

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

Greensboro, North Carolina  
March 21, 2024

The Board of County Commissioners met in a duly noticed Work Session at 3:30 p.m. in the Carolyn Q. Coleman Conference Room located on the first floor of the Old County Courthouse, 301 W. Market St., Greensboro, NC.

**PRESENT:** Chairman Melvin “Skip” Alston, presiding; Vice Chairwoman J. Carlvena Foster (via online communication); Commissioners Kay Cashion, Alan Perdue, Brandon Gray-Hill, Frankie T. Jones, Jr., Pat Tillman (in at 3:48 p.m.), and Mary Beth Murphy (in at 3:57 p.m.).

**ABSENT:** Commissioner Carly Cooke

**ALSO PRESENT:** County Manager Michael Halford; County Attorney Andrea Leslie-Fite; Clerk to Board Robin Keller; Deputy Clerk to the Board Ariane Webb; Deputy Clerk to the Board T’ebony Rosa; Victor Isler, Assistant County Manager; Erris Dunston, Assistant County Manager; Jason Jones, Assistant County Manager; Shaunne Thomas, MWBE 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 Melvin “Skip” Alston welcomed those present and called the meeting to order at 3:35 p.m.

**II. NEW BUSINESS**

Taking the prerogative of the Chair, Chairman Alston adjusted the agenda due to the consultant’s availability.

**C. MINORITY WOMEN BUSINESS ENTERPRISE DEPARTMENT  
UPDATE**

Shaunne Thomas, MWBE Director, introduced her team and provided an overview of the agenda item. She provided an overview of the annual spend report, outreach initiatives, economic impact, and strategies. She shared disparity study achievements over the previous fifteen (15) months.

Maria Miles, MWBE Deputy Director, spoke to the FY 2023 annual spend report, which exclude school capital outlay, debt service, non-major governmental, payroll, interlocal payments, grants, medical service reimbursements, service of summons, and volunteer election workers. She provided statistics regarding the FY 2023 prime contractor and subcontractor spend by race and ethnicity. She introduced current MWBE outreach initiatives and recognized Outreach Specialist and Marketing Manager Ferreli McGilvary.

Commissioner Jones questioned the areas where the race and ethnicity categories were identified.

Miles confirmed five (5) work categories identified in the disparity study, such as construction, goods, and services that are not categorized now but will be map identified in the future via the Munis system.

McGilvary displayed artificial intelligence (AI) generated technology for self-paced training modules. He spoke to bid solicitation, to social media, and to list serve distribution.

Chairman Alston questioned the distribution list presence on the County website.

McGilvary confirmed pre-bid solicitations are sent directly to qualified vendors and are also posted on the County's LinkedIn platform.

McGilvary continued the presentation by sharing the MWBE online newsletter click analytics. He shared vehicle maintenance vendors, interest meetings, the Triad Black Farmers Market, the Minority Economic Development (MED) Week, estimating workshop sessions, and announced new partnerships with the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and the Greater Greensboro Chamber of Commerce.

Miles spoke to the second quarter awards report to include race and ethnicity, prime contractors, and certified categories.

Chairman Alston questioned the MWBE goals.

Miles confirmed that goals are tied to availability and referred to slide 12. She noted they are pleased with the progress but there is more work to do.

Thomas recognized BJM Solutions, LLC consultant Dr. Fred McKinney who reviewed MWBE economic impact.

Dr. McKinney spoke to a Guilford County economic impact analysis, to tax revenue, to labor wages, and to return on investment (ROI). He shared direct, indirect, and induced effects of County spending. He shared a survey of MWBE characteristics to include a variety of industries, employment percentages, client sales and distribution.

Dr. McKinney described the multiplier model through a series of examples as a concept of spending one dollar (\$1) with MWBE businesses. He summarized the economic impact of the ROI in the MWBE Program. He shared it costs approximately \$1.8 million to run the MWBE Program. He noted that the MWBE Program contributes more than it costs since it is self-funded.

Commissioner Tillman expressed appreciation for the data. He questioned the number of MWBE businesses in Guilford County.

Thomas confirmed 2,700 businesses in the relevant market amongst twenty-seven (27) counties.

Commissioner Tillman questioned the categories of industries in the study. He requested an industry breakdown.

Dr. McKinney confirmed retail shops, food service, and anything in the 'other' category.

Thomas spoke to providing better data and setting fact-based, evidence-driven strategies.

Commissioner Cashion questioned contractor certification challenges.

Thomas confirmed that relationships and availability are a focal point. She spoke to back-office support and lack of estimator use. She highlighted the estimator module software donation, education, and database inclusion. She emphasized that most minority contractors do not need a loan, but a budget.

Commissioner Jones questioned the spend impact on traditional majority firms.

Dr. McKinney confirmed a similar result, but a need to conduct another survey.

Commissioner Jones questioned the approximately 2,700 MWBE firms.

Thomas confirmed the number and announced that Guilford County was the first municipal government to have an economic impact study of its MWBE Program.

#### **A. OPIOID SETTLEMENT PLAN FUNDING UPDATE**

Dr. Iulia Vann, Public Health Director, introduced the agenda item. She spoke to the recommendations and requested approval of the Community Health Workers for COVID Response and Resilient Communities (CCR) Strategic Plan.

Dr. Vann spoke to the implementation of local actions as a crisis response, to the Option B category of a needs assessment, future opportunities, and recognized Assistant County Manager Victor Isler.

Isler spoke to developing the strategic framework, to revenue, to leveraging alternative resources, to healthcare deliverables, to building renovation expenditures, to increasing recovery housing capacity, and to building a training pipeline.

Isler noted the eighteen (18) year distribution period and projected spending of opioid settlement funds by fiscal year.

Commissioner Tillman questioned the graphics provided in the slide deck (pages 9 and 10).

Isler confirmed payments and expenses as compared to cumulative payments and expenses and leveling out between 2027-2028.

Commissioner Perdue spoke to sustaining the program for eighteen (18) years with direct and indirect expense impacts to public safety, healthcare, and staffing.

Isler noted continued evaluations especially pertaining to the Medicaid framework and effects on the budget model.

Commissioner Cashion noted that prevention is a cost savings, spoke to the Medicaid policy, and questioned a funding set-aside in lieu of a Medicaid variance or increase reimbursement to afford the 2028 projects.

Isler confirmed that this is a snapshot that can be manipulated, and expenses and revenue can be re-evaluated.

Commissioner Jones echoed the comments of Commissioner Cashion and supports the set-aside.

Commissioner Murphy questioned the justice-involved population's Medicaid eligibility, considering the legislative session and advocacy efforts.

Isler confirmed North Carolina Association of County Commissioners (NCACC) conversations around this population with service alignment and re-entry.

Commissioner Cashion spoke to a similar issue discussed in the Justice and Public Safety (JPS) Steering Committee.

Chairman Alston questioned the different funds and the two (2) waves. He further inquired into a set-aside scenario.

Isler confirmed Wave 1 funds were received in FY 2023, Wave 2 funds were received in FY 2024, and the cumulative balance. He noted projections on the Lee's Chapel Facility upfit.

County Manager Michael Halford confirmed annual \$2 million set-asides, and proposed dollar allocations. He shared the strategic planning process will be the Board's living document, similar to the school bonds.

**Moved by Commissioner Kay Cashion, seconded by Commissioner Alan Perdue, to receive the Opioid Settlement strategic planning report completed by CCR in accordance with Exhibit C of the NC Opioid Settlement MOA; and accept the recommended strategies for use of opioid settlement funds as presented by County Staff.**

**The motion passed unanimously.**

## **B. LEGISLATIVE UPDATES – 2024 NC GENERAL ASSEMBLY SHORT SESSION**

Robin Keller, Clerk to the Board, introduced the agenda item.

Keller spoke to the first three (3) as Guilford County specific: (1) Local Option Sales Tax Bill; (2) Restoration of Education Lottery Funds; and (3) Regional Joint Transportation Support and Alignment.

Keller spoke to Number Four (4) as Greensboro specific: Support for Municipal Water/Sewer Infrastructure Projects; and Number Five (5) as High Point specific: Support for Municipal Housing Pilot Project.

Chairman Alston spoke to items for short- as compared to long- session consideration. He spoke to a regional approach by sending correspondence to appropriate municipal personnel for water resources.

Keller confirmed potential dates for a breakfast or lunch option for conversations. She reiterated an April 14<sup>th</sup> deadline for short session submissions.

Commissioner Perdue voiced concern regarding Number 4 as it pertained to Greensboro's routine maintenance as compared to a regional approach.

Chairman Alston confirmed good-faith municipal support for Greensboro and High Point.

Commissioner Tillman voiced concern regarding Number 4 and questioned the repercussions of a \$72.5 million short session funding request.

Commissioner Jones questioned Number 4 and the unintended consequences of areas operating outside of the city limits. Water solutions are not only for commercial but also residential. This is a good topic for a Work Session. He urged consideration for the potential workforce.

Commissioner Perdue questioned municipal support for the Pleasant Garden project.

Commissioner Murphy expressed support for Numbers 1, 2, 3, and 5. She voiced concern regarding Number 4's focus on commercial enterprise and less so residential water supply.

**Moved by Commissioner Mary Beth Murphy, seconded by Commissioner Kay Cashion, to approve Items Number 1, 2, 3, and 5 for the 2023-2024 Legislative Short Session; and table Item Number 4 in consideration of additional information from the City of Greensboro.**

**The motion passed unanimously.**

### **III. OTHER BUSINESS**

#### **A. COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATION (CBO) DISCUSSION**

Halford spoke to the CBO applications process. He noted that last year there were one hundred ten (110) requests, and this year one hundred sixty-three (163) with five (5) economic development projects. He inquired into the staff review process based on Board priorities.

Chairman Alston spoke to staff suggestions of CBO requests.

Commissioner Tillman requested an application review.

Chairman Alston requested a categorized spreadsheet of eligible CBOs with relevant information for each Commissioner for future review.

Commissioner Perdue questioned a scorecard, benchmarks, and value-added services for impactful county programming.

Chairman Alston confirmed a reporting period.

Halford spoke to providing CBO information.

Commissioner Jones clarified the column spreadsheet format for data reporting.

Discussion ensued regarding the CBO budget reporting protocols.

Commissioner Cashion spoke to past communication challenges and qualifiers, and to first-hand knowledge of working closely with nonprofit organizations.

Commissioner Tillman voiced concern regarding duplication of service providers.

Commissioner Murphy inquired into a CBO application review in closed session.

County Attorney Andrea Leslie-Fite spoke to the allocation of public funding, which is outside closed session parameters, and confirmed researching the issue.

Commissioner Jones questioned additional CBO outside funding sources as additional relevant information for the spreadsheet.

Halford noted \$1.9 million for this year's allocation as compared with \$2.3 million actual.

Chairman Alston confirmed support of actual allocation figures.

## **B. LAW ENFORCEMENT BUILDING UPDATES**

Halford spoke to the contract phases, to mobilization, and to demolition. He explained the demolition process. He noted an implementation timeline for the first week in April.

## **IV. ADJOURN**

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned by Board consensus at 5:23 p.m.

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Melvin "Skip" Alston  
Chairman

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Robin Keller  
Clerk