

CASWELL COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MEMBERS PRESENT

April 4, 2022
OTHERS PRESENT

Rick McVey, Chairman
David Owen, Vice Chairman
Nathaniel Hall
Jeremiah Jefferies
Steve Oestreicher
John Dickerson (Remote)

Bryan Miller, County Manager
Carla Smith, Clerk to the Board
Brian Ferrell, County Attorney (Joined Remote)

The Board of Commissioners for the County of Caswell, North Carolina, met in regular session on Monday, April 4, 2022 at 9:00 am in the Historic Courthouse.

WELCOME:

Chairman McVey called the meeting to order and paused for a moment of Silent Prayer. Then the Board of Commissioners and all the guest in attendance recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

No one appeared before the Board to make public comments.

The following public comments were emailed to the Board and were shared with the Commissioners via email:

Elin Claggett, 108 Jaye Lane, Providence, NC.

On January 6th, the Manager replied "we will process your request as soon as possible." On March 31, 2022, I received answers to my months-old Public Record requests and the Manager stated "To date we have spent approximately 7 days of personnel time replying to your request."

My first 2 questions asked December 30, 2021 were when would the budget audit be available and what was the cost. While I was still awaiting answers, another more important resident asked the County Manager the same questions on March 16, 2022. Within 5 minutes, he received a text message from Bryan Miller which read "It's not complete yet. I'm not sure on the timing. It may be anothe[r] mo[n]th or so. . . ." 5 minutes.

The question regarding CPA Isley included adding 3 recent invoices for payments totaling \$28,528. How long does that take?

Following the 2017 salary study, salary questions were answered within 24 hours. The recent salary study included almost 250 employees. Regardless of the system, salaries of consultants are required to for completion of IRS 1099 forms and to balance quarterly budgets. 2 different systems; 2 different directors in 2020 & 2021. Not a problem since the retired finance director was retained at a salary of \$44,628 for 9 months which is the equivalent of full time pay of \$59,504. So between 2 directors who were trained on both systems, plus a new assistant finance director, they ought to be able efficiently locate salaries paid to 3 attorneys (totaling \$304,079 in 2021). The last pieces of information were payments for 5 legal cases in 2020-2021 with additional expenses of \$115,458.

The chart of attorney/legal fees was clear and concise but again it shouldn't take literally over a week to make a 1 page chart of 3 attorney salaries totaling & legal fees for 5 cases.

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No personal information was asked other than salaries, as clarified in my follow-up emails re-written under the guidance of NC Assistant Attorney General. The Advisor Letter sent March 22nd, from the Director of NC Open Government Coalition, included a specific list of public records I was seeking and included the following excerpts:

- "At a minimum, the county should produce basic top-line financial information about money it has spent on public business. Even taking into account the legitimate burdens and responsibilities of public service, and related delays, it should not take months to provide basic public information about how the county spends money."
- "Caswell County residents have a right to information about county finances so they can understand the costs related to public work and be more informed as budget cycles and elections approach from year to year."

Your budget is due within 90 days and the only public discussion has been approval of >\$1 million off-budget spending for employee raises 2 weeks ago. By the way, how many times can you spend dollars from "lapsed salaries" while adding new positions? If these questions took 7 full days of personnel time, your management team is totally dysfunctional – no excuses for the resistance to provide me information for months. This should provide a glimpse of the problems that are facing the auditors and public trust.

RECOGNITIONS:

There were no recognitions.

AGENDA:

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Commissioner Owen said he would like to add to the closed session on the agenda. Add NCGS 143-318.11(a)(4) to discuss matters relating to the location or expansion of industries or other businesses in the area served by the public body.

A **motion** was made by Commissioner Owen and **carried unanimously** to approve the agenda as amended. (Commissioners Hall, Jefferies, Owen, Oestreicher, and McVey voted in favor)

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA:

- a. March 21, 2022 Regular Meeting Minutes

A **motion** was made by Commissioner Jefferies and seconded by Commissioner Owen and **carried unanimously** to approve the consent agenda. (Commissioners Hall, Jefferies, Owen, Oestreicher, and McVey voted in favor)

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PRESENTATION:

CHILD FATALITY PREVENTION TEAM REPORT:

Danielle Elmore is the Health Fatality Chairperson and works at the Caswell County Health Department. The Review Coordinator, Emily Hodges is with Mrs. Elmore. We are presenting the Child Fatality Report for Caswell County for last year. The purpose of the Child prevention fatality team is to identify system things that happen to children that contributed to their deaths. The purpose of our review would be each quarter. If we don't have any deaths for our community, we don't have to do a report to submit to the state. So we try to focus on trainings to help us when we are reviewing these cases.

Then Mrs. Elmore shared the review system. A child's death is a tragic event. The child fatality prevention team is a multidisciplinary group charged with the review of all child fatalities in Caswell County. Occurring in children between the ages of birth through seventeen. The purpose is to identify the causes in a child's death, identify gaps or deficiencies that may exist in order to improve the delivery of services to children and families. We make recommendations for changes and carry out changes that can prevent future child fatalities. We educate our community on how to prevent children from dying in our county. Child Fatality Prevention Team usually reviews fatalities from the previous year. The membership of this team comes from our community. In your packet, it's listed with each person, not their name, but what organization they represent. The process is as follows. We gather the information regarding the case, and we present it at the meetings in systematic fashion. Contributing factors to the death are identified. The team makes recommendations for preventing future child fatalities. Child Fatality meetings are confidential and closed to the public. A confidentiality statement is signed by each member at the start of our meeting. Teams follow protocol and procedural manuals along with guidelines. If you need more information on child fatality teams, it is found on the North Carolina Department of Human Services under child fatality. That'll give you more information.

Caswell County had one death that we reported on last year. You'll find that information in your packet. The death was due to SIDS, Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, and our system problem was the child passed away from SIDS. Our recommendation is to bring awareness to the parents here in Caswell County. The Health Department will provide detailed trainings during the perinatal period, when the mom comes in for her third trimester visit, and the 2-5-day visit for the infant. This is the flyer that we pass out, and it has a website, Danielle thinks it is in the packets, that we share for parents to look at to get different tips on how to prevent SIDS from happening.

County Manager Miller said commissioners, do you have any questions. Commissioner Hall said he had one question. You mentioned the flyer and trainings. Danielle Elmore said she can get the flyer to the board. Commissioner Hall said just tell me some of the tips now so they can be on record. Danielle Elmore said co-sleeping is one of them. So you don't want to co-sleep with the

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child. Sarah is our C-mark social worker, and is housed at the Health Department. So we have funding so that she gives out pack and plays. This encourages the parent not to sleep with the baby. Then at one point, we used to do the cardboard boxes for the parents to put the baby into instead of sleeping with them. Smoking is another leading cause. So we encourage the parents not to smoke around the infant. The website for that is safesleepnc.org. This is a North Carolina website. Danielle Elmore said she can get you a copy of the flyer so that you all can have it for reference.

❖ Commissioner Dickerson joined virtually at 9:08 am.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

DEVICES FOR COMMISSIONERS:

County Manager Miller said Commissioners, you had this on your last agenda. There was no decision made on how you wanted to proceed, so we are bringing it back to you today. We know that several commissioners are in need of new devices. With the current devices, there have been some issues downloading emails and just operational issues in general. We submitted to you last time a small laptop and an iPad. The laptop obviously would come with the keyboard, and the iPad can be equipped with a keyboard as well as a mouse. The iPad is substantially cheaper than the laptop. However, the laptop gives you much more functionality and more storage. So it's really up to the Board what you would like. Our I.T. Director has said it would probably be best if all Commissioners got this same device. However, there is no requirements. We can do whatever the Board wants to do. Mix and match, we can certainly entertain that, but it's really up to the Board's discretion what the Board chooses to do at this point in time. Chairman McVey asked if there were any questions for Mr. Miller.

Commissioner Oestreicher asked is there any reason we can't keep using the Surface Pro, other than it's nice to have everybody have the same thing. Commissioner Oestreicher is not sure what that benefits anyone. County Manager Miller said no, if the board chooses to continue using the Surface Pro that's fine. You can certainly do that. Mr. Miller said he just knows there have been some issues with a few Commissioners being able to download emails. Just operationally, the Surface Pros haven't seemed to work as well as the iPads had in the past. We've not tried laptops before. Commissioner Oestreicher said he finally figured out his Surface Pro, so he is happy.

Then Commissioner Dickerson said he had a question. There's a bad echo when listening to the discussion. Commissioner Dickerson was on Zoom, so he did not understand the last part Mr. Miller was talking about. So what is the consensus on the Surface Pros? Are you continuing to go with those or what's going on? County Manager Miller said Commissioner Dickerson, I don't believe that there's been a consensus reached at this point in time. Commissioner Dickerson said I just know that the Surface Pro for me has been very problematic, and I cannot reliably get the

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emails. Mine is still in the possession of the I.T. Department. I'm relying on my personal email through my phone to be able to communicate with county business. Something different needs to be done.

Commissioner Owen said I think the question that was asked was could an individual commissioner keep the Microsoft Surface even if the other members of the board went to something else. County Manager Miller said yes, we're happy to mix and match. Our I.T. Director did say that logistically it would be better if everybody had the same thing, but it doesn't make it impossible for some members of the Board to have different devices. So we're happy to do that, if that's what the Board would like. We're happy for some to have iPads and some to have Surface Pros. Whatever you would like to do.

Chairman McVey asked if there were any more questions. County Manager Miller said so Commissioners just to move this off of the even keel, why don't you as individual Commissioners, if you would like a new device, contact me. If the Board would approve this at this point in time, the individual Commissioners can contact me if you wish to have a new device. If that be the case, then we'll order a new device for that individual Commissioner and just move forward with it based upon the preferences of that individual Commissioner. Chairman McVey asked if the Board had a problem with that. Do you need a motion? The County Manager said yes, it would be much clearer if there were a motion.

A **motion** was made by Commissioner Owen and seconded by Commissioner Dickerson and **carried unanimously** to allow individual Commissioners to contact our County Manager as far as these devices are concerned. Then you will proceed with that information. (Commissioners Dickerson, Hall, Jefferies, Owen, Oestreicher, and McVey voted in favor)

HIDO TIMELINE:

The County Manager said Commissioners, you will find in your agenda packet the timeline for the HIDO meeting that you requested at your last meeting. So you'll see that if the Planning Board holds a special meeting between March 28 and April 12, we, as the Board of Commissioners can run an advertisement for a public hearing the week of April 6th and the 13th as public notice to hold the public hearing on April 18th your second meeting that would occur at 6:30 pm. Then the Board could move on that from there. The County Manager said he was happy to answer any questions the Board has about the process. The County Attorney's on with us, and he may have some insight to that as well. That's the way the process is outlined at this point in time.

ACTION ITEMS:

BROADBAND RESOLUTION:

County Manager Miller said Commissioners, you'll find at your desk the resolution on broadband. It's a resolution by the Caswell County Board of Commissioners, a broadband resolution for Caswell County broadband access. A resolution to partner with Spectrum CCO Holdings/Charter Communications to provide certain county funds from the American Rescue Act of 2021. A department of Spectrum to fund the construction of broadband infrastructure in certain areas of Caswell County. Whereas broadband service is vital to the economic development of Caswell County, and whereas the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) provided funding to Caswell County, which can be used to promote broadband services. Whereas Spectrum is a retail provider of communication services including the provision of broadband services of course to Caswell County. Whereas Spectrum intends to apply for a GREAT Grant under the North Carolina Growing Rural Economies with Access to Technology grant to provide broadband services to identify and unserved areas of Caswell County, and whereas Caswell County strongly supports the grant application with Spectrum. Whereas if Spectrum is selected by the local broadband infrastructure office to receive state fiscal recovery funds for the Caswell County project, then Caswell County will contribute a portion of its ARPA funds up to \$250,000 to support the project based on the total amount awarded by the state. And whereas the infrastructure will be completed, shall be owned and operated by Spectrum. Now therefore it be resolved by the Caswell County Board of Commissioners that Caswell County offers a partnership agreement to spectrum for the express purpose of supporting Spectrum's GREAT grant application to construct fiber to the home broadband services for specified unserved areas of Caswell County as agreed upon by Caswell County and Spectrum. Should the GREAT grant application be successfully awarded to Spectrum, Caswell County shall agree with their match portion up to \$250,000 from the County's ARPA funds for the project. The broadband services and infrastructure related there too shall be owned and operated by Spectrum. Adopted this fourth day of April, 2022.

The County Manager said Commissioners this is a resolution specifically for Spectrum. \$250,000 or somewhere in the neighborhood of a 5% match for the project. Once again that's because the county received less than \$8 million in ARPA funds. So the match was limited to up to \$250,000. So Spectrum to this point is the only internet service provider that's contacted the county to provide a GREAT Grant application. If approved by the Board, the county would also entertain the same type of agreement with any other broadband internet service provider up to 5% of their project costs, which is a proportional cost of the project, if they wish to apply and become partners with the county.

Commissioner Oestreicher said Mr. Miller, I wasn't quite expecting that second part. Would that imply that we would have to spend up to half a million dollars out of the ARPA funds. County Manager Miller said no sir. So to be clear, Spectrum is the only company thus far that has approached the county. Spectrum, to the best of my knowledge, intends on applying for all

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unserved areas available through the GREAT grant in Caswell County. So if another company were to receive funding instead of Spectrum that would decrease proportionately the amount of match needed that would go to Spectrum and therefore be given to another internet service provider. Commissioner Oestreicher said okay, so the total is \$250,000, and the County Manager said yes. Then Commissioner Oestreicher said just as a matter of picking in, should this be Spectrum/Charter or is that necessary. The County Manager said I think I spelled it out in the resolution. That's Spectrum CCO Holdings, Charter.

A **motion** was made by Commissioner Oestreicher and seconded by Commissioner Owen and **carried unanimously** to adopt the resolution. (Commissioners Dickerson, Hall, Jefferies, Owen, Oestreicher, and McVey voted in favor)

NATIONAL PUBLIC SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATORS WEEK:

The County Manager said Commissioners, in your agenda packet we have a resolution for National Public Safety Telecommunications Week to be scheduled for April 10th through the 16th of 2022, and the resolution reads as follows:

Whereas emergencies can occur at any time that require police, fire or emergency medical services; and,

Whereas when an emergency occurs the prompt response of Sheriff's Deputies, firefighters and EMS is critical to the protection of life and preservation of property; and,

Whereas the safety of our Sheriff's Deputies, EMS and firefighters is dependent upon the quality and accuracy of information obtained from citizens who telephone the Caswell County Emergency Communications Center; and,

Whereas Public Safety Telecommunicators are the first, first responders and most critical contact our citizens have with emergency services; and,

Whereas Public Safety Telecommunicators are the single vital link for our Sheriff's Deputies, EMS and firefighters by monitoring their activities by radio, providing them information and ensuring their safety; and,

Whereas Public Safety Telecommunicators of Caswell County 9-1-1 have contributed substantially to the apprehension of criminals, suppression of fires and treatment of patients; and,

Whereas each dispatcher has exhibited compassion, understanding and professionalism during the performance of their job in the past year,

Therefore, Be It Resolved that the County Commissioners of Caswell County declares the week of April 10th through 16th, 2022, to be National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week in Caswell County, in honor of the men and women whose diligence and professionalism keep our county and citizens safe.

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A **motion** was made by Commissioner Owen and seconded by Commissioner Oestreicher and **carried unanimously** to approve the resolution. (Commissioners Dickerson, Hall, Jefferies, Owen, Oestreicher, and McVey voted in favor)

COUNTY MANAGER'S UPDATES:

The County Manager said Commissioners, I have no updates, but I'm happy to give you any updates that you like and on any subject. If you don't have any questions for me, I do not necessarily have any updates.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:

Commissioner Jefferies: I attended the meeting for VAYA Health last week. We had one thing that I wanted to share. I think Commissioner Owen had mentioned this before. The Directors of VAYA talked to us about the foster kid program, where we have to pay the money first up front. They did talk about getting all 31 counties to talk to the County Commissioners to get legislation to come up and talk with them. Some counties may not be able to pay it up front. Mr. Jefferies asked the County Manager to get with the director and come up with something regarding this. It was very interesting.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS:

- **April 11, 2022 Caswell Economic Development Meeting at 1:00 pm**
- **April 18, 2022 Board of Commissioners Meeting at 6:30 pm**
- **April 22, 2022 Earth Day Festival 1:00-6:00 pm in the Yanceyville Pavilion**
- **May 6, 2022 Joint Meeting with Board of Education at 10:30 am at School Board Office**
- **May 12, 2022 Joint Meeting with the Town of Milton and Town of Yanceyville at 6:00 pm at CoSquare.**

Commissioner Hall said this is a very good list of upcoming events, but I didn't see anything on here for the Board of Elections. Didn't we request a meeting with them? Chairman McVey said we had requested one and we finally said we just wouldn't do it.

CLOSED SESSION:

A **motion** was made at 9:27 am by Commissioner Owen and seconded by Commissioner Jefferies and **carried unanimously** to consider the qualifications, competence, performance, or conditions of initial employment of an individual public officer or employee, which privilege is hereby acknowledged NCGS 143-318.11 (a) (6) and also to discuss matters relating to the location or expansion of industries or other businesses in the area served by the public body hereby acknowledged NCGS 143.318.11 (a) (4). (Commissioners Dickerson, Hall, Jefferies, Owen, Oestreicher, and McVey voted in favor)

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❖ Commissioner Dickerson left the meeting at 9:28 am.

A **motion** was made by Commissioner Owen, seconded by Commissioner Oestreicher and **carried unanimously** to return to open session at 10:10 am. (Commissioner Hall, Jefferies, Owen, Oestreicher, and McVey voted in favor)

APPROVAL OF CONTRACTS:

A **motion** was made by Commissioner Oestreicher, seconded by Commissioner Owen and **carried 4-1** to approve both employment contracts specifically for the Assistant County Manager and the Deputy County Manager. (Commissioners Hall, Owen, Oestreicher, and McVey voted in favor and Commissioner Jefferies voted against the motion)

Chairman McVey said he wanted to extend our condolences to Mrs. Jennifer Eastwood, the Health Director, and her family for the loss of her father this past week. Keep her in your thoughts and prayers.

ADJOURNMENT:

A **motion** was made at 10:16 am by Commissioner Owen and seconded by Commissioner Hall and **carried unanimously** to adjourn the meeting. (Commissioner Hall, Jefferies, Owen, Oestreicher, Carter, and McVey voted in favor)

Carla R. Smith
Clerk to the Board

Rick McVey
Chairman

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Timeline for HIDO Amendment

- March 28-April 12 - Planning Board Special Meeting
- April 6th and 13th - Caswell Messenger to run the notice for the Public Hearing
- April 18th - Public Hearing and Commissioners vote taken during the Board of Commissioners Meeting at 6:30 pm



CASWELL COUNTY LOCAL GOVERNMENT

**RESOLUTION BY THE CASWELL COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY
COMMISSIONERS**

**BROADBAND RESOLUTION
CASWELL COUNTY BROADBAND ACCESS**

**A RESOLUTION TO PARTNER WITH SPECTRUM (CCO HOLDINGS, CHARTER
COMMUNICATIONS) TO PROVIDE CERTAIN COUNTY FUNDS FROM THE
AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT OF 2021 TO PARTNER WITH SPECTRUM TO
FUND THE CONSTRUCTION OF BROADBAND INFRASTRUCTURE IN CERTAIN
AREAS OF CASWELL COUNTY**

WHEREAS, Broadband service is vital to the economic development of Caswell County; *and*

WHEREAS, The American Rescue Plan Act (“ARPA”) provided funding to Caswell County, which can be used to promote broadband services; *and*

WHEREAS, Spectrum is a retail provider of communications services including the provision of broadband services to portions of Caswell County; *and*

WHEREAS, Spectrum intends to apply for a grant under the North Carolina Growing Rural Economies with Access to Technology Act (“GREAT Act”) to provide broadband services to identified unserved areas of Caswell County; *and*

WHEREAS, Caswell County strongly supports the grant application of Spectrum; *and*

WHEREAS, if Spectrum is selected by the North Carolina Broadband Infrastructure Office to receive State Fiscal Recovery Funds for the Caswell County project, then Caswell County will contribute a portion of its ARPA funds, up to \$250,000 to support the project based on the total amount awarded by the state; *and*

WHEREAS, the infrastructure to be completed shall be owned and operated by Spectrum.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CASWELL COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS THAT:

1. Caswell County offers a partnership agreement to Spectrum for the expressed purpose of supporting Spectrum's GREAT Act application to construct fiber to the home broadband services for specified unserved areas of Caswell County as agreed upon by the County and Spectrum.
2. Should the GREAT grant application be successfully awarded to Spectrum, Caswell County shall contribute their match portion, up to \$250,000, from the County's ARPA funds to the project.
3. The broadband services and infrastructure related thereto shall be owned and operated by Spectrum.

Adopted this 4th day of April, 2022

Rick McVey, Chairman

S / Rick McVey

ATTEST:

S / Carla Smith
Carla Smith, Clerk

(Seal)



CASWELL COUNTY LOCAL GOVERNMENT

National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week

April 10-16, 2022

Whereas emergencies can occur at any time that require police, fire or emergency medical services; and,

Whereas when an emergency occurs the prompt response of Sheriff's Deputies, firefighters and EMS is critical to the protection of life and preservation of property; and,

Whereas the safety of our Sheriff's Deputies, EMS and firefighters is dependent upon the quality and accuracy of information obtained from citizens who telephone the Caswell County Emergency Communications Center; and,

Whereas Public Safety Telecommunicators are the first, first responders and most critical contact our citizens have with emergency services; and,

Whereas Public Safety Telecommunicators are the single vital link for our Sheriff's Deputies, EMS and firefighters by monitoring their activities by radio, providing them information and ensuring their safety; and,

Whereas Public Safety Telecommunicators of Caswell County 9-1-1 have contributed substantially to the apprehension of criminals, suppression of fires and treatment of patients; and,

Whereas each dispatcher has exhibited compassion, understanding and professionalism during the performance of their job in the past year,

Therefore, Be It Resolved that the County Commissioners of Caswell County declares the week of April 10th through 16th, 2022, to be National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week in Caswell County, in honor of the men and women whose diligence and professionalism keep our county and citizens safe.

Signed this 4 day of April, 2022

County Executive S / Rick McVey

Caswell County, NC