

The Graham County Board of Commissioners met Wednesday, September 23, 2020 at 2:00 p.m. in the Graham County High School Commons Area located on Sweetwater Road, Robbinsville for a joint meeting with the Graham County Board of Education. Board present: Dale Wiggins, Lynn Cody, Jacob Nelms, Connie Orr. Board absent: Keith Eller. School Board Members present Rodney Nelson, Chip Carringer, Sharon Edwards, Debbie Odom, Shane Garland. Also, present: County Manager Becky Garland, Clerk Kim Crisp, Project Manager Jason Marino, Superintendent Angie Knight, Assistant Superintendent Robert Moody, School Finance Officer Lester Green, Faculty Member Kevin White, Clerk Susie Beasley, and Graham Star Editor Kevin Hensley.

1. Chairman Wiggins and Chairman Nelson called their respective boards to order.
2. Chairman Nelson asks Assistant Superintendent Robert Moody to pray.
3. Chairman Nelson lead the Pledge of Allegiance.
4. Chairman Nelson asks for approval of the agenda. Member Odom made the motion to approve the agenda. Member Garland seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
5. Chairman Nelson asks for public comment. No public comment. Chairman Nelson asks for a motion to close public comment. Member Carringer made the motion to close public comment. Member Odom seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
6. Chairman Nelson stated that the agenda states discussion on the Robbinsville Middle School Construction Project and asks Superintendent Knight to share the resources that she has with the boards.
7. Superintendent Knight stated that Kevin White will walk the boards through a binder that was prepared for this meeting and will follow up with any questions that the board members may have and asks the Board of Commissioners to give an outline of information that they would like to hear today.
8. Manager Garland stated the board had several questions to clear up concerning the process procurement for both the Architect and Construction as well as questions regarding soil studies due to the issues with the high school that was constructed in the 1990's. Manager Garland stated that on the finance side, her board would have to pass a Capital Project Ordinance due to the match that the county is contributing and in order to finalize financing for this project match. Member Carringer stated that it was very difficult to hear with the masks and he understands the need but asks that everyone speak into the microphones.
9. Superintendent Knight stated that she and Manager Garland had visited the Department of Public Instruction/ School Construction Division in Raleigh when the grant became available which the school could have applied for up to \$15M that contains a three to one match from the State and ¼ from Local Government. Superintendent Knight stated that the most pressing need was to move the 6th Grade to the Middle School which would allow them to work on classroom ratio at the elementary school. Superintendent Knight stated that they have an impending classroom reduction for Kindergarten through 3rd Grade. Superintendent Knight stated, for instance, they are only allowed (17) children in a 1st Grade Classroom and we currently have (19 to 20) and if all kids were to come back from distance learning we would exceed those numbers and this was the urgency to apply and ask for the grant monies. Superintendent Knight stated that they are one of the last school districts to ask for this money which is on a (5) year cycle that repeats so if there are monies available where the State pays 75% of the bill then we should apply. Superintendent Knight stated that they asked for \$4.166M and this was awarded to them in November. Superintendent Knight asks for questions. No questions currently.
10. Superintendent Knight asked Kevin White to go through the book. Mr. White stated that he would discuss the timeline for the construction project. Mr. White stated that after they inquired about the grant, they did contact PFA Architect for some initial drawings and submitted the grant on September 12, 2019. Mr. White stated that due to COVID19 they are behind schedule of the initial timelines. Mr. White stated that the estimated costs are \$3,200,000.00 with a match of \$1,066,067.00 for a total project cost of \$4,266,067.00. Mr. White stated that they received notice of the award November 15, 2019. Mr. White stated that PFA submitted their designs proposal for a project cost of \$4,266,067.00. Mr. White stated that the book contains forms that was submitted to the State. Mr. White stated on January 4, 2020 they met with PFA to discuss the schools needs and on January 28th received the architect agreement and

on February 12, 2020 we received the new plans after the needs discussion and was presented with a more detailed drawing.

11. Superintendent Knight stated that the plan started with the 6th Grade Wing, office space and a new cafeteria for the middle school but after looking at the needs they felt that classroom space would be more advantageous for the school and leave the cafeteria as the current size. Superintendent Knight stated the timeline will show some modifications from the beginning of the plan after the needs were discussed.
12. Mr. White stated that the middle school 6th grade wing is behind the school and they did know that there were issues and did have soil samples taken. Mr. White stated that August 16th they received the soil sample reporting and found that the ground could be built upon, but improvements would have to be made. Mr. White stated that after discussion with PFA all agreed to renovate the middle school offices. Mr. White stated that on May 28th Manager Garland requested a meeting and this was held on June 10th with representatives from the school and Manager Garland. Mr. White stated that the information received contains the cost of the project, the architect fees, monthly design costs with bidding in November 2020. Mr. White stated that the cost was included on the soil remediation for \$120,000.00 bringing the total cost again to the \$4,266,066.70. Mr. White stated that Jason Marino became involved in the conversation in June 2020. Mr. White stated that the storage building for the carpentry shop would have to be relocated closer to the baseball field and this was included in the pricing as well. Mr. White continued with the timeline discussion to present with Notice to Bidders in Section T.
13. Superintendent Knight stated that this was a lot of information to digest at one time, but they are looking to bid the project out soon and asks for questions.
14. BOC Chairman Wiggins thanked the School for the meeting and stated that our board will be very supportive of the project and do not intend to interfere or delay any part of the project but they are responsible for a little over \$1M of taxpayer funds and they needed to be informed of the processes of the project. Chairman Wiggins stated that the processes that the school is required to go through are so much different than the counties and not being aware of the processes caused the board some concern. Chairman Wiggins thanked Kevin White for the notebooks and stated that they contain a lot of good information and the board did have questions on the foundations because they knew of the issues in the past. Chairman Wiggins stated that he was very pleased to see that the school had already done the core samples and felt that the biggest thing for the county is financing the counties portion of the cost which involves a lot of red tape. Chairman Wiggins again expressed his thanks for the notebooks and realizes that we have been in a pandemic which has caused serious communication issues for all types of government.
15. Manager Garland stated that she also was very thankful for the notebook and this will make her job much easier when going to the Local Government Commission on financing. Manager Garland recognized the amount of work that it took to create the notebooks and thanked Kevin White.
16. Manager Garland stated that the first step for her was to ask the Commissioner Board to pass the Capital Project Ordinance of \$4,266,667.00 for the Sixth Grade Wing at the Robbinsville High School/Middle School with anticipated revenues from the North Carolina Needs Based Public School Capital Fund of \$3,200,000.00; Proceeds from Loan Borrowings of \$1,066,667.00 for a total of estimated revenues of \$4,266,667.00. Manager Garland stated that the debt service payments will be financed from the proceeds of the school's portion of the Section 524 sales tax expansion funds under Article 42 of the Machinery Act of North Carolina. Commissioner Orr made the motion to approve the Capital Project Ordinance as stated. Commissioner Nelms seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
17. Manager Garland stated that the board would also need to approve the Graham County, North Carolina Declaration of Official Intent to Reimburse for which the County will be responsible for twenty-five percent (25%) matching funds of the costs of the Project with the proceeds of debt to be issued by the Issuer (the "Borrowing"), the interest on which is to be excluded from gross income for Federal income tax purposes and the project cost shall not exceed \$4,266,667.00 as funded under the above grant. Manager Garland stated that the maximum principal amount of the Borrowing to be incurred by the Issuer to finance the Project is not to exceed \$1,066,667.00, plus costs to close the loan and the debt service payments will be financed from the proceeds of the schools portion of the Section 524 sales tax expansion funds under Article 42 of the Machinery Act of North Carolina. Commissioner Nelms made the motion to accept the

Declaration of Official Intent to Reimburse as stated. Commissioner Orr seconded this motion.
Vote unanimous.

18. Manager Garland stated that she would be working with the financing match prior to the November 2nd Notice to Bidders and submit to the Local Government Commission for their approval. Manager Garland stated that she did not foresee any issues due to the counties clean audits and once approved they will move forward to get the funding in place. Manager Garland stated that she has spoken with Scott Donald and he did the work at our P&J Office Building and he can revise the bid document to reflect time to get the financing in place. Manager Garland stated that county government has many hoops that they must jump through that the school does not have.
19. Superintendent Knight asks where the Schools are on the QZAB Loans. Manager Garland stated that the maturity date is September 2021, and the Bond will be paid in one or two years after that date. Superintendent Knight stated that the Schools will be needing a new Elementary School. Manager Garland stated that we are in a good place in our financial processes. Manager Garland stated that she will keep Superintendent Knight and Finance Officer Green in the loop on the financing.
20. Mr. Knight asks about the final payment for the QZAB. Manager Garland stated that September 2021 will be the final payment.
21. Superintendent Knight stated that as additional information comes in, she will send the information to Manager Garland which can be distributed to the county board.
22. Commissioner Nelms who is also our Building Inspector stated that he has talked to Scott Donald and he needs several documents and requests that Jason Marino, Project Manager assist Scott Donald in the processes. Mr. Marino stated that he would send his contact information to Superintendent Knight.
23. Commissioner Wiggins asks that pertinent documents be sent to Manager Garland that need to be put into the binders and he did not need to see the email traffic.
24. Manager Garland stated that she had bills that needed to be paid on the project for the board's approval. The second request from PFA was \$4,127.25 State funds and \$1,375.75 County funds for a total of \$5,503.00 and further stated that Chairman Wiggins would need to sign for the draws. Manager Garland stated that the third bill from PFA is a total of \$70,191.05 with \$52,643.29 State funds and \$17,547.76 County funds. Commissioner Orr made the motion to approve payment of these bills as stated for the project. Commissioner Cody seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
25. Chairman Wiggins thanked the board for the binder of information and stated that they would be referring to it quite often through the processes.
26. Chairman Wiggins asks for a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Nelms made the motion to adjourn. Commissioner Cody seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.

Dale Wiggins, Chairman

Lynn Cody, Vice-Chairman

Keith Eller, Member

Jacob Nelms, Member

Connie Orr, Member

ATTEST: _____
Kim Crisp, Clerk to the Board