

The Graham County Board of Commissioners met Tuesday, March 15, 2022, at 5:30 p.m. for their regular monthly meeting in the Graham County Community Building located at 196 Knight Street Robbinsville, NC. All board was present. Also, present Manager Jason Marino, Finance Officer Becky Garland, Attorney JK Coward and Clerk Kim Crisp.

1. Chair Orr called the meeting to order.
2. Chair Orr asks Commissioner Cody to give the Invocation.
3. Chair Orr lead the Pledge of Allegiance.
4. Chair Orr asks for changes to the agenda. Clerk Crisp stated that there were no changes. Chair Orr asks for a motion to approve the agenda. Commissioner Wiggins made the motion to approve. Commissioner Eller seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
5. Chair Orr asks for approval of the February 8th Workshop and Regular Meeting Minutes and the February 8th Special Meeting. Commissioner Eller made the motion to approve the minutes as stated. Commissioner Nelms seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
6. Chair Orr asks Chase Lancaster to speak. Clerk Crisp stated that Mr. Lancaster was not present.
7. Chair Orr asks Sanitation Director Gavin Colvard to speak. Director Colvard stated that he was here to discuss the backhoe. Director Colvard stated that the repairs for the boom parts and labor are around \$13,000.00 and he is currently renting one for \$3700.00 per month. Director Colvard stated that he would like to repair the backhoe first and asks that the board consider purchasing a new backhoe for sanitation. Director Colvard stated that the current backhoe is twenty years old and continues to need constant repair. Director Colvard stated that he has checked pricing and the cost is \$123,000.00. The board had discussion on the repairs and asks the timelines for a new piece of equipment. Director Colvard stated that if we ordered today, we have an 8-month delivery. Director Colvard stated that a grapple is needed as well, and he and Manager Marino compared the John Deere and the Kubota. Director Colvard stated that the John Deere does not allow for a grapple, and this is a must in packing the garbage. The board asks that Director Colvard speak with Kubota and get the exact pricing so that we can get the paperwork in order. Commissioner Eller stated that in the meantime the equipment needed to be repaired for use and made the motion to allow the equipment to be repaired by Randy Rogers. Commissioner Wiggins seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
8. Clerk Crisp stated that Chase Lancaster had arrived if Chair Orr would allow him to speak. Chair Orr asks Mr. Lancaster to speak. Mr. Lancaster stated that he wanted to talk to the board about a rodeo event in the county and he has been working with Mayor Shaun Adams. Mr. Lancaster stated that for him to obtain insurance for the rodeo he needed a permit from the county. Mr. Lancaster stated that he wanted to donate 50% of the proceeds back to the county to support our jail and/or rehabilitation facility. Mr. Lancaster stated that he has gotten permission from the landowners to host the event where the land auction was held on Snowbird Road, he did have to pay a fee to use the site but still wanted to donate 50% back to the county. Mr. Lancaster asks if the board would sign for a permit to allow this event and the proposed date range is between September to December. Chair Orr asks what kind of permit he is seeking. Mr. Lancaster stated that he needed a Professional Bull Riding Permit to get the crews, the lighting etc. Chair Orr stated that the board would have to investigate this. Manager Marino asks Health Director Beth Booth if there were necessary permitting that they required. Director Booth stated that the only time the health department would be involved is for food permits. Attorney Coward asks that Mr. Lancaster explain the proposed permit. Mr. Lancaster stated that the bulls will be coming from Alabama, and he needed a permit from the county to send to the Professional Bull Riding Association showing that he is allowed to hold this event then he can get insurance for the event and after he receives insurance he can begin asking for sponsorship for the event. Chair Orr asks where the property is located. Mr. Lancaster stated that it was behind the Sanitation Department on Cody Property, and he will pay them \$500.00 for a two-day event. Clerk Crisp stated that she believed that he would need a letter not a permit stating that the county did not object to this event being held in the county. The board had no objection to the event, it is not on county property. Manager Marino stated that he needed to do some homework to see what was needed from the county and Mr. Lancaster stated that he would donate 50% of the proceeds back to the county.
9. Chair Orr asks Daniel Allison, Travel and Tourism Director to speak. Director Allison stated that he was here with Edd Satterfield, Graham County Historical Association Representative and they are here to request help to seek grants to pay for some of the renovation costs of the Sniders Building where the Museum and the Travel and Tourism Office would be located. Director Allison stated that the funds would be distributed through the county. Vice-Chairman Eller asks

Finance Director Garland if this is possible for her. Director Garland stated that she is the finance officer for Travel and Tourism as well so she would be fine with the request. Vice-Chairman Eller made the motion allow for the grant request as stated. Commissioner Nelms seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.

10. Chair Orr asks Ronnie Williams, Recreation Director to speak. Director Williams thanked the board for their time and for what they do for our county. Director Williams distributed handouts to the board for their review. Director Williams stated that our pool is fourteen years old and is having deterioration to the plaster, the waterline tiles are breaking and coming off and the skimmer drains are splitting and cracking. Director Williams stated that in the last four inspections he has been written up on the pool surface and was told that it needed to be replastered. Director Williams went into detail on the problems. Director Williams stated that he has been obtaining quotes and has spoken with twelve different contractors and only three of those responded with a quote. Director Williams stated that the warranties vary from one year to five years and the companies are booked out for months and their pricing is in the \$128,000.00 range but with the increases in pricing of construction materials the cost could go higher. Chair Orr asks that Director Williams revisit the companies that gave a quote get a firmer quote for the board to review. Commissioner Nelms asks if this could be done pre-season. Director Williams stated that he would call but it was doubtful. Director Garland stated that she has been saving money each year and she has about one-third of the funds at this time. Commissioner Wiggins stated that we needed to fix the pool and budget every year for the future repairs. Manager Marino stated that he has reached out to SW Commission Executive Director Russ Harris to see if there may be some grants that we could obtain, and he has applied for a \$50,000.00 grant to go toward the project. Director Williams discussed the cost for certified lifeguards and stated that the depth of our pool does not require certified lifeguards and asks the board's opinion, the board wanted to continue to train as we have been doing and keep the certified lifeguards. Director Williams discussed the cost of the supplies such as chlorine that went from \$200.00 for 100 pounds to \$500.00 for 100 pounds and asks if the board would consider an increase in the birthday and swim parties that are privately held. Director Williams stated that our surrounding counties vary in their pricing but recommended that we increase our charge by \$25.00 because of the added costs of regular maintenance. Commissioner Wiggins stated that was reasonable and made the motion to increase the party fees as stated. Commissioner Nelms seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
11. Chair Orr asks Manager Marino to give the manager and project manager reporting. Manager Marino stated that Graham County submitted the required paperwork for the \$5M grant for the New Justice Center and the State should be providing a contract for signature possibly as early as next week.
12. Manager Marino stated that he and Commissioner Wiggins met with the USFS to get an update on the Crossover Roads Project specific to the transportation aspect. Manager Marino stated that the USFS estimates about (11) miles of temporary roads within about 16,000 acres and (3) miles of that will be new roads. Manager Marino stated that the proposal includes (1,300) acres of management and harvest. Manager Marino stated that there have been questions raised about old growth in some stands that was selected by the USFS, but the environmentalist conservationist groups are disputing so USFS is not ready to drop those areas out of the plan yet. Manager Marino stated that a March field review of specific areas will be scheduled, and county officials will be invited to attend. Manager Marino stated that USFS expects a spring release of the environmental analysis for notice and comment and will be open for (45) days. Manager Marino stated that the Crossover Project could take up to (10) years to implement. Commissioner Wiggins stated that if this Forest Plan is allowed the USFS will control 41% of Graham County lands and there will be no timber sales and the county is objecting and further stated that he would like for us to go to court to get this plan stopped. Chair Orr stated that if this plan goes into effect, it will never be reversed.
13. Manager Marino stated that the CDBG-NR is currently in procurement, and they are accepting proposals a second time due to guidelines set by the State. Manager Marino stated that a Rehab Specialist is being solicited as well by Monice Chevalier with Withers Ravenel.
14. Manager Marino stated that the CDBG-CV grant that will help with the community kitchen renovations, workforce training for paramedics, enhancements to the Senior Center for additional food distribution and expand capacity and provide IT equipment for the schools is still being worked on by Alice Briggs with Withers Ravenel on administration and procurement. Manager Marino stated that a conference call is scheduled this Thursday.
15. Manager Marino stated that the board received an invitation by Rep. Gillespie to attend a meeting February 21st with DMV Officials to discuss DMV operations in our district and how to improve service for residents. Manager Marino stated that this will give our districts the chance to discuss any concerns and ideas we may have directly with DMV.

16. Manager Marino stated that the kick-off meeting for the EagleView High Resolution Aerial Imagery was held Monday December 13th and they have currently mapped 95% of the county. Manager Marino stated that the remaining 5% left is for one touch-up flight due to the snow-covered areas.
17. Attorney Coward stated that Brookfield is scheduled to meet in April to discuss the upcoming revaluation of their property.
18. Manager Marino stated that our grounds maintenance needs a new mower, and the cost is a little over \$9,000.00 and stated that they wished it could have waited until next budget, but the old mower is twelve years old and giving trouble. Commissioner Wiggins made the motion to go ahead with the purchase of the new mower from Lovin's for \$9406.00. Commissioner Nelms seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
19. Manager Marino stated that the Middle School project is around 58% complete.
20. Manager Marino stated that the RDA Moose Branch Subdivision Project is 85% complete and is excited to see affordable housing for the county.
21. Manager Marino stated that the Recreation and Cemetery buildings are 63% complete with delays due to illness of the contractor but hopes this project will start back up quickly.
22. Manager Marino stated that the Board of Elections renovations is 85% complete and we are awaiting the cabinetry.
23. Manager Marino stated that he recommended a Construction Manager at Risk for this project and asks permission to solicit for a design team. Commissioner Wiggins asks for a definition of a Construction Manager at Risk. Chair Orr asks that Manager Marino send out the information explaining what a construction manager at risk is and if needed the board can poll if a decision needs to be made before our next meeting.
24. Manager Marino stated that the Little Snowbird Project design is 100% complete and there will be a meeting on March 16th to discuss the project.
25. Manager Marino stated that Chair Orr had signed the paperwork for our schools to get an additional \$14M in grant funding with a zero-county match.
26. Chair Orr asks for the finance reporting. Director Garland stated that the county ended the month with \$11,022,375.33 cash balance which is \$86,000.00 higher than last year and was very pleased with this number. Director Garland stated that special accounts balances are:

a. Capital Projects	\$2,264,953.37
b. School Capital Project	\$114,178.83
c. American Rescue Plan Act	\$82,610.05
d. SCIF Grant – Courthouse	\$5,000,000.00
- Director Garland stated that she needed permission to open a separate account for the SCIF Grant / Courthouse Project. Commissioner Eller made the motion to approve the request as stated. Commissioner Cody seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
27. Director Garland stated that our tax collections for February was \$176,404.69 for current year; \$16,631.18 for prior year and \$53,810.13 for DMV. Director Garland stated that our year-to-date collection for real property is \$6,943,361.14 and \$417,341.37 for DMV. Director Garland stated that we are ahead \$57,795.85 in real taxes and \$19,559.01 in DMV and our tax collection rate is 95.25% and commends the tax collections office for their diligence in collections.
28. Director Garland stated that our revenues for the month are \$1,051,152.78 and our expenditures are \$1,421,440.50 for a deficit of \$370,278.72. Director Garland stated that our revenues to date are \$13,709,717.70 and our expenditures are \$11,568,566.77 for a year-to-date surplus of \$2,141,150.93.
29. Director Garland stated that our sales tax collection for the month was \$241,052.56 not including the quarter cent sales tax and she is very pleased with these numbers. Director Garland stated that she will be transferring \$75,314.36 to the capital projects funds from the quarter cent tax collection.
30. Director Garland stated that our back tax collections is \$484,000.64.
31. Director Garland stated that budget should be at 34% and we are holding at 42%.
32. Director Garland stated that she did have three budget amendments for the board review and/or approval.
 - a. Budget Amendment #14 to recognize Dogwood Health Trust Grant for Opioid Abatement for \$242,818.00.
 - b. Budget Amendment #15 to recognize funding from the General Assembly for a Sheriff Senate Bill Grant of \$82,270.00.
 - c. Budget Amendment #16 to amend for increase in jail costs due to high jail population for \$185,435.00.

Director Garland stated that Marlon Jackson and Kenneth Hyde, Jail Administration are here for questions or concerns regarding this increase. Mr. Jackson stated that the number of inmates has increased from 12-15 inmates to 30-35 inmates on any given day which is double the capacity that they normally have. Mr. Jackson stated that the bills for the inmates that are

housed in other counties have increased as well as increases in the regular monthly bills. Mr. Jackson stated that our officers are working hard even through COVID which continues to affect the Jail regularly which causes a lot of overtime. Mr. Hyde stated that we have over \$3,000.00 per month for inmate meals and they are seeing daily transport. Mr. Hyde one of which is in Wilmington NC that requires two officers, one to drive down and one to drive back. Mr. Jackson stated that our daily costs for supplies have gone up substantially and we are required by statute to have a commissary for the inmates. Mr. Jackson stated that they are working diligently to keep the costs down, but their budget is gone, and they need money. Mr. Jackson stated that after speaking with Director Garland for daily basic needs through June 30th they will need \$185,435.00 in additional funds. Director Garland stated that after this projection she began to look for ways to fund this overage and the good news is that we have an overage in our property and sales tax revenue. Mr. Jackson stated that he works hard every day to keep costs down. Mr. Hyde stated that the increase in fuel is a factor as well. Commissioner Nelms made the motion to approve Budget Amendments #14, #15 and #16 as stated. Commissioner Wiggins seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.

33. Chair Orr asks for public comment. Clerk Crisp stated that Daniel Allison, T&T Director was signed in for public comment. Director Allison gave a quick reminder that on March 22nd they will be meeting on the Sesquicentennial Celebration for our county and invites everyone to come.
34. Chair Orr asks Clerk Crisp to give the discussion items. Clerk Crisp asks for a motion to approve the releases of \$6,241.84 and the discoveries of \$92.43. Commissioner Wiggins made the motion to approve as stated. Commissioner Cody seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
35. Clerk Crisp stated that the board is invited to attend a meeting concerning Broadband which Senator Kevin Corbin is hosting and the invitation is in their packets.
36. Clerk Crisp asks for approval of the poll taken February 16th for extra bereavement leave for T Crisp. Commissioner Wiggins made the motion to approve as stated. Commissioner Nelms seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
37. Clerk Crisp asks for approval of the poll taken February 21st for leave without pay for G Bradley due to unexpected illness in her immediate family. Commissioner Cody made the motion as stated. Commissioner Wiggins seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
38. Clerk Crisp asks for approval of the February 28th poll for the cardiac monitors requested by EM Director Brian Stevens. Commissioner Wiggins made the motion to approve. Commissioner Nelms seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
39. Clerk Crisp asks for approval of the March 2nd poll to allow Attorney Coward to consult with another attorney on pending litigation. Commissioner Wiggins made the motion to approve as stated. Commissioner Cody seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
40. Clerk Crisp asks if the board would like to adopt the Resolution to name Public Health Week April 4-10, 2022. Commissioner Wiggins made the motion to adopt the resolution as presented. Commissioner Cody seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
41. Clerk Crisp asks for approval of the proposed dates for the Board of Equalization and Review, every Tuesday in April at 4:00 p.m. Commissioner Nelms made the motion to approve the dates as presented. Commissioner Wiggins seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
42. Clerk Crisp asks for approval of the HCCBG 2022-2023 funding as presented by Senior Center Director Wanda Hill for \$127,722.00 with a county match of \$14,191.00. Commissioner Wiggins made the motion to approve the grant as stated. Commissioner Nelms seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
43. Chair Orr asks for a motion to go into closed session under G.S. 143-318.11(a)(1)(3)(5)(6) for privileged or confidential information, attorney client privilege, personnel, and contracts. Commissioner Wiggins made the motion as stated. Commissioner Cody seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
44. Chair Orr asks for a motion to go into open session. Commissioner Cody made the motion as stated. Commissioner Nelms seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
45. Chair Orr asks for a motion to approve leave without pay for Andy Lynn. Commissioner Eller made the motion to approve as stated. Commissioner Nelms seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
46. Chair Orr asks for a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Wiggins made the motion as stated. Commissioner Nelms seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.

Signature page attached!

Signature page attached for Regular Meeting March 15, 2022

Connie Orr, Chair

Keith Eller, Vice-Chairman

Lynn Cody, Member

Jacob Nelms, Member

Dale Wiggins, Member

ATTEST: _____
Kim Crisp, Clerk to the Board