

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 WEDNESDAY, JULY 5, 2023. THE MEETING CONVENED AT 6:00 PM.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

- Chairman Jason R. Jones
- Vice-Chairman Denny Bucher
- Commissioner Chadwick Howard
- Commissioner Sherry Hunt
- 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
- Lauren Wargo, Assistant to the County Manager
- Nan Holton, Clerk to the Board

County Attorney, Arey Grady, recited the following invocation, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Gracious God, watch over our county now and in the days ahead. Guide and bless our Commissioners in their pursuit of faithful administration and wise laws. Grant them wisdom and integrity in the exercise of their duties. In the complexities of the issues they seek to address, give them quiet spirits and courageous hearts. Keep our Nation under Your care. Amen.

Based upon the invocation given by Reverend John A. Kellogg, at the April 23, 2023 session of the US House of Representatives

Commissioner Mark motioned to approve the agenda, as presented, seconded by Commissioner Mitchell 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 June 5, 2023 Regular Session, Minutes of June 19, 2023 Regular Session, Tax Releases and Refunds (*Credits = \$2,004.00; Refunds = \$337.68*), Recreation - Re-budget International Paper Grant – Budget Amendment and Sheriff – International Paper Donation Check – Budget Amendment. Commissioner Mitchell seconded the motion, which carried in a 7-0 roll call vote.

Recreation & Parks

REVENUES	AMOUNT	EXPENDITURES	AMOUNT
1010000-39901 Current Year Fund Balance	\$5,000.00	1015910-47302 C/O Other Improvements	\$5,000.00
TOTAL	\$5,000.00	TOTAL	\$5,000.00

Justification: This is a grant from International Paper that was received in fiscal year 2023 that will need to re-budgeted in FY 2024 in the amount of \$5,000. The grant will go towards the development of the beach volleyball courts at West Craven Park.

Sheriff's Office

REVENUES	AMOUNT	EXPENDITURES	AMOUNT
1014310-38301 Misc. Revenue	\$1,000.00	1014310-43240 Other Supplies	\$1,000.00
TOTAL	\$1,000.00	TOTAL	\$1,000.00

Justification: The Sheriff's Office has received a donation from International Paper in the amount of \$1,000.00. These funds will be used to purchase a variety of items related to the Sheriff's Office needs.

DEPARTMENTAL MATTERS: CARTS

NCDOT/IMD Change Request – Budget Amendment

CARTS Director, Kelly Walker-Cuthrell, reported the North Carolina Department of Transportation / Integrated Mobility Division (NCDOT/IMD) approved new vehicle contracts in FY 2022-2023, which included a substantial increase in the cost of vehicles. The additional amount was due to increased chassis and bus fabrication costs. She relayed for vehicles previously approved in the FY2022-2023 grant, NCDOT/IMD is providing funding for the additional costs, less the increased local match portion. For CARTS, that computes into a local match increase of \$12,090. She stated staff feels confident that the higher resale value of light transit vehicles will be sufficient to cover the increased local match portion.

Mrs. Cuthrell requested approval of a budget amendment in the amount of \$120,900.00 and authorization to proceed with documents required to increase the amount of the combined capital grant by \$120,900 of which \$108,810 will be state funding and \$12,090 will be local match generated by CARTS. This will allow CARTS to purchase the second revenue vehicle which was approved in the FY2022-2023 budget but could not be ordered due to the price increase.

Commissioner Mitchell motioned to approve the following budget amendment, in the amount of \$120,900.00, and to authorize staff to proceed with the required documents to accept the additional funding from NCDOT/IMP for the purchase of the seconded replacement light transit vehicle from FY 2022-2023. Her motion was seconded by Commissioner Mark and approved 7-0 in a roll call vote.

CARTS

REVENUES	AMOUNT	EXPENDITURES	AMOUNT
1014511-37000 Section 18 Capital	\$108,810.00	1014510-47301 Capital Outlay – Over \$5,000	\$12,900.00
1014511-38204 Mis Rev Section 18 Vehicle	\$ 12,090.00		
TOTAL	\$120,900.00	TOTAL	\$120,900.00

Re-budget of Previously Approved Replacement Vehicle

Mrs. Cuthrell stated that CARTS was approved to purchase two (2) replacement vehicles in the FY2022-2023 Budget. However, once the North Carolina Department of Transportation / Integrated Mobility Division (NCDOT/IMD) approved a new statewide contract for the procurement of vehicles, the cost per vehicle was significantly higher than the expiring contract. The additional expenses were attributable to increased chassis and bus fabrication costs. The required procurement documents were not released by the State until May 5, 2023.

She indicated at that time, CARTS ordered one vehicle so as not to miss the production window for this vehicle cycle. CARTS ordered one (1) vehicle instead of two (2) because the approved amount in the State grant and corresponding approved budget could not support the cost of both vehicles. Mrs. Cuthrell requested approval of a budget amendment in the amount of \$98,715 to re-budget the cost of one (1) replacement vehicle that was previously approved and budgeted in FY2022-2023.

Commissioner Mitchell motioned to approve the following budget amendment, in the amount of \$98,715.000, for the purchase of a vehicle previously ordered in FY 2022-2023. Her motion was seconded by Commissioner Smith and approved 7-0 in a roll call vote.

CARTS

REVENUES	AMOUNT	EXPENDITURES	AMOUNT
1014511-37000	\$88,844.00	1014510-47301	\$98,715.00
Section 18 Capital		Capital Outlay – Over \$5,000	
1014511-38204	\$ 9,871.00		
Mis Rev Section 18 Vehicle			
TOTAL	\$98,715.00	TOTAL	\$98,715.00

County Manager, Jack Veit, took the opportunity to announce that on July 17th at 11:00 am, there will be a ribbon cutting at the new CARTS building and he requested the Commissioners to mark their calendars.

DEPARTMENTAL MATTERS: RECREATION & PARKS

Recreation Truck Purchase – Budget Amendment

Recreation & Parks Director, Billy Wilkes, reported that in Fiscal Year 2022-2023, the Board of Commissioners approved \$33,068 for the purchase of a new Ford truck for the Recreation Department. The truck was ordered in August 2022 and still has not been delivered due to several production delays. He stated Ford Motor Company assured staff that the order will still be fulfilled.

Mr. Wilkes requested that the \$33,068.00 that was budgeted in FY 2022-2023 be re-budgeted to FY 2023-2024.

Commissioner Mark motioned to approve the following budget amendment, in the amount of \$33,068.00, to re-budget the funds to complete the purchase of the previously approved Ford truck for the Recreation Department, seconded by Commissioner Mitchell and approved 7-0 in a roll call vote.

Recreation

REVENUES	AMOUNT	EXPENDITURES	AMOUNT
1010000-39901	\$33,068.00	1015910-47301	\$33,068.00
Current Year Fund Balance		C/O over \$5,000	
TOTAL	\$33,068.00	TOTAL	\$33,068.00

Re-budget Pickleball Court Project Money – Budget Amendment

Mr. Wilkes reported that in the Fiscal Year 2022-2023 budget, the Board of Commissioners approved \$150,000 for 6 new pickleball courts at Creekside Park.

Also, in FY 2022-2023 the Recreation Department was awarded a Harold Bate Foundation grant in the amount of \$30,000 to be utilized in the construction and development of the new pickleball courts.

He stated that after a few contractor delays, construction of the project started in June. The projected completion of the pickleball courts project is late July/early August. Mr. Wilkes requested to re-budget the total amount of \$180,000 for fiscal year 2024 so the pickleball courts project can be completed.

Commissioner Mark expressed dismay that all six pickleball courts were being installed at Creekside Park.

Commissioner Mitchell motioned to approve the following budget amendment, in the amount of \$180,000.00, as requested, seconded by Commissioner Hunt and approved 6-1 in a roll call vote. There being one “nay” from Commissioner Mark.

Recreation

REVENUES	AMOUNT	EXPENDITURES	AMOUNT
1015910-39802	\$150,000.00	1015910-47302	\$150,000.00
Transfer from Reserve		C/O Other Improvements	
1015910-33500	\$ 30,000.00	1015910-47302	\$ 30,000.00
Bate Foundation		C/O Other Improvements	
TOTAL	\$180,000.00	TOTAL	\$180,000.00

**DEPARTMENTAL MATTERS: SHERIFF
AWARD OF FIREARMS TO RETIREE**

Captain Scott relayed that the Sheriff’s Office would like to sell the assigned service side arm to recently retired Captain Jarrett Hardison under the provisions of NCGS 20-187.2. He indicated this statute states that the governing body of law enforcement agency may in its discretion, award to a retiring member, upon request, the service side arm of such retiring member. The price has traditionally been set at one dollar, at which we will honor the same price for the above retiree.

Commissioner Smith motioned to approve the sale of assigned service side arm to recently retired Captain Jarret Hardison, as requested, seconded by Commissioner Mitchell and approved 7-0 in a roll call vote.

APPOINTMENTS

Pending

Chairman Jones reviewed the following pending appointments:

- Craven Clean Sweep
- Emergency Medical Services
- Fireman’s Relief Fund Board (District 5)
- Highway 70 Corridor Committee
- Volunteer Agricultural District (District 6)
- Craven County Recreation Advisory

Current

Craven County Recreation Advisory Board

Commissioner Mitchell nominated Matt Webb for reappointment. Commissioner Mark nominated Chad Braxton for reappointment. Commissioner Mark nominated David Santaigo for appointment to fill the vacant seat left by Daniel Miller, who is not eligible for reappointment. There being no additional nominations, Mr. Webb and Mr. Braxton were reappointed by acclamation and Mr. Santaigo was appointed by acclamation.

Havelock Board of Adjustment

Commissioner Hunt nominated Thomas McCarthy for reappointment. An appointment to fill the vacated seat left by Reuben Mikul was deferred until the Board's next meeting. There being no additional nominations, Mr. McCarthy was reappointed by acclamation. The Board will be provided with an ETJ eligible list prior to the next meeting.

Craven Community Child Protection Team

Commissioner Mitchell nominated Emily McDonald for reappointment. There being no additional nominations, Ms. McDonald was reappointed by acclamation.

Juvenile Crime Prevention Council

Commissioner Hunt nominated Wendy Peaden for reappointment. There being no additional nominations, Ms. Peaden was reappointed by acclamation.

Craven County ABC Board

Commissioner Mark motioned to defer consideration of this appointment until after the ribbon cutting of the new ABC building in Bridgeton. The Board was in consensus.

Upcoming

Chairman Jones reviewed upcoming appointments to boards and committees.

COUNTY ATTORNEY'S REPORT

Initial Offer to Purchase Real Property – 2308 Pearson Street, New Bern (Parcel # 8-039-040)

County Attorney, Arey Grady, reported that Craven County has received an offer in the amount of \$2,500.00 for this real property, which was acquired jointly with the City of New Bern through a tax foreclosure, with past due taxes and costs of foreclosure totaling \$4,624.39. He indicated the tax value of this property is \$5,000.00.

He noted that this property is jointly owned with the City of New Bern, which has already approved this initial offer.

Mr. Grady stated should the Board of Commissioners approve this transaction, the proposed resolution should be adopted, which will in turn authorize advertisement for upset bids. Once the upset bid process is concluded, this transaction will be brought back before the Board of Commissioners for final approval.

Commissioner Mitchell motioned to adopt the following resolution approving the transaction and authorizing the upset bid process, seconded by Commissioner Mark and approved unanimously.

CRAVEN COUNTY RESOLUTION ACCEPTING OFFER TO PURCHASE SUBJECT TO UPSET BIDS

WHEREAS, Craven County and the City of New Bern own certain real property identified as Tax Parcel Number 8-039-040 (hereinafter "the Real Property"), the Real Property having been acquired by Craven County and the City of New Bern in deed recorded in Book 3544, Page 0733 in the Office of the Register of Deeds of Craven County; and,

WHEREAS, Craven County and the City of New Bern have received an Offer to Purchase the Real Property, a copy of said offer being attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference; and,

WHEREAS, the City of New Bern has previously approved said offer: and,

WHEREAS, the Craven County Board of Commissioners is authorized to sell Craven County's interest in real property pursuant to North Carolina General Statute §160A-269.

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

1. The Craven County Board of Commissioners hereby authorizes the initiation of the upset bid process for the Real Property by advertising notice of the offer to purchase in accordance with the provisions of North Carolina General Statute §160A-269.

2. 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.

ADOPTED THIS 5th DAY OF JULY, 2023.

Initial Offer to Purchase Real Property – 1724 Rhem Avenue, New Bern (Parcel #8-024-094)

Mr. Grady reported that Craven County has received an offer in the amount of \$10,200.00 for this real property, which was acquired jointly with the City of New Bern through a tax foreclosure, with past due taxes and costs of foreclosure totaling \$6,867.59. The tax value of this property is \$20,250.00.

He noted that this property is jointly owned with the City of New Bern, which has already approved this initial offer.

Mr. Grady relayed that should the Board of Commissioners approve this transaction, the proposed resolution should be adopted, which will in turn authorize advertisement for upset bids. Once the upset bid process is concluded, this transaction will be brought back before the Board of Commissioners for final approval.

Commissioner Mark motioned to adopt the following resolution approving the transaction and authorizing the upset bid process, seconded by Commissioner Hunt and approved unanimously.

**CRAVEN COUNTY
RESOLUTION ACCEPTING OFFER TO PURCHASE
SUBJECT TO UPSET BIDS**

WHEREAS, Craven County and the City of New Bern own certain real property identified as Tax Parcel Number 8-024-094 (hereinafter "the Real Property"), the Real Property having been acquired by Craven County and the City of New Bern in deed recorded in Book 3560, Page 0893 in the Office of the Register of Deeds of Craven County; and,

WHEREAS, Craven County and the City of New Bern have received an Offer to Purchase the Real Property, a copy of said offer being attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference; and,

WHEREAS, the City of New Bern has previously approved said offer: and,

WHEREAS, the Craven County Board of Commissioners is authorized to sell Craven County's interest in real property pursuant to North Carolina General Statute §160A-269.

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

1. The Craven County Board of Commissioners hereby authorizes the initiation of the upset bid process for the Real Property by advertising notice of the offer to purchase in accordance with the provisions of North Carolina General Statute §160A-269.

2. 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.

ADOPTED THIS 5th DAY OF JULY, 2023.

PETITIONS OF CITIZENS – GENERAL TOPICS

The following citizen signed up to speak:

1. *Thomas Pittman, 1024 Walt Bellamy Drive,*

COUNTY MANAGER’S REPORT

County Manager, Jack Veit, expressed Happy New Year to the Commissioners, as the 2024 Fiscal Budget is now in place.

COMMISSIONERS’ REPORTS

Commissioner Mark reported on a recent meeting in Fairfield Harbour.

Commissioner Hunt had nothing to report.

Commissioner Smith had nothing to report.

Commissioner Mitchell hoped all enjoyed the Fourth of July holiday and celebrated our Declaration of Independence.

Commissioner Bucher stated it was interesting and encouraging to see the number of celebrations over the Fourth of July holiday, with several parades and lots of fireworks. He remarked we all should be thankful for our heritage and hoped everyone understood what they were celebrating.

Commissioner Jones expressed appreciation to our sheriff deputies, especially Deputy Sumner for being present at the Board of Commissioners’ meetings.

CLOSED SESSION

At 6:23 pm, Commissioner Mitchell motioned to go into closed session pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11 (a)(1) to prevent the disclosure of information that is privileged or confidential; and 143-318.11 (a)(3) to consult with an attorney. Her motion was seconded by Commissioner Mark and unanimously approved.

At 6:30 pm, the Board returned to open session.

County Attorney, Arey Grady, reported that no action was taken.

At 6:33 pm, Commissioner Mitchell motioned to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner Hunt and approved unanimously.

Chairman Jason R. Jones
Craven County Board of Commissioners

Nan Holton
Clerk to the Board