

GRANVILLE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
December 4, 2023
GRANVILLE EXPO AND CONVENTION CENTER
4185 US Highway 15 South, Oxford, North Carolina

PRESENT:

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

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

CALL TO ORDER

At 7:00 p.m. Chair May called the meeting to order. Reverend John Gooch had the invocation and Commissioner Sue Hinman led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chair May presented Clerk Debra A. Weary with flowers and a card from Vice Chair Karan and him and thanked her for her service on behalf of the entire Board.

CONSENT AGENDA

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 #4 for fiscal year 2023-2024:

BUDGET AMENDMENT #4			
December 4, 2023			
Legal Document			
<i>Be it ordained,</i> the FY 2023-2024 Annual Budget Ordinance is hereby amended as follows:			
GENERAL FUND			
Expenditures	Increase	Decrease	Total
General Government			\$ 5,000
Administration		(18,000)	
Human Resources	18,000		
Register of Deeds	5,000		
Public Safety			\$ 37,075
Sheriff's Department		(6,785)	
Emergency Management	32,860		
Animal Control	11,000		
Area Projects and Other Appropriations			\$ 1,785
Non-Departmental		(5,000)	
Fleet	6,785		
Total Expenditures			\$ 43,860
Revenues			
Restricted and Intergovernmental	43,860		
Total Revenues			\$ 43,860

BUDGET AMENDMENT #4
Detail [For Reference Only]

				Amendment	Balance after Amendment
GENERAL GOVERNMENT					
General Fund/ Human Resources					
Expenditures: Increase					
10	4125	413	Lease for HR Office Space	\$8,000	\$8,000
10	4125	510	Capital Outlay	\$10,000	\$11,000
10	4120	121	Salaries	(\$18,000)	\$184,735

Description: Fund new lease and equipment for additional HR office space by transferring funds from lapsed Administration salaries.

GENERAL GOVERNMENT					
General Fund/ Register of Deeds					
Expenditures: Increase					
10	4180	188	Supplemental Pension	\$5,000	\$5,000
10	8540	111	Personnel Adjustments	(\$5,000)	\$95,000

Description: Budget monthly supplemental pension for Register of Deeds Director.

PUBLIC SAFETY					
General Fund/ Sheriff					
Expenditures: Increase					
10	8550	353	R & M - Vehicles	\$6,785	\$61,623
10	4310	353	R & M - Vehicles	(\$6,785)	\$54,632

Description: Transfer remaining funds in Sheriff Repair & Maintenance - Vehicles to Fleet R&M Vehicles. Actual expenditures for this amount were already moved from Sheriff to Fleet.

PUBLIC SAFETY					
General Fund/Emergency Management					
Expenditures: Increase					
10	4330	606	Homeland Security Grant - DPR-4 Grant	\$32,860	\$32,860
Revenues: Increase					
10	3433	250	Homeland Sec. Grant	\$32,860	\$32,860

Description: Fund purchase of two message boards with Home Security DPR - 4 grant.

PUBLIC SAFETY					
General Fund/Animal Control					
Expenditures: Increase					
10	4380	398	Petco Spay & Neuter Exp	\$11,000	\$11,000
Revenues: Increase					
10	3348	870	Petco Spay & Neuter Revenue	\$11,000	\$11,000

Description: To recognize receipt of PetcoLove Spay & Neuter grant and appropriate funds for expenditure.

B. Approved declaring the following vehicles as surplus to be sold via online auction platform or by Enterprise Fleet Management if they chose to accept them for sale:

VIN	Year	Department	Make	Model	Mileage	Condition
8575	2011	Tax	Ford	Fusion	71356	Fair – has flat tire
7430	1999	Library	Ford	Explorer	100,000+	Good
9928	2003	Library	Ford	F-150	100,000+	Good

C. Approved unassigning \$674,000 from Human Services back to the General Fund (previously designated to GHS for the parking lot and air handler projects (\$1,361,873 - \$246,684 - \$441,189=\$674,000).

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

- Refunds November 9, 2023 – November 21, 2023: \$ 509.86
- Releases November 9, 2023 – November 21, 2023: \$ 973.21
- Write-offs (\$2 and less) November 9, 2023 – November 21, 2023: \$ 0.90

E. Approved the adoption of the Granville County Detention (Jail) Center Health Plan.

F. Approved minutes:

- October 2, 2023 Regular Meeting

ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

Chair May read the following statement:

I am very appreciative of our Board as we have worked diligently to position Granville County to be a better place to live work and play. Thank you, County Manager, Deputy County Manager, County Attorney, and County staff for all the hard work you have done this last year. There are and continue to be challenges and demands brought about by a growing county and at the crossroads of how growth is to be managed. We must do so responsibly, managing with the right balance so as not to lose the rural character our citizens continue to articulate at nearly every meeting and over the last year. We must also continue to work on:

Ensuring we balance our distribution and betterment of county services in an equitable fashion throughout Granville County. We made great strides this year in improving our county employees and Sheriff's office personnel compensation. This must continue as Granville is no longer isolated but must be able to compete with surrounding cities and counties. We continue to assist Granville Health on meeting our EMS needs, and fire services are receiving funding at levels never seen before. This demand will continue as we work on future equitable funding formulas. We continued to build upon our relationship with the school board, meeting budget requests; and continue to foster innovative concepts, such as our joint athletic projects, along with activity bus funding and other areas that will aid in retention of our teachers. We achieved substantial funding from the State to spur more economic development and continued assistance with needed water and sewer infrastructure funding, not to mention a new manufacturing center to be built and the beginning of real development in Triangle North as we are truly now positioned to see true economic growth. We also are happy to remind the public that coming soon our meetings will be streamed and enhancements will be coming online in the new year.

This year has also been a year of transition within the County government. Our newly hired Manager has had the opportunity to meet across the county and listen directly to the public. We added key personnel, and we will continue to work on solutions for better services but do so effectively with efficiency. Finally, Granville as a county and collective body must continue to work on our local economy that can aid in the reduction of poverty and ensure the disadvantaged receive the needed resources, particularly the young, those with handicaps, the mentally challenged, and the elderly.

Chair and Vice Chair of the Board Elected

Chair May turned the floor over to Clerk Debra A. Weary.

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

Commissioner Cozart nominated Commissioner Timothy Karan. Commissioner Williford seconded the nomination.

Motioned by Commissioner Jimmy Gooch, seconded by Commissioner Zelodis Jay, and unanimously carried, the Board closed nominations.

Motioned by Commissioner Tony W. Cozart, seconded by Commissioner Robert Williford, and unanimously carried, the Board elected Commissioner Timothy Karan as Board Chair.

Chair Karan opened the floor for nominations for Vice Chair.

Commissioner Jay nominated Commissioner Jimmy Gooch. Commissioner May seconded the nomination.

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

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

Commissioner Williford commented that this had been his first full year as commissioner, and Chair Karan assisted him in navigating and learning on the go. He expressed appreciation for his guidance on various matters, from basic operations to more intricate details.

Chair Karan stated that one of his goals for the year was to tear down some silos. He mentioned that there needed to be a change in the name of the new senior center being built in northern Granville County to community center, as it should be a cradle-to-grave center. He emphasized the importance of breaking down silos and making schools not just for children, but for everyone in the community.

Board Set Meeting Time, Place, and Schedule for Calendar Year 2024

Motioned by Commissioner Tony W. Cozart, seconded by Commissioner Robert Williford, and unanimously carried, the Board approved the Meeting Time, Place, and Schedule for Calendar Year 2024 as follows:

January	2	Tuesday as Monday is a holiday
January	16	Tuesday as Monday is a holiday
February	5	
February	19	Retreat Day 1 @ Granville Expo Center
February	23	Retreat Day 2 - Location to be determined
March	4	
March	18	
April	1	
April	15	
May	6	
May	13-16	Budget Workshops as Needed
May	20	
June	3	
June	17	
July	1	
August	5	
September	3	Tuesday as Monday is a holiday
October	7	
October	21	
November	4	
November	18	
December	2	

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

Motioned by Commissioner Jimmy Gooch, seconded by Commissioner Tony W. Cozart, and unanimously carried, the Board approved the appointment of members to boards, committees, and liaison assignments as follows:

- District 1 – Commissioner Zelodis Jay**
- Board of Equalization and Review
 - Digital Infrastructure Planning Committee
 - District Health Board
 - Emergency Services Committee
 - Environmental Affairs Advisory Committee Liaison

- Granville Health System Board of Trustees
- K.A.R.T.S.
- Kerr-Tar Regional COG Board
- Planning Board Liaison
- Solid Waste Liaison
- Water/Sewer Matters Liaison

District 2 – Commissioner Rob Williford

- Audit Review Committee
- Board Of Equalization and Review
- Emergency Services Committee
- Finance Liaison
- Human Relations Commission
- Juvenile Crime Prevention Council
- Opioid Advisory Committee
- Oxford Downtown EDC Board
- Kerr-Tar Workforce Development Board/Private Industry Council
- Solid Waste Liaison

District 3 – Commissioner Sue Hinman

- Animal Control Advisory Committee Liaison
- Board of Equalization and Review
- DOT Issues
- Franklin-Vance-Warren Opportunity Inc.
- Library Board Liaison
- Parks, Greenways and Recreation Advisory Committee
- Social Services Board
- Staff Appreciation

District 4 – Commissioner Tony Cozart

- Board of Equalization and Review
- Franklin-Vance-Warren Opportunity Inc.
- Granville Health System Board of Trustees
- Human Relations Commission
- Public Safety Liaison
- School Administration Liaison
- Social Services Board
- Staff Appreciation

District 5 – Commissioner Russ May

- Board Of Equalization and Review
- CAMPO- Executive Board
- Granville Fire Commission
- Planning Board Liaison
- Public Safety Liaison
- Kerr Tar RPO- TAC (Rural Planning Organization-Transportation Advisory Committee)
- School Administration Liaison
- Upper Neuse River Basin Committee
- Vaya Region 4 Board of Directors
- Veteran Affairs Committee Liaison
- Economic Development Advisory Board

District 6 – Commissioner Tim Karan

- Board Of Equalization and Review
- Digital Infrastructure Planning Committee
- Emergency Services Committee
- Extension Leadership Advisory Council
- Granville Health System Board of Trustees

- Greenways Advisory Council
- Parks, Greenways, And Recreation Advisory Committee
- Opioid Advisory Committee
- SGWASA
- Triangle North Board

District 7 – Commissioner Jimmy Gooch

- Audit Review Committee
- Board of Equalization and Review
- CAMPO Executive Board, Alternate
- Granville Health System Board of Trustees, Ex-Officio
- Opioid Advisory Committee
- Senior Center Advisory Committee Liaison
- SGWASA
- Soil & Water Board Liaison
- Transportation Plan Work Group
- Water/Sewer Matters Liaison

Board Approved Bonds for County Officials for 2024

Motioned by Commissioner Russ May, seconded by Commissioner Zelodis Jay, and unanimously carried, the Board approved the Bonds for County Officials for 2024 as follows:

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

Commissioner May mentioned that he had asked the County Manager to check with the County Attorney to see if there is a bond for the County Manager. He also mentioned that if the County Manager decides to join an organization or obtain liability insurance, it should be at the county's expense.

County Manager Drew Cummings said that they had discussed a matter with the County Attorney and stated that they would follow up if it was deemed appropriate.

INTRODUCTIONS RECOGNITIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

Board Updated on Granville County Human Relations Commission

Human Relations Commission Chair Reverend John Gooch updated the Board on accomplishments and activities of the Granville County Human Relations Commission (HRC). He mentioned that they have attended state meetings and have been highly regarded as a volunteer organization. They have helped prevent evictions and have intervened in rental and homeowner disputes. They have also been sponsors of the Martin Luther King Breakfast and the Martin Luther King essay contest for high school and elementary students.

Reverend Gooch mentioned that the Human Relations Commission has a bylaws committee that is responsible for helping to keep intact the things they have done over the years and to build on that foundation. He emphasized the importance of having a strong foundation and emphasized that the bylaws serve as the organization's foundation.

For consideration, Reverend Gooch requested that the chairperson of the Human Relations Commission be informed about any upcoming changes or issues concerning the commission. He also requested that the County Manager attend the Human Relations Commission meetings regularly to ensure that they are moving in the right direction. Additionally, he mentioned that there were volunteer individuals who expressed interest in serving on the commission and said he would provide their names to one of the commissioners for consideration.

Reverend Gooch recognized members of the Human Relations Commission by asking them to raise their hands or stand. He also acknowledged Human Relations Commission staff liaison Audrey Hill.

Commissioner Sue Hinman said she had a nomination in District 3, Cynthia Griffin, and asked Reverend Gooch to put her on the list for consideration. Reverend Gooch said that he believed he also had that name. He would deliver the list to the County Commissioner liaison.

Chair Karan thanked Reverend Gooch for his prayer, expressed appreciation for the Human Relations Commission, and said that there was no malice in anyone's heart when making decisions about who serves the community.

When Commissioner Cozart asked about the upcoming Human Relations Commission Martin Luther King Breakfast, Reverend Gooch replied that there would not be a Martin Luther King breakfast this year, but there would be a Martin Luther King program on January 16, 2024 at the Oxford Baptist Church. He expressed the commission's commitment to serving the county and ensuring equal treatment for all individuals.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Harvey Spur, 4185 Tommy Sneed Road, Oxford, NC, made the following public comments. He thanked the County Manager for the listening sessions, but he was not able to attend. He spoke about the Oxford expansion. He noted that Oxford has 350 pages of online regarding the matter. He mentioned Knotts Grove Road and said that it looked better with trees than houses. He held up a paper saying the Hospital has a D rating. He said Granville County is going from 4,000 housing units to 8,000 housing units. He mentioned that half the population goes to Durham to the doctor and Costco for groceries. He mentioned that Oxford is going from 3.5 million to seven million gallons of drinking water and 8% of water goes to wastewater. He said it will need be figure out where that is going as it will affect the schools. He wanted to know who in the county was in charge and what the prospects were for dealing with the future and the cost. He thinks it might cost the county money. In terms of administration, he said that 40 boards and commissions is a lot. He said he wished he had more communication as a citizen and that he could not thank the Oxford Public Ledger for much information. He would like to see the county move forward without a tax increase and consider giving retired people a discount.

Chair Karan stated that although the public comments period is not a question and response session, he wanted to speak to the Leapfrog rating that Granville Health System (GHS) received. He explained that Leapfrog, the organization that gave Granville Health System a D rating, is a pay-to-play organization. To receive a rating from Leapfrog, the organization must pay them. He also mentioned that Granville Health System has a four-star rating from CMS (Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services), the Medicaid rating system through the State of North Carolina. GHS is considering paying Leapfrog to give them a better rating in the future. Regarding Mr. Spur's other statements, Chair Karan said that he would not debate or discount anything he said and expressed appreciation for his attendance.

SOCIAL SERVICES MATTERS

Board Approved Additional DSS Positions to Cover Medicaid Expansion Workload

Department of Social Services (DSS) Director LaToya Toussaint delivered a comprehensive presentation on the implications of Medicaid expansion for the Department of Social Services in Granville County. Beginning with the legislative changes in spring 2023, which extended Medicaid coverage to thousands of residents, DSS Director Toussaint highlighted the concurrent end of the Public Health Emergency (PHE) on December 1, 2023, necessitating the reapplication of thousands of Medicaid recipients. She explained that the dual event is expected to result in a substantial 25% increase in caseloads for Medicaid-eligibility caseworkers. The presentation

outlined significant changes in Medicaid requirements, broadening eligibility to individuals aged 19 to 64, regardless of disability, with higher income thresholds at 138% of the federal poverty level.

DSS Director Toussaint provided a retrospective analysis of Medicaid enrollment trends, noting an average annual growth of 8-10% until the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, which caused a notable spike to 21%. The unwinding period between the current and next fiscal year was projected to bring about over 11% annual growth. The department experienced unprecedented growth during the pandemic, attributing it to the automatic eligibility granted to those without other medical insurance. Ms. Toussaint also underscored the anticipated impact on workload, revealing that staff currently processes over 200 applications per worker per month and emphasized the time-intensive nature of training Medicaid staff.

In preparation for the December 1st rollout, DSS Director Toussaint detailed various measures, including updates to phone systems, the establishment of a messaging line, community assistance calendars, drop box locations for paper applications, and a social media campaign to raise awareness. The core recommendation emanating from the presentation was the addition of seven full-time positions to the Medicaid program, incurring an annual cost of \$536,000. Notably, the county cost for the current fiscal year would be covered by one-time state funding, with future costs expected to be offset by ongoing state reimbursements. Ms. Toussaint concluded by highlighting the monumental significance of Medicaid expansion for North Carolinians' health and wellness, emphasizing the department's commitment to monitoring and adjusting to the evolving landscape, as evidenced by the observed surge in applications post-rollout.

When asked to restate what she was asking for, DSS Director Toussaint said she was requesting seven positions to be housed within the Department of Social Services to support Medicaid expansion without asking for additional funding from the county.

When asked, DSS Director Toussaint mentioned that they have evaluated the availability of space and have placed the staff in certain locations throughout their Oxford and Creedmoor locations.

Motioned Commissioner Sue Hinman, seconded by Commissioner Tony W. Cozart, and unanimously carried, the Board approved seven new positions for Granville County Social Services to include four (4) Medicaid Eligibility Case Workers, one (1) Medicaid Supervisor, one (1) Trainer/Quality Assurance position, and one (1) Accountant position to help support the expanded caseload caused by Medicaid Expansion across the State of North Carolina, with one-time funding from the State of North Carolina.

Board Approved Reclassification of DSS Administrative Assistant II Grade 65 to Processing Unit Supervisor V – Grade 61.

When asked if there were any additional Department of Social Service (DSS) items, County Manager Drew Cummings mentioned a reclassification request for an existing DSS position that needed to be walked in. The reclassified position was not expected to cost the county any additional money and was a slightly lower grade than the current classification.

Motioned by Commissioner Robert Williford, seconded by Commissioner Sue Hinman, and unanimously carried, the Board approved reclassification of the DSS Administrative Assistant II – Grade 65 to another Processing Unit Supervisor V – Grade 61.

County Manager Cummings thanked DSS Director Toussaint for her excellent presentation on a complicated topic and commended her for her ability to handle various complex issues since her arrival, which was approximately 45 days prior.

When asked, Ms. Toussaint stated that currently, over 16,000 residents in Granville County were enrolled in Medicaid, and that number is expected to grow to over 18,000 by the end of the fiscal year.

Chair Karan noted that the significant number of Medicaid recipients in the county indicates that 30% of the population in Granville County is at or near the federal poverty level.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Board Approved Contract for Pump Station Site Maintenance – Triangle North Granville Industrial Park

Development Services Director Scott Phillips stated that the wastewater pump station construction, which was done approximately 23 years ago, needs site maintenance. The requested work includes removing small trees and accumulated debris from outside and within the chain link perimeter, establishing a 10-foot clear buffer around the station, and removing accumulated roots and grass within the inside fenced area. This maintenance work was being done in preparation for more extensive work to be done later, which involved reconditioning the pump station. Four fixed-price lump sum prices were obtained for this work. He recommended awarding the fixed price service contract to E Christian and Son for an amount not to exceed \$13,912.50 unless authorized by change order.

Motioned by Commissioner Russ May, seconded by Commissioner Tony W. Cozart, and unanimously carried, the Board approved awarding a fixed-price service contract for pump station site maintenance at Triangle North Granville to E. Christian and Son for an amount not to exceed \$13,912.50 unless authorized by change order.

APPOINTMENTS

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

Motioned by Commissioner Zelodis Jay, seconded by Commissioner Tony W. Cozart, and unanimously carried, the Board reappointed Ethel Anderson (District 1) to the Kerr Tar Regional Council of Governments' Advisory Council on Aging.

Motioned by Commissioner Jimmy Gooch, seconded Commissioner Robert Williford, and unanimously carried, the Board reappointed Gary Kanady (District 6) to the Kerr Tar Regional Council of Governments' Advisory Council on Aging.

Board Approved Appointment to Granville Health System Board of Trustees

Motioned by Commissioner Jimmy Gooch, seconded by Commissioner Robert Williford, and unanimously carried, the Board reappointed Zelodis Jay (District 1), Tony Cozart (District 4), and Timothy Karan (District 6) to the Granville Health System Board of Trustees.

Chair Karan proposed the appointment of Commissioner Gooch, currently serving in an Ex Officio capacity, to a voting rights position, after which he would serve as Ex Officio. Seeking guidance on the procedural steps for this recommendation, Chair Karan sought the advice of County Attorney Wrenn.

County Attorney Jim Wrenn suggested considering the matter under advisement and addressing it formally at an upcoming meeting.

COUNTY MANAGER'S REPORT

Board the Adoption of Resolution Supporting Granville County Public Schools Grant Application

Chair Karan said that the purpose of this item is to approve a resolution to be submitted along with a grant application being submitted by the Granville County Public Schools to the state's needs-based Public Schools Capital Fund grant program. He invited County Manager Cummings to speak.

County Manager Cummings provided a concise overview, outlining an application seeking the maximum grant amount of \$52 million under a grant program. The application, if successful, would necessitate a 5% local match amounting to \$2.6 million. Conversations with the schools had already taken place regarding the county's intentions for the funds, and the County Manager recommended supporting the school district in the application. He noted that the award outcome would be known in late winter or early spring. The commitment outlined would involve matching the grant award with the required 5% local match if granted.

Commissioner Hinman raised a point, noting that the grant in question had been applied for previously, and the county had already given its approval. While acknowledging the need for a renewed agreement, Commissioner Hinman emphasized that this would not involve unfamiliar funds.

County Manager Cummings stated that the application had been submitted, perhaps twice, confirming Commissioner Hinman's observation.

Motioned by Commissioner Russ May, seconded by Commissioner Tony W. Cozart, and unanimously carried, the Board approved the adoption of the following *Joint Resolution Supporting An Application for the Needs-Based Public School Capital Fund Grant* for the former G.C. Hawley Middle School campus.



JOINT RESOLUTION SUPPORTING AN APPLICATION FOR THE NEEDS-BASED PUBLIC SCHOOL CAPITAL FUND GRANT

WHEREAS, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) is offering a Needs-Based Public School Capital Fund Grant; and

WHEREAS, the 532 students currently enrolled in GC Hawley Middle School are temporarily housed at the former site of the Creedmoor Elementary School campus, which was not designed for middle school instruction, nor does it have sufficient facilities for athletics and other special educational programming; and

WHEREAS, the vast majority of the former GC Hawley Middle School facility is in need of demolition or renovation; and

WHEREAS, there is sufficient space at the former GC Hawley Middle School campus to add additional community recreational facilities; and

WHEREAS, Granville County Public Schools is eligible to apply for up to fifty-two million dollars (\$52,000,000) to be used toward a Middle School project; and

WHEREAS, a local match of 5% of any grant funds awarded to Granville County Public Schools is required in order to apply for this Needs-Based Grant; and

WHEREAS, funds, if awarded, from this Needs-Based Grant will be used for new construction and renovation to the former GC Hawley Middle School.

THEREFORE, be it resolved that Granville County Public Schools will apply for the Needs-Based Capital Fund Grant in the amount of fifty-two million dollars (\$52,000,000), with any funds awarded to be used toward renovations to GC Hawley Middle School, and that Granville County Commissioners agree to match 5% of any amount awarded to Granville County Public Schools from the Needs-Based Capital Fund Grant.

Commissioner May asked County Manager Cummings to get updates from Bill Graham at Granville County Public Schools regarding the progress of the wiring at J.F. Webb and athletic projects at J.F. Webb High School and South Granville High School.

Board Approved Compensation Increase for Granville County Jury Commission

County Manager Drew Cummings presented a request for a pay increase for Jury Commission members. He highlighted the statutory requirement of this body, responsible for compiling the list of eligible jurors in Granville County annually. The proposed increase was a modest adjustment in their compensation, raising it from \$300 to \$500 per year.

Motioned by Commissioner Zelodis Jay, seconded by Commissioner Sue Hinman, and unanimously carried, the Board approved a compensation increase to \$500 for the Granville County Jury Commission.

Board Approved Contracting with CivicPlus for a Website Content Management System

County Manager Cummings invited Public Information Officer Terry Hobgood to present this item.

Public Information Officer Terry Hobgood presented a proposal for CivicPlus to host and manage the content of the Granville County website, along with a full redesign and redeployment of Granville County's website, granvillecounty.org. Noting the use of WordPress since 2016, he highlighted its limitations in meeting the current needs of staff and citizens. CivicPlus offers the "Notify Me" service, enabling residents to receive notifications for new content, fostering more active citizen engagement. Mr. Hobgood showcased CivicPlus-designed websites emphasizing easy navigation, mobile compatibility, and prominent display of news and events. He recommended approval of CivicPlus for website hosting and content management services, endorsing a comprehensive redesign. He further recommended authorizing the County Manager to execute the proposal and service agreement once finalized by the County Attorney, pending some ongoing details with CivicPlus.

Commissioner May asked what the \$22,464.30 per year includes. Mr. Hobgood replied, hosting, management of the site, technical support, and additional features as well. When asked about the availability of technical support, Mr. Hobgood responded, indicating that they have utilized the vendor for a few other purposes. In instances of major issues, such as website outages, support would be accessible at any time. For minor issues, the response time is expected to be within one to two days based on Mr. Hobgood's past experiences with the vendor. He also clarified that based on their research and comparisons with other vendors, the amount is considered standard and, in fact, lower than some of the alternatives they explored. He also responded that once the contract is signed, the full design and implementation process typically takes 9-12 months, and that the county currently hosts its own website entirely in-house. He reassured the Board that the existing site would remain in place until the new implementation is completed.

Chair Karan addressed the need for improved accessibility to public information, acknowledging that not everyone relies on local papers for updates. Mentioning the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners' efforts to amend public advertising, Chair Karan explained that one county in the state has transitioned to a website-based approach.

Chair Karan read the funding information and restated the recommendation from Mr. Hobgood.

Motioned by Commissioner Tony W. Cozart, seconded by Commissioner Sue Hinman, and unanimously carried, the Board approved, the proposal from Civic Plus at a first-year cost of \$62,7234.50 for website hosting and content management services in conjunction with a full redesign of the Granville County website (www.granvillecounty.org) and recurring annual service fees beginning in year two at \$22,464.30 and approved authorizing the County Manager to execute the proposal and service agreement once finalized by the County Attorney.

Mr. Cummings noted that nearly all the upfront one-time costs for the CivicPlus website project were being covered by a grant.

Mr. Cummings asked what the difference in cost is from the hosting we currently have, and Mr. Hobgood said that he could provide that information at a later date.

Chair Karan emphasized the challenges citizens face in receiving information, discussing the common issue of public emails, often referred to as the "sunshine list," going to spam folders. He highlighted the difficulty in monitoring these bulk emails and sharing personal experiences of overlooking important information in mass distributions. Chair Karan encouraged citizens to explore multiple avenues for receiving information and acknowledged that personal unawareness does not necessarily indicate inadequate advertising.

Board Approved Contracting with CivicPlus for CivicClerk Agenda Management Software

Clerk Debra A. Weary requested the board's consideration to upgrade the agenda management software by contracting with CivicPlus. She highlighted the current limitations of the Agenda.Net software with Provox, used since April 2018, as it is not web-based and lacks efficiency. Clerk Weary emphasized the need for a more streamlined and accessible software system, especially for remote work scenarios. She noted that CivicPlus, being the same company involved in the website upgrade, offered potential discounts and recommended approval of the proposed contract with CivicPlus for CivicClerk agenda management software and recommended authorizing the County Manager and County Attorney to finalize and execute the contract.

When asked if the software included transcription, Clerk Weary confirmed that it did not.

Motioned by Commissioner Russ May, seconded by Commissioner Zelodis Jay, and unanimously carried, the Board approved contracting with CivicPlus for CivicClerk agenda management software implementation and training in the amount of \$14,266.50 for the first year and annual recurring services starting year two in the amount of \$14,178.15 and approved authorizing the County Manager and County Attorney to finalize and execute the contract.

County Manager's Report

County Manager Cummings provided a brief update during the meeting, expressing a sense of concern regarding an incident at the courthouse earlier that morning. He explained that the courthouse had been evacuated due to smoke in the superior courtroom caused by a faulty belt in a rooftop unit. Local fire departments, particularly the Oxford Fire Department, were swift to respond. Fortunately, the situation was contained, and the courthouse was ventilated. Although the Superior Court did not resume that day, no significant damage occurred. Mr. Cummings expressed gratitude to the first responders and relief that the incident was not more serious than a slipping fan belt.

COUNTY ATTORNEY'S REPORT

County Attorney's Report

County Attorney Jim Wrenn did not have any items.

PRESENTATIONS BY COUNTY BOARD MEMBERS

Commissioner Jay extended congratulations to the Chairman and Vice Chairman and expressed gratitude to the past Chairman for his efforts, time, and service. He wished everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Commissioner Williford expressed gratitude to the past Chairman for helping him transition into his role as a new commissioner. He acknowledged the significant assistance he received, including numerous phone calls to Clerk Weary and the Chairman for guidance. Commissioner Williford also thanked the current Chairman for addressing his inquiries.

Commissioner Hinman expressed gratitude to all fellow commissioners, specifically acknowledging Commissioner May for his excellent work as chair over the past year and expressing admiration for Commissioner Karan as chair. She also welcomed Commissioner Gooch. She thanked everyone who participated in the recent parades in Butner and Creedmoor and expressed excitement about the upcoming parade in Oxford. She extended thanks to everyone involved in supporting the Department of Social Services, acknowledging the challenges they face. Commissioner Hinman concluded by wishing everyone a Merry Christmas.

Commissioner Cozart thanked the past chairman for dedicating a significant amount of energy during their tenure, expressing appreciation for his efforts. He shared his experience of riding one of the new activity buses involved in a joint venture with the school system, commending its quality and expressing pride in seeing students use such a first-class bus. Commissioner Cozart concluded by wishing everyone a special and enjoyable holiday season with their families.

Commissioner May expressed gratitude to Commissioner Karan for collaboration during the past year. He extended appreciation to Clerk Weary and emphasized that all staff members are valued. He acknowledged the efforts of the staff, expressing thanks for their contributions to the county. He touched on various topics, including fire department enhancements and the need to address equitable distribution of the fire tax dollars. He highlighted the County's initiatives in improving communications with the public through the website and audio-visual streaming. He acknowledged ongoing work with the County Attorney on DEQ (Department of Environmental Quality) matters and noted he is looking forward to updates. The Wilton Convenience Center was mentioned as an ongoing concern, and he encouraged resolution. In conclusion, Commissioner May wished everyone a Merry Christmas, emphasizing the importance of cherishing moments with loved ones during the holiday season. He urged the public and staff to take time to refresh and enjoy time with their families.

Commissioner Gooch expressed gratitude to Commissioner May for his leadership throughout the past year, acknowledging his diligent efforts. Congratulations were extended to Commissioner Karan for being elected as the new Chair, and Commissioner Gooch thanked fellow members for their support in his role as Vice Chair. He highlighted the strengths of Granville County, praising the excellent employees, attorney, County Manager, clerk, and staff. Commissioner Gooch expressed appreciation for all county employees and extended wishes for a Merry Christmas to everyone in Granville County.

Chair Karan expressed gratitude for the past Chairman's work and said that projects initiated during his tenure would continue with the same dedication. He discussed personal goals, emphasizing the need for an aquatic center in Granville County and highlighting the importance of community connections, especially in schools. He talked about plans to enhance recreational facilities, ensuring accessibility for all residents. Acknowledging the challenges of funding and addressing the poverty level, he stressed the importance of taxpayer support. He emphasized the comprehensive approach to serving residents from "cradle to grave" and expressed the desire to make facilities available across the county. Chair Karan mentioned convenience sites, recognizing the difficulties in citing new locations, especially in southern Granville County. He encouraged understanding and cooperation from residents in citing new sites. In closing, Chair Karan extended holiday wishes, expressing hope for joyful festivities. He reassured those facing sorrows that the community stands ready to support them.

ANY OTHER MATTERS

There were no additional matters.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon a motion by Commissioner Robert Williford, seconded by Commissioner Zelodis Jay, and unanimously carried, the Board adjourned at 8:29 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Debra A. Weary, NCMCC, CMC
Clerk to the Board

ATTEST:

Timothy Karan, Chair