

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

January 5, 2026 – 3:00 PM

J. NEWTON COHEN, SR. ROOM

J. NEWTON COHEN, SR. ROWAN COUNTY ADMINISTRATION BUILDING

PRESENT:

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

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

Call to Order

Chairman Edds called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. Chaplain Michael Taylor provided a solemnizing prayer. Chairman Edds lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

Consider Additions to the Agenda

There were no additions to the agenda.

Consider Deletions From the Agenda

Chairman Edds requested removal of the following items from the Consent Agenda:

- N. Approve Scope of Work - Fountainworks*
- AA. Text Amendments to Hazardous Materials Ordinance*
- BB. Text Amendment to Fire Code Ordinance*

He noted that additional documentation had been provided for Consent Item V: *GRANTS: Approve NC DNCR Additional ARPA Funds Awarded to Nature Center.*

Consider Approval of the Agenda

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

Consider Approval of the Consent Agenda

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

- A. Consider Approval of the Minutes - 12/1/25 Regular Meeting*
- B. Budget Amendments, as follows:*

6200- Parks & Rec	Appropriate funds received from NC State for America 250 Grant	\$6,000
5100- Health Department	Adjust funding to decrease AA583 Refugee funding	\$35,650
5300- Social Services	Appropriate funds to align medical expansion funding	\$34,133
Fund 103- Capital Projects	Appropriate donation of Bricks for DNP Bath house project	\$9,328
Fund 603- Airport	Appropriate TDRF funds for Contract 25411 and glideslope contract BOC 10/6/25 item Q	\$543,880
4112- General Government	Transfer funds to cover grant writing consultant for BUILD application	\$12,500
6200- Parks & Rec	Appropriate funds funds to cover purchase of train at DNP	\$1,343,250
4210- Telecommunications	Transfer funds for Telecommunications HVAC unit to Telecom and out of Facilities	\$240,000
4112- General Government	Transfer funds to cover Contract 26107 for Spyglass payment for IT consultant	\$67,432
Fund 3200- Schools	Appropriate funds from interest to cover bank fees	\$1,313
5300- Social Services	Appropriate state funding for low income energy and Subsidized Child Care	\$40,660
5300- Social Services	Appropriate donations received to expenditure accounts	\$11,680
6200- Parks & Rec	Appropriate mulch donation to Woodleaf park	\$119
6200- Parks & Rec	Appropriate cash donation to nature center for reptile house	\$1,000
6200- Parks & Rec	Appropriate NC Science Museum Grant to Nature Center	\$3,500
6200- Parks & Rec	Appropriate funds to cover train track expansion at DNP	\$37,778

- C. Award/Approve Compensation Study - Pontifex Consulting Group
- D. SpyGlass Change Order
- E. Department of Social Services Annual Report Fiscal Year 2025
- F. Award/Approved — Telecommunications HVAC System—Sylvester & Cockrum
- G. VTS & Tax Refunds for Approval
- H. GRANTS: Approve 2025 Salisbury-Rowan Community Foundation Award to DSS - ROCOC
- I. Financing Schedule for RCCC GO Bond
- J. Sole-Source OCLC FY26-FY29
- K. Security & Fire Alarm Maintenance - Insight Low Voltage - FY26-27 *Revision*
- L. GRANTS: Interlocal Agreement with East Spencer to Support BUILD Grant Application
- M. Brooks Network Services - Up-fit Contract 26290
- N. ~~Approve Scope of Work Fountainworks (**Removed from Agenda**)~~
- O. HEALTH: DWO Approval

- P. HEALTH: Salisbury Community Foundation grant - SNAP Double Bucks
- Q. Award/Approve - Gas Fire Protection Project - Holden Building Co.
- R. Approve/Award Lighting Controls Project (RCC) — Tim Schenk Electric of Rowan
- S. Interlocal agreement with the Town of Landis for Administration of Erosion and Sedimentation Control Program
- T. Schedule Legislative Hearing for ZTA 02-25; NC Salisbury LLC, for January 20, 2026
- U. Sole-Source JWC - Policy Exemption FY26-FY30
- V. GRANTS: Approve NC DNCR Additional ARPA Funds Awarded to Nature Center
- W. Rental Refund at the Rowan County Events Center
- X. Nature Center Donation
- Y. Woodleaf Park Donation of Mulch
- Z. DSS Attorney II Reclassification Request
- ~~AA. Text Amendments to Hazardous Materials Ordinance (**Removed from Agenda**)~~
- ~~BB. Text Amendment to Fire Code Ordinance (**Removed from Agenda**)~~
- CC. Department of Correction Revised Lease Agreement
- DD. Thurston Revised Lease Agreement

Public Comment Period

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

Bobby Kemp, 250 Chalk Maple Road, said he wants to help people as a commissioner.

Mike Julian, 135 Whipporwill Lane, read statute regarding who may run for election.

Special Recognitions

Chairman Edds and the other members of the Board recognized Chaplain Michael Taylor and presented him with a County flag and Proclamation.

On motion of Greene, seconded by Pierce, the Board voted 5-0 to approve a Proclamation Honoring Chaplain Michael Taylor, as follows:

Proclamation Honoring Chaplain Michael Taylor

WHEREAS, Chaplain Michael Taylor has faithfully served the people of Rowan County, North Carolina, as Chaplain of the Rowan County Sheriff's Office and as a spiritual leader for the community since 1993; and

WHEREAS, he is the founder of the "Shield-A-Badge with Prayer" program, initiated in 1995, which has provided consistent support, encouragement, and spiritual guidance to law enforcement officers and staff through prayer, outreach, and community engagement; and

WHEREAS, under Chaplain Taylor's leadership, the Shield-A-Badge program has flourished, enrolling hundreds of prayer partners and extending its influence across North Carolina, providing comfort and moral support to those who protect and serve; and

WHEREAS, Chaplain Taylor has demonstrated unwavering commitment to Rowan County, serving as pastor of Phaniels Baptist Church and as chaplain to

the Board of Commissioners, offering solemn invocations, guidance, and counsel at public meetings and ceremonies; and

WHEREAS, his decades-long service has strengthened the relationship between law enforcement, the community, and faith-based organizations, leaving a lasting legacy of compassion, dedication, and spiritual care.

NOW, THEREFORE, be it proclaimed that the Rowan County Board of Commissioners hereby recognizes and honors Chaplain Michael Taylor for his exceptional service, steadfast dedication, and enduring contributions to the citizens, officers, and community of Rowan County, North Carolina.

Set a Date for the Annual Planning Retreat

Clerk to the Board Sarah shared the proposed date for the upcoming Annual Retreat and suggested the meeting be held at the Rowan Community Center.

On motion of Edds, seconded by Caskey, the Board voted 5-0 to set the date for the Annual Planning Retreat for March 16, 2026.

Award/Approve Two Dan Nicholas Park Trains

Nick Aceves, Parks and Recreation Director, said due to a derailment incident, the train at Dan Nicholas Park needs to be replaced. He shared a brief overview of the train equipment located at Dan Nicholas Park. He compared the proposed new train specifications to the old equipment specifications. He shared benefits of installing two new trains at Dan Nicholas Park.

Mr. Aceves said in accordance with Competitive Bidding G.S. 143-129(b), Rowan County issued a Request for Proposals (RFP 2026-016) from qualified firms to provide services for design, plans, specifications, cost, and equipment to build two (2) custom electric train Locomotives with three (3) coaches each, installation, warranty and possible ongoing maintenance support with the Dan Nicholas Park amusement attraction equipment and infrastructure located in Rowan County, North Carolina.

The RFP was posted on October 26, 2025, with an opening date of November 17, 2025. The county didn't receive the minimum number of bids, so the RFP was re-bid as (2026-016(a)) on November 17, 2025, with an opening date of December 4, 2025. One (1) response was received. The County evaluated on a "best overall value" basis including, but not limited to, pricing, experience, references, quality, performance, and the applicant's ability to adhere to all conditions and requirements of the specifications outlined in this RFP.

The County is requesting to award the RFP to Chance Rides, LLC and approve the contract with Chance Rides, not to exceed \$1,343,250.00. Contract is to design, engineer, and fabricate two (2) fully electric 1/3 scale replicas of a mid-to-late 1800s-style locomotive (preferably a 4-2-4 wheel configuration) and three (3) passenger coaches (each with full train containing one ADA coach with ramp). The train will operate on a G24 scale track and serve as a public attraction at Dan Nicholas Park.

County Manager Aaron Church said the appropriated amount from the Fund Balance is \$1,343,250.00 and donor funding may be available.

There was general discussion about management of the train(s).

On motion of Klusman, seconded by Greene, the Board voted 5-0 to award the bid to Chance Rides, LLC, authorize the County Manager to approve the contract with Chance Rides in the amount of \$1,343,250.00, and approve the associated budget amendment.

Survey and Design – Engineering Train Track

Nick Aceves, Parks and Recreation Director, discussed the train track survey and design for Dan Nicholas Park. He explained the proposed changes.

Mr. Aceves said that contracts for architectural, engineering, or surveying services must be procured using the Request for Qualifications (RFQ) process established under N.C.G.S. 143-64.31 through 143-64.34, except when an exemption is permitted under N.C.G.S. 143-64.32. This statute allows units of local government or the North Carolina Department of Transportation to exempt specific projects in writing when the estimated professional fee is less than fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000). Rowan County's Purchasing Policy provides the following exemption authority:

1. If the estimated fee is greater than \$20,000 but less than \$50,000, the RFQ requirements may be waived by the Board of County Commissioners in accordance with N.C.G.S. 143-64.31.
2. If the estimated fee is below \$20,000, the County Manager may grant the exemption in accordance with N.C.G.S. 143-64.31.
3. All exemptions are considered on a case-by-case basis and require a memo documenting the exemption to be kept on file.

Parks and Recreation is requesting an exemption for CESI to provide the surveying and design services needed at the Dan Nicholas Park miniature train track to support the expansion to a safer 24" rail system.

Civil Engineering Services - \$20,000.00
Topographic Survey - \$17,778.00
Utility Marking Fee - \$ 1,600.00
Total Contract \$37,778.00

Commissioner Caskey stepped away from the meeting at 3:43 p.m.

County Manager Aaron Church explained funding for the project.

Commissioner Caskey returned to the meeting at 3:44 p.m.

On motion of Klusman, seconded by Caskey, the Board voted 5-0 to approve an exemption from the Rowan County Purchasing Policy, authorize the County Manager to sign the contract with CESI in the amount of \$37,778.00, and approve the associated budget amendment.

Board Appointments

On motion of Klusman, seconded by Caskey, the Board voted 5-0 to make the following appointments:

- *Greg Edds to the Commissioner Seat on the CRMPO Transportation Advisory Committee*
- *James Green to the Alternate Seat on the CRMPO Transportation Advisory Committee*

On motion of Greene, seconded by Klusman, the Board voted 5-0 to make the following appointments:

- *Ed Muire to the Planning and Development Director Seat on the CRMPO Technical Coordinating Committee*
- *Shane Stewart to the Alternate Seat on the CRMPO Technical Coordinating Committee*

On motion of Klusman, seconded by Caskey, the Board voted 5-0 to accept Gary Yelton's resignation from the Housing Authority Board.

On motion of Klusman, seconded by Greene, the Board voted 5-0 to accept Ryan Bravo's resignation from the Juvenile Crime Prevention Council and to accept Jocelyn Williams' resignation from the Juvenile Crime Prevention Council.

On motion of Klusman, seconded by Greene, the Board voted 5-0 to appoint Taylor Clawson to the Mental Health Seat on the Juvenile Crime Prevention Council.

On motion of Klusman, seconded by Greene, the Board voted 5-0 to make the following appointments:

- *Rodney D. Arey to a County Seat on the Liberty Volunteer Fire Department Fire Commissioners*
- *Geoffrey Mark Barringer to a County Seat on the Liberty Volunteer Fire Department Fire Commissioners*
- *Bryan Kirk to a County Seat on the Pooletown Volunteer Fire Department Fire Commissioners*
- *Dylan Barkley to a County Seat on the Pooletown Volunteer Fire Department Fire Commissioners*
- *Amy Lowe to a County Seat on the Pooletown Volunteer Fire Department Fire Commissioners*
- *Starling Johnson Kaklamanos to the Executive Officio Seat on the Rowan Economic Development Council*

On motion of Greene, seconded by Klusman, the Board voted 5-0 to make the following appointments:

- *Paul Canup to a County Seat on the South Salisbury Volunteer Fire Department Fire Commissioners*
- *Timothy Belk to a County Seat on the South Salisbury Volunteer Fire Department Fire Commissioners*
- *Wayne Taylor to a County Seat on the South Salisbury Volunteer Fire Department Fire Commissioners*

Closed Session

On motion of Edds, seconded by Greene, 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 December 1, 2025, as described by NCGS 143- 318.10(e), and pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11(a)(3), to consult with an attorney.

Resume Open Session

At 4:54 p.m. Open Session resumed.

On motion of Edds, seconded by Pierce, the Board voted 5-0 to approve an engagement letter between Rowan County and Rachel Keen of Womble Bond Dickinson releasing up to \$80,000 for legal services and authorize the County Manager to sign.

Adjournment

At 4:55 p.m., on motion of Pierce, seconded by Greene, the Board voted 5-0 to adjourn.

Sarah Pack, CMC, NCCCC
Clerk to the Board