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

130 West Innes Street • Salisbury, NC 28144
Telephone 704-216-8181 • Fax 704-216-8195

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE ROWAN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
July 20, 2026 – 6:00 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
Mike Caskey, Commissioner
Judy Klusman, Commissioner

County Manager Aaron Church, Assistant County Attorney Eli Hardin, and Clerk to the Board Sarah Pack were also present. Chief Finance Officer Anna Bumgarner and County Attorney Jay Dees were absent.

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 added one item to the agenda, USDA Lease Proposal, as Regular Item D.

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 Klusman, the Board voted 5-0 to approve the Consent Agenda as presented, as follows:

A. Consider Approval of the Minutes - 06/15/26 Regular Meeting and 07/08/26 Special Meeting

B. Budget Amendments, as follows:

6400- Animal Services	Appropriate funds to budget reserves for Animal Services for pet adoption vaccines	$3,890
Fund 603- Airport	Appropriate funds to cover purchase of Airport hangar from owner	$55,000

4125- Finance	Appropriate funds to cover contract 26601 carry over for Master plan	$25,000
4125- Finance	Appropriate funds to cover carry over purchase order 26000425 for staging diemensions	$10,972
4125- Finance	Appropriate funds to cover carry over purchase order 26000539 for Cloninger	$4,172
4330- Emergency Services	Appropriate funds to record NC Rural Health Transformation Grant	$300,000
5100- Health Department	Appropriate funds to record Bring Value Home Innovation Grant	$27,598
4160- IT	Transfer funds to cover Zoom invoice for FY27	$8,285
Fund 603- Airport	Appropriate funds from TDRF to cover TBE contract for Glideslope	$184,217
4125- Finance	Transfer funds from general fund to RCC/WEP fund to cover Ag Storage building	$1,221,000

C. *Award/Approve 2026-019 - RCC AG Storage Building - Holden*
D. *Administrative Services Contract – HOME-ARP Interlocal Agreement - City of Salisbury*
E. *Award/Approve-Professional Grant Administration Services for HOME-ARP Grant—The Hills Tandem LLC*
F. *HCCBG FY27 Poposed Funding Plan*
G. *Purchasing – Multiple Sole Source Requests (Fiscal Year) - Cont.*
H. *Change Order #14 -Holden Building Co. - RCC-Health Department*
I. *Amendment #3 - PayTel Inmate Communication Services - Sheriff's Office - IT*
J. *Set a Public Hearing for Ordinance Text Amendment for August 3, 2026*
K. *New Box Hangar Leases*
L. *Lease for 115 Candlewick Drive- Bowman (Tenant)*
M. *Talbert, Bright, & Ellington (TBE) - Work Authorization 3708-2502 - Mid-Carolina Regional Airport - Glideslope*
N. *GRANTS: Approve RHTP Mobile Integrated Health (MIH) Grant (Emergency Services)*
O. *GRANTS - Approve Scrap Tire Reimbursement Grant Funding*
P. *GRANTS: Approve DSS - ROCOC to Apply for First United Church of Christ Foundation Grant*
Q. *GRANTS: Authorization to Sign NCDMVA Closeout Report*
R. *Amendment #2 - CESI-Survey and Design-DNP Train Project -C26352*
S. *Rowan County Public Health: Services - Sports Physicals*
T. *Critical Path - RCC Main Concourse Renovations*
U. *Nonprofit Agreement for Appropriations*
V. *Water Rate Change*
W. *Policy Exemption - Addiction Treatment - Health Department - Daymark & BrightView - FY27-31*
X. *NCACC Annual Conference Voting Delegate*
Y. *BOC Approval Request – Sloan Park Pickleball Court Donation Project*
Z. *HOME Satisfaction*
AA. *Resolution for retiring officers to purchase service sidearms*
BB. *Non-Airworthy Aircraft Tie-Down Fee Policy*

CC. TAX & VTS Refunds for Approval
DD. Reclassify Temporary Deputy Register of Deeds to regular full-time Deputy Register of Deeds
EE. Change Order #2- Salcoa Contracting, Inc. - Dan Nicholas Park Wildlife Restroom Renovations
FF. Rowan County ADA Contracts – FY27
GG. Finance Officer Bond
HH. Road Name Change-Narnia Lane-Set Public Hearing
II. Schedule Legislative Hearing for SNIA 02-26; Piedmont Baptist Church, for August 17, 2026
JJ. Schedule Legislative Hearing for ZTA 02-26; Katherine Ross, for August 17, 2026
KK. Airport Hangar T2 Buyback Agreement - Tim Liescheidt (Tenant)
LL. Sworn Law Enforcement Pay at Dan Nicholas Park - Update
MM. Resolution Authorizing an Interlocal Agreement Regarding Mutual Assistance of Law Enforcement Services
NN. MRP Industrial SE, LLC, Agreement of Purchase and Sale

Public Comment Period

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

Bobby Kemp addressed the Board regarding the financial challenges faced by seniors, veterans, and individuals with disabilities, citing the cumulative impact of taxes and the rising cost of living on residents with limited incomes. He encouraged the Board to reconsider the County budget, explore additional tax relief for seniors, and stated his belief that residents age 65 and older should no longer be required to pay property taxes. Mr. Kemp also expressed concern about County spending priorities and suggested expanding the Board's membership.

Data Center Moratorium Public Hearing

Ed Muire, Planning and Development Director, explained that the public hearing was the first scheduled action under the County's temporary data center moratorium adopted on May 4, 2026. He stated that the hearing was intended to provide an opportunity for interested parties to express concerns about data centers, particularly regarding impacts on nearby residents' quality of life, and to offer suggestions for future regulations or zoning standards. He noted that public input could be considered as the County evaluates potential amendments to the zoning ordinance.

At 6:08 p.m. Chairman Edds opened the public hearing and closed it after everyone wishing to speak had done so.

Samantha Haspel encouraged the Board to adopt strong zoning regulations for data centers, including special use requirements, protections for farmland and surrounding communities, and additional opportunities for public input before ordinances are finalized. She also requested that community members with relevant research and expertise be included in the ordinance development process.

Sal Cerbone expressed concerns regarding his treatment at previous Board meetings, alleging inappropriate conduct by County officials and requesting accountability. He also raised concerns about unresolved issues affecting his property and criticized the County's handling of constituent concerns.

Michael Pope urged the Board to ensure that future data center developments are subject to environmental review and that developers bear responsibility for mitigating impacts on infrastructure, utilities, noise, and surrounding communities. He also encouraged requiring developers to contribute community benefits and sustainable practices.

Jalyn Johnson expressed concerns about the lack of public notification regarding proposed data centers and requested greater transparency throughout the planning process. She also urged the Board to evaluate and mitigate potential environmental impacts before approving future projects.

John Johnson voiced opposition to data center development, expressing concerns about potential risks to natural resources and questioning whether the projects would benefit the community. He urged the Board to prioritize protecting the County and its residents when making future decisions.

Kat Nolan requested that the County establish a special zoning category for data centers with enhanced public notification, public hearings, environmental protections, infrastructure requirements, and developer-funded improvements. She also encouraged continued collaboration with residents as zoning regulations are developed.

Mark Ortiz stated that opposition to AI data centers is a nationwide movement and recommended limiting future data center development by establishing maximum size, power usage, and cooling method standards within the zoning ordinance.

Colette Berg expressed concerns about the potential health and environmental impacts of data centers, particularly increased temperatures affecting nearby residents. She encouraged the Board to demonstrate responsiveness to public concerns in its future decisions.

Tenkamenin Crowder expressed concerns about the potential effects of data centers on local water resources and criticized the Board's handling of the issue. He urged the commissioners to reconsider their approach to future data center development.

Lori Hill stated that while small-scale data centers can provide benefits, she opposed hyperscale AI data centers due to potential economic, environmental, and community impacts. She recommended prohibiting hyperscale facilities, creating a citizen steering committee to assist with ordinance development, and adopting strong protections for future projects.

Inger Sturdivant declined to speak.

Mae Mack requested that the County adopt enforceable regulations for future data centers, including stricter standards for hyperscale facilities, transparency requirements, developer-funded infrastructure, and protections for surrounding communities. She also supported the creation of a citizen steering committee to assist with developing future regulations.

Mr. Johnson asked, from his seat in the audience, if any non-disclosure agreements (NDAs) were signed by boardmembers. Chairman Edds said NDAs were signed, but only as it pertained to company names.

At 6:47 p.m. Chairman Edds closed the public hearing.

Chairman Edds thanked attendees for their participation and stated that the Board enacted the moratorium in response to community concerns and the need to develop appropriate standards for a new type of development. He noted that, as with previous large-scale solar farm developments, the County is taking time to evaluate impacts and gather input. Chairman Edds expressed the Board's commitment to open discussions with stakeholders, including a planned meeting in early August, and to continuing dialogue until standards are developed that address community concerns. He added that the County will consider information and best practices from other jurisdictions facing similar issues and provide updates as the process moves forward.

Public Hearing – Road Name Change – Old Crow Lane

Shane Stewart, Assistant Planning and Development Director, explained that the request was to name an existing driveway located in the 700 block of Briggs Road that currently serves three residences and will also provide access to a future accessory dwelling unit. He stated that, under current 911 addressing standards, the driveway requires a road name, and the proposed name, Old Crow Lane, has been reviewed and found acceptable.

At 6:50 p.m. Chairman Edds opened the public hearing and closed it after no one wished to speak.

On motion of Pierce, seconded by Greene, the Board voted 5-0 to accept the Road Name Change Petition for Old Crow Lane as presented.

Board Appointments

On motion of Pierce, seconded by Klusman, the Board voted 5-0 to waive the residency requirement for the Community Technology Advisory Committee for Damien Akelman.

On motion of Edds, seconded by Pierce, the Board voted 5-0 to make the following appointments to the Community Technology Advisory Committee:

- *Damien J Akelman to the Rowan-Salisbury School System CTO seat*
- *Amy-Lynn Albertson to the Cooperative Extension Director seat*
- *Randy Cress to the Rowan County Chief Information Officer seat*
- *Melissa Jean Oleen to the Library Director seat*
- *Beth F. Pulliam to the Rowan-Cabarrus Community College CIO seat*
- *Ames Bishop Flynn to an At Large seat*
- *Charles Rodney Phillips to an At Large seat*
- *Ian W Shepherd to an At Large seat*

Commissioner Pierce nominated Commissioner Caskey to serve on the Community Technology Advisory Committee.

On motion of Edds, seconded by Pierce, the Board voted 5-0 to appoint Mike Caskey to the County Commissioner Seat on the Community Technology Advisory Committee.

Commissioner Klusman nominated Valerie Steele for the open seat on the Dangerous Dog Appeals Board.

On motion of Klusman, seconded by Pierce, the Board voted 5-0 to appoint Valerie Steel to an At Large seat on the Dangerous Dog Appeals Board.

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

- *Angel Lawing to an At Large Seat on the East Gold Hill Volunteer Fire Department Fire Commission*
- *Valerie Steel to an At Large Seat on the Historic Landmarks Commission*
- *Heather Kincel to the Rufty-Homes Senior Center – Lead Agency seat on the Home and Community Care Block Grant Advisory Committee*
- *Micah Ennis to the Rowan County DSS – Funded Provider seat on the Home and Community Care Block Grant Advisory Committee*
- *Beth Huber to the Trinity Living Center – Funded Provider seat on the Home and Community Care Block Grant Advisory Committee*
- *Valerie Steele to the Rowan Transit System – Funded Provider seat on the Home and Community Care Block Grant Advisory Committee*
- *Alexandra Fisher to the Meals on Wheels Rowan – Funded Provider seat on the Home and Community Care Block Grant Advisory Committee*

On motion of Klusman, seconded by Pierce, the Board voted 5-0 to waive the term limit for the Juvenile Crime Prevention Council for Carla Johnston.

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

- *Carla Johnston to the Member of the Public Representing Interests of Families of At-Risk Juveniles seat*
- *Matthew Marsh to the Business Community seat*

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

- *Mike Caskey to the County Commissioner seat on the Social Services Board*
- *Vinita Fitzgibbons to an At Large seat on the Therepeutic Recreation Board*

On motion of Caskey, seconded by Pierce, the Board voted 5-0 to accept Connie Asero's resignation from the Therepeutic Recreation Board.

<u>Agenda Addition** USDA Lease Proposal</u>**

Craig Powers, Director of Engineering and Environmental Services, provided an update on the County's upcoming USDA submission deadline and advised that a property manager and architect have been engaged to assist with the lease proposal and required floor plans. He presented three potential locations at the community center that could meet the USDA's requirements for secure parking and facility needs. After discussion, the Board expressed preference for pursuing Options One or Two, with Option Two utilizing currently vacant office space and an adjacent demoed area. The Board directed staff to proceed with developing the necessary plans and submission materials without returning for further Board approval prior to the deadline.

On motion of Edds, seconded by Pierce, the Board voted 5-0 to authorize the County Manager or his designee to submit a lease proposal for the USDA at Rowan Community Center, to waive RFQ requirements pursuant to NCGS 143-64.32 and County policy, and authorize the County Manager to execute a contract with WM2A Architects for these services in an amount not to exceed $34,500.00, and to authorize the Chairman to sign a lease agreement with the USDA for the space at Rowan Community Center should the County's proposal be accepted.

<u>Closed Session</u>

At 7:03 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 June 15, 2026, as described by NCGS 143- 318.10(e), pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11(a)(3) for Attorney Client Privilege, pursuant to NCGS 143- 318.11(a)(5) for property acquisition, and pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11(a)(6) for personnel.

Commissioner Pierce exited the meeting at 7:29 p.m.

<u>Resume Open Session</u>

At 7:30 p.m. Open Session resumed.

Mr. Church returned to the meeting at 7:30 p.m.

On motion of Edds, seconded by Klusman, the Board voted 4-0 (Pierce absent) to approve a Termination of Lease and Release agreement with Lisa's Hair Salon.

<u>Adjournment</u>

At 7:31 p.m., on motion of Greene, seconded by Klusman, the Board voted 4-0 (Pierce absent) to adjourn.

____

Sarah Pack, CMC, NCCCC
Clerk to the Board