

GRANVILLE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
March 4, 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. Vice Chair Jimmy Gooch had the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

TAX MATTERS

Board Updated on Error in the Published Schedule of Values

Chair Karan said that an item of importance was added to the agenda and would be addressed first.

County Attorney Jim Wrenn addressed a discrepancy in the neighborhood adjustment table used in the Schedule of Values for 2024. It was revealed that the neighborhood adjustment table, located on pages 353 through 360 of the Schedule of Values prepared by the County's contracted appraisal firm, Pearson's Appraisals, contained adjustment factors utilized in the 2018 revaluation, hereinafter referred to as "the 2018 adjustment factors". These factors were not employed in the tax assessments for 2024. Instead, the Tax Administrator utilized up-to-date neighborhood sales data for assessing properties during the 2024 revaluation.

Attorney Wrenn clarified that according to page 352 of the Schedule of Values, the neighborhood rates would range from 75% to 125%, to be applied by the appraiser during the final review. Furthermore, he assured that the updated adjustment table utilized during the final review would be promptly made available to the public.

He emphasized that utilizing the 2018 adjustment factors for property appraisals in 2024 would have led to substantial errors in appraised value. He highlighted the fundamental requirement of property appraisal under the Machinery Act, stipulating that all property, real and personal, should, as far as practicable, be appraised or valued at its true value in money.

Citing North Carolina General Statute 105-283(a), Attorney Wrenn elucidated that "true value" should be interpreted as market value, defined as the price estimated in terms of money at which property would change hands between a willing and financially able buyer and a willing seller, both possessing reasonable knowledge of the property's potential uses.

Attorney Wrenn referenced a precedent set by North Carolina courts, indicating that the use of Schedule of Values and rules of application not only facilitates the valuation of numerous property parcels but also ensures objective and consistent countywide property valuations, thereby promoting equity and property tax liability.

However, he cautioned against blindly adhering to the Schedule of Values, as while it presents an objective process in the County's valuation procedures, it does not guarantee that the valuation and assessment of specific properties are not arbitrary. This assertion was supported by a quotation from the NC Supreme Court Allred case.

Attorney Wrenn affirmed that the appraisal process must prioritize appraising property at its true value in money, thereby necessitating a departure from blind adherence to the 2018 adjustment factors to avoid appraisals that do not reflect the true value in money.

Attorney Wrenn ensured clarity by confirming that the tax appraisals sent out to the public contained the correct appraisal information. Nonetheless, he acknowledged an error in the County's Schedule of Values, which erroneously incorporated neighborhood assessments based on the 2018 adjustment factors.

Acknowledging the error in including the 2018 adjustment factors in the Schedule of Values, Attorney Wrenn outlined the County's intention to rectify this mistake by publishing the correct Schedule of Values. He emphasized that the public would be given an opportunity to review and comment on the updated neighborhood adjustment values and appeal directly if necessary.

Attorney Wrenn welcomed questions from the audience for further clarification.

Jaycee Georgiev, 1174 Smith Creek Way, Wake Forest, NC, raised several questions. Her first question pertained to the timeline for appealing the assessments. Attorney Wrenn clarified that the appeal process for individual assessments remains separate from the adjustment of the Schedule of Values. The focus of the discussion was on readopting specific pages of the Schedule of Values affected by the error.

Attorney Wrenn proceeded to explain the detailed process outlined in general statute 105-317(c) regarding the submission and consideration of proposed schedule changes. He emphasized that this process involves public inspection of the proposed changes, publication of statements in newspapers, and a public hearing conducted by the Board of County Commissioners before final adoption.

In response to Ms. Georgiev's question, Attorney Wrenn highlighted the importance of providing multiple opportunities for public input and appeal regarding the Schedule of Values. He suggested that addressing concerns about neighborhood factors through a specific process would be more efficient than handling individual appeals. Attorney Wrenn aimed to ensure transparency and fairness throughout the correction process.

Katie Sellgren, 1098 Lake Ridge Drive, Creedmoor, NC, sought clarification regarding the assessment process and the timeline for receiving updated assessments. She expressed concern about knowing whether she was assessed correctly without knowledge of the neighborhood multiplier.

Attorney Wrenn responded, explaining that the tax assessments sent out were believed to be correct, as they used up-to-date values in the calculation. However, he acknowledged the possibility of other errors, such as incorrect square footage or lot size. He assured Ms. Sellgren

that as soon as the staff reviewed and delivered the updated schedule to the commissioners, it would be made available online for public access.

Ms. Sellgren then asked about the procedure for addressing errors on tax forms, like incorrect square footage, and whether individuals should file an appeal or wait for the updated schedule. Attorney Wrenn advised against immediately filing a formal appeal and instead suggested contacting the tax office for an informal reconsideration. He clarified that this process is not a legal appeal but a request for reconsideration, emphasizing the tax office's willingness to correct errors efficiently.

Ms. Sellgren further inquired if the tax office was prepared for individuals seeking informal reconsideration, to which County Manager Cummings confirmed that they were and had been dealing with a steady stream of inquiries.

Jesse Davi, 1100 Lakeridge Drive, Creedmoor, NC, sought clarification regarding the timeline for adopting the revised Schedule of Values by the County Commissioners. He inquired about the period required for public notice and discussion before the adoption of the new schedule.

Attorney Wrenn responded, explaining that the statute requires a minimum of 21 days before the meeting at which a Schedule of Values will be considered by the Board. He mentioned their intention to post the corrected information as soon as possible, possibly by the next day, and he assured that the correct assessments were used in calculating taxes, despite the error in the published manual.

Mr. Davi further pressed for a specific date for the meeting to adopt the revised schedule, expressing concerns about the short timeframe for public awareness and discussion. Attorney Wrenn indicated that they were aiming for the first April meeting and emphasized their efforts to address the issue promptly while ensuring transparency.

As the discussion continued, Mr. Davi expressed dissatisfaction with the handling of the situation, stating that the public was not informed promptly about the error. Attorney Wrenn explained that the Tax Administrator discovered the mistake last week and has been working with County staff to rectify it since then. He clarified that the goal was to ensure the correct assessment of property values and provide transparency in the process, even though the statute did not specifically outline a procedure.

Mr. Davi questioned whether Attorney Wrenn's statement about the statute not outlining a procedure was correct. Attorney Wrenn explained that while the statute does outline a procedure for adopting a Schedule of Values, it does not outline a procedure for correcting errors in the published Schedule of Values.

Under the advisement of Attorney Wrenn, the County would follow the same statutory procedure for adopting the corrected Schedule of Values as was followed for adopting the current Schedule of Values.

Chair Karan opened the floor for further questions or comments from the board members.

Commissioner Hinman sought clarification regarding the situation, asking whether the correct appraisal formula was used but not properly reflected in the published manual and whether this would result in changes to taxpayers' valuations. Attorney Wrenn confirmed that the appraisals themselves were conducted using the correct formula, but the error was including the wrong pages in the previously adopted manual, and thus taxpayers' valuations would not change due to this issue.

Commissioner May raised a question about the process followed for adopting the original schedule of values and requested clarification on the public notice and involvement. Attorney Wrenn explained that the same process described earlier, involving public review, notice in a newspaper, and a public hearing before adoption, was followed initially. He emphasized that the current situation is being addressed by replicating the same process to ensure public involvement and comment on the corrected information, similar to what was done during the original adoption of the schedule of values.

Commissioner Williford addressed the audience, stating that he was made aware of the situation by the County Attorney around 3 o'clock that afternoon and confirmed that he had not spoken to any fellow commissioners in any formal or informal setting about the matter. Attorney Wrenn corroborated Commissioner Williford's statement, specifying that he had called Commissioner Williford around 3 o'clock to inform him of the situation and the proposed plan to address it at this meeting. The remaining Board members, Commissioner Gooch, Commissioner Jay, Commissioner Hinman, and Commissioner Cozart, and Commissioner May, all confirmed that they received similar calls from Attorney Wrenn that day, with no prior discussions among the board members.

Attorney Wrenn concluded the discussion by stating that if any additional mistakes affecting a substantial number of taxpayers were found, they would also be addressed publicly.

CONSENT AGENDA

Motioned by Commissioner Tony W. Cozart, seconded by Commissioner Zelodis Jay, and unanimously carried, the Board approved the consent agenda as follows:

A. Approved budget amendment #7 for fiscal year 2023-2024.

BUDGET AMENDMENT #7
03/04/2024
Legal Document

Be it ordained, the FY 2023-2024 Annual Budget Ordinance is hereby amended as follows:

GENERAL FUND

Expenditures	Increase	Decrease	Total
General Government			\$ 2,000
Human Resources	2,000		
Community Services			\$ 129,897
Cooperative Extension Service	29,897		
Economic Development	100,000		
Human Services			\$ (39,106)
Social Services	944		
HCCBG & Transportation		(40,050)	
Area Projects and Other Appropriations			\$ 13,411
Fleet	80,100		
Pass Thru Funds		(66,689)	
Contributions to Other Funds & Contingencies			(2,000)
Contingencies		(2,000)	
Total Expenditures			\$ 104,202
Revenues			
Restricted and Intergovernmental	161,948		
Appropriated Fund Balance		(57,746)	
Total Revenues			\$ 104,202

B. Approved project ordinance #1 - Triangle North Water and Sewer Project.

Project Ordinance Budget Amendment				
Triangle North - Water and Sewer				
Budget Amendment #1 (1st during Fiscal Year 2024)				
March 4, 2024				
LEGAL DOCUMENT				
Be it ordained, the FY 2023-2024 School Facility and HVAC Repair Project Budget Ordinance is hereby amended as follows:				
Expenditures	Increase	Decrease	Total	
Triangle North - Water and Sewer		(100,000)	\$	(100,000)
Transfers to General Fund - KLRCOG	100,000		\$	100,000
Total Expenditures				\$ -
Triangle North - Water and Sewer				
March 4, 2024				
DETAIL [For Reference Only]				
Description			Amendment	Balance after Amendment
Expenditures: Increase/(Decrease)				
33 4000 000	Triangle North - Water and Sewer	(\$100,000)		\$5,000,000
33 4980 010	Transfer to General Fund - KLREDC	\$100,000		\$100,000
Description: Transfer funds to pay to KTREDC for targeted/specific legal work related to development of Triangle North by Porman Industries LLC.				

C. Approved tax refunds, released, and offsets:

• Refunds	January 25, 2024 – February 21, 2024:	\$28,223.00
• Releases	January 25, 2024 – February 21, 2024:	\$23,617.01
• Write-offs (\$2 and less)	January 25, 2024 – February 21, 2024:	\$ 29.14

D. Approved minutes:

- January 2, 2024 Regular Meeting
- January 16, 2024 Regular Meeting
- February 5, 2024 Regular Meeting

INTRODUCTIONS, RECOGNITIONS, AND PRESENTATIONS

Board Updated on the Granville County Library Board of Trustees

Granville County Library System Director Will Robinson acknowledged Juanita Rogers and Karen Alley as members of the Granville County Library Board of Trustees, with Ms. Rogers serving as the board chair and Ms. Alley as the vice-chair and secretary. Mr. Robinson, Ms. Rogers, and Ms. Alley spoke from the PowerPoint presentation included in the agenda packet. Key updates included:

- Presented library statistics indicating significant increases in library usage, registered users, circulation, program attendance, and website visits over the 2022-2023 fiscal year.
- Highlighted the library project collecting the oral history of Edward McCoy and publishing bound volumes available for public use.
- Highlighted specific initiatives funded by the Memorial Fund, including the installation of a historical marker commemorating the Granville Street Colored Library and supporting an annual shelf competition.
- Outlined focus areas for the upcoming year, including early literacy, digital inclusion, and food security.

Commissioner May sought clarification on digital inclusion and the library's partnership with Granville County Public Schools as well as details on book removal criteria and disposal procedures.

Mr. Robinson explained the weeding process, which involves removing books from the library's collection. Typically, books not checked out in five years, except literature or school-used ones, are removed, along with outdated nonfiction like medical books. Currently, weeding is on hold to focus on building new shelves for additional books. Discarded books go to the Friends of the Library for sales or onto free shelves. Outdated or damaged books are disposed of, but efforts are made to circulate as many books as possible within the community.

Commissioner Cozart noted the tremendous investment made for renovations at the library.

Board Approved the Granville County Recreation Master Plan

Deputy County Manager Korena Weichel introduced Shweta Naneka from McAdams Company, who provided an overview of the Granville County Recreation Master Plan. Ms. Weichel outlined the need for updating the plan due to demographic and socioeconomic changes in the county since the previous 2017 plan.

Ms. Nanekar from McAdams then presented the project goals, process, and key findings. The plan aimed to address changing community needs, ensure equitable access to recreation, and qualify for future grant opportunities.

Key themes included balancing recreation needs, developing a connected park system, and creating a thriving recreational network. Recommendations focused on the geographic distribution of parks, enhancing greenways, and investing in park infrastructure and staffing.

Ms. Nanekar highlighted actions such as acquiring new parkland, improving regional connectivity, and hiring a parks and recreation director. She emphasized the economic benefits of investing in recreation and fostering partnerships with local businesses and community organizations.

Commissioner Hinman expressed gratitude for the hard work put into the Granville County Recreation Master Plan, emphasizing the importance of community input and collaboration to improve the park system.

Commissioner Jay echoed appreciation for the efforts, highlighting the significance of expanding greenways and parks across the county to benefit residents.

Commissioner May raised concerns about the lack of emphasis on athletic fields in the plan, noting the need for more facilities and access to recreational activities, particularly in the southern part of the county. He stressed the importance of addressing diverse recreational needs and ensuring equitable access for all residents. Commissioner Jay agreed and said that people in the northern end need access to recreational activities.

Ms. Nanekar from McAdam's responded, explaining the methodology behind the data used and acknowledging the importance of considering the county's unique characteristics and diverse recreational interests.

Commissioner May expressed agreement with using the document as a guide rather than a principled one that necessitates strict adherence.

Chair Karan restated the recommendation.

Motioned by Commissioner Sue Hinman, seconded by Commissioner Tony W. Cozart, and unanimously carried, the Board approved the adoption of the Granville County Parks, Greenways, and Recreation Master Plan as presented by McAdams Company.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Brad Oldenburg, 6588 Huntsburg Road, Oxford, NC, began by expressing gratitude for the extension of high-speed internet service to his area and commended those involved in making it happen. He then shifted to discuss early voting in Granville County. He raised concerns about the length of the early voting period and the lack of early voting locations in the northern part of the county. Mr. Oldenburg shared that he had discussed with the Board of Elections potential obstacles to early voting in the north, such as suitable locations and internet access. He also mentioned the need for more voting machines, workers, and potential cost implications. Mr. Oldenburg recounted a conversation with the Board of Elections chair regarding the absence of early voting in the north, expressing disappointment with her response that "they have election day to vote." He urged for solutions to address the lack of early voting options in the northern part of the county and mentioned Stovall Library as a possible option.

Lynne Denis, 101 East Thorndale Drive, Oxford, NC, addressed the Board regarding early voting in Oxford. She highlighted concerns about the compensation rate for set-up, noting that the \$25 flat set-up fee did not adequately compensate for the time and effort required, especially considering the large number of ballots that needed to be counted in preparation for early voting. Ms. Denis requested additional funding to increase the set-up compensation for workers. Additionally, she emphasized the need for internet access at the early voting site in Oxford to facilitate voter information retrieval and communication with election officials, noting that workers were using their personal cell phones.

County Manager Cummings responded to Lynne Denis by acknowledging her concerns about the set-up compensation for election workers and the need for internet access at the early voting Oxford site. He mentioned that there are set hourly rates for election workers, and he would look into why they were not being applied on an hour-for-hour basis for set-up time. He also stated that he would investigate the possibility of providing internet access at the Oxford site.

Michael Smith, 3557 Bragg Valley Lane, NC, expressed concern about the proposed tax increase, particularly highlighting its potential impact on retired individuals on fixed incomes, including himself. He emphasized that many in his neighborhood chose the area for its quality of life and lower taxes compared to their previous locations. Mr. Smith urged the commissioners to carefully consider the tax rate, expressing worry about the significant increase in property taxes he might face, which could jeopardize his ability to maintain his desired lifestyle. He urged caution to avoid replicating the high tax burden he experienced elsewhere, as it could potentially force him to relocate once again.

County Manager Drew Cummings responded by providing context on the revaluation of property and its impact on property taxes in Granville County. He explained that North Carolina law requires periodic revaluations of property to align with market values, and noted that the current real estate market in Granville County has seen significant appreciation since 2018, with an average increase of approximately 80%. Mr. Cummings highlighted that North Carolina law also requires the county government to publish a revenue-neutral tax rate, which indicates the tax rate that would generate the same revenue as the previous year, given the increased property values. While commissioners have the authority to set the tax rate, Mr. Cummings suggested that a significant drop in the tax rate might occur as part of the revaluation process. He also mentioned the possibility that even with a 60% appreciation in property value, some property owners might end up paying lower property taxes next year due to adjustments in the tax rate. Overall, Mr.

Cummings aimed to clarify the complexity of the situation and assure the community that the county administration is working to provide transparent information to help residents understand the changes in property taxes resulting from the revaluation process.

Sandra Bishop, 1535 Trail Wood Drive, Creedmoor, NC, expressed concerns regarding the revaluation of property taxes and vehicle values. She mentioned a significant increase in the property tax value of her 27-year-old modular home, as well as a substantial rise in the tax value of her 2018 Honda Accord. Additionally, Ms. Bishop highlighted inconsistencies in her property record card, with multiple changes occurring in a short period. She questioned the criteria used to classify neighborhoods as "excellent," "marginal," "good," or "average," and requested clarification on how these classifications are determined. Ms. Bishop also inquired about the availability of maps showing these neighborhood classifications.

County Manager Cummings suggested that Sandra Bishop's concerns could be addressed through individual appeals and consultations with the tax office. He acknowledged her suggestions for maps and other clarifications as valuable ideas.

Chair Karan noted that the meeting had deviated from the usual format, allowing for direct question-and-answer interactions. However, he recommended that Ms. Bishop contact the tax administration department for further assistance with her inquiries.

Jesse Davi, 1100 Lake Ridge Drive, NC, addressed concerns about property taxes and revaluation. He highlighted the lack of explanation in the County's code regarding land classifications and the inconsistency in property valuations. Mr. Davi criticized the absence of descriptions in the assessment manual, making it challenging for property owners to evaluate their taxes accurately. He also said that there were discrepancies in structure value adjustments and expressed distrust in the appraisal company's competence. Mr. Davi called for a halt to the reevaluation process, a public disclosure of discrepancies, an extension of the evaluation timeline, a full audit of the appraisal company, and a new appraisal team. He demanded transparency regarding corrective actions and appealed for a revised timeline and appeal deadline.

Jaycee Georgiev, 1174 Smith Creek Way, NC, raised concerns about property reassessment, particularly regarding the use of recent land sales for major subdivisions as comparables. Ms. Georgiev emphasized the importance of accurately documenting terms of sale, especially when involving developers or LLCs, to avoid misleading assessments. She expressed concern that Granville County's actions might force out family-owned farmers and rural homeowners on fixed incomes. Ms. Georgiev also criticized the inconsistency in land valuations, highlighting discrepancies between different subdivisions. Despite attempts to reach out to the County appraiser, she said that she did not receive a response, prompting a call for further investigation into the appraisal company and ensuring that pertinent questions are addressed.

Mark Griffin, 1629 Tally Ho Road, Oxford, NC, expressed concerns about the impact of property tax reevaluation on elderly residents in the community. He emphasized that many of these individuals are on fixed incomes and struggling to afford basic necessities due to inflation. Mr. Griffin stressed the importance of preserving family farms in the area and urged the Board to work diligently to ensure that the tax reevaluation does not force residents to sell their properties. He implored the Board to consider the financial burdens placed on residents and to exercise wisdom in addressing the issue.

Mary O'Brien, 10 Rupert Road, Raleigh, NC, expressed appreciation to the board for issuing the County solid waste services Request for Proposals (RFP) and requested approval to negotiate a potential contract with Meridian Waste. She highlighted several reasons why Meridian Waste's proposal should be considered, including brand-new equipment, experience, and references. Ms. O'Brien outlined the financial benefits of the proposal, such as an \$18 million upfront lease fee,

guaranteed annual host fee payments, and 25 years of disposal capacity. Additionally, she emphasized Meridian Waste's commitment to community involvement and willingness to negotiate terms beneficial to the County. Ms. O'Brien concluded by asking for the Board's vote to enter into contract negotiations with Meridian Waste.

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION MATTERS

Board Approved Memorandum of Agreement for Cooperative Extension

Cooperative Extension Director Charissa Puryear provided an update on the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between NC State Extension and Granville County. The MOA was updated to reflect changes in terminology and operational functions since its last update in 2006. Cooperative Extension Director Puryear mentioned that the County Manager and County Attorney have reviewed the updates.

Motioned by Commissioner Russ May, seconded by Commissioner Tony W. Cozart, and unanimously carried, the Board approved adoption of the Memorandum of Agreement between the Granville County Board of County Commissioners and NC State Extension that details individual relationships and mutually agreed-upon responsibilities of NSCU and Granville County and authorized the County Manager to execute the agreement once finalized by the County Attorney.

RECESS

At 8:43 p.m., the Board recessed and returned at 8:56 p.m.

SOLID WASTE MATTERS

Board Approval Landfill Contract Negotiations with Huff Soil Conservation Services

Environment Services Director Jason Falls offered background information on the Request for Proposals (RFP) process for landfill operations. On June 5th, 2023, the Board of County Commissioners authorized Garrett and Moore and staff to prepare and administer a request for proposals, evaluate proposals, and recommend an award for solid waste operations to become effective on July 1, 2024. He mentioned that the RFP for landfill operations had been advertised at the end of October 2023, with proposals due on December 15, 2023. Additionally, he noted that proposal evaluations and interviews of proposals were conducted between December 2023 and February 2024.

Environmental Services Director Falls read the following primary goals as articulated in the RFP:

- Continue support for local solid waste disposal services;
- Serve residents and businesses with a cost-effective landfill solution;
- Reduce or eliminate environmental liabilities;
- Minimize operating expenses;
- Maximize revenue to the County through sustained fees over the term of the contract;
- Find innovative ways to preserve landfill air space for the County by increasing compaction rates beyond the minimum listed in the RFP;
- Operate the County landfill in accordance with federal, regional, and local permits, regulations, and guidelines;
- Operate using best management practices to ensure efficient performance of high quality;

- Operate the County landfill in a manner that maximizes public and service provider safety;
- Operate the landfill in the most efficient and cost-effective manner, minimizing consumption of airspace;
- Operate the landfill in a manner that maximizes customer convenience and satisfaction;
- Operate the landfill in a manner that protects the environment from pollution; and
- Operate the landfill with minimal disruption to neighboring residents.

Three (3) proposers (Huff Soil Conservation Services, Inc., Meridian Waste North Carolina, LLC, and Wall Recycling, LLC) submitted responses that complied with the terms of the RFP, and those proposals were accepted and evaluated. The RFP contained four proposal scenarios:

- Option 1 - Contract operations of Butner and Oxford facilities with a local waste stream at Oxford municipal solid waste (MSW) landfill (currently approximately 50,000 tons annually)
- Option 2 – Contract operations of Butner and Oxford facilities with current County waste stream at Oxford MSW landfill plus tonnage increments up to an additional 100,000 tons annually to be solicited by the County
- Option 3 – operations of Butner and Oxford facilities with current County waste stream at Oxford MSW landfill plus Proposer/Responder financial incentives for disposal of up to an additional 100,000 tons annually to be solicited by Proposer/Responder
- Option 4 - The Proposer/ Responder proposal for a Purchase Agreement of the Oxford Subtitle D landfill together with a proposal for contract operations of the other Butner and Oxford facilities

Mr. Falls said that Huff Soil Conservation offered the lowest cost proposals for options one and two, while Wall Recycling and Meridian Waste provided proposals for scenarios three and four.

After evaluations and interviews, a team consisting of Garrett and Moore, the County Manager, and the Environmental Services Director, recommended Huff Soil Conservation Incorporated, citing their responsiveness to the RFP. The recommendation was made in accordance with North Carolina general statute 143-129.2. The Board was requested to determine if the proposal from Huff Soil Conservation Services was more responsive to the RFP and authorize negotiations for a landfill operations contract with them. The finalized agreement would be brought back to the board for approval.

During discussion, Commissioner Gooch sought clarification on the current waste generation in Granville County, with a particular focus on the amount of waste coming from outside the County. Mr. Falls, in response, provided details indicating that the County generates approximately 50,000 tons of waste annually, with about a quarter of that originating from neighboring counties like Vance and Franklin. Concerned about controlling waste inflow, Commissioner Gooch expressed reservations about accepting excessive waste from external sources, emphasizing the importance of minimizing such intake to preserve the rural environment and road infrastructure.

Commissioner Jay raised a query regarding Mr. Falls's explanation that Option 4, the sale of the landfill, would reduce the life of the landfill to 25 years. He also inquired about the subsequent steps once the landfill reached its capacity after 25 years. Mr. Falls clarified that after 25 years, the County would need to explore options such as constructing a new landfill or developing a transfer station to manage waste, effectively necessitating a fresh start in waste management strategies.

Chair Karan noted that Option 4, the sale of the landfill, was not being recommended.

Commissioner Williford brought attention to the anticipated growth in Granville County and its potential impact on waste generation over the next five to ten years. He emphasized that this growth trajectory would likely lead to increased waste generation, highlighting the importance of selecting a waste management solution capable of accommodating future demands.

Chair Karan referred to the recommendation:

The County Manager and Environmental Programs Director with extensive input from the County Attorney and County's landfill consultants, request that the Board determine that Huff Soil Conservation Services, Inc.'s proposal is more responsive to the request for proposals and that the Board authorize the County Manager, Environmental Programs Director, and County Attorney to enter into negotiations for a landfill operations contract with Huff Soil Conservation Services, Inc. to begin in FY 24-25 with the final recommended agreement to be brought back to the Board for approval.

Commissioner Williford initially proposed a motion to accept the recommendation and award the contract to Huff's Soil Conservation. However, County Manager Cummings clarified that the motion was actually for authorization to enter into contract negotiations with Huff's Soil Conservation, rather than directly awarding the contract. Commissioner Williford adjusted the motion accordingly, seeking authorization to negotiate a contract with Huff's Soil Conservation.

Chair Karan then acknowledged the motion, emphasizing that it was for entering into contract negotiations.

Commissioner Gooch sought clarification on whether the motion pertained to option one or option two of the proposals. Mr. Falls explained that the decision was to proceed with option one initially, with the flexibility to transition to option two when additional waste tonnage became available.

Attorney Wrenn further elaborated on the pricing structure, indicating that the motion essentially encompassed option two, with pricing adjustments for tonnage exceeding 50,000 tons per year.

Commissioner Gooch acknowledged the clarification, and County Manager Cummings emphasized that the discretion regarding the extra tonnage pricing would lie with the County.

Motioned by Commissioner Robert Williford, seconded by Commissioner Zelodis Jay, and unanimously carried, the Board approved authorizing the County Manager, County Environmental Programs Director, and County Attorney to enter into contract negotiations for a landfill operations contract with Huff Soil Conservation Services, Inc. to begin in fiscal year 2024-2025 and bring back an agreement to the Board for approval.

APPOINTMENTS

Board Approved Appointment to the Granville County Department of Social Services Board

Motioned by Commissioner Sue Hinman, seconded by Commissioner Tony W. Cozart, and unanimously carried, the Board appointed Mary Ellen Lemberg to the Granville County Department of Social Services (DSS) Board.

Board Approved Appointment to the Oxford Planning Board- Extraterritorial Members

Motioned by Commissioner Robert Williford, seconded by Commissioner Sue Hinman, and unanimously carried, the Board appointed Rob Adkins to the Oxford Planning Board as an extraterritorial member.

Board Approved Appointment to the Granville County Board of Adjustment

Motioned by Commissioner Russ May, seconded by Commissioner Robert Williford, and unanimously carried, the Board appointed Laura Howerton to the Granville County Board of Adjustment District 5 seat.

Board Approved Appointment to the Granville County Planning Board

Motioned by Commissioner Russ May, seconded by Commissioner Tony W. Cozart, and unanimously carried, the Board appointed Blaine Homes to the Granville Planning Board District 5 seat.

Board Approved Appointment to the Granville County Tourism Development Authority

Motioned by Commissioner Sue Hinman, seconded by Commissioner Zelodis Jay, and unanimously carried, the Board appointed Punitha Srin, Days Inn & Suites, to the Granville County Tourism Development Authority hotel/motel owner seat.

COUNTY MANAGER'S REPORT

County Manager Cummings began by expressing appreciation for the public comment provided by Mr. Oldenberg regarding broadband expansion in the County. He emphasized the importance of leveraging federal funding and local investment to expand broadband access, noting the positive impact it has on connecting residents to high-speed internet. Deputy County Manager Korena Weichel's efforts were highlighted in implementing this initiative.

County Manager Cummings addressed comments made by the Board regarding the recreation master plan. He clarified that the plan represents a collection of recommendations gathered through extensive public engagement efforts. Acknowledging the diverse opinions and priorities expressed by both commissioners and members of the public, he emphasized that investment decisions will be made within the broader context of the County's capital and operational needs.

Mr. Cummings concluded by expressing gratitude for the work done on both projects by staff and the valuable input provided by commissioners and the public during the public engagement process. He indicated his anticipation for future investment decisions based on the recommendations outlined in the recreation master plan.

COUNTY ATTORNEY'S REPORT

Attorney Wrenn announced that he had an economic development matter for closed session.

PRESENTATIONS BY COUNTY BOARD MEMBERS

Commissioner May addressed several topics during the meeting. First, he mentioned the upcoming Veterans Appreciation event scheduled for Saturday, March 9th at 2:00 p.m. at the Granville Expo Center with the theme "I Am the American Flag." He encouraged commissioners and members of the public to attend. Secondly, Commissioner May noted the approval of the CAMPO corridor study, particularly focusing on Highways 56, 50, and parts of 98 in southern Granville, including secondary roads. Thirdly, he raised concerns about the trash and litter

problems in the County and proposed a meeting with the County Manager to discuss potential solutions. He mentioned the challenges of prosecuting littering cases and highlighted the issue of liability associated with community service as a punishment. Commissioner May suggested exploring educational initiatives, collaboration with Granville County Public Schools, and improvements to convenience centers to address the problem.

Commissioner Gooch thanked everyone for coming out to the meeting and then thanked Attorney Wrenn for answering questions about tax matters. He noted that there is information on the County website regarding the Present-Use Value Program and property tax relief regarding low-income eligibility and other exclusions. He noted that the municipalities share the concerns, and they want everyone to live here.

Commissioner Jay expressed gratitude to everyone who made public comments during the meeting. He echoed Commissioner Gooch's sentiment that they all aim to live and grow old together in Granville County without running anyone away. Commissioner Jay agreed with Mr. Oldenburg's concern about the length of early voting, noting his personal experience with the long 15-day period and expressing hope for legislative action to address it. Additionally, he supported reconsidering the placement of an early voting poll in the north end of the county, suggesting that placing one in Stovall could be beneficial.

Commissioner Hinman expressed gratitude to the various organizations that held Black History celebrations throughout the previous month. She mentioned attending several events and learning a lot, particularly noting a new perspective on the play "A Raisin in the Sun" after seeing part of it presented at a church event. Commissioner Hinman also agreed with the sentiment that early voting was excessively long with low turnout, acknowledging the strain it puts on both voters and poll workers.

Commissioner Cozart expressed gratitude to the County Manager for addressing the issues raised by the Board of Elections staff during the meeting. He also shared his enjoyment of attending the Career and Technical Education (CTE) recognition event at Granville County Public Schools. He then highlighted the remarkable achievements of the students and the importance of recognizing the teachers who support them in their endeavors. Overall, he expressed pride in the CTE program and its positive impact on the community.

Chair Karan agreed with Commissioner Cozart regarding the importance of career and technical education (CTE), stating that it is crucial for traditional public schools. He emphasized that not everyone needs to attend college, and there is a demand for skilled trades, which are often overlooked. Chair Karan shared an example of high labor charges, highlighting the need for skilled workers in various fields.

ANY OTHER MATTERS

There were no other matters.

CLOSED SESSION

Motioned by Commissioner Robert Williford, seconded by Commissioner Zelodis Jay, and unanimously carried, the Board went into closed session as allowed by North Carolina General Statute 143-318.11(a)(4) for economic development matters at 9:27 p.m.

RETURN TO OPEN SESSION

Motioned by Commissioner Sue Hinman, seconded by Commissioner Robert Williford, and unanimously carried, the Board returned to open session at 10:01 p.m.

Board Approved 60-Day Due Diligence Extension of the Portman Industrial LLC Contract

Attorney Wrenn requested approval for a 60-day extension of the Portman Industrial LLC contract's due diligence period.

Motioned by Commissioner Tony W. Cozart, seconded by Commissioner Robert Williford, and unanimously carried, the Board approved a 60-day due diligence extension of the Portman Industrial LLC Contract.

ADJOURNMENT

Motioned by Commissioner Sue Hinman, seconded by Commissioner Robert Williford, and unanimously carried, the Board adjourned at 10:02 p.m.

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