

PERSON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MEMBERS PRESENT

MAY 15, 2023
OTHERS PRESENT

Gordon Powell
C. Derrick Sims
Kyle W. Puryear
Charlie Palmer
Jason Thomas

Katherine M. Cathey, County Manager
Brenda B. Reaves, Clerk to the Board
S. Ellis Hankins, County Attorney

The Board of Commissioners for the County of Person, North Carolina, met in regular session on Monday, May 15, 2023 at 9:00am in the Commissioners' Boardroom 215 in the Person County Office Building located at 304 S. Morgan Street, Roxboro, NC.

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

DISCUSSION/ADJUSTMENT/APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Commissioner Palmer voiced his concern of a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) item in the current fiscal year for conversion of the old landfill to a park noting he had a concern that this may impact the Sheriff's Office from using that site for its training; he said this project was included in the Adopted CIP in the April 17, 2023 minutes that are on the Consent Agenda for approval by the Board. County Manager Katherine Cathey stated that staff would thoroughly evaluate the site noting she was aware that the Sheriff's Office use the old landfill site for a shooting range. She noted any planning for this CIP project would include staff input from the Sheriff's Office, the Recreation, Arts & Parks Department and the General Services Department.

A **motion** was made by Vice Chairman Sims and **carried 5-0** to approve the agenda.

May 15, 2023

**RECOGNITION:
PRESENTATION OF AUTOMATIC EXTERNAL DEFIBRILLATORS TO
VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENTS – EMERGENCY SERVICES:**

Thomas E. Schwalenberg, Director / Department of Emergency Services stated Person County received a donation of eight Automatic External Defibrillators (AED's) from Defibtech. This donation was made possible through the County's participation with the RACECARS Clinical Trial (RAnimized Cluster Evaluation of Cardiac ARrest Systems) through Duke Clinical Research Institute.

The RACECARS Trial is a five-year study that implements specific clinical interventions in selected North Carolina communities to improve survival for people who experience a cardiac arrest, one of the main causes of death in North Carolina and the United States. In addition to addressing a major public health issue, the trial is one of the most innovative randomized trials to be done in the United States. The RACECARS Trial is the first U.S. fully "registry-based" trial, an approach that has been used to great advantage in conducting efficient clinical trials in Europe. The trial studies to implement guideline-based treatments in acute cardiovascular care. These programs, which began with the North Carolina Reperfusion of Acute MI in Carolina Emergency Departments (RACE), have led to major improvements in systematic regional approaches to emergency cardiovascular care around the world.

Mr. Schwalenberg noted county data clearly shows that cardiac arrest survival is directly related to how soon a victim receives cardiopulmonary resuscitation and early application of an AED. Clinical data shows that a person in cardiac arrest that is treated with CPR and an AED applied within two minutes of suffering an arrest has a 59% chance of survival compared to those treated at ten minutes with only a 13% chance of survival.¹ After ten minutes the survival rate quickly drops to zero percent survivability. The goal of this initiative is to place AED's in the hands of first responders that can get to the scene of a cardiac arrest quickly without having to stop at a local volunteer fire station and pick up an AED which can significantly delay response time. All seven of our volunteer fire departments have agreed to participate in this program. The eighth AED is being placed on the Fire Marshal's vehicle which is regularly out in the community and available to respond to incidents. He added they will measure the use of the AED's over the next four years and measure the program's impact. Mr. Schwalenberg presented an AED to volunteer fire department chiefs present at the meeting as well as to the Fire Marshal.

¹ Malta Hansen C, Kragholm K, Pearson DA, et al. Association of Bystander and First-Responder Intervention With Survival After Out-of-Hospital Cardiac Arrest in North Carolina, 2010-2013. JAMA. 2015;314(3):255-264.

INFORMAL COMMENTS:

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

Theresa Ahrens of 108 Elderberry Lane, Rougemont and a resident of the Elderberry Cluster neighborhood, an aging community challenged with accessing internet. Ms. Ahrens requested that the GREAT grant buildout include the Elderberry community.

Felts Lewis, Executive Director of the Roxboro Housing Authority and President of a newly formed non-profit, Roxboro Community Redevelopment Corporation, wanted to make the Board aware of his plan to apply for grant funding for permanent rental housing as well as shelter operations to address homelessness in Person County.

DISCUSSION/ADJUSTMENT/APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA:

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

- A. Approval of Minutes of April 17, 2023,
- B. Budget Amendment #19,
- C. SUP-03-23 – The Applicant, Jason Seaman of Thomas & Hutton, on behalf of the Property Owner, BV/Weston Jim Thorpe SPE, LLC, is requesting approval of “Written Decision Approving Special Use Permit Application” (i.e. Written Order) following Special Use Permit approval to construct an electrical substation within RC (Rural Conservation) zoned property (i.e. Polywood Facility Substation). The ±31.33-acre Subject Property is located along the east side of Jim Thorpe Highway on the Polywood campus at Tax Map #69-313 and Parcel #0928-00-00-9814.000,
- D. SUP-04-23 – The Applicant, Gary Garrett (“Applicant” and “Property Owner”) for the Garrett Recreational Vehicle Park, is requesting approval of “Written Decision Approving Special Use Permit Application” (i.e. Written Order) following Special Use Permit approval to develop a recreational vehicle park within RC (Rural Conservation) zoned property. The ±16.27-acre Subject Property is located along the northwest side of Thomas Store Road at Tax Map #A95-26 and Parcel #0954-00-37-1948.000,
- E. Person Industries Record Destruction,
- F. Cybersecurity Grant Application totaling \$79,200 with no county match,
- G. County approval of tax-exempt loan to Allensville Volunteer Fire Department, Inc. from Roxboro Savings Bank, SSB for a short term construction financing agreement in the principal amount of \$185,000, and
- H. Tax Adjustments for May 2023
 - a. Tax Releases
 - b. NC Vehicle Tax System pending refunds

May 15, 2023

NEW BUSINESS:

ZITEL GREAT GRANT PRESENTATION:

Assistant County Manager Brian Hart introduced Zitel Chief Operating Officer, Rodney Gray, who will provide updates about their plans and process for laying fiber infrastructure in the County, including information regarding project timelines, eligible address passings and total anticipated passings, and current pricing and service structure. Per the GREAT grant agreement, Zitel has been awarded an amount not to exceed \$1,936,153.80 with a 15% match for the purpose of deploying broadband services to a total of 655 locations, including 612 households and 43 businesses. Person County is contributing a total of \$170,837.10 in matching funds to Zitel as part of this project, which is 7.5% of the total cost of this project.


Mr. Gray attended the meeting virtually and shared the following presentation with the Board:




ZITEL PARTNERSHIPS

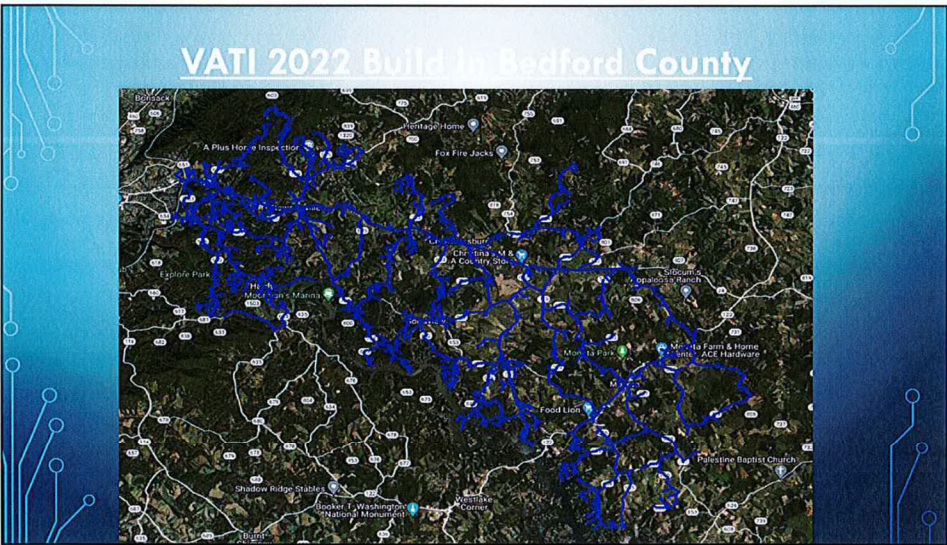
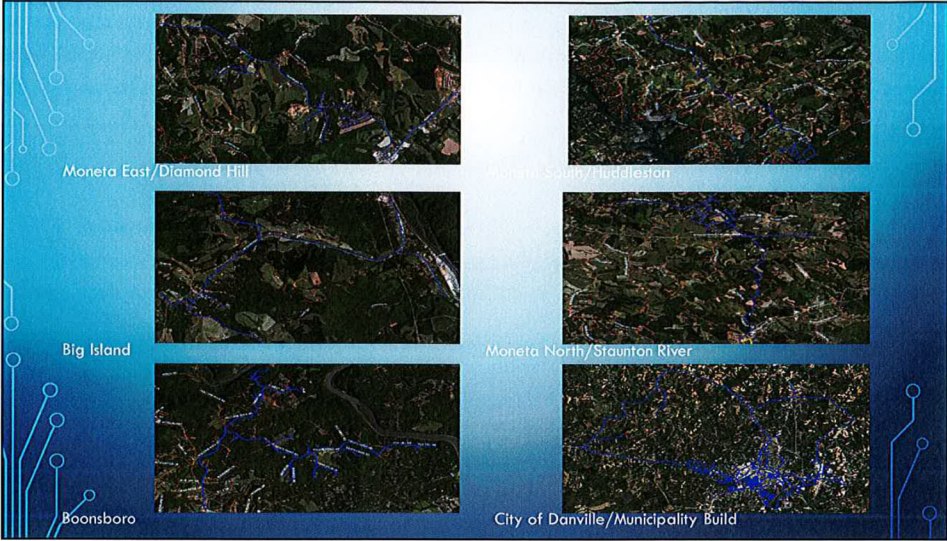
WE PRIDE OURSELVES ON BEING A REGIONAL COMPANY IN THE COMMONWEALTH WHOSE FOCUS IS ON RURAL BROADBAND AND LOOK FORWARD TO EXPANDING INTO THE GREAT STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA. AS A LOCALLY OWNED PROVIDER WE ARE ABLE TO WORK WITH COUNTIES AS A FULL PARTNER. WE CAN DO THINGS OUR COMPETITORS CAN NOT, LIKE OFFERING DARK FIBER USAGE FOR FREE, UTILIZING VOLUNTEER F.D. AND EMS FACILITIES AS POPS (POINT OF PRESCENSE) IN EXCHANGE FOR A LIFETIME OF FREE INTERNET SERVICE.

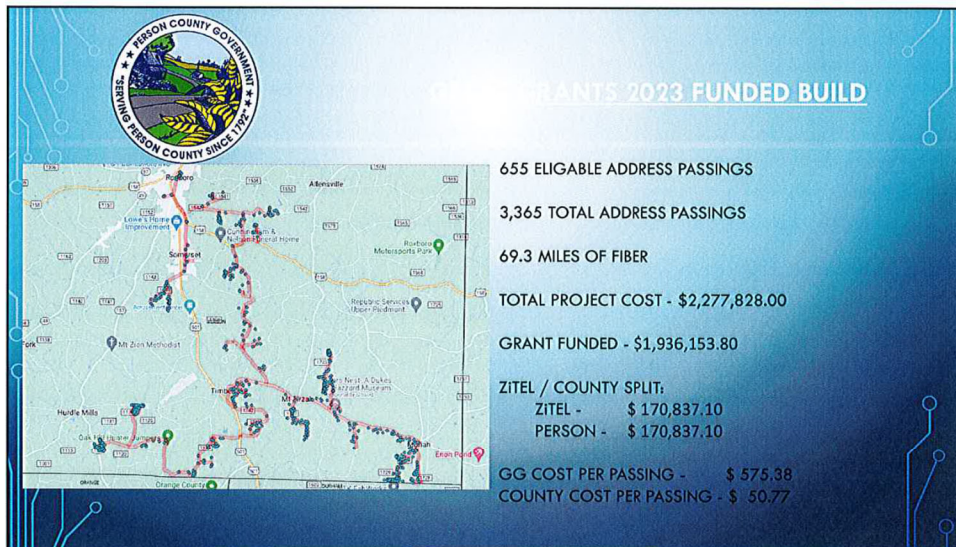
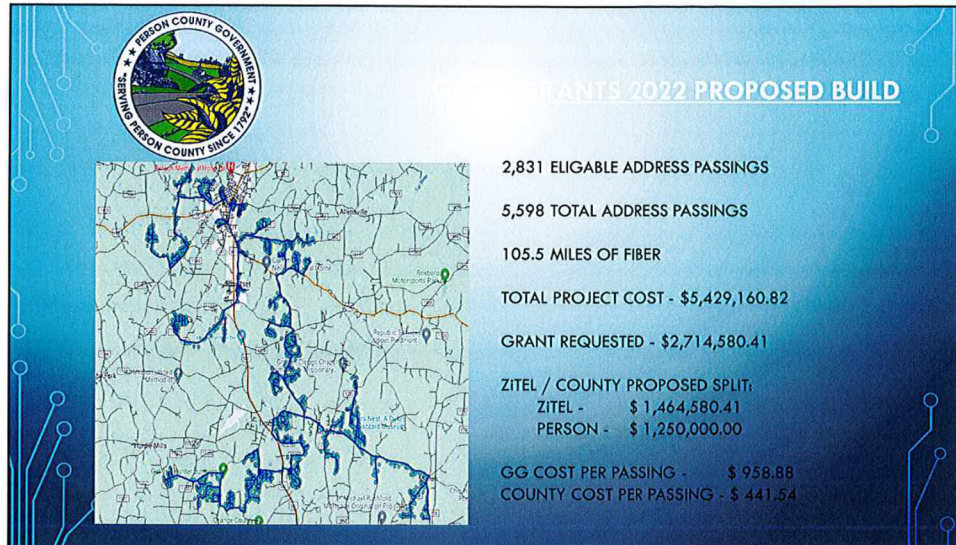
WE FOCUS ON BRINGING SERVICE TO RURAL AREAS, BASICALLY WE BUILD FIBER WHERE OTHER COMPANIES WONT.

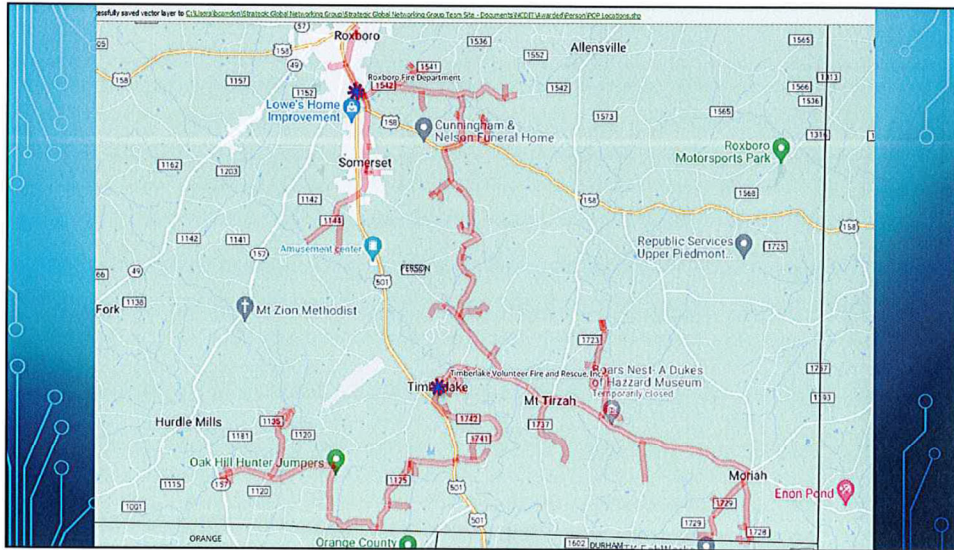
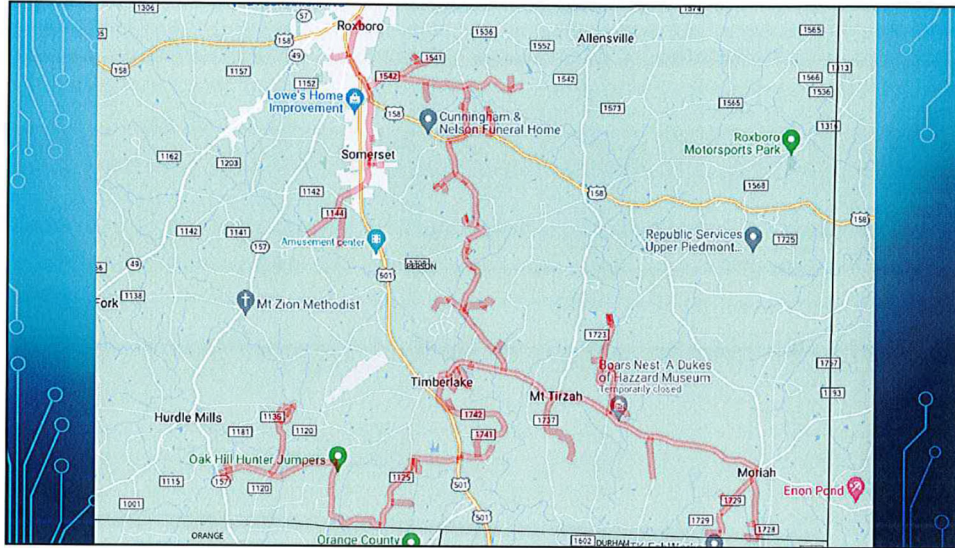


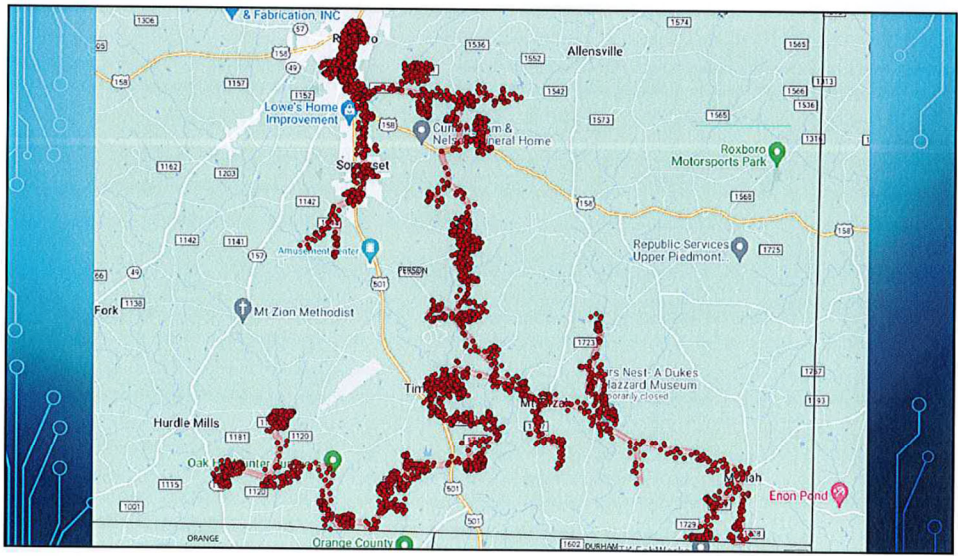
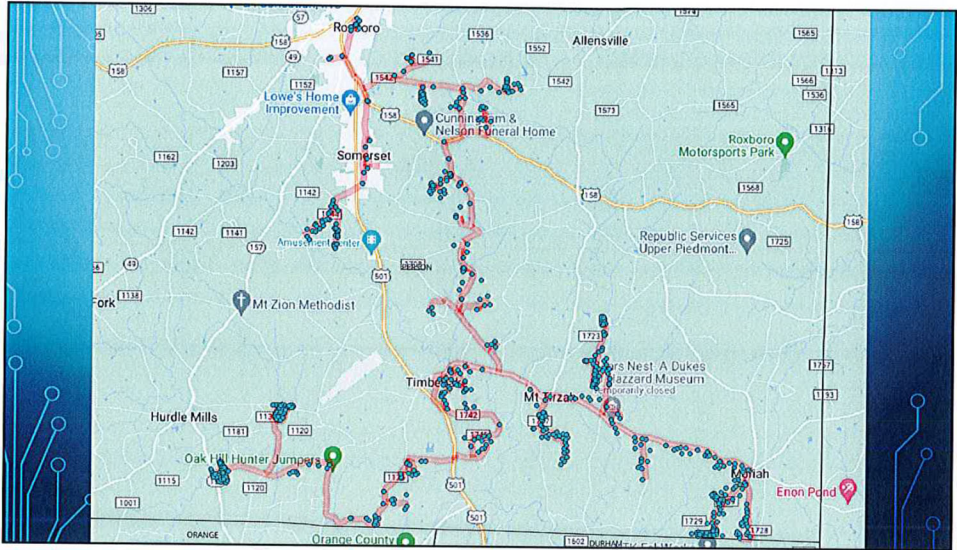
ZITEL'S KEYS TO SUCCESS

- We keep our overhead low
 - We are not top heavy in management, like larger corporations and legacy Telephone Companies.
 - We own our own outside plant construction company.
- We do things differently than our competitors
 - We design our processes and customer relations on the way we would want to be treated by our own providers.
 - We can be flexible to our customers and to our local government partners.
- We have over 20 years of IT and Network Security experience









Current Pricing and Service Structure

<p>Residential Essentials 100 \$4.99 / Month Up To 100 Mbs Download Up To 100 Mbs Upload</p> <p>Residential Deluxe 300 \$69.99/ Month Up To 300Mbs Download Up To 300Mbs Upload</p> <p>Residential Extreme 1000 \$97.99 / Month Up To 1Gbs Download Up To 1Gbs Upload</p>	<p>Business Essentials 100 \$9.99 / Month Up To 100 Mbs Download Up To 100 Mbs Upload</p> <p>Business Ultimate 500 \$159.99/ Month Up To 500Mbs Download Up To 500Mbs Upload</p> <p>Business Extreme 1000 \$279.99 / Month Up To 1Gbs Download Up To 1Gbs Upload</p>
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- Enterprise Rates Vary based on Construction, but approximately fall at \$2.00 per Megabit


Free Basic Installation
 Free ONT (modem) Usage
 \$10.99 per month Equipment Fee – Wi-Fi Router
 \$12.99 per month Equipment Fee – Wi-Fi Extender
 \$149.99 – Enhanced Installation

New Offerings Coming Soon

- Streaming & Cloud Services
- **Residential Basic 50**
\$29.99 / Month
 Up To 50 Mbs Download
 Up To 50 Mbs Upload

Double the FCC Definition of Broadband

This Plan is only available to those that qualify for the ACP (Affordable Connectivity Program) for low income families and will be a completely free internet package.



WHERE COUNTRY ROADS AND FIBER MEET

ZiTEL

We understand the issues of building in the rural areas of Virginia and North Carolina.

- 1000' drop included for free.
- \$1 per foot cost above the 1000' mark.
- Flexibility on that cost to work with our customers,
 - Enter into a contract term – receive a 25% discount on the drop cost
 - Will divide that cost monthly over the length of the term with NOTHING due at the time of install

QUESTIONS?

Commissioner Palmer asked if the Zitel news channels included News Max to which Mr. Gray confirmed it was included as well as others.

Vice Chairman Sims asked Mr. Gray for a construction start date; Mr. Gray said they were currently working with the power companies and expected to begin in the next 45 to 90 days; he said Zitel was a 2-year project and they did not plan to request an extension to complete the buildout. Mr. Gray said as the construction was completed in a certain area, they would install and add customers at that point versus waiting until the buildout was completed. Vice Chairman Sims reiterated the further need for broadband in other areas of the county. Mr. Gray confirmed Zitel's desire to relay all information noting those outside the footprint of the buildout could possibly be considered in the second round of GREAT grant awards as well as the Completing Access to Broadband (CAB) state grant program.

Commissioner Palmer asked Mr. Gray about the Elderberry community located in Rougemont to which Mr. Gray noted this community was in his first buildout proposal however, they were cut by NCDIT as an already served area by a protesting provider. Mr. Gray said he could work with the county to include them in the build-out; however, if that was done, that area would not be considered any further for a future grant. He commented that the Elderberry community was one-eighth to one-quarter mile from the current buildout plan.

Chairman Powell thanked Mr. Gray for the update. Commissioner Puryear asked Mr. Gray for the best contact number for residents to be put on the record as underserved or unserved. Mr. Gray responded that residents may call Zitel at 540-328-1970 or they could go to the Zitel web page at zitel.com to complete the forms.

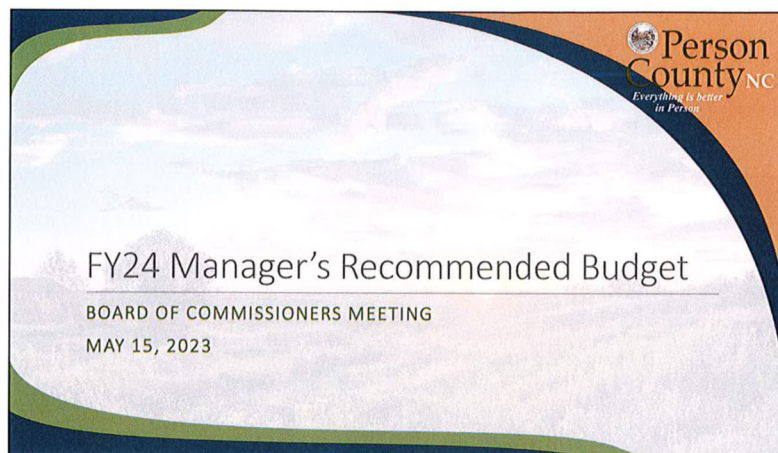
Mr. Gray stated they would be installing east to west across North Carolina in Halifax, Warren, North Hampton, Caswell and Person counties for this round of the GREAT grant for broadband expansion.

PRESENTATION OF THE FY 2023-2024 RECOMMENDED BUDGET:

North Carolina General Statutes require that on or before June 1 of each year, managers present their recommended budget for the next fiscal year to the Board of Commissioners.

County Manager, Katherine Cathey provided an overview of the FY 2023-2024 budget through the following presentation. She presented the Board with copies of the budget document for commissioners' review.

5/15/2023



Board of Commissioners' Priorities


Improving Broadband
Connectivity


Improving School
Facilities


Maintaining
the Tax Rate


Supporting the
Airport


Improving the
Economic
Development
Process

Progress on Priorities

- Economic Catalyst Fund: FY24 budget maintains current level of EDC discretionary funding
- To support site development and infrastructure needs for current and future projects
- Includes \$245K for designated incentive payments and \$1.4M for discretionary development needs
- Construction of corporate hangar complete
- Five-year lease agreement is pending
- New website launched
- Environmental assessment phase of the runway extension project is underway



Progress on Priorities

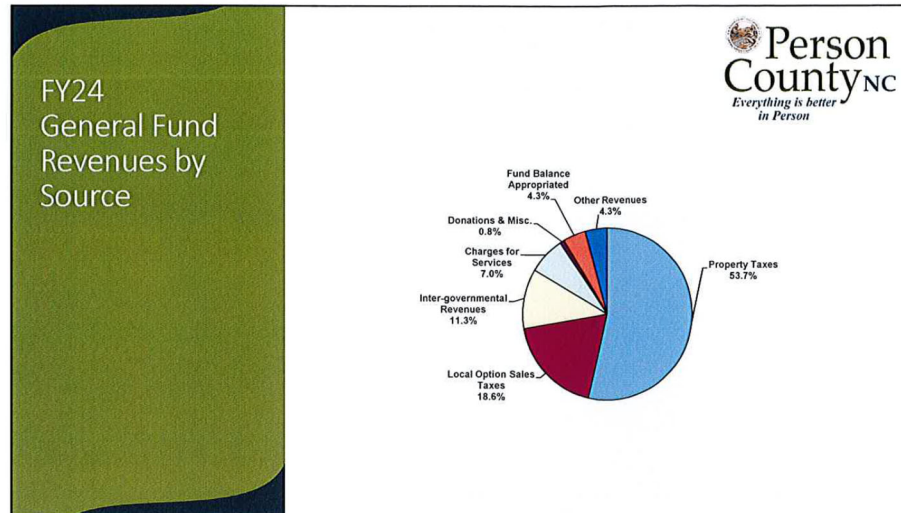
- Signed three-party GREAT Grant agreement with Zitel and NC DIT
- Construction to begin soon on grant-funded project
- \$2.58M in county ARP funds reserved for future broadband expansion
- Property Tax Rate will increase slightly, by .25 cents to fund debt service payments for \$38M in safety and accessibility improvements for PCS facilities
- FY24 CIP funds:
 - PCS: Person High School improvements and related contingency funds, installing cameras in all schools and a new roof for South Elementary
 - PCC: POD building for Early College (last installment payment), chiller room upgrades, science lab renovations, upgrades to Buildings B, C, & G, and a new BDEC entrance



FY24 Overview

- General Fund budget is \$73.3M
 - Increase of \$2.3M (3.3%)
- Budget for all funds is \$93.1M
 - Increase of \$5.0M (5.6%)
- Consumer Price Index
 - Increased by 8.0% in 2022
 - Up 5.8% over the past 12 months






Revenues


- Slight growth in the tax base: 3.05%
- Overall revenues: **+\$5.0M**
- Property Taxes: \$35.5M (**+\$1.2M**, 3.4%)
- Sales Taxes: \$13.6M (**+\$2.4M**, 21.6%)
- Interest Earnings: \$1.2M (**+\$1.2M**, only \$2.8K budgeted in FY23, >100%)

Tax Base Type	FY23	FY24	Net Gain/Loss
Property	\$4.895B	\$5.044B	+\$149M
DMV	\$425M	\$450M	+\$25M
TOTAL	\$5.32B	\$5.494B	+\$174M

FY24 Property Tax Revenues


- Property tax rate increases to \$0.7225 (currently \$0.72)
- Estimated at \$35.5M
- Collection rate remains at 97.5%

 = \$536,729

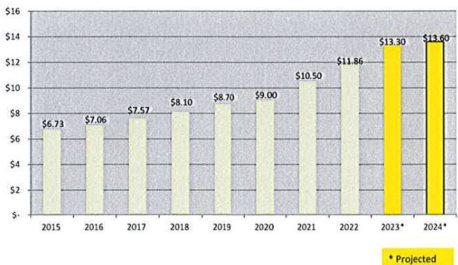


FY24 Sales Tax Revenues

- Rate is 6.75 cents
- County receives 2 cents
- Projecting growth of 21.6%



Local Option Sales Tax (in millions)



Year	Local Option Sales Tax (in millions)
2015	\$6.73
2016	\$7.06
2017	\$7.57
2018	\$8.10
2019	\$8.70
2020	\$9.00
2021	\$10.50
2022	\$11.86
2023*	\$13.30
2024*	\$13.80

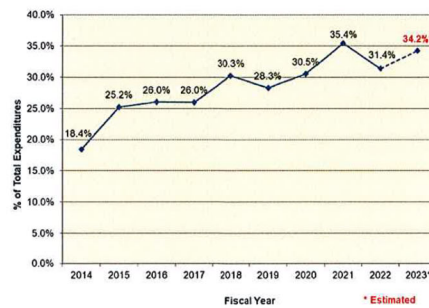
* Projected


Fund Balance



- Required for all local governments
- Provides for cash flow as property taxes are not paid on July 1
- Provides for unanticipated expenses and loss of revenues
- Indicator of the health of an organization's finances
- Level can contribute to the bond rating on which interest rates are based
- Best practices: limit spending to one-time, non-recurring needs
- Board adopted policy with goal of 25%; transfer excess to the Capital Investment Fund

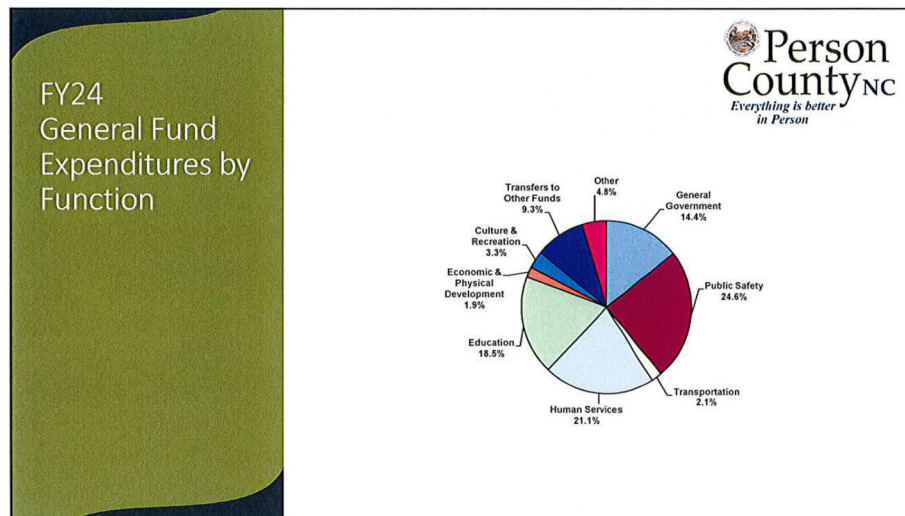
Fund Balance as a Percentage of Total Expenditures






Fund Balance Appropriations

- **\$3.16M** appropriated to sustain operating funds
 - General Fund: **\$1.3M** for vehicle capital (\$530K), a new ambulance (\$586K), and small one-time capital needs for various depts
 - Community Development Projects Fund: **\$96K** for the Landfill to Park, Mayo Park Picnic Shelters to Cabins, and Kirby Rebirth Roof Top Studio/Event Space projects
 - Library Fund: **\$106K** to spend down reserves that were generated from reductions in spending in prior years
 - Register of Deeds Technology Fund: **\$1.2K** for the purchase of a computer and monitor
 - Health Fund: **\$689K** and DSS Fund: **\$996K** as placeholders due to delayed timing of receipt of state and federal funds






Budget Highlights


Operating costs are dramatically impacted by:

- Inflation
- Implementation of the classification and pay study
- Rising costs of fuel, supplies, and maintenance expenses
- The need for new positions and vehicles



Budget Highlights


- Forestry increase due to higher personnel expenses and purchase of new vehicle (\$29K)
- Senior Center increase due to increase in overall operating expenses (\$12K)
- Person County Museum of History increase to continue campus revitalization (\$40K)







New Positions

Department	FTE	Position	Salary/ Benefits	Operating Costs	Offsetting Rev/Exp	Total
GIS	1	GIS Technician	\$64,520	\$1,800	-\$20,144	\$46,176
Health	1	Processing Assistant V	\$53,539	\$500	-\$13,304	\$40,735
Social Services	1	IMC II - FNS	\$57,594	\$0	-\$46,647	\$10,947
Social Services	1	IMC II - F & C Medicaid	\$57,594	\$0	-\$52,121	\$5,474
Social Services	1	IMC II - Adult Medicaid	\$57,594	\$0	-\$47,658	\$9,936
Communications	4	Telecommunicator EMD	\$230,376	\$8,400	-\$58,106	\$180,670
Recreation, Arts and Parks	1	Parks Maintenance Worker	\$52,261	\$930	\$0	\$53,191
Recreation, Arts and Parks (Kirby)	1	Arts Program Specialist	\$65,368	\$0	-\$40,053	\$25,315
Animal Services	1	Kennel Attendant	\$42,013	\$1,700	-\$11,502	\$32,211
PATS	2	Transit Specialist	\$104,006	\$0	-\$41,310	\$62,696
	14	Total	\$784,865	\$13,330	-\$330,845	\$467,351



Vehicles

- 30 requested
- 13 recommended according to the County's Vehicle Replacement Policy based on age, mechanical issues, and mileage
- 7 Sheriff's Office
- 3 PATS vans
- 1 PI van
- 2 Recreation and Parks trucks
- Total cost is \$517K (+\$291K from FY23)

Supporting the County Workforce

- Continuation of merit pay: \$256,214
- Continuation of longevity pay: \$308,080
- Employer contribution to retirement system: \$2.8M (+\$283K)
- Health insurance: \$13,688/employee/year; \$5.8M (+\$476K, 5.18% increase)
- Implementation of the classification and pay study: \$2.6M



Volunteer Fire Departments

- Fire Tax Rate remains at \$0.05
- Fire Tax District budget increasing by \$100K
- 2% increase for VFD's (per contract)
- FY23 bonus (Rescue Squad)
- Addition of automatic aid agreement with Leasburg VFD
- Unallocated funds for FY24 ISO bonuses (\$266K)
- Continues part-time staffing (\$790K)



Person County Schools



- Current Expense request: \$12,554,051 (+15.6%); recommendation: \$11,946,673 (+10%)
- Capital request: \$575K (+\$62K); recommendation: \$555K (+\$42K).
- CIP funds Person High School improvements and related contingency funds, installing cameras in all schools and a new roof for South Elementary.
- Debt Service estimate is \$850,448. The anticipated borrowing of \$12.745M in FY24 will impact the annual debt service by \$310,688.

Current Expense	Capital	Tech Capital	CIP	Debt Service	Total
\$11,946,673	\$555,316	\$500,000	\$14,165,000*	\$850,448	\$28,017,437

*\$12,745,000 is financed by debt.

Piedmont Community College



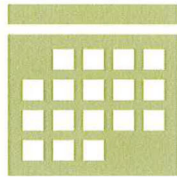
- Current Expense request: \$1,408,338 (increase of \$43,888 from FY23). Recommending to fully fund. Continues \$10K for Small Business Incubator.
- Capital request: \$70K (increase of \$10K from FY23). Recommending to fully fund request.
- CIP funds POD building for Early College (last installment payment), chiller room upgrades, science lab renovations, upgrades to Buildings B, C, & G, and a new BDEC entrance. This is a decrease of \$1.1M from FY23.

Current Expense	Capital	CIP	Debt Service	Total
\$1,408,338	\$70,000	\$839,000	\$0	\$2,317,338

Next Steps in Budget Process

BUDGET PUBLIC HEARING

➤ June 5, 7 p.m.



BUDGET WORK SESSIONS

➤ June 7, 9 a.m.

➤ June 13, 9 a.m. (if needed)

For More Information



www.personcountync.gov

Copies for viewing are located in the
Clerk's Office and the **Library**

County Manager's Office: 336-597-1720



HANDS-ONLY CPR DEMONSTRATION – EMERGENCY SERVICES:

Thomas E. Schwalenberg, Director / Department of Emergency Services informed the group that June 1-7, each year is federally recognized as National CPR and AED Awareness Week. This action was taken to highlight some very sobering statistics.

- Approximately 350,000 people suffer out-of-hospital cardiac arrest (OHCA) per year in the US, and only 8% to 10% survive to hospital discharge.
- Nationally, less than 40% of patients receive bystander CPR and 29% have an AED applied prior to paramedic arrival.
- 70% of cardiac arrests happen in the home.
- Median time from 911 call to paramedic arrival is more than 7 minutes, and more than 70% of patients do not receive timely defibrillation.
- Little evidence that these statistics have substantially improved despite 30 years of work.

Mr. Schwalenberg said in Person County, the Department of Emergency Services was working, as part of the RACECARS Clinical Trial (RANdomized Cluster Evaluation of Cardiac Arrest Systems), to change those statistics. Over the last 18 months, he said they have been busy teaching Hands-Only CPR and AED usage to the public through public events, faith-based initiatives, employee training (both County employees and private organizations), schools and other venues. Mr. Schwalenberg noted they have partnered with Person Memorial Hospital to expand their reach in the community. One of the goals for the RACECARS trial is to teach at least 10% the Person County population to do Hands-Only CPR and make them familiar with using an AED.

Mr. Schwalenberg invited the Person County Board of Commissioners to participate in Hands-Only CPR training as part of their goal of teaching the community the importance of knowing CPR and being able to perform these skills in a timely manner.

CHAIRMAN’S REPORT:

Chairman Powell reported he as well as Vice Chairman Sims, County Manager Katherine Cathey, County Attorney Ellis Hankins and others from the Person County community attended the RTRP State of the Region last week noting it was well organized and the group received a good report for the Research Triangle area.

MANAGER’S REPORT:

County Manager Katherine Cathey encouraged residents to complete the necessary forms for state and local agencies to know of the need for further access to broadband; she said they could contact the County Manager’s Office, Zitel, or complete a survey on the FCC web page. Based on her experience, Ms. Cathey recommended the Mayo Park Camping area and other Person County parks.

May 15, 2023

COMMISSIONER REPORT/COMMENTS:

Vice Chairman Sims voiced his appreciation of the efforts to expand broadband through Zitel, however, he advocated for further access to fiber for many unserved or underserved areas in Person County. He said he learned at the RTRP State of the Region that North Carolina was the third state behind Florida and Texas for the most people moving to live.

Commissioner Palmer advocated for the Pay Study to be approved and looked forward to the presentation and thanked employees for the services provided to the county's residents.

There were no reports from Commissioners Puryear and Thomas.

ADJOURNMENT:

A **motion** was made by Commissioner Puryear and **carried 5-0** to adjourn the meeting at 10:52am.

Brenda B. Reaves
Clerk to the Board

Gordon Powell
Chairman