

**MINUTES OF BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
OF GUILFORD COUNTY
WORK SESSION**

Greensboro, North Carolina
December 4, 2025

The Board of County Commissioners met in a duly noticed special meeting on December 4, 2025 at 3:30 p.m., in the Carolyn Q. Coleman Conference Room, 301 W. Market St., Greensboro, North Carolina.

PRESENT: Chairman Melvin “Skip” Alston, presiding; Vice Chairwoman J. Carlvena Foster; Commissioners Kay Cashion, Brandon Gray-Hill, Carly Cooke, Mary Beth Murphy, Frankie T. Jones, Jr., Pat Tillman, and Alan Perdue.

ABSENT: None.

ALSO PRESENT: County Manager Victor Isler; Interim County Attorney Matt Mason; Clerk to the Board Robin Keller, Chief Deputy Clerk to the Board Ariane Webb, Deputy Clerk to the Board T’ebony Rosa; Natalie Craver, Assistant County Manager; Erris Dunston, Assistant County Manager; Toy Beeninga, Budget and Management Director; Mary Herbenick, Guilford Nonprofit Consortium Director; members of staff, media, and the public. Virtual participation was made available to members of the public and media partners.

I. WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Alston welcomed those present and called the meeting to order at 3:37 p.m.

II. NEW BUSINESS

A. UPDATE ON STATUS OF NONPROFIT FUNDING

County Manager Victor Isler reviewed the work session agenda. He spoke to a fiscal stress test to gauge revenue streams from state and federal sources. He urged consideration of the impacts and limitations of the other organizations in our ecosystem. He highlighted the upcoming budget retreat. He introduced the agenda item and recognized Michael Rupp in Budget and Mary Herbenick (GNPC) to highlight the NPO presentation.

Commissioner Tillman entered the meeting at 3:38 p.m.

Rupp spoke to the scale of federal dollars directed to the Guilford County government and to the community-based organizations (CBOs). He shared multi-departmental efforts. He spoke to the

objectives regarding Guilford County receiving federal funding. He noted the exposure to federal fund streams, identified strategic investments, and contingency plans.

Rupp highlighted the value of a stress test to reveal the susceptibility of certain revenue streams, the flexibility of expenditure decisions within the budget, and the margin a government has for enduring this new reality. He shared the residual impacts to the local economy, revenues, and sales tax.

Commissioner Gray-Hill entered the meeting at 3:42 p.m.

Rupp noted the next steps to include (1) the County continues to build out this framework to understand the community's financial resiliency and the impacts to the county and community partners, (2) the recent federal shutdown helped identify risks, and (3) the County's fund balance is a critical component of this equation as fund balance maintains flexibility to respond to federal changes; however, the scale of federal funding cannot be backfilled with county resources alone.

Commissioner Cooke questioned the 4200 federal employees who work in Guilford County. She requested a breakdown of the workspace and whether that number has decreased due to a reduction in force (RIF).

Commissioner Tillman questioned the federal shutdown's net effects.

County Manager Isler confirmed a decrease in staffing and program design/planning, overtime, and food security. He noted that the Executive team is leaning into Non-Profit Organization (NPO) support. He shared that there was a \$5M decrease in grocery store shopping and a staggered approach to food and nutrition support due to economic impacts. He discussed the cost of food boxes and lost revenue to Second Harvest Food Bank (\$15-20/box that has a 4-5-day shelf life). He explained operational projection loss in the millions of dollars due to reimbursement policy changes.

Chairman Alston questioned whether there was confirmation of the proposed re-valuations of SNAP recipients to every 6 months.

County Manager Isler confirmed that it has not yet gone into effect. He opined on what it means to manage the administrative burden. He described that the new policy states twice a year and the equivalency counts to manage that level of output. He explained that there is a 50-75% decrease in reimbursement if there is an increase in full-time employees (FTEs).

Social Services Director Sharon Barlow confirmed that the policy has not been finalized yet. She noted projections from 50% down to between 21-31%.

Chairman Alston questioned impacted calculations.

County Manager Isler confirmed that this will be discussed at the budget retreat. He recognized Mary Herbenick.

GNC Director Herbenick provided a historical perspective of the Guilford Nonprofit Consortium.

Commissioners Jones and Murphy entered the meeting at 3:54 p.m.

Herbenick noted changes resulting from the federal funding freeze and shutdown. She shared data regarding major layoffs due to the immigrant and refugee crisis. She noted that 70% of NPOs receiving federal grants will have a shortfall. She noted the counties losing government grants. She shared the projected housing impacts from decreases in HUD grants. She noted NPOs needing to refigure programming due to donation reductions.

Herbenick provided data of the Piedmont Triad region NPs to include goods, wages, and taxonomy. She shared survey responses. She explained funding challenges to include loss of financial support, delayed reimbursements, lower donor contributions, hiring freezes, and alternative program models.

Herbenick shared that the biggest challenges include (1) funding challenges and delays (uncertainty around DEI-related funding; financial instability and planning); (2) operational adjustments (mission communication challenges); (3) organizational uncertainty (program sustainability risks, broader socio-political risks); and (4) proactive adaptation (diversified funding, policy changes).

Herbenick noted that the biggest threats to populations served include (1) loss of critical funding and support services, (2) rising fear, anxiety, and uncertainty, (3) impact on vulnerable populations, (4) disruption to community-based programming, and (5) barriers to access and engagement.

Herbenick shared a list of questions that lean towards collaboration and policy changes, additional factors to consider. She concluded the presentation by discussing a few observations to include new structure exploration, mission rebalancing, continuing development opportunities, and volunteerism.

Vice Chairwoman Foster questioned general outcomes.

Herbenick confirmed they are not positioned to fill gaps.

Vice Chairwoman Foster questioned High Point's involvement.

Herbenick confirmed that nothing is planned between now and the end of the year, but is in the planning phase.

Commissioner Cashion opined if more NPOs are overlapping service delivery. She questioned whether there was any movement towards mergers or being more proactive.

Herbenick confirmed some collaborative work with immigrant and refugee work, but more difficult with smaller NPs. She shared that duplication will go dormant for a period of time.

Commissioner Cashion questioned whether GNPC provided financial help with smaller NPs.

Herbenick confirmed that financing is not a viable program for the consortium to offer.

Commissioner Tillman spoke to having over 1200 veteran NPs. He shared that they must be solution-oriented to make stronger NPs that benefit more people. He questioned the study's sample size.

Herbenick confirmed the Urban Institute data, and that 56 organizations responded to the survey.

Commissioner Tillman voiced concern regarding the decrease in philanthropic donations.

Herbenick confirmed that foundations have bylaws and missions, along with donor-advised funds.

Commissioner Jones noted work-from-home challenges to donor campaigns. He questioned the impact of federal funding cuts to county-supplemented organizations.

County Manager Isler confirmed operational impacts and Food and Nutrition staff reductions.

B. NC HOUSE BILL 305/SL 2025-87

County Manager Isler highlighted stakeholder contributions. He recognized Budget Director Toy Beeninga.

Beeninga spoke to the Article 46 sales tax referendum and the 67% teacher supplement. He provided a scenario if voters approve the referendum and noted unrestricted funds for a public purpose. He highlighted the supplanting clauses and legislative intent, along with a 10-year look back with no funding to the Fire Rescue Council. He noted that the Guilford Technical Community College (GTCC) average is \$1.2M. He shared that the Board does not have authority to directly fund teacher supplements.

Beeninga highlighted goals of legislative intent is for fire protection, GTCC, and teacher supplements. He explained the GCS Board of Education (BOE) allocation fluctuating totals, as the BOE does not supplant funds. He shared that there are Fire and Rescue Council edits to sections regarding funding sources, and conversations with the City of Greensboro and the City of High Point. He shared ongoing discussions around the funding model. He noted that the county could collect and hold funds until requested by the F&R Council. He shared nominal participation fees.

Beeninga noted the next steps are to work with the General Assembly on ballot language and with county stakeholders regarding educational materials. He displayed the post-referendum 2026 timeline. He noted the Appendix with red lines for the following areas (1) For/Against ballot question and (2) New section to clarify supplanting. He explained the expansion language of certified instructional support personnel.

Commissioner Cooke questioned the goal of the edits: voter or elected clarification.

Beeninga confirmed changes to administrative funds in the 10-year look back. He shared that there is a focus on rural protection instead of municipal.

Commissioner Cooke urged for voter clarification, but a lack of information can be misleading.

Commissioner Tillman echoed Commissioner Cooke's remarks. He referred to slide 3 (Article 46) and the need for clarity for public purpose with a number/percentage value.

Commissioner Cashion urged consideration regarding the public's perception regarding teacher supplements, and requested a percentage for municipalities, rather than the original bill.

Chairman Alston questioned the revision's intended audience.

Beeninga confirmed conversations with Senator Berger's office.

Chairman Alston questioned a data for the language edits for the November general election.

Beeninga confirmed that the requested edits are due March 2026.

Commissioner Tillman shared the mechanics of bill-passing protocols.

Commissioner Jones questioned the intended language and the numerical versus the percentages.

County Manager Isler confirmed removing minimums and working on numbers and inserting both.

Commissioner Murphy explained certified instruct support personnel and different salary schedules, along with GCS intent and language consistent with bill allotment consistency.

Commissioner Cooke questioned ballot and bill texts.

Commissioner Perdue spoke to using simple, clarifying language on the ballot and not using bill text to decrease voter confusion.

Discussion ensued regarding the dynamics of the "one-quarter of one percent" language.

Commissioner Cooke sought clarity on slide 10 (Teacher Supplement).

Beeninga explained that GCS data confirmed FICA and retirement amounts, but needed more information from GCS.

III. OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business on this agenda.

IV. ADJOURN

There being no further business, the work session was adjourned by unanimous consent at 5:08 p.m.

Melvin "Skip" Alston
Chairman

Robin Keller
Clerk to the Board