

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

Greensboro, North Carolina
August 4, 2022

The Board of County Commissioners met in a duly noticed Work Session at 3:00PM in the McAdoo Conference Room located on the third floor of the Truist Building, 201 W. Market St., Greensboro, NC.

PRESENT: Chairman Melvin “Skip” Alston, presiding; Vice Chair J. Carlvena Foster; Commissioners James Upchurch, Alan Perdue, Justin Conrad, Mary Beth Murphy, Kay Cashion and Frankie T. Jones, Jr. (participating via virtual communication).

ABSENT: Commissioner Carly Cooke.

ALSO PRESENT: County Manager Michael Halford; Interim County Attorney Matthew Mason; Clerk to Board Robin Keller; Tiffany Oliva, Program & Fiscal Recovery Manager; Assistant County Manager Erris Dunston; Assistant County Manager Victor Isler; Assistant County Manager Jason Jones; Abby Gostling, Pandemic Recovery Budget Analyst; Amy Addington, Pandemic Recovery Policy Analyst; 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 3:07PM. He offered an overview of the purpose of the work session and noted this meeting will allow municipalities who submitted projects for American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding to provide information.

**II. UPDATE ON AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT (ARPA) FUNDING IDEAS
A. 2022-435 INFORMATION ON MUNICIPAL ARPA RFI REQUESTS**

Tiffany Oliva, Program & Fiscal Recovery Manager, reviewed the materials included the municipal proposal presentation and noted the Town of Stokesdale’s funding request was increased to \$3,113,038, accounting for inflation, which increases the total amount of ARPA funding requested by municipalities to \$72,582,453.

Oliva stated the Town of Pleasant Garden’s presentation was inadvertently left off the agenda but confirmed they will present during the work session. She noted that municipal requests received

were primarily for water and recreation-related projects, with the exception of a broadband services request from the Town of Summerfield that would not be presented during the work session.

City of Greensboro

Shawna Tillery, Director of the City of Greensboro's Parks & Recreation Department, discussed their \$20 million request for the Windsor Chavis Nocho Complex. She shared the request will give residents much deserved access to services and the facility will serve as a major gateway to the city.

Ms. Tillery provided an overview of the project timeline, noting voters approved a \$2 million bond referendum in 2016 for this project. She confirmed architectural and design work has been completed.

Ms. Tillery stated the complex will not only serve as a recreation center and library, but will also be a catalyst for economic development. She reviewed the proposed space designs and noted the \$20 million in ARPA funding would cover construction costs, to include: drawings, bidding and administrative work. Ms. Tillery discussed the measures for success and community planning efforts.

Commissioner Mary Beth Murphy spoke to the project's total cost of \$75 million and questioned if city ARPA funding will be used for the project.

Ms. Tillery confirmed the project is under consideration for Greensboro ARPA funding.

Commissioner James Upchurch questioned why the city did not place a larger bond referendum before the voters to cover the total cost of the project.

Ms. Tillery stated this decision was likely related to the City's ability to take on additional debt.

Vice Chair J. Carlvena Foster questioned how the project would reduce community healthcare costs.

Ms. Tillery stated the project will attract community partners, such as healthcare providers, but noted they cannot reveal the specific partners who will participate.

Commissioner Kay Cashion questioned the design process.

Ms. Tillery stated they plan to take contracts to the City Council within the next week, which will lead to a 6-8 month design process followed by construction.

Commissioner Cashion questioned the potential outcome for the current library.

Ms. Tillery confirmed the existing library facility will remain and community partners are potentially considering options for this building.

Commissioner Cashion questioned the potential to utilize the facility as a clinic.

Ms. Tillery confirmed the clinic is still an option.

Commissioner Alan Perdue questioned if the project would move forward if County funding were not approved.

Ms. Tillery stated the project will move forward with or without county dollars.

Chairman Alston noted Commissioner Frankie T. Jones, Jr. was participating in the work session via virtual communication.

Commissioner Jones expressed his support for the project and requested that, as the Board works through the request, staff could provide aggregate amounts of potential funding from other sources to ensure they are good stewards of public monies.

Ms. Tillery shared the City has committed \$8.1 million in ARPA funding towards the project, voters approved \$50 million in bond funding and the current request from the County is \$20 million in ARPA funding.

Commissioner Jones reiterated it would be helpful to receive information on potential funding from other sources.

Ms. Tillery stated there is a potential to receive approximately \$5 million from other partners.

Commissioner Cashion questioned when the City Council will consider this project.

Ms. Tillery confirmed this item is on the agenda for the Council's work session scheduled for next week.

Chairman Alston questioned if the estimated project cost of \$75 million is still a target amount, given the original estimates were initiated in 2019.

Ms. Tillery noted the initial estimate was \$65 million, they are currently on target with the estimated total cost of \$75 million. She shared they are entering the goal setting phase with project architects confirmed they understand the volatility of the construction market at this time.

Chairman Alston questioned if the architectural renderings were complete.

Ms. Tillery stated they are 50% complete and should be finished within the next 6-8 months.

Town of Stokesdale

Mayor Pro-Tem Derek Foy thanked County staff for their assistance with the presentation and shared their request for ARPA funding towards a project to supplement the main water trunk line with a secondary water line in the town. He noted the total funding request was increased to \$3,113,038 to account for inflation.

Mr. Foy stated Stokesdale is experiencing rapid growth. He spoke to the importance of providing an additional water line to support the twenty-year old main line and provide service for current residents and future developments in areas of the town that are historically underserved. Mr. Foy shared the town invested \$84,000 in a long-range water plan that recommended the addition of a secondary water supply line as a priority project.

Mr. Foy discussed a recent water line break as a result of Hurricane Florence and reviewed the current water system and proposed location of the secondary line. He discussed the funding the County was designated through HB 1163 towards their water study, along with the town's ARPA funding and capital improvement funds that have been committed towards this project.

Commissioner Justin Conrad thanked Mr. Foy for the presentation and noted the community's predicted growth over the next few years.

Mr. Foy anticipated an additional 775 new homes over the next 5-10 years and shared they number of customers has increased by 31% since January 1, 2020.

Commissioner Conrad questioned the potential property tax value of the additional developments.

Mr. Foy stated the homes in these new subdivisions will average between \$400,000 to \$500,000 in sales value.

Commissioner Conrad stated these developments will result in a significant increase in property tax revenues for the county.

Commissioner Jones thanked Mr. Foy for the presentation and questioned if the state funding must be encumbered by June 2023.

Mr. Foy confirmed and noted they anticipate no additional state funding at this time.

Town of Oak Ridge

Bill Bruce, Town Manager, shared the town's municipal water system was approved by the state this year and will connect its first customers this month. He noted their request for \$2.765 million will be leveraged with the \$1.1 million allocated to them through HB 1163 and \$1 million of the town's reserve funding to expand their water system. Mr. Bruce stated the combined funding will be allocated towards building an elevated town tank and a distribution main from Forsyth County during the initial phase of water service expansion.

Mr. Bruce reviewed the full budget for the project and shared the state's encumbrance deadline has added a sense of urgency to the funding request. He confirmed they hope to immediately add 216 new connections, as well as, additional access points for the Oak Ridge Fire Department.

Mr. Bruce reviewed the town's second funding request for \$305,000 to add new amenities to Oak Ridge Town Park by renovating the historic Redmon House into a community meeting space and providing free public Wi-Fi service.

Mr. Bruce discussed the town's final request for \$1,000,000 towards a multi-jurisdictional partnership between the Towns of Summerfield and Oak Ridge, Guilford County, City of Greensboro and Piedmont Land Conservancy to upfit Bandera Farms Park with trails for equestrians and hikers, parking, a playground and picnic shelter and restrooms to meet the increased demand for outdoor recreation.

Commissioner Upchurch requested additional details regarding the uniqueness of the property and how it can serve as an economic development driver.

Mr. Bruce noted the space was originally designated as an open space park that would partner four (4) municipalities to offer equestrian trails and connection to the Piedmont Greenway.

Commissioner Perdue expressed his interest in the installation of additional fire hydrants to protect property and lives, as they are experiencing a shortage of fire fighters.

Mr. Bruce noted they have lost pond access points due to the level of development in the area and this is a major concern for the fire department.

Commissioner Murphy shared Guilford County is working with the City of Greensboro to develop Bryan Park North and feedback from the local community references the addition of equestrian trails to this area. She stated that, as the Board considers development of county parks, we focus on how to collaborate services and amenities to avoid overlap.

Mr. Bruce noted the Town of Summerfield has received a Part F grant for \$500,000 to assist with funding; however, the grant is contingent upon a specific plan and those submitted features would have to remain. He expressed their interest in ongoing collaboration as the county is a partner and has a team member involved with site plan development.

Commissioner Cashion spoke to the historic preservation of the Redmon House at an estimated cost of \$521,000. She questioned if this portion of the request could be separated from the Wi-Fi installation.

Mr. Bruce shared that, out of the total budget, the estimated amount for Wi-Fi installation is \$16,000, with the remainder attributed to the Redmon House renovation. He shared the town would cover the difference between the funded request and the total cost.

Commissioner Cashion encouraged the town to apply for a historical grant from the NC Department of Cultural Resources and seek opportunities for federal funds towards the renovation project.

Commissioner Conrad expressed support for the town prioritizing water on its list of infrastructure needs and noted the water feasibility study led by the county a few years ago recommended prioritizing water service in the northwestern portion of the county to address concerns with public safety and economic development. He thanked Oak Ridge for being proactive and moving forward with water needs and shared his agreement with Commissioner Murphy's comments on the county partnering in the development of Bandera Farms Park.

Town of Pleasant Garden

Mayor Dean Maddox provided an overview of their request for \$11 million in ARPA funding to introduce water/sewer infrastructure to the Pleasant Garden Business District. He shared the goal is to complete a mix of infrastructure types to leverage the Carolina Core service area and improve economic development within southeastern Guilford County and Pleasant Garden. Mr.

Maddox noted this improvement will increase property tax revenues for the county, Pleasant Garden Fire Department and surrounding towns.

Commissioner Perdue shared that he grew up in the Pleasant Garden community and the soil in this area is not ideal for well and septic systems. He spoke to the critical need for a water system combined with a sewer system in order to support commercial expansion and its impact upon the growth of this area.

Commissioner Cashion shared her recent visit to one of the new parks and questioned if the town is seeking additional funding resources for the 11 M dollars to fund the project.

Mr. Maddox confirmed they are seeking state support but have not received any funding commitments. He noted that the state is holding to hear if the County will provide funding.

Commissioner Jones requested Mr. Maddox speak to the potential impact the Greensboro-Randolph mega site will have on the town.

Mr. Maddox noted the increase in positive activity and interest in the community with the development of the mega site, and the time is right to build sewer and water infrastructure to support additional growth. He noted Guilford County is currently missing out on potential tax revenue opportunities that are being directed to Randolph County.

Chairman Alston shared that, during a recent meeting regarding this project, the proposal included water and sewer infrastructure for the entire town; however, this presentation only references the business district funding.

Mr. Maddox noted that Brent Christensen, President & CEO of the Greensboro Chamber of Commerce, recommended prioritizing water and sewer service for the eight (8) business district sites to support mega site activity.

Chairman Alston noted that the state might be willing to allocate funding once the County determines what they will be able to do. He noted the project's total cost of \$11 million.

Mr. Maddox noted that they are working with Congresswoman Manning's office and the State.

Town of Gibsonville

Town Manager Bill Baxley reminded the Board that while Gibsonville is split between two (2) counties, the majority of their future growth will be in the area that lies within Guilford County.

Josh Johnson, Town Engineer, introduced their first funding request towards a new elevated 500,000-gallon water tank that will support existing citizens with improved fire flow and provide sufficient flow for continued growth in the town. He shared this is a priority project identified through their Water and Sewer Master Plan which focused on improved fire protection for the northern and northwestern portions of Gibsonville. Mr. Johnson confirmed they are requesting \$2.8 million in ARPA funding and have received a commitment of \$500,000 in state funding towards the project.

Mr. Johnson referenced the Water and Sewer Master Plan completed in 2020 which identified three (3) key projects to address limited fire flow in the town's northwestern service area.

Mr. Johnson reviewed project 2 that would fund a waterline along Hwy. 61 that would provide a trunkline from the City of Burlington's waterline at a cost of approximately \$3.14 million. He shared this project would serve approximately 4,000 current residents and prepare the town for future growth and new residents.

Mr. Johnson discussed the third project to build ADA playgrounds at Moricle and Murrell (Minneola) Parks in Gibsonville at an estimated cost of \$2.225 million and the project 4 to add pedestrian access to and from their downtown district at an estimated cost of \$1.2 million. He noted the proposed ADA sidewalks would facilitate access from commercial businesses in downtown to recreational and residential areas.

Commissioner Murphy stated the County's ability to support these water projects would serve as a transformational investment into the community and thanked town representatives for presenting these projects.

Commissioner Jones noted that, if all the towns could identify opportunities for additional and/or matching funds from other sources, it would improve the County's ability to better leverage ARPA funding.

Mr. Baxley confirmed the elevated water tank project is slated to receive \$500,000 in state funding and other water projects would be covered by the town through financing or business development tax revenues. He noted no other funding sources have been identified for the recreation and pedestrian access projects.

Chairman Alston questioned the overall cost of the projects.

Mr. Baxley noted the total costs for the projects is \$9.4 million.

Town of Summerfield

Scott Whitaker, Town Manager, shared their first priority is water and connectivity. He introduced the project as development of a skeletal water system connected to either Rockingham County or the City of Greensboro. Mr. Whitaker noted that when the County started the ARPA Request for Information (RFI) process, they had just started a feasibility project which estimates the total project cost at \$24-\$27 million.

Mr. Whitaker stated Summerfield is the third largest municipality in Guilford County and this project would immediately improve fire protection but would also serve as an expandable approach that would protect existing wells and better serve those in need of public water as growth continues.

Mr. Whitaker noted the town's 11,000 residents utilize private or community wells which can be insufficient and area fire districts rely upon dwindling water points or out-of-town hydrants. A public system would allow quicker access to water and improve fire protection, and potable

water would allow development of a greater variety of housing types and support residential and commercial growth.

Mr. Whitaker discussed their second project to complete development at Bandera Farms Park, in conjunction with Guilford County, Town of Oak Ridge, City of Greensboro and the Piedmont Land Conservancy. He spoke to the park's potential as a unique destination with equestrian and hiking trails, expansion of the Piedmont Greenway and a destination-quality adventure playground.

Mr. Whitaker noted the funding request for this project is \$2.3 million and discussed the needs assessments, surveys and focus groups that attest to the need for this type of public recreational facility. He confirmed this project would honor the County's conservation goals in a highly visible area and would protect water quality along Reedy Creek, while addressing County flood control and serving as a key highlight of the Piedmont Greenway.

Commissioner Jones requested they provide additional details on the housing types that would be available with water connectivity.

Mr. Whitaker discussed the potential for apartment and townhouse developments, in addition to quadplexes and other high-density housing that would be allowed with water service in the town.

Commissioner Conrad thanked all towns for their presentations and noted they have displayed their intent by already investing in this projects and prioritizing water connectivity.

Chairman Alston thanked the towns for their presentations.

C. 2022-400 FJC/DSS PROTECTIVE SERVICES TEAM

Oliva introduced the project and noted the original request presented during the July 29, 2022 work session did not include the projected 50% reimbursement rate for staff positions. She shared the new budget includes a more conservative reimbursement rate of 30%, which decreases the ARPA funding request from \$1.7 million to \$1.5 million. Oliva discussed the annual funding cost to sustain the program after ARPA funding has been expended would be \$468,676.

Motion was made by Vice Chair J. Carlvena Foster, and seconded by Commissioner Mary Beth Murphy, to approve the use of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding in the amount of \$1,772,220 towards the addition of eight (8) positions, to include: five (5) dual CPS/APS investigators, two (2) Social Worker III positions and one (1) supervisor to develop a specialty DHHS-DSS/FJC Protective Services team, and authorize all necessary budget transfers.

VOTE: Motion carried 8 - 0

AYES: Melvin "Skip" Alston, J. Carlvena Foster, Alan Perdue, Justin Conrad, Kay Cashion, Frankie T. Jones, Jr., Mary Beth Murphy, James Upchurch

NOES: None

ABSENT: Carly Cooke

B. 2022-397 INCREASING THE AVAILABILITY OF FOSTER FAMILIES FOR CHILDREN IN NEED

Oliva introduced the item and confirmed the requested amount is still \$350,000 over a two-year period. She reported the County invested \$350,000 in its 2016 adoptive and foster family recruitment campaign and recruited 50 foster homes during this period.

Motion was made by Commissioner Mary Beth Murphy, and seconded by Vice Chair J. Carlvena Foster, to approve the use of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding in the amount of \$350,000 over two (2) years) to enter into a sub-award agreement with Children's Home Society (CHS) to recruit, train and license foster families to meet the needs of children referred by Guilford County DHHS-DSS, and authorize any necessary budget transfers.

VOTE: Motion carried 8 - 0

AYES: Melvin "Skip" Alston, J. Carlvena Foster, Alan Perdue, Justin Conrad, Kay Cashion, Frankie T. Jones, Jr., Mary Beth Murphy, James Upchurch

NOES: None

ABSENT: Carly Cooke

D. 2022-403 FOOD SECURITY PROGRAM

Oliva introduced the program and noted the request has increased by \$133 for a total request of \$885,133. She noted the annual cost to sustain the food security program after ARPA funding has been expended is \$118,421.

Commissioner Jones requested additional details regarding decreases in the annual salary and contractual services costs to sustain the program.

Heather Schaffer, Cooperative Extension Director, noted they anticipate only retaining the coordinator position to sustain the program and funding from additional partners would be used to sustain the AmeriCorps VISTA positions.

Motion was made by Commissioner Mary Beth Murphy, and seconded by Commissioner James Upchurch, to approve the use of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding in the amount of \$885,133 to develop a county-wide Food Security Plan that would coordinate data-sharing, communication and align resources within Guilford County, and authorize all necessary budget transfers.

VOTE: Motion carried 8 - 0

AYES: Melvin "Skip" Alston, J. Carlvena Foster, Alan Perdue, Justin Conrad, Kay Cashion, Frankie T. Jones, Jr., Mary Beth Murphy, James Upchurch

NOES: None

ABSENT: Carly Cooke

E. 2022-401 EMT/PARAMEDIC ACADEMY EXPANSION AND FIRE ACADEMY LAUNCH

Oliva introduced the item and noted the EMT/Paramedic Academy request remains \$400,000 and the Fire Academy launch request remains \$1,125,000. She referenced the County's agreement to reimburse fire districts a maximum of \$15.00 per hour for 40 hours per week for 26 weeks, or \$15,600, for each Fire Academy candidate they sponsor and noted the Academy anticipates training 72 candidates during this time period.

Motion was made by Commissioner Mary Beth Murphy, and seconded by Vice Chair J. Carlvena Foster, to approve the use of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding in the amount of \$400,000 towards expansion of Guilford County's EMT/Paramedic Academy and \$1,125,000 to launch a Fire Academy, for a total of \$1,525,000 through 2026, and authorize all necessary budget transfers.

Commissioner Jones thanked staff for providing the annual cost to sustain for all presented projects.

Commissioner Murphy thanked the fire departments offering services in the rural parts of the county and shared her recent visit with Mcleansville Fire Department where they are experiencing significant vacancies and other departments where firefighters must work 48 hours

before being relieved. She noted the departments deserve this investment as they are reaching a critical point in their ability to provide service.

Commissioner Conrad shared his recent communication with local fire chiefs and expressed his support for the motion.

Vice Chair Foster shared her recent conversation with Jim Albright, Emergency Services Director, who discussed the department's plan to conduct grass-roots efforts to recruit minorities into the fire service and paramedic fields.

Chairman Alston noted these academies will pay for Guilford County residents to attend.

Albright confirmed they are working on a sponsorship agreement with the County Attorney's office and have that in place before releasing funds to the fire departments.

Commissioner Cashion shared her conversations with the rural fire departments and echoed Commissioner Murphy's comments. She noted people are interested in the fire services field and noted there has never been an opportunity like this Academy direct people towards this career.

Commissioner Perdue thanked his colleagues for supporting the item and noted people are the most important asset in this field, as if there are no trained personnel, they cannot meet the needs of the community.

Motion was made by Commissioner Mary Beth Murphy, and seconded by Vice Chair J. Carlvena Foster, to approve the use of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding in the amount of \$400,000 towards expansion of Guilford County's EMT/Paramedic Academy and \$1,125,000 to launch a Fire Academy, for a total of \$1,525,000 through 2026, and authorize all necessary budget transfers.

VOTE: Motion carried 8 - 0

AYES: Melvin "Skip" Alston, J. Carlvena Foster, Alan Perdue, Justin Conrad, Kay Cashion, Frankie T. Jones, Jr., Mary Beth Murphy, James Upchurch

NOES: None

ABSENT: Carly Cooke

III. OTHER BUSINESS

County Manager Michael Halford thanked the Board and his team for working on these items.

Commissioner Conrad noted the Board's responsibility with this ARPA funding is to ensure its reach into the community and shared he would like to have a discussion to vote on the municipal requests prior to further discussions regarding requests from non-profits and other agencies.

The Board discussed next steps regarding ARPA funding requests.

Commissioner Conrad questioned Commissioner Cashion's request for the Town of Oak Ridge to seek federal funding for renovation of the Redmon House and noted he received confirmation from the mayor that they are ineligible for these funds.

The Board discussed scheduling an additional work session to discuss ARPA funding requests.

Commissioner Conrad requested the Board provide a list of questions to staff to provide to municipal staff for further clarification prior to a vote.

By general consensus, the Board scheduled a work session for Tuesday, August 9, 2022 at 1:00PM.

Halford noted certain state matching funds require distribution to types of distressed communities that we do not have in Guilford County, as many of our ARPA requests are already addressing failing systems. He shared the Board might consider the option of committing an annual amount towards a specific project versus an up-front lump sum.

Chairman Alston reminded the Board to submit questions regarding the proposals to staff.

Commissioner Perdue shared a funding request for fire hydrants along High Point's waterline near Hwy 62 that he would like included in the discussion.

Halford requested Board questions forwarded to him and copied to Oliva.

IV. ADJOURN

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned by unanimous consent at 5:08PM.

Robin Keller
Clerk to Board

Melvin "Skip" Alston
Chairman