

THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE COUNTY OF CRAVEN MET IN REGULAR SESSION IN THE COMMISSIONERS' ROOM OF THE CRAVEN COUNTY ADMINISTRATION BUILDING, 406 CRAVEN STREET, NEW BERN, NORTH CAROLINA, ON MONDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 2022. THE MEETING CONVENED AT 7:00 PM.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Chairman Jason R. Jones
 Vice Chairman Denny Bucher
 Chairman George S. Liner
 Commissioner Theron L. McCabe
 Commissioner Thomas F. Mark
 Commissioner E. T. Mitchell
 Commissioner Beatrice R. Smith

STAFF PRESENT:

Jack B. Veit, III, County Manager
 Gene Hodges, Assistant County Manager
 Craig Warren, Finance Director
 Amber Parker, Human Resources Director
 Arey Grady, County Attorney
 Nan Holton, Clerk to the Board
 Lauren Wargo, Assistant to the County Manager

Following the Pledge of Allegiance, County Attorney, Arey Grady, recited the following invocation:

Lord God, we humbly come before You today, and we thank You for Your love and Your Grace and Your peace that is made available to us all. God, we ask for Your divine wisdom and guidance here today, for You and You alone know the future and the things that are to come. We ask that You would lead us in the decisions we are a part of and that You would give us boldness to honor You. Would You empower every man and woman in this room to use the life You have given them for good? Let us be leaders who follow Your example, leaders who love sacrificially, give selflessly, and serve graciously. May we all do our best to impact this incredible County and Nation of ours for the better.

We ask Your blessing on our Commissioners, on our County and on our United States of America.

*In the name of Jesus, we pray.
 Amen.*

Based upon the invocation given by Pastor Randy Bezet at the June 25, 2015 session of the US House of Representatives

Commissioner Mark motioned to approve the agenda, as presented, seconded by Commissioner McCabe and approved unanimously.

PETITIONS OF CITIZENS (AGENDA TOPICS)

There were no citizens from the public that signed up to speak.

CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Mark motioned to approve the Consent Agenda, inclusive of the Minutes of January 18, 2022 Regular Session; Minutes of January 24, 2022 Reconvened Session; Tax Releases and Refunds (*Credits = \$\$19,750.11; Refunds = \$579.44*); and Cooperative Extension Bate Foundation Grant – Budget Amendment. Commissioner Mitchell seconded the motion, which carried 7-0 in a roll call vote.

Cooperative Extension

REVENUES	AMOUNT	EXPENDITURES	AMOUNT
1014740-33510 Other Non Profit Grants	\$2,500.00	1014740-43240 Other Supplies	\$2,500.00
TOTAL	\$2,500.00	TOTAL	\$2,500.00

Justification: Grant money to be used to cover scholarships for children to attend 4-H camp this summer that otherwise would not be able to.

DEPARTMENTAL MATTERS: TAX – REPORT OF UNPAID 2021 TAXES AND TAX LIEN ADVERTISEMENT DATE

Tax Administrator, Leslie Young, reported that NCGS 105-369(a) requires her to present the 2021 taxes that remain unpaid which are a lien upon real estate. She stated that \$2,559,181.34 are delinquent and the statute also requires her to advertise the liens for 2021 in a newspaper of general circulation in the county. Ms. Young requested the Board authorize that the 2021 liens be advertised in The Sun Journal on Monday, April 11, 2022.

After a few remarks from the Board, Ms. Young responded to inquiries regarding gap billing which was legislated in 2017.

Commissioner Mark motioned to accept the report of unpaid 2021 taxes and to authorize the 2021 liens upon real estate in the Sun Journal on April 11, 2022. Commissioner Mitchell seconded the motion, which carried 7-0 in a roll call vote.

DEPARTMENTAL MATTERS: SHERIFF – VEHICLE LEASE

Major David McFadyen requested approval to renew the vehicle lease with Ebbie Howard and extend the lease to three years.

He stated that due to a shortage of spare vehicles, the Sheriff’s Office is not able to fully utilize Reserve Deputies for community patrol functions, and that Ebbie Howard has purchased a law enforcement rated, fully equipped, Chevrolet Tahoe to lease to the Sheriff’s Office for one dollar per year.

He indicated the lease provides that Mr. Howard will be responsible for all costs regarding maintenance and repairs, along with other costs associated with the vehicle. The lease also requires that he indemnify the County. The vehicle will be used for law enforcement purposes only, at the direction of the Sheriff’s Office.

Major McFayden addressed several inquiries about the vehicle shortage and affirmed that the shortage was not a result of the Board not authorizing them, but due to delivery issues.

Commissioner Liner motioned to approve the vehicle lease renewal, as requested, seconded by Commissioner Mitchell and approved unanimously.

DEPARTMENTAL MATTERS: FACILITIES

Award of Contract for Construction of 340 B Pharmacy

Assistant County Manager, Gene Hodges, reported that on June 7, 2021, the Board of County Commissioners authorized staff to begin the development of a 340 B Pharmacy to be housed in the Health Department. On August 2, 2021 a budget amendment in the amount of \$1,047,250.00 was approved by the Board of Commissioners that included operational costs, construction costs, capital costs, and design costs related to this project. County staff engaged with the contracted architect firm of Oakley Collier Architects (OCA) to begin the design of this project and develop bid documents for contractors. The solicitation for bids was advertised on December 14, 2021 and closed on January 11, 2022. A pre-bid meeting was held on site with 7 contractors or sub contractors attending. When bids were opened on January 11th, 3 bids were received.

Mr. Hodges confirmed the low bidder for this project was Waters Contracting Company with a base bid of \$285,000.00. It is also recommended that all of the alternates be accepted which will bring this bid to \$286,688.00. He indicated that Craven County has experience with Waters Contracting and the principal owner, Malcolm Waters. Mr. Waters was the primary contact related to the construction of the Adult Primary Clinic at the Health Department in New Bern and the inclusive playground located at Creekside Park. Additionally, they have functioned as a sub contractor with Barnhill Contracting on the Courthouse Rebuild project and have also done numerous small construction projects for the Maintenance Department.

Mr. Hodges requested that the Board of Commissioners accept the bid with alternates from Waters Contracting in the amount of \$286,688.00 and authorize staff to execute all necessary contracts and agreements related to this construction project.

Health Director, Scott Harrelson, and Assistant Maintenance Director, Zach Chenoweth, were present to address questions.

Commissioner Mitchell motioned to accept the bid with alternates from Waters Contracting in the amount of \$286,688.00 and to authorize staff to execute all necessary contracts and agreements related to this construction project, seconded by Commissioner McCabe and approved 7-0 in a roll call vote.

Approval of Fuel Center Project and Related Budget Amendment

Mr. Hodges reported that during the deliberations of the FY2021-2022 Craven County Budget, the Board of County Commissioners directed staff to explore the development of a County operated fuel station. Funds were budgeted for engineering and design services and the County has been working with Mr. Dwayne Alligood of Vaughn & Melton on this project. Through this process, staff has become engaged with JF Petroleum Group from Morrisville, NC. He stated JF Petroleum is a provider of fuels and fluids storage, management, and dispensing systems through the Sourcewell purchasing cooperative. The Sourcewell purchasing cooperative is a purchasing vehicle approved through the State of North Carolina for local governments to utilize that streamlines the purchasing process. He noted all goods and services that are contracted through Sourcewell have been competitively bid and reviewed. Additionally, JF Petroleum has been the supplier of fuel systems for many local governments in North Carolina as well as state agencies such as NCDOT.

He stated that JF Petroleum has provided Craven County with a quote of \$1,052,239.89.00 to develop a fueling center near the Judicial Center on Clarks Road. This price includes all the sitework, equipment, installation, and software for a 24,000 gallon capacity gasoline fueling center. This center will include above ground tanks, redundant generator power, fencing, canopy, and 4 dispensers capable of fueling two vehicles each simultaneously (8 vehicles total), and referenced the site map sketch.

Additionally, the County is responsible for a few items that are not included in the pricing from JF Petroleum. These items include:

- IT equipment
- Cameras and access control equipment
- 100' of fiber optic cable spliced into the existing line
- An HVAC mini-split for the control building
- Shelving and cabinetry for the control building
- Installation of a water meter and water line for the site.

Mr. Hodges stated that these items amount to \$77,000.00. With the \$50,000.00 in engineering and design that was included in the FY21-22 budget, and a 10% project contingency, the total amount of this project is \$1,279,240.00.

Zach Chenoweth, Dwayne Alligood with Vaughn & Melton and Chris Briggs with JF Petroleum, were present to address inquiries.

Mr. Hodges sought approval of a budget amendment in the amount of \$1,229,240.00 and authorization to staff to execute the needed procurement documents.

Commissioner Liner motioned to approve the following budget amendment in the amount of \$1,229,240.00 and to authorize staff to execute all necessary contracts and agreements related to this project, seconded by Commissioner Mitchell and approved 7-0 in a roll call vote.

Public Buildings

REVENUES	AMOUNT	EXPENDITURES	AMOUNT
1014200-39802 Transfer from Reserve	\$1,229,240.00	1014200-47302 C/O – Other Improvements	\$1,229,240.00
4000000-39901 Fund Balance Current Year	\$1,229,240.00	4004150-49701 Transfer to General Fund	\$1,229,240.00
TOTAL	\$2,458,480.00	TOTAL	\$2,458,480.00

Since Health Director Scott Harrelson was present, Chairman Jones requested him to give a COVID 19 update for Craven County

Mr. Harrelson reported that the Omicron variant spiked in NC on January 10th and right now the numbers are coming down across the state. He indicated that Craven County was a little behind the state, but the highest daily average was 215 cases per 100,000. Mr. Harrelson stated that today the County is at 165 cases per 100,000 and he anticipates a continual decline. He informed the Board that the monoclonal antibody treatment was not as effective against the Omicron variant. He remarked while vaccinated individuals did become infected and have to be hospitalized, the most severe cases were among the unvaccinated.

Mr. Jones stated the Commissioners have been contacted by citizens with a concern about the level of reporting Craven County does in comparison to other counties. He requested that Mr. Harrelson, and the Health Board discuss this and discern how more information can be shared with the public.

APPOINTMENTS

Pending

Chairman Jones reviewed the following pending appointments:

- Community Child Protection Team
- Craven/Pamlico Regional Library
- JCPC – Faith Community Representative seat

Current

Emergency Medical Services Advisory Council

Chairman Jones nominated Jedediah Stancil for reappointment; Commissioner Liner nominated Jeffrey Fedyna for reappointment; Commissioner Mitchell nominated Bill Smith for reappointment. There being no additional nominations, Mr. Stancil, Mr. Fedyna and Mr. Smith were reappointed by acclamation.

Craven Aging Planning Board

Commissioner Liner requested that the reappointment of Dora Jones be deferred. Commissioner Liner nominated Lydia Brown for reappointment. There being no additional nominations, Ms. Brown was reappointed by acclamation.

Upcoming

Chairman Jones reviewed upcoming appointment to boards and committees due to expire in February/March, 2022.

COUNTY ATTORNEY'S REPORT

Approval of Conveyance After Expiration of Upset Bid Period – 1256 Old Brick Road, New Bern (Parcel Number 1-035-9002)

County Attorney, Arey Grady, reported that Craven County previously received and approved an offer to purchase this real property, in the amount of \$2,200.00, subject to the completion of the upset bid process. The offer was advertised, and there were no upset bids, the final bid being \$2,200.00. The upset bid period has now expired, and Mr. Grady recommended approval of the conveyance at the purchase price of \$2,200.00. The County originally acquired this property through a tax foreclosure, with past due taxes and costs of foreclosure totaling \$2,116.05. The tax value of this property is \$13,500.00.

He stated should the Board of Commissioners authorize this transaction, a resolution should be adopted, which in turn will authorize the execution and delivery of the necessary documents.

Commissioner Mark motioned to adopt the following resolution approving conveyance after expiration of the upset bid period, seconded by Commissioner Mitchell and approved unanimously.

CRAVEN COUNTY
RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING CONVEYANCE
AFTER EXPIRATION OF UPSET BID PERIOD

WHEREAS, Craven County owns certain real property identified as Tax Parcel 1-035-9002 (hereinafter “the Real Property”), the Real Property having been acquired by Craven County in deed recorded in Book 3594 Page 1304 in the Office of the Register of Deeds of Craven County; and,

WHEREAS, Craven County previously received and approved an Offer to Purchase the Real Property, and Craven County subsequently advertised said offer for upset bids as required by North Carolina General Statute §160A-269; and,

WHEREAS, the upset bid period required under North Carolina General Statute §160A-269 has expired; and,

WHEREAS, the Craven County Board of Commissioners deems it advisable and in the best interest of the County to sell its interest in the Real Property to the successful bidder and to convey its interest in said property by quitclaim deed.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF CRAVEN COUNTY THAT:

Section 1. The last and highest bid of Charles Ray Banks in the sum of \$2,200.00 for the Real Property is hereby accepted, and the Offer to Purchase previously executed by Craven County subject to the provisions of North Carolina General Statute §160A-269 is hereby ratified and confirmed in its entirety.

Section 2. Upon payment of the full purchase price, the Chairman, the County Manager, the Assistant County Manager, the Clerk to the Board of Commissioners and/or County Attorney are authorized to take all actions necessary to accomplish the transactions contemplated by this Resolution, including but not limited to the execution and delivery of the quitclaim deed attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference.

ADOPTED THIS 7th DAY OF FEBRUARY, 2022.

Approval of Conveyance After Expiration of Upset Bid Period – 1250 Old Brick Road, New Bern (Parcel Number 1-035-037)

Mr. Grady reported that Craven County previously received and approved an offer to purchase this real property, in the amount of \$1,800.00, subject to the completion of the upset bid process. The offer was advertised, and there were no upset bids, the final bid being \$1,800.00. The upset bid period has now expired, and Mr. Grady recommended approval of the conveyance at the purchase price of \$1,800.00. The County originally acquired this property through a tax foreclosure, with past due taxes and costs of foreclosure totaling \$1,747.94. The tax value of this property is \$12,000.00.

He stated should the Board of Commissioners authorize this transaction, a resolution should be adopted, which in turn will authorize the execution and delivery of the necessary documents.

Commissioner Mark motioned to adopt the following resolution approving conveyance after expiration of the upset bid period, seconded by Commissioner Mitchell and approved unanimously.

CRAVEN COUNTY
RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING CONVEYANCE
AFTER EXPIRATION OF UPSET BID PERIOD

WHEREAS, Craven County owns certain real property identified as Tax Parcel 1-035-037(hereinafter “the Real Property”), the Real Property having been acquired by Craven County in deed recorded in Book 3157 Page 226 in the Office of the Register of Deeds of Craven County; and,

WHEREAS, Craven County previously received and approved an Offer to Purchase the Real Property, and Craven County subsequently advertised said offer for upset bids as required by North Carolina General Statute §160A-269; and,

WHEREAS, the upset bid period required under North Carolina General Statute §160A-269 has expired; and,

WHEREAS, the Craven County Board of Commissioners deems it advisable and in the best interest of the County to sell its interest in the Real Property to the successful bidder and to convey its interest in said property by quitclaim deed.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF CRAVEN COUNTY THAT:

Section 1. The last and highest bid of Charles Ray Banks in the sum of \$1,800.00 for the Real Property is hereby accepted, and the Offer to Purchase previously executed by Craven County subject to the provisions of North Carolina General Statute §160A-269 is hereby ratified and confirmed in its entirety.

Section 2. Upon payment of the full purchase price, the Chairman, the County Manager, the Assistant County Manager, the Clerk to the Board of Commissioners and/or County Attorney are authorized to take all actions necessary to accomplish the transactions contemplated by this Resolution, including but not limited to the execution and delivery of the quitclaim deed attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference.

ADOPTED THIS 7th DAY OF February, 2022.

Consider/Approval of EMS Medical Director Agreement

Mr. Grady remarked that this item has not been before the Board before, but as the Commissioners are aware, for some years Dr. Stanley Koontz has been the designated medical director for Craven County EMS, as well as for Pamlico County EMS and Jones County EMS. Dr. Koontz is employed by EMP of Craven County, PLLC, the group which staffs some aspects of the emergency department at CarolinaEast Medical Center, and in turn Dr. Koontz is based at CarolinaEast. He stated through collaborative discussions between Craven, Jones and Pamlico Counties, CarolinaEast, EMP and Dr. Koontz, the parties have developed an agreement formalizing the working relationship in place historically and re-allocating the contributions of each party to Dr. Koontz's compensation for serving as medical director (\$60,000). Craven's annual share will be \$10,000.

Commissioner Mitchell motioned to approve the EMS Medical Director Agreement, as presented, and to delegate the Chairman and the Clerk to the Board the authority to execute and deliver the agreement, seconded by Commissioner Liner and approved unanimously.

PETITIONS OF CITIZENS (GENERAL TOPICS)

The following citizens signed up to speak.

1. *Alan Harrod, 909 Caracara Drive, New Bern, NC*
2. *Bertha Bush, 160 Blount Brimage Drive, New Bern, NC*
3. *Brenda Henry, 126 Perrytown Loop Road, New Bern, NC*
4. *Jeff McAllister, 628 Lilliput Drive, New Bern, NC*

COUNTY MANAGER'S REPORT

County Manager, Jack Veit, reminded the Board that after their Regular Session on February 21st, there will be a Work Session which will last through the afternoon and lunch will be provided.

Mr. Veit reported that the FY 22-23 Budget process kicked off last week with a virtual meeting with all department heads and they have until the end of February to submit their proposed budgets to the management team. He stated the management team would then meet with department heads to work through their proposals and develop a draft to present to the BOC in May.

Mr. Veit expressed appreciation to Economic Development Director, Jeff Wood, and Commissioner Mitchell on the recent NAVALX kick-off.

COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS

Commissioner Liner had nothing to report.

Commissioner Mitchell had nothing to report.

Commissioner McCabe reported on attending the funeral for Jack Parker, a long time fire fighter well known throughout the County. Mr. McCabe informed the public that the Health Department would be distributing free N95 masks on February 20th at the Harlowe Community Center starting at 12 noon until 2pm or when they ran out. Mr. McCabe remarked on attending the NC ACC Board of Directors meeting in Raleigh and having packets of information to share with all of the Commissioners as a result of that meeting.

Commissioner Mark reported that the hospital had 52 Covid 19 patients this past week and 21 of the 52 had been vaccinated

Commissioner Bucher remarked on the recent passing of Mr. Marshall Van Winkle and what an incredible individual he was, indicating he had a great collection and knowledge of antique vehicles.

Commissioner Jones reported on a recent opportunity to speak with some school children and specifically referenced that a little girl approached him and requested he tell the Board that bullying is real in schools. Mr. Jones noted that former Commissioner Bill Harper had recently died and expressed how diligent Mr. Harper was about fighting for the citizens of Craven County. He indicated he sent a letter to his widow referencing the County’s appreciation for his service.

Commissioner Smith reminded everyone that February is Black History Month and encouraged people to show interest in the activities being offered around the community and learn about the struggles and accomplishments.

CLOSED SESSION

At 7:53 pm Commissioner Mark motioned to go into Closed Session pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11(a)(3) to consult with an attorney to protect the attorney-client privilege. His motion was seconded by Commissioner Mitchell and approved.

At 8:54 pm, the Board returned to Open Session. County Attorney reported that no action was taken in Closed Session.

DEPARTMENTAL MATTERS: PLANNING – SANDY RIDGE MOBILE HOME PARK BUDGET AMENDMENT

Assistant Planning Director, Chad Strawn, requested approval of a budget amendment that reflects court ordered access road improvements to the Sandy Ridge Mobile Home Park located in Bridgeton, NC. On January 4, 2022 the Craven County Superior Court issued a Default Judgment against the owners of Sandy Ridge Mobile Home Park allowing the County the ability to make improvements to the access road to the park and also improvements within the park. He stated that staff solicited informal bids for the cost of improvements of the access road to the park and also improvements within the park. Four bids were received; the lowest bidder was GHC Construction of New Bern, with a bid amount of \$77,146.00. A 20% overrun contingency for unforeseen expenditures brings the total to \$92,576.00. He indicated this improvement will be phase 1 of the overall improvements under the Default Judgment.

Commissioner Mark motioned to approve the following budget amendment in the amount of \$92,576.00, as requested, seconded by Commissioner Mitchell and in a roll call vote was approved 6-1, there being one (1) “Nay” from Commissioner Liner.

Planning

REVENUES	AMOUNT	EXPENDITURES	AMOUNT
1010000-39901 Current Year FB	\$92,576.00	1014910-44000 Contract Services	\$92,576.00
TOTAL	\$92,576.00	TOTAL	\$92,576.00

At 8:59 pm, Commissioner Liner motioned to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner Mitchell and approved unanimously.

Chairman Jason R. Jones
Craven County Board of Commissioners

Nan Holton
Clerk to the Board