

GRANVILLE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
January 21, 2025
GRANVILLE EXPO AND CONVENTION CENTER
4185 US Highway 15 South, Oxford, North Carolina

PRESENT:

Vice-Chair Zelodis Jay
Commissioner Robert Williford
Commissioner Mark Griffin
Commissioner Tony W. Cozart
Commissioner Russ May
Commissioner Timothy Karan

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

CALL TO ORDER

At 7:00 p.m. Vice-Chair Zelodis Jay called the meeting to order. Commissioner Tony W. Cozart had the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Vice-Chair Jay said he was filling in for Chair Jimmy Gooch.

CONSENT AGENDA

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

A. Approved budget amendment #11 for fiscal year 2024-2025.

BUDGET AMENDMENT 11
January 21, 2025
Legal Document

Be it ordained, the FY 2024-2025 Annual Budget Ordinance is hereby amended as follows:

GENERAL FUND

Expenditures	Increase	Decrease	Total
Public Safety			\$19,000
Human Services			\$1,000
Veterans Services	\$ 1,000	\$ -	
Area Projects and Other Appropriations			\$287,498
Non-Departmental	\$ 287,498	\$ -	
Contributions to Other Funds & Contingencies			(\$1,000)
Contingencies	\$ -	\$ 1,000	
	<u>Total Expenditures</u>		<u>\$306,498</u>
Revenues			
Restricted and Intergovernmental	\$306,498	\$ -	
	<u>Total Revenues</u>		<u>\$306,498</u>

B. Approved Resolution to Consolidate Banking Relationships.

RESOLUTION OF THE GRANVILLE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS TO CONSOLIDATE BANKING RELATIONSHIPS

WHEREAS, it is in the best interest of the County of Granville to streamline and consolidate its banking relationships for improved financial management and efficiency.

WHEREAS, the current banking arrangements with First National Bank are no longer needed and consolidation into one bank will simplify operations and reduce administrative burden;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Commissioners of the County of Granville hereby approves the closure of the accounts held at First National Bank under account number(s):

- 208XXX1015 Forfeiture – Dept of Treasury
- 208XXX3318 Forfeiture – Dept of Justice
- 208XXX1007 Sheriff Special Account
- 208XXX1023 Execution Account
- 208XXX1031 US Marshals Account

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the County of Granville will open new accounts with Truist Bank under account numbers:

- XXXXX36128398 Forfeiture – Dept of Treasury
- XXXXX36128401Forfeiture – Dept of Justice
- XXXXX36128371 Sheriff Special Account
- XXXXX36128436 Execution Account
- XXXXX36128428 US Marshals Account

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Jennifer Baird, Finance Director, be and hereby is authorized to take all necessary actions to close the aforementioned accounts at First National Bank and to execute all necessary documents to open and manage the new accounts with Truist Bank;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that any outstanding balances or financial obligations at First National Bank be transferred to the new accounts at Truist Bank, and any outstanding checks or transactions be cleared before the account closure;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the following individuals be authorized signatories on the new accounts with Truist:

- Jennifer Baird, Finance Director (all accounts)
- Drew Cummings, County Manager (all accounts)
- Korena Weichel, Deputy County Manager (all accounts)
- Karen Evans, Clerk to the Board (all accounts)
- Kendall Mangum (Execution account only)

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that any actions taken by the authorized signatories in connection with the above matters are hereby ratified and approved.

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

- Refunds November 21, 2024 – December 29, 2024: \$4,764.75
- Releases November 21, 2024 – December 29, 2024: \$4,103.10
- Write-offs November 21, 2024 – December 29, 2024: \$ 13.10
(\$2 and less)

D. Approved minutes:

- November 18, 2024 Regular Meeting
- December 2, 2024 Regular Meeting

INTRODUCTIONS, RECOGNITIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

Board Presented Resolution Recognizing the Campbell Family for Winning ABC’s Great American Light Flight

The Board of Commissioners recognized the Campbell Family of Bob Daniel Road for winning ABC's Great American Light Fight. Vice-Chair Jay invited the family forward, and Tourism Director Angela Allen introduced the family and provided background information. Vice-Chair Jay read the proclamation, and the Board gathered for photographs. The Campbell Family, who appeared on the Season 12 premiere of the show, won a \$50,000 prize for their elaborate light display, which spans 1.5 acres and includes various exhibits such as Santa's Garage, Santa's Train, "Campbellville," and a 20-foot tall tree.

**Resolution Recognizing the Campbell Family for Winning ABC's
Great American Light Fight**

WHEREAS, the Campbell Family of Bob Daniel Road in Granville County appeared on the Season 12 premiere of ABC's Great American Light Fight on December 5, 2024, and won the \$50,000 prize; and

WHEREAS, Yvonne Campbell began the display 20 years ago with a candle and angel, growing it to cover 1.5 acres with exhibits such as Santa's Garage, Campbellville, and a 20-foot tree with 6400 pixels; and

WHEREAS, the Campbell Family's success reflects the teamwork and dedication of multiple generations, with relatives joining together to build, decorate, and manage the display year after year; and

WHEREAS, the process of participating in the competition required months of preparation, including submitting detailed applications, photos, and interviews, showcasing the family's hard work and creativity; and

WHEREAS, the Campbell Family opens the display free to the public, accepting donations for Area Congregations in Ministry (ACIM);

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Granville County Board of Commissioners recognizes and congratulates the Campbell Family for their achievement and contributions to the community.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Larry Thomas, 207 East Front Street, Oxford, NC, representing the Granville County Fuller Center for Housing, announced the completion of a new modular house at the corner of King and Kingsbury Streets in Oxford. The house features 1380 square feet, three bedrooms, and two bathrooms with an open floor plan. Priced at \$250,000, the organization is financing the purchase. They prioritize selling the home first to a Granville County public school teacher who has lived in the County for at least five years. Their second preference is for a local resident employed by local, state, or federal government, but they welcome applications from anyone interested. Contact information and the application form are available on their website, www.granvillefullercenter.com, and Facebook page, encouraging all interested parties to apply.

Danielle Hayes, 2094 Creekside Drive, Franklinton, NC, thanked the commissioners for attending school tours and announced that schools would be remote the next day for safety reasons. As the legislative chair of the Board of Education, she discussed a letter she authored advocating for staff raises, which the County Manager would address later in the meeting, urging the General Assembly to increase the starting teacher salary from \$41,000 to \$50,000 and provide a 5% raise for all certified and non-certified staff. She emphasized that increasing state funding would ease the burden on smaller districts like Granville, allowing local funds to be used for infrastructure needs such as boilers, chillers, and roof replacements. Highlighting past successes in influencing state policies, she noted that previous resolutions from Granville had contributed to discussions on changes to English as a Second Language programs and a statewide cell phone policy. She also suggested moving Board member comments to the beginning of meetings so more people could hear them and expressed her anticipation for the upcoming Special Joint Session between the Granville County Board of Commissioners and the Board of Education on Monday, January 27, 2025

PURCHASING

Board Approved Purchase of Panasonic Toughbooks Lease for Granville County Sheriff's Office

Information Technology Director Chris Brame requested approval for a lease agreement to replace Panasonic Toughbooks for the Granville County Sheriff's Office in compliance with the County's IT policy, which mandates computer replacements every four years. The current devices, purchased in 2019, are due for replacement. The County IT department collaborated with Law and Order Technology, an authorized Panasonic vendor, to secure a Toughbook-as-a-service agreement, allowing for affordable upgrades over a flexible five-year term. The proposal includes leasing 54 Panasonic FZ-55 and 11 FZ-G2 Toughbooks at an annual cost of \$46,401.93, with funding available in the current IT hardware budget. Brame recommended approving the agreement and authorizing the County Manager to execute the contract once finalized by the County Attorney.

Commissioner Williford asked whether the lease price included software updates over the four-year period. Chris Brame explained that internal software updates would be handled by the IT department. Additionally, any hardware issues would be covered by Panasonic, allowing for a seamless replacement process without changing the lease cost.

Commissioner Williford sought clarification on whether Panasonic would swap out malfunctioning units without any complications. Brame confirmed that Panasonic would replace any faulty units as part of the agreement.

Commissioner Williford asked if all updates and services were covered for the entire four-year term. Brame confirmed that they were.

Commissioner May inquired about what would happen if a unit were accidentally damaged. Brame explained that accidental damage would be covered under the lease agreement, similar to the leasing arrangement used by the Highway Patrol.

Commissioner May asked about the accountability measures in place for tracking the inventory of these devices. Brame stated that Granville County IT conducts its own assessments and inventories to ensure proper tracking as part of its asset management process.

Commissioner May then asked whether these inventories were conducted on a yearly basis. Brame clarified that inventory checks were currently conducted on a quarterly basis.

Commissioner Williford raised a concern about what would happen if a unit were lost. Brame explained that the devices have built-in air cards with GPS tracking, which allows their locations to be monitored if they are misplaced.

Commissioner May concluded with a comment emphasizing the importance of providing law enforcement with modern, functional equipment. He stated that ensuring public safety is a key responsibility of the Board, just as it is with education, and that necessary investments should be made within budgetary limits.

Motioned by Commissioner Russ May, seconded by Commissioner Tony W. Cozart, and unanimously carried, Board approved the lease of 54 Panasonic FZ-55 Toughbooks and 11 Panasonic FZ-G2 Toughbooks for the Granville County Sheriff's Office in the amount of \$46,401.93, in accordance with Granville County's Information Technology Policy, and authorized the County Manager to execute the agreement upon finalization by the County Attorney.

APPOINTMENTS

Creedmoor Board of Adjustment

Commissioner Jay read the background information explaining that at their December 3, 2024 regular meeting, the Creedmoor Board of Adjustment approved the reappointment of David Melahado to the ETJ seat.

Commissioner May mentioned that Melhado is from his district, District 5.

Motioned by Commissioner Russ May, seconded by Commissioner Robert Williford and unanimously carried, Board reappointed David Melhaldo to the Creedmoor Board of Adjustment ETJ seat.

Kerr Tar Regional Council of Governments' Board of Directors

Commissioner Jay said that David Smith is resigning and an appointment needs to be made to replace his seat.

Motioned by Commissioner Russ May, seconded by Commissioner Robert Williford, and unanimously carried, Board appointed Commissioner Tony W. Cozart to the Kerr Tar Regional Council of Governments' Board of Directors.

Veterans Affairs

Motioned by Commissioner Mark Griffin, seconded by Commissioner Robert Williford, and unanimously carried, Board appointed David Sella to the Granville County Veterans Affairs Committee District 3 seat.

Motioned by Commissioner Russ May, seconded by Commissioner Tony W. Cozart, and unanimously carried, Board appointed Joshua Allen to the Granville County Veterans Affairs Committee District 5 seat.

COUNTY MANAGER'S REPORT

Board Approved Endorsement of Teacher Pay Letter to Legislatures

County Manager Cummings introduced a letter of support requested by the Board of Education. The letter encourages the state to ensure adequate compensation for teachers, emphasizing that additional pay could come from either the state or local taxes. Cummings highlighted the limitations of local taxes and the importance of collaboration to support teachers. He requested the Board's official endorsement of the letter.

Commissioners expressed support for the letter, commending the Board of Education.

Commissioner Karan reflected on his experience with the Board of Education, noting that Granville County does not dictate how school funds are spent once allocated. He thanked the current Board of Education, especially Danielle Hayes, for working collaboratively with the County and emphasized the importance of cooperation between the two bodies.

Commissioner May echoed Karan's sentiments, recognizing the ongoing joint efforts between the Board and school system, particularly in securing special need grants and SRO funding. He also reiterated the importance of legislative advocacy for schools, mentioning the Hawley School Facility Use agreement regarding field priorities for the schools.

Commissioner Williford joined the others in expressing gratitude to Ms. Hayes and the Board of Education for their tough decisions and hard work. He emphasized the Board of Education's dedication to addressing issues that had previously been overlooked, looking forward to continued progress and collaboration.

Motioned by Commissioner Tony W. Cozart, seconded by Commissioner Mark Griffin, and unanimously carried, Board Approved the following letter of support advocating for increased teacher compensation and authorized the Chair of the Granville County Board of Commissioners to sign the letter on behalf of the Board.

Dear Senator Berger and Speaker Moore,

The Granville County Board of Commissioners writes to echo and support the concerns raised by the Granville County Board of Education regarding the urgent need to address teacher pay in North Carolina. Our educators are vital to the well-being and future success of our students, communities, and the state as a whole, and their compensation should reflect their invaluable contributions.

We join the call for a minimum base salary of \$50,000 for beginning teachers, along with an overall increase of at least 5.0% for certified and non-certified staff. This proposal is not only an investment in education but a necessary step to ensure our educators can keep pace with rising living costs.

As you know, the current 3.0% salary increase from the 2023 biennium budget falls short of counteracting inflation, which has reached approximately 3.8% according to the North Carolina Commerce Department. Without sufficient adjustments, our teachers are experiencing effective pay reductions despite their critical roles in shaping the next generation.

Our teachers are more than professionals; they are mentors, role models, and the cornerstone of a strong and vibrant North Carolina. It is imperative that we demonstrate our commitment to their well-being and professional development by providing competitive and sustainable compensation.

We respectfully urge you to prioritize this matter during the upcoming legislative session and take bold action to implement these necessary pay adjustments. By doing so, you will not only honor the hard work and dedication of our educators but also secure the future of our public education system.

Thank you for your attention to this critical issue. We stand ready to support your efforts in advocating for our teachers and students.

County Manager's Report

County Manager Cummings did not have any further items to report.

COUNTY ATTORNEY'S REPORT

County Attorney's Report

County Attorney Wrenn did not have any items to report.

PRESENTATIONS BY COUNTY BOARD MEMBERS

Commissioner Griffin said that he attended a two-day training class on the essentials of County government. He expressed gratitude to County Manager Drew Cummings, Clerk Karen Evans, and Deputy Clerk Jessica Todd for arranging the training, which provided valuable insights into the role of a County Commissioner, including the legal boundaries of their responsibilities. Commissioner Griffin found the experience enlightening and emphasized its importance, along with prior training organized by Cummings. He concluded by expressing appreciation and a desire to continue learning.

Commissioner Cozart shared updates from recent visits to County facilities, including the health department, courthouse, and a school visit at South Granville High School, which

he regretted missing. He was impressed by the positive school environment and the students' orderly behavior, emphasizing its importance to parents and the community. He also expressed appreciation for the Martin Luther King Jr. Human Relations Committee's event held at Oxford Baptist Church, highlighting the fellowship and celebration of its legacy. He noted the busy but rewarding season, commending the community's collaboration through organizations like Orange Street Center, local schools, and Cooperative Extension. He concluded by acknowledging the positive impact of tax dollars being effectively utilized.

Commissioner May highlighted the numerous school events in December, expressing continued optimism about the positive developments in Granville County Public Schools and the importance of maintaining and promoting them. He mentioned meeting with the Fire Commission to address funding concerns, inviting Commissioners to attend their next meeting at the Expo Center to discuss taxpayer-focused services. Commissioner May appreciated the MLK breakfast and Commissioner Cozart's impactful message, noting his heartfelt passion. He shared updates on EMS improvements, including the near completion of having five ambulances on the road, two ALS QVs, and peak-hour staffing in North and South regions, commending the work of Granville Health System and Jonathan Pernell with GHS EMS. Additionally, Commissioner May discussed progress on school safety, including a recent meeting where Superintendent Winborne announced collaborative efforts with Oxford to place a School Resource Officer (SRO) at Creedmoor Elementary. He emphasized the importance of municipalities contributing to SRO staffing, which benefits the entire community.

Commissioner Williford shared updates on several topics. He first highlighted the success of the Human Relations Commission (HRC) MLK Breakfast at Oxford Baptist Church, thanking the Golden Corral of Roxboro for catering and members of the HRC for serving. He noted that Commissioners May, Cozart, and others helped with serving, and the event saw a strong turnout of 250-300 attendees. Dr. Linda Jordan delivered an excellent keynote address, and Dr. Tony Cozart, as emcee, impressed with his speaking abilities. Commissioner Williford also commended the young participants for their outstanding essay presentations. On the topic of courthouse safety and maintenance, he reported that, alongside Commissioners May and Cozart, he met with courthouse staff to address ongoing safety and maintenance concerns. He assured the public that these issues are being actively addressed in collaboration with the County Manager. Regarding School Resource Officers (SROs), Commissioner Williford expressed his satisfaction with plans to station two SROs at the high schools once they are combined.

Vice-Chair Jay delivered remarks expressing both concern and gratitude regarding various aspects of Granville County operations. Vice-Chair Jay reflected on the disappointing state of some school facilities. He emphasized the importance of children as both the present and future of the community, stressing the need to provide them with better learning environments. The disparity between the well-maintained exterior and the subpar interior of South Granville High School was particularly disheartening to him. He underscored the collective responsibility of the Board of Commissioners and the School Board to address these challenges and work together to "catch up." There was optimism about moving forward collaboratively to enhance the County's educational facilities. On a positive note, Vice-Chair Jay shared the news that the County had received a grant for the microtransit program, which will provide much-needed transportation services. He mentioned that updates on the program's progress would be forthcoming, with operations expected to begin in the near future. Vice-Chair Jay also acknowledged Facilities Maintenance Director Gary Bowen and his small facilities staff for their diligent work maintaining the County's buildings despite challenges like understaffing. He highlighted the extensive scope of their responsibilities, including maintaining 400,000 square feet across 29 buildings. He expressed deep gratitude for their hard work and dedication, reassuring them that their efforts do not go unnoticed.

ANY OTHER MATTERS

Vice-Chair Jay announced the upcoming Special Joint Meeting with the Granville County Board of Education on Monday, January 27, 2025 at 6:30 p.m. at the Mary Potter Center for Education, 200 Taylor Street, Oxford, NC.

ADJOURNMENT

Motioned by Commissioner Robert Williford, seconded by Commissioner Russ May and unanimously carried, the Board adjourned at 7:54 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Karen Evans
Clerk to the Board