

Greg Edds, Chairman
Jim Greene, Vice- Chairman
Mike Caskey
Judy Klusman
Craig Pierce



Aaron Church, County Manager
Sarah Pack, Clerk to the Board
John W. Dees, II, County Attorney

Rowan County Board of Commissioners

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MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ROWAN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS March 20, 2023 – 6:00 PM

J. NEWTON COHEN, SR. ROOM
J. NEWTON COHEN, SR. ROWAN COUNTY ADMINISTRATION BUILDING

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PRESENT:

Greg Edds, Chairman
Jim Greene, Vice-Chairman
Mike Caskey, Commissioner
Judy Klusman, Commissioner
Craig Pierce, Commissioner

County Manager Aaron Church, Clerk to the Board Sarah Pack, County Attorney Jay Dees, and Finance Director Anna Bumgarner were also present.

Call to Order

Chairman Edds called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Chaplain Michael Taylor provided the invocation. Chairman Edds lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

Consider Additions to the Agenda

Chairman Edds requested an addition to the agenda as Consent Agenda Item P:

- Sole Source and Contract with P&G Security for Dan Nicholas Park

Consider Deletions From the Agenda

There were no deletions from the agenda.

Consider Approval of the Agenda

On motion of Pierce, seconded by Klusman, the Board voted 5-0 to approve the agenda as amended.

Consider Approval of the Consent Agenda

On motion of Pierce, seconded by Klusman, the Board voted 5-0 to approve the Consent Agenda as amended, as follows:

- A. Courthouse Roof Replacement Change Order
- B. Amendment #3 - Benesch - Woodleaf Park Project
- C. Budget Amendments, as follows:

<i>Social Services</i>	<i>To budget additional funding for Low Income Water Assistance Program and Refugee Assistance</i>	<i>\$249,690</i>
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<i>Public Health</i>	<i>To budget for University of North Carolina Medical South Lifestyle Study rewarded money</i>	<i>\$2,500</i>
<i>Finance</i>	<i>To reallocate funds for Postage</i>	<i>\$9,050</i>
<i>Public Library</i>	<i>To recognize State Aid for the Library as part of American Rescue Plan Act Fiscal Recovery Funds</i>	<i>\$109,834</i>

- D. Contract Change Order - CST Fleet Services*
- E. GRANT AGREEMENT: Fiscal Year 2022 Rowan Transit 5310 ("Operating Grant")*
- F. Schedule Public Hearing for Z 01-23 (Rockwell Extra Territorial Jurisdiction Release) for April 17, 2023*
- G. Schedule Quasi-judicial Hearing for Special Use Permit 01-23: Millbridge Speedway for April 17, 2023*
- H. GRANT APPLICATION: Emergency Services request to apply for North Carolina Emergency Management Capacity Building Grant*
- I. Tax Refunds for Approval*
- J. Fiscal Year 2024 Federal Appropriations Requests*
- K. Consider Approval of the Minutes from the March 6, 2023, meeting*
- L. Unclaimed Property*
- M. GRANT AGREEMENT: Funding Agreement for Session Law 2022-74*
- N. Martin Starnes Audit Contract*
- O. Duke Energy Tower Site Agreement*
- P. Sole Source and Contract with P&G Security for Dan Nicholas Park (Agenda Addition)*

Special Recognition

Vice-Chairman Greene recognized the West Rowan Girls Basketball team for their accomplishments during their 2022/2023 season and presented a Proclamation Honoring the 2022-2023 West Rowan High School Girls Basketball Team. Todd Bell is the athletic director at West Rowan High School was invited to the front of the room and presented with a framed copy of the Proclamation.

Coach Ashley Poole was invited to the front of the room to be recognized.

Vice-Chairman Greene read the Proclamation aloud and recognized each member individually.

Coach Poole commended the players for their hard work. Mr. Bell said the community support for the team was tremendous.

The Board congratulated the team, coach, and athletic director for their achievements. Coach Poole presented each team member with a copy of the Proclamation.

On motion of Pierce, seconded by Klusman, the Board voted 5-0 to approve a Proclamation Honoring the 2022-2023 West Rowan High School Girls Basketball Team, as follows:

PROCLAMATION HONORING THE 2022-2023 WEST ROWAN HIGH SCHOOL GIRLS BASKETBALL TEAM

WHEREAS, the West Rowan High School Girls Basketball Team, under Head Coach Ashley Poole, is hereby recognized and honored for their 2022-2023 victorious basketball season; and

WHEREAS, by their extraordinary efforts, the following members of this dynamic and talented team are to be congratulated for their remarkable and triumphant season: Makaylah Tenor, Dede Cuthbertson, Demya Phifer, Sarah Durham, Aubrey Martin, Kennedy Clawson, Jamecia Huntley, Mya Edwards, Lauren Arnold, Emma Clarke, Tiara Thompson, and Katie Hoffner; and

WHEREAS, due to the hard work, dedication, and their exceptional chemistry, this outstanding group of Falcons made school history as they finished out a perfect 31-0 season by claiming the 3A State Championship title on March 11, 2023, the first-ever girls basketball team state championship earned in West Rowan High School's history; and

WHEREAS, the individual contributions from each team member were crucial to the successful season; and the tremendous commitment and excellent performance of these young Rowan County women, along with their coaching staff, have proven to be a source of admiration and inspiration to the citizens of Rowan County.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT PROCLAIMED, that the Rowan County Board of Commissioners does hereby honor and congratulate the West Rowan High School 2022-2023 Girls Basketball Team and Coaching Staff for their incredible achievements and commends them for their display of sportsmanship and leadership as they represented Rowan County.

Attorney Jay Dees commended other local teams on their outstanding athletic accomplishments.

Public Comment Period

John Herbert Morrison, 1710 Statesville Boulevard, Salisbury, said the tax value on his real property increased by 60%. Costs are rising across the board. He asked the Board to consider a revenue neutral tax rate for the upcoming year.

Connie Byrne, 216 Goldston Street, Kannapolis, said she understands that the Board doesn't have control over the property value increase; it is a direct result of the national housing market increase. Expenses for the County are increasing. She commended the Board for their work. She suggested senior citizens apply for tax deferment.

John Mitchell, 4215 Hampton Road, Salisbury, said the Board should tell citizens how much the tax value of real property will increase before the new values are released.

Lisa Lennox, 120 Topsail Road, Salisbury, asked the Board to reconsider the tax revaluation. The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the housing market dramatically. She discussed the cause and effect relationship of the increased real property tax values and gave related statistics. She gave multiple suggestions as to how to approach this issue.

Charles Isenhour, 820 Mocksville Road, Salisbury, said he has family that had a 128% increase to the tax value of their house. He is more concerned about tax collection than the value increase. Approximately 20% of the time, he sees expired vehicle tags on the road, meaning those people aren't paying taxes and don't have insurance. He showed photographs of homes that don't match the new tax values. He does not agree with how some homes have been valued. Some of the valuations are not fair.

Mike Taylor, 2122 Hopedale Street, Kannapolis, prayed for Sheriff Travis Allen, whose father recently passed away.

Chairman Edds said the revaluation amount comes out in stages. The bill will show the dollar amount. He agreed with Mr. Isenhour about some people not paying taxes. The collection rate is 97.88% which is great, but 100% is better. Often there is a tax lien on these homes, and those taxes are eventually collected. The commissioners are bystanders when it comes to the revaluation process. There is a standard method used to calculate property values, and the Board does not know what the values will be. Some adjacent counties are on the same revaluation schedule as Rowan, and some are not. Chairman Edds gave statistics regarding the average value increase in other counties. This is a state issue and we are in unprecedented times. There are a number of outside factors impacting the process; costs are high all around. He gave statistics to support the value increase. Chairman Edds said the Board understands that some mistakes will be made. The Board expects a tax rate decrease and is working with the County Manager to address a lower rate. Industrial and business development is "the answer." Growth is the hedge against inflation for residential taxation.

Vice-Chairman Greene said the County does not have responsibility for roads. The local municipality or the State of North Carolina is responsible for the maintenance of roads.

Consider Permit to Exceed Noise Ordinance Request (PE 01-23)

Shane Stewart, Planning and Development Assistant Director, said Rod Weaver and Misty Thomas are requesting a permit to exceed the amplified noise ordinance standards for an event on Saturday, May 6th between 1:00 PM and 9:00 PM on their property at 4860 Patterson Road China Grove (Parcel ID 223-003). According to information provided by the property owners, the event, referenced as "One Love Music Festival", will feature a day of "music, food, and fellowship" including miscellaneous vendors, information regarding the American Cancer Society and other assistance organizations, and activities for children. The owners indicated a portion of the proceeds will fund their non-profit organization, Wisdom Way Inc.'s mission – Hands of Hope.

Mr. Stewart showed a site plan of the property and described the layout of the festival. There will be private security. Nineteen letters were sent to neighbors, who were invited as special guests, but no responses were received.

Rod Weaver is the property owner. He said the property is for the community to share and enjoy. He is a humanitarian and sees the need for people to come together.

Chairman Edds invited public comment, but no one spoke.

On motion of Pierce, seconded by Greene, the Board voted 5-0 to approve the permit to exceed the noise ordinance standards, request PE 01-23, for an event on Saturday, May 6th between 1:00 PM and 9:00 PM on their property at 4860 Patterson Road China Grove (Parcel ID 223-003).

Public Hearing – Road Name Change (Brownstone Drive and Tulip Road)

Shane Stewart, Assistant Planning and Development Director, said the following road name changes have been submitted to the Rowan County Planning Department and are presented for approval by the Board of Commissioners. As required by North Carolina General Statute 153A-239.1, a public hearing will be held to consider and receive comment for the following road name requests:

1. Currently Known As: **Not Applicable**
Proposed Name: ***Brownstone Drive***
Location: driveway that connects to Jim Neely Road in the 100 block and then connects to US 601 Highway in the 7400 block.
Property Owner: The Equity Group
Reason for Change: Change in addressing ordinance requires all campground sites to have an individually numbered address and for all roads to be named.

2. Currently Known As: **Not Applicable**
Proposed Name: ***Tulip Road***
Location: driveway that connects to Bull Hill Road in the 100 block and then connects to Jim Neely Road in the 100 block.
Property Owner: The Equity Group
Reason for Change: Change in addressing ordinance requires all campground sites to have an individually numbered address and for all roads to be named.

At 7:20 p.m. Chairman Edds opened the Public Hearing.

James Hamm, Junior, 155 Jim Neely Drive, Salisbury, said his property is impacted by the name changes. He is a member of the volunteer fire department and is familiar with nearby locations. There have been renumbered and renamed sites at this location.

Mr. Stewart explained the changes and pointed them out on a map. This request did pass a 911 communications review.

Mr. Hamm said there has been confusion with people driving down his driveway looking for the campground.

Hearing no further comments, Chairman Edds closed the Public Hearing at 7:25 p.m.

On motion of Pierce, seconded by Greene, the Board voted 5-0 to approve the proposed road name changes as presented.

Financial Reports

Finance Director Anna Bumgarner presented the financial reports. She compared annual cumulative expenditures, with 2023 totaling \$105,077,293 for February. Annual cumulative revenue is up for 2023, with \$149,418,303 for February. She explained revenues that were one-time drawdowns that factored into this total. In January, the annual cumulative property tax for 2023 was \$87,112,133. In November 2022, the annual cumulative sales tax was \$16,868,940. Ms. Bumgarner compared monthly sales taxes from 2020 to 2023.

Adjournment

At 7:30 p.m., on motion of Pierce, seconded by Greene, the Board voted 5-0 to adjourn.

Sarah Pack, NCCCC
Clerk to the Board