

Regular Meeting
Monday, February 6, 2023
Chowan County Public Safety Center
305 West Freemason Street
6:00pm

This meeting was recorded. A copy of the recording is in the meeting file labeled February 6, 2023.

Present: Chair Bob Kirby, Commissioners, Ron Cummings, Larry McLaughlin and Alex Kehayes, Ellis Lawrence, Tray Taylor and Chris Evans.

Staff present County Manager Kevin Howard, Finance Officer Cathy Smith, County Attorney Lauren Arizaga Womble and Board Clerk Susanne Stallings.

Regular Meeting

Chair Kirby called the regular meeting to order and led all in the pledge of allegiance.

Commissioner McLaughlin then offered the invocation.

Approval of Agenda

Commissioner Cummings moved to approve the agenda as presented.

Chair Kirby asked for all in favor, the motion passed unanimously (7-0).

Public Comment

Chair Kirby opened the floor for public comment.

There was none.

Consent Agenda

All items on the Consent Agenda are considered to be routine and may be enacted by one motion. If a County Commissioner requests discussion on an item, the item will be removed from the Consent Agenda and considered separately.

- a. Minutes
Minutes of the January 9, 2023 and January 23, 2023 Regular and Special Meetings.

- b. Tax Refund Release Report
Riddick, R. \$223.54 Paid Twice

Commissioner McLaughlin moved to approve the consent agenda as presented. Chair Kirby asked for all in favor, the motion passed unanimously (7-0).

Center Hill Crossroads Fire Department Brush Truck

LW Nixon, Chief of Centerhill Crossroads Fire Department presented the Board with a request to utilize grant monies to purchase a brush truck for the fire department. He stated the Fire Department received a grant for \$50,000 from the State and later received \$10,000 in grant monies from the state. He stated they received \$35,000 from the Office of the State Fire Marshall. He stated in total they have \$95,000 and they would like to purchase a brush truck and equipment for the Fire Department. He stated the truck would cost between \$70,000 and \$75,000 and the remainder would be utilized for equipment.

Chair Kirby asked if any local match is required.

Mr. Howard stated no, these are monies that come to the County and go back to the Fire Department.

Chief Nixon stated that they have found a few trucks that meet their criteria but needed permission to purchase the vehicle.

Commissioner Cummings moved to approve the purchase of a brush truck and equipment utilizing grant monies up to \$95,000.

Chair Kirby asked about the status of another truck that was purchased.

Chief Nixon stated that was ordered in January and the sales rep has indicated they are working on it.

Being no further questions, Chair Kirby asked for all in favor, the motion passed unanimously (7-0).

Sheriff Weapon Surplus

Sheriff Edward Basnight presented the Board with a request to surplus a list of 22 shotguns to be sold to a Federally Licensed Firearm Dealer and use the proceeds to convert 6 shotguns that are not surplus over to a less lethal (bean bag round) and to purchase bean bag rounds for the Sheriff's Department.

Commissioner McLaughlin moved to surplus the guns listed and approve the disposal as described. Chair Kirby asked for all in favor, the motion passed unanimously (7-0).

Library Board

Ms. Stallings noted that the current bylaws for the Library Board align with the general statutes that define Library Board membership. The Bylaws and Statutes require no less than six (6) and no more than twelve (12) members. Until recently there have been twelve appointees to the Library Board. One of the Trustees recently resigned and it was unanimously recommended by the Board of Trustees that this seat not be filled and the Board membership be a total of 11 members. The Board of Trustees feels that leaving this seat vacant will reduce the possibility of a tie vote in the future. The Board will consider approval of this request.

Ms. Stallings also noted that there are some term expirations on the Board of Trustees that will expire in June. Those vacancies are being advertised and applications are being collected. The

Board of Trustees will review the applications and make a recommendation to the Commissioners at their April 11, 2023 meeting. Interested applicants are encouraged to apply no later than April 5, 2023.

Commissioner Taylor moved to approve the membership amendment as presented. Chair Kirby asked for all in favor, the motion passed unanimously (7-0).

Tax Items

Tax Administrator Melissa Radke presented the Board with the following items:

Value Relief – Jimbo Jumbos

Relief from value due to item not being in their possession on January 1, 2022. Item is a boat with a value of \$301,009. This is a reduction of \$3,625.65 off the tax bill.

Commissioner McLaughlin moved to approve the relief as presented. Chair Kirby asked for all in favor, the motion passed unanimously (7-0).

Refund – Beech Fork Farms

There was a duplicate listing of two items on the tax bill. The taxpayer wrote in the item and it was already listed on the form. The total value relief is \$443,988 and the refund is \$3263.31.

Commissioner Evans moved to approve the refund as presented. Chair Kirby asked for all in favor, the motion passed unanimously (7-0).

Refund – Swain Trucking

The trailer was sold in 2021. It was realized the property was not removed from the listing by the tax payer. Ms. Swain presented a bill of sale and it was recommended the taxpayer be refunded \$153.91 (value of \$20,940).

Commissioner McLaughlin moved to approve the refund as presented. Chair Kirby asked for all in favor, the motion passed unanimously (7-0).

Toyota Industries Commercial Finance

This was two leased items that were billed on separate accounts (billed to lessor and lessee). The total value is \$50,125 and a refund is recommended in the amount of \$548.87.

Commissioner Evans moved to approve the refund as presented. Chair Kirby asked for all in favor, the motion passed unanimously (7-0).

2026 Reappraisal Proposal

Ms. Radke stated the Board changed the reappraisal schedule from every eight years to every four years. The next reappraisal is scheduled for January 2026. She stated that it is time to contract these services again. She provided the Board with a quote from Vincent Valuations. She stated it will take approximately 1.5 years to complete the field work and another 1 to 1.5 years to complete the sales verifications. She stated she recommends the 2026 appraisal be a walk around which verifies everything previously listed and measure any buildings not already on the property record card. She stated the quote includes a fee of \$28.50 per parcel and allows

for 60 days for appeals. She stated she recommends allowing 60 days. She stated the total cost is \$364,686.60.

Commissioner McLaughlin asked for clarification on the dates in which the value is considered.

Ms. Radke stated that she is not allowed to consider values of property sales during February 2025 through February 2026.

Ms. Womble noted that prior to considering values the tax office is only reviewing the accuracy of the listing.

Ms. Smith noted the revaluation fund has \$20,000 and \$100,000 is budgeted for this fiscal year.

Commissioner Cummings moved to authorize staff to draft a contract with Vincent Valuations for the 60 day appeal period at \$28.50 per parcel.

Chair Kirby asked for all in favor, the motion passed unanimously (7-0).

2022 Report of Unpaid Taxes and Order to Advertise the 2022 Tax Liens

Ms. Radke reported that delinquent taxes due as of today total \$947,629.19 for real property. She stated that delinquent personal property taxes total \$117,536.93. She noted she wants to advertise both real and personal property taxes and the costs for the advertisement are passed on to the tax payer.

Commissioner McLaughlin moved to approve the Order to Advertise. Chair Kirby asked for all in favor, the motion passed unanimously (7-0).

Resolution – March for Meals

Chair Kirby stated that the Board will consider a proposed resolution from the Albemarle Commission proclaiming March 2023 as the 21st Annual March for Meals Month.

Commissioner McLaughlin moved to approve the resolution as presented. Chair Kirby asked for all in favor, the motion passed unanimously (7-0).

PROCLAMATION PROCLAIMING MARCH 2023 AS THE 21st ANNUAL MARCH FOR MEALS MONTH

WHEREAS, on March 22, 1972, President Nixon signed into law a measure that amended the Older Americans Act of 1965 to include a national nutrition program for individuals 60 years and older.

WHEREAS, for more than five decades, this landmark law has helped to fund community-based organizations – like Meals on Wheels – and it is still the only federal program designed specifically to meet the nutritional and social needs of older adults.

WHEREAS, this year, Meals on Wheels programs from across the country are joining together for the March for Meals awareness campaign to celebrate its success and garner the support needed to ensure these critical programs can continue to address food insecurity and

malnutrition, combat social isolation, enable independence and improve health for years to come.

WHEREAS, Meals on Wheels programs – both congregate and home-delivered, in North Carolina have served our communities admirably for 51 years for North Carolina; and

WHEREAS, volunteers for Meals on Wheels programs in **Chowan County** are the backbone of the program and they not only deliver nutritious meals to seniors and individuals with disabilities who are at significant risk of hunger and isolation, but also caring concern and attention to their welfare; and

WHEREAS, Meals on Wheels programs in North Carolina provide nutritious meals to seniors throughout **Chowan County** that help them maintain their health and independence, thereby helping to prevent unnecessary falls, hospitalizations and/or premature institutionalization; and

WHEREAS, Meals on Wheels programs in North Carolina provide a powerful opportunity for social connection for hundreds of seniors to help combat the negative health effects and economic consequences of loneliness and isolation; and

WHEREAS, Meals on Wheels programs in North Carolina deserve recognition for the heroic contributions and essential services they have provided amid the COVID-19 pandemic, inclement weather and other emergencies.

WHEREAS, the senior population is increasing substantially, and action is needed now to support local Meals on Wheels programs through federal, state and local funding; volunteering; donations; and raising awareness to ensure these vital services can continue to be delivered for years to come.

NOW, THEREFORE, CHOWAN COUNTY, does hereby proclaim March 2023 as a month celebrating Meals on Wheels and urge every community member to take this month to honor our senior nutrition programs, the individuals they serve and the volunteers who care for them. Our recognition of, and involvement in, the national March for Meals celebration can enrich our entire community and help combat senior hunger and isolation in America.

Dated this 6th day of February, 2023

Courthouse – Carpet Replacement

Mr. Howard presented the Board with proposals for replacement of the carpet on the 2nd floor. It is recommended that the Board select the proposal from Northeastern Flooring due to the reduced lead time of four weeks.

Board members asked that the Manager inquire to see if the low bidder is able to match the lead time in the middle bid.

Commissioner McLaughlin moved to approve the lowest bid if the bidder is able to match the completion time of the middle bid if not the bid should be awarded to the second highest bidder. Chair Kirby asked for all in favor, the motion passed unanimously (7-0).

Financial Items

Finance Officer Cathy Smith will present the following:

Current Fiscal Year Budget Amendments

Finance Officer Cathy Smith presented the following budget amendments:

BA2023-047

Account Number	Account Description	Revenue (Inc+/Dec-)	Expense (Inc+/Dec-)
TDA			
51-3815-530-00	Co-Op Monies	504.46	
51-8150-261-01	Office Supplies - Co-Op		504.46
51-3832-530-00	Co-Op Advertising	1,799.00	
51-8150-370-01	Co-Op Advertising		1,799.00
	Balanced	2,303.46	2,303.46
Justification:			
<i>To amend the 2023 budget for TDA to include Co-Op Income received through December 2022.</i>			

BA2023-048

Account Number	Account Description	Revenue (Inc+/Dec-)	Expense (Inc+/Dec-)
TDA			
51-3990-990-00	Fund Balance Appropriated	10,000.00	
51-8150-440-00	Contract Services - Website		10,000.00
	Balanced	10,000.00	10,000.00
Justification:			
<i>To amend the 2023 budget for TDA to include website renovation.</i>			

BA2023-049

Account Number	Account Description	Revenue (Inc+/Dec-)	Expense (Inc+/Dec-)
TDA			
51-8150-697-00	TDA Events		15,000.00
51-8150-826-00	*Music & Water Festival		(7,324.87)
51-8150-993-00	Designated Future Appropriations		(7,675.13)
	Balanced	-	-
Justification:			
		<p><i>To amend the 2023 budget for TDA to include Waterfront Concert Event. Request is to use funds previously designated to Music & Water Festival event. This will be a transfer between line items and no additional funding is being requested.</i></p>	

BA2023-050

Account Number	Account Description	Revenue (Inc+/Dec-)	Expense (Inc+/Dec-)
Emergency Mgmt			
11-3433-388-00	*HSGP - Active Intruder Grant Revenue	14,000.00	
11-4330-611-00	*HSGP - Active Intruder Grant Expenditure		14,000.00
	Balanced	14,000.00	14,000.00
Justification:			
		<p><i>To amend the 2023 budget for Emergency Management to include Homeland Security Active Intruder Grant funded by NC Department of Public Safety. There is no local match required.</i></p>	

BA2023-051

Account Number	Account Description	Revenue (Inc+/Dec-)	Expense (Inc+/Dec-)
ARPA Fund			
27-3301-239-00	LATCF Revenue	50,000.00	
27-4938-000-00	LATCF Expenditures		50,000.00
	Balanced	50,000.00	50,000.00
Justification:			
	<i>To amend the 2023 budget to include LATCF (Local Assistance and Tribal Consistency Fund) funding. The LATCF, added by Section 9901 of the American Rescue Plan, provides funding for use on any governmental purpose except for a lobbying activity.</i>		

Commissioner McLaughlin moved to approve the budget amendments as presented. Chair Kirby asked for all in favor, the motion passed unanimously (7-0).

Update on JA Holmes Highschool Project Expenses

A copy of the report is in the meeting file labeled February 6, 2023.

Financial Report December 2022

Finance Officer Cathy Smith will provide the Board with financial reports for December 2022. A copy of the report is in the meeting file labeled February 6, 2023.

ARPA Policies

Ms. Smith noted that the County received \$2.6 million in ARPA funds. The US Treasury requires that Counties adopt these policies in order to utilize these funds. She stated the County Attorney is currently reviewing the policies and she will bring back a final version at a later meeting date.

Ms. Womble stated that if the Board has any questions about the draft policies please let her know.

External Board/Committee Report

Chair Kirby stated that Board members are asked to report on the activities of the external boards to which they have been appointed.

Chair Kirby reported on the Albemarle Commission Board.

Manager's Report

County Manager Kevin Howard will update the Board on any pending matters.

Community Survey

Mr. Howard stated the County was approached by the Marcus Jackson Project and survey. He stated the group has asked to have the Chowan County seal on a community survey. He noted that the flyer has party affiliations to the Democratic Party which may be removed by the group performing the survey.

Board members discussed the survey and agreed that mixing questions about law enforcement agencies like the Town Police and Sheriff Office is confusing. Board members discussed the turn around time for the survey and that it is an online survey for a community that many members may not have internet or computer access. The data collection method was of concern for some board members in that paper surveys would not be made available for residents without internet access.

The Board agreed by consent to not provide input or the County seal on the survey.

Timely and Important Matters

There were none.

Adjourn

Being no further business, Commissioner Cummings moved that the meeting be adjourned. Chair Kirby asked for all in favor, the motion passed unanimously (7-0).

Bob Kirby, Chairman

Susanne Stallings, Clerk