

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

June 19, 2023 – 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
Judy Klusman, Commissioner
Mike Caskey, Commissioner

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

Call to Order

Chairman Edds called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Chaplain Michael Taylor provided the invocation. Chairman Edds lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

Consider Additions to the Agenda

Chairman Edds requested three additions to the agenda:

- Budget Amendment for Occupancy Taxes (Consent Item CC)
- Budget Amendment for Inmate Canteen Supplies (Consent Item DD)
- Budget Amendment for Airport Hangar Debt Proceeds (Consent Item EE)

Commissioner Pierce requested that Item S, the Plan Design Approval for the New Transit Building, be put out for bid.

Consider Deletions From the Agenda

There were no deletions from the agenda.

Consider Approval of the Agenda

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

Consider Approval of the Consent Agenda

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

A. Ambulance Franchise Agreement

B. DSS and Rowan Transit Memorandum of Agreement

C. Budget Amendments, as follows:

<i>Animal Services</i>	<i>To recognize increase in Animal Control Donations and Medical Supplies Cost</i>	<i>\$841</i>
<i>Finance</i>	<i>To recognize increase in North Carolina Vehicle Tax System Revenues and Fees</i>	<i>\$40,000</i>
<i>Animal Services</i>	<i>To recognize increase in Adoption Spay/Neuter Vouchers</i>	<i>\$4,559</i>
<i>Social Services</i>	<i>To budget donations received</i>	<i>\$357,231</i>
<i>Finance</i>	<i>To recognize increase in revenues and disposal fees at the Landfill</i>	<i>\$40,000</i>
<i>Airport</i>	<i>To recognize increase in Airport fuel revenue and expenses</i>	<i>\$90,000</i>
<i>Finance</i>	<i>Transfer funds to cover Vehicles Fleet/Target contract through fiscal year end</i>	<i>\$203,756</i>
<i>Finance</i>	<i>Transfer funds to cover Vehicles Fleet/Non-Target contract through fiscal year end</i>	<i>\$133,832</i>
<i>Finance</i>	<i>To recognize increase in Occupancy tax received and paid out to Rowan County Tourism (agenda addition-Consent item CC)</i>	<i>\$235,000</i>
<i>Sheriff's Office</i>	<i>To recognize increase in Inmate Canteen revenues and expenses (agenda addition-Consent item DD)</i>	<i>\$50,000</i>
<i>Airport</i>	<i>To budget debt proceeds for Airport Hangar (agenda addition-Consent item EE)</i>	<i>\$17,438,000</i>

D. Sole-Source Zoom

E. Sole-Source 120 Water

F. Sole-Source Auvik Networks, Incorporated

G. GRANT APPLICATION: Approve County Manager to Sign Supporting Documents for Upcoming Rowan Transit Service Grant Applications

H. Consider Approval of the Minutes - 6/5/23

I. GRANT AGREEMENT: Request to approve State Library of North Carolina Library Service and Technology Act Grant Agreement for Rowan Public Library

J. Sole-Source Avineon

K. Sole-Source Cemco Systems Incorporated

L. Tax Refunds for Approval

M. Sole-Source Tyler Technologies EnerGov

N. County Manager Multi-Rater Assessment

O. Sole-Source Vulcan Material, Toysmith, and Aurora

P. Sole-Source Patagonia - HOPE Program

Q. Addendum E to Systel Business Equipment Company, Incorporated

- R. Amendment Number 1 - David Schlang*
- S. Plan Design Approval for New Transit Building (Commissioner Pierce requested that this item be put out for bid during the Agenda Additions portion of the meeting)*
- T. Home Care Community Block Grant Allocation Request*
- U. GRANT AGREEMENT: Extension Request for Building Reuse Grant ("Agility")*
- V. Contracts for Liability and Property Pool and Workers' Compensation Pool*
- W. Sole-Source CivicPlus*
- X. Country Boy Landscaping Invoice 1*
- Y. Sole-Source Bluebeam*
- Z. Set a Public Hearing for Project Swarm for July 17, 2023*
- AA. West End Plaza/Wharton Smith Change Order*
- BB. Request for Qualifications for High Rock Lake*
- CC. Budget Amendment for Occupancy Taxes (Agenda Addition)*
- DD. Budget Amendment for Inmate Canteen Supplies (Agenda Addition)*
- EE. Budget Amendment for Airport Hangar Debt Proceeds (Agenda Addition)*

Public Comment

Chairman Edds opened the floor for public comment and closed it after everyone who wished to speak had done so.

Pam Bloom, 844 North Craige Street, Salisbury, thanked the public-school teachers, staff, and administrators for their continued efforts in educating. She applauded the schools and students. The economy depends on public schools. If the commissioners don't support the public-school environment, people will look for school systems that are better supported.

Rowan County Youth Voice Representative

Chairman Edds welcomed Nathan Croyle, who is the North Carolina 4-H delegate who will be representing Rowan County at the Youth Voice Summit during the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners annual meeting in August. Mr. Croyle gave a short presentation about his 4-H experiences and how 4-H has impacted his life as required in order to participate in the Youth Voices Summit.

Commissioner Klusman shared how 4-H has impacted her life as well.

Financial Reports

Finance Director Anna Bumgarner presented the financial reports. She compared annual cumulative expenditures, with 2023 totaling \$144,249,823 for May. Annual cumulative revenue is up for 2023, with \$184,084,876 for May. In April, the annual cumulative property tax for 2023 was \$91,906,366.

Ms. Bumgarner said in February 2023, the annual cumulative sales tax was \$26,924,884. She compared monthly sales taxes from 2020 to 2023.

Commissioner Caskey asked if there were loan proceeds in the revenues and Ms. Bumgarner said yes, there are loan proceeds that haven't been spent yet.

Review and Discussion of Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Proposed Budget

County Manager Aaron Church handed out a list of recommended budgetary adjustments (Attachment A) and explained each item. Due to the Medicaid expansion, there may be additional requests for new positions. The cost for the new Sheriff's Office position includes a vehicle and outfitting the position. The actual salary is \$58,000 annually. Mr. Church explained the action required if the changes were accepted.

Public Hearing – Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Proposed Budget

At 6:25 p.m. Chairman Edds opened the Public Hearing.

Connie Byrne, 216 Goldston Street, Kannapolis, said there has been a lot of discussion about the tax revaluation. She described expenses that the County will have to provide for over the next several years. The city of Kannapolis has not reduced the tax rate. She discussed the change in her property taxes. She urged anyone over the age of 65 to explore tax deferment options. She thanked the Board and said increased property taxes are a fact of life.

Kristen Swilley, 162 Devon Forest Drive, Mooresville, read a letter into record on behalf of a Rowan-Salisbury School System educator (Attachment B).

Tracy Walser, 8 Pine Tree Road, Salisbury, thanked the Board for their effort in creating the budget. The pay and pay supplement for educators is falling behind neighboring states. Recruitment is difficult and teachers leave Rowan County for better opportunities and better pay. Students are the ones who suffer. Rowan County public school teachers and staff need better financial support. Economic growth is only possible with a superior education system. She asked the Board to revisit the budget to consider investing more in public schools this fiscal year.

Sandra Sullivan, 665 Timberlane Trail, Salisbury, read her comments into record (Attachment C).

Jason Walser, 8 Pine Tree Road, Salisbury, thanked the Board for public school funding, particular for Knox and RCCC. There are significant needs and resources in the community. We are trying to attract young professionals, but they cannot afford to live here. He has reached out to the state regarding funding for teachers. This is an "all hands on deck" problem. We have a fantastic superintendent. He asked the Board to try to fund a bit more of the school's requested funding.

Cindy Fink, 105 Yorkshire Drive, Salisbury, Executive Director of Meals on Wheels, read her comments into the record (Attachment D).

Karen Puckett, 576 Adrian Road, Salisbury is a retired schoolteacher. She read her comments regarding fully funded schools into record (Attachment E).

Brian Wymbs, 203 Mitchell Avenue, Salisbury, talked about Leandro versus the State of North Carolina, where several counties came together to sue the state for more funding for public schools. It is important to fund schools properly. Mr. Wymbs gave statistics regarding the average supplement for schoolteachers for Rowan and surrounding counties, and said North

Carolina is ranked at number 46 nationally in regards to teacher pay. He said we can't control what the state does, but we can help locally. He asked for the supplement to be funded.

Alfred Wilson, 8660 US Highway 601, Salisbury, has many family members who are teachers. The most important thing we can do as a society is to pass on collective knowledge to the next generation. Anything that we can do to support that, he agrees with.

Hearing no more comments, Chairman Edds closed the public hearing at 6:51 p.m.

Chairman Edds directed his comments to educators. The County is in a difficult position this fiscal year. The revaluation is a big issue. Many calls have been received on varying sides. Approximately 145,000 people want lower tax rates because they can't take a 46% tax increase. There will not be money left over in this budget. A meeting was held with the school system to discuss financial needs. The Board values the schools and school system.

The Board is trying to address challenges. There are questions the Board has that they discussed with the school board. The Board does not control teacher supplements. The Board gives a pot of money to the school system. How much a county contributes per student is comparable data. The Board was presented with data from other communities. Chairman Edds questioned why, if Rowan is paying higher per student than other communities, aren't teachers getting higher supplements. Chairman Edds gave dollar amounts per pupil of surrounding communities. He questioned why the Board can't add to teacher supplements. This has created a dialogue between the Board and the school system. This is an ongoing discussion. Chairman Edds gave examples of ways to find where dollars are going that could be redirected. The County is continuing to work with the school board to find a solution. A substantial amount of funding has been invested in education over the last eight or nine years. This budget has an additional \$100 million allotted for education.

Commissioner Caskey said there are similar issues in law enforcement. He is interested in why teachers are leaving. Most law enforcement officers who leave don't want to be in that field anymore. He would like to look at all the different options available. Would additional money or teaching assistants help the situation? He questioned how much the school system received from the American Rescue Plan Act. This is an issue that needs to be addressed. This is a stressful time and people are angry. More funding may address part of the issue, but it won't address it all.

Commissioner Klusman thanked the parents and educators for their involvement in making change happen. More of the public needs to be involved in our children's education. It takes a community to raise children. Teachers are facing a lack of respect from students. There is a lack of value of education. People don't want to go into the teaching profession because they don't feel that people believe they are professionals. They aren't being treated like professionals. The community needs to gather together to rally state legislators. Children are just as much citizens as anyone else. Children are our future. There are very few doctors who work in Rowan County that actually live here. She thanked the Chairman and Vice-Chairman and said we need to consider raising our subsidy to our teachers. We are competing with neighboring counties for

teachers. How do young people afford to become teachers? She asked the Board to remember that there are more people who support what the citizens are saying.

Vice-Chairman Greene said budgeting is a difficult situation. People don't value education the way they did years ago. No matter how much money the County puts in the school system, without families supporting children at home, they won't succeed. The COVID-19 pandemic had a terrible impact on schools and now we're having to make up for it. This Board values education. It's hard to have enough money to go around for everything everyone would like. The number of children who are not prepared to participate in kindergarten is atrocious. This Board wants to support the schools. Everything can't be done at one time. The Board will do the best they can to support education.

Commissioner Pierce said in the eleven budgets he's been a part of, there is never enough money to address all requests. The commissioners have to review all requests and do what they can. The board is here to take care of citizens, not make money. Teaching is not about the money, its about the commitment. Teachers have to be committed to education. He has been talking with Senator Carl Ford for two years. There is a voucher system for children coming out that follows the child to where they go to school. Knox Middle School won't need to be built if children are going to go to private and charter schools. Building this school can wait. We need to quit wasting dollars building schools we don't need. Until we see what the voucher system will do, we need to wait. Spending \$55 million on a school is not something he supports. It's not improving education, it's detrimental to the taxpayer. More could be done with that money in the classrooms.

On motion of Pierce, seconded by Greene, the Board voted 5-0 to approve Fund 101 (General Fund) including the recommended adjustments (Attachment A) decreasing the Contingency amount from \$700,000 to \$48,671.

On motion of Pierce, seconded by Greene, the Board voted 5-0 to approve Fund 201 (Fire District Fund).

On motion of Pierce, seconded by Greene, the Board voted 5-0 to approve Fund 202 (Emergency Telephone System Fund).

On motion of Pierce, seconded by Klusman, the Board voted 5-0 to approve Fund 206 (Opioid Settlement Fund).

On motion of Pierce, seconded by Greene, the Board voted 5-0 to approve Fund 501 (Risk Management Fund).

On motion of Pierce, seconded by Greene, the Board voted 5-0 to approve Fund 601 (Landfill Fund).

On motion of Pierce, seconded by Greene, the Board voted 5-0 to approve Fund 603 (Airport Fund).

On motion of Pierce, seconded by Greene, the Board voted 5-0 to approve Fund 605 (Water Fund).

On motion of Klusman, seconded by Pierce, the Board voted 5-0 to approve Fund 701 (Department of Social Services Trust Fund).

On motion of Pierce, seconded by Greene, the Board voted 5-0 to approve Fund 702 (Fines and Forfeitures Fund).

On motion of Pierce, seconded by Greene, the Board voted 5-0 to approve Fund 703 (American Rescue Plan Act Fund).

At 7:38 p.m. Chairman Edds called for a recess.

At 7:51 p.m. the Board reconvened.

On motion of Greene, seconded by Caskey, the Board voted 5-0 to approve the Fiscal Year 2023-2024 Budget with the proposed adjustments.

Public Hearing – HLC 01-23

Aaron Poplin, Planning Technician, said in January of 2022, the Rowan County Historic Landmarks Commission (HLC) received an application from John Benjamin Knox to establish the Knox Farmhouse as a Rowan County historic landmark. The Knox Farmhouse is located at 915 Knox Road. further referenced as Rowan County Tax Parcel 279 012. The applicant wishes to designate the exterior of the house along with the 0.4 acres it sits on.

The HLC wishes to recognize the Knox Farmhouse because it is locally significant under the category of architecture. The architectural significance of the Knox Farmhouse few remaining examples of a wood framed farmhouse from the Antebellum period in rural western Rowan County, and for being a well-preserved example of vernacular Greek Revival style in a rural setting. Mr. Poplin discussed additions and alterations to the property.

On February 23, 2023, Planning Staff received comments from Kristi Brantley, State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) staff member, regarding local designation application for the Knox Farmhouse. Ms. Brantley stated the report had significant information for a local governing board to determine if the house has local significance. SHPO only asked for a few clerical changes to the report, which was subsequently updated.

Based on these comments the HLC recommends approval of the Knox Farmhouse as a Rowan County historic landmark. After reviewing the application, an on-site investigation of the property, and extensive research, the HLC deems the Knox Farmhouse to be of special significance in terms of its historical and cultural importance, and to possess integrity of design, setting, workmanship, materials, and character.

On May 9, 2023, the HLC conducted a courtesy hearing to receive comments regarding the Knox Farmhouse designation. No one spoke in opposition to the designation. On a vote of 5-0, the HLC recommended landmark designation for the exterior of Knox Farmhouse.

The property owner, Mr. Knox, discussed the history of the house.

At 7:56 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 5-0 to approve HLC 01-23 and the designating ordinance, as follows:

***AN ORDINANCE DESIGNATING THE KNOX FARMHOUSE, AND
ADJOINING 0.4 ACRES IN THE JURISDICTION OF ROWAN COUNTY,
NORTH CAROLINA AS A LOCAL HISTORIC LANDMARK***

WHEREAS, the Rowan County Historic Landmarks Commission has made an investigation and recommends the following property be designated a historic landmark; and

WHEREAS, the North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources has made a determination that the following property is eligible to be designated a historic landmark; and

WHEREAS, on the 19th day of June, 2023 a public hearing was held in the J. Newton Cohen, Sr. Room, in the J. Newton Cohen, Sr. Building, Salisbury, NC, by the Rowan County Board of Commissioners to determine whether the Knox Farmhouse should be designated as a local historic landmark; and

WHEREAS, all the prerequisites to the adoption of this ordinance as prescribed in Part 3C, Article 19, Chapter 160A of the North Carolina General Statutes have been met; and

WHEREAS, the Knox Farmhouse is believed to be one of the few examples of a wood framed farmhouses from the Antebellum period in rural Western Rowan County; and

WHEREAS, construction of the Knox Farmhouse began circa 1854; and

WHEREAS, the Knox Farmhouse is the farm seat for the Knox Farm which has been in continuous operation since the mid eighteenth century; and

WHEREAS, the Knox Farmhouse and adjoining 0.4 acres are an important historic resource worthy of preservation,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE ROWAN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS THAT:

1. The Knox Farmhouse and adjoining 0.4 acres at 915 Knox Rd. in the County of Rowan is hereby designated as a Local Historic Landmark pursuant to Part 3C, Article 19, Chapter 160A of the North Carolina General Statutes. This property is presently owned by John Benjamin Knox and Angela Poteat Knox and is further identified as part of Rowan County tax parcel 279 012.

2. The significant features of the building's exterior located on said property may not be moved, demolished, materially altered, restored or removed without a Certificate of Appropriateness being issued by the Historic Landmark

Commission of Rowan County. Any application for the demolition of this building shall require the waiting period set forth in the Historic Landmarks Ordinance.

3. Nothing in this ordinance shall be construed to prevent the ordinary maintenance or repair of any architectural feature in or on the said building and property that does not involve a change in design, material or outer appearance thereof, nor to prevent the construction, reconstruction, alteration, restoration, demolition or removal of any such feature when a Rowan County building inspector or similar official certifies to the Historic Landmarks Commission that such action is required for the public safety because of an unsafe or dangerous condition. Nothing herein shall be construed to prevent the property owner from making any use of this property not prohibited by other statutes, ordinances or regulations.

4. The owner and occupants of the building known as the Knox Farmhouse shall be given notice of this ordinance as required by applicable law and copies of this ordinance shall be filed and indexed in the offices of the Rowan County Register of Deeds, the County's Chief Building Inspector and the Rowan County Tax Supervisor as required by applicable law.

5. Rowan County Ad Valorem Tax Implications: Taxpayer shall be eligible for tax treatment and assessment according to NCGS 105-278 for only that portion of the total property subject of this ordinance and designation as a Historic Landmark that is not currently assessed at present use value pursuant to NCGS 105-277.2 et seq.

Public Hearing – Road Name Changes for Possum Hollow and Cordell Cove

Pamela Ealey, Planning Technician, said the following road name changes have been submitted to the Rowan County Planning Department and are presented for approval by the Board of Commissioners. She showed a geographic information system (GIS) map of the locations and discussed the requests.

1. Currently Known As: Not Applicable

Proposed Name: Possum Hollow Road

Location: driveway that connects to Marsh Campsite Road in the 200 block and then connects to SR2168 Goodman Lake Road in the 6600 block

Property Owners: Crane Point, Limited Liability Company (LLC)

Reason for Change: change in addressing ordinance requires all campground sites to have an individually numbered address and for all roads to be named.

2. Currently Known As: Not Applicable

Proposed Name: Cordell Cove Road

Location: driveway that connects to Marsh Campsite Road in the 100 block and then connects to SR2168 Goodman Lake Road in the 6600 block

Property Owners: Crane Point, LLC

Reason for Change: change in addressing ordinance requires all campground sites to have an individually numbered address and for all roads to be named.

At 7:58 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 approve the road name change requests for Possum Hollow Road and Cordell Cove Road as presented.

Public Hearing – New Road Name off of Old Tulip Farm Road

Aaron Poplin, Planning Technician, said the following road name change has been submitted to the Rowan County Planning Department and is presented for approval by the Board of Commissioners. He showed a geographic information system (GIS) map of the locations and discussed the requests.

1. **Currently Known As:** Not Applicable

Proposed Names: Parsley Trail

Location: driveway that connects to a private road Old Tulip Farm Road in the 250 block

Property Owners: Caroline Tedorovici, Thomas Parsley Junior (Jr.), Paul and Lisa Cogar.

Reason for Change: 3 single family dwellings will share this driveway and therefore it must be named.

Background: The three lots in this petition originated from two separate family subdivisions. Thomas Parsley Jr, as the original property owner, conveyed the other two lots to his daughters. When the second division was completed in March 2023 this triggered the need for naming the driveway. Planning staff originally tried to name the driveway “Parsley Trail” by plat, but after recordation realized that a road name petition would be necessary.

Staff talked with both Thomas Parsley Jr. and the Cogars and informed them of the petition process. Staff mailed a petition to all three property owners and recommended that they work together to submit a unanimous petition. After more than a month the property owners could not produce a unanimous petition and instead submitted two separate road name petitions. Parsley Trail was submitted as a majority petition having two of the three properties sign the petition and Lofty Pines Lane was submitted as a less than majority petition with only one of the three properties signing off on the petition.

At 8:01 p.m. Chairman Edds opened the public hearing.

Thomas Parsley, Jr., 1050 Parsley Trail, Salisbury, gave a brief history of the properties bordering the road. He received documentation saying the road would be named Parsley Trail but didn’t realize the process wasn’t followed correctly. This process is to correct that.

Paul Cogar, 251 Old Tulip Farm Road, Salisbury, read his comments into record (Attachment F). The road name was chosen by one person. He would prefer a neutral name that everyone agrees upon that isn’t tied to a property owner.

Caroline Tedorovici inherited her property, deeded to her by Mr. Parsley, and was not aware that the road would have to be named once it had three parcels on it. She understands that there are protocols in place for road naming. She has tried to maintain neutrality. She votes with her father on Parsley Trail because he gave her the land freely.

Hearing no further comments, Chairman Edds closed the public hearing at 8:12 p.m.

Commissioner Klusman said that she hopes, after the decision is made, that family members can reconcile.

On motion of Pierce, seconded by Greene, the Board voted 5-0 to approve the road name request and name the driveway Parsley Trail.

Board Appointments

*On motion of Pierce, seconded by Greene, the Board voted 5-0 to appoint John Denny and Jeffrey Matthews to the two available Business Community Seats and appoint Garry Perry to the Pilot Seat on the Airport Advisory Board. ****Clerk's note: This appointment was made in error and was corrected after the Board came out of Closed Session. See below in Minutes for corrected appointment.*****

On motion of Pierce, seconded by Greene, the Board voted 5-0 to appoint Frank Greene, Bryant Clark, and Kenneth Cole to the three available County seats on the Atwell Township Volunteer Fire Department Fire Commission.

On motion of Pierce, seconded by Greene, the Board voted 5-0 to appoint William Downs to the Faith Community seat on the Juvenile Crime Prevention Council.

On motion of Pierce, seconded by Klusman, the Board voted 5-0 to appoint Erin Moody to the General Seat on the Juvenile Crime Prevention Council.

On motion of Pierce, seconded by Greene, the Board voted 5-0 to appoint Brent Mincey to the County seat on the Locke Volunteer Fire Department Fire Commission.

On motion of Pierce, seconded by Greene, the Board voted 5-0 to appoint Joe Luckadoo, Jimmy Wolford, and Clyde Ashe to the three available County seats on the Miller Ferry Volunteer Fire Department Fire Commission.

On motion of Pierce, seconded by Klusman, the Board voted 5-0 to appoint Courtney Gordon to the At Large seat on the Rowan Transit System Advisory Board.

On motion of Pierce, seconded by Klusman, the Board voted 5-0 to appoint Eric Brady to the County seat on the Union Volunteer Fire Department Fire Commission.

Closed Session

At 8:16 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 5, 2023, as described by NCGS 143-318.10(e) providing that minutes or an account of a closed session may be withheld from public inspection so long as public inspection would frustrate the purpose of a closed session, and pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11(a)(3) to

consult with an attorney employed or retained by the public body in order to preserve attorney-client privilege regarding a matter involving Millbridge Speedway and Rowan County.

Regular Session

At 8:25 p.m. regular session resumed.

The Clerk noted that there was an error with the Airport Advisory Board appointments. There was only one Business Community seat available. There were two applications: John Denny and Jeffrey Matthews.

On motion of Pierce, seconded by Edds, the Board voted 5-0 to appoint Jeffrey Matthews to the Business Community Seat on the Airport Advisory Board.

Adjournment

At 8:28 p.m., on motion of Pierce, seconded by Klusman, the Board voted 5-0 to adjourn.

Sarah Pack, NCCCC
Clerk to the Board

MOTION: Approve the budget as presented with the following changes.

FY 2024 BUDGET

19-Jun-23

Recommended Adjustments to Budget

<u>REDUCE /</u> <u>INCREASE</u>	<u>ORG</u>	<u>OBJECT</u>	<u>ACCOUNT</u> <u>DESCRIPTION</u>	<u>FY 2024</u> <u>MANAGER'S</u> <u>BUDGET</u>	<u>FY 2024</u> <u>REVISED</u> <u>BUDGET</u>	<u>Difference</u>
Increase	1155090	591006	Rowan Rescue Squad	\$ 398,000	\$ 435,000	\$ (37,000)
Increase	1155310	534030	Technology Services	\$ 50,905	\$ 115,175	\$ (64,270)
Increase	1155310	532000	Professional Services	\$ -	\$ 97,470	\$ (97,470)
Increase	1154112	532017	Consulting Services	\$ 150,000	\$ 180,000	\$ (30,000)
Increase	Various	Various	New Position <i>Detective Sergeant</i>	\$ -	\$ 156,406	\$ (156,406)
Increase			Paid Military Leave from 136 hours to 172 hours			
Increase			Purchase 4 new vehicles for Health Department		\$ 114,000	\$ (114,000)
Increase	1156240	57400	Wood Leaf Park - C/A	\$ -	\$ 50,000	\$ (50,000)
Increase	Various	Various	New Position <i>Park Maintenance III</i>	\$ -	\$ 66,547	\$ (66,547)
Increase	Various	Various	New P/T Position <i>Resource Conservation Easement Specialist</i>		\$ 35,363	\$ (35,636)
Decrease	1154112	599000	Contingency	\$ 700,000	\$ 48,671	\$ 700,000
TOTAL						\$ 48,671

This includes creating the following new positions

1. Part-time Resource Conservation Easement Specialist
2. Full-time Parks Maintenance III
3. Full-time Detective Sergeant

June, 17, 2023
Current RSS School Teacher

Dear esteemed members of the Rowan County Board of Commissioners:

I'm anonymously writing this letter in an effort to have my voice heard as a current public school teacher in Rowan County, without the risk of losing my job. I'm a veteran teacher and am fully invested in the interest of ALL students in Rowan County and I feel the need to advocate for the voiceless.

As you know, 17% of all students entering Kindergarten in Rowan are actually Kindergarten Ready. This means that 83% of our parents in Rowan are unaware of how to prepare their children for school or they just don't have access to the resources to aid in the process. This coincides with the data that shows 30% of our parents have a degree in higher education or a certificate for some sort of trade. This data should translate to the ABSOLUTE necessity of having an abundance (if not an army) of highly trained teachers, counselors, mentors, and professionals in our Rowan Salisbury Public School System. Unfortunately, I wanted to tell you that the reality is quite the opposite and the lack of adults in our public educational buildings is at an all time low and it is UNSAFE. The time is now to attract more educated professionals to work at RSS with a more attractive teaching supplement and all other incentives that we can provide.

The following is a snapshot of what I witnessed this year and I am just one educator at one school.

I had an average of 32 students per core class, but my other colleagues on my grade level had 35 (in tested core classes). Because of teachers leaving RSS during the middle of the year, different colleagues from the same building had 60 students at one time (in tested areas). In addition to the absence of core teachers, the lack of EC teachers in the building was horrific and there was a void in services in one particular classroom for over half a school year. This is obscene and alarming when such a large percentage of our children come to us in Rowan needing meals, positive adult relationships, mentorship, counseling, mental health access and of course solid teaching.

Needless to say, I had an inordinate amount of students with high needs this year. Literacy levels ran the gamut, mental health issues were off the charts, and social/emotional skills were sadly deficient in the majority of my students. However, I want to share the day in the life of one student with you so you can understand the importance of this letter.

"LOVE" spent the first half of the year depressed and not working on any of the class work for ALL classes. He/she did however, spend many hours trying to figure out his/her identity. He/she went back and forth from boy to girl multiple times. He/she went from gay to straight multiple times and by the end of the year was cutting himself/herself. This high needs child was in a core class of more than 30 students per day and then had an elective class of 30 where the

teacher left mid year. With no sub 3 out of 5 days of the week, the class would shut down and everyone would be funneled to the gym. This is where 70-90 students would be stored and monitored by one poor PE teacher for an hour. Can you imagine the chaos everyday for LOVE and his/her classmates?

LOVE and ALL students of Rowan Salisbury Schools deserve better and need your help in order to attract and retain professionals in Rowan and build a massive team of highly qualified specialists, mentors, role models, counselors, and teachers. We must invest today in order to make our schools a SAFE place to educate, enlighten, and inspire future generations in our community.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

An Advocate for the Voiceless

Good evening. My name is Sandra Sullivan. I am anticipating my 34th year of teaching at Salisbury High School and am myself a product of our BSS system - from Overton to Knox to Salisbury High. I also serve as Site Support Leader to serve our Beginning Teachers at Salisbury High. We have approximately 23 beginning teachers at my school which forces me to add my voice to this conversation of our Supplement increase. Speaking during public comment is not my usual mode of operation. However, our state of NC has put all teachers in a position to fight for every step of gains we achieve. As I near the end of my career, I hope to see our Rowan system continue to recruit highly qualified teachers and retain those that will work with them as they grow. We place a burden on experienced teachers if we can only attract those w/no experience, qualifications, or certification. We are in danger of losing these highly qualified teachers who do not need to travel far for more compensation. During this school year, I served on a Teacher Led System recruitment and retention committee where we

Considered different avenues to recruit and retain. Yet with the state of our economy and little action being taken in our state legislature, our county must take note that money will be the loudest voice to increase the quality of professionals in our schools which in turn attracts newcomers and businesses to our area which will cause our community to grow and thrive. Thank you for allowing me to speak as I am passionate that our RSS system must thrive for our county to prosper. Other counties have heard the call and met the need. It is time for Rowan to increase our supplement also.

Meals on Wheels Rowan

Thank you for your generous allocation in the current budget year.

Your allocation helped us provide over 100,000 meals through our programs. Our goal is to serve homebound seniors with home-delivered meals and mobility-challenged seniors with our grocery program. Our Charlie, tablet program encourages social engagement. And in cooperation with Rowan Helping Ministries, we deliver USDA Food boxes to their clients who have no transportation.

We are currently serving up to 300 individuals every day.

One hundred of these individuals receive free meals. The other 200 clients pay on a sliding scale. We currently have 15 individuals on our waiting list.

Our total meal program cost in Fiscal Year 23-24 will be \$960,000. Last year I told you that our direct meal cost went up 70%. Unfortunately, it has not gone down.

In our request, we asked the County Commissioners to provide an allocation of only 10% of our total budget or \$165,000 to help feed seniors.

Some years ago, Rowan County determined that the best way to serve seniors was through non-profit agencies. Rowan County does not fund an Aging department or programming for senior services as some other counties do. Rowan County does not directly pay for senior center buildings or staffing.

Aside from the match for the Home Care Block Grant that is required by the state, the proposed budget includes funding for Rufty Holmes and Meals on Wheels at a total of \$232,000.

Our next-door neighbor, Cabarrus County budgets over \$2.5 million for Aging Services, Senior Centers and Meals.

We might be smaller in population, but I'd say you guys are driving a hard bargain. We are a growing county and our senior population is our fastest growing segment.

We plan for Education, Economic Development, Roads and more. Now it is time to plan for and FUND our Senior Programs. You can start by allocating \$165,000 to home-delivered meals for homebound seniors.

I'm Karen Puckett and although I just retired this year, I've spent many years as a teacher in the wonderful Rowan-Salisbury school district. Today, I want to talk about the glaring need for fully funded public schools here and throughout the state. What would fully funded North Carolina public schools for learners in grades PreK-12 look like?

Association of Educators
The NCAE is advocating that the NCGA fully fund public schools by raising student funding to \$15K per pupil (combination of local, state, and federal funds) which would include funding for student mental and physical health services (e.g. psychologists, counselors, social workers, and nurses), on-site after-school tutoring (with transportation), universal breakfast and lunch, instructional materials, and fair compensation for educators as our schools are losing an alarming number of teachers to other counties, states, and career paths.

Rowan-Salisbury Schools have a rich history and tradition that includes positive growth and change. My in-laws, who would have turned 92 this year, attended Rockwell High School and my mother-in-law continued on to Catawba College where she earned her teaching license and taught in our local schools for decades. Larger, more robust regional middle and high schools built in the early 60s allowed my husband to graduate from Erwin and East Rowan as did our two daughters, many years later.

My husband shares countless stories about former classmates who came from modest but hardworking families who leveraged their public school experience to receive college degrees or post high school training and achieve impressive and successful lives.

For our family, public schools have been a blessing. One daughter is earning a masters degree at UNC-G and last year, our other daughter graduated from Wake Forest Medical School.

I am asking the Commission to take the steps to participate in the continuance of a robust system of schools by accepting the board of education's budget request, and to encourage lawmakers at the state level to increase school funding. Strong and vibrant public schools will ensure an even better future for the citizens of Rowan County by making us business-friendly and competitive. The time for fully funded public schools is NOW!

Paul and Lisa Cogar
251 Old Tulip Farm Road
Salisbury, NC 28147
May 5, 2023

Rowan County Planning and Development and Rowan County Board of Commissioners
402 N Main Street
Salisbury, NC 28144

Dear Rowan County Planning and Development and Rowan County Board of Commissioners and Rowan County Board of Commissioners:

As we were made aware, that back in March, the new road name, Parsley Trail was assigned incorrectly using the recorded subdivision plat, involving only ONE of the property owners. Efforts have been made to correct this situation per your guidance, using the road name petition process, intending to have all owners the opportunity to rename the road in collaboration together. The property owners were unable to come into agreement TOGETHER to rename the road using a neutral name (one not resembling a property owner's name or that was chosen by only one person without any other's input) we can all agree on, despite many attempts via phone calls, and in person meetings with all property owners, seeking cooperation from all parties. We have offered to make the change of address a smooth process by reimbursing any prior change of address fees paid thus far and any fees that are needed to move forward with a new name as well. We wanted to provide this information to you so that you are fully aware of the attempts made to follow the petition naming guidelines. At this point in time, since the property owners could not choose a NEW name TOGETHER, we feel that it is in everyone's best interest, for the Board of Commissioners to rename the road using a NEW NEUTRAL name to avoid any further conflict. Thank you all so much for your time, guidance, and consideration during this difficult process.

Paul and Lisa Cogar