

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

October 20, 2025 – 6:00 PM

J. NEWTON COHEN, SR. ROOM

J. NEWTON COHEN, SR. ROWAN COUNTY ADMINISTRATION BUILDING

PRESENT:

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

ABSENT:

Judy Klusman, 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 a solemnizing prayer. Chairman Edds lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

Consider Additions to the Agenda

Chairman Edds noted the following additions to the agenda:

- Change Order #7 for KMD (Consent Item Z)
- Contract 26236 – Neuroagile Leadership (Consent Item AA)

Chairman Edds noted that Consent Item X, Present Landfill Permits, would be moved to the Regular Agenda as Item H.

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 4-0 to approve the agenda as amended.

Consider Approval of the Consent Agenda

On motion of Pierce, seconded by Caskey, the Board voted 4-0 to approve the Consent Agenda as amended, as follows:

- A. Consider Approval of the Minutes - 10/06/25 Regular Meeting*

B. Budget Amendments, as follows:

5100-Health Department	Appropriate funds for EMS rural grant	\$11,860
5100-Health Department	Appropriate funds to expense accounts to cover medical mobile unit	\$67,178

- C. Resolution Allowing Retiring Officer to Purchase Service Sidearm
- D. Road Name Change-Wonderwall Lane, Muddy Jeep Trail, and Progress Place-Set Public Hearing
- E. GRANTS: Veterans Services Requests Approval to Apply to FY26 NCDMVA Grant
- F. Change Order # 8 - Holden Building Co. - RCC-Health Department Project
- G. Change Order #2—Mid-Carolina Airport Water & Sewer Extensions—Talbert Bright & Ellington (TBE)
- H. Ratify Action Taken by the BOC to Approve Piggyback Vehicle Purchase at the Oct. 6 Regular Meeting
- I. Amendment #1 — Edifice-Construction Management Services—New Corporate & Box Hangars (C24607)
- J. HDR Work Authorization—Geological Assessment Phase VI – IX - Rowan County Landfill
- K. Contract Change #1 - Mid-Carolina Airport Localizer Replacement - Talbert Bright & Ellington (TBE)
- L. Talbert, Bright, & Ellington (TBE) - Work Authorization 3708-2402 - Mid-Carolina Regional Airport - Update Airport Layout Plan (ALP)
- M. Tax & VTS Refunds for Approval
- N. RATIFY: TA 02-25 Amendments to the Rowan County Noise Ordinance
- O. Interlocal agreements with China Grove, Cleveland, East Spencer, Faith, Rockwell, Salisbury, and Spencer for Administration of Erosion and Sedimentation Control Program
- P. Ratify Z 06-25: White, Barbee, Graham
- Q. GRANTS: Approval requested for Health Department to Apply for 2026 Smiles for Kids Grant
- R. Change Order # 3 - Matrix - Financial Audit
- S. Sole-Source - CDP Inc
- T. Amendment to Public Schools Capital Projects Ordinance
- U. Allow Use of Rowan Community Center on Nov. 12, 2025
- V. Proclamation Recognizing Veterans Day
- W. Additional Items for RCC Event Center
- X. Present Landfill permits (**Moved to Regular Agenda**)
- Y. Second Reading: US-29 Temporary Lane Closure Ordinance
- Z. Change Order #7 for KMD (**Agenda Addition**)
- AA. Contract 26236 – Neuroagile Leadership (**Agenda Addition**)

Public Comment Period

Chairman Edds opened the floor for Public Comment and closed it after everyone wishing to speak had done so.

Mark Ortiz, 155 Wankel Drive, Kannapolis, represents Down Home North Carolina. He shared that a listening session would occur on November 18 at 6:00 p.m. which will allow the community to share input on how to improve the county and what is needed. He invited the Board to attend, along with any community members who are interested. He shared a flyer with the Board (Attachment A).

Z 11-24: Jeremy Good

Aaron Poplin, Planning Technician, briefly reviewed the case, which was originally presented on August 18, 2025. The issue was tabled twice and is back before the Board for consideration.

Commissioner Caskey said he believes this case to be spot zoning. He wants to make sure the property owner would have time to move his business and not have to shut down.

Chairman Edds said there is some ambiguity surrounding this case from a legal standpoint. He explained how spot zoning works and how it would apply to this case. He described the “decision tree” when it comes to spot zoning and how a decision could be made on this issue. He referred to statute and other requirements surrounding spot zoning. Over time, additions were made to the property and businesses changed. He questioned what would come next if this business were to be sold and/or change over time.

Vice-Chairman Greene said this decision is a tough one for the Board to make. Decisions must be made according to State laws.

Commissioner Pierce said many people across the county have been in this same position. He cannot, in good conscience, deny a request that has so many similarities across the county.

Pierce moved to approve Z 11-24, but the motion died for lack of a second.

On motion of Edds, seconded by Greene, the Board voted 3-0 (Pierce opposed) to adopt the following statement of reasonableness and consistency, which Chairman Edds read into record:

The Board considered the Planning Board recommendation, however, for the following reasons denies the Petition:

The Board recognizes that the question of whether property owned jointly by a husband and wife is property “owned by a single person” for purposes of the spot zoning definition is an open legal question in North Carolina law. The Board agrees with the position articulated by Judge Dillion in his dissent to the 2015 Court of Appeals case Good Neighbors of Oregon Hill v. County of Rockingham that property owned jointly by a husband and wife is single owner property as it relates to the spot zoning definition.

Accordingly, because this property is a relatively small tract, owned by a single person, surrounded by a much larger area uniformly zoned residential, and relieving this property from restrictions placed on the surrounding property, the requested rezone would be spot zoning.

Because this requested rezone would be spot zoning, we must apply the reasonable basis test factors set out in the Court Appeals case Etheridge v. County of Currituck. As for the first factor, the size of the tract in question, it weighs against granting this petition as the portion of the tract to be rezoned is relatively small at only 7 acres. As for the second factor, the

compatibility of the disputed zoning action with an existing comprehensive plan, it weighs against granting this petition as the Western Area Land Use Plan encourages medium density residential development in this area and identifies US 29 and US 70 as appropriate corridors for heavy impact uses which this is not located in—this proposed rezone is not compatible with the Western Area Land Use Plan. As for the third factor, the benefits and detriments test, it weighs against granting this petition because there is no evidence this rezone would increase neighboring property values, there is no showing of broad-based support for this rezone as the only public comments have been in opposition to the petition, and there is no evidence the surrounding landowners will use the expanded services allowed by this proposed rezone. Lastly, the fourth factor, the relationship between the proposed uses and the uses on adjoining tracts, also weighs against granting the petition as all adjoining property is either residential or rural agricultural and commercial property is very limited in the larger surrounding area.

As such, all four factors of the reasonable basis test weigh against granting this petition and it is denied as a result.

Attorney Jay Dees suggested working with Planning to come up with a compliance period and then coming back to update the Board.

On motion of Pierce, seconded by Caskey, the Board voted 4-0 to deny Z 11-24.

Legislative Hearing Z 07-25: Sifford Rental Property LLC

Shane Stewart, Assistant Planning Director, said Steve Sifford, owner of Sifford Rental Property, LLC., requests rezoning of his four (4) Tax Parcels identified as 388-064, 388-065, 388-091, and 388-093 located in the 6100 block of E. NC 152 Hwy, from Rural Agricultural (RA) to Commercial, Business, Industrial (CBI).

Mr. Stewart described the site location and adjoining property zoning. Staff has not received any comments from concerned citizens. The Planning Board recommended approval.

At 6:32 p.m. Chairman Edds opened the public hearing and closed it after no one wished to speak.

On motion of Caskey, seconded by Greene, the Board voted 4-0 that Z 07-25 is consistent with the East Area Land Use Plan and reasonable/appropriate based on the following:

- 1. The plan encourages highway business along the NC 152 Highway Corridor.*
- 2. The property in request directly joins other parcels of like zoning/use and appears to be a logical extension of the zoning.*

On motion of Pierce, seconded by Caskey, the Board voted 4-0 to approve Z 07-25.

Legislative Hearing Z 08-25: Bowtie Properties LLC

Shane Stewart, Assistant Planning Director, said David Eller, owner of Bowtie Properties, LLC., requests rezoning of his 2.74-acre Tax Parcel, identified as 406-097 and located in the 100 block of Porter Road, from 85-ED-2 to Commercial, Business, Industrial with a Conditional District (CBI-CD) to accommodate "...a motor vehicle showroom/general storage for vehicles and other items...".

Mr. Stewart described the site and adjoining properties. He explained that the request includes a proposal for a museum to be placed on the property for ticketed entry and private events. The Planning Board unanimously recommended approval.

Hank Niblock of Craige Jenkins Liipfert & Walker represents the applicant and was available for questions.

At 6:39 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 4-0 that Z 08-25 is consistent with the East Area Land Use Plan and reasonable/appropriate based on the following:

- 1. The property is in an existing commercial and industrial area.*
- 2. The proposal is compliant with NC DOT standards.*
- 3. There will be no impact on existing utilities.*

On motion of Pierce, seconded by Greene, the Board voted 4-0 to approve Z 08-25.

Public Hearing and Presentation: EDC Project Vitamin

Scott Shelton, Rowan EDC Vice President, reviewed Project Vitamin. The company behind Project Vitamin is an existing Rowan County employer in the medical field. The company currently has 60 fulltime employees in our community, with an additional 15 in other parts of North Carolina. Project Vitamin is planning a significant expansion and has purchased a site in Rowan County for a new facility. The company plans to invest \$10.5 million in to the new facility as well as create 501 jobs over the next five years. The company plans to begin operations at its new facility in 2027.

The Rowan EDC is working with ‘Project Vitamin’ to pursue a Rural Health Care Grant through the State of North Carolina’s Building Reuse Grant Program. This grant can help the company offset construction costs for its new facility. However, if the State were to recommend a Rural Health Care Grant for this project, the County would have to apply for the grant on behalf of the company. The company is seeking a grant award from the State in the amount of \$500,000. The required local match for this grant is 5% of the award amount (\$25,000). In order to satisfy this local match requirement, the Rowan EDC proposes that the County utilize its Economic Development Funds to provide a \$25,000 grant to the company. The funds could only be used toward trade-specific equipment or fixtures, or for building upfits. The grant would be structured as a loan, which would be forgiven if the company maintains current employment levels and creates 501 new jobs. The Company would be required to repay the loan on a percentage basis if all jobs are not maintained for at least five years after the loan closing. The grant application and administration would be overseen by the County’s Grants Administration and Governmental Relations Department. No other assistance is being requested of the County for this project.

Project Vitamin plans to begin its expanded operations in 2027. The overall investment timeline is based on information provided to the Rowan EDC by the company. The evolving

nature of County tax rates, assessed value of the installed equipment, and construction timelines require certain assumptions in order to develop a functioning model. To establish a baseline, the following constants were applied:

- The County tax rate is fixed at the current rate of \$0.58
- The company invests an estimated \$7.93 million in real property improvements by the end of 2026
- The company invests a total of \$200,000 in business personal property by the end of 2026

Depreciation for business personal property was estimated using the State of North Carolina's 2025 Depreciation Schedule K. Ten-year lifespans were assumed for all business personal property depreciation. In application, it is unlikely that all assumptions will hold constant. The model provides general trends of expected revenues and expenditures. Incorporating the above framework, it is projected that the County would collect an estimated \$579,884 of new property tax revenue over a 10-year period.

At 6:48 p.m. Chairman Edds opened the public hearing and closed it after everyone wishing to speak had done so.

Bobby Kemp, 250 Chalk Maple Road, China Grove, asked if those 501 jobs will be filled by county residents or from people outside of the county.

Chairman Edds said every single job is available to Rowan County residents. The labor must show up and apply. It is not legal to require that the positions be given to residents only. There are many good jobs available to county residents.

Mr. Shelton said training will be provided for many of these positions.

Chairman Edds listed several companies offering jobs in the county.

At 6:56 p.m. Chairman Edds closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Caskey asked if these are white collar jobs and Mr. Shelton said for they most part they are. Commissioner Caskey said this is a great opportunity.

On motion of Greene, seconded by Pierce, the Board voted 4-0 to approve the submittal of a Rural Health Care Grant application to the State's Building Reuse Grant Program for \$500,000 and to approve a \$25,000 grant to Project Vitamin utilizing the County's Economic Development Funds.

Rowan County Flag Program Policy

Clerk to the Board Sarah Pack said the Rowan County Flag Program allows citizens to request a county flag to be flown over the Rowan County Government Building in recognition of a special occasion, person, or event. Requests are submitted to the Clerk's Office through a standardized form, and the associated flag and flying fees are paid at the time of the request. The Clerk coordinates the raising and lowering of the flag and provides the flown flag to the

requester afterward. Each Commissioner receives fifteen (15) complimentary flags per fiscal year to distribute, while additional flags may be purchased.

On motion of Caskey, seconded by Pierce, the Board voted 4-0 to approve the Rowan County Flag Program Policy.

Board Appointments

On motion of Pierce, seconded by Caskey, the Board voted 4-0 to make the following appointments:

- *Tamara Alston to an ETJ Seat on the Granite Quarry Planning Board – ETJ.*
- *Tamara Alston to an ETJ Seat on the Granite Quarry Zoning Board – ETJ.*
- *Dale Shepherd to a County Seat on the Liberty Volunteer Fire Department Board of Trustees.*
- *Tyler Wiethorn to an At Large Seat on the Planning Board.*
- *John Hall to an At Large Seat on the Rowan Transit System Advisory Board.*

Financial Report

Finance Director Anna Bumgarner presented the financial reports. She compared annual cumulative expenditures, with FY 2026 equaling \$47,721,454 in September. Annual cumulative revenue is at \$83,248,377. The annual cumulative property tax was \$73,879,815 in August. In June, the annual cumulative sales tax was \$44,502,229. Ms. Bumgarner compared monthly sales taxes from 2022 to 2025, with June totalling \$3,909,170.

Ms. Bumgarner questioned how the federal shutdown will affect departments that receive federal funding.

Present Landfill Permits (Moved from Consent Agenda)

Director of Engineering and Environmental Services Craig Powers introduced Mike Plummer, Senior Project Engineer from HDR. Mr. Plummer said gave a historical overview of the landfill site and detail the current usage compared to future site usage. The site has been divided into stages in order to prolong the life of the landfill. Expanding in this manner affords the landfill 25 years of additional capacity.

A conscious effort has been made to keep the same elevations to reduce visibility from the outside. Mr. Plummer explained the capacities of each additional stage of expansion. The State requires environmental justice studies and community involvement. This is required due to needing a new permit to exceed 10% of original landfill capacity. A communication plan will be developed in order to best reach the public. Sensitive receptors, such as churches and neighborhoods in close proximity, are taken into consideration as well. Communication will be done through in-person and virtual meetings.

Chairman Edds said the landfill is funded through an Enterprise Fund, meaning taxpayer dollars do not financially sustain the landfill. It is funded through use fees.

Closed Session

On motion of Greene, seconded by Pierce, the Board voted 4-0 to move the scheduled Closed Session to the November 3, 2025, meeting.

Adjournment

At 7:37 p.m., on motion of Pierce, seconded by Greene, the Board voted 4-0 to adjourn.

Sarah Pack, CMC, NCCCC
Clerk to the Board

Down Home Presents: Rowan County Listening Session

Tuesday November 18th 6-8pm

About this event

Join us for a community listening session where we will talk about Rowan County and how we, as multiracial, working class folks, can improve it! What do you like about your community? What would you like to change? What concerns keep you up at night?

Don't miss this opportunity to have your voice heard! Free food and drink will be provided.

Down Home NC is an organization that works to organize and build power in rural areas with working-class people around the state. We want to hear stories and learn what issues concern you and your family the most in Rowan County.

**Park Avenue Community Center
632 Park Avenue
Salisbury, NC 28144**

FREE &
OPEN TO
EVERYONE

