

**AGENDA
CRAVEN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR SESSION
MONDAY, MARCH 21, 2022
8:30 AM**

CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

APPROVE AGENDA

1. CONSENT AGENDA
 - A. March 7, 2022, Regular Session Minutes
 - B. Tax Releases and Refunds
 - C. Sheriff's Office - Budget Amendment (APS Donation Check)
 - D. Sheriff's Office - Laptop Donation

2. US MOTTO ACTION COMMITTEE PRESENTATION – Rick Lanier, Chairman

DEPARTMENTAL MATTERS

3. RECREATION – MASTER PLAN UPDATE: Billy Wilkes, Recreation & Parks Director

4. PLANNING – CDBG NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION GRANT: Don Baumgardner, Planning Director

5. APPOINTMENTS

6. COUNTY ATTORNEY'S REPORT: Arey Grady

7. COUNTY MANAGER'S REPORT: Jack Veit

8. COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS

9. CLOSED SESSION

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, MARCH 21, 2022. THE MEETING CONVENED AT 8:30 AM.

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

Chairman Jones recognized the four Marines who recently lost their lives in a training exercise.

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

Most gracious and everlasting God, we thank You for this, another glorious day that You have allowed us to see, and we honor You for Your undying faithfulness towards us.

Lord, help us to continually hold up the light of Your love, and may we be always mindful of our collective duty to serve each other as we serve You.

Teach us Your ways and lead us in a plain path. Shine Your light upon the road that our Commissioners must travel. Give them grace and truth to guide their every decision. Unite them under the banner of Your love and allow them to speak with one clarion voice that which You would have them say.

Teach us all to lean on Your everlasting arms and give us the grace to lead according to Your everlasting Word. Amen.

Based upon the invocation given by Bishop Alfred A. Owens, Jr., at the February 24, 2004, session of the US House of Representatives

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

CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Mark motioned to approve the Consent Agenda, inclusive of the Minutes of March 7, 2022, Regular Session; Tax Releases and Refunds (**Credits = \$18,818.61; Refunds = \$8,166.80**), Sheriff's Office Budget Amendment (APS Donation Check) and Sheriff's Office Laptop Donation. Commissioner Mitchell seconded the motion which carried 7-0 in a roll call vote.

Sheriff's Office

REVENUES	AMOUNT	EXPENDITURES	AMOUNT
1014310-38301 Misc. Donations	\$100.00	1014310-43240 Other Supplies	\$100.00
TOTAL	\$100.00	TOTAL	\$100.00

Justification: The Craven County Sheriff's Office received a donation check in the amount of \$100.00 to support the Animal Protective Services. This donation will help pay for various expenses they may have.

US MOTTO ACTION COMMITTEE PRESENTATION

Commissioner Bucher welcomed Rick Lanier, who is making a presentation on behalf of the US Motto Action Committee.

Mr. Lanier extended an invitation to Craven County to join the growing list of cities and counties to display "In God We Trust" on public buildings. He stated that displaying the motto promotes patriotism; gives ceremonial honor and expresses confidence in our country.

Mr. Lanier provided a background of its development in US history, highlighting that in July of 1956 United States Congress adopted "In God We Trust" as the official national motto, which affords its protection by the First Amendment. He indicated it is funded 100% by private donations and sixty NC Counties, and forty-six NC Municipalities have adopted it to date.

County Manager, Jack Veit, referred the Board to Attachment #2, which includes a resolution, as well as diagrams of two different options for the front of the County Administration Building. The Board was in consensus to utilize the rounded part of the building for display, as well as inside over the Commissioners' desks.

Commissioner Mark motioned to approve the following resolution, as presented, seconded by Commissioner Mitchell and approved 7-0 in a roll call vote.

**RESOLUTION BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE COUNTY OF CRAVEN,
IN THE STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA,
SUPPORTING THE DISPLAY OF THE NATIONAL MOTTO
"IN GOD WE TRUST" IN A PROMINENT LOCATION
ON ADMINISTRATION BUILDING IN NEW BERN, NORTH CAROLINA**

WHEREAS, "In God We Trust" became the United States national motto on July 30, 1956, shortly after our nation led the world through the trauma of World War II and

WHEREAS, "In God We Trust" has been used on United States currency since 1864: and

WHEREAS, this inspiring motto has been an integral part of United States society since it's founding; and

WHEREAS, the same inspiring slogan is engraved above the entrance to the Senate Chamber as well as above the Speaker's dais in the House of Representatives: and

WHEREAS, in both war and peace, these words have been a profound source of strength and guidance to many generations of Americans; and

WHEREAS, the National Anthem of the United States says, "... and this be our motto: in God is our trust;" and

WHEREAS, the Declaration of independence recognizes God, our Creator, as the source of our rights; and

WHEREAS, in 2011, the United States House of Representatives passed House Concurrent Resolution 13, which reaffirmed "In God We Trust" as the official motto of the United States and supported and encouraged the display of the national motto; and

WHEREAS, a number of our presidents have written or spoken about religion and God, with President John F. Kennedy stating, “The guiding principle and prayer of this Nation has been, is now, and shall ever be “In God We Trust”

WHEREAS, the County desires to display this patriotic motto in a way to solemnize public occasions and express confidence in our society.

NOW THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED THAT:

Section 1. That the Board of Commissioners of the County of Craven, North Carolina, does hereby determine that the historic and patriotic words of our national motto, “In God We Trust” shall be permanently and prominently displayed on the Administration Building at 406 Craven Street, New Bern, North Carolina, and to remain there in perpetuity.

Section 2. The County Clerk shall certify to the passage and adoption of this resolution and enter it into the book of resolutions.

PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED at a regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the County of Craven, North Carolina, held on the 21st Day of March 2022.

DEPARTMENTAL MATTERS: RECREATION – MASTER PLAN UPDATE

Recreation & Parks Director, Billy Wilkes, reported that in 2015, the Craven County Board of Commissioners approved a Comprehensive Recreation Master Plan for Craven County with work performed by East Carolina University staff and students. The plan was at a cost of \$25,000.00 and was grant funded.

Mr. Wilkes presented a PowerPoint of the 2022 Recreation Department Master Plan update, which included an executive summary, designed to be a short overview of the master plan update and a citizen needs assessment. The update also included programs, parks, and accessibility improvements since 2015.

He stated the Needs Assessment was designed to seek citizen input into the direction of recreation in Craven County over the next several years. The Recreation Department was able to secure almost 350 responses with all districts responding. The hard copies were located at town halls, libraries, health department locations and the recreation office. Electronic input was available through Facebook and the recreation department website.

He requested approval of the 2022 update of this plan, and recognized contributions from all recreation department staff on this project.

There were inquiries about water access; more centralized lacrosse fields; improved signage, specifically mentioning Latham Whitehurst Park and the acreage of each park for development.

Commissioner Mitchell motioned to approve the 2022 Master Plan Update, as presented, seconded by Commissioner Smith, and was approved unanimously.

DEPARTMENTAL MATTERS: PLANNING – CDBG NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION GRANT

Planning Director, Don Baumgardner, reported that the Planning Department was officially notified by the North Carolina Department of Commerce Rural Economic Development Division that Craven County will be receiving a \$750,000.00 grant. The proposed budget includes the following housing related CDBG activities: Rehabilitation: \$675,000.00 and Program Administration: \$75,000.00, for a total of \$750,000.00.

He stated the County will utilize these grant funds to perform rehabilitation activities on up to six (6) structures depending on final bid amounts. Currently, the needs assessment and qualification determinations are being completed, so individual recipients have not been chosen at this time.

He stated the Planning Department sent out a request for proposals for grant administration services to seven firms and posted the RFP on the State of North Carolina Interactive Purchasing System. Two firms sent in proposals, with Insight Planning and Development, LLC, receiving the highest rating based on the specific items requested within the RFP.

Mr. Baumgardner indicated that Craven County has been working with Insight Planning and Development, LLC, formerly known as Holland Consulting Planners since 1987 and has been satisfied with their work. Insight Planning and Development, LLC is currently working on the County’s Hurricane Expedited Buyout Program. He requested that the Board award this grant administration contract to Insight Planning and Development, LLC; approve the grant agreement, adopt the Project Budget Ordinance and the Budget Amendment, in order to move forward with the administration of these grant funds.

Commissioner Mitchell motioned to award the contract to Insight Planning and Development, LLC and to approve the grant agreement, Project Budget Ordinance and Budget Amendment, as requested, seconded by Commissioner Liner.

Motions were approved 7-0 in a roll call vote.

Community Development Block Grant – Neighborhood Revitalization
CDBG-NR
Fund 292 (241)

Expenditures:

Construction and Rehabilitation	\$1,500,000.00
TOTAL	\$1,500,000.00

The Following revenue is hereby received
Community Development Block Grant – Neighborhood Revitalization CDBG-NR

Revenues:

NC Dept of Commerce/Rural Economic Development Division	\$1,500,000.00
TOTAL	\$1,500,000.00

This ordinance is hereby approved this 21st day of March 2022

Planning

REVENUES	AMOUNT	EXPENDITURES	AMOUNT
2410000-33321 NC Dept. of Commerce	\$750,000.00	2414910-47600 Construction	\$750,000.00
TOTAL	\$750,000.00	TOTAL	\$750,000.00

Justification: Craven County has been awarded \$750,000 from North Carolina Department of Commerce under the Community Development Block Gant Neighborhood Revitalization Program. This funding will be used to perform rehabilitation on up to six structures depending on final bid amounts.

APPOINTMENTS

Pending

Chairman Jones reviewed the following pending appointments:

- Community Child Protection Team
- Craven Aging Planning Board

*Current**Fire Tax Commissioners*

Commissioner Bucher nominated applicant Brentley Hart for appointment to the Fire Tax Commission to replace Reuben Hart. There being no additional nominations, Mr. Hart was appointed by acclamation.

It was the consensus of the Board to defer appointments/ reappointments to the Craven County Board of Adjustments and Board of Equalization and Review.

Upcoming

Chairman Jones reviewed upcoming appointments to boards and committees with terms due to expire in April/May 2022.

COUNTY ATTORNEY'S REPORT

Approval of Conveyance after Expiration of Upset Bid Period – 1275 Temples Point Rd., New Bern (Parcel Number 5-008-016)

County Attorney, Arey Grady, reported that Craven County previously received and approved an offer to purchase this real property, in the amount of \$8,200.00, subject to the completion of the upset bid process. The offer was advertised, and there were no upset bids, the final bid being \$8,200.00. The upset bid period has now expired, and Mr. Grady recommended approval of the conveyance at the purchase price of \$8,200.00. The County originally acquired this property through a tax foreclosure, with past due taxes and costs of foreclosure totaling \$12,228.46. The tax value of this property is \$15,000.00.

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 Mitchell motioned to adopt the following resolution approving conveyance after expiration of the upset bid period, seconded by Commissioner Liner 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 5-008-016 (hereinafter “the Real Property”), the Real Property having been acquired by Craven County in deed recorded in Book 3709 Page 1051 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 \$8,200.00 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 21st DAY OF MARCH, 2022.

COUNTY MANAGER'S REPORT

County Manager, Jack Veit, announced that on Thursday, March 24, Commissioner McCabe will be hosting the Regional NC Association of County Commissioners' District Meeting at the New Bern Riverfront Convention Center from 5:30 pm-7:00.

Mr. Veit commented on a series of recent meetings with partners, specifically Hwy. 70 Corridor where there is a lot going on with emphasis on the Kinston By-Pass. He relayed that DOT is pushing for this and will hold a public meeting in Kinston in April.

He highlighted a report received from the DIX center, citing the highest amount of usage in February 2022. A total of 16 individuals of which four were diverted from the emergency room and one from the jail utilized the facility.

Mr. Veit reported that Human Resources had followed procedures to locate a Voluntary Employee Benefits Broker and Consulting Service to assist with strategically planning, designing, and negotiating the best coverage and cost for the County's voluntary employee benefit programs, inclusive of flexible spending, life insurance, vision insurance, critical care insurance, and others. After a thorough review and analysis, Mark III, a Charlotte-based benefits broker was selected. There is no cost to Craven County, as the broker company receives payment via commissions provided by the benefit plans; and it is expected Mark III will save costs normally incurred by Craven County through covering flexible spending account monthly fees.

COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS

Commissioner Mitchell had nothing to report.

Commissioner Liner had nothing to report.

Commissioner Smith had nothing to report.

Commissioner Mark reported that as of Friday, March 18th, the hospital had eight COVID cases, with only one in ICU.

Mr. Mark commented on a mailer he received from Craven Community College, stating that when former Commissioner Jonnie Sampson was here, he spoke compassionately about how we are helping people who attend the college to get jobs, but needed to help people with trades. Mr. Mark highlighted they are now promoting many trades such as trucking, welding, bricklaying, among other trades and professions offered at CCC at no cost.

Chairman Jones echoed Commissioner Mark's remark and thanked the CCC Board of Trustees for choosing this route. Commissioner Mitchell, who serves on the Board of Trustees referenced the success of the VOLT Center.

Commissioner McCabe had nothing to report.

Commissioner Bucher had nothing to report.

Chairman Jones had nothing to report.

CLOSED SESSION

At 9:30 am, Commissioner Mitchell motioned to go into closed session, pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11 (a)(4), to discuss matters relating to the location or expansion of industries or other businesses in the area served by the public body. Her motion was seconded by Commissioner Liner and unanimously approved.

At 10:05 am, Commissioner Mitchell motioned to return to Open Session, seconded by Commissioner Liner and unanimously approved. There was no action to report.

At 10:05 am, Commissioner Mitchell motioned to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner Mark, and unanimously approved.

Chairman Jason R. Jones
Craven County Board of Commissioners

Nan Holton
Clerk to the Board