

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 May 20, 2024 – 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, 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 led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Consider Additions to the Agenda

There were no additions to the agenda.

Consider Deletions From the Agenda

There were no deletions from the agenda.

Consider Approval of the Agenda

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

Consider Approval of the Consent Agenda

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

- A. Consider Approval of the Minutes*
- B. GRANTS: Approve Sheriff's Office to submit a budget adjustment request to OSBM*
- C. Budget Amendments, as follows:*

Finance	Transfer funds to adjust Fleet target accounts for Vector contract change	\$4,713
Finance/IT	To transfer funds for FY24 leases GASB 96	\$4,444
Finance/Airport	To transfer funds for FY24 leases GASB 96	\$33,972

<i>Soil & Water</i>	<i>To recognize donation for Conservation Farm Family Event</i>	<i>\$300</i>
<i>General Government</i>	<i>To transfer funds to cover inter-local agreement for economic development with TDA for project</i>	<i>\$750,000</i>

- D. Donation of Surplus Property to Rowan County Rescue Squad*
- E. GRANT ACCEPTANCE: Request to approve DSS/ROCOC to accept grant awarded by Woodson Foundation*
- F. Sole-Source - Schneider Geospatial (Formerly Spatialist) - FY24-25*
- G. Award - Construction Management Services - Edifice*
- H. REFUNDS FOR APPROVAL*
- I. Amendment #1 - Wharton-Smith Office Lease - West End Plaza*
- J. Sale of Ground Lease Hangar T7 Amos to KLD Air*
- K. Authorize Satisfaction for HOME Deed of Trust*
- L. Approve Surveillance Van Quote - Live Link (LEA Aid)*
- M. Contribution-based Benefit Cap*
- N. Change Order #16 - Wharton Smith - WEP*
- O. Landfill write-off*
- P. Sole Source - Faronics Technologies FY24-FY25*

Public Comment

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

Connie Byrne, 216 Goldston St., urged citizens to attend Board meetings. She asked that funding for education be increased in the upcoming budget. Facilities need funding and teachers need additional pay. She asked that Senator Carl Ford and Representative Harry Warren be utilized as resources for funding. Counties across the state are struggling. She shared her concerns regarding school choice and vouchers.

Cindy Fink, 105 Yorkshire Dr., thanked the Board for the current allocation for Meals on Wheels, which provides meals for 36 homebound seniors. She asked for the Board's continued support. She spoke of the impending "Silver Tsunami." There is a direct link between adding employees to the workforce and increased numbers of seniors in the community. Rowan County is number 20 in the state in total population and the 60+ population. There are large increases in the senior population expected. She questioned where services can be received and said an aging plan is needed. She suggested a workshop highlighting the senior-serving programs in the county.

Special Recognitions

Chairman Edds recognized Emergency Services employees in attendance and commended them for their dedication and service to the county. He asked Chaplain Michael Taylor to pray for Emergency Services workers.

Chairman Edds read aloud a Proclamation for National EMS Week 2024.

On motion of Edds, seconded by Commissioner Pierce, the Board voted 5-0 to approve a Proclamation designation May 19-25, 2024, as Emergency Medical Services Week, as follows:

PROCLAMATION EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES WEEK

MAY 19-25, 2024

WHEREAS, emergency medical services are a vital public service; and

WHEREAS, the members of emergency medical services teams are ready to provide lifesaving care to those in need 24 hours a day, seven days a week; and

WHEREAS, access to quality emergency care dramatically improves the survival and recovery rate of those who experience sudden illness or injury; and

WHEREAS, emergency medical services have grown to fill a gap by providing important, out of hospital care, including preventative medicine, follow-up care, and access to telemedicine; and

WHEREAS, the emergency medical services system consists of first responders, emergency medical technicians, paramedics, emergency medical dispatchers, firefighters, police officers, educators, administrators, pre-hospital nurses, emergency nurses, emergency physicians, trained members of the public, and other out of hospital medical care providers; and

WHEREAS, the members of emergency medical services teams, whether career or volunteer, engage in thousands of hours of specialized training and continuing education to enhance their lifesaving skills; and

WHEREAS, it is appropriate to recognize the value and the accomplishments of emergency medical services providers by designating Emergency Medical Services Week.

NOW, THEREFORE the Rowan County Board of Commissioners does hereby proclaim the week of May 19-25, 2024, as EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES WEEK with the 50th Anniversary theme, EMS WEEK: Honoring Our Past. Forging Our Future, and encourages the community to observe this week with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities.

Commission Klusman thanked Emergency Services for their help during personal crisis situations.

Address Appeal: 4596 Cook Road

Ed Muire, Planning and Development Director, introduced the staff members involved in this request.

At the April 1, 2024, Board of Commissioners meeting, an appeal submitted by Mr. Harry David Lee was considered by the Board regarding the Address Program Administration's decision to change his address from 4596 Cook Road to 4584 Cook Road. The vote on a decision regarding the appeal ended in a 2 - 2 tie; Based on the opinion of the County Attorney, the motion failed because of the tie vote, but does not suggest the appeal was granted because that would require a new motion.

Pam Ealey, Planning Technician, said the addresses on Cook Road were out of sync and needed to be corrected for emergency services purposes. The solution with the least impact changed the address for four homes.

Earl “Columbus” Hawks, Geographic Information Systems Manager, said it was important to have addresses in order in emergency situations. He described the current addresses that are out of order. There were no complaints from other residents whose addresses were changed.

Emergency Services Chief Allen Cress said when trying to find an address at night, often they use sequential numbers to find homes. Everything is electronic now.

Property Owner Harry David Lee said he has been at his address for 25 years. There is a shop and home on his property. He has at least 60 customers that mail payments to him at his current address. He will have to change his address on his vehicle registration, taxes, driver’s license, and more. Other neighbors have two mailboxes at their address. He suggested making his home 4584 and leaving his business 4596. Mail is already being delivered to the wrong addresses since the changes.

Commissioner Klusman said she has experienced multiple address changes and understands what Mr. Lee is going through. She said accuracy is key for 911, and when you need help, they need to be able to find you.

Commissioner Pierce proposed a compromise to have two mailboxes with his home address being 4584. We should try to work with citizens to make this as simple as possible. Mr. Lee has done a great job sharing the issues that will arise out of this change.

Chairman Edds asked Planning staff if two mailboxes was a possibility. Ms. Ealey said accidents can happen anywhere, and this solution would make the 4596 address out of sync.

Mr. Hawks said there must be a physical location for each mailbox. The houses past this address will be out of sync and could cause confusion for emergency services; he has seen this situation before.

Chief Cress said the phone that is called in on will plot a location for emergency services which could be confusing with multiple addresses at one location.

Mr. Hawks said his concern are for the homes beyond Mr. Lee’s property. With the property still out of sync, it would cause confusion. If this issue is fixed now, it won’t be a problem for future generations.

Ms. Ealey said every party is communicated to once an address is changed. Planning cannot control a third-party vendor and what they do with the information, but they did receive it.

Mr. Hawks said Planning will be happy to write a specific letter or make a phone call if any issue arises out of an address change.

On motion of Klusman, seconded by Caskey, the Board voted 3-2 (Klusman, Caskey, Edds voting aye, Greene and Pierce voting nay) to uphold the Address Program Administration's decision to change the 911 address of parcel 425-132 from 4596 Cook Road to 4584 Cook Road.

Legislative Hearing for Z 06-24

Ed Muire, Planning and Development Director, said Marilyn and Thomas Gemme submitted a request to have a Manufactured Home Overlay (MHO) applied to their property located at 1920 Hildebrand Rd (Tax Map 751 Parcel 015). Applying the MHO to their property would allow them to place one (1) new singlewide manufactured home on the property in the Rural Residential (RR) district.

The Gemmes purchased a single-family home on a 1.6-acre tract located at 8030 Statesville Blvd (US 70 Hwy) in March 1994 and subdivided the parcel a decade later into two (2) .8-acre tracts (conveyance plat included w/ Attachment 1). The tract with the residence fronting Statesville Blvd was sold in 2007 and the Gemmes retained the tract fronting Hildebrand Rd. and allowed their daughter to place a doublewide on the property (which has since been removed).

A text amendment adopted in 1999 effectively prohibits singlewide manufactured homes throughout the County on lots created after June 8, 1999, unless located within a manufactured home park district or a Manufactured Home Park Overlay (MHO). The Gemme's division of property in March 2004 "created" two (2) new tracts, thereby eliminating any vested status for placing a singlewide manufactured home on the Hildebrand Rd. property they retained. The Gemmes recently became aware of this predicament when visiting the Planning Department to initiate the process for placing a new singlewide manufactured home on the property.

Although categorized as a map amendment request, the underlying RR zoning remains intact as the MHO supplements permitted RR uses by including the singlewide manufactured home to the list of other potential RR uses. Following the aforementioned '99 text amendment applicable to singlewides, the County received and approved seven (7) MHO applications during a period from 2000 - 2003; none have been submitted until the Z 06-24 application.

The site is located within the Highway Corridor Overlay in Area 1 of the Western Conformity Area Land Use Plan. The Highway Corridor associated with Statesville Blvd (US 70 Hwy) extends from Salisbury's extraterritorial jurisdiction (ETJ) in Area 2 westward into Area 1 (vicinity of Barringer Rd) and continues to Cleveland's ETJ and on to the Iredell County border. The Highway Corridor is a one-half (1/2) mile buffer applied to the north and south side of Statesville Blvd. The intent of the Corridor is to promote building design and appearance, providing access to adjacent undeveloped tracts and encouraging complimentary uses to the rail corridor. Residential recommendations for Area 1 focus on new major subdivision development (i.e. > 8 lots) and not single lot residential development.

During countywide zoning in 1998, the current RR district zoning in the area was applied to a swath of tracts along the Statesville Blvd corridor between NC 801 Hwy and Cleveland's ETJ as a "placeholder." Some of these tracts were in farm use or residential use, but due to size or land use at the time didn't warrant Industrial (IND) zoning. If maintained in their status quo the land uses could continue without being considered nonconforming, but if aggregated together or sold for development would likely transition to some form of non-residential zoning. The MHO was intended to mitigate the impacts singlewide developments of 1 to 29 lots created after June 8, 1999 have on surrounding properties while maintaining the character of the area.

The RR district is recognized as the underlying zone and all uses permitted in the RR district will be allowed on this property. If approved, the MHO will extend the uses permitted in the RR district to include singlewide manufactured homes. As a reminder, the RR district allows singlewide manufactured homes provided their location is on lots created prior to June 8, 1999. Mr. Muire described the conditions in the vicinity:

- North of site: Five (5) vacant RR zoned parcels fronting Hildebrand Rd. and Conditions bounded on the rear by the railroad.
- South of site: Three (3) residentially developed parcels; two (2) of which are zoned RR and the other, Tax Parcel 751-012, was zoned CBI-CD in 2004 for use as an auto sales lot (case Z 19-04 and CUP 15-04).
- East of site: RR zoning consisting of two (2) residentially developed properties fronting Statesville Blvd and a CBI zoned business on a double frontage lot between Hildebrand and Statesville Blvd.
- West of site: RR zoned parcels; some vacant and others residentially developed.

The parcel has over one hundred sixty (160) feet of frontage and an existing driveway onto Hildebrand Rd. (SR#2816). Hildebrand Rd. is classified as a local road that provides access to properties between Statesville Blvd and Old US 70 Hwy. Traffic counts are not typically taken on local roads as volumes are low and none are available for Hildebrand. Statesville Blvd (US 70 Hwy) is within one thousand (1,000) feet of the site and has a design capacity of 35,100 vehicles per day and the 2022 NDOT traffic count just east of this site at the NC 801 intersection was an 11,500 Average Annual Daily Traffic count. A residentially developed property is generally assigned ten (10) trips per day and in this case, the addition of 10 trips will not have a negative effect on Hildebrand Rd. or Statesville Blvd.

This site currently has a ground water well and existing septic system on site for serving a potential dwelling.

This site and surrounding area is in the protected area of the Yadkin River water supply watershed (WS-IV-PA). Residential uses in the WS-IV-PA are subject to a 20,000 square foot minimum lot size and non-residential uses are limited to an impervious cover of thirty-six percent (36%) of the lot size when the disturbed area of the project exceeds one (1) acre. In this case, Tax Parcel 751-015 exceeds the watershed's residential minimum lot size requirement.

Mr. Muire explained that although establishing the MHO is a legislative process, the Zoning Ordinance also specifies the application demonstrate compliance with the evaluation criteria (Section 21-59) reserved for "special uses," in addition to providing a Site Plan. Staff has assisted the applicant in preparing both items.

1. Adequate transportation access to the site exists.
 - a. Response: The tract has frontage and existing driveway onto Hildebrand Road (SR #2816). This is deemed satisfactory access to a single-family dwelling, regardless of whether the unit is stick-built, modular or manufactured.
2. The use will not significantly detract from the character of the surrounding area.
 - a. Response: The immediate area is a mix of residentially developed and vacant tracts, bordered by a CBI zoned parcel housing a former race shop and an adjoining parcel previously zoned CBI-CD for an auto sales lot.

3. Hazardous safety conditions will not result.
 - a. Response: The manufactured home will be set-up and inspected according to HUD standards and have permanent masonry skirting in place prior to occupancy.
4. The use will not generate significant noise, odor, glare, or dust.
 - a. Response: These nuisances are not typically associated with a residential use.
5. Excessive traffic or parking problems will not result.
 - a. Response: The lot area is sufficient to provide off-street parking for a residential use. Vehicle trips generated by the dwelling were deemed negligible and addressed in the zoning section of this report.
6. The use will not create significant visual impacts for adjoining properties or passersby.
 - a. Response: The manufactured home will be a new Type II unit (pitched shingled roof and vinyl siding).

This case is not a general rezoning of property, rather this application seeks to supplement the list of RR uses to include a singlewide manufactured home by way of applying an overlay (i.e. the Manufactured Home Overlay) to the property. As stated in Section 21-33(4), “The purpose of the Manufactured Home Overlay is to provide for the development of Type II and Type III manufactured homes in established residential zoning districts while maintaining the overall residential, rural or agricultural character of those districts. Because of the potential impacts of the establishment of this district, it has prescribed conditions contained in this subsection to ensure compatibility with the surrounding area.”

The application is for a site within a residential zoning district (Rural Residential) and is a single unit on an individual lot and has demonstrated it can comply with the prescribed conditions of the MHO for siting a Type II unit.

Following the courtesy hearing held at their April 22, 2024, meeting, the Planning Board unanimously forwarded a favorable recommendation for Z 06-24.

Commissioner Klusman asked for clarification regarding the history of the subdivision ordinance and Mr. Muire described the changes in housing from the early 90’s to current. Commissioner Klusman questioned if this situation will be allowed to happen more frequently if the “door is opened.” Mr. Muire said there is still a legislative process to be observed. He does not think changes are necessitated unless more requests arise.

Vice-Chairman Greene clarified that the Gemmes are making this request because they are dividing their property and Mr. Muire confirmed.

At 6:51 p.m. Chairman Edds opened the public hearing and closed it after no one wished to speak.

On motion of Commissioner Edds, seconded by Commissioner Pierce, the Board voted 5-0 that Z 06-24 is not consistent with the West Land Use Plan but is reasonable/appropriate based on the following:

1. *It ensures compatibility with the surrounding area.*

2. *There is precedent as the County has approved 7 MHO applications from 2000-2003; none have been submitted until the Z 06-24 application.*
3. *There is a negligible traffic impact.*
4. *There are existing utilities in place with a ground water well and existing septic system.*
5. *It exceeds existing watershed minimum lot size requirement.*
6. *It meets all special use criteria (specified by the ordinance).*

On motion of Greene, seconded by Pierce, the Board voted 5-0 to approve Z 06-24.

Legislative Hearing for PE 01-24: Rod Weaver and Misty Thomas

Shane Stewart, Assistant Planning Director, said Rod Weaver and Misty Thomas are requesting a permit to exceed the amplified noise ordinance standards for the second annual “One Love Music Festival” on Saturday, June 22nd between 12:00 PM and 9:00 PM on their property at 4860 Patterson Road China Grove (Parcel ID 223-003). According to previous information provided by the property owners during last year’s event, the festival will feature a day of “music, food, and fellowship” including miscellaneous vendors, information regarding the American Cancer Society and other assistance organizations, and activities for children. The owners indicated a portion of the proceeds will fund their non-profit organization, Wisdom Way Inc.’s – Hands of Hope Mission.

According to Section 14-10 of the Noise Ordinance, *“It shall be unlawful for any person, group, event or business to play, use or otherwise operate any sound amplification equipment (to include radio, tape player, stereos, etc.) emitting sound that is unreasonable, frequent and continued with such volume at any time on any given day of the week, in a manner which may annoy or disturb the quiet, comfort or repose of the general public. This provision is applicable when the source of the noise is plainly audible to the responding law enforcement officer at a distance of one hundred (100) feet.”*

However, Section 14-12 provide an opportunity to exceed the amplified sound standards in the form of a “permit to exceed” when the event is open to the public. As indicated in Section 14-12 (c) of the Rowan County Noise Ordinance, the following criteria shall be considered when issuing or denying an application:

1. The timeliness of the application.
 - a. Finding: Planning Staff received the revised application on May 7th.
2. The nature of the requested activity.
 - a. Finding: According to Mr. Weaver and the event coordinator Mike Gaston, the event is open to the public and will feature food, vendors, and live entertainment. The property contains gravel driveway connections at both Brown and Patterson Roads to the relatively flat 17 acre grassed field. According to the site plan, guests will be directed to use Brown Road for both the entrance and exit, which will be stationed with event personnel to process tickets and deliver logistic information. Parking areas are denoted on the site plan for the anticipated 400 – 500 guests.

Site plan detail also include proposed stage and speaker arrangement on the south side of the property, two (2) sets of portable toilets with washing stations, and food / beverage areas. Mr. Gaston has been in contact with the Environmental Health Office regarding permitting and will ensure individual food vendors of the requirements.

3. Previous experience with the applicant.
 - a. Finding: None. Property owners purchased this 17-acre parcel on March 9, 2017, which is currently listed in the present use value program as tax deferred due to agricultural use. Two (2) “zoning permits” have been issued related to the farm use – a 480 sf office and a 2,880 sf horse barn. From speaking with the owners, they shared their passion for neglected horses, serving veterans, and mission efforts.
4. The time of the event.
 - a. Finding: According to the application, the event will take place on June 22nd between 12:00 PM and 9:00 PM.
5. Other activities in the vicinity of the proposed event.
 - a. Finding: None to knowledge.
6. Frequency of the event.
 - a. Finding: This is the second annual event.
7. Cultural or social benefits of the proposed event.
 - a. Finding: See #2.
8. The effect of the activity on any adjacent residential area.
 - a. Finding: The site has sufficient area to accommodate the anticipated number of guests. The applicant has been in contact with Sheriff’s Office staff regarding the event, requirements of their office, and agreed to provide private security.
9. Previous violations, if any, by the applicant.
 - a. Finding: Planning staff have requested the 911 call log for the previous event, which were not available at the time of this memo. According to the owner, they decided to re-position the speakers in a northeasterly direction and will reduce the sound level on the speakers based on last year’s event.
10. Adjoining property owners surrounding the location are notified by the Planning Department or applicant at least seventy-two (72) hours prior to consideration by the Board of Commissioners.
 - a. Finding: Staff mailed notice to seventeen (17) property owners, which are generally within 500 feet of the subject site, on May 8th and posted a sign on the property on May 9th. In accordance with section 14-12(e) of the Noise Ordinance, conditions or requirements necessary to minimize adverse effects upon the community or surrounding neighborhood may be placed on the application.

Mr. Stewart said two emails were received with complaints regarding language used by a comedian and some of the music, and the owners are planning to address this. There were no 911 calls last year. The same number of participants are expected this year.

At 6:58 p.m. Chairman Edds opened the floor for public comment and closed it after everyone wishing to speak had done so.

Property owner Rod Weaver said last year was a success but there were a few success. Five of nineteen neighbors came. This event is to bring the community together. Last year there was a complaint that the music was too loud, so they turned it down. Foul language is not condoned. They would like to continue this event. Many vendors came including the Bloodmobile. Beds were given away to veterans. It was a great event.

On motion of Pierce, seconded by Klusman, the Board voted 5-0 to approve PE 01-24.

Road Name Changes: Cattle Drive/Misfit Meadows Lane

Planning Technician Pamela Ealey said following road name changes have been submitted to the Rowan County Planning Department and are presented for approval by the Board of Commissioners.

1. Currently Known As: No name driveway
Proposed Name: Cattle Drive
Location: 700 block of Ed Deal Road (SR 0)
Property Owners: James D & Linda H Mauldin; James T & Danielle Mauldin
Reason for Change: Request for 3rd structure accessing this drive, per ordinance the drive must be named. Unanimous petition received, name choice approved by GIS and Emergency Services.
2. Currently Known As: No name driveway
Proposed Name: Misfit Meadows Lane
Location: 3700 block of Patterson Road (SR 1533)
Property Owners: Stacy & Steven Lockman; Kiersten Martin & husband; Cory & Paula Collins
Reason for Change: Request for 3rd structure accessing this drive, per ordinance the drive must be named. Unanimous petition received, name choice approved by GIS and Emergency Services.

At 7:03 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 changes for Cattle Drive and Misfit Meadows Lane as presented.

Inter-local Agreement with TDA for Economic Development – Tourism Capital Project

James Meacham, Chief Executive Officer of the Rowan County Tourism Development Authority, said the Rowan County Tourism Development Authority, a North Carolina Public Authority (Rowan County TDA) requests consideration from the Rowan County Board of

Commissioners on entering Rowan County into an inter-local agreement with the Rowan County TDA for an expansion and enhancement of community assets for the purpose of public benefit through community, economic and tourism development.

The Rowan County TDA seeks to enhance the community's public infrastructure for tourism and economic development by creating a multi-block pedestrian and visitor connection between the Rowan County Farmer's Market Pavilion and the Historic Salisbury Amtrak Station located on Rowan County's Railwalk in Downtown Salisbury. Plans have been established to improve and expand the Railwalk by connecting existing locations and infrastructure through a safe and inviting public corridor that links tourism and community assets. Completion of the project will connect critical agriculture assets at the Rowan County Farmer's Market with arts, cultural, historic and urban experiences in Downtown Salisbury, and transportation at the Amtrak Station.

The additional development builds off the success of the long-standing relationship between the Rowan County TDA and Rowan County, as well as the previous partnership to refurbish an adjacent abandoned warehouse into the current Rowan County Farmer's Market & Pavilion. The Farmer's Market partnership fostered community and tourism development, improved an area food desert, and created a permanent home for the Rowan County Farmer's Market and other community events.

In addition to supporting existing investments, and the infrastructure at the Rowan County Farmer's Market & Pavilion, the Rowan County TDA's project goals include expanding safety and pedestrian amenities through pedestrian access, public art, and infrastructure development. Planned improvements include streetscape enhancements, lighting, signage, alleyway expansion, improved access for emergency response, better aesthetics, safety, and further tourism development.

Development of the Railwalk Corridor will provide significant enhancements and create an asset for the district and community, serving as a benefit to the area, surrounding property owners, and the public at large. The enhancements will include, increasing the public footprint, improving walkability and safety from the Salisbury Amtrak Station and Historic Salisbury Depot to the Rowan County Farmer's Market, and enriching existing businesses through improved lighting, ease of access, public walkability, stormwater improvements, and historic preservation along the corridor.

The Rowan County TDA has been engaged with the City of Salisbury and seven property owners, along the existing Railwalk Corridor, to bring this project to life. After a series of meetings with the property owners, obtaining a Certificate of Appropriateness from the Historic Preservation Commission, and approval from the Rowan County Tourism Board of Directors, the project is ready to proceed.

The Rowan County TDA is acquiring the property in question and will also have the authority to control the property and its development to ensure that it is used in the desired manner. The work to be performed by the Rowan County TDA will be done pursuant to an easement agreement entered by and between area property owners and the Rowan County TDA to make improvements

to the adjacent structures in the Railwalk. Mr. Meacham showed renderings of what the area would look like after improvements.

As a North Carolina Public Authority, the Tourism Authority utilizes the same bid process as local government for construction projects. The Rowan County TDA has hired Ramsay Burgin and Smith Architects to complete the design work, project bidding and construction management in accordance with NC General Statutes.

Through the development process, the Rowan County TDA seeks to build upon Rowan County's strengths, community character, strategic investments, and brand, while driving overnight stays and serving visitor needs through bridging the gap between agriculture and transportation in an urban downtown.

The anticipated cost to complete the development of the Railwalk Corridor is \$750,000. The Rowan County TDA requests the Board of Commissioners consider entering into an inter-local agreement with the Rowan County TDA for the completion of the project. The Rowan County TDA requests and proposes utilizing the same interlocal agreement framework from the County and TDA's 2018 agreement for construction of the Rowan County Farmers Market & Pavilion as authorized and in accordance with NCGS 460A-460(2), NCGS 160A-461 and NCGS 159-13.

The Rowan County TDA requests the Board of Commissioners consider making available to the TDA up to \$750,000 for the completion of the Railwalk Corridor in FY 2024-25. The Rowan County TDA would agree and be responsible through an approved interlocal agreement to repay all funds to the County over a five-year period beginning in Fiscal Year 2025-2026 and concluding in Fiscal Year 2029-30.

Commissioner Klusman commended Mr. Meacham's work on this project and asked if visitors will be drawn to the Railwalk as an attraction. Mr. Meacham said an economic impact analysis hasn't been completed yet as there are a lot of changes coming to the area, but the partnership between the TDA and the County to develop the Farmer's Market has been a major success and this project likely will attribute to that.

Vice-Chairman Greene asked if taxes have increased since the COVID-19 pandemic. Mr. Meacham said things have rebounded well. There was a slight decrease at the end of 2023. Currently the market is running at over 70% occupancy. There is a high number of short-term rentals in the county. There are two proposed hotels that will be developed over the next three years. One will be at exit 75 off Interstate 85 and the other is the Marriot property at exit 76 next to Wal-Mart.

On motion of Pierce, seconded by Greene, the Board voted 5-0 to approve the Inter-local Agreement for economic development with the Rowan County Tourism Development Authority.

On motion of Pierce, seconded by Greene, the Board voted 5-0 to approve the associated budget amendment.

Local Reentry Council Grant

Ann Kitalong-Will, Grants Administration and Governmental Relations, said funding is available to Rowan County to establish a Local Reentry Council (LRC) intended to serve as a coordinated network of organizations and individuals to reduce recidivism & promote public safety through coordinated effort that identifies & helps individuals to successfully transition out of correctional supervision.

The North Carolina Department of Adult Correction is working to establish Local Reentry Councils in the state and has released a request for proposals from qualified agencies to serve as "Intermediary Agencies" to LRCs. Per the RFP: "The Intermediary Agency serves as the mechanism to fund and support the creation of the LRC, acts as the fiscal agent for the LRC, and operates as the liaison between NCDAC and the LRC."

Ms. Kitalong-Will explained the background of the LRC which includes reducing recidivism and promoting public safety. She described how the LRC works and the County's role as an Intermediary Agency. A local match is not required. She explained the funding structure.

Vice-Chairman Greene asked what sort of staff is required. Ms. Kitalong-Will said the request includes two staff members. Vice-Chairman Greene asked who would supervise this people and Ms. Kitalong-Will said this isn't yet known.

Chairman Edds asked if there are any other organizations in Rowan County working with reentry. Ms. Kitalong-Will said not at this time. There are multiple community agencies who could be involved in this initiative. Chairman Edds said reentry has been an issue for a while but there are limited resources available to offenders who are reentering society. Opportunities for personal development should be available; there should be people or programs to assist with reentry. Ms. Kitalong-Will said the State will provide training and local support. Chairman Edds asked if this is approved and the community isn't ready to administer the program, could the grant be declined until infrastructure is in place to support the program. Ms. Kitalong-Will said yes; the State is ready to help facilitate the program in communities. The majority of the funding will be spent on service activities. The Case Manager would likely need to be funded by the County. Additional grant funding would need to be pursued in order to sustain the program.

Commissioner Caskey asked if the Case Manager would be a County employee and Ms. Kitalong-Will said yes. There is a lot of crossover with the Veteran's Treatment Court.

Vice-Chairman Green clarified that both employees would be County employees and Ms. Kitalong-Will said yes.

Chairman Edds asked Attorney Jay Dees for confirmation that application could be made and the grant could be declined if the County isn't ready to facilitate the program and Mr. Dees said yes.

Commissioner Pierce suggested surveying surrounding counties to see how they are handling the program.

Mr. Dees asked if there was a fixed timeline for expending the funds and Ms. Kitalong-Will explained what was required for compliance.

On motion of Edds, seconded by Pierce, the Board voted 5-0 to approve County staff to prepare and submit a proposal in response to the Department of Adult Correction's RFP, to serve as the Intermediary Agency for a Rowan County Local Reentry Council (LRC), and to approve and authorize the County Manager or designee to sign grant proposal documents.

FY2024-2025 Proposed Budget

County Manager Aaron Church presented the proposed budget for the 2024-2025 fiscal year. The recommended budget is prepared according to the Local Government Budget and Fiscal Control Act and is balanced. The current budget is \$198,247,750. The 2025 requested budget is \$269,431,480, which is a 35.91% increase. The recommended 2025 budget is \$238,598,704, which is a 20.35% increase.

The tax rate will remain at 58 cents per \$100 valuation. The tax collection rate remains the same as 2024 at 98%. The projected 2025 tax base is \$20,125,000,000, which is an increase by 7.57% over the 2024 tax base of \$18,707,900,000. A \$10,980,000 property tax increase is expected.

Sales tax makes up approximately \$40,000,000 of the general fund revenue which is 16.76%. It is currently at 7.14% less than 2023 actuals for several reasons, including the impact of inflation. This creates a \$4,400,000 increase in sales tax revenue.

It is recommended that the following departments increase fees:

- Building Inspections
- Emergency Services
- Planning and Development
- Parks and Recreation
- Animal Services

As of June 30, 2023, the Total Fund Balance was \$128,488,175 with \$65,307,078 categorized as unassigned. This budget recommends using \$37,380,395 to balance the FY 2025 budget. This includes \$1,000,000 budgeted for contingencies, \$29,195,760 to cover large one-time capital expenditures, and \$9,354,635 Fund Balance Appropriate for reoccurring expenses. The \$26,433,130 increase from last year's appropriation will prevent excessive new debt accrual.

Commissioner Pierce asked if the one-time capital expenditures include American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds and Opioid Litigation funds and Mr. Church said no, those funds are in addition.

The requested one-time capital items are as follows:

Crawford Building Remodel	\$4,850,000
Land – EMS Station	650,000
Donnelly House Demo	40,000
Security System Upgrade	1,000,000
Health Department Relocation*	15,000,000

Behavioral Health Urgent Care**	1,050,000
Library – building repairs	54,000
Library – Headquarters Carpet	277,520
ADA Compliance Parks	3,579,140
Storage Building – Ellis Park	115,100
Shelter – Woodleaf Park	80,000
RCCC – Auto Building Design	2,500,000
TOTAL	\$29,195,760

The Health Department Relocation* estimated total is \$24.7 million. Of this amount, \$15 million will come from the General Fund and \$10.6 million will come from the ARPA Fund. Behavioral Health Urgent Care** Startup Costs are projected to be \$500,000.

The Americans with Disabilities Act requires County sites to be accessible and is federally mandated. In FY 2022 an ADA Self-Evaluation and Transition Plan was completed and determined improvements that are required to be implemented to be compliant with federal standards. For FY 2025, \$600,000 has been budgeted for improvements.

The Proposed Budget includes 27 vehicle purchases totaling \$3,076,728, as follows:

Department	Vehicles	Cost
Emergency Services	4	\$ 1,700,000
Inspections	1	30,000
Animal Services	2	93,722
Transit *	3	326,643
Environmental Health	2	93,608
Sheriff	15	832,755
Total	27	\$ 3,076,728

This year, departments requested 92 new positions. The following positions are recommended in the FY 2025 budget:

Department	Title	Cost
County Attorney	Assistant County Attorney	\$ 178,331
Sheriff's Office	School Resource Officer *	165,887
Social Services	Income Maintenance Worker II (6)**	509,760
Social Services	Supervisor**	98,934
Animal Services	Veterinarian	125,324
Rowan Com. Center	Events Coordinator	76,884
Rowan Com. Center	Events Center Manager	89,575
Rowan Com. Center	PT Events Center Attendants (2)	76,846
Rowan Com. Center	Grounds Maint. Worker	61,846
Rowan Com. Center	Maintenance Mechanic II	70,917
Total Increase		\$ 1,454,304

A 4% cost of living adjustment is recommended for every county employee and official, with a 2% increase taking effect July 1, 2024, and an additional 2% increase taking effect January 1, 2025.

The recommended budget includes expending \$5,854,755 in public safety projects that can be covered with Article 46 sales tax. Revenues are projected at \$5,500,000, with an estimated current balance of \$372,000.

Description Budgeted	Amount
Radio Debt Service	\$ 1,799,000
NEW - Telecom Debt Service	730,000
NEW - Southern EMS Station	843,000
Land Purchase W. EMS Station	650,000
Sheriff Department Vehicles	832,755
Security System Upgrade	1,000,000
Total	\$ 5,854,755

Chairman Edds asked for clarification regarding the cost of the Southern EMS station. Mr. Church said the land purchase is total cost, but the station cost is projected debt service.

Commissioner Pierce asked how big the station would be and Chief Allen Cress said it would be four bays and would cost roughly \$550 per square foot with options for future expansion.

Mr. Church explained the payment structure.

Finance Director Anna Bumgarner explained future payments. A vote would be needed before anything can be built; this is just budgeting for the expense.

Commissioner Klusman asked how much room for expansion there will be. Chief Cress said there could be up to eight bays and other additional options.

Mr. Church explained the State and Local estimates for average daily membership (ADM) changes in each school system. Rowan Salisbury Schools are project to lose 186 students, while Kannapolis City Schools will gain 37 and Charter Schools will gain 353.

Ms. Bumgarner said she is able to pull an estimated ADM from the State for public schools, but not for charter schools. She reaches out to charter schools to estimate numbers for them.

Mr. Church said the budget recommends a 9.4% increase in per pupil funding to \$2,328.97. He described the proposed changes in education funding, as follows:

School System	FY 2024	FY 2025 Proposed
Rowan Salisbury Schools Current Operating	\$38,315,757	\$41,520,537
Rowan Salisbury Schools Current Capital	932,069	932,069
Debt Service	5,445,000	4,870,800

Debt Service for \$16 million	0	1,500,000
Debt Service for \$55 million	4,911,491	5,014,000
Total	\$49,604,317	\$53,837,406

Rowan Salisbury Schools are recommended to have an increase of \$4,233,089.

School System	FY 2024	FY 2025 Proposed
Kannapolis City Schools Current Operating	\$2,793,299	\$3,144,615
Kannapolis City Schools Current Capital	67,931	70,366
Debt Service for \$2 million	0	254,000
Debt Service	473,400	208,200
Total	\$3,334,630	\$3,473,561
Charter Schools	\$2,422,710	\$3,473,561

Kannapolis City Schools are recommended to receive an increase of \$342,551 while Charter Schools are recommended to receive an increase of \$1,050,851.

Mr. Church summarized the County's current debt.

Description	Payment
Radio Equipment	\$ 1,799,000
Rowan Community Center - Ag Center	2,860,000
Parks and Recreation	126,000
NEW - Telecom Project	730,000
NEW - Southern EMS Station	843,000
RCCC - 2011 Bond	887,000
RCCC - HVAC/Dental	258,000
RCCC - Paving/notification System	66,000
NEW - RCCC 2020 Bond Tech Building, Fire Decontamination Station, Career Promise Building, and Renovation Fine Arts Program	4,019,000
RSS - Central Office	540,650
RSS - 2017 Roofs	692,950
RSS - West Elementary School	2,922,950
RSS - HVAC	714,250
KCS - Technology	208,200
NEW - RSS - School	5,014,000
NEW - RSS - Roofs	1,500,000
NEW -KCS Elementary School	254,000
Estimated Issuance Costs	328,000
	\$ 23,763,000
Airport - 2016 Hangar	\$ 283,000
Airport - 2024 Hangar	1,555,000
	\$ 1,838,000

Total Debt Service	\$ 25,601,000
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Commissioner Pierce asked if money had been drawn down for hangars and Ms. Bumgarner said some had, but only one invoice has been paid.

Mr. Church asked the Board to schedule a Public Hearing on the budget for the first regular meeting in June.

On motion of Pierce, seconded by Greene, the Board voted 5-0 to set a public hearing on the Proposed FY2024-2025 Budget on June 3, 2024, at a meeting starting at 3:00 p.m.

Chairman Edds noted that there would be a Special Called Meeting of the Board of Commissioners on June 24, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. with the purpose of reviewing and adopting the budget.

Financial Reports

Finance Director Anna Bumgarner presented the financial reports. She compared annual cumulative expenditures, with FY 2024 equaling \$149,176,467 in April. Annual cumulative revenue is at \$175,556,372. The annual cumulative property tax was \$109,407,564 in March. In January, the annual cumulative sales tax was \$24,374,443. She compared monthly sales taxes from 2021 to 2024.

On September 19, 2022, the Rowan County Board of Commissioners adopted an Investment Policy for Rowan County that includes providing a quarterly investment report to the Board. Per the policy this report shall summarize the investment activities in the most recent quarter and comment on anticipated investments in the next quarter. Since this is the first year that reports are being provided to the Board, I will include an overview of activities going back to July 1, 2022.

The County has decided to be conservative in the purchase of investments and at this time will no longer be investing in commercial paper. Currently the County has 29.22% invested in Treasury Bill, Notes or Government Agencies, 69.51% of its total portfolio in North Carolina Capital Management Trust (NCCMT) and the remaining 1.27% in money market instruments. With the change in the market the County's investment portfolio has improved for the quarter ended March 31, 2024, 236 basis points higher than March 31, 2023. Year to date interest earnings with the Market-to-Market adjustment total \$8,734,734 as rates begun to stabilize. Finance has mainly invested in shorter terms as the interest rates have been better in the 6 to 12-month range. The chart below shows that on Treasuries and agencies we are getting average yield above 4%.

Total Portfolio as of March 31, 2024:

Investment Portfolio	Investment Amount	Weighted Average Yield to Maturity	Average Maturity (Days)
US Treasury & Government Agency Securities	\$ 74,549,955	4.04%	200.47
NCCMT	\$ 177,321,378	5.24%	1
Money Market Instruments	\$ 3,233,706	3.10%	1
Total Portfolio	\$ 255,105,039		

Interest earned through March 31, 2024, is mainly from NCCMT and Truist Bank it totals \$6,759,960. This interest is received monthly. Interest earned on Treasuries and Agencies is \$1,974,774 through March 31, 2024, and is only received on maturity date. NCCMT's has a short-term focus in its portfolio, and as such the NCCMT yield leads Treasury and Agency issues when rates are rising and lags when rates are falling.

Chairman Edds said earned interest in an unbelievable source of funding for the County.

Adjournment

At 8:13 p.m., on motion of Pierce, seconded by Greene, the Board voted 5-0 to adjourn.

Sarah Pack, NCCCC
Clerk to the Board