

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

Greensboro, North Carolina
December 18, 2025

The Board of County Commissioners met in a duly noticed Work Session at 3:30 P.M. in the Carolyn Q. Coleman Room, Old County Courthouse, 301 W. Market Street, Greensboro, NC.

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

ABSENT: Commissioner Pat Tillman

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; Assistant County Manager Natalie Craver; Assistant County Manager Erris Dunston; Budget Director Toy Beeninga; Finance Director Don Warn; Facilities Director Eric Hilton; Integrated Data and Services Program Manager Shelbi Flynn; Grants Manager Haley Matthews; Senior Budget & Grants Analyst Rachel Herring; 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. He recognized County Manager Victor Isler.

County Manager Isler provided an overview of the afternoon’s agenda. He spoke to frameworks of advancing livability through the strategic plan. He spoke to alignment with the National Association of Counties (NACo). He described exploring concepts and creating lenses of how we look at the community. He highlighted space to recognize the County’s role in solving hard problems through engagement and collaboration. He explored a governance model that leans into oversight and stewardship. He identified Board priorities, announced an upcoming budget kickoff on January 30th, and noted alignment with budget opportunities.

II. NEW BUSINESS

A. ADVANCING OUR LIVABILITY – STRATEGIC PLAN

County Manager Isler identified the current visionary leadership of the Board and mission alignment with core values. He stressed the importance of focusing on community and caring for residents, accountability, and communication. He spoke to building on a foundation timeline over the past five (5) years that addressed emerging needs, American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) investments, the One Guilford vision, and data indicators. He defined livability in theory and practice through an age-friendly community, health rankings, transportation, resources, and opportunities. He highlighted capital investments in education, safety, cross-county mobility, and synthesizing information.

County Manager Isler explained five (5) goal areas within the ecosystem to include (1) healthy and thriving people, (2) lifelong success, (3) safe and resilient communities, (4) sustainable and vibrant communities, and (5) operational support and fiscal sustainability. He noted the spectrum of government involvement with wicked problems and the County's power to engage with and recognize challenges. He shared a governance framework to be discussed at the Budget Retreat to encompass Board-sanctioned committee work.

County Manager Isler explained that the data dictionary includes the livability indicators. He noted the definition of livability as the degree to which people of all ages, abilities, and incomes can experience the opportunity to live, learn, work, and play in a desirable and supportive environment that honors the uniqueness of individuals, a vibrant culture, and access to amenities and resources. He thanked staff for their work and recognized Budget Director Toy Beeninga who spoke to the indicators to include the five (5) goal areas, twenty (20) strategies, forty-one (41) activities, and tactics.

Director Beeninga discussed Goal Area 1: Guilford County supports individuals and families to thrive by ensuring access to high-quality health and human services and by promoting physical, mental, and social well-being. He spoke to Goal Area 2: Guilford County empowers individuals across their lifespan from early childhood education through lifelong learning, supports upward mobility and long-term prosperity, and promotes sustainable economic development. He noted Goal Area 3: Guilford County creates a safe, prepared, and resilient community by investing in public safety, emergency response, disaster readiness, and community resilience.

Director Beeninga shared Goal Area 4: Guilford County promotes intentionally designed, vibrant, and thriving communities by advancing infrastructure to meet growth demands, engaging in planning and development practices that balance environmental, social, and economic factors for all residents, and establishing high quality recreational and green space amenities. He explained Goal Area 5: Guilford County is committed to attracting and retaining a talented County workforce, thereby ensuring operational excellence and responsible fiscal stewardship for the delivery of sustainable, high-quality public services in partnership with the community.

Commissioner Cashion voiced support for this comprehensive strategic plan. She questioned the inclusion of our aging population and identified them as a category that is often overlooked.

County Manager Isler confirmed the county's age-friendly status and identified a logic model to build out.

Commissioner Perdue shared that the county has not invested in infrastructure to our detriment.

County Manager Isler confirmed a need to be intentional regarding increasing density and public water/sewer in unincorporated areas.

Commissioner Cooke expressed support for the plan and noted the spectrum of government involvement and goals. She questioned the plan's use.

Director Beeninga confirmed action team creation and development based on Board preferences.

Commissioner Cooke noted the plan's rolling timelines along with timely updates.

Director Beeninga confirmed the timeline's flexibility.

County Manager Isler explained a rolling concept.

Commissioner Murphy entered the meeting at 4:11 p.m.

Commissioner Cooke shared the plan's intentionality.

Vice Chairwoman Foster spoke favorably of the plan and highlighted Goal Area 5 regarding safety and addressing community needs.

Commissioner Cashion spoke to a solid but fluid plan to the benefit of the community.

County Manager Isler introduced Integrated Data and Services Program Manager Shelbi Flynn, who provided her expertise to this project.

B. CAPITAL PLANNING

County Manager Isler spoke to big-picture viewpoints regarding growth and economic development.

Director Beeninga highlighted the next steps from the November 20th work session and best practices. He spoke to the ten (10) year capital improvement projects (CIP), two (2) large bond issuances, yearly capital allocations, assessments, and ~\$141M to fix current facility needs. He discussed the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) recommendations and recognized Finance Director Don Warn.

Director Warn identified the county's fiscal health and explained debt policies to include the county's ten (10) year payout ratio, debt-to-assessed value, debt service to expenditures, and debt per capita. He highlighted the county's credit ratings with S&P (AAA) and Moody's (Aaa), along with creditworthiness and financial snapshots based on analysts and economic factors.

Commissioner Cooke questioned slide 11 (County Debt Policies).

Director Warn confirmed that it is outstanding debt based on the population.

Commissioner Cashion questioned the debt per capita average across the state.

Director Warn confirmed that Mecklenburg County has less debt due to its larger population. He will provide additional data on peer counties.

Chairman Alston echoed Commissioner Cashion's comments to prepare for upcoming budget town halls.

Commissioner Cashion questioned general obligation bonds.

Director Warn spoke to going back to the market for the GCS bond and the re-evaluation process.

Director Beeninga noted the county's identified needs to fix current facilities and transparency to include a program summary spreadsheet of each building's programmed and identified needs. He shared expansion, optimization, and consolidation opportunities for the Central Government Complex, EMS, P&R, Public Health, and Social Services, to name a few.

County Manager Isler noted strategies to address projected operational and population growth demands over the next ten (10) years to weave into debt service.

Facilities Director Eric Hilton shared the three (3) month outlook on the Probation and Parole strategies to pursue. He noted the renovation and parking issues regarding the Edgeworth Building. He shared the Independence Building outlay and footprint.

Director Beeninga spoke to two (2) options for Board consideration to either fix the current facility or have an à la carte approach based on priorities.

Commissioner Murphy questioned slide 18 (Expansion/Optimization Opportunities) and shifting allocations.

Director Beeninga confirmed.

Commissioner Cooke questioned the displaced departments and insurance proceeds for the Cashion Center.

Director Beeninga noted the proceeds were included as a total view of the CIP for Board consideration.

Director Hilton confirmed staff placement, relocation, and future occupancy.

County Manager Isler noted the Family Justice Center (FJC) square footage expansion.

Commissioner Cooke questioned the \$141M option.

Director Beeninga confirmed that the funds would fix current facilities but not cover expansion/optimization opportunities.

Commissioner Cooke requested a full-scope view of all CIPs and future projects based on available options.

Commissioner Perdue noted operational challenges to these capital improvements and future impacts to service delivery.

Vice Chairwoman Foster questioned slide 16 (Fixing Current Facilities) regarding a consolidated center in High Point.

Director Beeninga confirmed a High Point site build with centralized operations.

Chairman Alston expressed concerns regarding putting forth a plan to move forward with relocating departments and consolidating services.

County Manager Isler noted that on Jan 15, 2026, staff can hold a term lease review for Board consideration with projected expenditures in alignment with debt service and contract terms.

Commissioner Cooke voiced support for the Chairman's plan

County Manager Isler confirmed the funding adjustments as maintenance and renovation move forward.

Commissioner Jones noted that deferred maintenance costs more in the long run.

Commissioner Cashion voiced concern regarding increased expenditures on Lee's Chapel and Gibson Park.

County Manager Isler confirmed a two (2) to three (3) week delay due to weather concerns and discussed the project's scope with impacts to January's ribbon cutting.

C. UPDATE ON FISCAL YEAR 2027 COMMUNITY BASED ORGANIZATION (CBO) PROCESS

County Manager Isler introduced the agenda item.

Director Beeninga recognized Senior Budget & Grants Analyst Rachel Herring.

Analyst Herring spoke to the CBO process, county policy, and FY26 status. She highlighted performance reporting protocols and recognized Grants Manager Haley Matthews.

Manager Matthews noted site visit processes and FY26-27 updates to coincide with a guiding philosophy to include (1) sustainability, (2) accountability, (3) impact, (4) efficiency, and (5) alignment, along with key takeaways of a performance matrix template. She shared the application evaluation review and rating criteria. She displayed an evaluation tool and explained the FY27 application timeline and review plan.

The Board expressed support for the presentation and proposed format.

III. OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business for this agenda.

IV. ADJOURN

There being no further business, the work session was adjourned by unanimous consent at 5:15 p.m.

Melvin “Skip” Alston
Chairman

Robin Keller
Clerk