

GRANVILLE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
December 2, 2024
GRANVILLE EXPO AND CONVENTION CENTER
4185 US Highway 15 South, Oxford, North Carolina

PRESENT:

Chair Timothy Karan
Vice-Chair Jimmy Gooch
Commissioner Zelodis Jay
Commissioner Robert Williford
Commissioner Sue Hinman
Commissioner Tony W. Cozart
Commissioner Russ May

County Manager Drew Cummings
Deputy County Manager Korena Weichel
County Attorney James C. Wrenn, Jr.

CALL TO ORDER

At 7:00 p.m. Chair Timothy Karan called the meeting to order. Commissioner Robert Williford had the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

CONSENT AGENDA

Motioned by Commissioner Russ May, seconded by Chair Timothy Karan, and unanimously carried, Board removed item five (5), Resolution for Granville County Official America 250 NC Committee, from the consent agenda, and tabled it to a January regular meeting.

Motioned by Commissioner Zelodis Jay, seconded by Commissioner Robert Williford, and unanimously carried, the Board approved the consent agenda as follows:

A. Approved budget amendment #8 for fiscal year 2024-2025.

BUDGET AMENDMENT No 8			
December 2, 2024			
Legal Document			
Be it ordained, the FY 2024-2025 Annual Budget Ordinance is hereby amended as follows:			
GENERAL FUND			
Expenditures	Increase	Decrease	Total
General Government			\$80,000
Finance	\$ 80,000	\$ -	
Public Safety			\$12,100
Sheriff's Office	\$ -	\$ 5,700	
Detention Center	\$ 5,700	\$ -	
Emergency Management	\$ 10,000	\$ -	
Addressing / GIS	\$ 2,100	\$ -	
Community Services			\$20,000
Planning	\$ 20,000	\$ -	
Human Services			\$12,905
HCCBG & Transportation	\$ 2,084	\$ -	
Oxford Senior Center	\$ 5,578	\$ -	
Senior Center - North	\$ 4,441	\$ -	
Creative Lifetime Learning	\$ 802	\$ -	
Area Projects and Other Appropriations			(\$85,000)
Non-Departmental	\$ -	\$ 85,000	
Contributions to Other Funds & Contingencies.....			(\$35,000)
Contingencies	\$ -	\$ 35,000	
	Total Expenditures		\$5,005
Revenues			
Interest & Operating Transfers In	\$ 401,468	\$ -	
Restricted and Intergovernmental	\$ 5,005	\$ -	
Appropriated Fund Balance	\$ -	\$ 401,468	
	Total Revenues		\$5,005

B. Approved American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Project Ordinance Amendment #8 for Fiscal Year 2024-2025.



Project Ordinance
American Rescue Plan Act
Project Ordinance Amendment #8
December 2, 2024
LEGAL DOCUMENT

Be it ordained; Section 5 of the American Rescue Plan Grant Ordinance adopted by the Granville County Board of Commissioners on June 21, 2021 and amended on June 20, 2022, September 3, 2024, November 4, 2024, and November 18, 2024 is superseded and hereby replaced as follows:

Section 5: The County has elected to reimburse \$401,468 of its ARP/CSLFRF funds for Expansion FTE positions authorized by 31 CFR 35.6(b)(3)(ii)(E)(2) from July 1, 2023 through October 31, 2024.

Internal Project Code	Project Description	Expenditure Category	Cost Object	Appropriation of ARP/CSLFRF Funds
2-1	Administration Expansion FTEs for period of July 1, 2023 through October 31, 2024	3.2	Salaries	\$61,446
			Benefits	\$35,626
2-2	Animal Control Expansion FTEs for period of July 1, 2023 through October 31, 2024	3.2	Salaries	\$69,114
			Benefits	\$20,524
2-3	Emergency Management Expansion FTEs for period of July 1, 2023 through October 31, 2024	3.2	Salaries	\$71,783
			Benefits	\$31,031
2-4	Finance Expansion FTEs for period of July 1, 2023 through October 31, 2024	3.2	Salaries	\$24,990
			Benefits	\$7,660
2-5	Parks and Grounds Expansion FTEs for period of July 1, 2023 through October 31, 2024	3.2	Salaries	\$54,392
			Benefits	\$24,991
	TOTAL			\$401,468

C. Approved the following tax refunds, releases and write-offs:

- Refunds November 7, 2024 – November 20, 2024: \$ 729.7
- Releases November 7, 2024 – November 20, 2024: \$11,686.15
- Write-offs (\$2 and less) November 7, 2024 – November 20, 2024: \$ 1.62

D. Approved the Micro-Grant Agreement with the North Carolina Railroad Company (NCRR) and authorized the County Manager to sign the agreement on behalf of Granville County.

OATHS OF OFFICE

Commissioner Mark C. Griffin Took the Oath of Office

North Carolina Representative Frank Sossamon administered the Oath of Office. Griffin's wife Michelle Griffin held the bible for him during the oath of office

I, Mark C. Griffin, do solemnly swear that I will support the constitution of the United States; so help me, God.

I, Mark C. Griffin, do further solemnly and sincerely swear that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to the State of North Carolina, and to the constitutional powers and authorities which are or may be established for the government thereof; and that I will endeavor to support, maintain and defend the constitution of said state, not inconsistent with the constitution of the United States, to the best of my knowledge and ability; so help me, God.

I, Mark C. Griffin, do further swear that I will well and truly execute the duties of the office of County Commissioner for Granville County according to the best of my skill and ability, according to law; so help me, God.

Commissioner Zelodis Jay Took the Oath of Office

Chair Timothy Karan administered the Oath of Office. Zelodis Jay had his mother, wife, and sister hold the bible for him during the oath of office.

I, Zelodis Jay, do solemnly swear that I will support the constitution of the United States; so help me, God.

I, Zelodis Jay, do further solemnly and sincerely swear that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to the State of North Carolina, and to the constitutional powers and authorities which are or may be established for the government thereof; and that I will endeavor to support, maintain and defend the constitution of said state, not inconsistent with the constitution of the United States, to the best of my knowledge and ability; so help me, God.

I, Zelodis Jay, do further swear that I will well and truly execute the duties of the office of County Commissioner for Granville County according to the best of my skill and ability, according to law; so help me, God.

Commissioner Tony W. Cozart Took the Oath of Office

North Carolina District Court Judge Carolina S. Burnette administered the Oath of Office. Cozart's wife Jackie Cozart held the bible for him during the oath of office.

I, Tony W. Cozart, do solemnly swear that I will support the constitution of the United States; so help me, God.

I, Tony W. Cozart, do further solemnly and sincerely swear that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to the State of North Carolina, and to the constitutional powers and authorities which are or may be established for the government thereof; and that I will endeavor to support, maintain and defend the constitution of said state, not inconsistent with the constitution of the United States, to the best of my knowledge and ability; so help me, God.

I, Tony C. Cozart, do further swear that I will well and truly execute the duties of the office of County Commissioner for Granville County according to the best of my skill and ability, according to law; so help me, God.

Commissioner Russell Eugene May, Sr. Took the Oath of Office

North Carolina Representative Frank Sossamon administered the Oath of Office and former Representative Matt Winslow stood beside Representative Sossamon. May's brother Kenny May held the bible for him during the oath of office.

I, Russell Eugene May, Sr., do solemnly swear that I will support the constitution of the United States; so help me, God.

I, Russell Eugene May, Sr., do further solemnly and sincerely swear that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to the State of North Carolina, and to the constitutional powers and authorities which are or may be established for the government thereof; and that I will endeavor to support, maintain and defend the constitution of said state, not inconsistent with the constitution of the United States, to the best of my knowledge and ability; so help me, God.

I, Russell Eugene May, Sr., do further swear that I will well and truly execute the duties of the office of County Commissioner for Granville County according to the best of my skill and ability, according to law; so help me, God.

Break

At 7:23 p.m., Board held a brief reception in the meeting room and lobby. Board returned to open session at 7:47 p.m.

Chair and Vice Chair of the Board Elected

Chair Karan turned the floor over to Clerk Karen Evans.

Clerk Evans opened nominations for Chair of the Granville Board of Commissioners.

Commissioner Karan nominated Commissioner Jimmy Gooch. Commissioner Williford seconded the nomination.

Motioned by Commissioner Tony W. Cozart, seconded by Commissioner Zelodis Jay, and unanimously carried, the Board closed nominations.

Motioned by Commissioner Timothy Karan, seconded by Commissioner Robert Williford, and unanimously carried, the Board elected Commissioner Jimmy Gooch as Board Chair.

Chair Gooch opened the floor for nominations for Vice Chair.

Commissioner Cozart nominated Commissioner Jay. Commissioner May seconded the nomination.

Motioned by Commissioner Robert Williford, seconded Commissioner Russ May, and unanimously carried, the Board closed the nominations.

Motioned by Commissioner Robert Williford, seconded by Commissioner Russ May, and unanimously carried, the Board elected Commissioner Zelodis Jay as Vice Chair.

Board Set Meeting Time, Place, and Schedule for Calendar Year 2025

Motioned by Commissioner Russ May, seconded by Commissioners Robert Williford and Zelodis Jay, and unanimously carried, the Board approved the Meeting Time, Place, and Schedule for Calendar Year 2025 as follows:

January	6	
January	21	Tuesday as Monday is holiday
February	3	
February	17	Retreat Day 1 @ Granville Expo Center
February	21	Retreat Day 2 - Location to be determined
March	3	
March	17	
April	7	
April	21	
May	5	
May	12-15	Budget Workshops as Needed
May	19	
June	2	
June	16	
July	7	
August	4	
September	2	Tuesday as Monday is holiday
October	6	
October	20	
November	3	
November	17	
December	1	

Board Approved Appointment of Members to Boards, Committees, and Liaison Assignments

Motioned by Commissioner Zelodis Jay, seconded by Commissioner Mark Griffin, and unanimously carried, the Board tabled the appointment of members to boards, committees, and liaison assignments to a January regular meeting.

Board Approved Bonds for County Officials for 2025

Motioned by Commissioner Zelodis Jay, seconded by Commissioner Mark Griffin, and unanimously carried, the Board approved the Bonds for County Officials for 2025 as follows:

- Finance Director \$ 1,000,000
- Tax Administrator \$ 250,000
- Sheriff \$ 25,000
- Register of Deeds \$ 25,000

INTRODUCTIONS RECOGNITIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

Board Introduced Cooperative Extension Director Selena McCoy

Selena McKoy, the new Granville County Extension Director, was introduced. Chair Gooch read the full background information included in the agenda packet.

- Started as the new Granville County Extension Director, effective November 4, 2024.
- Holds dual Bachelor of Science degrees in Horticultural Science and Poultry Science from NC State University.
- Began her career with Cooperative Extension as an intern in Wilson County in 2018.
- Served as a Horticulture Agent in Harnett County, working with farmers, growers, and Master Gardener volunteers.
- Led initiatives such as the Harnett County Farmers' Market Planning Team and the Farm-City Week Planning Committee.
- Married to Alex McKoy, an NC State Horticulture graduate and a native of Granville County.
- Excited to settle in Granville County and contribute to its agricultural growth.
- McKoy enjoys gardening with her husband and spending time with their two dogs.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Scotty Brooks, 104 Smith Street, Oxford, NC, addressed the Board regarding the impact of the Granville County School Board's decision to close Granville Central High School and reassign students to J.F. Webb and South Granville High Schools. Brooks expressed concern over the increased challenges for School Resource Officers (SROs), emphasizing that a single officer cannot effectively manage the safety of large student populations, such as 600-800 students. He highlighted the risks of student altercations, teacher assaults, and potential misuse of force by SROs, given the size and strength of some high school athletes. Brooks urged the Board to secure additional funding to support SROs and ensure student safety. He also suggested that city governments, like Oxford, should contribute financially to the schools, as many city residents attend Webb High School. He appealed to the Board to prioritize the safety of Granville County's students, framing it as a moral and practical necessity.

SHERIFF MATTERS

Board Approved Transfer of Retired K9 Asset to Deputy Handler

Sheriff Fountain requested authorization to transfer the ownership of retired K9 asset, K9 Winston, to his handler, Sergeant Mark Harrison. K9 Winston has served with the Granville County Sheriff's Office since 2016, displaying exceptional skills and reliability. The transfer would be conducted at a fee of \$1.00, in compliance with North Carolina General Statute 17F-21, and the proceeds would be deposited into the Sheriff's Special Account. Sergeant Harrison had

made a formal request to assume ownership of K9 Winston, which would be finalized through a Memorandum of Understanding and Agreement between Sheriff Fountain, County Attorney Cummings, and Sergeant Harrison. This request aligns with the guidelines for the disposition of retired service animals.

Motioned by Commissioner Robert Williford, seconded by Commissioner Zelodis Jay, and unanimously carried, Board approved the sale of K9 Winston to Sergeant Mark Harrison for the amount of \$1.00. The Board further authorized the County Manager to execute the contract once finalized by the County Attorney.

Board Updated on Jail-Based Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT) Program

Sheriff Fountain expressed gratitude for Ms. Cathy Hazlett, for her work with the Jail-Based Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT) program. He highlighted her contributions, including feeding the inmate population Thanksgiving dinner and spending time with the women in the jail to assess their needs. Additionally, a program was initiated to provide Christmas items for the female inmates. Sheriff Fountain noted that the MAT program was ready to launch and that two individuals had been identified to join the effort.

Sheriff Fountain also reported on restructuring efforts with Susan Auger of Stepping Up. Together, they developed a workflow to optimize the MAT program's impact on the inmate population and outlined how the program would work with the board, Southern Health Partners, and the assembled team. A new, updated budget proposal was being prepared to adjust for fewer staffing needs, leveraging contractors instead of County employees to reduce costs and maintain funding flexibility for future use. Sheriff Fountain emphasized that the program would operate well within the existing funding allocation.

Cathy Hazlett, the Granville Health Department's Substance Use Prevention and Treatment Program Manager, expressed excitement about the Jail-Based Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT) program. She highlighted the program's focus on using opioid settlement funds to assist a high-risk population by combining addiction treatment, counseling, and reentry services. Hazlett emphasized the program's use of evidence-based strategies to help individuals overcome addiction and redirect their lives in a positive direction. She noted that this initiative, though new to her, was a promising step toward making a meaningful impact on those struggling with substance use.

Dr. Susan Auger, a consultant with the regional Stepping Up Initiative, discussed her role in fostering community collaboration and leveraging resources to support recovery and reduce recidivism among the incarcerated population. She explained her work in visually mapping the program's workflow to create a clear, comprehensive plan for reentry and recovery services. Dr. Auger highlighted how Granville County's efforts could serve as a model for other counties, showcasing leadership and innovation in addressing addiction and mental health challenges. She expressed enthusiasm about the progress made and the program's potential to set an example for other rural communities.

Sheriff Fountain praised the expertise and dedication of Cathy Hazlett and Dr. Susan Auger, acknowledging their pivotal roles in enhancing the jail's operations. He shared that the Granville County jail was recently ranked among the top two in North Carolina, attributing this success in part to the MAT program and other innovative approaches. Sheriff Fountain outlined plans to collaborate with organizations like Freedom House and the DA's office to implement a diversionary program, further expanding support for mental health and addiction recovery. He emphasized the program's broader goal of ensuring individuals return home better prepared for positive life changes, marking a significant cultural shift in addressing these issues.

Commissioner Williford asked about the average number of women housed at the detention center each month.

Sheriff Fountain responded that the current average daily population (ADP) is around eight (8) to ten (10) women, though it could reach up to twenty (20) when housing individuals from other jurisdictions. He noted that approximately half of these women have a substance use disorder and highlighted that Hazlett had meaningful conversations with them during her Thanksgiving visit.

Commissioner Jay asked if the program would assist inmates as they transition back into society after release.

Sheriff Fountain explained that the program includes a comprehensive approach to support reentry. It begins with a questionnaire, adapted from Orange County, to assess the level of addiction and substance use disorders during intake, conducted privately to avoid HIPAA violations. Medical evaluations follow, facilitated by Southern Health Partners, to ensure continuity of care for individuals already receiving addiction treatment. The program also incorporates group therapy, facilitated by local volunteers and organizations, and peer support, with staffing provided at no cost through partnerships like those with Mecklenburg County and Stepping Up.

Sheriff Fountain noted plans for "hot handoffs" to peer support teams upon release and distributing of Narcan to help prevent overdoses. The program aims to address relapse risks and includes tracking to measure reentry success and reduce recidivism. He highlighted the need for diversionary programs for individuals frequently incarcerated for issues like trespassing due to mental health or homelessness. The overarching goal is to save lives, reduce dependency, and foster a holistic approach involving community partners, churches, and ongoing education efforts. Fountain emphasized the importance of mobilizing resources to provide long-term solutions for reentry and recovery.

Hazlett clarified that peer support services are provided through Central Community Services, directed by Lisa Gilbert, who coordinates reentry efforts. She emphasized that while the Sheriff's program currently offers continuity of addiction treatment, such as methadone for detainees already on a program, the opioid settlement program aims to assess all detainees for substance use disorders and mental health needs at booking. This approach ensures that each detainee receives necessary services, which are seamlessly documented and delivered within the detention center. Hazlett highlighted the importance of linking individuals to community resources with peer support from individuals who have experienced incarceration and understand the challenges of reentry. This reentry support begins prior to release to facilitate a smoother transition back into the community.

Commissioner May inquired about the involvement of Visions in the program and whether it is currently active in Granville County. Hazlett confirmed that Visions plays a role in the program and is indeed functioning in the county.

When asked, Sheriff Fountain reported that the average daily jail population for the year was approximately 100 inmates, though it fluctuated between 90 and 120 due to factors such as weekend detainees and agreements with other counties. The Sheriff clarified that no inmates currently receive MAT services as the program has yet to be implemented but projected that approximately 15 inmates could benefit once operational.

The Sheriff also explained a partnership with Mecklenburg County, which provided funding for one peer support staff member for a year. This individual will complement another peer support worker funded through the Stepping Up Initiative. Both roles will support the Sheriff's Office's reentry and community integration programs at no cost to the County. Sheriff Fountain emphasized that the initiative aims to leverage external funding sources to sustain the program without overcommitting County resources.

Commissioner May raised questions regarding the program's oversight, funding sources, and potential long-term financial implications for the County. The Sheriff and Dr. Susan Auger clarified that Mecklenburg's contribution and the Stepping Up Initiative funding are distinct and that the Sheriff's Office remains committed to sustainability through external resources and Medicaid eligibility for released inmates.

During the discussion, Sheriff Fountain and Dr. Susan Auger emphasized that the initiative's costs to the County would not exceed the funds already obligated. Sheriff Fountain clarified that the program's peer support positions are funded through existing grants, including the Stepping Up Initiative and a Mecklenburg County grant, ensuring no additional burden on the County's budget. Furthermore, both affirmed that no new personnel would be allocated or funded in the upcoming budget cycle, and any changes to resource allocation would remain within the scope of already approved plans.

Eliot Clark noted that Medicaid and other insurance resources could cover post-release services, further alleviating costs for the County. Additionally, a federal waiver under review could expand funding opportunities for incarcerated individuals' healthcare services.

Commissioner Cozart expressed his excitement about the comprehensive nature of the program, highlighting the mental health and addiction treatment components, as well as the capacity to assess individuals upon entry. He noted that he felt this program was long overdue and was glad to see a plan in place to support individuals and make a difference in their lives, even after leaving incarceration. He commended everyone involved for their collaborative efforts and expressed enthusiasm for the program's future.

APPOINTMENTS

Board Approved Reappointment to Kerr Tar Regional Council of Governments' Advisory Council on Aging

Motioned by Commissioner Robert Williford, seconded by Commissioner Zelodis Jay, and unanimously carried, the Board reappointed Sue Bryant (District 2) to a Kerr Tar Regional Council of Governments' Advisory Council on Aging at-large seat.

COUNTY MANAGER'S REPORT

County Manager's Report

County Manager Cummings welcomed Commissioner Mark Griffin to the Board and noted that orientation sessions were scheduled for Wednesday, December 4, Thursday, December 10, and Friday, December 13, 2024 to provide a comprehensive overview of County operations. He also expressed gratitude to Commissioner Sue Hinman for her eight years of service, highlighting her active, communicative, and generous contributions during his two years with the County. Cummings acknowledged and echoed the sentiments shared by other commissioners regarding her service.

COUNTY ATTORNEY'S REPORT

County Attorney's Report

County Attorney Wrenn reported having no business to address in open session. He echoed County Manager Cummings' remarks, welcoming Commissioner Griffin and expressing appreciation for the opportunity to serve alongside Commissioner Hinman.

PRESENTATIONS BY COUNTY BOARD MEMBERS

Commissioner Jay welcomed Commissioner Griffin to the Board and expressed appreciation for Commissioner Hinman's service, acknowledging her dedication and heartfelt contributions to the County.

Commissioner Williford echoed the sentiments of welcoming Commissioner Griffin and praised Commissioner Hinman for fostering a sense of family among the Board members. He reflected on her service and noted that while there were occasional disagreements, there was always mutual respect and care.

Commissioner Griffin thanked the community and the Board for their support during his transition into the role. He recognized County Manager Cummings and fellow commissioners for their guidance during orientation. Commissioner Griffin also expressed admiration for Commissioner Hinman's legacy, noting her longstanding friendship with his family and her contributions to the community.

Commissioner Cozart commended the success of the recent Granville Health System Foundation fundraiser and highlighted the community's support for the hospital. He praised Commissioner Hinman for her service, particularly in social services and other efforts, and thanked her for embracing his family. Cozart also welcomed Commissioner Griffin and offered his support in their future collaboration.

Commissioner May congratulated the newly elected and re-elected officials on their appointments, including Commissioner Griffin. He thanked outgoing Chair Karan for his leadership and recognized Commissioner Hinman for her impactful service and legacy. Commissioner May mentioned attending the Granville County Public Schools board meeting and emphasized the importance of collaboration with the school board as they navigate transitions and consolidations. He reiterated his commitment to fiscal responsibility and stewardship on behalf of Granville County citizens, thanking them for the honor of serving as a commissioner.

Commissioner Karan reflected on his time as Chair, noting the challenges and rewards of the role, including some humorous moments about the toll it took on him physically. He emphasized the importance of unity on the Board, even when disagreements occur, and how they always make peace and respect each other's views. Commissioner Karan also discussed the communication challenges the Board faces, particularly in helping the public understand complex issues like the EPA's copper rule and revenue-neutral tax rates. He expressed gratitude for the dedicated staff in Granville County and concluded by wishing everyone a Merry Christmas and encouraging kindness during the holiday season.

Chair Gooch expressed gratitude to Commissioner Karan for his leadership as Chair and for the support he provided during the transition. He welcomed Commissioner Griffin to the Board, offering support and highlighting the orientation and training Commissioner Griffin will undergo to help him acclimate to his new role. Chair Gooch congratulated Commissioners Jay, Dr. Cozart, and May and thanked Commissioner Hinman for her service. He wrapped up his comments by wishing everyone a Merry Christmas, acknowledging the holiday parades, and expressing appreciation for the involvement and support of the community throughout the year.

Commissioner May took a moment to recognize and thank Clerk Karen Evans, Deputy Clerk Jessica Todd, and Administrative Support Specialist Audrey Hill for their hard work and dedication. He acknowledged the seamless operation of Board meetings, attributing it to their careful preparation and efforts. May expressed that their contributions do not go unnoticed and extended his gratitude on behalf of the Board, wishing them a safe and Merry Christmas.

ANY OTHER MATTERS

There we no additional matters.

CLOSED SESSION

Motioned by Commissioner Timothy Karan, seconded by Commissioner Russ May, and unanimously carried, Board went into closed session as allowed by North Carolina General Statute 143-318.11(a)(4) for economic development matters at 8:48 p.m.

RETURN TO OPEN SESSION

Motioned by Commissioner Timothy Karan, seconded by Commissioner Zelodis Jay, and unanimously carried, the Board returned to open session at 9:49 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Motioned by Commissioner Zelodis Jay, seconded by Commissioner Tony W. Cozart and unanimously carried, the Board adjourned at 9:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Karen Evans
Clerk to the Board