

Continued Meeting – May 27, 2022

The Graham County Board of Commissioners met Friday, May 27, 2022, for a continued meeting in the Graham County Community Building located at 196 Knight Street Robbinsville, NC. Board present Connie Orr, Keith Eller, Jacob Nelms and Dale Wiggins. Board absent Lynn Cody. Also, present Manager Jason Marino, Finance Director Becky Garland, and Clerk Kim Crisp.

1. Chair Orr called the meeting to order.
2. Chair Orr asks for changes or additions to the agenda. Clerk Crisp requests that the 2022/2023 Holiday Schedule be added to the agenda. Manager Marino requests that an updated Conflict of Interest Policy for Graham County and Graham County Transit be added as well. Commissioner Wiggins made the motion to approve. Commissioner Nelms seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
3. Chair Orr asks Clerk Crisp to present the holiday schedule. Clerk Crisp asks if the board would like to add Friday, July 1, 2022, and Monday, July 4, 2022, as the July 4<sup>th</sup> Holiday and then presented the rest of the schedule that matches the State's. Commissioner Wiggins made the motion to approve the holiday schedule as presented. Commissioner Nelms seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
4. Clerk Crisp stated that Juanita Colvard, Transit Director needed approval of the Conflict-of-Interest Policy for 2022. Clerk Crisp stated that this is the same policy which is also the Graham County Policy with no changes from last year. Commissioner Wiggins made the motion to approve. Commissioner Eller seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
5. Manager Marino asks the board if they wished to entertain closed session at the beginning of the meeting, due to personnel issues that need to be discussed. Chair Orr asks for a motion to go into closed session under G.S. 143-318.11(a)(1)(6) for privileged or confidential information and personnel. Commissioner Wiggins made the motion to go into closed session as stated. Commissioner Nelms seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
6. Chair Orr asks for a motion to go back into open session. Commissioner Wiggins made the motion to go back into open session. Commissioner Eller seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
7. Chair Orr asks Graham County School Superintendent Dr. Angela Knight, Assistant School Superintendent Robert Moody, Finance Director Lester Greene, and Board Chair Rodney Nelson to discuss the school budget request. Dr. Knight thanked the board for their time and appreciated the opportunity to meet with them concerning school funding requests. Dr. Knight stated that Finance Director Greene would discuss the presentation. Director Greene reviewed the school budget with the Board of Commissioners and gave a review of the unfunded mandates that the State is passing down to the schools which in turn passes down to the taxpayers. Director Greene gave an extensive review of the "pots" of money that they receive and how it is distributed. Director Greene stated that they have received unfunded mandates for insurance, retirement, wage increases and much more. The board asked questions throughout the presentation. Director Greene discussed classroom expenses, exceptional children funding, general supplies, salaries, and benefits for all employees. Director Greene stated that the school is completing a sixth-grade wing at the middle school. Director Greene discussed impact aid and how the funding works for the schools. Chair Orr stated that the NCACC's main priority is to fight unfunded mandates and they and this board will continue to fight because this is shocking to everyone when the State is allowed to push unfunded mandates. Director Greene and Finance Director Garland discussed low wealth funding and we are at the state average to receive full funding. Director Garland stated that at the end of the day, it is left up to the taxpayers to fund any shortages.
8. Mr. Moody stated that they do not receive any type of state or federal funding for safe schools and with today's world it is concerning for our kids that must change classes between buildings.
9. Mr. Nelson stated that our goal is kids, and we must support our kids. Mr. Nelson thanked the board for listening to the school's presentation and for the questions and thanked the school staff for keeping our schools open considering the pandemic and he is proud to say that \$1.9 million dollars of scholarships was given to our seniors and eight of those recipients played a winning season of softball and graduated with honors, proof that our scores are showing the hard work of our staff.
10. Director Garland stated that she did receive the JCPC funding request for \$6,483.00 county match and asks that the board approve this match today. Commissioner Eller made the motion to approve. Commissioner Nelms seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
11. Director Garland stated that she did have a budget amendment for review and approval.

- a. Budget Amendment #21 – to recognize additional DSS funding for Foster Care and Adult Protective Services for \$38,818.00.

Commissioner Eller made the motion to approve the budget amendment as stated.

Commissioner Nelms seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.

- 12. Director Garland stated that she has been working on the directives from the board concerning the minimum wages to \$14.00 per hour and we currently have (49) active employees who make under \$14.00 and with the FICA and benefits we are looking at \$275,000.00 to make this adjustment. Director Garland stated that last week she was at a \$2.4 million deficit but now she has it under \$1.2 million deficit and she gave a breakdown of where the deficit is coming from.

- a. School Funding Request \$500,000.00
- b. Health Insurance Increase \$250,000.00
- c. Retirement Increase \$ 65,000.00
- d. Departmental Increases \$325,000.00
- e. Miscellaneous Increases \$ 27,000.00

Combined total deficit \$1,167,000.00

- 13. Director Garland stated that she would need a motion to approve the insurance renewal which did have a 17.7% increase. Commissioner Nelms made the motion to approve the insurance proposal as presented. Commissioner Eller seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.
- 14. Director Garland stated that she took all budgets to baseline and adjusted for the pay increases as previously discussed. Director Garland stated that she did adjust for the increases of fuel and supplies. Director Garland stated that she made all the changes to the public safety as requested.
- 15. Commissioner Eller asks if we are receiving the maximum amount on our ambulance bills. Director Garland stated that she will be reaching out to other vendors to improve the revenue streams for our ambulance billing.
- 16. The board reviewed the budget requests for special appropriations, schools, and pool repairs. The board all agreed to continue the meeting until Friday, June 3, 2022. Commissioner Nelms made the motion to continue the meeting as stated. Commissioner Eller seconded this motion. Vote unanimous.

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Connie Orr, Chair

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Keith Eller, Vice-Chairman

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Lynn Cody, Member

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Jacob Nelms, Member

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Dale Wiggins, Member

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
Kim Crisp, Clerk to the Board