

GRANVILLE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
January 16, 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 7:01 p.m. Chair Timothy Karan called the meeting to order. Commissioner Russ May had the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

CONSENT AGENDA

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

- A. Approved purchasing computer replacements from the State contract vendor, SHI in the amount of \$101,665.91 to adhere to Granville County's IT Policy of a four-year equipment lifecycle from fiscal year 2023-2024 budget for the following departments:**
- Board of Elections
 - Planning
 - Inspections
 - Economic Development
 - Emergency Communications
 - General Services
 - Human Resources
 - Internal Auditor
 - Information Technology
 - Library
 - Register of Deeds
 - Senior Services
 - Soil & Water
 - Tax
- B. Approved purchasing 7 Dell docking stations, 7 Dell LED monitors and 27 Dell Latitude 5540 laptops for the Department of Social Services with a proposed total one-time cost of \$51,114.37 to adhere to Granville County's IT Policy of a four-year equipment lifecycle from fiscal year 2023-2024 budget.**

C. Approved minutes:

- October 16, 2023 Regular Meeting

INTRODUCTIONS, RECOGNITIONS, AND PRESENTATIONS

Board Updated on Granville County Animal Control Advisory Committee

Anne Crews, president of the Animal Control Advisory Committee and member of the Humane Society of Granville County, provided an update on the Animal Control Advisory Committee. She said that the committee was filled and functional, with members having diverse backgrounds, including veterinarian technicians, a veterinarian, retired registered nurses, a clinical trials analyst, and individuals volunteering at the shelter. They focused on dangerous dog appeals, policy formulation, and consistency with other animal control units. In the past two years, they addressed six dangerous dog appeals, with four upheld and two returned. Efforts included reviewing the dangerous dog ordinance, addressing issues like notifying emergency responders when going to a house with a dangerous dog, and reviewing the exotic animal ordinance. The committee aimed to be more involved with the shelter, ensure State inspection compliance, and collaborate with Animal Control. The presentation included 2023 statistics. Ms. Crews highlighted the euthanasia rate for dogs is between 8 and 12% and 5% for cats. She explained that in her twenty-year involvement, she had seen the euthanasia rate decline over time. She attributed this positive change to a shift in focus towards getting animals out to rescue instead of just trying to adopt them to the population.

Commissioner Jay recalled an individual walking with a large boa constrictor in public at the last Hot Sauce Festival in Oxford, expressing concern about the need for regulations. Ms. Crews acknowledged the lack of jurisdiction over such cases but highlighted the startling nature of seeing large snakes in public.

Commissioner Jay also inquired about addressing people not getting shots for cats, and Ms. Crews discussed the estimated 10,000 feral cats in the county. She mentioned the Trap-Neuter-Release (TNR) program, where animals are fixed, vaccinated, and released with their left ear clipped to signify they are feral and sterile.

Commissioner Hinman asked about the availability of a Granville County deputy for Animal Control, and Animal Management Director Matt Katz confirmed that the assigned Granville County deputy does respond to calls and texts. He noted additional support from Oxford, Butner, and Creedmoor departments, adding that Oxford and Butner police departments had stepped up in the last six months. Commissioner Hinman expressed gratitude for the Granville County deputy's availability and the support from area police departments.

Commissioner Gooch asked about the number of feral cat colonies. Mr. Katz responded that there were an estimated 200 colonies. Ms. Crews mentioned that the Humane Society manages the colonies at the Food Lion and the fast-food row in the Butner-Creedmoor area off Exit 191 off Interstate 85.

The discussion touched on the closure of the Spay Neuter Assistance Program (SNAP) and the absence of a low-cost mobile van for spaying and neutering, emphasizing the need for alternatives within an hour's drive.

Board Presented Proclamation in Recognition of the Humane Society of Granville County (HSGC)

On behalf of the Board, Commissioner May presented Anne Crews, member of the Humane Society of Granville County (HSGC) and chair of the Granville County Animal Control Advisory Committee, and Matt Katz, Granville County Animal Management Director with the following Proclamation in Recognition of the Humane Society of Granville County:

Proclamation in Recognition of the Humane Society of Granville County

WHEREAS, the Humane Society of Granville County (HSGC) has been a beacon of compassion for three decades, founded in 1992 by concerned citizens in the Granville Kennel Club; and

WHEREAS, the HSGC has dynamically evolved, fostering a collaborative relationship with Animal Control for over 20 years, initially focusing on enhancing euthanasia methods; and

WHEREAS, the current mission, "to improve the welfare of the animals of Granville County through the promotion of responsible pet ownership," reflects their unwavering dedication to compassionate care; and

WHEREAS, HSGC's success is evident through key programs: the Spay/Neuter Voucher Program addressing pet overpopulation, the Feline Adoption Program rehoming over 500 cats in the last four years, and the Pet Food Pantry serving low-income residents for 13 years, providing 1500 pounds of pet food monthly in 2023; and

WHEREAS, HSGC extends their impact to the emotional well-being of animal owners, celebrating the human-animal bond with the annual Blessing of the Animals event and supporting Community Cat Caregivers; and

WHEREAS, over the past 30 years, HSGC has exceeded its mission goal, becoming a beacon of community service and compassion; and

WHEREAS, the Granville County Commissioners express profound gratitude to HSGC and its dedicated board members, Angela Gooch, Ed Rosen, Danielle Feldkamp-Crews, Deborah Lyon, and Anne Crews.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED, THAT the Granville County Commissioners express profound gratitude to the Humane Society of Granville County for their unwavering commitment to animal welfare, responsible pet ownership, and exemplary community service.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Public Comments

There were no public comments.

SOCIAL SERVICES MATTERS

Board Approved DSS Position Reclassification

DSS Director LaToya Toussaint presented a request for the reclassification of an open position within the Department of Social Services (DSS). The proposal sought to reclassify the current Administrative Officer II position (DSS-17 Salary Grade) to a Business Officer I position (DSS-19 Salary Grade) under the Office of State Human Resources with the State of North Carolina. This reclassification was prompted by the rapid growth of the Social Services budget due to Medicaid expansion.

DSS identified the need for a position focusing on fiscal forecasting, budget preparation, management, and accounting oversight. The Administrative Officer II position was deemed

insufficient for these responsibilities, lacking the necessary level of expertise. The reclassified position would play a crucial role in supervising the newly approved accountant position and overseeing accounting technicians. The rationale behind the request emphasized the complexities of managing the current departmental budget, billing, and reimbursement processes. DSS Director Toussaint highlighted the importance of having a qualified individual at this level to ensure effective supervision.

Motioned by Commissioner Robert Williford, seconded by Commissioner Sue Hinman, and unanimously carried, the Board approved the position DSS reclassification from Class Title: Administrative Officer II, salary grade DSS-17 to Class Title: Business Officer I, salary grade DSS-19 position in the current pay and classification plan.

TAX MATTERS

Board Approved Refund Request for Clerical Error on Tax Bill

Tax Administrator Jenny Short presented information about a request for a refund for Bess and Michael Adcock due to a clerical error on their 2023 tax bill. The error occurred when the Tax Department received a listing form for a new metal outbuilding on January 11, 2023. Subsequent changes to the Adcock property were noted by the Granville County Real Property Appraiser when visiting the property on January 18, 2023. The introduction of the new building caused an unintended increase in the value of \$57,529.00. After adding the building and deeming the house in poor condition, the value should have decreased by \$9,430.00. The Tax Administrator recommended a refund of \$602.64 based on the valid defense of a tax imposed through clerical error, as outlined in the North Carolina Machinery Act 105–381(a)(1).

Motioned by Commissioner Tony W. Cozart, seconded by Commissioner Robert Williford, and unanimously carried, the Board approved refunding Bess and Michael Adcock \$602.64 for the clerical error on their 2023 tax bill.

When asked, Ms. Short provided an update on the tax revaluation progress and communication efforts to County citizens.

REGISTER OF DEEDS MATTER

Board Approved COTT Systems Software Renewal Contract for Register of Deeds

Register of Deeds Kathy Taylor sought approval for the COTT Systems software license renewal for the online indexing and searching software. The Register of Deeds has used the COTT Systems software for several years, extensively used by both staff and the public for researching digital records. The software is crucial for maintaining the database and microfilming of all records. Competitive bids were not required, following the County's purchasing policy, as it was a renewal of an existing service falling under Information Technology-related purchases.

Motioned by Commissioner Russ May, seconded by Commissioner Zelodis Jay, and unanimously carried the Board approved contracting with Cott Systems Inc. in the amount of \$10,860, semi-annually, for a total annual cost of \$21,720 for the software license renewal for online indexing and searching software and authorized the County Manager, County Attorney, and Register of Deeds to finalize the agreement.

SHERIFF MATTERS

Board Retroactively Acknowledged Emergency Purchase for Detention Center Maintenance Requirement

Chair Karan presented this next item regarding approval of an expedited purchase of more than \$10,000 due to a maintenance requirement at the Granville County Detention Center. The Detention Center required the replacement of a Variable Frequency Drive (VFD) compressor, crucial for controlling two air conditioners and heating units within the facility. The work order demanded immediate attention to provide climate control for the inmate population.

Chair Karan said that the County Manager recommended approving the decision of the staff and retroactively approving the emergency purchase, not to exceed \$20,008.00.

Commissioner Williford inquired about the warranty on the new compressor, and Development Services Director Scott Phillips said it was five years.

Commissioner Cozart mentioned the warranty time frame and potential credit.

Commissioner May raised concerns about the delay in notifying the Board of the expenditure, emphasizing the importance of following proper procurement procedures even in exigent circumstances.

Commissioner Gooch questioned why the original company was not contacted under the warranty, and Development Services Director Scott Phillips indicated that Comfort USA was notified, but he did not have the details about their response or the decision to proceed with the emergency purchase.

Chair Karan noted that the agenda packet indicated that the issue was in the Detention Center and asked for clarification on the location from Mr. Phillips. Mr. Phillips said it was within the administrative area, and that he could follow up for further clarification.

Motioned by Commissioner Russ May, seconded by Commissioner Jimmy Gooch, and unanimously carried, the Board retroactively acknowledged the emergency purchase of a VFD compressor for the Detention Center in the amount not to exceed \$20,008.00.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Board Approved Emergency Backup Generator for the Granville County Convention and Expo Center

Development Services Director Scott Phillips provided information about the request to award a fixed-price construction service contract for the installation of an 80 KW backup generator at the Granville County Convention and Expo Center. The County had received a non-matching North Carolina capacity-building competitive grant for this purpose. Kilian Engineering was retained to evaluate generator capacity and prepare bid documents. The initial low bidder, Cape Fear Generators, proposed a Kohler generator with a 48-week lead time, which did not meet grant requirements. An alternative Generac unit with a 12-week delivery schedule was suggested, incurring an increased cost of \$12,344.16. Despite the increased cost, at \$135,000 it remained below the next lowest bid. The recommendation was to award the fixed-price construction service contract to Cape Fear Generators for an amended cost not to exceed \$115,212.16 unless authorized by an approved change order.

Commissioner Williford inquired about the type of fuel, and Mr. Phillips confirmed it was liquid propane (LP). Commissioner Williford questioned whether a separate tank would be used. Mr.

Phillips explained that a separate 250-gallon tank would likely be added, potentially bringing the total capacity to 500 gallons. The decision on one 500-gallon tank or two 250-gallon tanks would depend on availability.

Commissioner May emphasized to the public that the project incurred no cost to the County. Mr. Phillips confirmed, stating that it was a non-matching state grant for up to \$248,000.

Motioned by Commissioner Robert Williford, seconded by Commissioner Zelodis Jay, and unanimously carried, the Board approved awarding a fixed-price construction services contract to Cape Fear Generators for the installation of an 80-kilowatt backup generator at the Granville County Convention and Expo Center for a cost not to exceed \$115,212.16 unless authorized by an approved change request.

APPOINTMENTS

Board Approved Reappointment to the Adult Home Care Community Advisory Committee

Motioned by Commissioner Robert Williford, seconded by Commissioner Tony W. Cozart, and unanimously carried, the Board reappointed Barbara Harris (District 2) to the Adult Home Care Community Advisory Committee.

Chair Karan noted that there are two other vacancies on the committee and noted that training and vetting are required to be appointed. It was noted that appointees could come from any district.

Board Approved Roster for Emergency Services Committee

Motioned by Commissioner Russ May, seconded by Commissioner Sue Hinman, and unanimously carried, the Board approved the following roster for reappointment to the Emergency Services Committee for two years:

Emergency Services Director	Jason Reavis
Fire Marshal	Ken Reeves
President of Fire Chief’s Association	David Cottrell
Emergency Communications Director	Trent Brummitt
Animal Management Director or Designee	Matt Katz or Designee
County Manager or Designee	Drew Cummings or Designee
Sheriff or Designee	Sheriff Robert Fountain or Designee
Granville Health System CEO	Adam McConnell
GHS Emergency Medical Director	Jonathan Pernell
Law Enforcement or Other Representative(s)	Richard Ray
County Commissioner	Zelodis Jay
County Commissioner	Timothy Karan
County Commissioner	Rob Williford
County Staff (Ex-Officio)	LaToya Henderson

Board Approved Appointments to the Senior Services Advisory Committee

Commissioner Williford motioned to appoint Virginia "Ginnie" Lee Currin to the District 2 seat, with Commissioner Cozart seconding the motion. During the discussion on this motion, Commissioner May introduced an amendment. The proposed amendment involved moving forward with the reappointment while also considering a change in the appointment composition of the Senior Services Advisory Committee to include representatives from all districts. It was mentioned that the County Manager is working on a policy for all boards. The Board proceeded with an amended motion.

Motioned by Commissioner Russ May, seconded by Commissioner Robert Williford, and unanimously carried, the Board appointed Virginia “Ginnie” Lee Currin (District 2) to the Senior Services Advisory Committee and approved reviewing all boards and committees, at a later date, to ensure board’s representation were appropriately proportioned with representatives from each district.

Motioned by Commissioner Timothy Karan, seconded by Commissioner Robert Williford, and unanimously carried, the Board reappointed Richard Lyons (District 6) to the Senior Services Advisory Committee.

Board Approved Appointment to the Environmental Affairs Committee

Commissioner Hinman announced that she had found someone to fill a vacancy on the Granville County Citizens Advisory Committee for Environmental Affairs

Motioned by Commissioner Sue Hinman, seconded by Commissioner Robert Williford, and unanimously carried, the Board appointed Nathan Peterson (District 3) to the Granville County Citizens Advisory Committee for Environmental Affairs.

COUNTY MANAGER’S REPORT

County Manager’s Report

County Manager Drew Cummings thanked Chris Brame, IT Director, for the effort put into upgrading the audio-visual equipment in the Commissioner's Meeting Room. He noted the successful implementation of new microphones and monitors and noted that he was pleased with their performance tonight.

County Attorney’s Report

County Attorney Wrenn did not have any items to report.

PRESENTATIONS BY COUNTY BOARD MEMBERS

Commissioner Hinman shared that she attended the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. celebrations over the weekend. She emphasized the need for breakfast at the Oxford event to increase attendance and praised the pianist, Reverend Dr. Brett Pardue, for stepping in and playing for the event as well as speaking. County Manager Cummings noted Reverend Dr. Pardue’s classical training as an opera singer. Commissioner Hinman expressed her awe at the young participants' reports on Dr. King but urged for more involvement from a broader spectrum of Granville County's youth.

Commissioner Cozart informed the Board that Cornerstone Church has blankets made available by the Sheriff’s Office for those in need. He expressed the desire for better coordination between the Creedmoor and Oxford Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. celebrations to allow participants to attend one without leaving early to get to another. He appreciated the in-depth essays presented during the celebrations and reflected on the positive aspects of the day.

Commissioner May mentioned positive news expected from CAMPO regarding the corridor study, and highways 56, 50, and extending to 98. He said the study will have a significant impact on the County's planning. He also reported that he attended the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. celebration in Creedmoor, and expressed hope for improved coordination between the committees handling such events since the Oxford and Creedmoor events were scheduled on the same day close to the same time, making it challenging to attend both events.

Commissioner Gooch expressed gratitude for the honor and privilege of attending two Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. events, emphasizing the moving nature of the celebrations.

Commissioner Jay attended three Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. events and commended the excellent presentations, particularly highlighting the outstanding young speakers. He appreciated the engaging speeches and acknowledged the exceptional preaching skills of the pastor at Oxford Baptist Church who spoke at the event held there.

Commissioner Williford spoke about his attendance at the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. celebration at Oxford Baptist Church, expressing his regret about the overlapping schedules and emphasizing the thought-provoking message from the minister. He highlighted the need for better coordination between the celebration committees to avoid scheduling conflicts.

Chair Karan mentioned writing a letter of support for a modified school calendar aligned with the community college system. He acknowledged the importance of local calendar options, considering the needs of students enrolled in early college programs. Additionally, Chair Karan expressed gratitude for the Board's honorarium to the National Alliance on Mental Illness in memory of his mother, recognizing the organization's crucial role in mental health support and thanking the board for their contribution.

ANY OTHER MATTERS

Notice of Special Joint Meeting with the Board of Education

County Manager Cummings announced a Special Joint Meeting between the Granville County Board of Commissioners and the Granville County Board of Education. The meeting was scheduled for Monday, January 29, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. at the Mary Potter Center for Education in Oxford, NC. The primary purpose of the meeting was to discuss long-term budgeting and facility planning. He mentioned that Commissioner Cozart and Commissioner May serve as school liaisons and meet regularly with the Board of Education liaisons.

Commissioner May reminded everyone about the upcoming visit of Catherine Truitt, North Carolina Superintendent of the Department of Public Instruction, scheduled for Friday, January 19, 2024.

Chair Karan noted that they had received an email from Granville County Schools Superintendent Stan Winborne indicating that Ms. Truitt would be joining them at their Hawley School visit but would be leaving earlier than anticipated so the schedule will be slightly modified. The meeting would convene at 10:00 a.m.

Any Other Matters

There were no other matters.

CLOSED SESSION

Motioned by Commissioner Sue Hinman, seconded by Commissioner Robert Williford, and unanimously carried, the Board went into closed session as allowed by North Carolina General Statute 143-318.11(a)(3) for attorney-client matters at 8:07 p.m.

RETURN TO OPEN SESSION

Motioned by Commissioner Sue Hinman, seconded by Commissioner Zelodis Jay, and unanimously carried, the Board returned to open session.

ADJOURNMENT

Motioned by Commissioner Robert Williford, seconded by Commissioner Jimmy Gooch, and unanimously carried, the Board adjourned at 8:56 p.m.

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