

GRANVILLE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
May 19, 2025
GRANVILLE EXPO AND CONVENTION CENTER
4185 US Highway 15 South, Oxford, North Carolina

PRESENT:

Chair Jimmy Gooch
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 7:10 p.m., Chair Jimmy Gooch called the meeting to order. Commissioner Timothy Karan had the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Commissioner May said that he had a matter to address during the ‘Any Other Matters’ agenda item.

Motioned by Commissioner Zelodis Jay, seconded by Commissioner Robert Williford, and unanimously carried, Board approved the May 19, 2025 regular meeting agenda.

CONSENT AGENDA

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

- **Approved Budget Amendment 17 for Fiscal Year 2024-2025.**

BUDGET AMENDMENT 17
May 19, 2025
Legal Document

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

GENERAL FUND			
Expenditures	Increase	Decrease	Total
General Government			\$10,000
Board of Elections	\$ 5,000	\$ -	
Finance	\$ 5,000	\$ -	
Public Safety			(\$750)
Sheriff's Office	\$ -	\$ -	
Detention Center	\$ -	\$ -	
Emergency Management	\$ 4,250	\$ -	
Emergency Services	\$ -	\$ 5,000	
Community Services			\$8,500
Cooperative Extension Service	\$ 8,500	\$ -	
Human Services			\$ 16,594
HCCBG & Transportation	\$ 5,856	\$ -	
Oxford Senior Center	\$ 2,295	\$ -	
Senior Center - North	\$ 1,700	\$ -	
Senior Center - South	\$ 638	\$ -	
Creative Lifetime Learning	\$ 6,105	\$ -	

Area Projects and Other Appropriations			\$8,000
Pass Thru Funds	\$	8,000	\$ -
Contributions to Other Funds & Contingencies.			(\$5,000)
Contingencies	\$	-	\$ 5,000
		Total Expenditures	\$ 37,344
Revenues			
Restricted and Intergovernmental	\$37,344	\$	-
		Total Revenues	\$37,344

- **Approved a three-year contract with A Plus Group for cleaning services at an annual cost not to exceed \$195,000; furthermore, the Board authorized the County Manager to execute the contract upon finalization by the County Attorney.**
- **Approved a three-year contract with Keeps Clean for cleaning services at an annual cost of \$53,520; furthermore, the Board authorized the County Manager to execute the contract upon finalization by the County Attorney.**
- **Approved the following tax refunds, releases, and write-offs:**

Refunds	April 24, 2025 - May 4, 2025	\$ 3,426.98
Releases	April 24, 2025 - May 4, 2025	\$ 0.00
Write-offs	April 24, 2025 - May 4, 2025	\$ 41.18

INTRODUCTIONS, RECOGNITIONS, AND PRESENTATIONS

Charla Duncan Introduced as Economic Development Director

The County Manager introduced Charla Duncan as the new Economic Development Director for Granville County. Key highlights about Charla include:

Professional Background:

- Previously worked at Warren County for six years, primarily as their Director of Community and Economic Development
- Has been with Granville County for about three weeks and "hit the ground running"

Accomplishments at Warren County:

- Identified and acquired three county-owned sites for future development
- Secured over \$5 million in development grant funding

Recognition:

- Named a "Trailblazer in Business NC" in 2022
- Named "Emerging Leader of the Year" by the North Carolina Economic Development Association in 2023
- Currently represents the North Central Prosperity Zone on the Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina Advisory Council

Education and Certifications:

- Certified Economic Developer
- Graduate of UNC School of Municipal and County Administration Program
- Bachelor's degree in English with secondary education licensure from UNC Greensboro
- Master's degree in Public and Nonprofit Management from New York University

Carlos Landrau Introduced as Animal Services Director

Carlos Landrau was introduced as the new Animal Services Director for Granville County. Here are the key details about him:

Professional Background:

- Has been a faithful employee of Animal Services since 2016

- Certified Animal Control Investigator through the National Animal Care and Control Association
- Also certified through:
 - North Carolina Animal Control Federation
 - American Animal Cruelty Investigation School
 - Humane Society of the United States
 - American Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals

Education:

- Graduate of Cape Fear High School
- Graduate of UNC Pembroke, where he studied Mass Communications
- Graduate of the Chamber of Commerce's Leadership Granville program

Notable Strengths:

- The County Manager specifically highlighted Carlos' "superpower" of de-escalation skills
- Known for his ability to calm tense situations and find positive resolutions
- These skills were noted as particularly valuable in Animal Control, where people's emotions can run high

Board Received Presentation from the Veterans Affairs Committee Advisory Board

Chair of the Veterans Affairs Committee, David Sella, presented on behalf of the advisory board based on the slide deck presentation included in the agenda packet.

Committee's Mission and Activities:

- The committee focused on making Granville County a place where veterans feel "loved, respected, and needed"
- They conducted outreach through community events, social media, and newspapers
- They supported future military personnel through the Warrior Games at Webb High School with Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (JROTC) programs
- The committee noted veterans comprise only 6% of the population (down from 18% in 1980)

Support and Partnerships:

- They worked with various community organizations including:
 - The Joel Fund
 - Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy for Heroes in Research Triangle Park
 - Emissary's Motorcycle Ministry (who helped raise funds to rehabilitate a veteran's home)

Special Recognition:

- The committee recognized Sergeant Major George Davis who turned 100 years old

Future Initiatives:

- They discussed preliminary work with the Sheriff's Office to establish a Veterans Court
- They expressed interest in expanding outreach efforts

Financial Support:

- The committee thanked commissioners for allocating \$1,000 for the Veterans Appreciation event
- Commissioner May noted this funding would continue annually
- Approximately 150 people attended the Veterans Appreciation dinner at South Granville High School

Recognition of Key Contributors:

- Anne Williams and Lynette Breisacher were acknowledged as key volunteers.
- AJ Spiess, Veterans Service Officer (VSO), was commended for his outstanding work with veterans and his service as staff liaison to the Veterans Affairs Committee.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

No one came forward for public comments.

PUBLIC HEARINGS**Board Held Public Hearing on Fiscal Year 2025-2026 Proposed Budget**

Chair Gooch declared the public hearing open and noted that County Manager Drew Cummings had presented the recommended budget at the regular meeting on May 5, 2025. He then invited anyone wishing to speak to come forward.

No one came forward to speak.

Chair Gooch declared the public hearing closed.

SHERIFF MATTERS**Board Approved Consulting Contract for Robert Bailess**

Board considered Sheriff Fountain's request to extend the contract for Rob Bailess, a consultant for the Sheriff's Office. Sheriff Fountain explained that:

- Funding for the contract was already available in the line item for contract services within their budget
- Bailess had proven to be a valuable asset during a period of transition in the Sheriff's Office
- He continued to assist with contract negotiations, procurement, and implementing quartermaster systems
- His experience as a former Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) special agent in charge was beneficial to the department

Motioned by Commissioner Zelodis Jay, seconded by Commissioner Robert Williford, and carried 5-2, Board approved consulting services agreement with Bailess Group, LLC for law enforcement consulting, effective April 1, 2025, for an amount not to exceed \$37,000.00, to be funded from the Sheriff's Office line-item for Contract Services (10-4310-354); the agreement will remain in effect until terminated by either party in accordance with its terms; furthermore, Board authorized the County Manager to execute the agreement upon final review and approval by the County Attorney.

PLANNING MATTERS**After Holding a Legislative Hearing, Board Approved Knotts Grove Road Rezoning**

Chair Gooch declared the legislative hearing open, stating that the purpose was to consider the rezoning application submitted by Fred's Towing and Transport Incorporated for a 4.53-acre portion of property located on Knotts Grove Road. He then turned the floor over to Planning Director Barry Baker, who provided a presentation on the application based on the information included in the agenda packet.

Chair Gooch asked if there were any individuals who wished to speak for or against the rezoning. No witnesses came forward, and the public hearing was declared closed.

Planning Director Barry Baker stated that the legislative hearing for the rezoning request had met all public notice requirements under local and state law. The application was submitted by Fred's Towing and Transport for 4.53 acres of land located on Knotts Grove Road, east of I-85. A portion of the property was already zoned I-2 (General Industrial District), and the applicant proposed to rezone the remaining acreage from Agricultural Residential 40 (AR-40) to I-2.

The Planning Board held a public hearing on the application in April and unanimously recommended approval by a vote of 6–0. Baker referenced the materials provided to the Board, including the rezoning application, supporting documents, land use definitions, the Planning Board's written consistency statement, and excerpts from the April 17, 2025, Planning Board meeting minutes.

A zoning map was presented showing the subject property outlined in blue, with the existing I-2 zoning in purple and AR-40 zoning in yellow. The surrounding area included the Knotts Grove Industrial Properties (former Santa Fe site) and a manufactured home park. The future land use map designated the area for office and industrial uses. Baker reiterated that the rezoning request was consistent with the county's land use plans and that the Planning Board had recommended approval.

Motioned by Commissioner Timothy Karan, seconded by Commissioner Zelodis Jay, and unanimously carried, Board approved the rezoning of 4.53 acres located on Knotts Grove Road, identified as a portion of Tax Map #191102687654, from Agricultural Residential 40 (AR-40) to General Industrial District (I-2); the Board also adopted the associated written plan consistency and reasonableness statement as required by N.C.G.S. 160D-605.

Board Approved Order Granting Major Special Use Permit (Blue Bell Lane)

Board considered an order granting a major special use permit for a Duke Energy telecommunications tower on Blue Bill Lane. Planning Director Barry Baker presented the following details:

Burns and McDonnell, on behalf of Duke Energy, submitted a permit to construct a 404-foot guyed wireless telecommunication tower with a fenced compound on Duke Energy Progress property, replacing an existing tower at the same location. The Granville County Board of Adjustment had previously granted a height variance on November 28, 2023. Due to a conflict of interest, County Attorney Wrenn recused himself from the April 7th evidentiary hearing, with Attorney Chad Essick serving as counsel. Following the hearing, the Board approved the major special use permit, and the order presented was drafted by Essick to formally document the decision.

Motioned by Commissioner Timothy Karan, seconded by Commissioner Mark Griffin, and unanimously carried, Board approved the *Order Granting Major Special Use Permit (Blue Bell Lane)*.

COUNTY MANAGER'S REPORT

County Manager's Report

County Manager Cummings mentioned that William "Billy Spain", Animal Services Deputy Director, was in attendance and had been promoted alongside Animal Services Director Carlos Landrau when Landrau was promoted.

COUNTY ATTORNEY'S REPORT

County Attorney Wrenn said that he had matters for closed session.

PRESENTATIONS BY COUNTY BOARD MEMBERS

Commissioner Jay

- Acknowledged the mayors of Butner and Stem in attendance.
- Thanked them for coming to the meeting.

Commissioner Griffin

- Reported on attending Vance-Granville Community College's commencement ceremony, noted a record 517 graduates, and expressed pride in the college, its students, faculty, and the citizens of Granville County for their support.

Commissioner Cozart

- Commended staff for their clear budget presentation and noted there were no public concerns at the hearing.
- Shared enjoyment of the Culture Fest in Oxford on Saturday, May 10, 2025, and mentioned the late Dr. Helen Othow, who had long advocated for such an event.
- Extended condolences to former Economic Development Director Harry Mills on the loss of his wife.

Commissioner May

- Recognized 11 of 12 local fire departments for receiving \$40,000 each in matching grant funds and thanked Emergency Management Director Jason Reavis and Fire Marshal Ken Reeves for securing the funding.
- Reported on a meeting with Granville County Public School officials about a potential maintenance agreement that could result in significant savings.
- Added comments about facility maintenance needs at the Granville Athletic Park (GAP) site.
- Delivered a heartfelt tribute to law enforcement during National Police Week, May 11-17, 2025, highlighting their sacrifices, the challenges they face, and the high suicide rates within the profession.

Chair Gooch

- Echoed condolences to Harry Mills on the loss of his wife.

ANY OTHER MATTERS

There were no other matters for open session.

CLOSED SESSION

Motioned by Commissioner Robert Williford, seconded by Commissioner Mark Griffin, and unanimously carried, the Board entered into closed session at 7:56 p.m. for attorney-client matters as allowed by G.S. 143-318.11(a)(3) and personnel as allowed by G.S. 143-318.11(a)(6)

RETURN TO OPEN SESSION

Motioned by Commissioner Timothy Karan, seconded by Commissioner Russ May, and unanimously carried, Board returned to open session at 8:46 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Motioned by Commissioner Robert Williford, seconded by Commissioner Tony W. Cozart, and unanimously carried, Board adjourned at 8:46 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Karen Evans
Clerk to the Board