

**MINUTES OF BOARD OF COUNTY
COMMISSIONERS
OF GUILFORD COUNTY**

Greensboro, North Carolina
January 21, 2016

The Board of County Commissioners met in a duly noticed regular meeting on January 21, 2016 at 5:30PM, in the Commissioners' Meeting Room, 301 W. Market St., Greensboro; North Carolina.

PRESENT: Chairman Jeff Phillips, presiding; Vice Chairman Alan Branson; Commissioners Kay Cashion, Carolyn Q. Coleman, J. Carlvena Foster, Justin Conrad (in at 5:41PM via simultaneous communication), Alan Perdue, Ray Trapp and Hank Henning.

ABSENT: None.

ALSO PRESENT: County Manager Marty Lawing; County Attorney Mark Payne; Deputy County Manager Clarence Grier; Robin Keller, Clerk to Board; Ariane Webb, Deputy Clerk to Board; Merle Green, DHHS-Public Health Division Director; Heather Skeens, DHHS-Social Services Division Director; John Dean, Human Resources (HR) Director; J. Leslie Bell, Planning & Development Director; Ben Chavis, Tax Director; Jim Albright, Emergency Services Director; Yvonne Moebs, Risk Management Director; Reid Baker, Finance Director; Robert McNiece, Property Management/Facilities/Parks Director; members of the community and media.

I. INVOCATION

Board Chaplain Ben Chavis provided the invocation.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairman Phillips led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Phillips called the meeting to order at 5:40PM and welcomed those present. He invited Commissioner Conrad to the meeting via telephone at 5:41PM.

IV. SPEAKERS FROM THE FLOOR

Lindy Garnette, CEO of the YWCA-Greensboro, spoke to the organization's designation as a White Flag warming center for those without shelter to remain out of the cold. She noted public health and safety are the responsibilities of local government, and spoke to the needs of homeless individuals and families during inclement weather. Ms. Garnette stated the additional costs of the warming shelter are approximately \$1000/night and noted these expenses are not included in the annual budget. She commented on the organization's collaboration with Greensboro Urban Ministry and The Salvation Army of Greensboro. Ms. Garnette requested the Board consider the County's responsibility regarding emergency needs of citizens and support funding of these services.

Chairman Phillips requested Ms. Garnett remain following the new business portion to continue discussions with other Commissioners.

Andy Stevens, Greensboro resident, thanked Commissioners for their consideration of audio recordings of work sessions. He spoke to the need to reign in costs of local government and urged the Board to utilize contract labor in lieu of hiring additional employees. Mr. Stevens expressed concerns regarding eminent domain and announced he was running for North Carolina Commissioner of Agriculture. He spoke to issues regarding property rights and the need to lower taxes to improve agriculture throughout the state. Mr. Stevens urged the Board to repeal restrictions on concealed carry permits for employees and citizens in government buildings and property.

Jacqueline McClain, Summerfield resident, expressed concerns regarding the designation of bona fide farm status at the state level, and its ability to exempt individuals from local planning and zoning ordinances. She distributed information regarding local abuse of bona fide farm status and noted the statute accounts for all types of livestock, with the exception of swine. Ms. McClain requested the Board address the exemption with state legislators.

Chairman Henning questioned if the Board would have any influence over this state legislation.

J. Leslie Bell, Planning & Development Director, confirmed this is a state statute and noted the farm in question has applied for a farm number. He stated the Planning department has sent a letter notifying the owner they are operating a business in a residential zone, but noted he anticipates the farm will receive bona fide designation from the Farm Service Agency. Bell reiterated that the qualifications for this status are defined at the state level.

Commissioner Perdue questioned the prior policy and qualifications regarding bona fide farm status.

Bell confirmed this was a local ordinance implemented prior to changes in state statute, and noted the County now complies with state ordinances.

V. CONSENT AGENDA

Chairman Phillips referenced the addendum to the new business portion of the agenda.

A. BUDGET AMENDMENTS

1. 2016-029 DHHS - PUBLIC HEALTH DIVISION: UNITED WAY OF GREATER GREENSBORO GRANT

Approve an increase of \$7,500 in Other Revenues and increase the Department of Health and Human Services - Public Health Division FY2015-16 budget by the same amount to reflect revenues received from United Way of Greater Greensboro Kathleen and Joseph M. Bryan Community Enrichment and Venture Grant.

Legislation Text

2. 2016-030 DHHS - PUBLIC HEALTH DIVISION: DELTA DENTAL FOUNDATION GRANT

Approve an increase of \$5,000 in Other Revenues and increase the Department of Health and Human Services - Public Health Division FY2015-16 budget by the same amount to reflect revenues received from the Delta Dental Foundation for child dental services.

Legislation Text

B. CONTRACTS

1. 2016-024 LABORATORY INFORMATION SYSTEM CONTRACT WITH ORCHARD SOFTWARE CORPORATION: DHHS-PUBLIC HEALTH (PH) DIVISION

Approve DHHS-Public Health Laboratory Information System contract with Orchard Software Corporation in the amount of \$129,138.00, with first year maintenance free. Following the first year of the contract, the annual maintenance amount will be \$15,496.00. The contract will be in effect for thirty-six (36) months and shall continue thereafter until terminated by either party.

Legislation Text

Event 487-Laboratory Information System Contract

2. 2016-032 HEALTHCARE DEPENDENT ELIGIBILITY AUDIT SERVICES
CONTRACT WITH SECOVA

Approve contract with Secova in substantial form in the amount of \$29,000 plus up to \$5,000 for reimbursement of postage expenses, for a total contracted amount not to exceed \$34,000, to be effective February 2016 for a term of one (1) year.

[Legislation Text](#)

[DEVA Statement of Work 2015 1-4-16](#)

[Secova MSA - Guilford County](#)

[Secova Business Associate Agreement](#)

C. MISCELLANEOUS

1. 2016-025 PROPERTY TAX REBATES AND RELEASES FOR MONTH ENDING
DECEMBER 31, 2015

Accept and approve property tax rebates and releases for the month ending December 31, 2015.

[Legislation Text](#)

[December 2015 NCVTS Pending Refund](#)

[December 2015 Rebates & Releases](#)

2. 2016-027 TAX COLLECTION AND BEVERAGE LICENSE REPORTS MONTH
ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2015

Accept and approve tax collection and beverage license reports for the month ending December 31, 2015.

[Legislation Text](#)

[401C All Guilford 12-31-15](#)

[Bev 12-31-15 Detail](#)

3. 2016-013 APPROVE PURCHASE OF THREE (3) F550 CHASSIS FOR EMERGENCY SERVICES

Approve purchase of three (3) Ford F550 Cab/Chassis from North Carolina State Contract 070A from vendor: Piedmont Ford, 412 S. Regional Rd., Greensboro, NC 27409. The three (3) Ford F550 Cab/chassis will be for use by Emergency Services as ambulance chassis. Contract amount for total award is \$163,929.00 (\$54,643.00 per chassis).

[Legislation Text](#)

[F550 State contract pricing.pdf](#)

[NC P and C 070A Awarded Vendors Pricing.xlsx](#)

4. 2016-023 MINUTES APPROVAL

Review and approve the following sets of draft meeting minutes:

10/22/2015 Work Session

12/17/2015 Work Session

12/29/2015 Health & Human Services Sub-Committee Meeting

01/07/2016 Work Session

[Legislation Text](#)

[dmws102215](#)

[dmws12.17.15.docx](#)

[comHHS 122915](#)

[dmws010716](#)

Motion was made by Commissioner J. Carlvena Foster, seconded by Commissioner Alan Perdue, to approve the consent agenda.

VOTE: Motion carried 9 - 0

AYES: J. Phillips, A. Branson, K. Cashion, J. Conrad, C. Coleman, C. Foster, R. Trapp, A. Perdue, H. Henning

NOES: NONE

VI. NEW BUSINESS

Chairman Phillips requested the Board address the addendum prior to discussing the remaining new business agenda items.

3. 2016-012 612 CABLE STREET AND 1300 E. COMMERCE AVENUE - OFFERS FOR PURCHASE OF FORECLOSED PROPERTIES

Approve surplus of the following properties: 612 Cable Street, High Point, NC 27260 (Tax Parcel No. 0171717) and 1300 E. Commerce Avenue, High Point, NC 27260 (Tax Parcel No. 0174585); and direct the Clerk to Board to begin the upset bid process.

Legislation Text

Bids on County Foreclosed Properties 011916

Robert McNiece, Property Management/Facilities/Parks Director, introduced the item and noted the properties have been bid upon by the original owner. He requested the Board declare the properties surplus which would allow staff to move forward with the upset bid process.

Commissioner Coleman questioned if properties were advertised.

McNiece stated there was no advertisement, as the properties were recently acquired by the County, and then were bid upon by the former owner.

Commissioner Coleman questioned the bid amounts.

McNiece noted the amounts listed on the agenda are the prior owner's bids, which encompass the taxes and legal fees the County has invested in foreclosure.

Commissioner Coleman questioned the difference in the bid amounts.

McNiece noted the amounts are two (2) separate bids for two (2) separate properties. He explained the upset bid process.

Commissioner Trapp clarified the bid amounts offered by the prior owner.

Motion was made by Vice Chairman Alan Branson, seconded by Commissioner J. Carlvena Foster, to approve surplus of the following properties: 612 Cable Street, High Point, NC 27260 (Tax Parcel No. 0171717) and 1300 E. Commerce Avenue, High Point, NC 27260 (Tax Parcel No. 0174585); and direct the Clerk to Board to begin the upset bid process.

VOTE: Motion carried 9 - 0
AYES: J. Phillips, A. Branson, K. Cashion, J. Conrad, C. Coleman, C. Foster, R. Trapp, A. Perdue, H. Henning
NOES: NONE

1. 2016-009 APPROVE EXTERNAL AUDIT CONTRACT - CHERRY BEKAERT, LLP

Approve extending the contract with Cherry Bekaert, LLP for external audit services for Guilford County for fiscal years 2016 through 2018 with the base amount of \$85,500 and an annual increase of the lesser of the CPI (Consumer Price index) increase or 1%. Approve the annual external audit contract for FY2016, as required by the Local Government Commission, in the amount of \$85,500.

[Legislation Text](#)

[Guilford County 3 year proposal letter - 2016](#)

[Guilford County 2015 Audit Contract](#)

[Guilford County 2015 Engagement Letter](#)

Reid Baker, Finance Director, introduced the item.

Motion was made by Commissioner J. Carlvena Foster, seconded by Commissioner Hank Henning, to approve extending the contract with Cherry Bekaert, LLP for external audit services for Guilford County for fiscal years 2016 through 2018 with the base amount of \$85,500 and an annual increase of the lesser of the CPI (Consumer Price index) increase or 1%. Approve the annual external audit contract for FY2016, as required by the Local Government Commission, in the amount of \$85,500.

VOTE: Motion carried 9 - 0
AYES: J. Phillips, A. Branson, K. Cashion, J. Conrad, C. Coleman, C. Foster, R. Trapp, A. Perdue, H. Henning
NOES: NONE

2. 2016-034 AUDIO/VIDEO RECORDING OF COMMISSIONERS' WORK SESSIONS

Consider and discuss the feasibility of providing audio and/or video recording of Commissioners' Work Sessions.

[Legislation Text](#)

Robin Keller, Clerk to Board, introduced the item and noted staff were directed to research the options of recording work sessions via audio or video. She reviewed the three (3) options and noted Option 2 would require additional staff to mimic service provided by existing staff on loan from other departments. Keller stated audio/video recordings could be posted on the County website through Granicus software. She noted City of Greensboro Channel 13 would require a live feed which would restrict the Board to conduct all meetings in the Commissioners room and would not guarantee available time slots, but may be able to re-play some work sessions 2-3 hours prior to regular meetings.

Commissioner Coleman noted the request is nothing new, and referenced the Board's prior procedure of conducting discussions during work sessions and votes occur during the regular meetings, while televised. She noted that returning to this practice would save the time and expense involved with audio/video recordings of work sessions, and spoke to the need for transparency in Board decisions and voting.

Commissioner Coleman stated Welfare Reform Liaison Project, Inc. (WRLP) has a training program which instructs people on the operation of audio/video equipment, and noted their willingness to allow members of their team to tape work sessions at no cost, with their own equipment.

Commissioner Trapp discussed the video production job training program offered by WRLP and noted this alternative would require no County funding, while fulfilling necessary training hours for its students. He also reviewed preliminary discussions with GTCC regarding its video production training program, and potential in utilizing students to record work sessions.

Commissioner Conrad expressed his concern with video-taping work sessions and noted these meetings are open to the public. He stated he could not support the item.

Chairman Phillips questioned the motion on the floor.

Commissioner Coleman clarified she would prefer the Board adopt a policy of discussion only during work sessions, followed by voting on discussed items during the next regular meeting. She noted if this procedure is not adopted, she requests the Board utilize WRLP staff to record work sessions.

Motion made by Commissioner Carolyn Q. Coleman, seconded by Commissioner Ray Trapp, to conduct a formal vote on all actionable Board Work Session items during televised regular meetings of the Board.

Commissioner Henning expressed concerns with duplicating information provided in work sessions during regular meetings. He spoke to the time and energy involved in having to explain information provided during work sessions in regular meetings.

Commissioner Foster opined that the proposed policy is comparable to closed session discussions where votes are required to occur upon return to the regular meeting.

Commissioner Henning noted work sessions are public and closed session topics cannot be discussed during open meetings. He proposed holding work sessions in the Commissioners' chambers if the goal is to relay this information to the public.

Commissioner Coleman urged the Board to include citizens in all the work accomplished by the Board.

Chairman Phillips clarified the motion on the floor.

Commissioner Conrad questioned the feasibility of conducting procedural votes during work sessions.

Commissioner Coleman stated simple procedures that impact the Board's work should not be brought before the public, but expressed her desire to inform citizens of votes that will impact their lives.

Commissioner Perdue stated there could be repercussions as a result of hasty votes and noted the potential for unintended consequences. He suggested tabling the item to consider all recording options presented. Perdue discussed his experience as a staff member presenting items to the Board and noted previous Board policies resulted in duplication. He stated that he could not support the motion on the floor.

Commissioner Trapp spoke to the need to move towards open government and discussed the option of live streaming work sessions.

Keller stated recorded work sessions could be replayed on the County website at no additional cost, however noted they could not be televised live.

Commissioner Cashion requested clarification from the Clerk regarding recording work sessions and live streaming.

Keller clarified recording in the Commissioners' chambers would allow the option to live stream the video, and confirmed that recording in other locations will only allow the option of replay on the County website.

Commissioner Cashion questioned if Commissioner Coleman preferred live streaming meetings.

Commissioner Coleman confirmed she would prefer live-streaming, but noted her primary goal is to broadcast the information discussed during work sessions.

Commissioner Cashion questioned if the Board would accomplish this goal if work sessions are not live-streamed, but recorded for replay only.

Commissioner Coleman questioned the time slot available for replay on Channel 13.

Keller clarified the potential time slots available for replaying work sessions and noted the preparation time required to submit recorded videos to Channel 13.

Commissioner Cashion requested clarification of the motion.

Chairman Phillips clarified the motion on the floor was to postpone the vote of actionable items discussed during work sessions until the regular meeting for a formal vote by the Board. He confirmed this motion does not include the consideration of audio/visual recordings.

Commissioner Cashion expressed concerns that regular meetings would be extended to review all items discussed during a work session prior to the formal vote in the regular meeting.

Chairman Phillips echoed Commissioner Cashion's concern and opined on two (2) controversial votes that occurred during work sessions. He expressed appreciation for Commissioner Coleman's concerns, but stated he could not support the motion.

Commissioner Coleman spoke to the Board's attempts to remain transparent and noted Chairman Phillips reference of the controversial votes. She urged the Board to broadcast the reasons behind their decisions and noted there have been previous opportunities to discuss this item.

Commissioner Henning offered a substitute motion to explore the option of GTCC and WRLP staff conducting audio/video recordings of Board work sessions.

Commissioner Trapp reviewed potential cost efficiencies associated with utilizing GTCC and WRLP trainees.

Chairman Phillips expressed concerns with maintaining consistency as students matriculate from these programs.

Commissioner Trapp confirmed that students would be available year round to assist with recording.

Commissioner Coleman offered a friendly amendment to the motion on the floor, and requested staff present research related to these options during the March 3, 2016 regular meeting of the Board.

Commissioner Henning re-stated his substitute motion and accepted Commissioner Coleman's friendly amendment.

Commissioner Foster clarified that they are in discussions with GTCC, but have not confirmed that they will be able to assist.

Commissioner Cashion spoke to the Board's intent to keep the public informed of all meetings and discussions.

The Board discussed the wording of the substitute motion on the floor.

Substitute motion was made by Commissioner Hank Henning, seconded by Commissioner Ray Trapp, to direct staff to explore the options of utilizing video production program interns through Welfare Reform Liaison Project, Inc. (WRLP), GTCC, or other cost-efficient alternatives to conduct audio/video recordings of Commissioner Work Sessions; and to direct staff to have this information prepared for presentation to the Board during its March 3, 2016 regular meeting.

VOTE: Motion carried 8 – 1
AYES: J. Phillips, A. Branson, K. Cashion, C. Coleman, C. Foster, R. Trapp, A. Perdue, H. Henning
NOES: J. Conrad

4. YWCA OF GREENSBORO WHITE FLAG NIGHT WARMING SHELTER

Chairman Phillips invited YWCA CEO Lindy Garnette to return for additional discussion and opened the floor to the Commissioners for questions regarding the program.

Ms. Garnette clarified YWCA's productive relationship with the faith community, local businesses and individuals who contribute to the operation. She spoke to the 32 bed shelter operated year-round by the organization, and noted additional needs posed by the warming shelter result in stretching volunteers and partner organizations to capacity. Garnette thanked the community for its generosity and noted the warming shelter goes above and beyond the normal scope of operations.

Commissioner Trapp requested Garnette explain the difficulties encountered during inclement weather.

Ms. Garnette noted the YWCA's partnership with Greensboro Urban Ministry (GUM) and Interactive Resource Center (IRC) and discussed examples of collaboration between these agencies. She spoke to the need for volunteers who can assess and manage escalating situations within the population they serve. Garnette confirmed that the few altercations that have occurred have been effectively managed by staff and noted the costs of additional staff are not reflected in the numbers provided to the Board.

Commissioner Trapp questioned if clients with Mental Health issues present additional challenges.

Ms. Garnette discussed additional expenses incurred to assist Mental Health patients, and spoke to the hours incurred by law enforcement and other certified personnel who address these issues. She discussed cost-savings associated with housing these clients in warming shelters versus expenses associated with transport to emergency rooms via EMS.

Commissioner Trapp noted there is a requirement to transport these clients to medical facilities in order for EMS to request reimbursement or bill for this service. He urged the Board to assist the YWCA as a cost-efficient option and stated he would support the County Manager negotiating with City of Greensboro to provide an equal match in support of this agency.

Commissioner Coleman questioned the amount requested.

Ms. Garnette stated she is requesting approximately \$500/night for every night the YWCA of Greensboro warming shelter opens. She noted the City of Greensboro has committed to \$500/night for every night the warming shelter is open, and estimated 29-45 additional nights of shelter operation for the remainder of the season.

Commissioner Coleman urged the Board to make this decision tonight to allow the YWCA to continue offering these services.

Commissioner Cashion thanked the organization for this service and noted this is a public health, public safety and morality issue. She urged the Board to give this request serious consideration and look at the needs of citizens who must utilize these services. Cashion expressed her support for the request.

Ms. Garnette stated the IRC served clients 29 nights during last year's winter season and noted personnel estimated the average time for shelter operation is 29-40 nights.

Commissioner Cashion questioned the details of the contract between the YWCA and City of Greensboro.

Ms. Garnette stated she does not have details, but has been in communication with the City Manager.

Vice Chairman Branson questioned the number of warming shelter locations within Guilford County.

Ms. Garnette stated the coalition consists of GUM, IRC and YWCA of Greensboro and noted the severity of the weather has triggered the City of Greensboro to open recreation centers to serve additional clients.

Vice Chairman Branson questioned if the agency transports citizens from rural locations within Guilford County.

Ms. Garnette discussed local church shelter programs and GUM Weaver House extension sites at locations throughout the County. She noted the clients served by her agency have normally been banned from extension sites and traditional shelters due to behavioral issues. Garnett discussed transportation provided by First Baptist Church between the three (3) agencies, and efforts by the Greensboro Police Department to transport clients to these three agencies.

Commissioner Branson questioned if the coalition partners with populations served by the “Church under the Bridge” program.

Ms. Garnette stated they do not question clients when providing assistance, but know that the YWCA serve clients throughout the County. She noted certain traditional shelters are not equipped to handle clients who have mental health issues, who are intoxicated or have substance abuse issues.

Vice Chairman Branson questioned the County Manager regarding the potential funding source for this request.

County Manager Marty Lawing discussed the options of reviewing the DHHS Public Health and Social Services budgets for available funding or utilizing the Manager’s contingency fund.

Ms. Garnette stated they do not view the request as a donation but a fee for services provided to Guilford County residents and noted the organization is providing services to a vulnerable population.

Chairman Phillips expressed his appreciation for the services provided by the YWCA and spoke to the Board’s willingness to assist. He shared his concerns regarding the amount of the request and the potential for other agencies to present to the Board with emergency requests for funding. He questioned if the remaining agencies in the coalition have sufficient funding to maintain their shelter operations.

Ms. Garnette stated IRC does not have additional funding to support White Flag shelter operations, but noted GUM sufficient funding to maintain the shelter for the remainder of the winter season. She noted collectively the coalition stated they would require \$80,000 to maintain White Flag Shelter operations; however they have been unsuccessful in raising this level of funding. Ms. Garnette reiterated the levels generosity found within the local community, and emphasized the need for additional funding to avoid exhausting all sources of volunteers and donations. She stated The Salvation Army and Guilford County’s overall emergency response will provide food and shelter for homeowners in need, but these concerns are incomparable to the potential risk of life for homeless clients.

Chairman Phillips expressed his disappointment that this information was just presented to the Board, and requested the organization approach the Board sooner with its funding needs.

Commissioner Foster commended Ms. Garnette for approaching the Board and expressed her support for the request, but urged the Board not to limit its support to Greensboro shelters, but consider requests from organizations in High Point.

Commissioner Coleman stated a dollar value cannot be placed on assisting one (1) life. She urged the Board to support this request and questioned why this was not included in the DHHS budget.

Commissioner Perdue discussed public safety issues related to cold temperatures, costs associated with transporting citizens in instances of true emergencies. He spoke to the needs of citizens in High Point, and noted the Board traditionally did not support unfunded requests. Perdue questioned if the warming shelter could remain open if the Board chose to take additional time to review the request, versus making a final decision this evening.

Ms. Garnette clarified County staff have been involved in meetings regarding the operation of warming shelters and stated she assumed they were reporting their needs to the Commissioners.

Commissioner Perdue urged staff to collaborate with the YWCA, and other agencies, to encourage proactive communication to alleviate the drain on resources in other areas.

Commissioner Henning thanked Ms. Garnette for approaching the Board with this request and applauded the YWCA of Greensboro for stepping outside their scope of work to meet the real needs of the community. He discussed the uniqueness of the circumstances and urged the Board to consider comparable requests from High Point organizations.

Chairman Phillips expressed his concerns that the Board will provide inadequate funding to fully assist the White Flag Shelter and stated they will work to improve communications and include these requests in the regular budget season.

Ms. Garnette noted Open Door Ministries (ODM) does assist High Point residents, and confirmed the homeless population in High Point can access the IRC.

Commissioner Foster stated ODM, The Salvation Army of High Point and Leslie's House operate comparable shelters for High Point residents.

Chairman Phillips requested Commissioners Foster, Henning and Perdue identify comparable shelter needs within High Point.

Commissioner Trapp opined that the YWCA and other organizations failed to present these requests to the Board because of a prior vote to de-fund Human Services Community-Based Organizations (CBO's). He spoke to the need to adjust this decision in times of emergency.

Chairman Phillips discussed the prior vote and noted the need to thoroughly vet all funding requests. He commended the YWCA on presenting their need to the Board.

Commissioner Conrad echoed Chairman Phillips comments and expressed his support of the request.

Motion was made by Commissioner Carolyn Q. Coleman, and seconded by Commissioner Ray Trapp, to approve the expenditure of \$500/night, for up to 30 nights, in support of the White Flag warming shelter operated by the YWCA of Greensboro.

VOTE: Motion carried 9 – 0
AYES: J. Phillips, A. Branson, K. Cashion, J. Conrad, C. Coleman, C. Foster, R. Trapp, A. Perdue, H. Henning
NOES: NONE

VII. HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES UPDATE

1. 2016-010 DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES (DHHS) - SOCIAL SERVICES DIVISION UPDATES

Receive DHHS - Social Services Division updates and approve thirty-seven (37) eligibility positions.

[Legislation Text](#)

[Attachment I: FNS and Medicaid Workload 01-2016](#)

[Attachment II: Copy of EconSVcspositions - MH est1](#)

[Attachment III: DHHS-DSS USDA Letter](#)

[Attachment IV: FNS Timeliness Urban 12-28-15 thru 1-1-16](#)

Heather Skeens, DHHS-Social Services Division Director, introduced Chriselda Crawford, Economic Services Division Program Manager, and Elizabeth White, Economic Services Division Director, and reviewed the presentation and information distributed to the Board regarding her request for thirty-seven eligibility positions for Economic Services.

Skeens discussed Economic Services staffing patterns, and reviewed the volume of work managed by staff such related to application and review processing requirements, reported changes and other administrative responsibilities. She presented a brief Medicaid overview and explained the federal requirement to terminate contracts with vendors utilized to process Medicaid applications, resulting in the current request for twenty-one (21) additional staff. Skeens discussed changes to Food & Nutrition Services (FNS) policy changes impacting

workloads, such as stringent processing timeframes, along with emergency processing requirements. She reviewed the request for an additional sixteen (16) FNS positions, and spoke to recruitment and training requirements. Skeens discussed the use of overtime to manage the volume of FNS applications and recertifications, which potentially compromises quality and management's ability to coach and mentor employees. She stated these efforts are not sustainable and explained the risks associated with continuing to process applications through a contracted vendor or failing to process FNS applications timely. Skeens reiterated her request for 37 positions to meet the requirements of the current workload.

Vice Chairman Branson questioned the difference between the number of County positions requested versus the total number of staff Vanguard have under contract to process Medicaid cases.

Skeens explained Vanguard has dedicated 30-35 part-time staff to manage Medicaid cases. She clarified the requested 37 positions will be utilized to process FNS and Medicaid cases, and would not be used solely to replace the volume of work managed by Vanguard staff.

Vice Chairman Branson questioned the location of Vanguard staff.

Elizabeth White, DHHS-Social Services Economic Services Division Director, stated Vanguard employ virtual staff that work from home.

Skeens clarified these virtual staff can work anywhere within the state and have access to the Northwoods document management system and NCFAST case management system.

Chairman Phillips questioned the total number of staff requested to process Medicaid cases.

Skeens clarified twenty-one (21) positions have been requested to replace staff employed through the Vanguard contract.

Chairman Phillips questioned the directive from the North Carolina Department of Health & Human Services to terminate contracts utilized to process Medicaid cases.

Skeens discussed the directive received from NCDHHS and clarified contract staff cannot be used unless the County Manager or County Human Resources (HR) verify contract staff are hired and trained using exact recruitment and training techniques employed by Guilford County.

Chairman Phillips discussed the two (2) separate staffing requests for the FNS and Medicaid programs. He spoke to the need to satisfy the federal requirements regarding processing of Medicaid cases and to alleviate the burden placed upon FNS staff working to meet federal processing timeframes.

Commissioner Perdue expressed concerns with number of requested positions and the timing of the request. He spoke to associated difficulties with "on-boarding" this amount of staff at one time. Perdue shared his concerns with the language of the NCDHHS letter and its failure to provide definitive requirements for managing the workload versus recommendations. He

questioned if Vanguard staff could be hired directly by the County as part-time hourly employees to assist with this workload.

Motion made by Commissioner Alan Perdue, seconded by Commissioner Hank Henning, to approve the addition of four (4) eligibility caseworkers dedicated to address the Medicaid workload created by termination of the Vanguard contract effective 6/30/2016, eight (8) FNS eligibility caseworkers, one (1) FNS office support specialist, and direct staff to continually evaluate the need for additional staff.

Commissioner Perdue requested additional information regarding state and federal requirements for managing the workload.

Commissioner Trapp questioned the FNS timeliness rate.

Skeens confirmed the FNS timeliness requirement for the state is 95%.

Commissioner Trapp questioned the timeliness rates for larger counties within the state and opined on the difficulty of meeting state requirements if larger counties are not in compliance.

Skeens discussed processing rates in counties throughout the state, and noted the state timeliness rate is 91%.

Commissioner Trapp questioned if the Economic Services division was fully staffed.

Skeens noted there is currently one (1) eligibility vacancy out of the total number of allotted eligibility positions.

Commissioner Trapp questioned the number of bi-lingual eligibility staff meeting the needs of Spanish and Vietnamese Limited English Proficiency (LEP) clients.

Skeens confirmed there are bi-lingual Spanish-speaking eligibility staff, and one (1) full-time interpreter for the agency.

Commissioner Trapp questioned if the department had implemented state recommendations that were provided to the agency in 2014.

Skeens stated she was unaware of this document until recently, and noted many of the recommendations have been implemented. She stated the remaining suggestions will require additional staff and discussed potential options for implementation.

Commissioner Trapp stated utilizing the state recommendations make the department more efficient and expressed his concerns with the effectiveness of the NCFAST case management system.

Commissioner Conrad thanked Skeens for her presentation and questioned if anyone has spoken with state or federal legislators regarding the requirement to eliminate these contracts.

Skeens stated they have not discussed this requirement with federal legislators as it will require Congress to change Medicaid policy and laws regarding merit pools. She noted NCDHHS staff have urged state legislators to lobby federal lawmakers to change these requirements.

Commissioner Coleman questioned if twenty-one (21) positions is sufficient to manage the workload handled by thirty-five (35) Vanguard staff.

Skeens noted Vanguard staff worked part-time to manage the work and their calculations indicate an additional twenty-one (21) positions could handle this work.

Commissioner Coleman questioned if the recently vacated positions have been filled.

Skeens clarified that, per the County HR Disciplinary policy, the positions are not vacant until the appeal process has been completed.

Commissioner Coleman questioned if they are current with processing FNS cases.

Skeens stated they are processing at 96% according to State guidelines and noted the department is within USDA requirements for timely processing.

Commissioner Coleman questioned the need for mandatory overtime.

Skeens stated mandatory overtime is required to maintain timely processing of cases. She discussed the need to work overtime in December 2015 and noted she issued a memo to staff informing them of the potential for mandatory overtime within the next week, to make up for time lost if the County should close due to upcoming inclement weather. Skeens discussed opportunities for voluntary overtime that were offered during the past few months.

Commissioner Coleman confirmed overtime will help the agency achieve 95% timeliness processing rate and questioned if additional supervisors are included in the request for staff.

Skeens stated two (2) supervisory positions are included in the original request.

Commissioner Coleman questioned if Skeens was aware that staff were informed only five (5) additional people were required to process the current volume of FNS cases via conference call.

Skeens stated management must evaluate the breadth of work across the division to determine staffing needs; however program managers will evaluate the needs of their individual team.

Commissioner Coleman questioned cross-training and staff's ability to manage work in multiple programs.

Skeens stated they review the total workload and compare the staff's ability and capacity to handle the work.

Commissioner Foster questioned the implementation document from the state.

Skeens confirmed the recommendations were provided by a team of state staff who visited the agency.

Commissioner Foster questioned the total number of staff recommended by the state.

Skeens explained the recommendations outlined by the state, and noted some are dated due to changes in processing times within Guilford County.

Commissioner Foster questioned if these recommendations could be implemented.

Skeens stated staffing recommendations were based upon dated information that is no longer relevant with current NCFAST processing timeframes.

Commissioner Foster expressed concern that state guidelines, which factored in productivity and staffing levels, could not be implemented.

Skeens stated data used to develop the recommendations were based upon prior processing times. She discussed departmental efforts to hire hourly, temporary staff in early 2014 to meet workload demands and noted a large amount of resources were dedicated to this process; however these staff were searching for permanent positions, and were normally hired into full-time, benefited positions.

Commissioner Coleman questioned if the document provided indicated contract workers could not be used.

Skeens stated the email and document outlines the federal merit pool requirements and does not specify contract workers.

Commissioner Coleman questioned why Guilford County DHHS has not requested funding to cover the additional expense of hiring staff, as the misinterpretation of this merit pool policy was the fault of the state.

Skeens stated she has not made this request as it has been explained as a County cost, with potential for reimbursement.

Commissioner Coleman expressed concern that additional clarification had not been requested from the attorney.

Skeens noted additional clarity was requested by staff, and based upon the information provided from the state, agencies chose to pursue contracts to save costs.

Commissioner Coleman questioned if Guilford County's attorney's had any input on the interpretation of the policy.

Skeens stated she did not believe the attorney's were consulted regarding the viability of the contract.

Chairman Phillips expressed his support of Commissioner Perdue's recommendation. He requested the department provide feedback in late March or early April regarding the progress provided by new staff, if the motion is approved. He encouraged staff and Commissioners to speak with federal and state legislators for further guidance on this policy.

Motion made by Commissioner Alan Perdue, seconded by Commissioner Hank Henning, to receive DHHS-Social Services updates and approve the addition of four (4) eligibility caseworkers dedicated to address the Medicaid workload created by termination of the Vanguard contract effective 6/30/2016, eight (8) FNS eligibility caseworkers, one (1) FNS office support specialist, and direct staff to continually evaluate the need for additional staff.

VOTE: Motion carried 9 – 0
AYES: J. Phillips, A. Branson, K. Cashion, J. Conrad, C. Coleman, C. Foster, R. Trapp, A. Perdue, H. Henning
NOES: NONE

[IX. APPOINTMENTS AND REAPPOINTMENTS TO VARIOUS BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS.](#)

1. 2016-026 APPOINTMENTS TO VARIOUS BOARDS & COMMISSIONS

Approve listed appointments to various boards and commissions.

[Legislation Text](#)

[City-County Insurance Advisory Committee Roster](#)

[JCowan Application City-County Insurance Advisory Comm](#)

[JCowan Resume](#)

Keller introduced the appointment of Jerry Cowan to the City/County Insurance Advisory Committee.

Commissioner Foster noted there are additional candidates interested in this committee, and requested these appointments tabled to the next meeting.

Motion made by Commissioner J. Carlvena Foster, seconded by Commissioner Ray Trapp, to table listed appointments to various boards and commissions until the next regular meeting of the Board.

There was general consensus of the Board to table the item until the next regular meeting.

X. COMMENTS FROM COMMISSIONERS

Commissioner Trapp invited everyone to attend the Guilford Cup Basketball Tournament on January 30, 2016. He noted donations of socks, scarves and hats will be accepted during the game.

Commissioner Foster thanked Chairman Phillips, Vice Chairman Branson and Commissioners Perdue and Henning for participating in the Martin Luther King, Jr. Day parade in High Point. She spoke to profound comments delivered by Chairman Phillips during the ceremony, and spoke to the historical significance of the renaming of Kivett Drive to Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive. She thanked Dr. Ronald Carter, president of Johnson C. Smith University, for his participation as keynote speaker during the event.

Commissioner Cashion shared her attendance at the Martin Luther King Jr. observance at Temple Emmanuel, where Reverend Willie Barber was the keynote speaker, and observance services at St. James Presbyterian Church on January 16, 2016. She stated she visited Raleigh to attend the NC Treasurers Board of Trustees meeting for the State and Local Retirement System. Cashion noted the board voted to adopt a five (5) year stabilization rate of 7.25% effective July 1, 2016, resulting in an additional cost of 0.25% to the County within the next five (5) years.

Commissioner Henning stated he enjoyed the High Point Martin Luther King Jr. Day parade and expressed appreciation to Commissioner Foster for her hard work during the Kivett Drive renaming ceremony.

Commissioner Perdue echoed Commissioner Henning's comments regarding the parade and requested the public heed warnings of Emergency Services personnel during the impending inclement weather. He requested prayers for those working during the event and wished good luck to the Carolina Panthers during the upcoming weekend game.

Vice Chairman Branson thanked Commissioner Foster for the invitation to participate in the Martin Luther King Jr. Day parade in High Point. He noted the passion of the Board to assist those in need and discussed efforts of a local group traveling to Guatemala to build shelters and churches. Branson noted the need for continued evaluation of community-based organization requests, and discussed the responsibility to provide assistance during emergency situations, such as the evening's funding request from the YWCA of Greensboro for the White Flag Night warming shelter.

Chairman Phillips encouraged citizens to continue supporting the needs of local organizations that are assisting the less fortunate. He provided the contact information for IRC and YWCA of Greensboro and thanked Garnett and others for their great service on behalf of homeless citizens during colder months.

Chairman Phillips announced the County's decision to formally declare a State of Emergency within as of 5:30PM, in light of the Governor's earlier declaration for the State in anticipation of impending inclement weather. He requested first responders remain on high alert, and thanked Emergency Services, Sheriff's deputies, local police and fire district personnel for their diligence and efforts to protect citizens. Phillips urged citizens to remain safe.

XI. COMMENTS FROM COUNTY MANAGER

Lawing reminded the Board of its Annual Retreat scheduled for February 4-5, 2016 and will be held in the ACC Hall of Champions board room. He noted the goal is to have all retreat information available to Commissioners by the end of next week.

Commissioner Coleman requested a report regarding the status of Mental Health programs within the Jails.

Chairman Phillips requested Commissioners direct requests for additional retreat topics to him for potential inclusion on the agenda.

XII. HOLD CLOSED SESSION PURSUANT TO N.C.G.S. §143-318.11 FOR THE PURPOSE OF CONSULTING WITH THE COUNTY ATTORNEY AND TO DISCUSS A PERSONNEL MATTER.

Motion was Commissioner Alan Perdue, seconded by Vice Chairman Alan Branson, to hold closed session pursuant to N.C.G.S §143-318.11 for the purpose of consulting with the County Attorney and to discuss a personnel matter.

VOTE: Motion carried 9 – 0
AYES: J. Phillips, A. Branson, K. Cashion, J. Conrad, C. Coleman, C. Foster, R. Trapp, A. Perdue, H. Henning
NOES: NONE

The meeting went into recess at 8:29PM.

The meeting reconvened at 9:24PM.

PRESENT: Chairman Jeff Phillips, presiding; Vice Chairman Alan Branson; Commissioner Hank Henning, Alan Perdue and Ray Trapp.

ABSENT: Commissioner Kay Cashion, Carolyn Q. Coleman, J. Carlvena Foster and Justin Conrad

ALSO PRESENT: County Manager Marty Lawing; County Attorney Mark Payne; Deputy County Manager Clarence Grier; Robin Keller, Clerk to Board; Ariane Webb, Deputy Clerk to Board; Yvonne Moebs, Risk Management Director, Jeff Fowler, Security Director; members of the community and media.

XIII. AMENDMENT TO INTERNAL SERVICES FUND - RISK MANAGEMENT BUDGET: WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Motion was made by Vice Chairman Alan Branson, seconded by Commissioner Alan Perdue, to approve amendment to the Internal Services Fund's Risk Retention budget increasing the Risk Retention – Admin./Liab./Prop./WC appropriation by \$1,100,000; increasing user charges by \$360,000; and increasing appropriated fund balance by \$740,000.

VOTE: Motion carried 5 - 0
AYES: J. Phillips, A. Branson, A. Perdue, H. Henning, R. Trapp
NOES: None

XIV. ADJOURN

Motion was made by Commissioner Alan Perdue, seconded by Commissioner Ray Trapp, to adjourn the meeting.

VOTE: Motion carried 5 - 0
AYES: J. Phillips, A. Branson, A. Perdue, H. Henning, R. Trapp
NOES: None

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned by unanimous consent at 9:25PM.

Ariane Webb
Deputy Clerk to Board

Jeffrey M. Phillips
Chairman