

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, SEPTEMBER 18, 2023. THE MEETING CONVENED AT 8:30 A.M.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

- Chairman Jason R. Jones
- Vice-Chairman Denny Bucher
- Commissioner Chadwick Howard
- Commissioner Sherry Hunt
- Commissioner Beatrice R. Smith

MEMBERS EXCUSED:

- Commissioner Thomas Mark
- Commissioner E. T. Mitchell

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.

Good and gracious God, we pray for a spirit of gratitude in this Chamber and throughout our County and our Nation. May we be truly grateful from the bottom of our hearts for all the good You have done for us. We give thanks for the grace of life, which we cherish, and we especially give thanks for the gift of eternal life, which You offer us as a sheer gift of Your self-sacrificing love. We thank You. We bless You. We glorify You.

We pray all this in Thy sacred name. Amen.

Based upon the invocation given by [Monsignor Stephen J. Rossetti](#), at the April 3, 2023 session of the US House of Representatives

Chairman Jones requested to add 5.B under Sheriff’s Department for consideration of an additional School Resource Officer at West Craven High School.

Commissioner Bucher motioned to approve the agenda, as amended, seconded by Commissioner Smith and approved unanimously.

CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Hunt motioned to approve the Consent Agenda, inclusive of the Minutes of September 5, 2023; Tax Releases and Refunds (**Credits = \$15,291.07; Refunds = \$1,033.48**); and Information Technology New World Records Management System (RMS) Maintenance Increase Budget Amendment. Commissioner Smith seconded the motion which was approved 5-0 in a roll call vote.

Sheriff

REVENUES	AMOUNT	EXPENDITURES	AMOUNT
1010000-39901	\$14,050.00	1014310-44000	\$14,050.00
Current Year Fund Balance		Contract Services	

TOTAL	\$14,050.00	TOTAL	\$14,050.00
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Justification: Additional funds requested to cover increased costs of New World (Tyler) FY24 renewal. The numbers used during budget preparation did not include enough of an increase based on previous years’ trends.

**DEPARTMENTAL MATTERS: SOLID WASTE
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT CONSULTING SERVICES**

Solid Waste Director, Steven Aster, reported that as part of disaster preparedness, Craven County has held a prepositioned Emergency Management Consulting contract for natural disasters and to provide aid to other County Departments in the completion of grant applications associated with disaster recovery and resiliency projects.

He stated that on August 7, 2023, staff published a request for proposals for Emergency Management Consulting Services. The proposals were due by August 21, 2023, with one proposal being received. Craven County staff decided to republish the request for proposals due to not satisfying the minimum requirements of receiving more than one proposal. The new publication date was August 22, 2023, with proposals due back by September 1, 2023. Craven County received two (2) proposals on September 1, 2023. Mr. Aster stated that after review and rating by the review team, staff requested the Board of Commissioners award Insight Planning and Development the Emergency Management Consulting Services contract. He indicated Insight Planning and Development has extensive knowledge of Craven County and has project managers in place with a long work history associated with Craven County disaster recovery and resiliency projects.

Mr. Aster recommended the Craven County Board of Commissioners award a one-year contract with four (4) one (1) year renewals to Insight Planning and Development to provide emergency management consulting services.

Commissioner Hunt motioned to contract with Insight Planning and Development to provide emergency management consulting services and to authorize staff to complete all needed documents or agreements. Her motion was seconded by Commissioner Smith and approved unanimously.

DEPARTMENTAL MATTERS: SOCIAL SERVICES

Supplemental Low-Income Housing Energy Assistance Program Funding (LIHEAP) – Budget Amendment

Social Services Director, Geoffrey Marett, reported the state has released the Supplemental Low-Income Housing Energy Assistance Program funding to counties. He remarked this is an annual project which starts in December and lasts until March or until the funds are depleted. Mr. Marett indicated this funding is 100% Federal, with no County match required. Payments will be made directly to vendors on behalf of eligible participants.

Mr. Marett requested approval of a budget amendment in the amount of \$323,988.00.

Commissioner Hunt motioned to approve the following budget amendment, as requested, in the amount of \$323,988.00, seconded by Commissioner Smith and approved 5-0 in a roll call vote.

Mandated 5215, Admin 5210

REVENUES	AMOUNT	EXPENDITURES	AMOUNT
1015215-33424 Energy Assistance	\$323,988.00	1015215-42307 Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)	\$323,988.00
TOTAL	\$323,988.00	TOTAL	\$323,988.00

Roll Forward Funds for Replacement County Vehicle – Budget Amendment

Mr. Marett requested approval of a budget amendment in the amount of \$28,593.00, to roll forward funds from FY 2022-2023 to pay for a replacement county vehicle that was not received last fiscal year. Commissioner Hunt motioned to approve the following budget amendment, as requested, in the amount of \$28,593.00, seconded by Commissioner Bucher and approved 5-0 in a roll call vote.

5210 Admin

REVENUES	AMOUNT	EXPENDITURES	AMOUNT
1010000-39901 Fund Balance	\$28,593.00	1015210-47301 C/O Over \$5,000	\$28,593.00
TOTAL	\$28,593.00	TOTAL	\$28,593.0

DEPARTMENTAL MATTERS: HEALTH

Animal Shelter Fee Proposals

Tanya Osler, Veterinarian for the Craven-Pamlico Animal Services Center, requested the Board’s approval to modify, discontinue and add some fees to the current schedule in her department.

Commissioner Bucher motioned to approve the following fee proposals, as requested, seconded by Commissioner Hunt and approved unanimously.

- **Adoption Cat:** \$80 (includes vaccine & rabies for cats over 4 months, microchip, FIV/FeLV test & spay/neuter for cats over 3 pounds): **Existing fee modification**
- **Adoption Dog:** \$125 (includes vaccine & rabies for dogs over 4 months, microchip, heartworm test for dogs over 6 months & spay/neuter for dogs over 16 weeks old): **Existing fee modification**
- **Senior Cats for Senior Laps:** \$10 (any cat over 5 years of age can be adopted for \$10 to a senior over 60 years of age): **Existing fee modification**
- **Bordetella Vaccine:** **Discontinue fee**
- **FIV/FeLV Heartworm Test/SNAP Heartworm:** \$25: **Existing fee modification**
- **Rescue Pull Neutered-Spayed/Intact (501c3 only):** \$25/cat and \$50/dog for entered-spayed or \$0 if not neutered/spayed to approved rescues with application and 501c3 on file: **Existing fee modification**
- **Health Certificate for rescue transport (501c3 only):** \$35 per page (max 6 animals of one species per page): **New fee**
- **Elizabethan Collars (e-collar/cone):** \$10: **New fee**
- **“Lonely Hearts Club”:** 50% off of adoption fee for animals with length of stay longer than 50 days: **New fee**
- **Animal Carriers:** \$10: **New fee**

Ms. Osler provided an update to the Board on activities at the Animal Shelter. She reported on the Open House and indicated it was a roaring success, with lots of visits, adoptions and donations. She remarked on the information on their Facebook page and gave stats for total adoptions in comparison to this time last year.

The Board expressed their appreciation for her and the programs she has implemented.

Additional State Funds – Budget Amendment

Health Director, Scott Harrelson, reported the Craven County Health Department has been awarded a total of \$344,667.00 in State funding over a 5-year period which can be used to recruit and hire new public health staff to better serve, protect, and respond to public health needs.

He requested acceptance of the total funding amount (\$344,667.00) and approval of a budget amendment to utilize a portion of this funding (\$107,847.00) at this time to cover the expense of hiring a full-time Advanced Practice Provider/Nurse Practitioner. He indicated the health department has a growing demand for adult primary care services.

Commissioner Howard motioned to accept State Funding in the amount of \$344,667.00 and to approve the following budget amendment, in the amount of \$107,847.00, to go towards a Nurse Practitioner position. Commissioner Bucher seconded the motion, which was approved in a 5-0 roll call vote.

Mr. Harrelson addressed questions about revenue to sustain this position and Medicaid expansion.

Health/Adult Primary Care

REVENUES	AMOUNT	EXPENDITURES	AMOUNT
1015100-33301 State Grant	\$42,499.00	1015100-41002 Full-Time Employees	\$30,667.00
1015102-33301 State Grant	\$65,348.00	1015100-41101 FICA	\$ 2,346.00
		1015100-41102 NC Retirement	\$ 3,956.00
		1015100-41103 401K	\$ 1,533.00
		1015100-41104 Workers Comp	\$ 865.00
		1015100-41106 Health Insurance	\$ 2,898.00
		1015100-41107 Dental Insurance	\$ 216.00
		1015100-41108 Life Insurance	\$ 7.00
		1015100-41109 Disability Insurance	\$ 11.00
		1015102-41002 Full-Time Employees	\$46,001.00
		1015102-41102 FICA	\$ 3,519.00
		1015102-41102 NC Retirement	\$ 5,934.00
		1015102-41103 401K	\$ 2,300.00
		1015102-41104 Workers Comp	\$ 1,297.00
		1015102-41106 Health Insurance	\$ 4,347.00
		1015102-41107 Dental Insurance	\$ 342.00
		1015102-41108 Life Insurance	\$ 10.00
		1015102-41109 Disability Insurance	\$ 16.00
		1015100-41515 Dues/Subscriptions	\$ 200.00
		1015100-44000	\$ 1,400.00
TOTAL	\$107,847.00	TOTAL	\$107,847.00

County Manager Jack Veit referenced a recent email from Clayton Gaskins, Hospice Director, regarding their staffing and revenues, and requested Mr. Harrelson provide the details.

Mr. Harrelson reported Hospice is fully staffed now and has averaged 35 patients the first two months of this fiscal year. He indicated being fully staffed they could handle up to 55 patients and currently have 43 in house.

**DEPARTMENTAL MATTERS: SHERIFF
COVID GRANT ROLLOVER FUNDS FROM FY20 TO FY24**

Sheriff Chip Hughes requested the Board’s approval of a budget amendment in the amount of \$15,321.00 to move funds that were allocated for a Covid-19 grant, in the amount of \$73,892.00, that was awarded and approved during FY23 but was not completed. He indicated these rollover funds will be used to purchase more cleaning supplies and gloves.

Commissioner Hunt motioned to approve the following budget amendment, in the amount of \$15,321.00, seconded by Commissioner Smith and approved 5-0 in a roll call vote.

Sheriff (Jail)

REVENUES	AMOUNT	EXPENDITURES	AMOUNT
1014316-33301 State Grant	\$15,321.00	1014316-43207 Janitorial	\$15,321.00
TOTAL	\$15,321.00	TOTAL	\$15,321.00

Additional School Resource Office (SRO) at West Craven High School

Sheriff Hughes reported on numerous recent incidents involving violence at West Craven High School (WCHS) and requested approval of an additional School Resource Officer at WCHS. He indicated based on the call volume and the school being in a rural community; the response time can be lengthy. He expressed concern for school staff, students, and for his deputies. Sheriff Hughes stated if they consider this, he has two qualified applicants, with appropriate training.

Commissioner Jones remarked he had been approached by the Chair of the School Board and another School Board member relaying support for adding an SRO at WCHS. He indicated they may be able to invest some monies to assist in the future, but if this new SRO is approved today, the County needs to fund the full amount. Mr. Jones cited examples of the WCHS Principal putting himself in the middle of altercations and expressed his support.

Sheriff Hughes addressed questions about what is fueling the increase in violence, what happens to the students involved in the altercations, and tracking the increase of violence through the recent years.

Mr. Veit provided the Board with a breakdown of expenses associated with hiring a new SRO. The salary and benefits, totaling \$74,580.40 are just for the rest of fiscal year 2024. The equipment package totaling \$78,420.00 involves a lot of one-time costs. The total need to add another SRO to WCHS is \$153,000.00.

Commissioner Jones motioned to approve an additional SRO at West Craven High School and to approve a budget amendment in the amount of \$153,000.00, seconded by Commissioner Bucher and approved 5-0 in a roll call vote.

Sheriff – SRO

REVENUES	AMOUNT	EXPENDITURES	AMOUNT
1010000-39901 Current Year Fund Balance	\$153,000.00	1014314-41002 Full-time Salary	\$49,470.00
		1014314-41101 FICA	\$ 3,784.00
		1014314-41102 NC Retirement	\$ 6,645.00

		1014314-41104	\$ 2,473.00
		Workers Comp	
		1014314-41105	\$ 1,470.00
		401K LEO	
		1014314-41106	\$ 9,660.00
		Health	
		1014314-41107	\$ 720.00
		Dental	
		1014314-41108	\$ 22.00
		Life	
		1014314-41109	\$ 36.00
		Disability	
		1014314-47301	\$54,616.00
		Capital Outlay over \$5,000	
		1014314-42200	\$ 1,104.00
		Telephone	
		1014314-43502	\$ 3,500.00
		Uniforms	
		1014314-42500	\$ 1,500.00
		Travel/Training	
		1014314-43101	\$ 3,000.00
		Fuel and Other	
		1014314-47321	\$13,700.00
		Capital Outlay under \$5,000	
		1014314-43233	\$ 1,000.00
		Ammo	
TOTAL	\$153,000.00	TOTAL	\$153,000.00

**DEPARTMENTAL MATTERS: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
ENC TECH BRIDGE – BUDGET AMENDMENT**

Economic Development Director, Jeff Wood, reported that the Economic Development Department, in conjunction with the Coastal Carolina Regional Airport Authority and the Convention Center, have provided a proposal to FRC East to assist them in their effort to establish the ENC Tech Bridge outside of Cherry Point Air Station. He stated Craven County has been awarded an agreement from the Department of Navy to provide the following:

- Event planning for activities such as industry showcase events and industry/academia symposiums.
- Build out of the former church on 634 Airport Road to be a facility for ENC Tech Bridge and companies who want to collaborate.
- Assistance in establishing relationships with universities on engineering projects.
- Assistance in working with the school systems to provide opportunities for teachers to collaborate with FRC East and provide pertinent information back to their classes.

He indicated this agreement will add \$516,048.00 to the Economic Development Department Budget. It is the first of many funding opportunities related to the Partnership Intermediary Agreement (PIA) signed between Craven County and the Department of Navy in 2021.

Mr. Wood responded to questions about staffing and expenditure timelines.

Mr. Wood requested approval of the agreement and a budget amendment in the amount of \$516,048.00.

Commissioner Hunt motioned to authorize the Finance Director to execute the PIA Agreement and to approve the following budget amendment in the amount of \$516,048.00. Her motion was seconded by Commissioner Bucher and approved 5-0 in a roll call vote.

Economic Development

REVENUES	AMOUNT	EXPENDITURES	AMOUNT
1014920-38219 FRC Revenue	\$516,048.00	1014920-44047 Contract Services – PIA	\$516,048.00
TOTAL	\$516,048.00	TOTAL	\$516,048.00

**DEPARTMENTAL MATTERS: INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
STATE AND LOCAL CYBERSECURITY GRANT – BUDGET AMENDMENT**

Information Technology Director, Steve Bennett, reported that in April 2023, the Information Technology Department applied for the State and Local Cybersecurity Grant. He indicated this grant reimburses counties and other local government agencies for cybersecurity related services and technologies. Mr. Bennett stated staff was notified of an award to Craven County in the amount of \$99,944.00 and that funds will be placed into the Capital Outlay line to purchase 2-PA 1410 Palo Alto Next-Fen Firewall with subscriptions, 3 PA-440 Palo Next-Gen Firewall subscriptions, 400 Cortex XDR Pro with services, 400 Cortex XDR with services and 240 Cisco Duo MFAs. He relayed that training will also be required with the purchase of these items for IT staff members.

Mr. Bennett requested approval of a budget amendment in the amount of \$99,944.00.

Commissioner Smith motioned to approve the following budget amendment in the amount of \$99,944.00, seconded by Commissioner Hunt and approved 5-0 in a roll call vote.

Information Technology

REVENUES	AMOUNT	EXPENDITURES	AMOUNT
1014140-33320 Dept. of Public Safety	\$99,944.00	1014140-47301 Capital Outlay over \$5,000	\$75,536.00
		1014140-42500 Travel/Training	\$23,408.00
TOTAL	\$99,944.00	TOTAL	99,944.00

APPOINTMENTS

Pending

Chairman Jones reviewed the following pending appointments:

- Coastal Carolina Regional Airport
- Craven Regional Library
- Havelock Board of Adjustment (ETJ) (document follows)
- Havelock Library
- Highway 70 Corridor Committee
- Volunteer Agricultural District (District 6)

Current

Craven County Clean Sweep

Commissioner Bucher nominated Pat Sager for reappointment. There being no additional nominations, Ms. Sagar was reappointed by acclamation.

Adult Care Home Advisory Committee

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

Upcoming

Chairman Jones reviewed upcoming appointments to boards and committees with terms expiring in October/November.

COUNTY ATTORNEY'S REPORT

County Attorney, Arey Grady, had nothing to report.

COUNTY MANAGER'S REPORT

County Manager, Jack Veit, reported on the timeline for renovations of the New Bern Library, pointing out it would close at its current location on December 1st and open at the old Fireman's Museum location on December 4th. He related the lack of a State Budget affects the timing of this project, which the County lacks control over.

Mr. Veit highlighted the C1A meeting last week on Cherry Point Marine base, which included a tour of FRC.

Mr. Veit indicated he and Human Resources Director, Amber Parker, had attended the RAI Summit: Community Solutions to Recovery in NC last Thursday and Friday. He and Amber presented at the Summit and were sought out by others to learn more about the opioid program in Craven County. He commented on topics that enlightened him, specifically mentioning prenatal opportunities.

Mr. Veit concluded with the fact that a lot is happening in Craven County and it is a great time to be the County Manager, remarking his tenure here started twelve years ago today.

COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

Commissioner Howard indicated he has worked with the WCHS Principal and stated he is very experienced and focused on building relationships with kids. He expressed his support of the new SRO.

Commissioner Smith had nothing to report.

Commissioner Bucher had nothing to report.

Commissioner Jones thanked the Board for supporting the additional SRO at WCHS and thanked the Sheriff for his team of deputies. Mr. Jones also remarked on being present when Jack Veit was hired and all that he endures in the capacity of County Manager.

At 9:44 am, Commissioner Smith motioned to adjourn the meeting. Her motion was seconded by Commissioner Hunt and approved unanimously.

Chairman Jason R. Jones
Craven County Board of Commissioners

Nan Holton
Clerk to the Board