

Regular Meeting – September 19, 2023

The Graham County Board of Commissioners met Tuesday, September 19, 2023, 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 Finance Director Stacy Carpenter, Interim County Manager/Clerk to the Board Kim Crisp and Payroll Specialist Lanie Stewart.

1. Chairman Nelms called the meeting to order.
2. Chairman Nelms asks Commissioner Orr to give the Invocation.
3. Chairman Nelms asks for approval of the agenda. Commissioner Williams made the motion to approve the agenda. Commissioner Orr seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
4. Chairman Nelms asks for approval of the minutes for the: Continued Meeting June 2nd; Special June 13th, Special June 14th, Workshop Session June 20th, Regular Meeting June 20th, Emergency Joint Meeting June 29th, Board of E&R July 11th; Emergency Meeting July 11th. Commissioner Eller made the motion to approve the minutes as stated. Commissioner Williams seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
5. Chairman Nelms asks Billy McMahan to speak. Mr. McMahan was not present.
6. Chairman Nelms asks Samuel Farley to speak. Mr. Farley stated that he was here to speak about his garbage pick up service. Mr. Farley stated that he started this service roughly two years ago and he picks up household garbage only. Mr. Farley stated that he buys the garbage cans for his clients and contracts for a certain price to pick up and deliver their household garbage to the transfer station. Mr. Farley stated that his service is to help the elderly and/or shut-ins who do not have a way to take their garbage to convenience sites. Chairman Nelms stated that he is paid a set price and if he is required to start paying across the scales, he would not make any money. Mr. Farley stated that he pays taxes on the money that he makes but he has a small business and cannot afford to pay \$60.00 per ton across the scales. Mr. Farley stated that he did not mind paying some type of fee but the \$60.00 per ton was just too much. Commissioner Eller asks how much garbage he disposes of. Mr. Farley stated that he charges \$30.00 per month for homeowners and \$40.00 for rental homes. Commissioner Nelms asks how many bags per household would that be. Mr. Farley stated that he supplies 95-gallon trash cans, and it holds five large garbage bags. Commissioner Orr asks how many tons he disposes of each week. Mr. Farley stated that most weeks are 2 ½ to 3 ton per week. Mr. Farley stated that is for one entire run and he starts at four thirty in the morning and finishes around four in the afternoon on Monday's. Commissioner Cody asks if he has two trucks. Mr. Farley stated that he does have a crew that helps him, and they empty around twenty to thirty cans. Mr. Farley stated that he is not against paying something, but the price now is just too high. Mr. Farley stated that he has a friend in another county that does the same service, and he pays \$3.00 per ton and has over 900 customers. Commissioner Orr asks how many clients Mr. Farley had. Mr. Farley stated that he has around 140 clients. Mr. Farley stated that his fuel costs must be accounted for as well as his expenses. The board agreed to have further conversation on this concern.
7. Chairman Nelms asks Josh Stevens to speak. Mr. Stevens stated that he owns roll offs and pays to cross the county scales and if the county closes or limits the sites this will affect his business. Mr. Stevens stated that he was here to see what the board was proposing and if the numbers had been broken down on the proposed savings. Chairman Nelms stated that the board did not have a plan in stone, they are still trying to see what direction is best for the taxpayers, but they did have preliminary numbers on the approximate savings. Mr. Stevens stated that it benefited him to have the convenience sites, but he understands that people are being lazy and not taking care of the sites. Mr. Stevens stated that the sanitation staff work very hard to keep those sites in order and to turn around and see them trashed is wrong. Chairman Nelms stated that the board is still talking about the proposed plan but there have been many changes in the law concerning convenience sites, business disposal, etc. and they are trying to find the best solution for everyone. Mr. Stevens thanked the board for their time.
8. Chairman Nelms asks Finance Director Stacy Carpenter to give the finance report. Director Carpenter stated that she had several things to discuss. Director Carpenter stated that Interim Health Director Donna Stephens would like to move money around in her budget and the main reason is to fill the vacancies that she has. Director Carpenter discussed the proposed changes. Commissioner Eller asks if the money is in her budget. Director Carpenter stated that it was, she was just moving the money between her line items. Commissioner Cody asks that Director Carpenter formalize the numbers and present the board with a budget amendment. Director Carpenter stated that she would.
9. Director Carpenter stated that she needed a motion to open a new checking account for the Sheriff Department Marine Account. Director Carpenter stated that the Sheriff had received donations for the purchase of a boat. Commissioner Orr made the motion to approve the

Marine Checking Account for the Sheriff's Department. Commissioner Cody seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.

10. Director Carpenter stated that Vaya Health had presented their budget, and the county portion is \$6,000.00.
11. Director Carpenter stated that she had received a request for a debt set-off from a person that had passed away and wanted to know how the board proceeded with this. Interim Manager Crisp stated that they needed to check for an estate first through the clerk of court and if there were no estate or properties to sell, the board could elect to write off the debt.
12. Director Carpenter stated that she had another request to pay the Town of Robbinsville employees for their work at the Heritage Festival. Chairman Nelms stated that this is a private organization and does not have anything to do with county government. The board agreed that the county would not pay for this bill, they give an appropriation to the Heritage Festival and that is who is responsible.
13. Director Carpenter stated that the county ended the month with a \$5,308,694.61 cash balance which is trending lower, but it is explainable.
14. Director Carpenter stated that our projects account balances are:
 - a. Capital Projects NCCMT \$3,288,959.81
 - b. School Capital Project NCCMT \$ 119,686.58
 - c. American Rescue Plan Act UCBI \$ 849,884.16
 - d. SCIF Grant Courthouse NCCMT \$4,947,262.64Director Carpenter stated that the county has earned \$46,709.49 in interest on these accounts.
15. Director Carpenter stated that the current year tax collection is \$508,293.72 and the prior year is \$19,832.01. Director Carpenter stated that our DMV collection for the month is \$64,084.00.
16. Director Carpenter stated that our year-to-date tax collection for real is \$1,33,869.43 and our DMV is \$134,606.59 and our tax collection rate is 14.82%.
17. Director Carpenter stated that our revenues are \$475,141.85 and our expenditures are \$3,738,812.05 for a deficit of \$3,263,670.20, Director Carpenter stated that we have had to front the two sanitation trucks and we paid for several expenses in relation to the school and urgent care.
18. Director Carpenter stated that our revenues to date were \$1,437,959.20 and our expenditures were \$5,449,840.27 for a deficit of \$4,011,881.07.
19. Director Carpenter stated that our sales tax collections are \$247,728.55.
20. Director Carpenter stated that the tax office continues to collect back taxes and we have collected \$435,495.36 since the beginning.
21. Director Carpenter stated that she did have a small presentation on ADP Payroll. Director Carpenter stated that our current situation is that our current payroll company Optimum Suite is not working well and has an end of life coming up in 2024; time collection automated is in three departments only but not the (22) remaining; there are still a lot of manual processes (i.e., time collection, benefits administration) and the auditors have recommended that we look at ADP. Director Carpenter stated that our desired future state is streamlining payroll/HR processes; electronic time collection across all (25) departments; automated benefits administration and tie to payroll (deduction, carrier feeds, reconciliation reports, etc.) and better processes of things like onboarding, EE01, Total Compensation, Workers Comp tracking, etc. Director Carpenter stated that Lanie Stewart has a presentation for the board to review. Ms. Stewart stated that with ADP it will help deploy workforce now allowing full automation of Time, HR, Benefits and Payroll across the county reducing manual tasks and increasing accuracy and give employees access to the ADP Mobile app allowing self service to increase employee satisfaction and reduce administration. Ms. Stewart stated that we have (204) employees on payroll and gave examples of what an employee could get by using the ADP versus Edmunds Gov. Tech. Ms. Stewart stated that processing would take a shorter period with ADP and there are custom reports that can be done through ADP that the supervisor would have access to for their department. Ms. Stewart stated that ADP would integrate (7) years of data transfer from our old program to theirs and we would have support by an assigned ADP Associate plus have a 24/7 support line. Ms. Stewart stated that if we have printed checks, they will be printed by ADP and overnight for the employees and annual updates will be received at no extra cost. Director Carpenter stated that with a change in programs they anticipate assisting in filling the gap for the need of a fourth person on the finance team by decreasing manual processes, increase employee involvement with information such as retirement, benefits and how-to-guides and create a cohesive working environment between departments and employees. Director Carpenter stated that the financial comparison is as follows:
 - a. ADP \$34,847.30 (3-year guarantee)
 - b. Edmunds Gov Tech \$31,450.00 (3-year guarantee with end-of-life March 20, 2024)Director Carpenter stated that there is a difference of \$3,397.30 but given that they will receive extra support she is recommending that we change to ADP. Commissioner Williams stated that

she was not a big fan of Edmunds Gov Tech, and she does payroll. Commissioner Cody stated that we needed to look at other comparisons because ADP may not have the best reputation with large companies. Commissioner Orr asks if we change companies what is the go live date. Director Carpenter stated that the payroll would change effective January 1st but they would begin processing the changeover immediately. Commissioner Williams stated that realistically if the payroll processor is recommending a program, we should listen to them because they are the ones that are implementing the processes. Ms. Stewart stated that ADP can provide other services, but they are optional but the ones that they do provide are more than we are receiving at this time. Commissioner Williams made the motion to change payroll companies upon the finance officer's recommendation to ADP. Commissioner Orr seconded this motion. Vote called. Commissioners Nelms, Orr and Williams voted yes. Commissioners Cody and Eller voted no. Motion carried three to two.

22. Chairman Nelms asks for public comment. No public comment.
23. Chairman Nelms asks for approval of the releases for \$6,752.24 and discoveries for \$322,755.22. Commissioner Cody made the motion to approve the releases and discoveries as stated. Commissioner Orr seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
24. Chairman Nelms stated that we would now go to the discussion items. Chairman Nelms opened the bid for the 2014 Dodge Van and stated that we received on bid from Tim Sullivan for \$4000.00. Commissioner Eller made the motion to accept the bid. Commissioner Orr seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
25. Chairman Nelms asks about the donation to the Cemetery Commission. Interim Manager Crisp stated that John and Nina Crisp would like to donate the Haize Jenkins Cemetery to the Cemetery Commission. Chairman Nelms asks Attorney Coward to get with Interim Manager Crisp and see what needed to be done.
26. Chairman Nelms asks Interim Manager Crisp to speak on the remaining items. Interim Manager Crisp stated that she had received several complaints that the Humane Society was not taking Graham County animals, and this is not the case. Interim Manager Crisp stated that the center was full, and they were requesting that people hold their animals for a couple of weeks until they could get some of the animals moved up north.
27. Interim Manager Crisp stated that the Senior Celebration is scheduled in Bryson City for September 22, 2023, from 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
28. Interim Manager Crisp stated that the next item of business was handled earlier for the health director.
29. Interim Manager Crisp stated that we had received the \$6,200.00 grant for the dental clinic.
30. Interim Manager Crisp asks if the board would have further discussion on the Tax Assessor Assistant. The board tabled the discussion at this time.
31. Interim Manager Crisp stated that we received notification from the US Board of Geographic Names that they named the falls in question "Bemis Camp Falls".
32. Chairman Nelms asks for approval of the following polls:
 - a. New hire for part time custodian L Moore
 - b. Urgent Care notice of closing posted 8/17
 - c. Audit extension 9/11
 - d. Advance to Lacy Hood PTO
 - e. Hire A Nichols for Accounts PayableChairman Nelms asks for a motion to approve the polls. Commissioner Orr made the motion to approve. Commissioner Williams seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
33. Chairman Nelms 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 Eller made the motion as stated. Commissioner Williams seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
34. Chairman Nelms asks for a motion to go into open session. Commissioner Williams made the motion as stated. Commissioner Orr seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
35. Chairman Nelms asks Billy McMahan to speak. Mr. McMahan stated that his taxes tripled, and he cannot afford to pay, he is eighty-six years old and lives on a fixed income. The board stated that they would send his concerns to the Tax Assessor Brandy Cook for another review.
36. Chairman Nelms asks for a motion to continue the meeting to September 26th at 5:00 p.m. Commissioner Williams made the motion to continue the meeting as stated. Commissioner Orr seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.

Jacob Nelms, Chairman

Natasha Williams, Vice-Chair

Lynn Cody, Member

Keith Eller, Member

Connie Orr, Member

ATTEST:

Kim Crisp, Clerk to the Board