

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

April 3, 2023 – 3:00 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 3:00 p.m. Chaplain Michael Taylor provided the invocation. Chairman Edds lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

#### Consider Additions to the Agenda

Chairman Edds said Steve Simpson's application for the Scotch Irish Volunteer Fire Department Fire Commissioners will be considered in addition to the two other applications that were received.

#### Consider Deletions From the Agenda

There were no deletions from the agenda.

#### Consider Approval of the Agenda

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

#### Consider Approval of the Consent Agenda

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

A. *Proclamation Recognizing Telecommunicators Week, as follows:*

**PROCLAMATION**  
**PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATORS WEEK**  
**April 9-15, 2023**

WHEREAS, the services and functions performed by the Rowan County Public Safety Telecommunicators are critical to the safety and welfare of the citizens of Rowan County and the municipalities; and

WHEREAS, the Public Safety Telecommunicators provide 24-hour service seven days per week as the vital link in the chain of emergency services providers; and

WHEREAS, these dedicated professionals are the initial point of contact for citizens in crisis situations who need emergency services assistance. In answering the public's daily cries for help, they are often instrumental in saving lives and reducing property damage when tragedy strikes.

NOW THEREFORE the Rowan County Board of Commissioners does hereby proclaim April 9-15, 2023 as "Public Safety Telecommunicators Week" in Rowan County and urges all citizens to acknowledge the contributions of these loyal public servants.

B. National Cinemedia Agreement

C. Budget Amendments, as follows:

Social Services	To budget the funding authorization received for Adult Protective Services Essential Services	\$5,584
Public Health	To budget increase in Smart-Start Healthy Beginnings grant	\$13,845
Public Library	To budget Salisbury-Rowan Comm Foundation Grant	\$3,500
Cooperative Extension	To recognize National Rifle Association Shooting Sports Club Grant awarded	\$2,300
Cooperative Extension	To budget for Cooperative Extension additional revenue and expenditures	\$5,000
Finance	To reverse Budget Amendment 07-414 and place funds back in Schools Current Expense (American Rescue Plan Act Revenue Replacement)	\$92,911

D. Rowan Cabarrus Community College Design Funding Request

E. Vaya Health Update

F. Request to Use West End Plaza Parking Lot

G. Budget Appropriation Increase for Rowan Museum

H. Consider Approval of the Minutes 3/20/23

I. South Data Inc. Amendment and Approval

J. Wharton Smith Office Lease at West End Plaza

K. Title Change Only Requested by Social Services

L. Title Change Only Requested by Sheriff Travis Allen

M. CivicClerk Sole Source

N. Schedule Public Hearing for Revisions to County Incentive Policy for 4/17/23

O. Award Woodleaf Park Project Bid to Randolph and Sons Builders Incorporated

**Public Comment Period**

There were no public comments.

## **Child Abuse Prevention Month Report**

Amy Brown, Smart Start Rowan Executive Director/Community Child Protection Team (CCPT) Chair, explained the mission of Smart Start. Smart Start works with other community and County agencies to lay the foundation for improving the lives of children from birth to five years old. Ms. Brown detailed the items included in the CCPT report and listed seven ways the Board of Commissioners could support the CCPT.

Shawn Edman, Terrie Hess House Child Advocacy Center (THHCAC)/CCPT, explained the goals of the THHCAC. The year 2022 was a record year for cases and THHCAC is on track to surpass that in 2023. Mr. Edman explained some of the programs and strategies used in addressing abuse or other issues. A call center is being developed for the state of North Carolina. There is also a therapy-based program for caregivers and young children who may be experiencing difficulties. Economic insecurity is a big factor in abuse. Financial stressors can be overwhelming. Mr. Edman asked for the Board's support in preventing child abuse.

Commissioner Klusman asked how many abusers are known to the child and Mr. Edman said ninety percent.

Alyssa Harris, Rowan Public Health Director/CCPT, said that often substance abuse is a key emerging issue that effects the development of children. Ten percent of Rowan County infants require a plan of safe care, meaning they are affected by illegal substances at birth. She gave statistics regarding the effect of substances on the population. She commended the Board for their economic support of the familial unit through funding community programs. In-patient stays often pose a large economic burden resulting in lack of services because of a person's inability to pay. Funding for community agencies makes access to these services more widespread.

Micah Ennis, Social Services Director/CCPT, said it's difficult to fathom that poverty affects people in Rowan County. Poverty doesn't cause abuse or neglect, but it poses a large challenge to those who want the best for their families. There are nearly 50,000 Rowan County residents on Medicaid, with approximately half of that amount receiving benefits from Food and Nutrition Services (FNS). Medicaid expansion will see an increase in this number. She gave statistics regarding poverty levels. She thanked the CCPT for their coordination and cooperation along with other county departments and said child protection is a collaborative effort.

Chairman Edds said better jobs help people economically. He asked what more the Board can do to ease the struggle with poverty. How can these people be connected with upcoming opportunities? Ms. Ennis suggested creating a team to study this issue and address it. There are a variety of reasons that people may be stuck in poverty. The CCPT would love to be a part of the conversation.

Vice-Chairman Greene asked about the number of people on Medicaid. Ms. Ennis said a more exact number is 47,500 individual beneficiaries. This includes children and adults. Vice-Chairman Greene asked if children affected by poverty and abuse are tracked and compared to graduation rates. Ms. Ennis suggested working with the school system to determine this answer.

She gave relevant statistics regarding current children in foster care and poverty. Vice-Chairman Greene discussed assisting children affected by poverty and abuse in order to determine the effect on graduation rates.

Chairman Edds asked about the budget to address this situation. Ms. Ennis said it is roughly \$250 million including Medicaid. This money goes to services and programs like FNS. This amount of money is staggering. The County needs to find a way to pass the dividend along.

*On motion of Pierce, seconded by Greene, the Board voted 5-0 to approve and accept the Community Child Prevention Team report.*

*On motion of Klusman, seconded by Pierce, the Board voted 5-0 to approve a Proclamation for Child Abuse Prevention and Awareness Month, as follows:*

***Proclamation for Child Abuse Prevention and Awareness Month***

*WHEREAS, child maltreatment is a community problem and finding a solution depends upon involvement among people throughout the community; and*

*WHEREAS, child maltreatment occurs when parents find themselves in stressful situations without community resources and unable to cope; and*

*WHEREAS, approximately 93,195 children were subject of investigations of abuse, neglect and/or dependency in North Carolina in fiscal year 2021; and*

*WHEREAS, 45 children were victims of homicide by their parent or caretaker in North Carolina during the year 2021; and*

*WHEREAS, the majority of child maltreatment cases stem from situations and conditions that are preventable in an engaged and supportive community; and*

*WHEREAS, the effects of child maltreatment are felt by whole communities, and need to be addressed by the entire community; and*

*WHEREAS, effective child maltreatment prevention programs succeed because of partnerships created among social service agencies, schools, faith communities, civic organizations, law enforcement agencies, and the business community.*

*THEREFORE, the Rowan County Commissioners do hereby proclaim April 2023 as Child Abuse Prevention Month in Rowan County and calls upon all citizens, community agencies, faith groups, medical facilities, and businesses to increase their participation in our efforts to prevent child maltreatment and strengthen the communities in which we live.*

**Public Hearing and Finding Resolution for Installment Financing Airport Hangars**

Finance Director Anna Bumgarner said pursuant to Section 160A-20 of the General Statutes of North Carolina and Section 147(f) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 with respect to an installment financing contract in the principal amount currently expected not to exceed \$8,701,000 the proceeds of which will be used to finance a portion of the costs of the acquisition, construction and equipping of the following: one new approximately 17,400 square foot public safety hangar (including office space) (the “Public Safety Hangar”), one approximately 20,600 square foot hangar (including office space) and three box hangars (approximately 4,000 square feet each) (collectively, the “Hangars”), all located at the Mid-Carolina Regional Airport. The Hangars will be owned by Rowan County, North Carolina. A portion of the Public Safety

Hangar may be leased to Novant Health, Inc. a North Carolina nonprofit corporation and an exempt organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the Code (or an affiliate or related party). A portion of the installment payments due under the Contract are expected to be issued as tax-exempt qualified 501(c)(3) bonds as defined in Section 145 of the Code.

The total project cost is currently estimated at \$12.7 million. The County has \$3 million in State Capital Infrastructure Funding (SCIF) for this project and \$1 million in County funding.

At 3:37 p.m. Chairman Edds opened the public hearing and closed it after no one wished to speak.

*On motion of Edds, seconded by Pierce, the Board voted 5-0 to approve a Resolution Authorizing the Filing of an Application for Approval of an Installment Financing Contract Authorized by North Carolina General Statutes 160A-20 and Making Certain Findings Required by North Carolina General Statutes 159-151, as follows:*

**RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE FILING OF AN  
APPLICATION FOR APPROVAL OF AN INSTALLMENT  
FINANCING CONTRACT AUTHORIZED BY NORTH  
CAROLINA GENERAL STATUTES §160A-20 AND MAKING  
CERTAIN FINDINGS REQUIRED BY NORTH CAROLINA  
GENERAL STATUTES §159-151**

*WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners (the "Board of Commissioners") of Rowan County, North Carolina (the "County") desires to pursue the financing of the acquisition, construction and equipping of new airport hangars at the Mid-Carolina Regional Airport (the "Project") pursuant to an installment financing contract, as permitted under N.C.G.S. §160A-20; and*

*WHEREAS, it is anticipated that the portion of the cost of the Project that will be financed, together with the payment of issuance expenses in connection with the financing, will not exceed \$8,701,000; and*

*WHEREAS, the installment financing contract for the financing of the Project pursuant to N.C.G.S. §160A-20 must be approved by the North Carolina Local Government Commission (the "LGC") and will only be approved if the findings of N.C.G.S. §159-151(b) have been made; and*

*WHEREAS, the County has today held a public hearing regarding financing of the Project through the execution and delivery of the installment financing contract, as evidenced by the Certificate and Summary of Public Hearing attached hereto;*

*NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Commissioners of the County, as follows:*

- 1. After consideration, the Board of Commissioners has determined that the most*
- 2. advantageous manner of financing the Project is by an installment financing contract pursuant to Section 160A-20 of the General Statutes of North Carolina, as amended. In support thereof, the Board hereby makes the following findings of fact:*

- (a) Pursuant to Section 160A-20, the County is authorized to finance the Project by entering into an installment financing contract and a security agreement that creates a security interest in some or all of the Project to secure repayment of such financing.*
  - (b) The proposed financing is necessary or expedient because it will provide needed improvements for the County.*
  - (c) The proposed financing is preferable to a bond issue for the same purpose because of low fixed costs and favorable interest rates offered through installment contract financing compared to a bond issue.*
  - (d) The cost of the proposed undertaking is approximately \$12,600,000, a portion of which will be paid with funds on hand and funds received under the State Capital and Infrastructure Fund. The remaining cost of the Project (\$8,701,000) exceeds the amount of funds that can be prudently raised from currently available appropriations, unappropriated fund balances, and non-voted general obligation bonds that could be issued by the County in the fiscal year pursuant to Article V, Section 4, of the North Carolina Constitution.*
  - (e) The sums proposed to be provided under the financing are adequate and not excessive for the stated purpose of financing the Project.*
  - (f) The County's debt management procedures and policies are good and have been carried out in strict compliance with law and will henceforth be so carried out.*
  - (g) There will be no increase in taxes necessary to meet the sums to fall due under the proposed financing.*
  - (h) The County is not in default in any of its debt service obligations.*
- 3. The attorney for the County will render an opinion that the proposed financing is authorized by law and is a purpose for which public funds may be expended pursuant to the Constitution and laws of North Carolina.*
  - 4. Each of the County Manager, the Finance Officer, and other appropriate officers of the County is hereby authorized and directed to proceed with the financing of the Project and the filing of an application with the LGC for its approval of such financing as described above for the financing of the Project in an amount not to exceed \$8,701,000, and the actions of any of the Chairman, the County Manager, the Finance Officer, and other officers of the County in connection therewith are hereby approved and confirmed.*
  - 5. All other acts of the Board of Commissioners and the officers of the County, which are in conformity with the purposes and intent of this resolution and in furtherance of the financing of the Project, are hereby ratified, approved and confirmed.*
  - 6. This resolution shall take effect immediately.*

Commissioner Pierce said to grow the county, we have to be up to speed on transportation needs. Nowadays, corporate America flies rather than drives. There is a chartered airplane sales/detailing/flight school company moving in. The hangers are ready to be occupied. Customers are waiting for these hanger spots. This allows the County to grow the airport and bring more corporate business to the county.

Valerie Steele, Airport Director, explained some of the corporate clients coming to the airport and those that are already established. Aerowood Aviation is the official charter service for the Charlotte Hornets. This is big news for Rowan County.

Chairman Edds said Senator Carl Ford secured five million for the airport for new equipment.

Ms. Steele described new projects at the airport.

Chairman Edds explained some of the changes occurring due to the funding from Senator Ford. There is potential for additional revenue through various projects.

#### **Grant Program Proposal: Plumbing Repair/Replacement for Eligible Customers of Northeast Rowan Water System**

Randy Cress, Assistant County Manager/Chief Information Officer, said in July 2018, the Northeast Rowan County Water System (NRCWS) began distributing public water supply to customers who were previously supplied from private groundwater wells. NRCWS is a consecutive system that obtains water from Salisbury-Rowan Utilities (SRU) and serves a population of approximately 445 people. Rowan County owns the water system, and SRU serves as the "Operator in Responsible Charge" (ORC or "Operator"). SRU operates a water treatment plant that supplies the City and Northeast Rowan County systems.

Beginning in July 2018, NRCS and its Operator have performed semi-annual tap sampling for the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Lead and Copper Rule compliance. The system's 90th percentile lead concentration had exceeded the EPA requirements as indicated in many of these water samples.

Analysis by outside engineering consultants also demonstrated that there is no source of lead in the public water supply but rather that lead was leaching into drinking water from old or outdated private plumbing systems and components within some customers' properties. The County and Operator have taken action to support the reduction of lead concentrations in homes in the system by altering treatment techniques to best prevent the leaching of lead in the private plumbing systems. More recently, the EPA created a Trigger Level for lead in drinking water of 10 parts-per-billion, or ppb (previously 50 ppb).

Rowan County has proactively researched methods to address lead leached into drinking water from private plumbing. The County also expects to receive funding from American Rescue Plan Act funds through the DEQ specifically intended to address lead contamination in drinking water. ARPA funding provides a potential opportunity for the County to assist citizens who may have lead leaching into their system from their private plumbing systems.

Rowan County proposes to establish the 2023 Plumbing Grant for Lead Remediation for Qualified Customers of Northeast Rowan County Water System program. The Plumbing Grant will allow qualifying customers (those with prior sampling values greater than 10 ppb) to have appropriate repairs and/or replacements made in their private plumbing system to address materials causing lead to leach into the drinking water.

Ann Kitalong-Will, purchasing grants, explained the funding source for the grant.

Chairman Edds asked if this problem has grown over recent years. Mr. Cress said the county was already looking at the more aggressive 10 ppb.

Commissioner Pierce asked if the chemical booster station will still be needed and Mr. Cress said yes. There is a potential hydrogen (pH) requirement for the water system. Commissioner Pierce asked if the booster station should have been completed after replumbing the houses.

County Manager Aaron Church explained compliance requirements.

Commissioner Pierce asked how many homes will need to be replumbed. Mr. Cress gave an estimate based on the sampling. Commissioner Pierce asked about parameters regarding eligibility for replumbing and Mr. Cress gave date ranges and examples. Information will be distributed in mailers for bill payments.

Mr. Cress said this is a completely optional program over and above any state requirements. There is a voluntary process for homeowners who are interested.

Chairman Edds questioned how this process will vary from a similar process in the past.

Mr. Church said the booster station is required to remain in compliance.

County Attorney Jay Dees explained relevant aspects of the previous time water lines and the chemical booster station were addressed.

Mr. Church said action is not required at this time if the Board chooses to table this issue.

*On motion of Pierce, seconded by Greene, the Board voted 5-0 to approve the 2023 Plumbing Grant for Lead Remediation for Qualified Customers of Northeast Rowan County Water System.*

### **Updated Rowan County Lease Proposal to United States Department of Agriculture for Space in West End Plaza**

Ann Kitalong-Will, purchasing grants, said at the August 15, 2022, Regular Meeting of the Rowan County Board of Commissioners, the Commissioners approved the County Manager to sign and submit a proposal in response to United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Request for Lease Proposal (RFL) No. 57-37159-22-FA for space in the West End Plaza (WEP).



In the months since first approval was received, the USDA and County staff have refined the initial proposal numbers. She shared updated numbers based on:

- Estimated cost of renovation (USDA space), amortized over 10 years at 7%
- Estimated operating costs (USDA space)
- Base shell rental rate (square feet)

Ms. Kitalong-Will discussed projected costs and revenue over a ten-year term. Submitting these updated forms to the USDA is the next step to negotiate lease rates for the space in West End Plaza designated for the USDA offices. The Board will be updated periodically as lease negotiation proceeds.

Amy-Lynn Albertson, Cooperative Extension Director, explained the relationship between the USDA and the County.

Commissioner Klusman asked about communication with the farm service representatives. Ms. Albertson explained the proposal that was completed. The combination of leases is a good thing.

*On motion of Greene, seconded by Caskey, the Board voted 5-0 to authorize the County Manager to sign and submit the updated documents to the USDA as part of the County's proposal to the USDA to lease office space in West End Plaza.*

### **Board Appointments**

*On motion of Pierce, seconded by Edds, the Board voted 5-0 to appoint Jereme Linker to the At Large seat and appoint Andrew King to the Alternate seat on the Town of Rockwell Board of Adjustments.*

*On motion of Klusman, seconded by Pierce, the Board voted 5-0 to appoint Eddie Hawks to the Environmental/Health/Transportation seat on the Local Emergency Planning Committee.*

Pierce moved to appoint Angelena Spillman to the At Large seat on the Planning Board, but the motion died for lack of a second.

*On motion of Edds, seconded by Klusman, the Board voted 4-1 with Pierce opposed, to appoint Sean Reid to the At Large seat on the Planning Board.*

*On motion of Klusman, seconded by Greene, the Board voted 5-0 to appoint Jeannie Wooten Weaver to the County seat on the Rowan-Iredell Volunteer Fire Department Fire Commissioners.*

*On motion of Greene, seconded by Pierce, the Board voted 5-0 to appoint Steve Simpson, Bernie Jock Davis, and David Phillip Majors Junior to County seats on the Scotch Irish Volunteer Fire Department Fire Commissioners.*

### **Closed Session**

*At 4:30 p.m. on motion of Edds, seconded by Pierce, the Board voted 5-0 to enter into Closed Session pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11(a)(1) to consider approval of the minutes of the Closed Session held on March 6, 2023, as described by NCGS 143-318.10(e) providing that minutes or an account of a closed session may be withheld from public inspection so long as public inspection would frustrate the purpose of a closed session, and pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11(a)(3) to consult with an attorney employed or retained by the public body in order to preserve attorney-client privilege between the attorney and the public body regarding airport leases.*

**Regular Session**

*At 5:30 p.m. regular session resumed.*

**Adjournment**

*At 5:31 p.m., on motion of Pierce, seconded by Klusman, the Board voted 5-0 to adjourn.*

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Sarah Pack, NCCCC  
Clerk to the Board