

Chowan County Board of Commissioners
Regular Meeting
Monday, October 16, 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 October 16, 2023.

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

Commissioner Ellis Lawrence was absent.

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

Regular Meeting

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

Commissioner Evans then offered the invocation.

Approval of Agenda

Ms. Stallings noted the addition of Item 10a, Bond Counsel Contract for John A. Holmes High School

Commissioner Cummings moved to approve the agenda as amended.

Chair Kirby asked for all in favor, the motion passed unanimously (6-0).

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. Approval of Minutes
Minutes of the October 2, 2023

Commissioner McLaughlin moved to approve the consent agenda as presented. Chair Kirby asked for all in favor, the motion passed unanimously (6-0).

Update from Albemarle Regional Health Services (ARHS)

Health Director, Ashley Stoop provided the Board with updates from ARHS. She provided the Board with a handout inviting them to the ARHS State of Health Summit to be held on October 27, 2023 in Elizabeth City.

Sandra Ferebee provided the Board with information on clinical services offered by ARHS.

Board members discussed the use of ARHS services for migrant or homeless populations.

Ms. Stoop noted that often these individuals are referred to various nonprofits and other resources. She discussed a pilot project that they are working on which will provide housing and medical supplies but this is mostly for those within the Medicaid population.

ICPTA (Inter County Public Transportation Authority) Director Herb Mullen discussed the transportation services offered by ICPTA.

Board members asked if electric vehicles have been considered.

Mr. Mullen stated this was not a viable option and the vehicles are currently powered by propane.

Amy Underhill discussed local health education and their efforts to work with local schools.

Commissioner Kehayes asked what percentage of the ARHS budget is paid by Chowan County.

Ms. Stoop stated the total budget is \$30 million. She stated that 5% of the budget is from local county appropriations.

Annual Report

Extension Report to the People

Extension Director Mary Morris provided the Board with the annual Extension Report to the People video. A copy of the video is in the electronic meeting files of the Clerk to the Board.

Ms. Morris introduced Kelly Luton who is the new Horticulture Agent in Chowan.

Ms. Luton stated she was thankful to be working in Chowan County.

Water Rate Study Committee Appointments

The Board will make resident appointments and Commissioner appointment to the Water Rate Study Committee at their meeting on November 6, 2023.

Edenton Tea Party 250th Anniversary Celebration

Chair Kirby stated that the Board is asked to consider adoption of a proclamation celebrating the upcoming year-long celebration of the Edenton Tea Party's 250th anniversary.

Commissioner Kehayes moved to adopt the proclamation as presented. Chair Kirby asked for all in favor, the motion passed unanimously (6-0).

Proclamation

WHEREAS, On October 25, 1774 an event of international importance occurred in Edenton, North Carolina; and

WHEREAS, 51 women penned their names to a resolution against the British Empire, forming the earliest known political action written and organized by women in America; and

WHEREAS, The women drew up their resolves, declaring their intention to boycott English tea and English cloth, which was a momentous step for colonists, who relied on imported tea and other British goods in their daily lives; and

WHEREAS, The women signed their names and mailed the document to England, in what became known as the “Edenton Tea Party”; and

WHEREAS, October 25, 2023 marks the beginning of a yearlong celebration of the actions of these brave women and their political resolve to support the birth of the United States of America; and

WHEREAS, Chowan County along with other organizations will celebrate the 250th anniversary over the next year by highlighting the bravery of these female patriots through exhibits, public lectures, social media at the local, statewide and national levels; and

WHEREAS, This celebration will promote Edenton and Chowan County as an important center for early American History as well as a destination for 21st century cultural tourism.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, The Chowan County Board of Commissioners here do recognize the

Edenton Tea Party 250th Celebration

IN WITNESS THEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and cause the seal of the County of Chowan to be affixed, this the 16th day of October in the year of our Lord two thousand and twenty-three.

Resolution Supporting Operation Green Light for Veterans

Chair Kirby stated that the Board of Commissioners is asked to consider a resolution that designates October through Veterans Day a time to salute and honor the service and sacrifices of veterans and encourages our residents to display a green light in the windows of their place of business or residence from November 6th through November 12th. He noted that the Courthouse and Public Safety Center will be recognizing this celebration with green lights this year.

Commissioner Evans moved to adopt the resolution as presented. Chair Kirby asked for all in favor, the motion passed unanimously (6-0).

Supporting Operation Green Light for Veterans

WHEREAS, the residents of Chowan County have great respect, admiration, and the utmost gratitude for all the men and women who have selflessly served our country and this community in the Armed Forces; and

WHEREAS, the contributions and sacrifices of those who served in the Armed Forces have been vital in maintaining the freedoms and way of life enjoyed by our citizens; and

WHEREAS, Chowan County seeks to honor individuals who have made countless sacrifices for freedom by placing themselves in harm's way for the good of all; and

WHEREAS, veterans continue to serve our community in the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, religious groups, civil service, and by functioning as County Veterans Service Officers in 29 states to help fellow former service members access more than \$52 billion in federal health, disability and compensation benefits each year; and

WHEREAS, Approximately 200,000 service members transition to civilian communities annually; and

WHEREAS, an estimated 20 percent increase of service members will transition to civilian life in the near future; and

WHEREAS, studies indicate that 44-72 percent of service members experience high levels of stress during transition from military to civilian life; and

WHEREAS, active military service members transitioning from military service are at a high risk for suicide during their first year after military service; and

WHEREAS, the National Association of Counties encourages all counties, parishes and boroughs to recognize Operation Green Light for Veterans; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners of County appreciates the sacrifices of our United States military personnel and believes specific recognition should be granted;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, with designation as a Green Light for Veterans County, Chowan County hereby declares from October through Veterans Day, November 11th 2023 a time to salute and honor the service and sacrifices of our men and women in uniform transitioning from active service;

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that in observance of Operation Green Light, Chowan County encourages its citizens in patriotic tradition to recognize the importance of honoring all those who

made immeasurable sacrifices to preserve freedom by displaying green lights in a window of their place of business or residence from November 6th through the 12th, 2023.

Walker Gym (Oakum Street)

Ceiling Replacement

Mr. Howard requested that the Board consider a proposal to replace the ceiling over the stage area. He noted the high school is currently utilizing the facility for a cafeteria. He stated the total project cost for the repairs is \$15,500.

Commissioner McLaughlin moved to approve the request as presented. Chair Kirby asked for all in favor, the motion passed unanimously (6-0).

Restroom

Mr. Howard presented that Board with a proposal to install hand dryers in the restrooms. The total project cost is \$2,000. He stated that school staff most likely will install the dryers.

Commissioner Taylor moved to approve the project as presented. Chair Kirby asked for all in favor, the motion passed unanimously (6-0).

Courthouse Survey

Mr. Howard presented the Board with a proposal to perform a survey for asbestos at the Courthouse. He noted the building was constructed in the late 1970s and it is possible there is asbestos in the building.

Commissioner McLaughlin asked if there are any documents from construction available that would answer this.

Mr. Howard stated that staff has building drawings but not spec sheets.

The cost for the survey is \$3,250. He stated this will be paid from the project budget.

Commissioner McLaughlin moved to approve the request as presented. Chair Kirby asked for all in favor, the motion passed unanimously (6-0).

High School Project Bond Counsel.

Mr. Howard stated the County is required to have bond counsel as part of the short term financing. He stated the received a proposal from the current bond counsel (Parker Poe) and their proposal is \$45,000. Mr. Howard stated that he would recommend using project contingency monies for this expense.

Chair Kirby asked if the bond counsel has any liability and what is the tangible benefit for having them.

Mr. Howard stated that short term financing cannot be handled by the County Attorney.

Board members expressed their concerns over the expense for the counsel.

Commissioner Evans stated he would recommend a motion to approve the contract but request the manager get quotes for a lesser expense. He stated he would include in his motion a cap of the expense at \$45,000.

Ms. Smith noted that the LGC and USDA told the County to expect the cost to be around \$50,000.

Chair Kirby noted that this is an unintended consequence of the project. He noted the schools hosted a ground breaking a year ago.

Ms. Smith noted the Bond Counsel is responsible for protecting the County's interest in the loan documents as the bank's attorney drafts everything for signature.

Board members expressed their frustration with the additional expense.

It was agreed upon that the motion made by Commissioner Evans would allow the manager to seek additional proposals but if they were not able to locate any, he was authorized to sign the agreement presented by Parker Poe.

Chair Kirby asked for all in favor, the motion passed (5-1 Taylor).

Financial Items

Ms. Smith presented the following:

Budget Amendments

2024-019

Account Number	Account Description	Revenue (Inc+/Dec-)	Expense (Inc+/Dec-)
Register of Deeds			
11-3418-415-00	*Preservation/Automation	608.50	
11-4180-298-00	*Dept Supplies - Auto/Pres		202.83
11-4180-440-00	*Contr Svcs - Automation/Pres		202.83
11-4180-511-00	*C/O - Auto / Pres		202.84
Sheriff's Office			
11-3431-232-00	*Sheriff Donations	25.00	
11-4317-440-00	*Donation - Expense		25.00
11-3431-240-00	*Project Lifesaver	541.87	
11-4317-298-00	*Project Lifesaver		541.87
Animal Shelter			
11-3438-894-00	*Donations - Chowan	3,171.04	
11-3438-894-02	*Donations - Perquimans	100.00	
11-3438-894-03	*Donations - Other	550.00	
11-4381-600-00	*Donation - Expense		3,821.04
11-3438-895-00	*Adoption - Chowan	840.00	
11-3438-895-01	*Adoption - Gates	340.00	
11-3438-895-02	*Adoption - Perquimans	620.00	
11-3438-895-03	*Adoption - Other	720.00	
11-4381-441-00	*Contr Svcs - Spay/Neuter		2,520.00
11-3438-897-00	*A.W.A.R.E. Reimbursement	8,500.00	
11-4381-601-00	*A.W.A.R.E. Reimbursement		8,500.00
Cooperative Ext:			
11-3495-370-00	*AG Program Fees Discretionary	12.00	
11-4953-440-00	*Ag Program Fees Discretionary		12.00
11-3495-372-00	*4H United Way	1,500.00	
11-4953-445-00	*4H United Way		1,500.00
11-3495-378-00	*4-H Fees Discretionary	3,065.00	
11-4953-448-00	*4-H Fees Discretionary		3,065.00
11-3495-379-00	*Livestock Program	8,590.00	
11-4953-449-00	*Livestock Program		8,590.00
Recreation			
11-3612-487-00	*Recreation Donations	3,300.00	
11-6130-299-01	*Donations - Dept Supplies		3,300.00
11-3612-504-00	*Recreation Special Events	2,100.00	
11-6132-453-00	*Recreation Special Events		2,100.00
Senior Center			
11-3616-533-00	*Reg Fees - Trips	12,581.50	
11-4268-312-00	*TRIPS - Senior Citizens		12,581.50
11-3616-533-01	*Registration Fees Activities	330.00	
11-4268-299-01	*Activities - Dept. Supplies		330.00
11-3616-535-04	*Silver Sneakers	624.00	
11-3616-535-05	*Silver & Fit	162.00	
11-3616-535-06	*Renew Active	345.00	
11-4268-352-02	*Healthways		1,131.00
DSS			
12-3531-230-14	*DSS Special Events	321.00	
12-5310-450-00	*DSS Special Events		321.00
	Balanced	48,946.91	48,946.91
	Total Discretionary Income Received FYE 2024	144,947.03	
Justification:			
	<i>To amend the 2024 budget to include Discretionary income for September 2023.</i>		

2024-020

Account Number	Account Description	Revenue (Inc+/Dec-)	Expense (Inc+/Dec-)
TDA			
51-3815-530-00	Co-Op Monies	15.99	
51-8150-261-01	Office Supplies - Co-Op		15.99
51-3832-530-00	Co-Op Advertising	4,000.00	
51-8150-370-01	Co-Op Advertising		4,000.00
	Balanced	4,015.99	4,015.99
Justification:			
<i>To amend the 2024 budget for TDA to include Co-Op Income received through September 2023.</i>			

2024-021

Account Number	Account Description	Revenue (Inc+/Dec-)	Expense (Inc+/Dec-)
Building Inspections			
11-3839-915-00	Bertie County - Building Inspections	1,179.41	
11-4350-251-00	Automotive Supplies		589.71
11-4350-353-00	Maint & Repairs - Vehicles		589.70
	Balanced	1,179.41	1,179.41
Justification:			
<i>To amend the 2024 budget for Building Inspections to include revenue received in July & August 2023 for services provided to Bertie County.</i>			

2024-022

Account Number	Account Description	Revenue (Inc+/Dec-)	Expense (Inc+/Dec-)
Insurance Proceeds			
11-3493-890-00	Insurance Proceeds	3,141.30	
Sheriff's Office			
11-4310-353-00	Maint & Repairs - Vehicles		3,141.30
	Balanced	3,141.30	3,141.30
Justification:			
<i>To amend the 2024 budget to include Insurance Proceeds received for the Sheriff's Office.</i>			

Commissioner Kehayes moved to approve the budget amendments as presented. Chair Kirby asked for all in favor, the motion passed unanimously (6-0).

External Board/Committee Report

Commissioner Kehayes discussed the DSS Board noting that the DSS Director would be bringing the Board information on reimbursement for guardians.

Chair Kirby noted the ECP Board met however due to no quorum there was no action taken.

Manager's Report

County Manager Kevin Howard updated on the following:

- Staff has been presented a change order for the high school project for \$25,662.88. He stated that the schools were informed that demolition could not proceed without the removal of the furniture per the landfill. He stated the monies for this change order would come out of contingency.

Timely and Important Matters

Refugees in Chowan County

Commissioner Evans asked if there is any tracking for impacts of refugees or migrants in Chowan County.

Mr. Howard stated this most likely is known by DSS and the Health Department.

Commissioner Kehayes stated he asked about this at a recent DSS meeting and they have not seen any local impact.

Adjourn

Being no further business Commissioner McLaughlin moved that the meeting be adjourned. Chair Kirby asked for all in favor, the motion passed unanimously (6-0).

Bob Kirby, Chairman

Susanne Stallings, Clerk