approval of Community Development Block Grant – Neighborhood Revitalization Application Housing Selection Committee Bylaws and Guidance.

Mr. Evans stated that as staff continues to work with our consultant to prepare an application for the NC Department of Commerce's Community Development Block Grant – Neighborhood Revitalization (CDBG-NR) program, one critical action is needed from the Board at this meeting. This program provides funding for the renovation and replacement of substandard housing for low-moderate income families. Funds may be spent on rehabilitation (including scattered site housing), acquisition, clearance, relocation, substantial rehabilitation, replacement housing and emergency repairs. We are currently drafting an application to provide scattered-site housing rehabilitation. This type of assistance for existing housing stock continues to be a great need here in Edgecombe County, and there are few other sources of funding to meet that need. Mr. Evans stated that in housing rehabilitation, we are typically able to perform comprehensive repairs to address major structural, mechanical, and even accessibility needs for low-to-moderate income residents. The application must include potential recipients. To select those potential recipients, we must have a Housing Selection Committee with bylaws and guidance, which is included for Board consideration. Mr. Evans recommended that the Board adopt the Housing Selection Committee Bylaws and Guidance and that the Board call for a final public hearing to be held at the November meeting.

Mr. Boswell moved to approve as presented and call for a public hearing at the November 6, 2023 meeting relative to the Community Development Block Grant – Neighborhood Revitalization application. Mr. Wiggins seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

9. PLANNING BOARD REPORT: *Received*****

Presented by Mrs. Katina Braswell, Planning Director.

1. Planning Board training session conducted by Chad Meadows, CodeWright Planners.
2. September 18, 2023 draft minutes.

10. AFTERLISTS AND RELEASES FOR REVIEW AND APPROVAL.

Mrs. Powell moved to approve the afterlists and releases as presented. Mrs. Harris seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

11. CONTRACTS FOR REVIEW AND/OR APPROVAL.

Mrs. Harris moved to approve the contracts as presented. Mr. Thorne seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

12. DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS FOR REVIEW.***Received***

A. Water and Sewer update.

B. Monthly Financial Summary presented by Mrs. Barfield, CFO.

C. Update on Tornado Debris Cleanup and Tipping Fee waiver.

Mrs. Harris moved to excuse Mrs. Powell from voting, being that she was a victim of the tornado. Mr. Boswell seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

Mr. Boswell moved to extend the waiver of the tipping fee to include construction and demolition for those that were directly affected by the tornado that are uninsured or underinsured. Rev. Hines seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

D. Edgecombe Soil and Water Conservation District Newsletter.

Mr. Thorne stated that this month we had a 3% water loss. He stated that he asked Mr. Matthews for context of what that looks like for a system of our size and was told that we should be targeting for 12 to 14%. He stated that the Water Department brought in \$85,319.25 in additional revenue just by water loss

13. MANAGER'S REPORT.***Received***

A. Major events and updates.

B. Workforce Development Indicators.

C. TDA financial report.

D. Update on FY-22 State Appropriation Grants provided by Mrs. Bess.

E. Update on Countyline Merger.

F. Budgetary impact of the loss of federal inmates.

G. Edgecombe Works! Promise Program.

14. COMMISSIONERS' REPORT.

Mr. Webb stated that last month we were sitting in the meeting about this same time. He stated that it is 10:10 p.m. and we have two female Commissioners and six other additional females. They do not need to be getting on the highway at 10:10 p.m. He proposed a new meeting time of 6:00 p.m. The agenda for each meeting continues to grow.

Mr. Wiggins as for thoughts on the time from the Board and they agreed.

Mr. Peters stated that in December the meetings schedule is set for the full year so that may be an opportunity to do so.

Mr. Wiggins suggested that at the December meeting we set it for next year's schedule. There were no objections from the Board.

Mr. Webb stated that in August we had a fire down his way (Macclesfield fire district) on a Friday evening and he received a call from a concerned citizen (South Edgecombe Fire District). The couple was boiling peanuts and an outside 20 lb. cylinder was firing everything up. They had an underground 500-gallon tank that sprang a leak. Fire was spring all over the year and getting ignited. He stated that he brought this issue to Mr. Evans and they got a response from Mr. Brown. The issue that happened was the home is in the South Edgecombe Fire District and the South Edgecombe Fire District firemen, three showed up on personal vehicles. After the fire was basically out South Edgecombe finally did send a tanker. Macclesfield responds to the fire. South Edgecombe does not and the person is in the South Edgecombe District. The citizen wanted to know why did Macclesfield come and not the South Edgecombe. The back-up was Bakertown Fire Department out of Wilson. He stated that Mr. Brown's response mentioned the fact that the volunteer firemen in all of our areas now is no longer what it use to be years ago. You cannot find volunteer firemen now. Mr. Webb stated that if we truly have an issue with volunteer firemen we need to very concerned in Edgecombe County.

After discussion Mr. Evans stated that a follow-up to the issue will be done and brought back to the Board.

Mr. Thorne stated that he would like to ask the Manager to go ahead and appropriate the \$1.125 million from the fund balance and empower the Sheriff to go find the cars now and we will figure out the budget amendments to get it back into the fund balance once we have the money from Nash County.

Mr. Wiggins stated that was already in the motion.

15. **ATTORNEY'S REPORT.**

None.

16. **CLOSED SESSION.**

Rev. Hines moved to go into closed session to discuss:

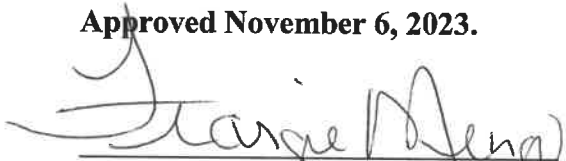
A. Economic Development. [N.C.G.S. 143-318.11 (a)(4)]

Mr. Boswell seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

Mr. Boswell moved to go out of closed session and resume the regular meeting. Rev. Hines seconded the motion, which carried by unanimous vote.

17. **REV. HINES MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. MRS. HARRIS SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED BY UNANIMOUS VOTE.**

Approved November 6, 2023.


Frankie Mungo, Clerk to the Board