

CASWELL COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MEMBERS PRESENT

May 20, 2024
OTHERS PRESENT

Jeremiah Jefferies, Chair
Finch Holt, Vice Chair
John Dickerson
Ethel Gwynn
Rick McVey
Frank Rose
Tim Yarbrough

Scott Meszaros, County Manager
Melissa Williamson, Deputy County Manager
Melissa Miller, Deputy Finance Director
Carla Smith, Clerk to the Board

The Board of Commissioners for the County of Caswell, North Carolina, met in a Budget Work Session and regularly scheduled meeting on Monday, May 20, 2024 at 5:00 pm at the Gunn Memorial Library.

WELCOME:

Chairman Jefferies called the meeting to order, and welcomed everyone to the Caswell County Board of Commissioners meeting on May 20, 2024. Then all paused for a moment of Silent Prayer, and the Board of Commissioners and all the guest in attendance recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

TAX DEPARTMENT REEVALUATION UPDATE:

Thomas Bernard, Tax Director said good evening Mr. Chairman and Commissioners. What I'm going to go over, I handed it out to everybody. It's the Caswell County reevaluation notice. The reevaluation is finished. We're in the informal appeal process. That office is right across from my office; across the hall where the reevaluation guys will be taking his informal appeals. In order to do that, on this second page is an informal appeals form that they would like for you to fill out. There's a number over there 336-694-1380 that you can call and set up an appointment with them for you to bring evidence or whatever your concerns are for the increase in value. Now just because it's an increase doesn't mean you're going to actually be able to have a successful appeal. It needs to be something wrong. There could be some data entered incorrectly or some numbers keyed in wrong, but I suggest everybody fill this form out, give them a call, and turn this form in to them that's in that office right across the hall. The average increase in value, I think, was an average of about 39% overall. It's a lot of people that went up a lot more than that. Mine certainly did. Some did not go up as much; some may have even decreased. That's a total average across the county, but I do suggest people that are going to appeal, fill this form out, call that number, get an appointment, and turn this form in to them.

Vice Chairman Holt asked do they get this form across from your office? Is that what you're saying? Mr. Bernard said they should have got one in the mail. Everybody may not have received theirs yet. My wife received hers; I haven't received mine yet. So I'm expecting them to

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be in the mail when I get home tonight, but it could be tomorrow. They all went out, or as we say, they hit the streets Friday evening or Saturday morning.

Commissioner Rose said correct me if I'm wrong, Mr. Bernard. Number four, if you are contesting a property that you have had more than three years, you don't have to fill out number four down. Correct? Mr. Bernard said yes sir. I do encourage people to fill this form out, bring it to them, let them review it and check for errors.

Chairman Jefferies said I have one question. As far as the reevaluation, if the people want to protest something like they have over the years when they come before the Commissioners and said it's too much and the Commissioners make a decision what it should be. Is this going to work the same? Mr. Bernard said yes sir. As soon as the informal appeal process will be over, then if people still have issues, we will bring it before the Board of E & R. We don't have anything though to go before the board at this time, but hopefully they can be settled during that informal appeal process. That's why you get to talk to them one-on-one, it's called inform. So instead going to the board, hopefully those concerns will be addressed during that informal appeal process. Chairman Jefferies said okay. So my next question is, maybe I'm wrong but I don't know how to announce this. Why has this taken us so long? Well I know you've been around about 30 years, and in all the years you've been here, this is the first time I ever known this to happen. Mr. Bernard said this is the first time. It is the Reevaluation Company. The project manager that was here that was overseeing the project, pulled out. It's my understanding he pulled out and left Mr. Piner with no explanations, no anything. He did not tell him where he was with his work. That was done probably early fall of last year or maybe late summer, and I think it was month or two before anybody knew because he was calling in sick. But I think it was a month, two, or three before anybody found out that he wasn't on the job. But that concern can be addressed. If you want to, Mr. Piner was here at the last meeting, but that concern needs to be addressed to Mr. Piner. We are normally, we used to send reval. notices out probably somewhere in February after the reevaluation. Chairman Jefferies said and my next question would be do you have a date set for this to be back in. So people can get it back in. Mr. Bernard said well it was 30 days from the date of this notice. The date of the notice that it was mailed was on 5/17. Chairman Jefferies said yes, I just got mine today. Mr. Bernard said and I haven't got mine yet, but what I'm saying is we will work with that. 30 to 40 days, we're going to work with you. You know we always work with people in Caswell County.

Commissioner Rose said one question I had, and I brought it up at the last meeting. I got with the County Manager and the County Attorney, and it was the contract. That's where I guess Mr. Piner will have to explain some things. Mr. Bernard said yes sir. Commissioner Rose said is when this stuff was turned over to the tax office because I think that we do need to recoup some funds due to the fact that this is so late. I don't know if there's an attorney that he has, but it has been brought to our attorney. I'd like to see that through. I know you don't have anything do that, that's going to fall back on the company. Mr. Bernard said I think I talked to Mr. Johnston. Attorney Johnston said that's correct, Commissioner Rose. Mr. Bernard and I have had that

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conversation about that contract. We can discuss that further tonight during the closed session. Mr. Bernard said thank you, sir.

Chairman Jefferies asked if anyone else had questions for Mr. Bernard. Hearing none, Mr. Bernard said thank you. I appreciate it. You all have a good evening.

BUDGET WORK SESSION:

County Manager Meszaros said so I'm going to hand you out some updates. So we want to look at the budget schedule a little bit with the adoption being on the 17th of June. This is pretty much identical with all the work sessions we had. So does everyone know Johnna Sharpe from the NCACC? So she here. Johnna has actually poured in a ton of work for us over the last year and a half, and she's helped me with the calculations and the budget numbers. The Department Heads, as you know, you can't open up the software to put this current year in because you still have the audits open. So everything has to be done on Excel pivot tables, and Johnna's kind of a wizard and has expertise that far surpasses everything I want to try to mess with. So she's been putting a lot of weekends and nights in. Our team has been working through the budget process with the Department Heads. We still intend to put the data that you have tonight back to the Department Heads for a double set of verifications to make sure we have all the inputs right. So the on the first page is just to revised calendar. On the second page, it has the special appropriations. So you asked for those to be mailed last time, and so I emailed them out to you. I'm assuming everybody got it, and then we sent out the Department Heads', the ones that submitted them, submittal forms. I sent that out to you as well. You said you wanted to get those. So those should be fairly accurate. You know it takes time to whittle through, double check, and get everything kind of received and verified. So Johnna's here tonight to talk a little bit to you because she's a financial expert and can explain the mill levy, where the budget neutral number is, where our current budget is, how that looks without having used reserve funds, where that sits with the current tax, the mill applied to what this year's budget would be, and the current status. So I think if she would be so kind as to walk you through that page, just to kind of explain the scenario, and give us a narrative because it really helps to get that big picture. Understand that this isn't the recommended budget. This is just this year's budget versus all the asks, and so you're seeing holistic data. You're not seeing anything that's been whittled down; it's just gross data. But I think if you want to have her just kind of walk you through that a little bit, and then if you have questions, I don't want to keep her here all night. Johnna Sharpe said I'm fine, I'm staying through to the regular meeting.

Johnna Sharpe said I noticed something on the calendar. Scott that also on the June 3rd is when you would present it to the public. So that would be when the formal presentation would be made to the public. As Mr. Bernard mentioned, we've been waiting anxiously to get his total valuation number because in a reappraisal year, you have to set what is called the revenue neutral tax rate. That tax rate is set at a level that will generate the same level of revenues in the new budget year that you would have collected on the prior year and last year's values. So it's a pretty simple math equation: last year valuation times last year's rate; this year's new valuation, and you saw solve

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for the rate. Then once you get that rate, you're able to apply the average growth in the tax base over the last eight years. So finally getting his numbers, we were able to do that calculation this weekend, and right now the revenue neutral rate would be set at 58.5 cents, which is a 15 cent decrease from your current rate of 73.5. So that includes a revenue neutral rate and a 1.4% inflation rate. So just to give you ballpark numbers, last year's valuation or this year's valuation for 2024 is at 1.8 billion. The new valuation is 2.3 billion, and so that's where we arrive at getting the revenue neutral rate. Which there is absolutely no requirement that the Board adopt that as the new rate, but that rate has to be disclosed to the public. That will be done as part of the public hearing notice, and then whatever rate the manager recommends in the budget. If it is anything above the 58.5, it would be considered a tax increase. So I'll just stop there because all of the numbers that you see on everything that I'm putting forward after this are based on a revenue neutral rate of 58.5 cents.

Commissioner Yarbrough said Johnna, back up just a second. You mentioned one point something for inflation. Explain what you're talking about. Johnna Sharpe said okay. What the statutes allow you to do is you go through and look at every year the growth in valuation, each year on the total property tax. That includes motor vehicles, personal property, and everything. Then you take that; it's just a simple average of here are the increases over the past several years. The average increase for you all was 1.44%, and so that includes: there's a 2.13% increase from 23 to 24, 1.87, 1.68, 1.12, 1.5, 1.0, and 0.7. Commissioner Yarbrough said that's an increase in personal property? Johnna Sharpe said that's in value. That's everything; real estate, personal, motor vehicles, and public service boards. Commissioner Yarbrough said so that one point, forgive me for not remembering. Johnna Sharpe said 1.44. Commissioner Yarbrough said 1.44 that's above...Mrs. Sharpe said the revenue neutral rate. Yes, that's how you get the... Commissioner Yarbrough said that's the revenue neutral plus... Johnna Sharpe said plus growth. Right. So the revenue neutral before the applied growth rate was 57.45. So that times the 1.44 gets you to the 58.5. There's lots of rounding going on in there, but 58.5. So that way you're allowed to capture... If you just set it to that revenue neutral rate, you don't capture the natural growth because you're getting new vehicles, you're having new homes built, and you're having new businesses built. So you have to factor that growth in so you don't kind of net that growth out. So if you never had another home built or nobody ever bought a new car, then you wouldn't have any growth, but that's how you factor in what's often referred to as the natural growth just as your community grows and assets get added. One area where there's been a lot of growth has been in the public service companies over that time because you've had, especially over the last couple of years, high fiber coming in. So as your infrastructure has grown, that's an area where you're also getting increase. Vehicles surprisingly, so your motor vehicles are increasing in value about somewhere about \$15 million a year. So you're getting really good steady growth on that. Personal property has even been increasing. I know Mr. Bernard's estimates are somewhat conservative because you got to factor in depreciation on personal properties. So I will think we've been conservative in the growth estimates, and also because the notices have just gone out,

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we really don't have an idea of what the appeals factor might be. So he's billed a certain amount, but if appeals are successful, then that's going to reduce that valuation. So in this total valuation number, we've estimated an appeals factor.

Commissioner Yarbrough said of what? Mrs. Sharpe said right now 2%. Commissioner Yarbrough said so you're estimating that actual values will be decreased by 2%. Mrs. Sharpe said yes, and here's the challenge, if you don't do that you could find yourself in a position, given that we've got to adopt this budget or you've got to adopt the budget before the appeals process is final, of possibly adopting a revenue neutral rate that is too low. That could put you in a shortfall position for the year, and a budget is nothing but a plan, a lot of assumptions, and estimates. So we're got to be thoughtful in making sure that you're protecting the county and that you don't find yourself in a severe shortfall once the appeals come in. So best case scenario is the appeals aren't at that level, and you'll have more revenue than we budgeted. But looking at that difference it's not millions of dollars; it's hundreds of thousands of dollars because your revenue that each penny generates on this new value is \$230,000. So one penny generates \$230,000.

Commissioner Rose is there a chance that this appeal process could absorb more than that 2%? Mrs. Sharpe said well that'll be up to you all since you're the Board of E & R, but I would think the 2% is a conservative guess. But I think my position is I'd rather assume that conservative. You be in a position of maybe having a little additional revenue as you go into next year depending on where the values end up, and you never know where the values are going to end up for any given year. It's all a best professional guess, but then be in a position that you maybe have something that helps fall to your fund balance. But as a reminder, you can only establish the tax rate one time, and that's with your adopted budget. So if you missed the tax rate, you do not have an opportunity to fix it until the next fiscal year. So it's a really important number to make sure it's got some conservatism built in it.

Commissioner Yarbrough said if my mouth is correct, that 58.5 cent revenue neutral is 21% reduction off of what the rate is now. I know you said 15 cents, but it's a 21%. Mrs. Sharpe said right. Commissioner Yarbrough said but if values went up on an average of 38 to 39%, taxpayers are still looking at an increase regardless. So how is that revenue neutral? Mrs. Sharpe said well because Mr. Bernard is just looking at the real estate value. That's not considering all the other factors. So actually with the revenue neutral rate because that rate is applied against all of your property tax values, you will actually see decreases in all the other property taxes. Actually vehicle taxes decrease and personal property decreases because the only thing really is the real estate values have gone up. So you're really lowering that for the bulk of your tax base, which is the property values, but the motor vehicle tax at that revenue rate, you're losing money. When I did the revenue forecast, you're losing I think it's a couple hundred thousand dollars in the property tax area, and you're losing in the personal property tax as well because at the revenue neutral rate those bases haven't changed. Your vehicles evaluated every year, personal properties evaluated every year, and public service core. So those values are just a year old, but it's your home values that haven't been touched in the last eight years. So your total, let me get that.

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We've been doing this fast, so I didn't want to necessarily hand this out without kind of some quality control on the numbers. Your total assessed property value of real is around 1.9 billion, and that includes 275 million of exemptions. So exemptions have already been knocked down. So then you've got another billion of taxable personal, public service core, and motor vehicles. On those types of property, they are going to see a decrease in their taxes. Commissioner Yarbrough said if that's just the personal property type. That's not real property. Mrs. Sharpe said correct. Typically, what you'll look at is, even at the revenue neutral rate, if the average home value across the county went up 39%, when you get your valuation if your home's value went up more than that, then your tax bill is going to increase at the revenue neutral rate. If your home went less, then you'll pay less. Commissioner Yarbrough said I hadn't talked to folks that got less. Mrs. Sharpe said well also you got to remember my understanding is you, the Board, deferred to do their reappraisal at the four-year period, which you're typically on a four-year process. So eight years is a long time, and a 39% increase over an eight-year period is actually a little bit lower than what some other counties have been seeing over this last cycle. Commissioner Yarbrough said yeah, but that 39% is the average. Mrs. Sharpe said yes. Commissioner Yarbrough said when you have folks talking about 100-150, if you're going to have numbers like that, they're expecting a substantial decrease in the rate. I'm going try to make sure they get it. I'm not speaking for the Board; I'm just speaking myself. I know everybody got wants and everybody's got needs in the county budget, but the taxpayer can't bear but so much of a burden. I'm not willing to force it on them so speak. This is just my opinion. You go ahead. Mrs. Sharpe said so are there other questions on the revenue neutral rate? You're right. 15 cents off the 73.5 is a 22% reduction, and it's not the 39 because you've got a billion dollars of other values in there.

Johnna Sharpe said then what I wanted to share is I think as I've worked with a lot of Boards in the past, before I've always wanted to share kind of to give them context of what the requests are over what available revenues are. So on this sheet that's called General Fund Surplus (GAP) worksheet. I think this gives you kind of that big picture context of where the budget requests stand, and now that we have the revenue neutral rate, we can put that in context of what these requests mean in terms of tax dollars. So let me just orient you to this worksheet. This is only the general fund. So it's your fund 100, fund 130 Social Services, fund 140 Health Department, fund 150 libraries, and then the revaluation fund. So you've got your general fund revenues, I'll start there. At the top, we've got the original budget for 2024. Then we've got the base budget request from the departments, and really that base budget is also this preliminary revenue estimate, which includes the revenue neutral rate. Then that next column just shows you the increase or decrease over the base budget from the original budget. Then I know Mr. Meszaros gave you all an expansion summary last week or the week before, and so we have also included the expansions in here. So that this provides you the summary of the total budget request. So we go back to just the base budget, right now revenues are expected to be 24.9 million, and right now there's no fund balance in that number. So this is just true recurring revenues. Then I grouped the

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general fund expenditures by county departments: salaries and benefits, education, special appropriations, debt service, and transfer to other funds because those are really the big buckets of expenditures. So when you look at the total general fund expenditures, that without any use of fund balance, puts your expenditure request over the estimated revenues by a little over \$2.3 million. So in equivalent pennies on the tax rate, that is equivalent to 10 cents on the tax rate. So right now if you basically rent operations as they are today because that's what the departments were asked to do, to put in their base budget operations as they are today, you'll see there are some increases and decreases as we refine estimates, adjust extracts to Personnel, and made some changes to the vacancy rate. So again these are all preliminary adjustments. Without fund balance, you would need a 10 cent tax increase to balance the revenues for 2025.

Commissioner Yarbrough said so correct me if I'm wrong. It would need to go to 68 and a half. Mrs. Sharpe said yes sir.

Commissioner Rose said without taking anything fund balance. Mrs. Sharpe said without taking anything from fund balance. So I guess what I want to highlight there is your use of fund balance, which is only a one-time source and what I tend to do over the next couple of weeks is to update your fund balance projection based on preliminary 22 numbers and preliminary 23 numbers because you've been budgeting for fund balance but you haven't been using fund balance. So I guess I want to highlight there that the value of using fund balance and I know there's been some concern about using fund balance because it's a one-time source. You're going to use it, and at some point, it's no longer there. That's equivalent to a 10 cent tax increase.

Commissioner Yarbrough said so you're saying that since this is just my second year doing this, last year we budgeted 2. some odd million out of fund balance. Mrs. Sharpe said 1.9.

Commissioner Yarbrough said I thought it was 2.1. County Manager Meszaros said it was it was 1.9, but there were budget amendments that took it up. Commissioner Yarbrough said okay. We budgeted that amount, but we haven't spent that amount. Is that what you are saying? Mrs. Sharpe said correct. You didn't in 21. You're getting close to having what I would call final numbers for 22 so I'll be able to give an estimate on if you use fund balance for 22. It does not look like you're going to, and then I'll make a guess at 23 as well. We still got more work to do on 23 before we get the numbers final. So again we're still sharpening the pencils; we still are looking at and verifying all of these. I looked at it yesterday, and I said oh we've missed two departments that aren't even entered. So there's still some quality controls, and these are still draft numbers. I think this helps to give you kind of an order of magnitude and a context around the request around your tax per penny. Yes, if you look at the total, the expansion request, the total expansion requests are five million less than expansion related revenues of about \$400,000. So if you wanted to fund all the expansion requests, I don't believe that's what Mr. Meszaros would be recommending, that's a 20 cent tax increase, which would put you well above the revenue neutral point.

❖ Commissioner Dickerson entered the meeting

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Mrs. Sharpe said so I don't think anybody's suggesting that that's going to be what we recommended, but I think seeing the request in terms of what those are around the pennies on the tax rate, now that we have that tax rate number. It's helpful for me because it's a whole lot easier to balance a budget when you know what your revenue number is. So it was good we finally got the property tax values. I know you've seen the expansion summary. I believe Mr. Meszaros gave you the printouts of the Department's base budgets, which those are the raw numbers. Not scrubbed, not addressed, and it didn't include any salary numbers. So what follows this summary sheet is a summary by department of the total request. It's still at a high level but are those same columns: the original budget, the base budget, the change, the expansions, and the total request. So that you can see at a high level the starting point of the request that the manager is starting from as he moves to work toward a recommended budget. This is all of the requests pulled together: salaries, non-salaries, and expansions. We still have to do some quality control on these numbers, and we're getting ready to send them back to the departments for their validation because when you're putting all of this together entries or wrong fingers can happen. But this gives you the total look at what's been put forth.

County Manager Meszaros said with everything on the expansion sheets that we went over last week. That would be like all things funded, this would be the total tied out to all the departments. Obviously our work ahead of us is to whittle down to what is fundable, what is necessary, and what is something we could defer to next year. At the last meeting you talked a little bit about what some of the things are like the capital in the school district for their requests. They have State funds, Lottery funds, and some reserves so we can do that without using county funds. So we can accomplish that, but it doesn't come off of our net balance. Those are the types of things that we have to work through to find those checks and balances to figure out where do we really lie with what our net impact is, but it is concerning because that means this year if we actually follow the budget, you're operating on a \$2 billion deficit. At some point that's not sustainable for the operations of the county. Right? I mean you got to figure out like hey do we take the 10 cents now, or do we wait 5 to 10 years when it's 30. Those things don't get cheaper, and your problem is it's easy to get ahead of your problems financially as a County then to get five, six, or eight years down the road and say oh now we have all the vehicles need to be replaced, all the maintenance wasn't done, and now we have salary gaps. So I mean it's incrementalism, but at the same time it's being good stewards and good fiduciary responsible Board to the citizens. There's a balance there. What that looks like, we have to figure that out.

Johnna Sharpe said and if you recall we shared this more so with the Finance and Budget Committee, but the approach to the budget this year with the departments was that they could reallocate their bases, but that anything beyond their base request was supposed to be put on expansions. You'll see there are some increases in departments especially in the benefits lines because we've already put the required retirement rate in the budget because you have no choice. You got to pay the retirement system rates, and we put in the new health insurance rates. So any increase in benefits is really being driven by those two major increases. You'll also see some

areas where salaries have increased and in most cases that is where we have had to adjust the vacancy rate downward. So it's less of a reduction against the budget because 2024, that budget year, was the first year that the vacancy rate had been used as a budgeting convention. What we found was that in some cases the departments are not having the vacancies that we anticipated so we've had to reduce that number. So reducing the vacancy increases the salary line. If you see bigger increases in salaries than you might expect, that's the driver in most cases. Then of course once the manager recommends a budget, we'll provide you a level of detail as you received last year, which is the detail at the line item level so you would have all that for the departments. But these numbers are still in draft so I've just rolled them up at the high level.

Commissioner Yarbrough said one thing Mr. Meszaros, and I asked this last year during budget time and didn't receive it. These contractual services, I'd like an itemized list of who that is or what that is. Like on Administration, they've got \$85,000 to \$86,400 for contractual services. I just want to know what that entails. Not just on Administration, but countywide. The reason I'm asking is, is there a way that County staff maybe could do that job. I know that's adding workload, I get that, but I don't... Johnna Sharpe said we can share that information, but in most cases Mr. Yarbrough, you're hiring for expertise that the county doesn't have and couldn't afford. County Manager Meszaros said one good example is Mr. Johnston is the attorney. So if he was a staff attorney and we paid his benefits and all of the normal FTE stuff, his salary and what he gets paid would be far different than what we contract with him. Commissioner Yarbrough said okay, but I still would like a breakdown of that. Mrs. Sharpe said Mr. Yarbrough, let me ask you because the easiest way for us to do that is for me to pull the 24 actual expenses and show you from that point because we didn't ask the departments to necessarily detail that out, but we assume kind of the same patterns. So we can absolutely pull that together. Commissioner Yarbrough said that'll work. Mrs. Sharpe said okay.

Commissioner Rose said everything you've got in red, I'm assuming is a deficit. Mrs. Sharpe said it's a revenue. Revenues are in red, and in parentheses, they're credits. So that's the quick way you make sure your revenues are red and your expenditures are black. But on the change column a red is a decrease whether it's a revenue or an expenditure and a black is an increase. Commissioner Rose said worksheet is still dollars. Mrs. Sharpe said yes. Commissioner Rose said I was getting a little worried.

Johnna Sharpe said I've got about 2,000 lines in detail behind these 12 pages so if there's any burning questions that you have on any of these line items I can I can break it out. No problem.

Commissioner Rose said one question I do have is on what we have in our fund balance. Mrs. Sharpe said yes sir. Commissioner Rose said we don't have an accurate 100% number on that at this time. Right? Mrs. Sharpe said I had it accurate as of June 30, 2021. I can get you a pretty good ballpark for 22, and a bigger ballpark for 23.

County Manager Meszaros said you want to explain how we have the outlays and obligations, and it's not just like a savings account where we have credit. Mrs. Sharpe said yes. It's really the

result of revenues over expenditures. That's how you change the fund balance, and until we have the actual revenues and the actual expenditures finalized for both 22 and 23, we can't give you a 100% accurate number. Of course there's going to be an estimate for 24, which we could also do at this point. That one's even more of a ballpark because we still have a couple of months left in the year, but we can make some reasonable estimates about where expenditures and revenues would be. I really think it's important for you all to know as when Mr. Meszaros recommends his budget, what at least that forecast is as good a one as we can provide you.

Commissioner Yarbrough said when can you give us those estimated fund balances? Mrs. Sharpe said by the end of this month. Commissioner Yarbrough said okay. Mrs. Sharpe said we'll have them when Mr. Meszaros transmits his budget to you.

Commissioner Rose said and on the revenue neutral number, I totally understand what you say on property side. Even on revenue neutral we generate more money after the reevaluation than we did before the reevaluation if you're going by this off of property taxes. Mrs. Sharpe said yes, it's a little bit because you're capturing that growth. Commissioner Rose said the question I have is what's driving the sales tax down. Mrs. Sharpe said that's a great question. There is a part of the sales tax revenues that you receive, which is called the Medicaid old articles, and this was back in 2013. The state took over paying the Medicaid match so Counties no longer had to pay that, and in exchange for that, they took away one of the sales tax articles that counties levied. The General Assembly at that time promised to hold the counties harmless. If their sales tax exceeded the amount of the Medicaid match that they would remit that to the counties. Well in 2020, no in 2024... I'm sorry. I get my years mixed up. In 2023, the county received almost \$800,000 of Medicaid hold harmless. This year that number has dropped to \$350,000. This is an issue that the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners is really trying to wrap our heads around to see what's going on. So you're losing about \$450,000 of the Medicaid hold harmless, which is not offset by your sales tax fund of the of the other articles. Because your sales tax is growing and while sales tax is still growing statewide, it has significantly slowed down. So that's what's driving the reduction in the sales tax numbers, and there are some counties who are seeing millions of dollars of loss in that number. Commissioner Rose said second question is the permit and fees; what's driving that down? I understand on the revenue neutral it's showing that decrease of \$94,128. Mrs. Sharpe said I can't answer that one off the top of my head. So we'll have to dig in and look at that one.

Mrs. Shape said I do know the Medicaid hold harmless because when you look at your budget of the \$24 million, you've got 13.3 in property tax, which is really the only revenue you have any control over. We levied all the sales tax articles. There is one that you could levy, but it requires a referendum. Sales tax and property tax make up 80% of your revenue or 75% of your revenue. Your other number the sales and services, a lot of those are fee for services, and a lot of those monies are Medicaid and medical dollars that are flowing through Health and Human Services. In addition, all of your intergovernmental restricted is for, in most cases, health and DSS. So you've got several chunks of your revenues that are restricted, and they can only be spent on

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certain things. You really have little to no control over them. So your revenue that you can control is the property tax rate.

County Manager Meszaros said generally most counties, like 99% of that, is pretty accurate. Mrs. Sharpe said you do have a good collection rate. Your collection rate for the way the statutes work, you take the full levy and you can apply the last audited collection rate. So these property tax numbers do assume a 98.6% collection rate on everything other than motor vehicles, and motor vehicles are assumed at 100% because motor vehicles aren't collected until somebody comes to get their car tax. So they're 100% collected.

Commissioner Yarbrough said the investment earnings are going to \$150,000 from \$6,500. Why such a big jump. Mrs. Sharpe said well interest rates have been up. Commissioner Yarbrough said yes, but that's...Mrs. Sharpe said well and honestly right now that's a conservative estimate because your actual revenues for this year are more. I want to do some work with Miss Miller to kind of look and see where the investment is at, but there were some big receivables outstanding. Namely about \$2.7 million of funds that the state needed to reimburse you for the high school, and that came back in. So that's helped. So you've got your fund balance, and some of your fund balance is really cash on hand and some is cash you're expecting. Really everybody's been seeing an increase in the interest rates because just like mortgage rates go up, so do investment rates.

Commissioner Rose said what about that transfer in? 146 last year; zero this year. Mrs. Sharpe said \$100,000 of that was for the reval., and since that's over, you won't be transferring money from the reval. Fund. So that was actually an internal transfer between the general fund and reval., and the other \$46,000 is an elimination of the court fund, which has been functioning in a separate sub fund. It doesn't need to be. So we're moving that into the general fund to simplify the accounting, and that eliminates that transfer. So really that reduction in revenue, if you look down on the transfers to other funds, decreased as well. Those two net each other out.

County Manager Meszaros said if you have addition questions, obviously Mrs. Sharpe is here. There are some Department Heads here. So the ones that are here, if you want to go through some of those expansion requests that way. We do have a 6:30 meeting, but if you have more questions or want additional understanding of this. You get warm when you start talking about all this fun stuff.

Mrs. Sharpe said but as I mentioned, I think most of you all have my contact information, or email Mr. Meszaros for it if you don't. Don't hesitate to reach out if I can provide some addition information.

County Manager Meszaros said so I don't know how you want to do this. Obviously there are several Department Heads here. If you want to choose the one that is going to want to address first.

Commissioner Yarbrough said I just flipped to I.T. \$165,000 expansion budget, can we get a little explanation on that.

Jason Benson, I.T. Director said good evening Commissioners. So it does show \$165,000. Roughly \$60,000 of that is for VOIP telephone systems, which isn't really a new purchase. It's something that I would currently pay every single year. We are upgrading that system, but based off the numbers that we're working with right now, and we have from the vendors, we should be able to do the migrations without any additional cost except what's already been anticipated for this fiscal year.

Johnna Sharpe said and let me just kind of hop on that because that showing up as an expansion was my error. I didn't realize that we were moving everything into the IT budget, and we're going to be reducing it from the other departments because it's going to be paid centrally. So that will be a net zero impact. Commissioner Yarbrough said it's a wash. Mrs. Sharpe said yes. That's totally my bad. I didn't understand that.

County Manager Meszaros said so to be fair, the overall budget requests we put them all in and we broke them all out. But as we worked the last week and a half through all of the numbers and transfers, some of these things have actually like the school district asked you for the HVAC system. That's actually not in the budget expansion because there are funds in their reserves; so it's a net zero. So when we get to the final budget, you'll see that, but to not make it confusing, this data is a little bit driven just on the project and not on that net impact with Finance. So I apologize about that. I had to provide you something to have the meeting, and I gave you the best information we had at the time. Since then and in moving forward even when we prepare the final recommended budget by June 1st, that'll be a little different than what you see now, but it should be a lot closer than the thing you're asking the question about.

Commissioner Yarbrough said let me make sure I understand you right Johnna. This \$165,000 that you're showing in expansion, it's actually not. Mrs. Sharpe said it's actually a \$100,000 because 60 of that is going to be offset by reductions in the other departments. Commissioner Yarbrough said but it's still \$100,000. Mrs. Sharpe said yes, it is still \$100,000. Yes.

Commissioner Rose said I thought wash meant... Wash to me...Johnna Sharpe said no, no, no. Just \$60,000 of the \$165,000. So \$100,000. We discovered that late this afternoon after this was already printed. So I apologize.

Commissioner Yarbrough said so the \$105,000 is for? Jason Benson said basically there's a number of additional security endeavors that we are looking to implement. With the National Guard coming to do our assessments and providing reports on where we are with different factors in our infrastructure, there's a number of things that we need to get implemented to maintain our security.

Commissioner Rose said this \$60,000 in there, voicing my opinion, is that the whole county? Jason Benson said yes. I mean technically all of my budget that we're talking about would be for the entire County.

Commissioner Holt said we had concerns from Emergency Management. County Manager Meszaros said so he is actually coaching baseball game right now. So that's why I said if we pick from the Department Heads that are here. I've got one that's officiating the game. I've got one that's coaching the game. With the Department Heads that are actually here tonight, we get those, and I would assume with the limited time we would hear from those and have others come to another meeting. I have several large departments here.

Kenneth Everett, 911 Director came forward.

Commissioner Yarbrough said Kenneth, I see \$75,254 in salaries. How many additions is that? Mr. Everett said two requested full time positions for their salary. Commissioner Yarbrough said how many do you keep on staff currently? Mr. Everett said we work two around the clock, 24 hours a day, and we're staffing, we've run a peak operation from 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. With the additional two more telecommunicators, it would allow us to operate three around the clock, 24/7. The reason being is because each year the center sees about a 15 to 20% call increase. I know just two years ago, we increased up to two to have Peak Time staff, and we're seeing a great point. But if you go back in the last three or four years, you look at the numbers and the trend all the way after 9:00 p.m. till the next morning, we don't have the Peak Time Staffing, and we're seeing about 60% call increase across the board. Regardless whether it be fire, medical or Sheriff's Office numbers. So just like any other County, everybody is seeing a constant increase in their calls for service for Public Safety in their agencies. Whether it be economic impacts, aging population, medical, the traffic, or simple law enforcement things, our call volume is increasing at night time but also during the day. The main focus right now is to get staffing around the clock with three in the center covering the calls.

Commissioner Yarbrough said how many openings have you got now? Mr. Everett said one as of today. So the hiring process has been a very, very challenge for us. We've worked closely with HR even after these Peak positions, with people leaving, and we had a couple to resign and took careers at the Fire Department with the most recent to Burlington Fire. But the problem we get into is we only brought in about five or six applications specific to the county. Through our Indeed process, we received about 77 to be exact. So if you look at it, we had about 82 applications, and we've been able to schedule 17 for the initial process, which is a computerized critic call test. You're talking about six or seven of them are no call no shows. So you really you're about 11, and out of the 11 50% pass to computerized test and 50% interview. The problem we have right now is it's still consistent across the board for all agencies: we don't want to work nights or weekends. When we bring new people in, night shift has the vacancies that we have open. That's where we need coverage at. So really you're back down to 1%. 1% out of 80 something is what you hire. We finished our process recently so we have one vacancy left, and

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we'll start the process back over. So getting the applications, the resumes, or getting them in is fine when they originally get there. The problem is getting them to the computerized testing, getting them through, getting them to the interview, and making job offers. That's where we have a problem, but at the same time we have a problem with getting them in to cover those positions. But the call volume doesn't do us any justice because it's constantly on the rise. In the last two weeks, this County's been put through a very trying time.

Commissioner Yarbrough said what's your capital outlay for? Mr. Everett said the capital outlay is for radio consoles that go in there. Those are the computers, the monitor screens, the cabling, and the programming for the back to upgrade the radios so you can actually transmit and talk to the responders. Those are currently what we call a Motorola 5500 series. They are expired completely so they have to be updated. There's no way you can get parts anymore for those. That's been in the plan as well as we move forward with our advancements and adjustments of fixing things where they need to be. Those were held to this year for replacement. Those were actually or the original year they were put in was 2006. So you only have service for so long on those consoles, and then they have to be replaced. So we're two years shy 20. We've had a great service out of them, but Motorola doesn't have parts or capabilities to work on them anymore. So what we've done in the last couple of years is as other centers are in the same situation as they transition and replace them, we've actually taken their parts and bought them so we would have spares. So if something broke, we were able to go down and fix it.

Commissioner Dickerson asked if there were any avenues for grants on any of that? Mr. Everett said so the \$289,000 is the part that's ineligible from the North Carolina Emergency Telephone fund. The other 55% would be covered by the State. So that whole project exceeds \$500 some thousand. County Manager Meszaros said that's kind of like our match that's not covered. Mr. Everett said yes sir. That's what we call ineligible funds or what we have to pay. That's as far as they'll go. The radio and the radio consoles are one of our greatest priorities to get into play. We need those. Our system is expired. Commissioner Dickerson said so that \$289,000 is a match to a grant. Mr. Everett said yes sir. That's what is ineligible.

Commissioner Yarbrough said that's what's the State will pay, 55%? Mr. Everett said roughly depending on all the fine strings that are attached and the parts that come with it. They're usually somewhere between 55 and 60%, is what the State will cover. So the remaining portion will be ours.

Chairman Jefferies said I was reading somewhere that this money can only be spent on this particular item. Right? Mr. Everett said yes sir. That's correct. The eligibility list is just like some other things that were covered about funding coming in, there's a very strict list by the Legislature. What they set in place is only what you're able to take out those funds and spend it on.

County Manager Meszaros said Dianne is here with the Department of Social Services with that update.

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Dianne Moorefield, DSS Director, said I didn't really prepare any sort of presentation, but I believe we may have had some questions at one of the last meetings about our department. I'm here to be able to answer any of those that you might have. I would like to update you on the fact that we have gone from having a lot of vacancies in the past, and right now, I have one vacancy in our Child Protective Services Unit and I have one vacancy in our Adult Protect Services Unit. So we've been very fortunate to be able to bring on new staff, and currently, a lot of them are in training. We've had a lot of progress in filling those vacancies. The other challenge that we have been faced with recently, and it's not included in my initial budget. But we are going to have to add some additional money for unclaimed bodies because it is our responsibility at DSS by State Statute that if there are unclaimed bodies, we have to claim them. We have to make arrangements for them. County Manager Meszaros said I believe they asked about that last time.

Commissioner Rose said how many are you projecting or you normally have in years past, which I mean that's kind of hard to say. Mrs. Moorefield said in the past, most years we've had none, but so far we've had six this year. Commissioner Rose said now what about nursing homes, does that still apply. If they don't have any family and they pass in the nursing home, would the nursing home take care of that, or does that fall back on you. Mrs. Moorefield said it's an unclaimed body, and it's the Department of Social Services. We spend a lot of time and effort trying to identify family members and locate them, whether they're in other counties or whatever because families need to know and have an opportunity to make arrangements for their family.

Vice Chairman Holt said you got a line item for \$1,000 down here. You said you need to add that. It's already been put on there. Mrs. Moorefield said for the unclaimed bodies? Vice Chairman Holt said yes. Mrs. Moorefield said I've asked that that be increased. County Manager Meszaros said it's currently two.

Commissioner Rose said you're asking for an additional \$1,000 in this year. Mrs. Moorefield said I'm actually, well yes. I base it on the number of unclaimed bodies we have, and how many we can project that we might have over the rest of the year. So we've gone in the past years from having one to this year, we've had six. So I am budgeting for at least six.

Commissioner Dickerson said what does it cost per body? How do you dispose of it? Mrs. Moorefield said we use cremation. Commissioner Dickerson said what does that average cost wise? Mrs. Moorefield said the cost lies to us. In the past we have paid \$600, but that cost to us has now increased. So we're looking at \$1,000.

Commissioner Yarbrough said once that cremation process is over and done with, a family member is located and they want the remains. They can get them if they reimburse DSS for them. How does that work? Mrs. Moorefield said we have had a few that family members were finally located. They came forward, but it was well after the fact. We did not charge them. We had already incurred the expense. So we tried to offer the family the option of having the ashes. We don't have anywhere to store them.

Commissioner Rose said that was going to be my question. Do they just leave them at the funeral home? Mrs. Moorefield said the funeral home has been very kind to store them for us for a certain amount of time. They keep them. Commissioner Rose said and I guess after certainly length of time, do they petition to have the ashes? Mrs. Moorefield said yes, they only keep them for... I mean some of them have been kept for a couple of years.

Chairman Jefferies said Mrs. Moorefield I would like for you to kind of explain the job of Medicaid, and explain why there has been such increase there. Mrs. Moorefield said Medicaid expansion has really impacted at our agency, and the number of clients that we serve because it really opened up the network to many, many more individuals in the county. So our caseloads have really grown with the Medicaid expansion, and it's also brought a lot more people into the agency that we have to accommodate and provide services for. So it has created a need. I have one new position in my budget, and it is directly related to the Medicaid expansion. My staff, they're thankful to finally be fully staffed again, but it's a growing need with the Medicaid expansion. We're having to figure out how to handle the increased caseload.

Melissa Williamson said of course the tailored plan is going to roll out too. Mrs. Moorefield said yes.

Commissioner Rose said so this 75/25 on this DSS Gap, 25 is us and 75 is State? Mrs. Moorefield said yes. Commissioner Rose said 25% being us is \$34,710. Mrs. Moorefield said yes. We only have a small portion of the cost. Every program we administer is shared expenses. Each program is different. Some of them can be 50/50; some of them can be 75/25. Every program is a little bit different in how we are reimbursed.

County Manager Meszaros said you asked me last time what the Care IVE was. Mrs. Moorefield said this is the Foster Care. That is a Federal funded program. There's several different foster care programs. Federal IVE money is federal money. Then we have State foster care, which is funded by State funding, but all of them have a little part of local funding added too.

Commissioner Rose said I guess my question on that 5310 on the DSS Foster Care State Line increased \$140,000. What's driving that \$145,000? Or is that a wash? Mrs. Moorefield said the increase in the foster care, we budget the increase based on the number of children that we anticipate bringing in care. It also has to do with the rate that it's costing us. The rate has increased because some of the Federal funds have decreased. So we're having to pick up more of it. Commissioner Rose said I guess my question is \$145,000 this line item in here is offsetting revenue? Is that on this worksheet the County Manager gave us last week. County Manager Meszaros said so yes, this was before we got all the final numbers. so this is State funded. So it doesn't have a net impact on us. Commissioner Rose said so that was my question. So that \$145,000, that's State funded. Not a cost to the county? County Manager Meszaros said correct. It's an expansion on our base budget so we wanted to make sure you're aware of it.

Johnna Sharpe said if it says offsetting revenues, it's a source other than County dollars.

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Chairman Jefferies asked if there were any more questions? Then said thank you Mrs. Moorefield.

County Manager Meszaros said in the last meeting you asked about Extension Services, the Cooperative Extension. That's actually for all increases for the entire department, the \$38,000 we talked about. So that isn't a 50% split. We thought it might have been a 50/50, but that's for the entire staff, an incremental amount for the State.

Commissioner Rose said I do have a question on one thing. The email that you did send out. Let me pull it back up. As far as the Forestry budget...County Manager Meszaros said so they have a new attack vehicle there. Commissioner Rose said yes, that's what it was. County Manager Meszaros said so it went up. I think last year it is like \$98,000, and the net impact's \$30,000. Their vehicle has aged so they're asking for partnership on it. That's not the full cost. Commissioner Rose said no, I mean I see on here where the State's paying \$289,562 according to this memo we got. The State is paying \$173,737, and we will be paying \$115,00. The State share is I guess is 60%; ours is 40%. County Manager Meszaros said we really tried to break it down into the exact incremental increases on some of those programs so that the net impact isn't counted twice, you don't have any overages, and that kind of thing.

County Manager Meszaros said then they aren't doing the Renaissance Festival obviously in Milton. So that's a revenue on the overall sheet. That was \$18,000 last year. Parks and Rec., I can call Randy, but he's officiating the game, and it's getting kind close to that 6:30 time. I don't know. Do you want me to share? Commission Rose said I don't think we have time to get to him. Melissa Miller is here, if she wants to speak for Finance. I appreciate Johnna being here. Both Melissa's have been extremely helpful in all this. It takes a lot of effort to get these things culminated, go through them, prioritize, and make sure they're the best avenues on things.

RECESS:

The Board took a brief recess until the regular meeting began.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Elin Claggett: My name is Elin Claggett. I live at 108 Jaye Lane, Providence, North Carolina. I'd like to have this recorded verbatim.

According to the NC Treasurer's website, 99 counties have completed their FY2022 budget audit. 89 counties have completed their 23 audit. Over 60% of the counties utilize Munis software. Lacking CPAs in Finance Dept., an Accounting Specialist position was urgently in April 2022. However, in spite of qualified applicant(s) and urging from Sharon Edmundson from the LGC/NC Treasurer Office, it was never filled. Finance Dept.'s budget meanwhile has increased from \$247,000 in 2021 to \$520,000 in 2024, more than doubled. Johnna Sharpe, from NCACC has been an outstanding asset. Training staff on data entry within the Munis system. Inclusion of up-to-date expenditures for the FY2025 budget planning does demonstrate significant progress within the Finance Dept.

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Isley CPA consultant firm has continued to collect payment during 2024. Their only public update in two years was on March 6, 2023, and it was pretty scabby. The TSPA auditor's contract stated the FY22 audit would be complete by the end of April; it didn't happen. The TSPA auditor's contract also later stated the FY23 audit would be completed in May; that won't happen. The Manager's update from May 6th reads "They provided the county with a list of questions and additional documentation that they needed on April 21st . . . The biggest outstanding piece for FY23 is to complete the bank reconciliations for the main checking account." That's kind of important. I have requested a copy of this auditor's final list twice. I'm here today with hope that you, as Commissioners, can help facilitate this record request. The last fund balance dates back to June 30, 2021.

Also, this is kind of redundant now from the last meeting. Caswell County tax assessments were received May 18, 2024. A small initial sampling from residents shows variation from 26% to 65% increase in appraised values of their homes. These homes did not have any significant capital improvements since the last assessment. In 2016, assessors had vehicles that were clearly marked with "Reevaluation" signage and they left notices that they'd visited the properties. Explanations for increases were detailed at that time. In contrast, this year no one came by our property and there was zero information provided to delineated factors that contributed to these significant increases. So how do you know what to appeal. Residents have not received any explanation to account for wide variances in percentage increases from house to house. Given the dramatic increase in assessment values, will the tax rate be correspondingly reduced significantly? I think that was answered earlier.

So thank you for your time.

RECOGNITIONS:

There were no recognitions.

AGENDA:

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

A **motion** was made by Commissioner Yarbrough and seconded by Commissioner McVey and **carried unanimously** to approve the agenda. (Ayes: Commissioners McVey, Yarbrough, Rose, Holt, Dickerson, Gwynn, and Jefferies)

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA:

- a. May 6, 2024 Regular Meeting Minutes

A **motion** was made by Commissioner Rose and seconded by Commissioner Gwynn and **carried unanimously** to approve the consent agenda. (Ayes: Commissioners McVey, Yarbrough, Rose, Holt, Dickerson, Gwynn, and Jefferies)

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DISCUSSION ITEMS:

There were no discussion items.

ACTION ITEMS:

SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL & HAULING CONTRACT:

Aubrey Fuqua, Solid Waste Director, said good afternoon. As you know, every three years we have to rebid the hauling and the disposal for the solid waste for the county. So this is the year to do it, and it's a three-year contract. I have Nick with me from First Piedmont. He's the Vice President and Chief Operating Officer. I believe all of you have a copy of the contract by email or paper. Sorry for the delay, but well up to lunch time today, we were negotiating, working out, and trying to change some prices to get savings from the original contract to bid. We only had one company to bid. We went back to the table and changed some policies and procedures where we could do things different to where we can haul the dumpsters to a different location. We saved/cut \$55,000 from the first price to this price.

A.J Fuqua said just a quick overview of it. Each site took about a 20.8% increase in hauling. Anderson was a little higher at 21.3 %. The landfill open tops, where people haul their debris and stuff in, did go up to almost 50% increase. After we went back to the drawing board, I took a 23.5% decrease in the Cherry Grove hauling. So that's the savings. Tipping, each site went up 6.9% other than the Landfill, it went up 8.6%. This is a one-year price. Your contract will have the price for next year and the third year as well. Cherry Grove, if you look on the contract and percentage it out, it was a 16.8%, but it used to be hauled to Upper Piedmont in Person County near Rougemont. But we're hauling to the First Piedmont transfer station. So we're making the savings in the hauling. So still by increasing the tipping for Cherry Grove, we're saving about \$2,500 this year, and you'll see savings next year and the year after. Let's see. So to cover that cost, and I'm sure you want to know how we're going to cover that increase because it increases significantly about, let me get to the right page, \$180 almost \$181,000 increase from what we paid last year for our tipping and our hauling. So that's \$181,000. So the way I've got it figured out, and if you want a copy of this, I can pass it out. I changed the Tipping Fee at the Landfill to take over a lot of that cost, and then we would have to go up at each household \$1 a month to cover that increase. But I've been through the budget; I was working on it yesterday. I talked to First Piedmont yesterday and met with them at 8:00 this morning. Then that's when we got the price difference at about 11 o'clock today. So just to give you an example, construction debris is now \$60 a ton, and I propose we go to 75 a ton for it. Everything else would be at \$65 a ton with the exception of out of County residents. We do have some people that live at the edge of like Person, Alamance, Orange, Rockingham, and Virginia that come over and dump because we're a closer landfill facility than theirs. So I feel like we should charge them a little more than we do our County residents, and that would be set at \$70 a ton as well. Nick, do you have anything you would like to talk about? About the contract?

Nick, First Piedmont Vice President, said no. If anybody has any questions, I'd be...

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Vice Chairman Holt said that dollar, how much was that? Mr. Fuqua said it's a dollar a month. It would put it... It's currently \$113 a year; it would put it at \$120 a year.

Commissioner Dickerson said you were talking about charging the out of state people more, what do they pay if they dump it in their counties? Are we still lower than we should be? Should we match at least what they would have to pay if they had dumped it in say Danville. Mr. Fuqua said so say Pennsylvania County, for example, if they go to their Convenience Site, they can throw couches and stuff away. Can you tell what your tipping rate is if somebody would take construction debris to your Landfill? Nick said starting off, I'd say probably \$46 or somewhere in there. Mr. Fuqua said so we're higher than most counties around because we have to pay to get rid of it. We don't actually bury the trash. Rockingham has an active landfill. Alamance has an active landfill, but a lot of people would rather pay the little bit extra tonnage and come here because they're going to save it in the mileage and gas.

A.J. Fuqua said the only other thing I did do is I changed our dumpster rental. It went up \$20 to deliver a dumpster because of fuel and to help with the cost.

Commissioner Dickerson said I know we talked about this a lot in the past, and it kind of went silent. But what are we doing to address people from outside the county that dump illegally in our dump sites? Mr. Fuqua said so if we can catch them and get a tag, I work with the Sheriff's Office to try to track them down. If I can catch them there, I can write them a Civil Ticket for out of County use from out of the ordinance, or we can take them, get their name and stuff, and take them to the Magistrate. We go to the Magistrate office and get a criminal summons. But the DA says that if they're out of county, you'd be better off to write the Civil Ticket than trying to get them to come to court because if they don't show up there not going to issue a warrant in Virginia for throwing the trash out of state. We can run tags, and we have been going back if the operator or some citizen calls and says hey Virginia tag at this time. I can go back and get the tag off the camera. I get the Sheriff's Office to run it and send an officer. If they're lucky to get somebody at home, then we'll talk to them, write them a ticket, or get their information and tell them not to come back. Same thing if we catch them from Person County. The 119 site has a lot of Person County Lake people, and we catch them. We try to work the sites, check, and make sure it's County residents. The only way you can do it is asking are you a County resident. Do you have proof that you're a county resident because we don't do stickers or anything?

Commissioner Dickerson said that was my next question. Should we be looking at some kind of sticker system where we do? Mr. Fuqua said my honest answer is it would make my job easier and the operators. Because if I pull up if for example I don't know what you drive, and if you got North Carolina tags, I'm going to assume you're a County resident. If you got Virginia tags, I'm going to immediately, if I pull up and see you, tell you who I am and speak to you to figure out if you're a County resident. If you had the stickers, then you would know if they're a County resident or outside County resident. I could look at what the cost of stickers would be, which you would have to set it so that each person gets two, and then they got to pay for the additional ones depending on how many vehicles they have. Commissioner Dickerson said well that's part of the

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property tax invoices sent out. You know who's paying the taxes so it wouldn't be that difficult to issue them two. Mr. Fuqua said you get a sticker for every vehicle you pay property tax on I guess. Commissioner Dickerson said I think that's something we really ought to be looking at pursuing. Every time somebody dumps trash in a compactor around here that they're not a taxpaying resident of Caswell County, that takes a cost on everybody else in this County to get rid of that loss. Mr. Fuqua said then what else put the cost is when even the citizens leave couches, furniture, and stuff at the site. We do go get them and make them clean it up, or we clean it up and write them a ticket. If we can't find them, if their tags don't come back right, or we can't get their tag off the camera, we got to eat the cost to get rid of it. Commissioner Dickerson said how about the damage. At one point there was construction debris being thrown in, and it damaged cylinders or something. Have you had any more of that? Mr. Fuqua said I haven't had any more of that, but that particular one, we took to court. The court system, the judge, made him pay the county back for the damages. So if they damage one, I immediately go to the Magistrate's office and let the Magistrate decide what they want me to do instead of just writing a Civil Ticket. Commissioner Dickerson said well I for one would like to see some more information on the sticker systems if you have a way of finding them. Mr. Fuqua said okay, I'll check in with one of our vendors we use for decals and stuff to see what they can do. You want it for the front windshield? Commissioner Dickerson said whatever is going to be more convenient for you all to enforce. Mr. Fuqua said okay or the back windshield. We'll see what they can do.

Commissioner Rose said A.J., is this \$181,000 included within your budget? Mr. Fuqua said yes. Now I don't know what budget you have in front of you because I just had to work on my budget. When I got the new numbers, I had to change it, but yes, when you see my budget, it will be included in there. Johnna might can answer that a little better. Johnna Sharpe said we worked on finalizing his budget this afternoon, and what you have that I gave to you at the work session is just the general fund. So your paper doesn't include Solid Waste, but we've gone through his numbers and it balances with the new costs and his projected fee increases.

Commissioner Rose said I think you said a dollar increase, but is there any way to get that off the taxpayer? The reason I'm saying is if and I'm not putting off on the construction guy or whatever. If somebody comes to my house and puts a roof on, I pay for the material, and I also pay disposal in that. But the contractor can go, according to this, and dump the same amount at the same fee. Mr. Fuqua said no, I change the fee for this year to \$75 a ton. Chairman, can I pass this out? So the yellow is what you'll see that has changed.

Vice Chairman Holt said if that's \$75 a ton, are you making the money, or are you breaking even? Mr. Fuqua said depending on how much we can get in the dumpster. So that \$75 puts us about because we have to pay to haul it out of there, it puts us close. The more we can get in the dumpster to get out of there, depending on how much we can compact it, the better off we are. Vice Chairman Holt said it's one thing, the homeowner coming by there and putting their stuff, but this construction, that should be a whole lot different class. Mr. Fuqua said right. So I have it set at \$10 higher than a homeowner; like miscellaneous and stuff like that. I have it set \$10

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higher. For the years in the past, it was all the same, but I got to thinking it's not really fair. We're going up a dollar, and if you got a couch or something and you're a County resident, you should get a little bit of a break. So I had to go up five dollars on the home or on the regular stuff, but I went up \$10 on construction. I mean we can move that up a little bit, and see if we can adjust. But I pulled a report, and it's only about 2,000 tons of construction debris, that's construction debris only and nothing else mixed with it, a year. So that's how I would have to charge it. So I put it all in a thing, changed numbers, worked on it trying to get the 100 to get it down for only a dollar a month. When I originally, before we went back to the drawing board, we were almost two or three dollars a month; we were at over \$130 some dollars.

Commissioner Rose said I do understand that fine line there because if you price it up so high you don't have chain of thought that goes...Mr. Fuqua said right, and then we going to have to go get them with the state with our truck; and then we going to eat the cost 100%. Commissioner Rose said but I do think that like you said there should be just a little bit more there. The taxpayers have already paid for this in a Solid Waste fee. They want to carry their stuff, and they shouldn't pay the same thing as somebody outside. Mr. Fuqua said I totally agree. That's why I changed it this year. In the years past it was all the same, but I felt like we should change it this year. I mean we could add another \$5 a ton to the construction, but like you say, it doesn't mean they're going to dump it on side the road or doesn't mean they're going to come to him. We have a roofer that comes to us a lot, and he comes out of Virginia because he doesn't want to get in the mud. He won't stay on the concrete, but I mean if we put it so high...Commissioner Rose said this this contract has to be signed by or approved by this Board. Mr. Fuqua said yes. If you want to approve it tonight, fine. I'm not asking you to; that's totally up to you all. But I've changed the numbers a lot to keep it low.

Commissioner Dickerson said you said that you only have one bid on the contract. Mr. Fuqua said yes sir. Commissioner Dickerson said do we have restrictions or something in place that's making these companies not want to bid on it. How can we only have one? Mr. Fuqua said so we put it on the website, I've sent it to everybody three years ago that had shown interest, and I emailed it personally to them. I had one company send me questions back, and I answered their questions and sent out an update to everybody that I sent the original to. I had one company, First Piedmont send in the contract. So they got a copy of what the current rates are so they knew what we were paying because it's public record. I had to give it to them. So I don't know if they didn't think they could, with the increase, beat them. I don't know.

Commissioner Rose said I've got one question, and I've been asked by a couple of folks or citizens. If a family rent a dumpster from First Piedmont, they establish it in a location where they wanted to dump all their trash, and they paid for First Piedmont to come pick it up. Can they get this Solid Waste fee off of their tax bill if they show they're paying somebody to pick their trash up? Mr. Fuqua said so one of them can. So for example if you and three of your neighbors do it, they're only going to take it off of one person. Commissioner Rose said why would it be one? Mr. Fuqua said I can't answer that question. We can check with Mr. Bernard because that's

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what I've always been told. The bills are sent out through the Tax Department, and it's handled through them. I would be afraid to answer you why, but that's what I've always been told. It's one household. So if you and your family did one and you all got three houses, you would get the fee cut off of one house not all three. Just remember this fee also covers recycling. So we're taking care of the citizens recycling for that fee as well, and we haul that all ourselves.

Commissioner Yarbrough said if that particular property owner has a dumpster that they lease with First Piedmont, all the residences that they own is exempt? Mr. Fuqua said I'd have to get that answer. Commissioner Yarbrough said I believe it is.

Commissioner McVey said Mr. Johnston, have you look at this? Attorney Johnston said yes sir, Commissioner McVey. Mr. Fuqua and I had several conversations last week about this contract.

Commissioner Yarbrough said you reviewed it? Attorney Johnston said all the language seems pretty straightforward with the indemnification policy against the county if the County is held liable. This isn't the first use of First Piedmont that they have had, but like Mr. Fuqua said it doesn't have to be passed tonight. We have until July 1st if you have any other questions for Mr. Fuqua. If you want to explore any other options that we can advise on.

Commissioner Rose said just check on that. The reason I'm asking is like a mobile home park, they have a dumpster. That mobile home park, I can't see 20 mobile homes get assessed that fee. Mr. Fuqua said so I do know in mobile home parks, if they have a dumpster, they're not assess a fee, but if they are not and there's one that is not, they agree to pay the fees. So every mobile home in that mobile home park pays the fee. Because it's in the County ordinance if you have so many homes and in a mobile home park, you have to provide a dumpster or either everybody in that facility has to pay the fee.

Mr. Fuqua said I will be honest with you, I looked at possibly what it would cost us to buy trucks and do the hauling ourselves, but we're getting a discount on the tipping rate for First Piedmont so it would not be a savings. It would probably cost us more than what we're paying them to do it all for us because we own our boxes, we own the packers, and we own the compactors. So that's an option. So if another company wanted to come in, we have all the equipment.

Commissioner Yarbrough said so we are only paying First Piedmont for the hauling? Mr. Fuqua said and the tipping to dispose of the trash. Yes, sir. Commissioner Yarbrough said we own all the other equipment or the county does? Mr. Fuqua said yes sir, and we do all the maintenance to them. So we're not leasing any equipment from them. The only thing First Piedmont owns is like outside here, they own the front loaders. In their deal, they give them to us for free, and we have four their open top boxes that we use at the landfill. Other than that, we own everything else. The packer boxes that go up and down the road, they're our boxes.

Chairman Jefferies said I know in the past that some farmers had family and Mexicans, and they had these dumpsters. They only paid for one dumpster and their families didn't pay for but one box although it was for more than one house. Mr. Fuqua said I'd have to check. So I went to get

the total number for the budget, I went off the number of households we used last year for the number, and we had a 97% collection rate. So I did that number households and 97% collection rate.

Chairman Jefferies said County Attorney, I think we need to look into that and see if any person in the county that have dumpsters and the family use that dumpster if they are paying the price. Attorney Johnston said yes sir. I'll be glad to consult Mr. Fuqua and the Tax Director, Mr. Bernard to get that answer. Chairman Jefferies asked if there were any more questions. Hearing none, they moved on.

HEALTH DEPARTMENT RETENTION BONUSES:

Health Director, Jennifer Eastwood said good evening. A couple of months ago, you all approved a budget amendment to accept state money \$141,000, which we will get every year for the next five years. The plan at the time was to use that money for a part-time Nurse Practitioner, a Community Health Worker, and then a portion of it to be given as bonuses for a few of our key staff members. They would be staff that we find hard to replace, if they leave, and that would be Environmental Health Staff, Nurses, and our Health Educator. We've had a really hard time filling those positions, and so originally, the idea was to give a retention bonus to those people so that we could keep them and not have to try to recruit. We have not been able to fill this fiscal year the Nurse Practitioner or the Community Health Worker, and so I would like your permission to use a portion of that money to give a retention bonus to all of my staff. The total would be \$71,000. The remainder of that money would roll over to next year, and we would use it. We're still planning on hiring a Nurse Practitioner, but we just don't want to lose the money from the State. Anybody have any questions?

Commissioner Rose said did you just say it goes back to the State? Mrs. Eastwood said it doesn't technically go back. We'll get it next year, but we're coming up on the end of the fiscal year. What I don't want to happen is us to get to the end of the five years and not have used it, and they give it to another county. So I'd like to use at least a portion of it this fiscal year. Commissioner Rose said is this one time? Mrs. Eastwood said a one-time bonus. It's all state money. There's no county dollars, and it shouldn't affect the budget overall because the money is there. It's in the personnel expenditures. It just would be a matter of moving it to a bonus line item instead of a salary line item.

Commissioner Dickerson said if we approve this for select employees at the Health Department, what does that send as a message to the rest of County employees that are not getting a bonus like that? Doesn't that demean them? Mrs. Eastwood said I don't mean to belittle any other County Employees. I think they all deserve bonuses. But I just happen to have the State money, and it can be used for this. Commissioner Dickerson said are there other purposes we can use this State money for? Mrs. Eastwood said this State money is all for Public Health Workforce infrastructure. So it can be used for hiring, retention, and recruitment, and those are the things it can be used for. Commissioner Dickerson said and you got five years to use it before it goes

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back. So if you didn't use it this year, you could apply it to the salary of the people you're trying to hire next year. Mrs. Eastwood said yes. Commissioner Dickerson said so I don't see the urgency to give out bonuses.

Commissioner Yarbrough said have you used any of it? This \$140,000. Mrs. Eastwood said we haven't used any of it. We didn't get it till late in the fiscal year. We didn't get it in the beginning with the rest of our State Grants. We got it I guess after one of the sessions of the Legislature. So I mean I think the answer to that is I don't want to lose any staff. I already have positions I can't fill. The urgency would be to give them some incentive to stay because if we don't have those positions for our state mandated programs, we may not be able to run them efficiently. So that's the urgency for it.

Commissioner Dickerson said why wasn't this put in as part of the budget process instead of special appropriations to be paid out? In other words, I've seen several times over the years that I've been on the Board it come up with one department or another wants to do a special onetime appropriation to give this employee more money or give this group bonuses, and we've talked about it over and over again that all those requests need to be brought in at budget time and take them into consideration when we're going over the overall finances of the county and not just doing it peace meal. Mrs. Eastwood said I agree with you, and I really do try to do that. But as I just said we didn't get this money until well into the fiscal year. Commissioner Dickerson said if you got five years to spend it, what's the hurry to shell it out? Mrs. Eastwood said it is my understanding that we get this money every year for 5 years. It'll be \$141,000 every year for 5 years. The State can decide that they're not going to give us that money if we're not spending it, and they can give it to another county who is spending it. Every year we're waiting to see what the State is going to give us, and most of the time a lot of the State money such as our COVID funds, we didn't know about during the budget year. It is rolled over, but we didn't know it. Until we get that contract with the State, we don't know what that money is going to be. So if we don't spend it, it's a gamble. We may get it; we may not. Commissioner Dickerson said and when is the timeline on that again? When did you receive? Mrs. Eastwood said I received... You guys had a budget amendment a couple of months ago, and the service period, I don't have it. I'd have to get back to you Mr. Dickerson on it, but we didn't have it in June. We had it later in the year. Commissioner Dickerson said correct me if I'm wrong. If we didn't have it in June, that means that we recently got it. Mrs. Eastwood said we did within the last few months. Commissioner Dickerson said so we've got until at least until next June to decide on this. We can do this during the budget process. It doesn't need to be approved as an action item on the meeting and spur of the moment request of the department. What I don't like about request like this where you're caught off guard, is here we are as a Board and it's on here as an action item, and we've had no time to consider the ramifications across the board with other County employees. I feel like we're being put between a rock and a hard place, and I don't like to have that happen. Mrs. Eastwood said I respect that. You did though approve a budget amendment that did give bonuses to some staff a couple of months ago. I'm just asking you now to give that to all staff in my

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department instead of just a few. We're already approved to give it to a few staff; I'd just like to give it to all staff. Commissioner Dickerson said so in other words, you got the door open a little bit, now you opening it a whole lot wider for the rest of them. Mrs. Eastwood said no, that was not my intention. That sounds very manipulative. Commissioner Dickerson said it does. Mrs. Eastwood said and that's not what I did because... Commissioner Dickerson said quite. I mean that's what I'm thinking about this whole... Mrs. Eastwood said I have a Nurse Practitioner job posted and have been actively recruiting. We are at the end of the State fiscal year, and I haven't been able to hire. Commissioner Dickerson said well if this is held until next time, you can pay that job even more than what is advertised at, and maybe you would get people to apply for that. Mrs. Eastwood said I will be able to next year, but what about the other five years when I only get \$141,000. Commissioner Dickerson said well we'll have to cross each bridge as we get to it. Mrs. Eastwood said yes sir, we will.

Chairman Jefferies asked are there any other questions from the Board for Mrs. Eastwood? Hearing none, Chairman Jefferies said thank you Mrs. Eastwood. I guess we'll come up with something on this at our next meeting. Mrs. Eastwood said are you tabling it. We're not going to take any action on it one way or another? Chairman Jefferies said we will table it until next week if that will be okay with the Board.

Commissioner Rose said Mr. Chairman, I will have to abstain from voting for the fact that my daughter is employed there. I did consult with the County Attorney, and he said it would be a conflict of interest.

Chairman Jefferies said what is the pleasure of the Board?

A **motion** was made by Commissioner Dickerson and seconded by Commissioner Holt and **carried 6-0** to table it until the next meeting. (Ayes: Commissioners McVey, Yarbrough, Holt, Dickerson, Gwynn, and Jefferies. Commissioner Rose abstained from the vote.)

Commissioner Jefferies said it is tabled until the next week.

AMERICA 250 NC COMMUNITTEE RESOLUTION:

County Manager Meszaros said so the Caswell County Historical Association has reached out apparently for the 250th anniversary of the United States. The State has funds and they would like to get the \$10,000 grant to do some ceremonial issues with the State. Every county is entitled to talk with this grant. So it's kind like a block grant for \$10,000 to do ceremonial purposes. So if you would acknowledge that they can form a committee with the Historical Association to receive this \$10,000. There is a resolution with that. I would just need you to take an action by a motion on this. If you choose so, I will let her know, and we'll have them apply for grant. We will move forward if you accept.

Vice Chairman Holt said are there any strings attached to this? County Manager Meszaros said there are no strings. It's basically a shared grant so each county will get so much.

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Chairman Jefferies said no match. County Manager Meszaros said if you chose to do so, we need a motion.

Commissioner Dickerson said no match? County Manager Meszaros said no match. It's basically an amount of money that they have to apply for the money for ceremonial purposes.

A **motion** was made by Commissioner McVey and seconded by Commissioner Dickerson and **carried unanimously** to let them receive the grant. (Ayes: Commissioners McVey, Yarbrough, Rose, Holt, Dickerson, Gwynn, and Jefferies)

COUNTY MANAGER UPDATES:

County Manager Meszaros said so the first item I have for you is sort of an action item. I just need an approval or a motion. The Caswell Senior Services recommends renewing their meal contract with Golden Corral for two more years. Their price went down from \$5.21 to \$5.11 per meal, and I just need to have a motion to accept their bid. They're the only one that bid on that. It's a reduced cost. So if you are okay with us continuing the meal service with Golden Corral, I'd like to have a motion so that it's formal.

Vice Chairman Holt said so we saving money? County Manager Meszaros said yes.

A **motion** was made by Commissioner Holt and seconded by Commissioner Dickerson and **carried unanimously** to accept the bid. (Ayes: Commissioners McVey, Yarbrough, Rose, Holt, Dickerson, Gwynn, and Jefferies)

County Manager Meszaros said then just an update on our CAB Grant. They're having training in June, the procedures in training. We're going to have an evaluation team to discuss their scope of work. So basically with the additional CAB Broadband, every county has to have a representative there. They go through the training, and they basically select the most appropriate area. Melissa has been stepping and monitoring and taking care of that. She's been amazing. That's just an update. I don't have any other updates except for the contractor was in the building all day today at the Old Courthouse doing the sound system. So I want to make sure it works, and that Jason and everybody understands how to test it and make sure everything's functional before you move from this facility back into the Meeting Chambers. I would hope that that's possible by the next meeting. I will let you know as soon as I can.

Commissioner McVey said County Manager, have we had any contact with Zitel lately? County Manager Meszaros said so they've been reaching out to us, and Melissa might have a better answer. Their contract is void, and they opted out. Melissa Williamson said Spectrum and Brightspeed picked up those grants. The State had to rebid them out, and I don't know but I'm assuming that where they got that bid back out that the contracts are in negotiations and in the works. From my understanding it will be Spectrum and Brightspeed who will take that over because Zitel took on more than they could chew basically. They had to resend on the contracts. County Manager Meszaros said we're in a public meeting, but the State Director told me not to take their calls, which is pretty strong stance from the Director of the State.

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Chairman Jefferies asked if there were any questions for the County Manager?

Commissioner McVey said Co-Square? County Manager Meszaros said so the tenants, it is reopened in the back, and we're not having any large gathers. We can't really have like a public meeting because the egress, the Building Inspector wants to make sure that the front egress is open. So we do have tenants back. You know it was 27 days on the brick; I think you heard that last time. So as soon as that cured, they'll have a door and it shouldn't take long to get it finalized. It could be a week after that. We're working with the adjustor trying to make sure all payments and all the things are squared away. So it's going pretty smoothly. Other than the front portion it's complete.

COUNTY ATTORNEY UPDATES:

County Attorney Johnston said yes sir. Mr. Chairman and members of the Board thank you. At your last meeting, I was requested to research the ordinance that regulates solar farms in the county, and specifically as it relates to a Decommissioning Plan and a potential bond for that decommission of the project. So I have an insert here to pass out to the Board, and this is the language that it's currently in our HIDO, High Impact Development Ordinance, to regulate solar farms. I'll pass this out. Commissioners if you look at the bottom of the page, I have the Decommissioning Plan highlighted. So that plan is pretty standard as it relates to State statutes and other municipalities in the state of North Carolina, but we do not have a requirement for a bond. It's my understanding that most private contracts between the solar farms and landowners do have this language. However, we do not, but we are allowed by State law to require a bond, if we choose to implement that and add that to our HIDO. In my research, the state statutes and other county ordinances across the state, it looks like on average we can require an amount equal to 1.25 times the estimated decommissioning cost as determined by North Carolina License Engineer. We can have this under the purview of the Planning Director, County Manager, and myself as the County Attorney. I spoke with Jason Wallington earlier today, our County Planner, and they do have this solar farm language added as an agenda item for the next Planning Meeting. So it looks like they're already planning to discuss this. So this Board could obviously take action or you could wait for the Planning Board recommendation. That will be in your discretion.

Vice Chairman Holt said somebody sent me something I think about a year ago. I can't find it, but it was about chemicals that were in these things. I cannot remember what it was, but do you know anything about it? Attorney Johnston said yes sir. I think Commissioner McVey had asked this question at the last meeting. So the EPA and NC DENR, North Carolina Department of Environment Natural Resources and Water Quality, have put out opinions on the toxicity levels in the solar panels. It's really across the board, Commissioner Holt. It depends on which solar panels are used as to the amount of chemicals that they have in them, but the EPA does have a hazardous materials processed. These items have to be monitored and disposed of properly. That's certainly something we can add into our local ordinance to invite the EPA and NC DENR

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to monitor this process. Vice Chairman Holt said yes. I mean if we get stuck having to clean it up they'll have to come in on the calls. Attorney Johnston said certainly. I think that's where the bond comes into play. The bond will have to be in place. The value of the bond will be determined by a North Carolina License Engineer, and it'll have to be renewed. The insurance has to be presented to either the County Planner, County Manager, or myself.

Commissioner Dickerson said how does that work if you require the bond to be put up, and they do it initially. Who keeps up with it to make sure that that's still in place over the years that the solar farm is in operation. Attorney Johnston said yes sir, that'll be up to Administration. County Manager Meszaros said and check the bond and just verify.

Commissioner McVey said so it's too late to do a bond on the 400-acre site that's going in.

Attorney Johnston said I'm not sure the stage of that process. Have they started construction?

Commissioner McVey said I think so. I know they've done all the grading and stuff. Attorney Johnston said okay. We can certainly inquire, but they're probably grandfathered in.

Commissioner McVey said that's what I'm figuring, but we should have been on the ball before that. That's covering 400 acres. It's a lot. Attorney Johnston said but I will say this. Through my research, the EPA certainly keeps close tabs on these projects. Commissioner McVey said good.

Commissioner Dickerson said so all that's going to be discussed by the Planning Board. The leaks and any of that. Attorney Johnston said that's my understanding Commissioner. Yes.

Commissioner Dickerson said another question about another issue for the County Attorney. At the last meeting, the subject of running dogs was brought up, and you were asked to check about the ordinance and how it works on game lands. I've got several phone calls on this issue, and I was asked that question so I'd like to find out what you found out when you inquired. Attorney Johnston said certainly Commissioner. It's my understanding that that issue, according to staff, was not add it as an action item and was basically quote dead in the water, but I did conduct the research based upon your request from the last meeting. I studied the state statutes and also reached out to the Wildlife Resources Commission, and put in a phone call to Bronson Hannah, our local Wildlife agent on the wildlife game lands. I eventually made contact with the Wildlife Resource Commission in Raleigh, and they indicated that basically any county ordinance that's passed, for instance if there was a local ordinance that applied to hunting with dogs if that was passed in Caswell County, then the Wildlife Game Land would have to respect that law and that would have to be enforced on the game lands as well. Commissioner Dickerson said I would not have thought that. I would have figured State law would reign supreme, and they'd have control of the game lands that they would have the ultimate call. Attorney Johnston said that was my initial thought as well Commissioner, but I found out otherwise.

Vice Chairman Holt said I just feel like that that's not our decision to be made. If that is the decision that somebody wants to be changed, it needs to be changed in Graham at the District Wildlife. Not by seven people that some of us don't even deer hunt. So I hope this issue does not come back up.

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Chairman Jefferies asked Attorney Johnston if he had anything else. Attorney Johnston said yes sir, Commissioner Jefferies. Also there was a question about our Economic Developer, Tony Smith and delinquent taxes that we listed in the newspaper. Mr. Smith did reach out to me. He indicated that his properties are listed under Anthony Wayne Smith, and that he doesn't own any property on the Burk Road in Pelham. I think that would be it under my updates Commissioner Jefferies, but I do have a few items to bring up in close session.

Commissioner Dickerson said just for clarification that question about Mr. Smith that came from me. The dog running one did not come from me. When you were talking you said that I didn't bring that up. Attorney Johnston said oh okay, I didn't mean to convey that Commissioner. That's correct.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:

Commissioner Rose: I would like to extend my condolences and prayers to the family. We had a tragedy this weekend in the county. Life altering situation. I'd just like to ask the Board to remember them in your prayers as well as the Fire Department, EMS, and the Sheriff's Department. It's been a pretty tough weekend.

Commissioner Gwynn: I would like to share with you. I did go by the Senior Center and as you know Jeannine was out because of her husband's death, but it was a grant from PTRC. Usually she does it or I could do it. I asked if I need to go ahead and do the grant writing since she's going to be out, but she's going to be working some from home. So she's going to do it.

Also the family of John D. Foster asked me if I had anything to say at his funeral in regards to him being a commissioner, and I express our condolence.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS:

- May 27, 2024 Memorial Day Observed-County Offices Closed
- June 3, 2024 Board of Commissioners Meeting and Budget Work Session at 5:00 p.m. at the Gunn Memorial Library

CLOSED SESSION:

A motion was made at 7:21 pm by Commissioner Yarbrough and seconded by Commissioner Rose and **carried unanimously** to discuss matters relating to the location or expansion of industries or other businesses in the area served by the public body, which is hereby acknowledged NCGS 143-318.11 (a) (4), and to consider the qualifications, competence, performance, character, fitness, conditions of appointment, or conditions of initial employment of an individual public officer or employee or prospective public officer or employee, which is hereby acknowledged NCGS 143-318.11 (a) (6). (Ayes: Commissioners McVey, Yarbrough, Rose, Holt, Gwynn, Dickerson, and Jefferies)

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ADJOURNMENT:

A **motion** was made at 8:24 pm by Commissioner Yarbrough and seconded by Commissioner McVey and **carried unanimously** to adjourn the meeting. (Ayes: Commissioners Yarbrough, Rose, McVey, Holt, Dickerson, Gwynn, and Jefferies)

Carla R. Smith
Clerk to the Board

Jeremiah Jefferies
Chairman

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**Resolution Supporting Caswell County Historical Association
Efforts to Recognize and Approve the Caswell County
Official America 250 NC Committee**

A resolution of Caswell County in supporting the America 250 NC committee for the United States semiquincentennial (AMERICA 250 NC) recognition efforts in the county.

WHEREAS, Roy Cooper, Governor of North Carolina created AMERICA 250 NC to plan, encourage, develop, and coordinate the commemoration of the 250th anniversary of the United States and North Carolina's integral role in that event and the role of its people on the nation's past, present, and future: and

WHEREAS, AMERICA 250 NC has a mission to engage ALL North Carolinians and ALL 100 counties through their many signatures and officially recognized programs, projects, and events over the commemoration by inspiring future leaders and celebrating North Carolina's contributions to the nation over the last 250 years; and

WHEREAS, by adoption of America 250 NC's mission, Caswell County Historic Association Committee for Caswell County is officially formed to achieve the goals of America 250 NC.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the County of Caswell hereby endorses AMERICA 250 NC and its mission; and

RESOLVED, the County of Caswell via the Caswell Historical Association establishes an AMERICA 250 NC Committee made up of a diverse group of citizens to work with AMERICA 250 NC on any and all activities. The participants of the committee will be strictly voluntary roles and there will be no compensation for participation.

IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be sent to the Caswell County legislative delegation and the AMERICA 250 NC Committee.

ADOPTED this 20th day of May 2024.

Attested: Carla Smith

Clerk to the Board

Jeremiah Jeffers

Chairman