

**AGENDA
CRAVEN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR SESSION
MONDAY, MARCH 1, 2021
7:00 P.M.**

CALL TO ORDER

ROLL CALL

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

APPROVE AGENDA

1. PETITIONS OF CITIZENS – AGENDA TOPICS
2. CONSENT AGENDA
 - A. Minutes of February 15, 2021 Regular Session
 - B. Tax Releases and Refunds

DEPARTMENTAL MATTERS

3. CONVENTION CENTER – APPROVAL OF MINGES PARTNERSHIP:
Tarshi McCoy, Convention Center Director
4. SOLID WASTE: Steven Aster, Solid Waste Director
 - A. Budget Amendment and Approval of Purchase of 240 Bailey Lane,
Vanceboro, NC
 - B. Approval of Purchase Contract for 241 Belltown Road
5. ELECTIONS – 2020 HAVA GRANT: Meloni Wray, Director of Elections
6. EMERGENCY SERVICES – NO. 9 TOWNSHIP FIRE & RESCUE – RESERVE
MONEY REQUEST: Roger Wetherington, President
7. FINANCE – ANNUAL AUDIT CONTRACT FOR FY2021: Craig Warren, Finance
Director
8. APPOINTMENTS
9. COUNTY ATTORNEY’S REPORT: Arey Grady
10. PETITIONS OF CITIZENS – GENERAL TOPICS

11. COUNTY MANAGER'S REPORT: Jack Veit
12. COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS
13. CLOSED SESSION

THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE COUNTY OF CRAVEN MET IN REGULAR SESSION IN THE COMMISSIONERS' ROOM OF THE CRAVEN COUNTY ADMINISTRATION BUILDING, 406 CRAVEN STREET, NEW BERN, NORTH CAROLINA, ON MONDAY, MARCH 1, 2021. THE MEETING CONVENED AT 7:00 P.M.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Chairman Jason R. Jones
 Vice Chairman Denny Bucher
 Chairman George S. Liner
 Commissioner Theron L. McCabe
 Commissioner E. T. Mitchell
 Commissioner Beatrice R. Smith

MEMBERS EXCUSED:

Commissioner Thomas F. Mark

STAFF PRESENT:

Jack B. Veit, III, County Manager
 Gene Hodges, Assistant County Manager
 Craig Warren, Finance Director
 Amber Parker, Human Resources Director
 Arey Grady, County Attorney
 Nan Holton, Clerk to the Board

Following the Pledge of Allegiance, County Attorney, Arey Grady, recited the following invocation:

Almighty God, ruler of all things and all men, You have set all things to move in harmony; You desire that men dwell in unity and love.

Cause people everywhere to respect law and justice. Where people are unjust, inhuman, and cruel, send correction. Where they are at war, send peace.

Give to those whom You have placed in the seats of honor and power the blessing of sound judgment, the skill of making wise decisions, the patience to act in due time, and the tact for being mutually helpful.

May wisdom and knowledge be the stability of our time, and our deepest trust be in You, the Lord of nations and the King of kings. Amen.

Based upon the invocation given by Reverend Robert Rosenberg the May 11, 2000 session of the US House of Representatives

Commissioner Liner motioned to approve the agenda, as presented, seconded by Commissioner Mitchell and unanimously carried.

PETITIONS OF CITIZENS – AGENDA TOPICS

There were no citizens from the public that signed up to speak.

CONSENT AGENDA

Commissioner Smith motioned to approve the Consent Agenda, inclusive of the Minutes of February 15, 2021 Regular Session and the Tax Releases and Refunds (**Credits = \$2,924.60; Refunds = \$709.01**). The motion was seconded by Commissioner McCabe and in a roll call vote approved 6-0.

DEPARTMENTAL MATTERS: CONVENTION CENTER – APPROVAL OF MINGES PARTNERSHIP

Convention Center Director, Tarshi McCoy, reported that Craven County and the New Bern Riverfront Convention Center first announced in September 1999 an exclusivity agreement with Pepsi that only Pepsi products would be used at the new center. This agreement was for a 5-year term. As the Convention Center was being reopened after the repairs from Hurricane Florence, it was decided that the Center would offer both Pepsi and Coke products to attendees per their request.

Ms. McCoy stated that they were recently approached by Minges Bottling Group to consider becoming an exclusive Pepsi facility once again. This agreement would be a five (5) year agreement beginning March 2021. She highlighted that Minges Bottling Group will, in exchange for this agreement, supply the convention center with: \$1,000 annual sponsorship toward a convention center self-promoted event, \$500 annual in-kind product and annual media tag valued at \$19,000.

Commissioner McCabe motioned to approve the contract with Minges Bottling Group, as recommended, that will make the Convention Center an exclusive Pepsi facility, for five years, in exchange for marketing and product support. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Liner and unanimously approved.

DEPARTMENTAL MATTERS: SOLID WASTE

Budget Amendment and Approval of Purchase of 240 Bailey Lane, Vanceboro, NC

Solid Waste Director, Steven Aster, reported that the Board previously approved an assignment of contract for the property located at 240 Bailey Lane, Vanceboro. Subsequently, staff obtained a survey, an environmental assessment and a title exam, all for this property, and those due diligence items show that the property is acceptable for the County's intended use. In turn, the County is in a position to close on the purchase of the property in the coming weeks. Staff and legal counsel recommended that the Board authorize the County to move forward with closing on the property.

Mr. Aster relayed that in order to proceed, a budget amendment in the amount of \$40,000 needs to be approved. This amount reflects the purchase price of \$39,000 plus \$1,000 for settlement costs.

Commissioner Mitchell motioned to move forward with closing on the property and to approve the following budget amendment, as requested, seconded by Commissioner Liner and approved 6-0 in a roll call vote.

Solid Waste

| REVENUES | AMOUNT | EXPENDITURES | AMOUNT |
|--|--------------------|--|--------------------|
| 4000000-39901 Fund Balance Carryover | \$40,000.00 | 4004150-49701 Transfer to General Fund | \$40,000.00 |
| 1014721-39802 Transfer in from Res Fund | \$40,000.00 | 1014721-47301 Capital Outlay over \$5,000 | \$40,000.00 |
| TOTAL | \$40,000.00 | TOTAL | \$40,000.00 |

Approval of Purchase Contract for 241 Belltown Road

Mr. Aster commented that at the November 16, 2020 work session, the Board of Commissioners authorized staff to explore the purchase of 241 Belltown Road, parcel number 3-030-116. This parcel is approximately 9 acres and adjoins the Craven County Fort Barnwell Solid Waste Convenience Center. The owner is willing to sell the property and has accepted an offer of \$15,000. The next step is for Craven County to approve a purchase contract with Ronnie S Gray for this parcel.

He stated that the County Attorney also recommended that a property boundary survey and a Phase 1 Environmental Assessment be performed as part of the County's due diligence review. Craven County Solid Waste requested a resolution of exemption for this project, which will allow the Solid Waste Department to contract with Avolis Engineering to perform these engineering and surveying services and forgo the formal Request for Qualifications process.

Mr. Aster requested approval of the purchase contract of \$15,000, exemption of engineering and surveying services, and the budget amendment in the amount of \$13,700.

Commissioner Liner motioned to approve the purchase contract, the exemption for the engineering services and the following budget amendment in the amount of \$13,700. Commissioner Smith seconded the motion, which carried 6-0 in a roll call vote.

Solid Waste Department

| REVENUES | AMOUNT | EXPENDITURES | AMOUNT |
|---------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| 1010000-39901 | \$13,700.00 | 1014721-44000 | \$13,700.00 |
| Current Year Fund Balance | | Contractual Services | |
| TOTAL | \$13,700.00 | TOTAL | \$13,700.00 |

DEPARTMENTAL MATTERS: ELECTIONS – 2020 HAVA GRANT

Director of Elections, Meloni Wray, requested the Board’s approval of a 2020 HAVA Subgrant for the purpose of improving the administration of federal elections, and to be used for the following:

1. Enhancing election technology (updating software in the voting machines to Electionware)
2. Improving, acquiring or replacing voting systems/technology/methods for casting and counting votes (replacing the aged out ADA voting equipment, the Automarks, with Expressvotes, and purchasing designated flash drives and ballot boxes for election equipment)

She stated the Board of Elections will seek reimbursement from the State for funds spent on this HAVA Grant; and requested the Board’s approval of a budget amendment in the amount of \$93,050.00.

Commissioner Smith motioned to approve the following budget amendment, as requested, seconded by Commissioner Liner and approved 6-0 in a roll call vote.

Elections

| REVENUES | AMOUNT | EXPENDITURES | AMOUNT |
|-----------------|--------------------|------------------------------|--------------------|
| 1014160-33327 | \$93,050.00 | 1014160-47321 | \$93,050.00 |
| Federal Grant | | Capital Outlay \$500-\$4,999 | |
| TOTAL | \$93,050.00 | TOTAL | \$93,050.00 |

DEPARTMENTAL MATTERS: EMERGENCY SERVICES – NO. 9 TOWNSHIP FIRE & RESCUE – RESERVE MONEY REQUEST

No. 9 Township Fire and Rescue President, Roger Wetherington, and Emergency Services Director, Stanley Kite, reported that the station applied for and was recently awarded a Department of Insurance (DOI) Rescue Grant for generators at the Main Station and Substation. He mentioned that the Main Station generator is over 20 years old and parts were unable to be located. The station will be upgrading from a 38kw generator to an 80kw generator.

Mr. Wetherington requested a budget amendment in the amount \$24,900 from the fire district’s reserve fund to pay the fire department’s portion of the 50/50 grant.

Commissioner Liner motioned to approve the following budget amendment, as requested, to support the Rescue Grant. The motioned was seconded by Commissioner Smith and approved 6-0 in a roll call vote.

Fire Departments/No. 9 Twp. Fire

| REVENUES | AMOUNT | EXPENDITURES | AMOUNT |
|---------------------------|--------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| 2090000-39901 | \$24,900.00 | 2094340-46999 | \$24,900.00 |
| Current Year Fund Balance | | PBC Grant Match | |
| TOTAL | \$24,900.00 | TOTAL | \$24,900.00 |

DEPARTMENTAL MATTERS: FINANCE – ANNUAL AUDIT CONTRACT FOR FY2021

Finance Director, Craig Warren, reported that Thompson, Price, Scott, Adams & Co, P.A. has submitted a proposal to perform the County’s annual audit for the current fiscal year ending June 30, 2021. The proposed fee is \$72,600, the same fee charged for fiscal 2020, and represents year two of the three year cost proposal approved by Commissioners last May. Mr. Warren stated that the County realized \$56,833 in savings on this contract from the prior year and recommended that the County continue to contract with Thompson, Price, Scott, Adams & Co, P.A. to perform the annual audit for fiscal year 2021.

Commissioner Mitchell motioned to approve the audit contract for FY21 with Thompson, Price, Scott, Adams & Co., P.A., was recommended, seconded by Commissioner Smith and in a roll call vote approved 6-0.

APPOINTMENTS

Pending

Chairman Jones reviewed the following pending appointments:

- Adult Care Home Advisory Committee
- Community Child Protection Team
- Coastal Regional Solid Waste Management Authority (CRSWMA)
- Craven/Pamlico Regional Library
- Nursing Home Advisory Committee
- Regional Aging Advisory Board
- Voluntary Agriculture District Advisory Board
- Cove City Library

Current

Highway 70 Corridor Committee

Commissioner Liner nominated Danny Walsh for reappointment to the Highway 70 Corridor Committee. There being no additional nominations, Mr. Walsh was reappointed by acclamation.

Clean Sweep Committee

Chairman Jones nominated Debbie Kirkman for reappointment to the Clean Sweep Committee. There being no additional nominations, Ms. Jones was reappointed by acclamation.

Upcoming

Chairman Jones reviewed upcoming terms due to expire on boards and committees.

COUNTY ATTORNEYS' REPORT

*Approval of Conveyance After Expiration of Upset Bid Period – Sand Hill Rd., Dover
(Parcel Number 3-058-071)*

County Attorney, Arey Grady, reported that the County previously received and approved an offer to purchase the property on Sand Hill Rd., Dover, subject to the completion of the upset bid process. The upset bid period has now expired, and Mr. Grady recommended approval of the conveyance at the purchase price of \$1,750.00. The County originally acquired this property through a tax foreclosure, with past due taxes and costs of foreclosure totaling \$2,410.39. The tax value of this property is \$2,700.00.

He requested that the Board adopt a resolution to authorize this transaction, which in turn will authorize the execution and delivery of the necessary documents.

Commissioner Mitchell motioned to adopt the following resolution to accept the final sale, seconded by Commissioner Smith and unanimously approved.

CRAVEN COUNTY
RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING CONVEYANCE
AFTER EXPIRATION OF UPSET BID PERIOD

WHEREAS, Craven County owns certain real property identified as Tax Parcel Number 3-058-071 (hereinafter “the Real Property”), the Real Property having been acquired by Craven County in deed recorded in Book 2562 Page 880 in the Office of the Register of Deeds of Craven County; and,

WHEREAS, Craven County previously received and approved an Offer to Purchase the Real Property, and Craven County subsequently advertised said offer for upset bids as required by North Carolina General Statute §160A-269; and,

WHEREAS, the upset bid period required under North Carolina General Statute §160A-269 has expired; and,

WHEREAS, the Craven County Board of Commissioners deems it advisable and in the best interest of the County to sell its interest in the Real Property to the successful bidder and to convey its interest in said property by quitclaim deed.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF CRAVEN COUNTY THAT:

Section 1. The last and highest bid of JK Investment Holdings, LLC in the sum of \$1,750.00 for the Real Property is hereby accepted, and the Offer to Purchase previously executed by Craven County subject to the provisions of North Carolina General Statute §160A-269 is hereby ratified and confirmed in its entirety.

Section 2. Upon payment of the full purchase price, the Chairman, the County Manager, the Assistant County Manager, the Clerk to the Board of Commissioners and/or County Attorney are authorized to take all actions necessary to accomplish the transactions contemplated by this Resolution, including but not limited to the execution and delivery of the quitclaim deed attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference.

ADOPTED THIS 1ST DAY OF MARCH, 2021.

PETITIONS OF CITIZENS – GENERAL TOPICS

There were no citizens from the public that signed up to speak.

COUNTY MANAGER'S REPORT

County Manager, Jack Veit, reminded the Commissioners of the upcoming Work Session to be held on March 15th following their Regular Session morning meeting.

Mr. Veit then provided the proposed Budget Work Sessions, starting on Monday, May 17th following the Regular Session morning meeting. Other Budget Work Sessions would be held May 18th, 19th and 20th, starting at 8:30 a.m. at the Convention Center. He indicated that more meetings would be scheduled as needed at that point.

Mr. Veit reported that House Bill 119 regarding property tax relief for COVID affected businesses requires following closely in that it has potential to affect county taxes and how they are collected.

COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS

Commissioner Liner reported he has received calls about animals that are picked up by Craven County Animal Control and not being taken to the Craven County Animal Shelter. He expressed concern and requested that staff review the County's ordinance and consider changing it to make our animal shelter the only drop off site.

Commissioner Mitchell echoed Commissioner Liner's concern, stating that a person's pet is their personal property and the County should maintain the responsibility of the animal when picking it up. She reported she has received inquiries from parents seeking a la crosse field and requested that staff get back to her on availability of such through Parks and Recreation.

Commissioner Smith highlighted a COVID vaccine clinic to be held at Bryant Chapel Church in Cove City on March 8th. She indicated they already had 80 registered citizens and were still taking registrations. She provided her phone number for those interested in making an appointment. She remarked she was receiving help from Lorean Wilson of Bryant Chapel Church, Elder Dobson with the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, and Fern Cotton. Plans are to hold another clinic in Vanceboro once this one is completed. Commissioner Smith encouraged everyone to receive the vaccine, expressing that she has had it herself and it is safe and effective.

Commissioner McCabe reported on the COVID vaccine clinic being held in Harlowe on Wednesday, March 3rd at 1:30 p.m. at the Harlowe Community Center. He remarked about the assistance of the Health Department and the Sheriff's Office. Commissioner McCabe encouraged people to come receive their vaccine or help with the clinic.

Commissioner Bucher had nothing to report.

Chairman Jones remarked on the recent focus on litter in the county and reported that he and Mr. Veit are in talks with others on the CRSWMA Board and the Sheriff. He reported they would be talking with individuals from the adjoining counties about the issue and seeking solutions. Mr. Jones stated that the Sheriff would be putting inmates back out picking up litter in the near future. He requested this topic be added to the upcoming Work Session.

Chairman Jones expressed his thanks to Commissioners McCabe and Smith in helping set up clinics to utilize the vaccine equity allotments.

Mr. Veit took the opportunity to highlight that the County Health Department is getting an additional 2,300 doses and vaccine registration has opened up for teachers, day care workers and others who work with children.

CLOSED SESSION

At 7:51 p.m., Commissioner McCabe motioned to go into Closed Session pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11(a)(3) to consult with an attorney to protect the attorney-client privilege. His motion was seconded by Commissioner Mitchell and approved unanimously.

At 8:59 p.m. Commissioner Mitchell motioned to return to Open Session. Her motion was seconded by Commissioner Liner and approved unanimously.

No action was taken.

At 9:01 p.m. Commissioner Mitchell motioned to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner McCabe and approved unanimously.

Chairman Jason R. Jones
Craven County Board of Commissioners

Nan Holton
Clerk to the Board