

The Graham County Board of County Commissioners met Tuesday, February 20, 2024, at 5:30 p.m. in the Graham County Community Building located at 196 Knight Street Robbinsville, NC for their regular monthly meeting. All board members were present. Also, present. Kim Crisp, Interim County Manager/Clerk to the Board, Attorney Jay Coward, and Stacy Carpenter, Finance Director.

1. Chairman Nelms called the meeting to order.
2. Chairman Nelms asks Commissioner Cody to give the invocation.
3. Chairman Nelms asks Commissioner Orr to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.
4. Chairman Nelms asks for approval of the minutes. No minutes for approval currently.
5. Chairman Nelms asks the representative with Revved Up to speak on “The Hut”. Mr. Colwell stated that he is the chair of Revved Up and they are here to save “The Hut” and asks that Mr. Hatch speak. Mr. Scott Hatch stated that they were here concerning “The Hut” which is located on property owned by the First Baptist Church. Mr. Hatch stated that it will be a community effort to move the building, and this will be done with all volunteers. Mr. Hatch stated that they are not asking for financial funding from the county, but they are asking the county to support them by allowing the building to be relocated to county property. Mr. Hatch stated that the property is where the old railroad right of way was, next to the United Community Bank. Mr. Hatch stated that this is a perfect location, and it would be kept open to the public. Mr. Hatch stated that we need to come together and save the Hut, which is a historical building, by engaging the people. Mr. Hatch stated that they will apply for grant funding if needed but the volunteers are willing to put the sweat, tears, and efforts into saving the Hut. Mr. Hatch stated that the vision is coming together and the only thing lacking is the location. Pastor Eric Reece thanked the board for their time and stated that he wanted to see The Hut saved. Mr. Eddie Hollifield stated that he has used The Hut many times through the Boy Scouts and encourages the board to allow for the relocation. Debbie Beasley, Town Alderwoman stated that the Town would assist as well and wanted to see the relocation. Interim Manager Crisp stated that the property was owned by the Travel and Tourism Authority, and they would need to speak with that board for commitment of the property. The commissioners thanked the volunteers and had no objections to their proposal but were unable to approve the relocation but asked that they speak with the Travel and Tourism Board.
6. Chairman Nelms asked Brian Browning with US Forest Service to speak. Mr. Browning stated that he was here to introduce himself. He is the new District Ranger for the Cheoah and Tusquittee Forest Service. Mr. Brown stated that he is a native of Macon County, born and raised, and he knows the importance of forest land in Graham County. Mr. Browning stated that Graham County has a high percentage of acreage that belongs to the Forest Service. Mr. Browning stated that Graham and Macon County are blessed with public lands. Mr. Browning stated that here in Graham County there are projects going on and that this past summer, they were working on Santeetlah Road to improve the travel routes and have made repairs to the bridge that was damaged. Mr. Browning stated that the bridge had to be closed for a while, but there are plans to reopen. Mr. Browning stated that they will be doing some controlled burns in the county, but not a lot in the spring. Mr. Browning stated that he was able to get grant money for a lot of work on the Joyce Kilmer Trail system and they plan to make improvements to the parking lot and the bathroom at the Joyce Kilmer Memorial Trail car park. Mr. Browning stated that they do have plans to do some maintenance in the Cable Cove campground as well. Mr. Browning stated that he realizes there's not a lot of logging going on but there are some crossover vegetation management projects being done. Commissioner Orr asks about the opening of the Cable Cove campground. Mr. Browning stated that they are decommissioning the older sites and repairing the bathrooms. Mr. Browning stated that there is no date for the bathroom facility repair but the repairs at the Joyce Kilmer site will be before September 30, 2024. The board thanked Mr. Browning for the information.
7. Chairman Nelms asks Gavin Colvard, Sanitation Director to speak. Director Colvard stated that the wooden shed at sanitation is now dangerous, and he is not letting anyone go in the building and Project Manager Marino is working on a plan to get the building torn down. Director Colvard that that he received the quotes for the fencing at Bear Creek and it is \$7,397.45 and to man the site it will cost \$11,549.43. Director Colvard stated that the Gladden Creek fence repair is \$6,335.28. Director Colvard stated that he is seeing a savings of \$360.00 per day on the tonnage by manning the three sites which comes to \$120,000.00 savings plus a savings of \$60,480.00 on the Ballground disposal costs. Director Colvard stated that everyone is loving the manned sites at East Buffalo and Highway 28.

Commissioner Orr stated that the ex-director Donnie Orr had some good ideas that could mesh with some ideas in the future and asks that we have him included in the future discussions. Commissioner Cody thanked Director Colvard for his work and has received all positive comments for Sawyers Creek site. Commissioner Cody stated that the attendant is assisting the elderly, and the ladies are more comfortable disposing of their garbage when they know someone will be there.

8. Chairman Nelms asks PM Marino to speak. PM Marino presented the board with the project reporting and stated the Justice Center is still awaiting the location. PM Marino stated that our Little Snowbird Creek project is complete, and the final invoice has been sent for repayment. PM Marino state that the Senior Center Kitchen Expansion was readvertised for a second time. PM Marino stated that our GDBG Project is finalizing bonding requirements, and they are scheduling a preconstruction conference. PM Marino stated that the construction is underway at the Five Point Center, and they are reporting at 98%. PM Marino stated that the RHS Bleacher project design is underway and anticipates that the school will need to pursue rental bleachers for 2024 graduation and football season. PM Marino stated that the Clerk of Court flooring replacement is awaiting permission from the board to proceed. PM Marino stated that they are obtaining an estimated cost and will be presenting it to the board. PM Marino stated that the EMS paving project has been included in the projects budget and he will be providing reports as we go forward.
9. Chairman Nelms asks Stacy Carpenter, Finance Director for the finance report. Director Carpenter stated that she is working to complete the audit.
10. Director Carpenter stated that our projects account balances are:
 - a. Capital Projects NCCMT \$3,375,999.77
 - b. School Capital Project NCCMT \$122,854.00
 - c. ARPA – UCBI (now closed) \$649,818.24
 - d. SCIF Grant NCCMT \$4,971,113.61
11. Director Carpenter stated that our tax collections for the month were: current \$233,035.94; past \$15,062.64 and DMV \$50,701.66. Director Carpenter stated that our year-to-date tax collections are: Real \$8,798,318.91; DMV \$436,775.31 and our current tax collection rate is 94.55%.
12. Director Carpenter stated that our revenues are \$915,224.04 and our expenditures are \$1,972,435.39 for the month and year to date are \$15,617,161.63 revenues and \$15,632,510.47 expenditures.
13. Director Carpenter stated that our sales tax collections were \$261,119.50.
14. Director Carpenter stated that our back tax collections were \$433,789.77.
15. Director Carpenter stated that she is having weekly meetings with Becky Garland, Local Government Commission concerning the audit and she is setting a goal of March 15th for completion. Director Carpenter stated that she is also having weekly meetings with a NCACC Representative, and they have been very helpful in helping her streamline the workforce. Director Carpenter stated that the conversion with ADP has overall gone well, and she will be training payroll staff to take over more finance duties.
16. Chairman Nelms asks for public comment. No public comment.
17. Chairman Nelms asks for approval of the following polls:
 - a. 2/12 Ambulance remount \$250,758.21; with deposit of \$78,500.00
 - b. 2/09 Purchase batting cages \$5,405.08
 - c. 2/15 Approve Budget Amendment #15 to move funds inside health budget.Commissioner Orr made the motion to approve the polls as stated. Commissioner Cody seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
18. Chairman Nelms asks for approval of the releases \$1,701.74 and the discoveries \$10,555.20. Commissioner Eller made the motion as stated. Commissioner Orr seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
19. Chairman Nelms asks for a motion to remove Matthew Smith from the Firefighter Relief Fund Board. Commissioner Eller made the motion as stated. Commissioner Williams seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
20. Chairman Nelms asks for a motion to appoint Brenda Postell to the Firefighter Relief Fund Board. Commissioner Eller made the motion as stated. Commissioner Orr seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
21. Chairman Nelms asks for a motion to appoint Jocelyn Satterfield to the Four-Square Board. Commissioner Williams made the motion as stated. Commissioner Orr seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
22. Chairman Nelms asks for a motion to write off the sanitation fees due to non-payment and or fictitious addresses for \$2,529.80. Commissioner Orr made the motion as stated. Commissioner Cody seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.

23. Chairman Nelms asks for a motion to surplus a 2017 Ford E350 with a value of \$12,463.00-\$13,389.00. Commissioner Cody made the motion to surplus the 2017 E350 with a minimum bid of \$5,000.00. Commissioner Williams seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
24. Chairman Nelms asks for new business. Director Carpenter stated that she did have our Attorney Fees for January – December 2023 in the amount of \$34,035.00 and she needed approval to pay. Commissioner Orr made the motion to pay the total bill. Commissioner Cody seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
25. Director Carpenter stated that she has three budget amendments for the board’s approval.
 - a. Budget Amendment #13 – amend the Health Department Budget for our provider \$3,000.00. Commissioner Orr made the motion to approve. Commissioner Williams seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
 - b. Budget Amendment #14 – amend DSS budget \$32,966.00. Commissioner Eller made the motion to approve. Commissioner Orr seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
 - c. Budget Amendment #15 \$107,916.90 approved by poll.
 - d. Budget Amendment #16 Sheriff Budget \$17,030.00. Commissioner Orr made the motion to approve. Commissioner Williams seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
26. Director Carpenter stated that Melissa Crisp and Wanda Hill had asked about the revenue that is generated from their department through the jail meals and wanted to discuss the overages if any for capital needs. Manager Crisp stated that the county needed to begin planning for replacement of stoves, freezers, deep fryers etc. The board asks that they break down how much revenue is coming in and see if there are overages for discussion.
27. Director Carpenter stated that she had looked at the sheriff’s funding for the evidence audit and the county owes his budget \$11,570.00 and she would prepare a budget amendment for the board’s review.
28. Rae Millsaps, a member of the audience stated that she had applied for the county manager position and has not received any word of an interview or any correspondence and asks that she be interviewed for the position. Manager Crisp stated that she will notify the candidates when the board directs but at this time, no one has been interviewed.
29. Chairman Nelms asks for a motion to go into closed session under G.S.143.318.11(a)(1)(3)(5)(6) for privileged or confidential information, attorney client privilege, personnel, and contracts. Commissioner Orr made the motion as stated. Commissioner Eller seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
30. Chairman Nelms asks for a motion to go back into open session. Commissioner Williams made the motion as stated. Commissioner Eller seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
31. Chairman Nelms asks for a motion to write off EMS Bill 57964620 due to the lack of an estate. Commissioner Cody made the motion to write off the bill as stated. Commissioner Williams seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
32. Chairman Nelms asks for a motion to continue this meeting to Monday, February 26, 2024, at 9:00 a.m. Commissioner Williams made the motion to continue as stated. Commissioner Orr seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.

Jacob Nelms, Chairman, Graham County Commissioner

Natasha Williams, Vice-Chair, Graham County Commissioner

Lynn Cody, Member, Graham County Commissioner

Connie Orr, Member, Graham County Commissioner

Keith Eller Member, Graham County Commissioner

ATTEST: _____
Kim Crisp, Clerk to the Board