PERSON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEMBERS PRESENT

OCTOBER 3, 2022 OTHERS PRESENT

Gordon Powell
C. Derrick Sims
Ralph Clark, Interim County Manager
Brenda B. Reaves, Clerk to the Board
Kyle W. Puryear
Charlie Palmer
Patricia Gentry

The Board of Commissioners for the County of Person, North Carolina, met in regular session on Monday, October 3, 2022 at 7:00pm in the Person County Office Building Auditorium.

Chairman Powell called the meeting to order. Vice Chairman Sims offered an invocation and Commissioner Puryear led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

DISCUSSION/ADJUSTMENT/APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Chairman Powell requested Board consideration to add the following to the agenda: Appointment of the County Manager and Approval of an Employment Agreement following Closed Session, and an additional Closed Session #2 related to economic development.

A **motion** was made by Chairman Powell and **carried 5-0** to add the noted items above to the agenda and to approve the agenda, as adjusted.

INFORMAL COMMENTS:

The following individuals appeared before the Board to make informal comments:

Mr. Jack Pleasant of 465 Yarbrough Road, Roxboro, and current Chair of the Advisory Leadership Committee with the Agriculture Extension Office addressed the Board about plans to use the auditorium as the Board of Commissioners' meeting space. Mr. Pleasant stated support to improve the acoustics, sounds, and update electronics however noted his concern related to permanent seating unless the Board is seated on the stage area. He added concerns related to blocking access to the elevators and bathrooms.

Ms. Anderson Clayton of 1416 Stone Drive, Roxboro noted her disappointment of the Board that they had not committed to the Splash Pad using the American Rescue Plan funding stating the community voted in 2008 for a rec center and swimming pool to which the Board has failed to meet those needs of the community. She asked the Board to reconsider and reprioritize.

Mr. Jim Hayward of 2844 Leasburg Road, Roxboro stated his interest for the Board to prioritize broadband access in Person County; he spoke of the inadequate service and need for better access, noting it would improve economic development.

Mr. Ronald Epps of 1019 Epps Martin Road, Roxboro presented Operation Greenlight to the Board; he said Operation Greenlight is a national collaborative initiative to support military veterans and to raise awareness about the unique challenges they face. Mr. Epps encouraged businesses and residents to shine a green light, whether interior or exterior from November 7-13, 2022 to let veterans know they are seen, appreciated and supported.

Mr. Bob Brauer of 1 Bobwhite Road, Roxboro, and a member of the Bee Keepers and the Master Garden Society stated these groups meet regularly in the auditorium noting his opposition to the Board to reduce the floor space in the auditorium.

Ms. Ollie Jeffers of 285 Dunaway Road, Semora, a member of Mothers Against Drunk Drivers, Street Safe Highway and High Five appeared before the Board to request Board approval to increase the pay to be competitive noting benefits of the EMS department to the community.

Ms. Kaye Duncan of 1248 Todd Road, Roxboro and the Emergency Services Chaplain stated support of the EMS division and requested the Board to support the pay increases before them on the agenda.

Mr. Ronnie Jeffreys of 70 Westwood Lane, Roxboro and President of the Person Veterans Council thanked the Board for its support of veterans and requested support of the EMS division noting they deserve to be competitive as they are saving lives.

Ms. Cynthia Lynch of 395 Union Grove Church Road, Hurdle Mills stated she was impressed with the Interim County Manager, Ralph Clark, and his initiative on topics such as the Dept. of Social Services building lease, the old Helena School and the proposed sale of the new constructed hangar at the Airport. She also thanked the commissioners for their input to the landfill representative asking for hours on Saturdays; she said the landfill was now going to be open two Saturdays per month, which was originally proposed for no Saturday hours. Ms. Lynch asked the Board to have discussions in open session as people have questions.

Mr. Gerald Wallace of 421 S. Lamar Street, Roxboro asked the Board to reconsider the proposed Splash Pad noting he advocated this activity for the community. He also stated his support for the Board to approve needed increases for the EMS division.

DISCUSSION/ADJUSTMENT/APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA:

A **motion** was made by Commissioner Palmer and **carried 5-0** to approve the Consent Agenda with the following items:

- A. Approval of Minutes of September 6, 2022,
- B. Approval of Minutes of September 14, 2022,
- C. Approval of Minutes of September 19, 2022,
- D. Budget Amendment #7, and
- E. Approval of Contract with U.S. Imaging, Inc. to Scan 1790-1994 Index Books, Deeds and Various Record Books and Plats On-Site with Document Indexing using \$397,239 American Rescue Plan funding

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN FUNDING RECOMMENDATIONS:

Assistant County Manager, Katherine Cathey recalled that Person County received \$7,670,470 in American Rescue Plan Act (ARP) funding. On June 20, 2022, the Board of Commissioners approved a Grant Project Ordinance applying all of the project expenditures to salary and benefits for the Sheriff's Department, Emergency Communications, Emergency Medical Services (EMS), and the Parks and Recreation Department. The supplanted funds (salary and benefits expenditures) will be available in the General Fund for allocation by the Board. To date, the Board has set aside \$2.75 million in ARP funding for broadband infrastructure expansion, \$82,110 for installing wheelchair and cargo lifts in the Kirby Cultural Arts Center, and \$397,239 for the digital imaging of records in the Register of Deeds Office, leaving a remaining uncommitted balance of \$4,441,121.

Ms. Cathey noted at the September 6, 2022 Board meeting, the Board requested staff to bring updated recommendations back for the Board's consideration on this date. She said staff has re-evaluated the proposed projects and considered other possible uses for the County's ARP funds. The following projects are recommended for funding based on the feedback received from the Board and staff over the past month. Ms. Cathey noted since the Board's agenda packet was distributed, staff made a change related to the Energy Savings project to reduce the funding by \$1M to move into the North Park Speculative Manufacturing Building project, which would be designated for general economic development, rather than that specific purpose.

Project	Department	Funding
Energy Savings Installation of new windows in the County Office Building (COB) (built in 1964) and Person High School (built in 1967) to increase energy efficiency. Both of these facilities were built when the average electricity cost was less than 1 cent per Kwh. Today's cost is in the 10-11 cent range. The COB electricity bill for August 2022 was approximately \$5,000, while the bill for the same number of Kwh's in 1965 would have been \$500. A normal bill for the high school during the school year is approximately \$25,000/month. Energy savings, improved building appearance, and improved comfort for building occupants. Priority is recommended for the COB at this time.	General Services	\$1,441,121
Accessible Playground Installation of one universal/ADA playground at Huck Sansbury Park for an inclusive play area; an expressed need by the community.	Recreation, Arts and Parks	\$250,000
Kirby Theater Accessibility Improvements Installation of full-service elevator (\$350,000), accessible restrooms in the lobby (\$200,000), and an additional doorway (\$50,000). The Kirby Cultural Arts Complex is one of the mostused facilities within Person County. It provides citizens with access to arts and other programming and spaces for private rentals. The facility's usage, along with associated revenues and economic impact, suffers due to a lack of ADA accessibility and safety and liability risks created by old equipment and systems.	Recreation, Arts and Parks	\$535,337
Spay, Neuter & Microchip Program Low-cost spay, neuter and microchip program for county residents. Requested funding supports the program for three years.	Animal Services	\$125,000
North Park Speculative Manufacturing Building The goal of the project is to bolster recruitment efforts with new manufacturing space, taking advantage of heightened economic development opportunities considering North Carolina and the Triangle Region for manufacturing operations. The annual carry cost for a speculative building is approximately \$325,000. The funding would enable the County to enter into an agreement to lease the building for up to three years while it is marketed to companies.	Economic Development	\$2,000,000
		\$4,351,458

Ms. Cathey further noted, at this time, the proposals below are not recommended for ARP funding. These projects all have value and may be considered for future funding through other sources.

Project	Department	Funding	
Mobile Adoption Unit	Animal Services	\$190,000	
Transportation for multiple animals and supplies to/from			
adoption events, community events and veterinary			
appointments (spay/neuter).			
New HVAC at Helena and Olive Hill Gymnasiums	Recreation, Arts	\$250,000	
Make these facilities climate-controlled and usable year-	and Parks		
round. There is a need for climate-controlled rental and			
program space within the community.			
Community Risk Reduction Program	Emergency	\$867,700	
Community Risk Reduction (CRR) is a process in which the	Services and Fire		
risks a community faces are studied and then a plan is put	Administration		
into place to address those risks. Emergency Services and			
the Office of the Fire Marshal are in a unique position to			
help address these risks to enhance lives, cut property loss			
and reduce morbidity and mortality.			
County Parks Transformation	Recreation, Arts	\$1,000,000	
Pave gravel parking lots to ensure ADA accessibility.	and Parks		
County Parks Transformation	Recreation, Arts	\$600,000	
Installation of universal/ADA playgrounds (2) and	and Parks		
expansion of walking tracks to include bike lanes (10).			
County Parks Transformation	Recreation, Arts	\$100,000	
Branding and wayfinding signage	and Parks		
County Parks Transformation	Recreation, Arts	\$500,000	
Repair and replace fences.	and Parks		
County Parks Transformation	Recreation, Arts	\$80,000	
New picnic shelters (3)	and Parks		
Kirby Transformation	Recreation, Arts	\$160,000	
Curtain replacements with fire-proofing, new grande	and Parks		
curtain motor, upgrade to stage light system, streaming			
equipment, and scenic roller			
Splash Pad	Recreation, Arts	\$750,000	
There are no public aquatic facilities in Person County. A	and Parks		
splash pad/spray ground has been included in the Person			
County Recreation Master Plan for 20 years. This facility			
will provide equitable water-based recreation for our			
community in a safe and structured environment.			
Additionally, a well-designed splash pad is accessible for			
all kinds of physical abilities and serves as a			
multigenerational place of play.			
Rail Corridor Acquisition and Greenway Planning	Recreation, Arts	\$ 1,097,870	
Acquisition of land currently owned by Norfolk Southern	and Parks		
Railway along an unused rail line stretching 8.7 miles from			
southern Roxboro, through Timberlake, to the Durham			
County line, roughly following the US-501 corridor. Lay			
the groundwork for a potential greenway connecting			
Person County to established greenway networks to the			
south.			

Ms. Cathey stated the Interim County Manager recommended that the Board consider the proposed projects and allocate ARP funding.

Commissioner Palmer asked staff for a site selected for the Splash Pad, if approved to which staff stated the site options would include the Huck Sansbury Park and the Sportsplex as both sites have parking, utilities and infrastructure to support this type of facility to be added.

Commissioner Gentry asked for more information related to the Community Risk Reduction Program; Emergency Services Director, Thom Schwalenberg stated the Emergency Services Department and the Fire Marshal's Office already implement public outreach and education and the Community Risk Reduction Program would enhance the current outreach program with a plan to address needs with lesser costs solutions on the system and services but would include additional personnel to carry out the plan. Mr. Schwalenbeg stated the net result would be ultimately healthier lives with reduced stress on the system. He said Person County has a continual increase of call volume and such a program could reduce the unit utilization by 25%.

Commissioner Puryear asked the Recreation, Arts, and Parks Director, John Hill, which projects relate to safety and liability concerns for the Kirby Transformation; Mr. Hill stated accessibility needs projects do not trigger other facility updates noting accessible restrooms are an issue as well as accessibility to all levels of the Kirby facility. Mr. Hill also addressed questions related to the Splash Pad noting support areas would be needed for the facility, i.e., bathrooms, lockers, seating areas.

Chairman Powell stated he appreciated all public feedback noting the department heads did their job well, making it a hard decision for the Board. He noted a deeper dive into utilizing the best way to benefit the most people.

Without a deadline to dedicate the ARP funds, Commissioner Gentry suggested the Board have a work session dedicated for further discussion around the proposed ARP projects. It was the consensus of the Board to have a special meeting for this purpose and asked the Clerk to the Board to poll the board for possible meeting dates.

Commissioner Gentry asked Ms. Cathey how much has the county spent to date on broadband expansion to which Ms. Cathey stated the County invested in the public towers and allowed RiverStreet Networks to attach its equipment. In addition, Ms. Cathey noted Person County has invested in a fiber network with leverage for future expansion. She noted the GIS department was working on developing maps to compare data to better identify areas in the county to focus on additional broadband accessibility.

NEW BUSINESS:

OPIOID SETTLEMENT UPDATE AND FORMATION OF AN ADVISORY COMMITTEE:

Assistant County Manager, Katherine Cathey, reminded the Board that on August 15, 2022, the Board of Commissioners established a Special Revenue Fund for projects to be funded by the opioid settlement. Person County's total allocation is \$2,595,543, which will be available through 2038 to abate the impacts of the opioid epidemic. In accordance with the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the State of North Carolina, these funds must be used for opioid remediation activities, such as treatment, recovery, harm reduction and other life-saving programs and services over an 18-year period. To date, Person County has received \$212,536 and by the end of the year, Person County will have approximately \$320K in this Special Revenue Fund. The Person County Opioid Settlement Payments are outlined below:

Year	Payment Amount
Spring 2022	\$99,719.67
Summer 2022	\$219,302.87
Summer 2023	\$173,565.71
Summer 2024	\$209,338.36
Summer 2025	\$215,503.56
Summer 2026	\$133,641.28
Summer 2027	\$133,641.28
Summer 2028	\$154,046.03
Summer 2029	\$158,904.30
Summer 2030	\$158,904.31
Summer 2031	\$137,184.34
Summer 2032	\$114,541.58
Summer 2033	\$114,541.58
Summer 2034	\$114,541.58
Summer 2035	\$114,541.58
Summer 2036	\$114,541.58
Summer 2037	\$114,541.58
Summer 2038	\$114,541.58
2022-2038 Total	\$2,595,542.77

Ms. Cathey said the County shall spend opioid settlement funds on opioid remediation activities either under Option A or Option B, as detailed in the MOA. Each county receiving opioid settlement funds must hold at least one public meeting annually with all municipalities in the county invited in order to receive input as to proposed uses of the funds and to encourage collaboration between local governments both within and beyond the county. Without any additional strategic planning beyond the annual public meeting, the county may spend opioid settlement funds from the list of High-Impact Opioid Abatement Strategies (MOU Exhibit A). The County may choose to participate in additional voluntary, collaborative, strategic planning and spend opioid settlement funds from the broader list of categories found in Exhibit B of the MOU, which contains all the initial opioid remediation strategies listed in the National Settlement Agreement.

Ms. Cathey recommended the formation of an Opioid Settlement Advisory Committee. The Committee would be appointed by the Board of Commissioners and charged with the following:

- discuss opioid-related health concerns and issues impacting the residents of Person County;
- advise the Board of Commissioners on options to expend funds to remedy opioid impacts;
- plan and host an annual meeting open to the public to receive input on proposed uses of the settlement funds and to encourage collaboration between local governments.

Ms. Cathey stated staff seeks direction from the Board on:

- the appropriate entities or areas of expertise that should be represented on the Committee;
- the number of at-large residents that should serve on the Committee;
- the total number of members the Committee should include; and
- any other details regarding the establishment of the Committee.

Ms. Cathey presented the suggest composition of the Opioid Settlement Advisory Committee as below:

Position #	Representation	Appointment Process		
1	Person County at-large resident with lived experience (personal or family member)	Application process		
2	Person County at-large resident with lived experience (personal or family member)	Application process		
3	Substance use treatment provider	Application process		
4	Employer/Business Leader	Application process		
5	Community group working on opioid-related concerns	Application process		
6	Roxboro Police Department	City designee		
7	Person County Health Department	County Manager designee		
8	Person County Social Services Department	County Manager designee		
9	Person County Emergency Services Department	County Manager designee		
10	Person County School District	PCS designee		
11	Person Memorial Hospital representative	PMH designee		
12	Person County Sheriff's Office	Sheriff designee		
13	Mental Health representative	Vaya designee		

Ms. Cathey stated should the Board approve, the Clerk to the Board will solicit membership applications and should allow for a pool of candidates for the Board to review and make formal appointments in January 2023.

When asked about a 13-member committee being workable for this purpose, Health Director, Janet Clayton stated in her experience, the representatives understood the expectations and she has always tried to have the best fit to accomplish the goal.

Chairman Powell asked if a salaried position would be needed to which Ms. Cathey stated staff has not discussed nor proposed that possibility noting the funds has specific funding restrictions for remediation activities for direct services.

A motion was made by Commissioner Puryear and carried 5-0 to establish the Person County Opioid Settlement Advisory Committee, and authorize the Clerk to the Board to solicit membership applications.

FY23 EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES PAY ADJUSTMENTS:

During the June 7, 2022 Budget Work Session, the Board approved the addition of \$180,000 to a contingency line item for the adjustment of EMS pay and requested that staff bring a proposal back for the Board's consideration in the new fiscal year.

Emergency Services Director, Thom Schwalenberg and Human Resources Director, Sonya Carver recommended adjusting pay grades and compensation for EMS personnel to remain competitive in our labor market (surrounding counties in our region of North Carolina) and improve employee retention and recruitment.

The estimated cost of adjusting the base pay for EMS personnel is \$146,000 (including salary and benefits). All EMS employees (shift supervisor and below) will receive a minimum of a 5% increase. Pay adjustments were determined using the recommended pay grade structure and previously established years/experience criteria.

	Salary Grade	Minimum	Midpoint	Maximum
CURRENT				
EMT	59	31,559	40,238	48,916
ADVANCED EMT	61	34,794	44,362	53,930
PARAMEDIC	64	40,278	51,354	62,431
ASSISTANT SHIFT				
SUPERVISOR	65	42,292	53,922	65,552
SUPERVISOR	66	44,407	56,618	68,830

RECOMMENDED								
EMT	62	36,533	46,580	56,627				
ADVANCED EMT	64	40,278	51,354	62,431				
PARAMEDIC	66	44,407	56,618	68,830				
ASSISTANT SHIFT								
SUPERVISOR	67	46,627	59,449	72,271				
SUPERVISOR	68	48,958	62,422	75,885				

Mr. Schwalenberg and Ms. Carver requested Board approval of the implementation of the recommended pay grades and the utilization of contingency funds to adjust current EMS employee pay, effective Sept. 23, 2022. Salary increases will be reflected in Oct. 19, 2022 paychecks. Ms. Carver added that the Board would be seeing similar requests from other public safety departments, i.e., telecommunications and the Sheriff's Office.

A **motion** was made by Commissioner Gentry and **carried 5-0** to approve the implementation of the recommended pay grades and the utilization of contingency funds to adjust current EMS employee pay, as presented.

POTENTIAL SALE OF AIRCRAFT HANGAR AT THE RALEIGH REGIONAL AIRPORT AT PERSON COUNTY:

Managing Partner for The Brough Law Firm, T.C. Morphis, Jr. filled in for County Attorney, Ellis Hankins and presented to the Board a potential sale of aircraft hangar at the Raleigh Regional Airport at Person County. Mr. Morphis noted that Person County has received a written offer to purchase the new aircraft hangar at the Raleigh Regional Airport at Person County, located at 499 Montgomery Drive, Timberlake, NC. Wayfarer, LLC (a Georgia corporation) offers \$4,000,000 for a 30-year lease or other ownership interest of the hangar structure, and \$6,000 per year for a 30-year ground lease.

Mr. Morphis explained the tentative offer was subject to the negotiated offer, advertisement and upset bid procedure specified in N.C.G.S. § 160A-269. Other persons may raise the bid by not less than 10% of the first \$1,000 and 5% of the remainder, within 10 days of the date of publication of this notice (i.e., not less than \$4,200,050). Bidders must deposit with the Clerk to the Board 5% of the bid with the written offer.

If the Board wishes to tentatively accept the offer and start the statutory process, the following is the appropriate action: tentatively accept the offer, subject to completion of the procedural steps outlined in the negotiated offer and upset bid statute, i.e., the Clerk will run an ad of the tentative offer in the local newspaper, and then final acceptance of the highest offer and approval of a mutually acceptable contract of sale with the successful bidder.

Interim County Manager, Ralph Clark noted their aircraft can only be taxed if it was parked in the hangar on January 1st.

A **motion** was made by Commissioner Gentry and **carried 5-0** to tentatively accept the offer, direct the Clerk to advertise per the negotiated offer and upset bid statutes.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:

Chairman Powell reported he attended a 150th year anniversary celebrating Allen's Chapel Church. He noted the Clerk to the Board, Brenda Reaves and her husband, Charles were celebrating their 41st wedding anniversary on this date.

MANAGER'S REPORT:

Interim County Manager, Ralph Clark has no report.

COMMISSIONER REPORT/COMMENTS:

Vice Chairman Sims thanked the public for making comments related to the ARP funding noting the Board would be further discussing the projects. He, and his fellow commissioners thanked the EMS employees for their efforts for their community with hopes the Board's action would help recruit and retain good staff.

There were no further commissioner comments.

CLOSED SESSION #1

A **motion** was made by Vice Chairman Sims and **carried 5-0** to enter into Closed Session at 8:39pm per General Statute 143-318.11(a)(6) for the purpose to consider the qualifications, competence, performance, character, fitness, conditions of appointment, or conditions of initial employment of an individual public officer or employee or prospective public officer or employee with the following individuals permitted to attend: TC Morphis, Jr., Interim County Manager, Ralph Clark, Clerk to the Board, Brenda Reaves and Register of Deeds, Tonya Wilson.

Chairman Powell called a brief break to transition to the Closed Session. He called the Closed Session to order at 8:41pm.

A **motion** was made by Commissioner Puryear and **carried 5-0** to return to open session at 9:03pm.

CLOSED SESSION #2

A **motion** was made by Commissioner Gentry and **carried 5-0** to enter into Closed Session at 9:04pm per General Statute 143-318.11(a)(4) for the purpose of discussion of matters relating to the location or expansion of industries or other businesses in the county (economic development) with the following individuals permitted to attend: TC Morphis, Jr., Interim County Manager, Ralph Clark, and Clerk to the Board, Brenda Reaves.

A **motion** was made by Commissioner Gentry and **carried 5-0** to return to open session at 9:16pm.

Chairman Powell stated the first item for Board action was a request by the Register of Deeds.

A **motion** was made by Commissioner Gentry and **carried 5-0** to approve increasing the annual salary of the Register of Deeds, Tonya Wilson to \$69,000 effective October 4, 2022.

APPOINTMENT OF COUNTY MANAGER AND APPROVAL OF EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENT:

A **motion** was made by Commissioner Puryear and **carried 5-0** to authorize the Chairman of the Board of Commissioners to enter into an employment agreement on October 4, 2022 between the Person County Board of Commissioners (County of Person) and Katherine M. Cathey as the next county manager of Person County.

Chairman Powell stated the Board conducted a search for a new county manager with the assistance of a national search firm noting there were over 20 applications received for the position, which were narrowed to eight candidates. He added each candidate was reviewed objectively, considering qualifications and experience, looking for the best fit for a new county manager for Person County Government. Chairman Powell said the Board participated in six Zoom interviews and further narrowed down the candidates to conduct three face-to-face interviews. Chairman Powell said the Board then discussed the candidates and came to a consensus on one candidate to continue discussions and possibly a contract agreement. Chairman Powell announced the Board has offered a contract to, and accepted by Katherine Cathey to be Person County's next county manager. He added Ms. Cathey has served as Person County's assistant county manager for the past two years and brings to the table a vast amount of experience in county government and an extensive network of contacts across the state of North Carolina. Chairman Powell said these are exciting times and welcomed Ms. Cathey and her new leadership in creating innovative ideas and plans that build on what was currently in the works and keeping the county moving forward in the future.

Ms. Cathey thanked the Board noting her appreciation of the Board's confidence in her and the opportunity to continue working with the Board, with county employees and with our community in this new role to move Person County forward.

Interim County Manager, Ralph Clark thanked the Board for the opportunity to serve as interim county manager for Person County since the end of June. He stated it had been a pleasure to work with the Board and the county employees. The commissioners stated their appreciation to Mr. Clark for all he had done for the county the last few months. Mr. Clark added with the appointment of the county manager, his contract was thereby terminated and he would spend a couple of hours the next day transitioning with Ms. Cathey prior to his departure.

ADJOURNMENT:

A motion	was	made	by	Commissioner	Puryear	and	carried	5-0	to	adjourn	the
meeting at 9:25pm	1.										

Brenda B. Reaves Clerk to the Board	Gordon Powell Chairman	
Clerk to the Board	Chairman	