

The Sampson County Board of Commissioners convened for their regular meeting at 6:00 p.m. on Monday, August 5, 2024, in the County Auditorium, 435 Rowan Road in Clinton, North Carolina. Members present: Chairman Jerol Kivett, Vice Chairperson Sue Lee, and Commissioners Thaddeus Godwin, Lethia Lee and Allen McLamb.

Chairman Jerol Kivett called the meeting to order and turned the meeting over to Vice Chairperson Sue Lee who provided the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **Approval of Agenda**

Upon a motion by Commissioner Godwin and seconded by Commissioner Lethia Lee, the Board voted unanimously to approve the agenda with the following amendments:

- Added a Discussion of Employee Salaries as Item 4 (Action Item), Making the Consent Agenda Item 5
- Added an EMS Clinical Internship Agreement between Edgecombe Community College and Sampson County to the Consent Agenda
- Added the Home and Community Care Block Grant for Older Adults Funding Plan for FY 24-25 to the Consent Agenda

### **Item 1: Reports and Presentations**

NCDOT Update Chairman Kivett called upon NCDOT District Engineer Daniel Jones who shared updates on various construction and resurfacing contracts throughout the County. Highway Maintenance Engineer Lance Eason then provided an update on maintenance projects. The Board expressed their thanks for the diligent work that DOT has been doing in Sampson County.

Water Systems Update Chairman Kivett called upon Public Works Director Mark Turlington who provided an update on the County Water System as well as ongoing and completed projects.

Update on Sale of County Property and Upset Bid Process Chairman Kivett called upon Finance Director David Clack who shared that bids were opened on July 30, 2024 and the highest bid was currently \$357,000. Staff has advertised the new qualifying minimum bid of \$347,900 with a 5% bid deposit and a bid opening date of August 13, 2024.

### **Item 2: Public Hearings**

Naming of Private Roads Chairman Kivett opened a public hearing and called upon GIS Coordinator Jessie Matthews who stated that the Road Naming Committee recommended that PVT 41-9421 be named Riverfront Ln. and that PVT 1915-821-626 be named Tree Line Rd. Chairman Kivett opened the floor for public comments and hearing none closed the public

hearing. Upon a motion by Chairman Kivett and seconded by Commissioner Godwin the Board voted unanimously to name the private roads and recommended by the Road Naming Committee.

Sampson County Public Transportation – FY26 Grants Chairman Kivett opened a public hearing and called upon Sampson County Public Transportation Director Rosemarie Oates-Mobley. Mrs. Oates-Mobley requested approval to apply for the following grants from the NC Department of Transportation for FY26: CTP/5311-\$267,628 with a 15% local match of \$40,145, Elderly/Disabled-\$50,000 with a 50% local in-kind match of \$25,000, and Capital-\$600,000 with a 10% local match of \$60,000. Chairman Kivett opened the floor for public comments and hearing none closed the public hearing. Upon a motion by Vice Chairperson Sue Lee and seconded by Commissioner Lethia Lee the Board voted unanimously to approve the submission of the grant applications to the NC Department of Transportation.

### **Item 3: Planning & Zoning**

R24-01 and R24-01a – Plain View Hwy Rezoning Chairman Kivett opened a public hearing and called upon Senior Planner Michelle Lance who reviewed rezoning requests submitted by Attorney Andrew J. Dickerhoff to rezone tax parcel 14051908010, 8.44 acres, from the (I) Industrial zoning district to 6.87 acres (RA) Residential Agricultural and 1.57 acres to (C) Commercial zoning district. The Planning Board voted 4-0 to recommend approval of the rezoning request at its July 9, 2024 meeting. Chairman Kivett opened the floor for public comments and hearing none closed the public hearing. Upon a motion by Chairman Kivett and seconded by Commissioner Godwin the Board voted unanimously to approve the proposed rezoning and adopt the following Zoning Consistency Statement: *The Sampson County Planning Board finds the proposed rezonings to be consistent with the Residential Growth Land Use designation and to positively align with the main purpose and intent of such designation. The Sampson County Planning Board finds that the rezoning requests are reasonable and in best public interest and recommends approval to the Sampson County Board of Commissioners. The Sampson County Planning Board finds the proposed rezonings to be consistent with the land use plan.*

R24-02 – Old US 421 Hwy Rezoning Chairman Kivett opened a public hearing and Senior Planner Michelle Lance reviewed a rezoning request submitted by Attorney Andrew J Dickerhoff to rezone tax parcel 14051908009, .96 acres from the (I) Industrial zoning district to the (RA) Residential Agricultural zoning district. The Planning Board voted 4-0 to recommend approval of the rezoning request at its July 9, 2024 meeting. Chairman Kivett opened the floor for public comments and hearing none closed the public hearing. Upon a motion by Chairman Kivett and seconded by Commissioner Godwin the Board voted unanimously to approve the proposed rezoning and adopt the following Zoning Consistency Statement: *The Sampson County Planning Board finds the proposed rezonings to be consistent with the Residential Growth Land Use designation and to positively align with the main purpose and intent of such designation. The Sampson County Planning Board finds that the rezoning requests are reasonable and in best public interest and recommends approval to the Sampson County Board of Commissioners. The Sampson County Planning Board finds the proposed rezonings to be consistent with the land use plan.*

**Item 4: Action Item**

Discussion of Employee Salary Funds Chairman Kivett called upon County Manger Ed Causey who discussed a conflict between the language in the Budget Ordinance and the County's available funds. The cost to implement salary changes as outlined in the adopted Budget Ordinance for FY24-25 would cost approximately \$1.7 million. This amount exceeds the available resources of the County. The funding included in the budget for salary increases is less than \$750,000. Mr. Causey asked Finance Officer David Clack to offer some clarification. Mr. Clack informed the Board that Section 12 of the Budget Ordinance would need to be revised once the Board made a decision on how to rectify this miscalculation. Upon a motion by Chairman Kivett and seconded by Commissioner Godwin the Board voted unanimously to direct staff to re-work the budget ordinance to stay within the confines of the originally budgeted amount of \$747,000.

**Item 5: Consent Agenda**

Upon a motion made by Vice Chairperson Sue Lee and seconded by Commissioner Lethia Lee, the Board voted unanimously to approve the Consent Agenda as follows:

*(as Board of Commissioners)*

- a. Approved the minutes of the July 8, 2024 meeting (Copy filed in Inc. Minute Book \_\_\_\_\_, Page \_\_\_\_\_.)
- b. Authorize the execution of the Home and Community Care Block Grant for Older Adults Agreement for the Provision of County-Based Aging Services for FY 2024-2025 between Sampson County and Mid-Carolina Regional Council
- c. Authorize the execution of an EMS Clinical Internship Agreement between Sampson County and Lenoir Community College
- d. Approve the updated System Safety Plan (including the Drug & Alcohol Testing Policy) for Sampson County Public Transportation
- e. Approve the updated Title VI Plan for Sampson County Public Transportation, as approved by the Office of Civil Rights
- f. Authorize the execution of a contract for temporary staff between Sampson County Department of Social Services and Vanguard Professional Staffing
- g. Authorize the execution of a contract for guardianship management between Sampson County Department of Social Services and Generations Family Services
- h. Authorize the execution of a contract for janitorial services between Sampson County Department of Social Services and Just-Rite Cleaning Services
- i. Adopt a Resolution Accepting the 2023 Appropriations Act Directed Project Grants Offer for the Landfill Area Water Main Extensions Project and Authorizing the County Manager to

Furnish Any Needed Information and to Execute All Necessary Related Documents (Copy filed in Inc. Minute Book \_\_\_\_\_, Page \_\_\_\_\_.)

- j. Approve a late disabled veterans tax exclusion request for Tracy A. Baysa
  - k. Approved tax refunds and releases as submitted
  - l. Approved budget amendments as submitted
  - m. Authorize the execution of an EMS Clinical Internship Agreement between Sampson County and Edgecombe Community College
  - n. Approve the Home and Community Care Block Grant for Older Adults Funding Plan for FY24-25
- (as Board of Health)*
- o. Authorize the execution of letters required the for Sampson County Health Department's upcoming Accreditation

**Item 6: County Manager's Report**

Chairman Kivett called upon County Manager Ed Causey who welcomed new Expo Center Director Kaitlin Adkins. Mrs. Adkins stated that she is looking forward to working with the Board. Mr. Causey went onto inform the Board that the Emergency Services Control Group would be meeting the next morning to discuss preparations being made for Tropical Storm Debby as well as next steps.

**Item 7: Public Comment Period**

Chairman Kivett called upon Clerk to the Board Stephanie Shannon who received one public comment via email. Ms. Shannon read the following into the public record:

"Dear Mr. Kivett, We, the members of the Mingo Grange, wish to express our thanks to the Board for their efforts and diligence during the budget discussions. No proposal coving sixty thousand people can satisfy or deliver all that's needed, and with limited resources the problem is compounded. We asked for a reduction of the tax rate with no strings or conditions on amounts, simply that it be fair. You delivered and we are thankful for that. Your job as our representatives are difficult and we appreciate that. We look forward to working with the Board in a meaningful way for next years budget process and offer our help in any way possible. Sincerely yours, Patrick Blanchard. President, Mingo Grange."

Chairman Kivett then opened the floor for public comments. The following were received:

William Holden - "Good evening. Thank you for taking the time to listen to my little complaint that I have. I went to the tax office today because I received my tax bill. I know that they did another land assessment not too long ago. Supposedly, everybody got it in the mail. Well, I didn't receive one that I know of. All I got was a letter saying that they were going to charge \$80 for the landfill a year. But, last year I paid taxes in Autryville on my property which is four-

tenths of an acre with nothing on it. \$31. This year it went up to \$152.75. Okay, the County taxes. Last year I paid \$56.72. This year it went to \$203.13. So, yeah, I think that's a little bit...I can understand maybe 20% increase, but not 71% and 81% increase on my taxes for the property that is just not even the size of this building, of this hallway I should say. So, I need some assistance in that matter if it's possible for me to get it."

Carolyn Brunson - "Good evening, Commissioners. I came to this meeting tonight because I hadn't been here for a while and, well, I had no intentions of speaking but I asked what was the subject and she said, 'Well, these are subjects' and I said, 'Well, who determines the water bill fees and all?' She said, 'Well you do.' Because when I got my water bill, I found in it that the delinquent fee had doubled, not doubled, had gone up one and a half times what the delinquent fee was. And that to me is horrendous, and as I think about it, what about those people below what we call underprivileged and that are getting County water? How...did you make any concession for them if they should happen to be late paying their fee, their bill, that they have to pay that \$125? That's going to put them in a debt situation of always being behind. I can understand you increasing, having an increase, but one and a half times...people's salaries are not increasing one and a half times. Somebody has to say something. What are you going to do about the people down on the bottom rung or the next rung up on the ladder? Everybody can't afford that \$125 delinquent fee, and I think you should consider making some kind of concession for those who are at the lower level. Thank you."

**Item 8: Closed Session - G.S. § 143-318.11(a)(1)&(a)(3)**

Upon a motion made by Vice Chairperson Sue Lee and seconded by Commissioner Godwin the Board voted unanimously to enter into Closed Session. Upon a motion by Chairman Kivett and seconded by Vice Chairperson Sue Lee the Board voted unanimously to come out of Closed Session.

**Recess to Reconvene**

Upon a motion made by Chairman Kivett and seconded by Commissioner McLamb, the Board voted unanimously to Recess to Reconvene on Monday, August 12, 2024 at 10:00 a.m. in the Administrative Board Room, 406 County Complex Rd., Clinton, NC.

/signed copy on file in Clerk's Office

R. Jerol Kivett, Chairman

/signed copy on file in Clerk's Office

Stephanie P. Shannon, Clerk to the Board