

**CASWELL COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**  
**MEMBERS PRESENT**

**July 17, 2023**  
**OTHERS PRESENT**

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John Dickerson, Chairman  
Tim Yarbrough, Vice Chair  
Ethel Gwynn  
Finch Holt  
Jeremiah Jefferies  
Rick McVey  
Frank Rose  
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Bryan Miller, County Manager  
Carla Smith, Clerk to the Board  
Melissa Williamson, Deputy County Manager  
Aisha Gwynn, Assistant County Manager  
Brian Ferrell, County Attorney (Remote)

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The Board of Commissioners for the County of Caswell, North Carolina, met in regular session on Monday, July 17, 2023 at 6:30 pm at the Historic Courthouse.

**WELCOME:**

Chairman Dickerson called the meeting to order, and welcomed everyone to the Caswell County Board of Commissioners Meeting. We will start out with a moment of Silent Prayer, and the Board of Commissioners and all the guest in attendance stood and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

**Jerry Sykes:** 896 Alvis Boswell Road in Yanceyville, NC. I'm a member on the Farmer Lake Board. I am speaking only on my behalf not on the boards because I don't know how they feel about all this. We discussed various things in the meeting. Fishing is the most discussed item because it's the main attraction at the lake. We know that crappie population was out of balance over there so we discussed a few options from the Wildlife Resource Commission. After surveys we found out that crappie was stemming, too many fish, and very slow drift available. After all our research from the Wildlife Resource Commission, we also struggled with stocking in 2022 of hybrid striped bass. We had two stockings of the bass. The purpose of this was, one, to provide extra fishing opportunities, and the second was because hybrid bass and crappie populations were living in the same area of the lake. They consume some of those crappies. Hopefully we get back to the point where normal growth rates of the crappie are not so slow. I think we have an obligation to do what we can for the fish, the public, and the kids. We had a very successful Kids' Day. I want to thank you all very much for your support that you offer us for that. We want the kids to have a great day. Then each time we come back to that, we want to think how we can do that, and it's by improving the fishing. I can understand that the fishing goes a long way and understanding the environment, wildlife, water quality, pollution, and many other things including time spent with a parent, grandparent, or friend. You may be taking someone fishing on Farmer Lake or to see deer, the turkeys, or anything out there. You might even see a doe, you never know. I can't express what I think about the importance of fishing and the positive effect it can have on a kid depending on whoever loves them and what time you spend.

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I said all that to say this. I think we missed a great opportunity on June 19<sup>th</sup> when you all were tasked with appointing new board members. The person I know applied but was not approved. This person probably knows more about fish species, fish habitat, water quality, lake forward fishing, boats, and fishing than anyone I know. He also knows the importance of providing fishing opportunities for kids. He made several trips each year taking kids fishing. His application did not detail all these things on there. So you all did not know. Steve Eaton, he also applied. He has been on the board for years, and he was denied. This is kind of disappointing. He was involved in all these things that I mentioned earlier. He was a big part in all of it. He was involved in trying to equip the fishing as much as any of us was. He was there for the fishing tournaments, and he worked endlessly on those Kid's Days. I was under the understanding that someone who served on a volunteer basis in good standing was almost always approved. I think Steve was much more than just in good standing. He was a big part of the Board. It certainly wasn't because of his lack of dedication because he was always there and helped as much as he could. I urge you all in the future to recognize the importance of quality fishing especially for the kids, and please take seriously applicants for those positions. Thank you.

**Thomas Wright:** 559 George Russel Road. Me and Mr. Thomas Bernard, Tax Director had a meeting on July 7<sup>th</sup>. The County Attorney was there too. The letter (Shared with the Board of Commissioners) is a letter Thomas Bernard wrote on November 28, 2017. I'm still having that same problem on the same assessment of the property. \$8,775 was added to my property tax that I never had, and it shouldn't have been here. My lawyer read this letter and said it seems to him that it was a letter Mr. Bernard sent to me for me to come down to talk to him. I don't know what it meant to him, but it definitely didn't mean that to me. We went to Raleigh down to the board to see about that. When we got down there, Brian Ferrell, County Attorney, told the board before we even got started not to read this letter. This letter is a fraud. Nobody down there told him this letter was a fraud. He said it was \$132,068. It could have been solved. All you got to do is ask him. I told him what they did, but I never seen an appeal. When you appeal something, they hear your side before they make a decision. This decision was made before I got down there. What he said the Board had contacted him and told him what it was. Then Mr. Wright read the letter.

Dear Mr. Wright;

The North Carolina Department of Revenue contacted this office to confirming the value of your 69.64 acre parcel of land in Caswell County that you appealed to the commission. It was determined that the singlewide mobile home on this property still had the tongue attached even though covered by the concrete block perimeter skirting. We have reduced the value of the 69.64 acre parcel to \$ 132,568. We also adjusted your personal property bill by including the singlewide mobile home removed from real estate and added it to your personal property bill. The corrected value of the singlewide mobile home added to your personal property was \$3,510. I have attached a copy of both the corrected real estate bill and the corrected personal property bill.

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If you agree to the adjusted value of your 69.64 acre parcel as confirmed by the North Carolina Department of Revenue please sign the attached form and return it to the Caswell County Tax Office.

I signed a form because I didn't know what they did. I still don't know. I don't believe that the appeal decides before you get there. I think this Board can get the answer. You can get the answer from Thomas Bernard. It shouldn't be no problem, and the County Attorney. Thomas Bernard wrote this letter. The County Attorney defended him on it. Ask him. He knows. It's \$8,675 that he has charged me from 2004 up until now. Still haven't taken it off. It's still there. I want it corrected. He ain't going to correct it until somebody with some authority speak to him.

Chairman Dickerson said Mr. Thomas, what are you asking the Board to do? Mr. Thomas Wright said I'm asking the Board to ask Thomas Bernard and Brian Ferrell why it haven't been corrected. Because it's a little bit complicated if you ain't been there, and you don't know it. It's complicated. I'm charged for a mobile home on a lot and the mobile home never was there. I been charged for it all those years. He don't want to get it right. He transferred the \$8,675 to another parcel, and I don't think that is it. You can't find out about it without asking him. He won't tell you the truth. I'm taking it to Civil Court anyhow. I got a lawyer, and the lawyer said she don't handle criminal trials. It is criminal if he wrote this letter and they didn't tell him to. That's fraud. I done told him that. So you know, you have the authority to ask him. I already know he ain't going to tell you the truth. Ain't nobody going to admit to no fraud if they can get around it. He shuffling the papers around. That ain't all, but that is the main thing I want off there. It won't go away, and nobody is going to get it off. That's all I got.

Chairman Dickerson said thank you for your comments. Mr. Ferrell, excuse me. Mr. Miller, would it be possible to have Thomas Bernard look at this letter and give us some information from the County Tax Office? The date on it is 2017. Is that past the time frame we have any control over? So there is nothing this Board can do? Someone in the crowd said we can't hear you. Chairman Dickerson said I was asking the County Attorney if the date on this document, 2017, and we can go back how many years?

County Manager Miller said I think it is four plus one. Chairman Dickerson said 5 years, and this is outside of that. County Manager Miller said Brian jump in here any time you'd like. When you are appealing your tax valuation, you can only appeal the current year tax valuations. To appeal tax year 2017, you can't do anything with. If there was an appeal about today's valuation and you found that there was an error in today's valuation, you could go back four plus one. Is that correct, Brian? County Attorney Ferrell said yes, four plus one. County Manager Miller said I think you can go back four plus one, if you found an error.

Chairman Dickerson said so I guess again Mr. Ferrell, my question is for clarity's sake. We have no jurisdiction over this issue because of the time frame or do we?

County Attorney Ferrell said right. We did have a pre-hearing conference with Mr. Wright recently there in the county in advance of the upcoming appeal that Mr. Wright has filed to the

NC Property Tax Commission that will be heard next month. We have certainly heard from Mr. Wright over the years about various tax disputes that he has with his properties. As a county, I believe we are doing our best to understand those and address those proactively including the 2017 issues. At this point in time, I'm not 100% clear what Mr. Wright is actually seeking, but what I'll say is I know the county has worked diligently to make sure his tax card is accurate and that he receives the attention about the issues that he has raised as closely as we can give it. So Mr. Wright certainly has the right to appeal the current tax valuation, and he is doing that. We'll be in Raleigh next month to talk to the Property Tax Commission about his appeal. I understand Mr. Wright has issues with a 2017 letter that Mr. Bernard wrote to him. Quite frankly I do not share the same view of that letter that Mr. Wright has. But I understand that is of a concern for him, and he's raising that to you. My understanding is he believes that that letter perhaps somehow improperly influenced him to resolve a case that he had with the county at that time. I believe that's what the issue is.

Chairman Dickerson said so one more question. The key thing I'm taking from your presentation is that it is under appeal now, and it's going before the appeals process in Raleigh. Attorney Ferrell said yes. This particular property tax parcel 8626, the tax valuation of that for the 2022 tax year has been appealed and is on appeal. So we look forward to having that play out in front of the Property Tax Commission next month.

Chairman Dickerson asked if there were any other comments. Then Chairman Dickerson said to attorney Ferrell so your official position would be let it play out at the appeals process. Attorney Ferrell said I believe so to the extent that his comments relate to the 2022 appeal. It perhaps is Mr. Wright's interest just to appear before you and give you his view of some letter that he received some years ago. I'm not entirely sure. But as to the appeal, as to the valuation, the current tax valuation of Mr. Wright's property identified as tax parcel 8626, I would say absolutely yes. That matter is under appeal. The jurisdiction now is with the Property Tax Commission, and the matter should be handled there. Chairman Dickerson said okay thank you Mr. Ferrell. Chairman Dickerson then asked County Manager Miller can you get back with us and talk with Mr. Bernard at the Tax Office. County Manager Miller said yes Mr. Chairman.

## **RECOGNITIONS:**

There were no recognitions.

## **AGENDA:**

### **APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

Chairman Dickerson said there's been one item added to the agenda that's not listed on your printout, and that will become item number 12. That is the addition of the contract for collecting delinquent taxes for Caswell County.

A **motion** was made by Commissioner Yarbrough and seconded by Commissioner McVey and **carried unanimously** approve the agenda. (Ayes: Commissioners Holt, Gwynn, Jefferies, McVey, Rose, Yarbrough, and Dickerson)

**APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA:**

- a. June 12, 2023 Budget Work Session Minutes
- b. June 13, 2023 Budget Work Session Minutes
- c. June 19, 2023 Regular Meeting Minutes

Chairman Dickerson asked are there any questions or corrections to those minutes?

A **motion** was made by Commissioner Jefferies and seconded by Commissioner Gwynn and **carried unanimously** approve the consent agenda. (Ayes: Commissioners Holt, Gwynn, Jefferies, McVey, Rose, Yarbrough, and Dickerson)

**DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

**ZITEL GREAT GRANT:**

Rodney Gray said good evening members of the Board. Thank you for having me down this evening. So my name is Rodney Gray. I'm the Chief Operating Officer for Zitel. Zitel is an ISP out of Southern Virginia. To give you a little background about our company. We pride ourselves on being an internet service provider in the Commonwealth Virginia and very rural communities. That's where we started. That's how we do business, and that's where we have cut our teeth on providing internet service in rural parts of Virginia and Bedford County specifically around Smith Mountain Lake. We're looking very much to expanding into North Carolina. We have won seven grants in seven different counties in North Carolina to provide fiber optic internet service to the citizens. We are a smaller, privately owned company. We can do things differently than our big providers. The bigger companies that are the leftovers of the mob Bell telecommunications days. Some of the things we do is make our local government grant awardees partners the way we worked with Bedford County, Campbell County, and Carroll County in Virginia. We can do things like we offer dark fiber services to those localities to connect their facilities together. I know you may not know what POP is. A POP is a telecommunications Point of Presence. It's the little base built into the corner spot with chain defenses around them. Varying about 10 foot by 10 foot in concrete walled buildings and telecommunications. They're usually lease those properties for 100 years. They're kind of an eye sore. One of the things we do differently is we work with our local government partners to put POP inside of a volunteer rescue squad or Volunteer Fire Department. They have generators. They have empty closet space, and they're secure. What we can do is we can offer those Volunteer Fire Departments free internet service for the life of them. The time they provide us to allow to distributed the fiber through them is quick. Usually Volunteer Fire Departments and rescue squads are in a town center, city center, or population center. It gives us the opportunity to

interact better with the community and make better relationships that way because we're utilizing the current small government infrastructure to provide services to all the citizens.

One of the things that is a key to our success is we keep our overhead low. I'm the Chief Operating Officer of the company, and I'm one of the primary owners. I come here tonight to speak to you because we don't have government liaisons, a vice president of this, or a vice president of that that comes out to speak to you guys. We work with everybody forever. We own our own outside plant construction company. About 70% of the fiber that we put in the ground or on the poles is done by in-house personnel. We don't subcontract that out so that way we can keep our costs low, keep our services low, and we own all the fiber that we have. We designed this company in 2017 when we started to do things differently. Brandon and I designed this company to operate differently than what most people are used to. For example, the cable provider that I used to use when I lived in Roanoke was every two years the price would be jacked up. I'm paying 250 a month for cable TV and internet. I would call them, and they'd tell me it's outside your promotional period two-year special pricing agreement. We don't do that. The price we offer is the price you get. There's no two-year commitment to your contract. Everything's up front. Everything's right on the front page of our website, costs, fees, taxes, and everything we provide. So we have over 20 years of I.T Network Security Consulting. That's how this company started. That's what we did for the past 20 years as we moved into an ISP different than our telecommunications providers who used the old telephone lines. We come from an I.T background. The slide in front of you now is our current build in the local communities around Bedford County Virginia, Smith Mountain Lake, the City of Danville, Lynchburg, and Campbell County. We have about 250 miles of fiber in the ground and serve about 12,000 citizens in Southern Virginia. Next slide is our VATI. VATI is the GREAT Grant equivalent in Virginia (Virginia Telecommunications Initiative). We were awarded 417 miles of fiber in our 18-month project in Bedford County, Virginia. We have about 70% completed that on time and under budget in Bedford County, which gives us another 20,000 potential passings. Passings are possible customers. All right, so this is the map that shows our fiber route here in Caswell County, what we were awarded by the state NCDIT, the North Carolina Department of Information Technology, under the GREAT Grant. We have 906 eligible address passings. It's really the number that only matters to the state. Those are the customers that are unserved and underserved that don't have the minimum broadband connectivity at their home. That's how they gauge the grant and what the costs are. The true number is that our fiber has 3812 addresses or citizen addresses in your county. The remaining above 1906 will have a competitive choice now in who they're going to choose for their internet service provider. It's going to be about 144 miles of fiber that we're going to put down in Caswell County. The total project cost, and of course I can't see it, is just over six million dollars. \$4 million of that was awarded from the state in a grant to us. Caswell County's contribution is \$250,000 and Zitel's contribution will be invested to almost \$2.5 million dollars in your county with fiber optic infrastructure. This shows a more detailed map that shows all of the eligible passings and what the state use to identify. The next slide will show you the total passings of all addresses that will be serviced by fiber by Zitel when

the project is completed. This is the fiber graft. Stars represent the Volunteer Fire Departments and rescue squads that we have identified that we will be contacting once we get all of our permitting in place and our approvals in place with NCDOT, Duke Energy, the local co-op and power company. Once we get the state of North Carolina on the right path, it's just a C-leg. Those are the local Fire Departments we will contact and see if we can't partner with to provide a POP to those facilities and give them free internet service and free television inside their facilities. This is our current monthly service rate for our plans. We have a residential 100 public megabytes to a gigabit plans I think for small businesses, and we can also provide Enterprise class services to your large industrial parks, large major businesses, hospitals, and things like that for government facilities. All of our basic costs, surcharges, and monthly rentals of equipment are all listed right there, and the same is on the front page of the website. New offerings are coming soon. Television services are not on here, but television service has already been offered in Virginia. We have a premium television streaming service that we partner with. It's a company called Vidgo that we can now provide to all of our customers. It gives about 150 television channels, but I'm not exactly sure which local channels they carry in the Caswell County area. In Virginia, they get all the locals except for NBC. They get to hold or nail down the contract with NBC because NBC is owned by Comcast Universal, which unfortunately is Comcast Xfinity. So the negotiation is a little more difficult to carry that channel. We also have a residential Basic 50 plan that's eligible to all of our low-income citizens that qualify for the ACP, the Affordable Connectivity Program with the federal government. They get a \$30 discount that we get reimbursed from the federal government. You basically qualify for a free 50 Meg, and that is going to change. Now it's actually a synchronous plan which is 50 Megs down and 50 Megs up internet service that would be free. So one of the other things we do that we focus on is the rural carrier. Most rural communities I know in Virginia and especially in North Carolina have these extremely long gravel driveways or you live down a long private road. Other larger natural carriers want \$10, \$12, or \$15,000 to run that circuit down your gravel road or driveway. We don't do that. We offer a thousand foot drop out from the main road for free. So up to a thousand. Anything over a thousand foot, we only charge a dollar per foot to cover the cost of the cable. So let's say you're two thousand foot off the main road, and you have a really long driveway. It's a quarter of a mile. We still want to get you hooked up on the internet without having some huge upfront costs. So you get a thousand foot free, and you got to pay for a thousand foot. That's a thousand dollars, not money that somebody has in their pocket that they give away to hook up the internet. Then we do get into where you can become a 24 month, 36 month, or 48-month contracted customer. We immediately knock 20% off of that when you become a contracted customer, and we divide it up into a monthly payment of \$10 -\$15 on top of your regular costs for the long drop to get to your home. Those are the different things that we can do different based on being a smaller company, being a regional company, and being proud of what we can do differently than our big providers. I think we're a great fit for Caswell County, and we're really looking forward to the opportunity to start building our fiber here and providing service to your citizens. Any questions?

Commissioner Rose said Mr. Gray, I have a question. You said long gravel driveways you all will be able to cover them. In Caswell, we have a lot of gravel driveways that are State maintained. Somebody who lives at the end of the state maintained gravel dirt road, does that still, because that is a state maintained road, would you still go down it? Mr. Gray said yes, if it's part of the map that we have been granted. That GREAT grant or NCDIT has given us and they are eligible addresses, we are required to go down that road to get there. Now a lot of times these gravel roads, they may not have any type of easement on them but utilities. So we have to negotiate with the landowners. 99% of the time they have no problem because they're giving it up to get a service that they're desperately in need of. We'll negotiate and get an easement down the side of the gravel road. Even if it's a gravel road or State maintained, we'll maintain the NC DOT requirements. I'm not sure what or how NC DOT differs from Virginia. In Virginia, we have to be within 30 foot of the center line of the road, and you have to be 36 inches deep along the edge of the road. We maintain those exact same standards overall, State maintained gravel road or a private road, because a lot of private roads I'm sure in North Carolina is like Virginia. They get enough houses on them, they will petition NC DOT to take them over as state maintained roads, and we want to make sure we're within the tolerances so that we don't interfere with that in the future.

Commissioner Yarbrough said one more question. When do you foresee starting construction in Caswell? Mr. Gray said so that's the million dollar question. Right now we are waiting for the attorneys to approve our C-LEC. The C-LEC is a cooperative local extension carrier that has to do with the old Mitel telephone base. When you are a C-LEC and you can provide competitive telephone service being a C-LEC through I know in Virginia it's called the State Corporation Commission. I'm not sure who in North Carolina that state commission is that designate you as a C-LEC. When you get that designation, getting into the road easements of NCDOT and getting on the poles for joint use agreements like Duke Power are much easier. They cost less, and they would save us money over the long run. It's a long red tape bureaucratic process to become a CLEC. We've been going through this process for about eight months now since we were notified of the award. It takes about a year. The entire project with NCDIT is a two-year project. We're about I think it's been two months since we signed all the contracts. It's about two months into the 24 month project. Right now we're working with NC DOT. We're working to power the other co-ops to get all of our joint use agreements and get all of our right of ways so that we can get into the easements. That process we're hoping will be cleared up in about the next 30 to 60 days, and we can start construction. 141 miles, it's only going to take us about six months to get through that project. So we're hoping spring 2024 we'll be completely done. That doesn't mean that's when we start hooking people up. We hook people up as we build. We'll go to the POPS, start there, and build out from the POPS. As you get fiber in front of your home, you'll get a door hanger on your door. You'll see radio commercials and yard signs going up saying Zitel Fiber Optic internet is here. We'll start turning people on as we move down the line away from the POPS.



Chairman Dickerson asked are there any other questions from the Board?

Mr. Gray said so we're hoping in the next 30-90 days those maps that I just showed you will be published. We have maps, but they're difficult to read and try to find some of these addresses. We're hoping to have interactive maps linked back into our GIS system so citizens going there and look up their address to see if they're in the service footprint. I checked just before I came down here and currently we already have about 95 citizens in Caswell County pre-signed up. We hope before we start, you know once we start marketing this area, I think the passings at 3,800. We would like to see about a 50% take rate, and see at least about 2,000 customers signed up in Caswell County. Thank you very much for your time. I appreciate you having me.

#### **FAMILY SERVICES GRANT:**

Aisha Gwynn said greetings Commissioners. It's my pleasure to stand before you this evening to discuss a grant application for new construction of a non-congregant shelter that we're calling The Lighthouse of Caswell County. This is going to be through the Supportive Housing American Rescue Plan referenced throughout this presentation as the SHARP program. This opportunity is funded and provided by the North Carolina Housing Finance Agency based in Raleigh. Next we have a brief overview of Family Services just to remind you of this department. We are the domestic violence service provider for the county. We have been a part of Caswell County Government since July of 2010 when it moved operations from the Town of Yanceyville. Family Services is 95% grant funded. It is the responsible of the Executive Director, myself, or Department Head to research and write every grant that Family Services receives. This is a review of our funding sources. As you see Caswell County Government provides about 5% of our overall funding. Per the Budget Ordinance passed in June, our current operating budget is \$373,000. So what do we do? This department is funded strictly to spend money for victims and survivors of domestic violence. We do that by meeting their basic needs such as food, shelter, safety and security, and medical treatment: physical and mental needs. So as Executive Director, when I came on in April of 2019, I conducted like a service delivery analysis. One thing that came up was that sheltering services, that's how we call it, is very different from providing shelter. If someone in Caswell County is fleeing a domestic violence situation, they will always be referred outside of the county. We cannot meet that need inside the county because we do not operate a domestic violence shelter. Others surrounding North Carolina counties: Rockingham, Guilford, Alamance, Orange, and Person, they all maintain and operate a domestic violence and/or an emergency shelter, as does Danville and Martinsville, Virginia. In fact, Guilford County operates two, but they would due to their size. The possible remedy is the SHARP program. This is a one-time only program. One-time only, that will not be offered again, to offer three million dollars for the acquisition, rehabilitation, and/or construction of a non-congregant shelter in only eligible and prioritized areas. The North Carolina Housing Finance Agency has seen Caswell County as one of those areas. Caswell County Government Family Services has been invited to partner with the state of North Carolina and apply for SHARP program funding for a new non-congregant shelter that, like I said, we're calling The

Lighthouse of Caswell County. If you look at your attachments in 1A and 1B, that is what was submitted to the state the North Carolina Housing Finance Agency and their response to the application. It's in the second packet of stapled papers.

When you think of a non-congregate shelter, what do you think of? Let's start with what a congregate shelter is. A congregate shelter is the big gymnasium that you think of after a natural disaster. This might be operated by a non-governmental organization like the American Red Cross. Everybody's in that gymnasium on cots with blankets, and that is a congregate shelter. In a non-congregant shelter everyone has their own private unit, and they maintain the autonomy in that unit. It does not require any occupants to sign a lease or any type of occupancy agreement. I would just like to note that as far as congregate shelter, I've worked in those, and that is not exactly appropriate for the victims or the survivors that we want to serve with this non-congregate shelter.

So let's talk about estimated costs of construction. For the architect and design of the master plan, Tise-Kiester Architects, PA of Chapel Hill, construction costs are estimated between 2 million to 2.2 million dollars. This predicated upon a \$400,000 purchase price which is also dependent upon the appraisal. That also is located in that attachment 1A and 1B in your packet.

So who would the shelter serve? This will be on the last attachment, attachment three: Qualifying Population. "Homeless" as defined by 24 CFR *Homeless* subsections (1), (2), or (3). At risk of homelessness is defined by 24 CFR 91.5 or also fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking or human trafficking or other households with high risk of housing instability and at-risk of homelessness. For the purpose of this conversation, our focus has been on prioritizing option three: fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking or human trafficking. During the last fiscal year 22-23, 73% of all calls to Family Services crisis line were for emergency shelter, and every single one of those callers had to be referred to another county.

Let's talk about up-front costs. Acquisition of \$400,000, design, pre-development, 10% of developer's fee, and 20% of construction which is estimated to be \$400,000-440,000. This is based upon a very rough preliminary estimate by the architects and our Housing Development consultant who is here with us tonight. So you're probably wondering how will this be dispersed? You have two options. Let's start with the first option. For almost 50% of the private cost and it will not be dispersed until during construction. So specifically for our prioritized, we will be eligible for the \$3 million grant. The first would be \$1.5 million, the second disbursement will be \$1.2 million, and the third and final disbursement will be for the remainder of \$300,000. The other option is that you could certify your construction costs and get a reimbursement or disbursement, excuse me, at the end of construction. Here we get into some of the stipulations of the SHARP Award. It is not for operations; it is strictly for acquisition, rehabilitation under the construction of the shelter. Is this a loan, or is it a grant? I was told by the initial consultant, not Robyn Heeks who's here with me tonight, that it is a loan that operates as a grant; it's a grant that

operates like a loan. The North Carolina Housing Finance Agency is asking for a financial investment that is reimbursable through SHARP program funding. 100% reimbursable. All funds must be expended by the deadline, 12/31/2030. The internal goal, if awarded and approved, is to have the shelter construction complete by fiscal year 26-27 or by the first quarter of March 2027. Following that the agency wants to have the shelter operational within the next fiscal year which will be 27- 28. Tonight you have the financing scenario for SHARP program funding. The permanent lender is the North Carolina Housing Finance Agency. You have an option of obtaining a Construction Bridge Loan. All cost associated with his project are 100% reimbursable through SHARP program funding. That would include interest, principal, and a pre-approval letter from a lender is not required. Caswell County Government could also have a self-funded option, but I think the North Carolina Housing Finance Agency, for due diligence, would prefer that we had a lender.

So we've talked about this shelter that's not a congregate shelter, let me be clear. So what are the expectations? First of all, Family Services is a custom strength grant performance Services focusing on all interventions. Additional grant funding is available when a brick and mortar shelter is attached to a victim service provider. I can let you know that Caswell County was solicited for these grant opportunities since the sheltering gap exist in this community. The North Carolina Housing Finance Agency, and this is only if the application funding is approved, requires assurances that Caswell County Government is committed to successful outcomes for this award. It could be in the future that a completely new department might need to be formed for the operations of the Lighthouse. It can also be that if there's a funding gap between grants and operating expenses the county would ultimately assume responsibility for that. I can say that I found other shelters that are comparable across the state, and there's not many. Really I think the architect did one in Lee County. I do not think; I know he did one in Lee County. Tise-Kiester Architects. That's a 30-bed facility with a plethora of community service agencies housed in that building. We're looking at a 10 to 15 unit autonomous building. I also call Rockingham County. Their shelter can accommodate three families, and three families alone. I can say the utilities can be estimated at \$2 per square foot. A preliminary estimate of operating budget was created and is about \$370,000 in year One.

Then I have some additional thoughts. The possibility of this grant was introduced at the budget work session on April 21<sup>st</sup>, and I have included the minutes here. At that work session, Family Services were given clear guidance that more collaboration or cooperation was needed or requested between us and other victim service providers in the county. I want to let you know that the Sheltering gap has been discussed between us and other victim service providers in the county specifically the one that's named in the minutes, Crossroads. They were here earlier. So next steps: Family Services is seeking approval from this body to apply for this funding. This is just an application; it is not binding. If the application is approved by the North Carolina Housing Finance Agency, the plans will be made available for public review, a public hearing would be scheduled, I will return on the agenda to request acceptance of this award, you will

discuss this project, and you would make the decision whether to accept the award or not. Commissioners, I've given you a great deal to consider this evening. In closing, I want to emphasize again that this is only an application. Nothing is binding, and nothing is required until we are awarded the funds. This Board makes a decision to accept or not accept if we get to that point. Thank you so much for allowing me this opportunity to present this award, this project, or possible application. I'm available to answer any questions.

Commissioner Holt said I have one. I think you said you turned away 73 domestic people to other counties. Mrs. Gwynn said 73%. Yes. Commissioner Holt said okay. My understanding was that if you have a domestic case like that, you send them to another county because you can't protect them in this county. Is that correct? Mrs. Gwynn said no, we send them to where there's a shelter bed. Commissioner Holt said so being in this county does not matter? Mrs. Gwynn said it does, but I'm a bit confused. Commissioner Holt said I was under the understanding that because of protection reasons, you try to move them out the area to a different location. Mrs. Gwynn said we move them out of the area because we do not have a shelter. Now as far as safety, some prefer to stay in the county because they may work here, they may have kids that are still in school here, and they may want to stay in this area. But some do want to move outside the county. But everyone that called, the 73%, last fiscal year were referred out because we could not accommodate them anywhere. Commissioner Holt said okay. I was kind of understanding that this was domestic, but I see where what you said tonight it could be homeless shelter and all kinds of different things. So is it going to strictly be for domestic violence or just turn into a humble shelter for anymore? Mrs. Gwynn said it's not going to be a homeless shelter for anyone. What it's going to be is an emergency shelter that can house domestic violence and homeless individuals, and they will be separated. Commissioner Holt said separated but still at the same place. Mrs. Gwynn said yes. Commissioner Holt said so it would be. We're looking at this grant, if we stop, we'll have to pay back \$3 million to the federal government. Mrs. Gwynn said yes. Commissioner Holt said and it's going to start out \$400,000 a year is what it's going to be costing us because this basis is going to cover construction. Mrs. Gwynn said that's correct. This does not include operating expenses.

Chairman Dickerson said what are you figuring the operational expenses at? Just a ball park figure. Mrs. Gwynn said about \$370,000 for year one. I think 2-3% it grows each year from that. Chairman Dickerson said and when you make the comment that it would be housed in the county victims of domestic violence. I was under the impression as Commissioner Holt was that counties tried to put those victims in a different county for their safety sake. What happens if someone comes to that facility locally, knowing where it's at, looking for them. Are we setting ourselves up for a liability or someone getting hurt? Mrs. Gwynn said that is a challenge with any shelter. I will tell you when they call us, they are asking for a shelter bed in Caswell County. I say where are you located, and they say oh I'm in Providence, I'm in Pelham, or I'm in Leasburg. I want to stay here. Well we don't have a shelter here. I can't really speak to, I mean I can without getting into too many details, but I can say that they want to stay here. There's this

thing that a lot of people still think that we still operate the shelter because we say sheltering services. What we can do is people have asked us to put them up at the hotel. For some people that's appropriate, and for some people it's not. It depends on each individual situation. Chairman Dickerson said for clarity sake, if we ran the shelter and for some reason the county could not continue to run it for a 10-year time frame, we would have to pay this money back. Mrs. Gwynn said that is correct. Chairman Dickerson said in year 11, 20% would be knocked off, and Mrs. Gwynn said that is correct. There is that clause in the stipulations.

Commissioner Yarbrough said Mrs. Gwynn, without going into specifics, can you tell the Board how many domestic calls you have in a 12-month period that are seeking shelter. Mrs. Gwynn said I think it was 140 that came in 22-23, and of that 73%. I can't remember that exact number, but I'm sure there might be a more math inclined person. Commissioner Yarbrough said so 73% of that number were seeking shelter. Mrs. Gwynn said yes, and then others will come in the next day and say well we do want a shelter. They will come in for intake. Commissioner Yarbrough said okay.

Commissioner Rose said Mrs. Gwynn I feel that there is need for this shelter. We had one for a number of years, but this 15-year commitment scares me. A couple questions: When we did have that shelter a number of years ago, how did we have that as far as operating? Was that through a grant? Mrs. Gwynn said I wasn't here then. I've only been here as long as there was no shelter in operations. I can tell you that every shelter is supported by grants, supported, operated, and funded. Yes. Commissioner Rose said next question. I was looking at some of these options you had in here. A couple of things stood out to me. Why would we need 22 acres or why would we need 35 acres of land? Mrs. Gwynn said it was because that's the way the parcel is listed, and I think we've had that conversation about shrinking down the amount of acreage. So that is the conversation I'm going to probably have, possibly more than likely happening, with the seller. Commissioner Rose said none of this grant will fund any of the operating expenses, and Mrs. Gwynn said none. Commissioner Rose said like I said, I do support having a shelter. I'm having problems with the path that we're going down. Like I said, I know for a fact we had three shelters in the county at three different locations, and I'm just wondering how we operated that for all these years that we had it rather than getting into this now. I just wondered that.

Commissioner Jefferies said Mrs. Gwynn, if we buy a house or property that is already there, could we use this grant to renovate it? Mrs. Gwynn said we could have if I had been able to find that property before submission at this point in the grant application process. Commissioner Jefferies said we have had one on County Home Road and out on Highway 62, both were properties that already existed. I was just thinking there was a house that we could buy and renovate the property. Mrs. Gwynn said that is true. Some of those opportunities have come to me since I've been putting out that we were interested in applying for this funding. I will say that we're up against a deadline for the application. It's only been open for 22 days, and it closes this Friday. Caswell County, they are encouraged by the grant interest proposal that I put together in attachment 1A and 1B in your packet because this opportunity doesn't come around often at all

really or a three million dollar grant to build a non-congregant shelter in rural areas. I think that's the key.

Chairman Dickerson said it's a lot of information to be dumped at once having to make a decision tonight. Why were we not approached before now? Mrs. Gwynn said well it was mentioned in April that this great application was on the radar. So I included those minutes in the presentation. The reason why the packet was not included with the agenda package because we were waiting on the preliminary design to come from the architects. Chairman Dickerson said it's a lot to be dropped right at the last minute. I have one more question. Is there any procedures or any kind of strategy in place to prevent what seems to be a lot of times a revolving door of domestic abuse victims? In other words, is there any kind of strategy to get them out of that situation long term instead of being victimized over and over? Mr. Chairman, I too struggle with that. We have a secured grant funding for new interventions. We have implemented those, albeit during the pandemic. So some of them could not be implemented to fidelity, but we've got an extensive training on how to empower and providing self-sufficiency skills. But really it's ultimately they are the driver of their own bus, and they made that decision whether they wanted to return or not. If they're ready to leave, we're there for them every time. I know it's a revolving door. It can be frustrating for people looking in and for us as advocates when we see the same person come back and we see the same abuser abuse another person that fell into the same cycle of somebody else who we have been under their power and to break free. It is frustrating, but we exist because that ill on society exists. That revolving door, it's very real. We see it every day, throughout the day, and the calls we get at 1 am in the morning. We're trying everything we can to let them know that they are supported, and they are secure. But they have to make that decision themselves.

Commissioner Gwynn said let me ask you, when it's outside of the county, do we pay for that. Mrs. Aisha Gwynn said no. The other agencies that accept the callers that call for shelter bed, they get the money for housing that client.

Commissioner Yarbrough said have you ever had a circumstance where someone requested some type of protective shelter from domestic violence, and you couldn't meet that need in an adjoining county? Mrs. Gwynn said yes, and we keep calling. We've placed them as far as Southern Pines, Fayetteville, and recently we took someone to Randolph County, which is not really far. It's still in the Triad, but it's still further away than what they wanted. But yes. Commissioner Yarbrough said well let me rephrase that. Have you ever had a situation where you couldn't place them anywhere? Mrs. Gwynn said yes. So in that situation, we have to absorb the cost and put them in a hotel. Commissioner Yarbrough said but you were able to get them out of the situation that they were in so to speak. Mrs. Gwynn said yes. The emergency shelter at a hotel is not ideal. It's not autonomous, and it's not private regardless of which hotel you put them in. It's not as secure as we would like.

Commissioner Holt said on the picture, I'm not sure where this location is, but it says School Drive. Is this close to a school? Mrs. Gwynn said it's across the street from BY. kind of catty-corner on Highway 62. Commissioner Holt said is it any kind of legal thing with that being at a school? Mrs. Gwynn said the previous Shelter was right adjacent to that property. So if it was it would have been grandfathered in. Commissioner Holt said it would have been grandfathered in. Do you know County Manager? County Manager Miller said no. There are certain... Commissioner Holt said regulations about being close to a school. County Manager Miller said no. I'm not aware of any regulations around that. There are regulations around if you're receiving operational dollars for these kind of facilities. They have to be within so many miles of the school. They have to be within so many miles of Library Services. They have to be within so many miles of the grocery store or a convenience store so that the residents can get everything they need. Mrs. Gwynn said that is the only stipulation that it is close to Community Resources.

Commissioner Holt then asked Mr. Ferrell, do you know of anything where you're putting I guess a homeless shelter or domestic violence right across the street from a school. Attorney Ferrell said I'm not aware of any regulation about siting a facility in proximity to a school. Not to say they're not there. I haven't researched that issue.

Commissioner Rose said Mrs. Gwynn you did say that the first year it was \$370,000 and increase 2% each year. Mrs. Gwynn said yes.

Commissioner Yarbrough said you said this application is due by this Friday. Mrs. Gwynn said that's correct. Commissioner Yarbrough said okay. Just for the sake of this conversation. If the Board said go ahead. You get approved, what kind of time frame are you looking at far as the architect, and building the building before getting residents. Mrs. Gwynn said probably two to three fiscal years I think as we discussed. The funds have to be expended by 2030. So that'll be 29-30 fiscal year. I will say the decision wouldn't come back until December 2023 or early January 2024.

Commissioner Holt said at what point is this architect going to start charging, or are they now? County Manager Miller said that's a great question, and I'm glad you asked that question. So one of the things that I don't think we or Mrs. Gwynn's covered this yet. I think it was part of the conversation. So Commissioners as Mrs. Gwynn told you, this is not accepting the grant. It's approving her to move forward with the grant. Where we're at though is if we move forward with the grant, there is going to be charges that we're going to have to pay to consultants, to architects, and to engineers to do all the things that make up the grant. I don't have a good idea of what those charges are. Do you? Mrs. Gwynn said I can say that right now we can refer back to upfront costs. I don't have the exact figures in front of me. County Manager Miller said so we are at a point where if you approve this, you will have to start spending some money. Now if we get the grant and if you accept the grant, that money is reimbursable with the grant. Commissioner Holt said what if we don't? County Manager Miller said if you don't, you spent money, and that's

it. So I think that's important to know. Most of the time and with most shelters that I'm aware of, there are the operational costs that receive grant funding to cover those costs, and most of the time, there's little to no county match associated with that. But that's not a guarantee. So what I would say to you as Board members is if you approve this, hope that there's grant funding to support the operational costs, but also understand that that might fall on the Board's lap at some point in time. That's \$370,000, which equates to 2.15 cent of a tax increase for year one. So I'm just trying to provide you with all the information so you understand.

Commissioner Rose said I have a question and I will direct this to the County Manager due to the fact that Mrs. Gwynn said that she was not here when these other shelters were in operations. How did we do those shelters at that time? County Manager Miller said those shelters were funded with grant funds. The operational costs were made with grant funds, but here again grant funding is great when you have it. I think I would be doing the Board a disservice. I personally believe we can probably get grant funding to cover the operational costs, but I can't tell you that 100% and guarantee that. Mrs. Gwynn, have you spoken to any operational funders or grant funders to see what their thoughts are. Mrs. Gwynn said I have. I talked with Family Violence and Prevention Service Act, and they told me that they have a different scale for brick and mortar shelters than they do for prevention providers. So that would be where we fall. If we had a brick and mortar shelter, there would be more money that we get. So for example, in the overview we had \$47,500 from FVPSA Core. If you had a brick and mortar shelter under the new scale that they're going to implement in the next fiscal year, we will qualify for a minimum of, I think, \$120 because I would have less awards. I don't know if I'm saying that correctly. They're going to shrink the number of awardees to increase the amount that you get. So right now we have \$47,500, which is the base for non-operating a shelter. It used to be \$20,000. County Manager Miller said so one of the things that I can tell you is Mrs. Gwynn has done a tremendous job in bringing additional funding into the county since she's been a director. I feel fairly confident if there's money out there, she could go get it. However, those things are left up to the legislature. I mean who knows what they're going to apply to the budget. So I can tell you that we would do everything we can to get those operational dollars, but I can't promise you. This is a big decision. It's three million dollars. Mrs. Gwynn said I can assure you, one last thought, if there is any concern, that no more spending will happen unless this Board approves it. I'm not saying that spending has happened, but I'm just saying that no more charges will be incurred or no charges.

Commissioner Yarbrough said but this is for either one of you. You have no idea tonight what these expenses are that we will have to spend between now and December when you say yeah go ahead and apply as far as consultant or architects. Do you have any idea? Mrs. Gwynn said yes. Probably about \$2,500 for the consultant that is required by the North Carolina Housing Finance Agency. There's going to be a fee for the architect for the markup in your packet. I'm not sure about that fee because I'm just not sure. Commissioner McVey said your architect fee is going to be high. We are looking at building some stuff, and we are talking about \$6,000 because that would be extremely high. Looking at what you have here, it would probably be at least sixty.



What would it be? The young lady is shaking her head. Mrs. Aisha Gwynn said this is Robyn Heeks. Can she be recognized to answer that question possibly? Robyn Heeks said thank you. I'm Robyn Heeks of Heeks Collaborative. We worked really hard in the last three weeks to get the team together and to get this application. I wish that NCHFA gave you all a larger window in which to react, but Tise-Kiester Architects does these all the time. They're super-efficient. I have not gotten their fee proposal yet, but for other similar projects it was \$6,000 or less. That's because it's just the schematics. It won't be until NCHFA invites you all to receive the grant and you guys approve receiving the grant that you all would finalize a contract and negotiate those final fees with the architect and any other person who's really going to be doing work on this project. Once the application goes in on Friday, everything really goes on hold until you all make a decision as to whether or not you want to proceed with the project and receive the grant money. Commissioner McVey said I want to know how much money we going to have to put out before we receive it. Mrs. Gwynn said for the disbursement, it won't come until during construction. So \$1.5, that'll be reimbursed. 50%. I'm being transparent.

Commissioner Jefferies asked what are you asking for? Mrs. Gwynn said to just apply for it.

A **motion** was made by Commissioner Jefferies and seconded by Commissioner Gwynn to apply for the grant.

Chairman Dickerson said we have a motion and second on the floor. Is there any discussion?

Commissioner Yarbrough said I'm kind of like Commissioner Rose. I think it's a good thing to have a shelter. I really do. I've never had a family member that I know of being a victim of domestic violence, but I know that it's a real problem. But not knowing what and it might not have been five thousand dollars; not knowing that number and that 15-year clawback gives me a lot of heartburn. We could get this \$3 million to get the building, and eight years down the road saying well this just ain't worth it. It's costing us too much. We don't have any occupants.

Commissioner Gwynn said so to apply, is there a fee for that? Are we obligated in any way if you apply? Mrs. Gwynn said no.

Commissioner Holt said we'll be obligated to start paying the architect and all these other fees because they will not keep working for free. Mrs. Gwynn said their work is done.

Commissioner Yarbrough said one question. The young lady here (Robyn Heeks). The comment that you made about the six thousand dollars, what were you referring to? I couldn't exactly hear you. Ms. Heeks said so to prepare the application, NCHFA requires certain exhibits. One of those exhibits is a schematic of your design, and they don't expect to be final. They just want to get a sense that your team knows how to manage that budget. When we say we want to build 10 to 15 units that we have a good handle on what that requires spatially and financially. So I think one of your attachments is that design that Tise-Kiester prepared. Their work is done at this point. It's not approved by Aisha or you all, but it is enough to give NCHFA a flavor of what this project might look like. So they have done that, and they do it all the time. They're very

reasonable and efficient with their time. So again I don't have the invoice from them or the proposal from them, but in my experience, I don't expect them to charge more than six thousand for what they have already done. Then you guys have a contract with me for just this application fee. Period. I think it is a total price of \$7,500. \$2,500 to get started and \$5,000 at the time that we submit the application. That all comes out of the final fee that is a part of the schematic budget plan that she has. So it's essentially a piece of the larger development consultant fee.

County Manager Miller said so if I'm understanding you correctly that \$6,000 plus \$7,500. So \$13,500 is the up-front cost. Ms. Heeks said yes. When Aisha and I first met I think I said do you guys have the ability to pay \$20,000 if that's what it takes because we were thinking about surveys, appraisers, and would we need additional consultation from other professionals. At this point we don't need those things. We feel comfortable with the material that we have in the application. So I think you guys are good with the numbers that we've already shared with you and no additional invoices are expected.

Commissioner Holt said okay.

Commissioner McVey said so this drawing you have in this packet, is that what you want to see? Ms. Heeks said that's a preliminary, and that's based on one round of feedback because that is what we have had time for. Sunday, I think they responded to our comments and gave us another draft. There's still a lot more work to be done on it, and that's an okay part of the process. They, NCHFA, understands that these are very preliminary.

Commissioner Rose said you said eight employees it would take to run this facility. Mrs. Gwynn said I think I said about six to eight or six. Commissioner Rose said okay. So the facility, it should fall under state guidelines for regulations. Mrs. Gwynn said it should. Commissioner Rose said okay. What happens if we don't have enough, you have more paper on that shelter than you have employees able to operate it. Would we have to close it? Mrs. Gwynn said that is an excellent question, and I can find that out for you. But I can tell you that the plan is to have a team, like the live-in staff and the caseworker staff; it's not to have like one or two rotating. It's supposed to be a team. That's why I say six to eight. Commissioner Rose said right. Now I mean that was just one question. I know we're playing hard right now with you. We just want to be aware. That's just one of the questions I had. Is it State regulated, and for some reason if we didn't have adequate staffing that facility based on who you had in it, what would happen to the facility? Would we have to close it? Mrs. Gwynn said it may. I think I have heard of other shelters having to close because of staffing issues for a period of time, and then they reopen. The funders understand that, and they expect that. They have policies in their contracts for that. That I can say. Commissioner Rose said what affects would that have? Mrs. Gwynn said this grant, I don't know. That's operating, and this is the construction. So I think there might be some type of stipulation where it's like they understand, not necessarily they understand, but they can give a little bit of leeway if it's closed for let's say two weeks because there was no staffing and we couldn't have any new admissions.

Commissioner Holt said I'm sorry. I need to go back. Is there a bill or have we spent any money to this architect now, whether we say no tonight? Are we going to get a bill for this? Mrs. Gwynn said we are going to get a bill or invoice from them. Commissioner Holt said so who approved that. Mrs. Gwynn said in our grant funding, we had that amount. Not from NCHFA.

Commissioner Holt said what if you don't get the grant. Mrs. Gwynn said no, no, no. This is from a separate grant. We have six grants.

Commissioner Yarbrough said so these drawings from Tise-Kiester, I guess I'm saying that right. Mrs. Gwynn said yes. Commissioner Yarbrough said are these the only required drawings as far as the application goes? Or will there have to be something more detailed? Mrs. Gwynn said no, that is sufficient. Commissioner Yarbrough said so the architect won't have to do anything else? Mrs. Gwynn said no. Commissioner Yarbrough said for the application only if it gets approved. Mrs. Gwynn said yes.

Commissioner Holt said would there have been another \$7,500? Commissioner Yarbrough said I think that is what it cost to do the drawing. Commissioner Holt said \$6,000. Would there be another \$7,500 on top of that? County Manager Miller said so the \$7,500 is for the consultant and \$6,000 is for the architect. Both of which are required by the grant. So the total will be \$13,500. Commissioner Holt said that we have spent now, or that we will be spending? Mrs. Gwynn said we have not received an invoice from Tise-Kiester. Commissioner Holt said so how much is it that we owe right now if we said no. Mrs. Gwynn said I actually do not know. It should be no more than six thousand dollars. Commissioner Holt said if it's a yes, it'll be \$13,000. Mrs. Gwynn said I'm sorry, can you repeat that. Commissioner Holt said if we say yes, it will be \$13,000. Mrs. Gwynn said I imagine it would be. That way we could finish out the application.

Commissioner Yarbrough said the consultants, what are we paying for there? The consultant fees what are we paying for? County Manager Miller said the consultant is required by the grant to make sure the grant applications are complete, they are the right information that the granting agency wants is in there, that it's accurate, and to make sure the cost estimates are accurate. You know a lot of jurisdictions just don't have a capacity or people to write grants and go through this process correctly. So the consultant is somebody to help guide through the grant process.

Commissioner Yarbrough said it's required? County Manager Miller said it is required, Commissioner Yarbrough said even though Aisha is fully capable of doing it. County Manager Miller said yes. It is required, and here again if you get the grant and you accept the grant, it's refundable or reimbursable. Commissioner Yarbrough said that \$13,500, the Board approved for her to move ahead then we are approved that \$13,500 will come or can come back out of that. County Manager Miller said it can if you accept the \$3 million. Commissioner Yarbrough said true. If we don't accept it, it's just money gone. County Manager Miller said \$13,500.

Commissioner Holt said you all are just putting the situation and voting on it tonight.

Commissioner Rose said one last question. Is this in this package, this acreage that you're looking at? Would that have to be equal? Is that included in your application? Mrs. Gwynn said yes. Commissioner Rose said okay, but you said you all will be looking at going back and getting... Like I said that's a big sticking point for me. It's the 22 acres and the 35 acres. It's a whole lot of land. Mrs. Gwynn said it is. Commissioner rose said did you get it pulled off the tax books because once you get it off the tax books, I mean for that facility what I'm looking at that's a whole lot of land.

Chairman Dickerson said we all have a lot of questions that have been answered here, and I'm sure we could keep on asking them. At some time, we must call for the question. We have a motion and a second. My heart goes out to the victims of the domestic violence. It's a real, bad situation. The costs associated with this is high, and it's giving us all a lot to think about. You got a 15-year obligation for the project. \$300 some thousand dollars or almost 400,000, but at some point we're going to have to call for the vote. Is the Board ready to vote on this?

A **motion** was made by Commissioner Jefferies and seconded by Commissioner Gwynn and **failed 2 -5** to apply for the grant. (Ayes: Commissioners Jefferies and Gwynn. Nays: Commissioners Holt, Rose, Yarbrough, McVey and Dickerson)

#### **ADDITIONAL LAND USE REGULATIONS:**

County Manager Miller said Commissioners, you'll see in your agenda pack the additional land use regulation examples that Matthew Hoagland, the Planning Director, has provided for you. He and I spoke several weeks ago, and I asked Matthew to come up with some potential billboard regulations or examples of what other communities did to regulate billboards in their communities with the casino coming. We're already seeing increased traffic on Highway 86. With the increased traffic, it's very likely that we're going to have many applications for billboards. We wanted to get these in front of you to have you start thinking about these things. We don't expect you to make any kind of decisions on this tonight. This is purely for discussion. I'm happy to answer any questions you may have about the information that's been provided, but we can certainly provide you with this information and bring it back at another time. If you want to drill down, have a special work session, or whatever the pleasure of the Board is, but we wanted to bring this information to you and provide it to you so you can start thinking about it. So if you were inclined to act on something like this, you could do so.

Chairman Dickerson asked if there were any questions.

Commissioner Yarbrough said haven't the Town said they can't have billboards inside the Town limits. County Manager Miller said the Town has. From my understanding, what the Town did is they regulated billboards to where only if you have a business operating in the town limits can you put up a billboard. So Caesar's Casino could not put up a billboard inside Yanceyville's town limits because they don't have a business operating there. I think there's some other smaller regulations that went along with that, but that's my understanding.

Chairman Dickerson said so for all intents and purposes here, what we're really talking about here is trying to avoid having a county like you're on South of the Boarder. County Manager Miller said that's correct. That's exactly what it is. I know NCDOT and there's a lot of other agencies that kind of regulate billboards as well, but I think the county with its lawmaking powers and land use regulations, you get direct some of that. I just think it's better for us to get it in front of you now and have you start thinking about it now than eight months down the road when we already had 30 applications for billboards up and down 86. Chairman Dickerson said so what are you recommending? County Manager Miller said we can bring that back to you. We can bring this back to a future agenda. We can take your recommendations; we can make recommendations to you from other jurisdictions that have seen similar instances. We're happy to do whatever the Board wants us to do. Say if you want us to come up with a proposal, then we're happy to do so. Chairman Dickerson asked what's the pleasure of the Board?

Commissioner McVey said my suggestion is let them come up with a proposal and bring it back to us. See what happens.

Chairman Dickerson asked if everybody was in agreement with that? Then Chairman Dickerson asked County Manager Miller can you come up with something and bring it back to us? County Manager Miller said yes sir.

#### **ACTION ITEMS:**

##### **CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY:**

County Manager Miller said Commissioners, every year we have... every two years excuse me Family Services has to have certain policies in place and approved by the Board. This is one of the policies that the Board needs to approve for us to be able to receive the grant funding that currently funds Family Services. So that's the reason this is in front of you in a nutshell. This is not the only policy that will be required. There'll be additional policies to come back to you at the next meeting surrounding Family Services and their funding requirements. So we have to have the conflict of interest approved by the Board and in place for us to continue to receive the grant funding.

A **motion** was made by Commissioner Yarbrough and seconded by Commissioner Rose and **carried unanimously** to approve the policy. (Ayes: Commissioners McVey, Jefferies, Yarbrough, Gwynn, Rose, Holt and Dickerson)

##### **CONTRACT FOR LEGAL SERVICES FOR GEORGE P. DANIEL LAW FIRM:**

Chairman Dickerson said the contract for legal services for George P. Daniel Law Firm is to collect delinquent taxes for the county. That contract you have a copy of that. It's been passed out, and it expired on June 30<sup>th</sup> last month. I want to talk about not renewing that contract with the Daniel Law Firm; instead renewing that contract with the Johnston Law Firm. Russell Johnston. Are there any comments or discussion?

Commissioner Jefferies said I didn't quite hear what you said. Chairman Dickerson said Mr. Jefferies the next time item up is the discussion of the contract for the collection of delinquent taxes for Caswell County. The contract expired June 30<sup>th</sup>. What I want to do is I'm making a motion that we do not renew that contract with the Daniel Law Firm instead award that contract to Russell Johnston of the Johnston Law Firm. Commissioner Holt said I will second that.

Chairman Dickerson said is there any other questions or discussion?

Commissioner McVey said Mr. Chairman do we know what Mr. Johnston is going to be charging us? Chairman Dickerson said the same terms as the contractor before. Commissioner McVey said the same as Daniels, and Chairman Dickerson said the same. Commissioner McVey said thank you, and Chairman Dickerson said yes sir.

Commissioner Yarbrough said Mr. Miller, this contract we have before us has a five-year term. Are they all set up like that? County Manager Miller said yes.

Chairman Dickerson said well if there are no other questions, we have a motion and a second. We will have roll call voting. We will start out with Commissioner Holt. Commissioner Holt said which way is it worded so I'll understand how I'm voting. Chairman Dickerson said a yes vote on this proposal is to not renew the contract with the Daniel Law Firm and to award the contract to Russell Johnston of the Johnston Law Firm. Commissioner Holt voted yes.

Commissioner Rose said one more question please. Has Mr. Johnston submitted anything stating his approval. Chairman Dickerson said yes he has. Several Commissioners have talked with him, myself included. Commissioner Rose said because I don't want to give it to him, and he says no, I'm not going to do that. Chairman Dickerson said no sir, I talked with him right before I walked in here to make sure that was still on. Commissioner Rose said I mean I'd just like to see something. I'd just like to see something or his contract. Chairman Dickerson said he has talked to several of us today.

The voting continues and Commissioner McVey said I would love to see a contract, but I'll go ahead and say aye.

A **motion** was made by Commissioner Dickerson and seconded by Commissioner Holt and **carried 6 -1** to not renew the contract with the Daniel Law Firm and instead award that contract to Russell Johnston of the Johnston Law Firm. (Ayes: Commissioners Holt, Yarbrough, Jefferies, McVey, Gwynn, and Dickerson. Nays: Commissioner Rose)

#### **CONTRACT FOR LEGAL SERVICES FOR BRIAN FERRELL:**

County Manager Miller said Commissioners, we have the County Attorney on Zoom with us tonight. This is the contract for legal services. Basically the payments have not changed from last year to this year. They've stayed flat. I think this contract has served as well over the last year. I think it saved us quite a bit of money over the last year. So I having said that, I'll turn it over to Brian Ferrell, and he can take it from there.

County Attorney Ferrell said Mr. Chairman and members of the Board, we offer our legal services to you on the same terms and conditions substantially as last year with the \$6,500 flat fee for services enumerated in the agreement and with obviously carve outs for services that we don't provide for that flat fee. It'll be the same as we've done last year, and of course the Board is able to terminate the agreement at any time with notice for me even though the term does run for a year. You're not obligated for a full year. If the relationship's not working out either of us can terminate at any time. So I'm happy to answer any questions you may have about how the agreement works or any other questions.

Commissioner Holt said it's my understanding, it's just what I've heard, that they were supposed to be present to meetings before COVID came along, and something got changed moving forward. Attorney Ferrell said right. Yes, for a long time none of us had remote participation. We were always there, and during COVID I believe the county realized that it could not pay mileage for me to travel up there. Some meetings I'm active, and some meetings I'm not. So it avoids a cost by having my remote participation, and that really came about when the technology came online for the Zoom during COVID. Commissioner Holt said I know when you say mileage, you've since moved to the beach. It's my understanding. Attorney Ferrell said yes. So I work remotely from Eastern North Carolina in Carteret County most of the time. I'm back in Durham quite a bit. I was there last week. When I do have mileage, that's charged for plan trips, it's from my office in Durham not from here. So for instance when I came up for the pre-hearing conference and when I'll drive to Raleigh for the hearings in the property tax matter we considered, it's all for my office in Durham. So no net change there from the years and years I've been providing the services. And of course should the county or the Commissioners say they'd like me to attend a meeting or it makes sense for me to attend a meeting, I'm perfectly willing to do that.

Commissioner Yarbrough said Mr. Ferrell how many years has the law firm you represent been working for Caswell? Attorney Ferrell said that's a good question. In total it's coming up on eight or nine years. I'd have to go back and look.

Chairman Dickerson said Mr. Ferrell is it standard practice for attorneys not to be present in their jurisdiction where they are County Attorney? Attorney Ferrell said I think it varies. I think it varies. I think most employee attorneys... So there's a couple of models in North Carolina for County/Town attorneys. Smaller jurisdictions often have contracted legal services arrangements like I do, and their attorney may or may not be present in the jurisdiction. For instance, there's a firm in Chapel Hill that I do a quite a bit of work with, and I think they represent maybe 10 or 11 towns across North Carolina. They travel for that. So I don't think that's uncommon in towns with smaller legal budgets or legal departments if you will. I would say if you had an in-house legal like employee, an attorney that was an employee, that was on site every day that it would be more typical in my experience to have that employee reside within the county. Then Chairman Dickerson said Mr. Ferrell is there any legal prohibitions that will stop you from being both County Attorney and the County Attorney that handles foreclosures? Attorney Ferrell said

can you say that one more time? I missed that last part. Chairman Dickerson said is there any legal prohibition that would stop you from having both roles as the county attorney to the Board and the attorney that takes up the issues with tax collection? Attorney Ferrell said oh. Would there be a prohibition on that? I don't know that there'd be any conflict in that. It's never or I've never done that since I've provided legal services to the county. That work was always provided by another firm. That does require a sort of a paralegal heavy practice, and I don't know that we currently have the staffing to take that on in our paralegal section. But there's nothing that prevents it. I've just never done it. Never been asked to do it. Chairman Dickerson said that was what I was asking. It'll be pretty obvious why I'm asking that question here in a minute. Are there any other Commissioners who would like to comment?

Commissioner Yarbrough said nothing against your firm Mr. Ferrell or nothing against you personally, but I'm kind of like the folks with the small businesses that want you to shop local. I'm kind of that way with my attorney. I like my attorney to be local. Like that's nothing against you. So I would like for the Board to consider someone locally for lack of a better term. And I know we just gave the man one job a few minutes ago. I really think Russell Johnston will do us a good job as County Attorney. He's a county native. He knows everyone on the Board I'm sure, and he's willing to do it. Chairman Dickerson said I've spoken with him as well.

Commissioner McVey said at what cost? Chairman Dickerson said same terms as our current contract. Exact same thing. Commissioner Rose said Mr. Chairman, what did you say. Chairman Dickerson said same terms as what Mr. Ferrell had. No changes.

Attorney Ferrell said I like Russell very much and think he's very competent as well. He is local. Commissioner Yarbrough said he made the same comment about you. He Spoke very highly of you.

A **motion** was made by Commissioner Dickerson and seconded by Commissioner Yarbrough and **carried 6-1** to not renew the contract for being the County Attorney with Brian Ferrell and award the contract to be County Attorney to Russell Johnston of Johnston Law Firm. (Ayes: Commissioners Jefferies, Gwynn, Yarbrough, Rose, Holt and Dickerson. Nays: Commissioner McVey)

County Attorney Brian Ferrell said Mr. Chairman thank you for that, and before we move on, I'd just like to say I appreciate the opportunity to serve the county for all these years. I'm happy to work out a transition plan, if it's useful with the manager. There are a number of active cases that Mr. Johnston will need to take over quite quickly. So I'm happy to work with the manager and Russell on that transition plan if it pleases the Board. Chairman Dickerson said thank you, sir. We are very gracious and we appreciate that.

## **BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT REQUEST:**

County Manager Miller said Commissioners, on tonight's agenda you have two requests from the Board of Adjustments. The first request is for alternates. I think the board is requesting five



alternates to be appointed. Obviously, I don't think we have five applications for the Board of Adjustments. If the Board approves that, we'll advertise for those alternate positions and bring those back to you at another time. I have spoken with the Planning Director about the alternates, and he believes that the alternates would be very helpful in certainly things with the Board of Adjustments.

Commissioner Yarbrough said Mr. Chairman, I believe, if I'm correct, it's a five-member board, and they have to have at least four members present. County Manager Miller said that is correct. Commissioner Yarbrough said they can't operate with three. When I served on it we had at least one occasion 40 of us attended; we didn't have to meet. So well...Chairman Dickerson said go ahead Mr. Yarbrough. No, I was going to say we would be posting to asking folks to volunteer, but the Board got to approve it first.

County Manager Miller said right. So, this is a two-part ask. So the second part is the Board of Adjustments has requested \$20 per person per meeting as payment to the board to reimburse them for their expenses.

Chairman Dickerson said are there any questions from the Board?

A **motion** was made by Commissioner Yarbrough to find alternates for the Board of Adjustments however many we need, but only up to five.

Chairman Dickerson asked wasn't it a two-part request, and Commissioner Yarbrough said it is a one-part motion.

A **motion** was made by Commissioner Yarbrough and seconded by Commissioner Rose and **carried unanimously** to find alternates for the Board of Adjustments however many we need, but only up to five. (Ayes: Commissioners Holt, Rose, Yarbrough, Jefferies, McVey, Gwynn, and Dickerson)

County Manager Miller said Mr. Chairman, we had the second part. Chairman Dickerson said I assume by it not being brought up that's the decision they wanted. County Manager Miller said if that is what the Board meant, that's what the Board will do. Chairman Dickerson said is that what you meant Mr. Yarbrough? I was not going to comment at all, but if the Board wants to discuss the other, that's alright. Chairman Dickerson said ok I interpreted it one way, but what's the pleasure of the Board. What do you all want to do. Chairman Dickerson said I interpreted his motion to mean that he didn't want to take the second part. Mr. Yarbrough's motion was only to approve the alternates. Now the other issue that Mr. Miller brought up is paying the board is in consideration. What is the comments of the Board?

Commissioner McVey said Mr. Miller, didn't this come up before the Board last year? County Manager Miller said it had. It came up last year and the Board took no action. Chairman Dickerson said refresh my memory of this. We talked about this one time before and one of the sticking points was when we started paying this board a stipend, and then the others get a

stipend. You gave us a figure of what that could cost. County Manager Miller said yes and that costs is about fifty thousand. Forty-five to fifty thousand dollars. Then Chairman Dickerson asked if there were any more questions from the Board. What is the pleasure of the Board? Commissioner McVey said that is what it would cost today if we implemented this? County Manager Miller said yes. Then County Manager Miller said no, no, no. Not for just the Board of Adjustments, but for all boards and committees within the county.

Then Elin Claggett spoke up from the public. It was about \$500 from last year. Twenty dollars per person is what the board was paid. Compared to other boards getting... some individuals get like a hundred dollars on ABC per meeting, or forty dollars or sixty dollars.

Chairman Dickerson said if there is no motion. Then he said Mr. Claggett, would you like to be recognized. John Claggett said if I may. Since this Board was appointed, it would have had they been paid twenty dollars per member per meeting, the grand total the taxpayers would have had to pay is about one month's commissioners stipend so far because they meet on an as needed basis. The previous Board of Adjustment was paid. That's all I had. Thank you. Chairman Dickerson said thank you, sir.

Commissioner McVey said when he is saying previous board, what board is he talking about? County Manager Miller said the Planning Board. Mr. Claggett said you guys were the Board of Adjustment. Commissioner McVey said how long has that been? Mr. Claggett said I can't hardly hear you. Commissioner McVey said I don't think anybody else is having trouble hearing me. You shouldn't be making comments. Chairman Dickerson said let's break that up. Do we have any motion from the Board to entertain this idea? All right hearing no motion from the floor, the item is dead. We're moving on.

#### **BOARD AND COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS:**

County Manager Miller said Commissioners you have a few committees that you need to make appointments to tonight. We'll just go down the list, if that pleases the Board.

**Board of Health:** There is 1 vacancy on the board.

A **motion** was made by Commissioner Yarbrough and seconded by Commissioner Rose and **carried unanimously to appoint Amanda Everett to the Board of Health.** (Ayes: Commissioners Holt, Gwynn, Jefferies, McVey, Rose, Yarbrough, and Dickerson)

**Juvenile Crime Prevention Council:** There are 2 current members who will term off the Board as of 6/30/2023 and 1 vacancy. They are as follows: Brenda Day and Aisha Gwynn.

A **motion** was made by Commissioner Rose and seconded by Commissioner Holt and **carried unanimously to appoint Aisha Gwynn and Brenda Day to the Juvenile Crime Prevention Council.** (Ayes: Commissioners Holt, Jefferies, McVey, Rose, Gwynn, Yarbrough, and Dickerson)

**Tourism Development Authority:** There are 2 current members who will term off the Board as of 6/30/2023. They are as follows: Karen Oestreicher and Imtiaz Ahmed.

A **motion** was made by Commissioner McVey and seconded by Commissioner Gwynn and **carried unanimously to appoint Angela Upchurch and Imtiaz Ahmed to the Tourism Development Authority.** (Ayes: Commissioners Holt, Jefferies, McVey, Rose, Gwynn, Yarbrough, and Dickerson)

The County Manager said Commissioners, on the back page I'll just bring this to your attention. There's a whole page of vacancies we have on boards and committees that we have no application. Commissioner Yarbrough said for these, do you take applications at any time? The clerk said I will and I will bring the names to the Board when I get applications.

Chairman Dickerson said Mr. Ferrell looking at these boards, just real briefly. I want to touch on something. Weren't we talking about at one time some of these boards being dissolved because they don't meet. County Manager Miller said we were. I haven't gotten that list back. I was waiting to hear back from the chair persons of each individual board. I've not done that. I've not heard back from all those, but that's something that's still on our radar.

Commissioner Gwynn said I think Mr. Rose hadn't reported back on his appointment on the PTRC Board. Commissioner Rose said Mr. Chairman, Mrs. Gwynn is going to take the PTRC committee, and I'm going to look at taking the Board of Health Committee from her. But I probably will consult or have Mr. Miller consult with our attorney to make sure there's not a conflict or interested due to the fact that my daughter works at the Health Department. If there is a conflict, I will try to work around it. Commissioner Gwynn said since I was going to the meeting and I would be there, I may as well take it. Chairman Dickerson said does everybody on the Board agree? Does anyone oppose to that? Then Chairman Dickerson said do we need a motion to do that? County Manager Miller said we need a consensus from the Board. Chairman Dickerson said okay, we have a consensus of the Board so you all are fine.

#### **VOTING DELEGATE FOR NCACC CONFERENCE:**

County Manager Miller said Mr. Chairman, the last thing that we have on tonight is a voting delegate for the NCACC conference. Right now that conference is August 24th to the 26<sup>th</sup>. We know right now two Commissioners will be attending, and that's Commissioner Jefferies and Commissioner Gwynn. So the Board can appoint one of those as a voting delegate for that conference. you have a nomination in this Wednesday here got emotion and a second from the board to uh delegate to the industry HCC conference through roll call voting thank you.

A **motion** was made by Commissioner Holt and seconded by Commissioner Yarbrough and **carried unanimously** to appoint Ethel Gwynn as the NCACC Voting Delegate. (Ayes: Commissioners Jefferies, McVey, Gwynn, Holt, Rose, Yarbrough, and Dickerson)

#### **COUNTY MANAGER'S UPDATES:**

County Manager Miller said Commissioners, I just have a couple of updates for the Board. The first update for the Board is that I did attend the CRL Conference. The County Reinsurance Limited Conference. It was a great conference and had a lot of good information that I think would benefit the county in years to come as it relates to reinsurance. So I'm happy to be back from that trip. It was a long trip, and I'm glad to be back. I'm happy to answer any questions about any updates the Board wants. I will tell you that the second round of the GREAT Grant occurred. It was doubtful whether Caswell would receive any funding from the second round of the GREAT Grant, but I'm happy to announce that Spectrum did receive an additional, I believe it's 606 addresses from the second round of the GREAT Grant. So that's 606 more addresses that'll be covered in Caswell along with the addresses they're covering now and with what Zitel is covering. Keep in mind, we still have CAB and the Last Mile, those two programs. So I'm happy to answer any other questions you may have about it.

Chairman Dickerson asked if there were any questions from the Board?

Commissioner Yarbrough said Spectrum, do you have any status updates on when they plan to wind up the first phase? County Manager Miller said you know, the last estimate I heard was a month and a half that they would be finished with RDOF. That's probably been two weeks ago. I do have a meeting with Spectrum for I believe it's a 20th. Commissioner Yarbrough said because I know they were looking at the map for RDOF having most of the leg work done. Some of the contractors had a mile and a tenth back in the winter. That's been it. I mean you can't find a Spectrum vehicle anywhere. It's like they fell off the face of the Earth. County Manager Miller said well I have that meeting scheduled, and I'm sorry I misspoke. It's the 26th that I'm meeting with Spectrum to get an update. Commissioner Yarbrough said okay next. I know in years past and I don't know if it's been in recent years or not, but the district engineer from DOT would always come before the Board of Commissioners to give kind of an update of what the DOT plans to do in the upcoming year. Does that still occur? County Manager Miller said yes. It's not been too terribly long ago and gave an update to the Board. It's probably been a year or a little over a year. Commissioner Yarbrough said it hasn't been since I was on the Board. County Manager Miller said I'll certainly reach out to DOT, and see if they're interested. I'm sure they will be in coming back and talking to us. Commissioner Yarbrough said the last thing from me. How are things going with the CPA firm, finance, and audits? How are we progressing? County Manager Miller said so the audit is in the Auditor's hands. They're doing their work now. There may be some additional documentation that they'll request from us throughout the process, but the information is available. Commissioner Yarbrough said this is fiscal 2021? County Manager Miller said 2021. And from what I understand the plan that we have, I don't know 100% if we're

going to be able to do, but the plan we have right now is to do 22 and 23 concurrent. So we hope we'll be able to do those at the same time. The Auditors will be able to do both those audits at the same time, and when we finish that we will be completely caught up. Commissioner Yarbrough said thank you.

Chairman Dickerson asked how much has that cost the county? County Manager Miller said I don't have a total on this right now. I'm happy to get that and bring it back to you.

### **COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:**

**Commissioner Rose:** Mr. Chairman, I would like to extend my condolences to the former Commissioner Gordon Satterfield and his family on his passing. Mr. Satterfield was a Commissioner here I believe for about 16 years. I'd just like to pass it on to the family.

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS:**

- August 7, 2023 Commissioners Meeting 6:30 pm at the Historic Courthouse
- August 17, 2023 at 6 pm Joint Town Meeting at the Milton Town Hall inside the Thomas Day Museum.
- August 21, 2023 Commissioners Meeting including the Board of Education Meeting at 6:00 pm at the Gunn Memorial Library
- August 24-26, 2023 NCACC Annual Conference

### **CLOSED SESSION:**

A **motion** was made at 8:35 pm by Commissioner Yarbrough and seconded by Commissioner McVey and **carried unanimously** to consider the qualifications, competence, performance, character, fitness, conditions of appointment, or conditions of initial employment of an individual public officer or employee or prospective public officer or employee. NCGS 143-318.11(a)(6). (Ayes: Commissioners Holt, Gwynn, Jefferies, McVey, Rose, Yarbrough, and Dickerson)

A **motion** was made by Commissioner Yarbrough, seconded by Commissioner Rose and **carried unanimously** to return to open session at 9:53 pm. (Ayes: Commissioners Holt, Gwynn, Jefferies, McVey, Rose, Yarbrough, and Dickerson)

A **motion** was made by Commissioner Holt to buy out the County Manager's Contract, but **failed due to the lack of a second.**

### **ADJOURNMENT:**

JULY 17, 2023

A **motion** was made at 9:58 pm by Commissioner Yarbrough and seconded by Commissioner McVey and **carried unanimously** to adjourn the meeting. (Ayes: Commissioners Holt, Gwynn, Jefferies, McVey, Rose, Yarbrough, and Dickerson)

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Carla R. Smith  
Clerk to the Board

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John Dickerson  
Chairman



# ZITEL PARTNERSHIPS

WE PRIDE OURSELVES ON BEING A REGIONAL COMPANY IN THE COMMONWEALTH, WHOSE FOCUS IS ON RURAL BROADBAND, AND LOOK FORWARD TO EXPANDING INTO THE GREAT STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA. AS A LOCALLY OWNED PROVIDER, WE ARE ABLE TO WORK WITH COUNTIES AS A FULL PARTNER. WE CAN DO THINGS OUR COMPETITORS CANNOT, LIKE OFFERING DARK FIBER USAGE, UTILIZING VOLUNTEER F.D. AND EMS FACILITIES AS POPS (POINT OF PRESENCE) IN EXCHANGE FOR A LIFETIME OF FREE INTERNET SERVICE.

WE FOCUS ON BRINGING SERVICE TO RURAL AREAS, BASICALLY WE BUILD FIBER WHERE OTHER COMPANIES WON'T.

# ZITEL'S KEYS TO SUCCESS

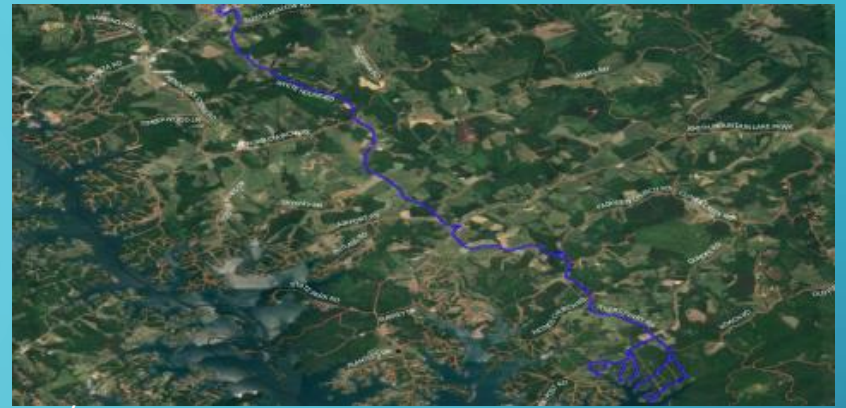


- We keep our overhead low
  - We are not top heavy in management, like larger corporations and legacy Telephone Companies.
  - We own our own outside plant construction company.
- We do things differently than our competitors
  - We design our processes and customer relations on the way we would want to be treated by our own providers.
  - We can be flexible to our customers and to our local government partners.
- We have over 20 years of IT and Network Security experience

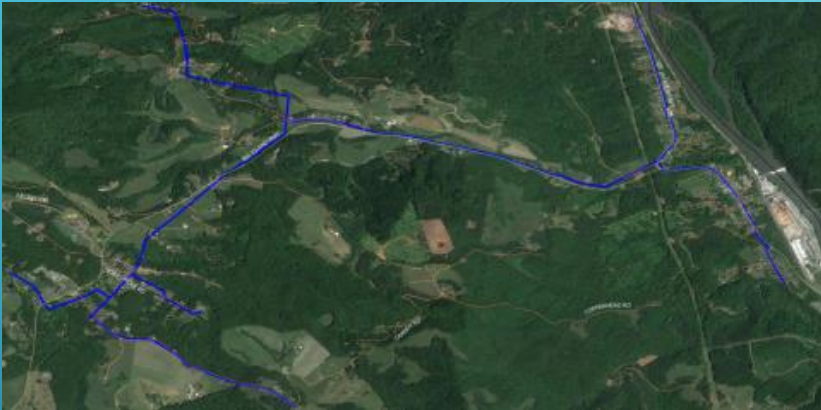




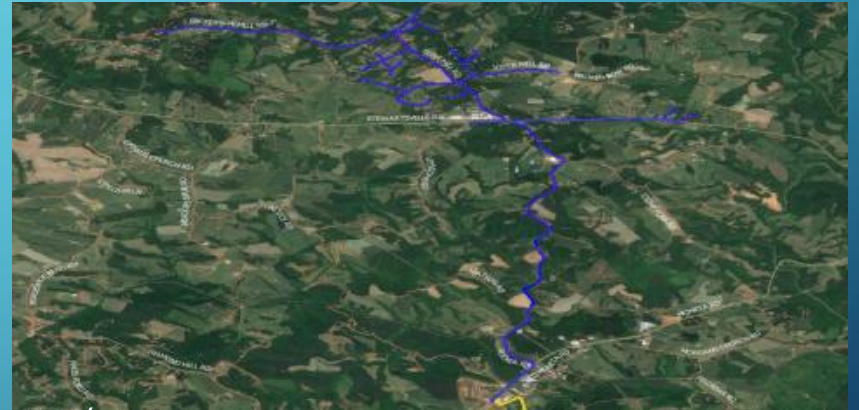
Moneta East/Diamond Hill



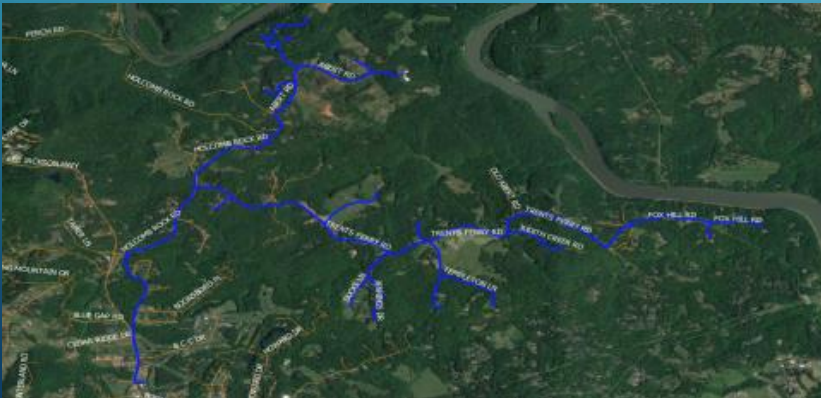
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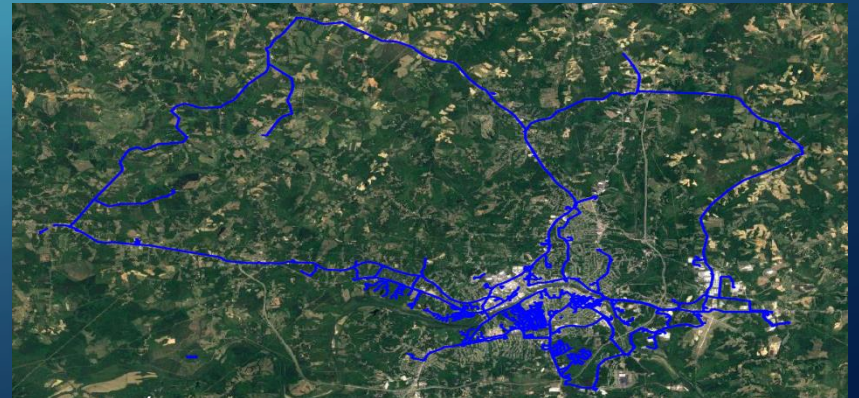
Big Island



Moneta North/Staunton River



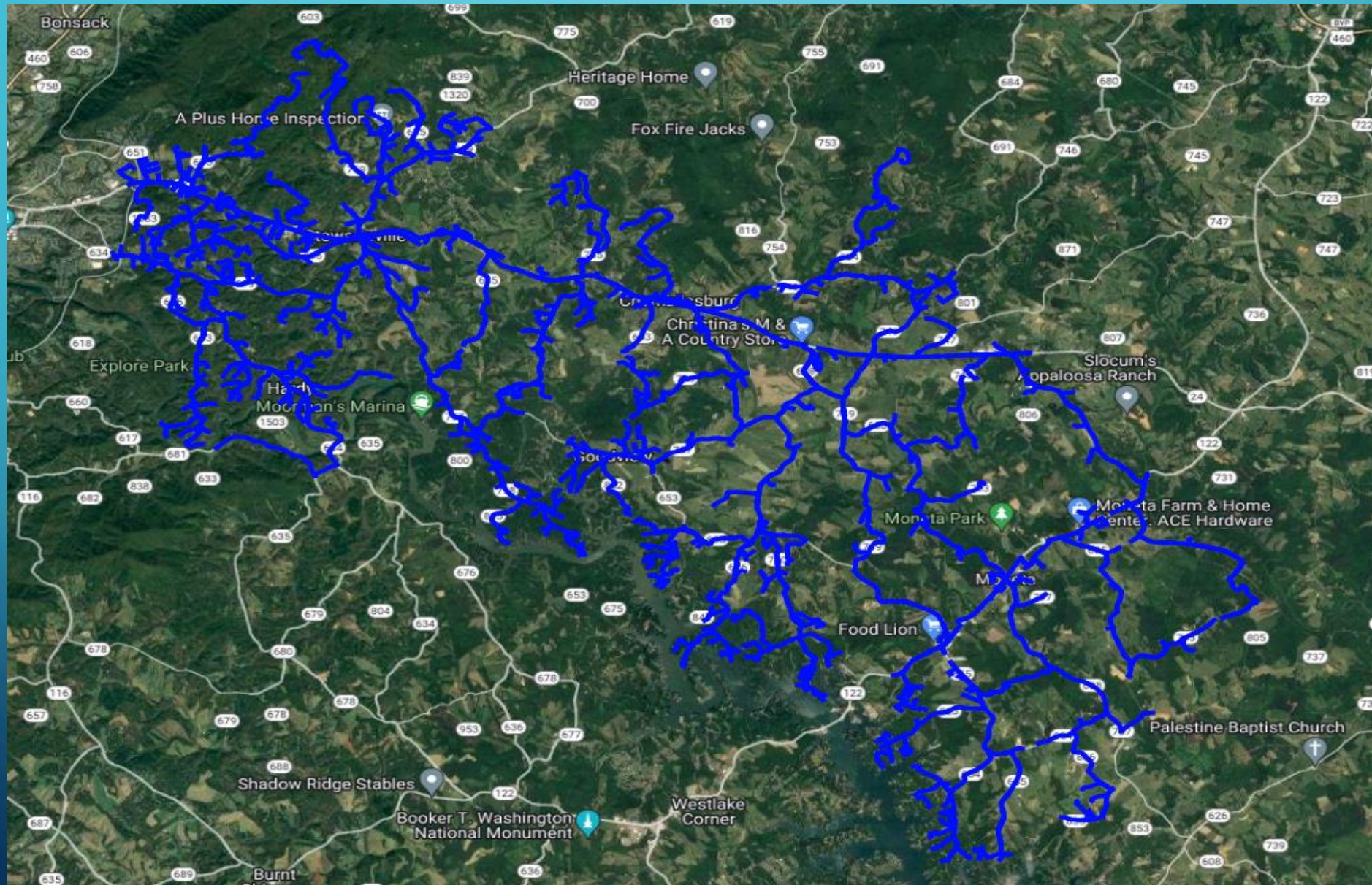
Boonsboro



City of Danville/Municipality Build



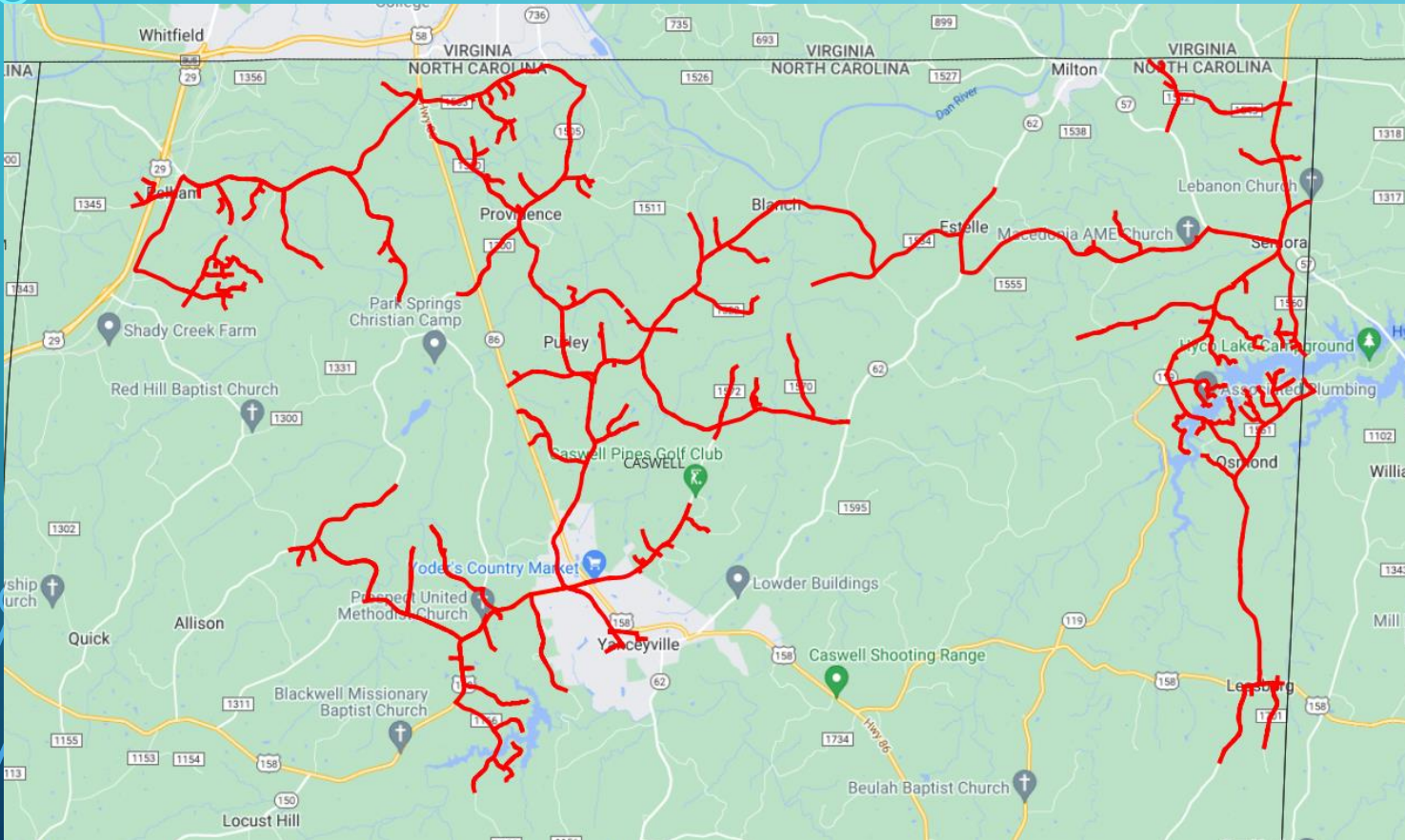
# VATI 2022 Build in Bedford County







# GREAT GRANTS CASWELL COUNTY BUILD



1906 ELIGIBLE ADDRESS PASSINGS

3812 TOTAL ADDRESS PASSINGS

144.14 MILES OF FIBER

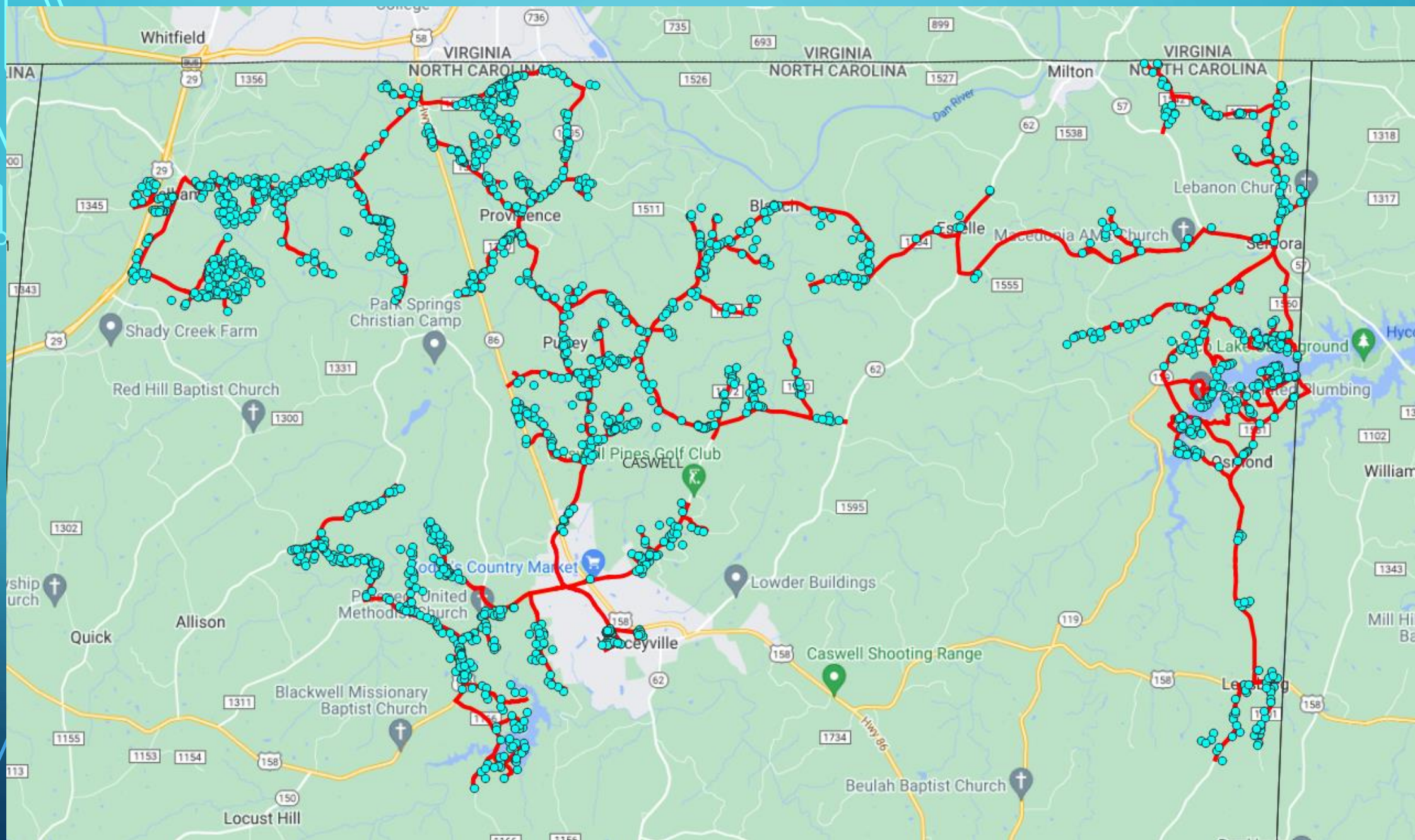
TOTAL PROJECT COST - \$6,668,331.60

NCDIT CONTRIBUTION - \$4,000,000.00

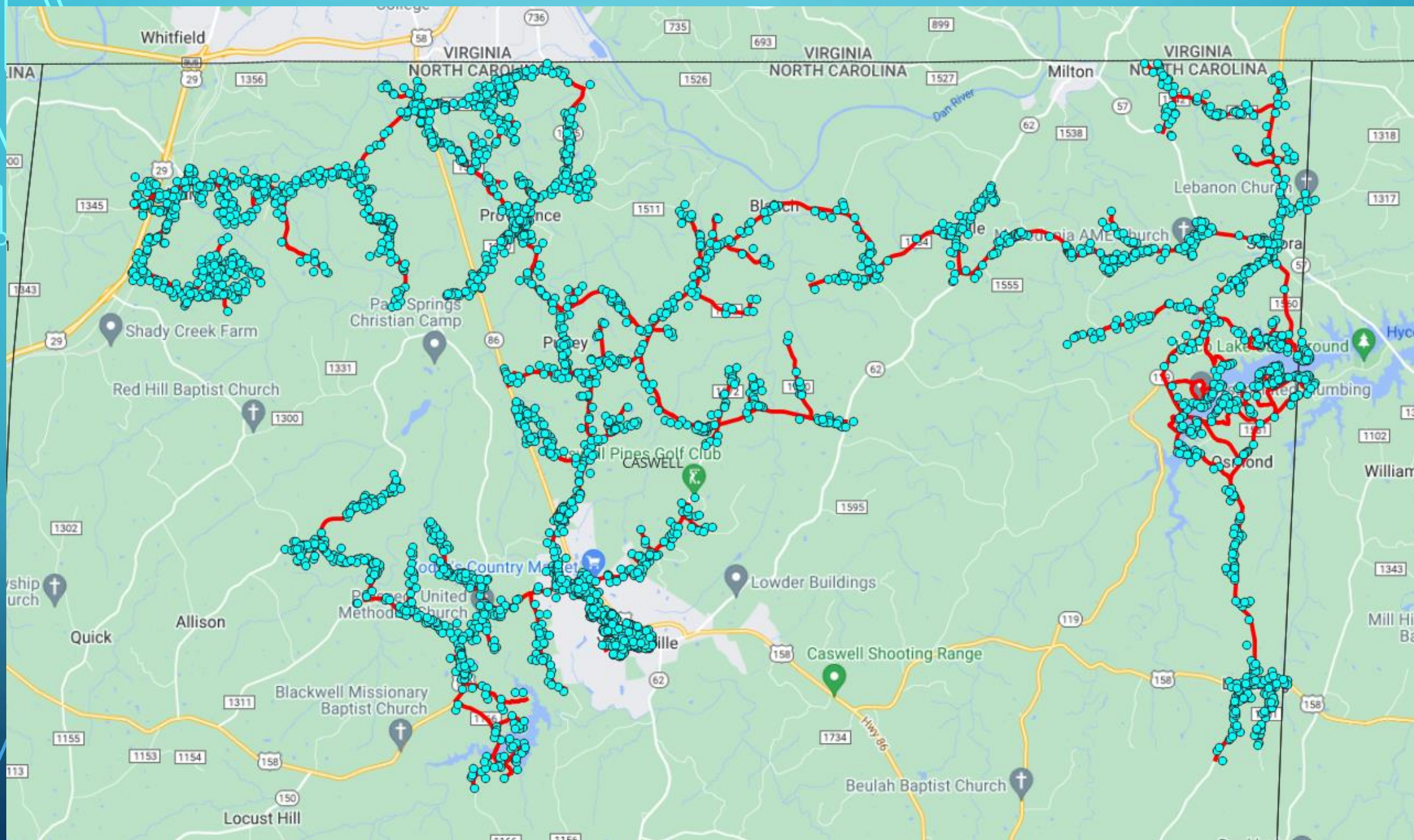
CASWELL CONTRIBUTION - \$250,000.00

ZiTEL CONTRIBUTION - \$2,418,331.60

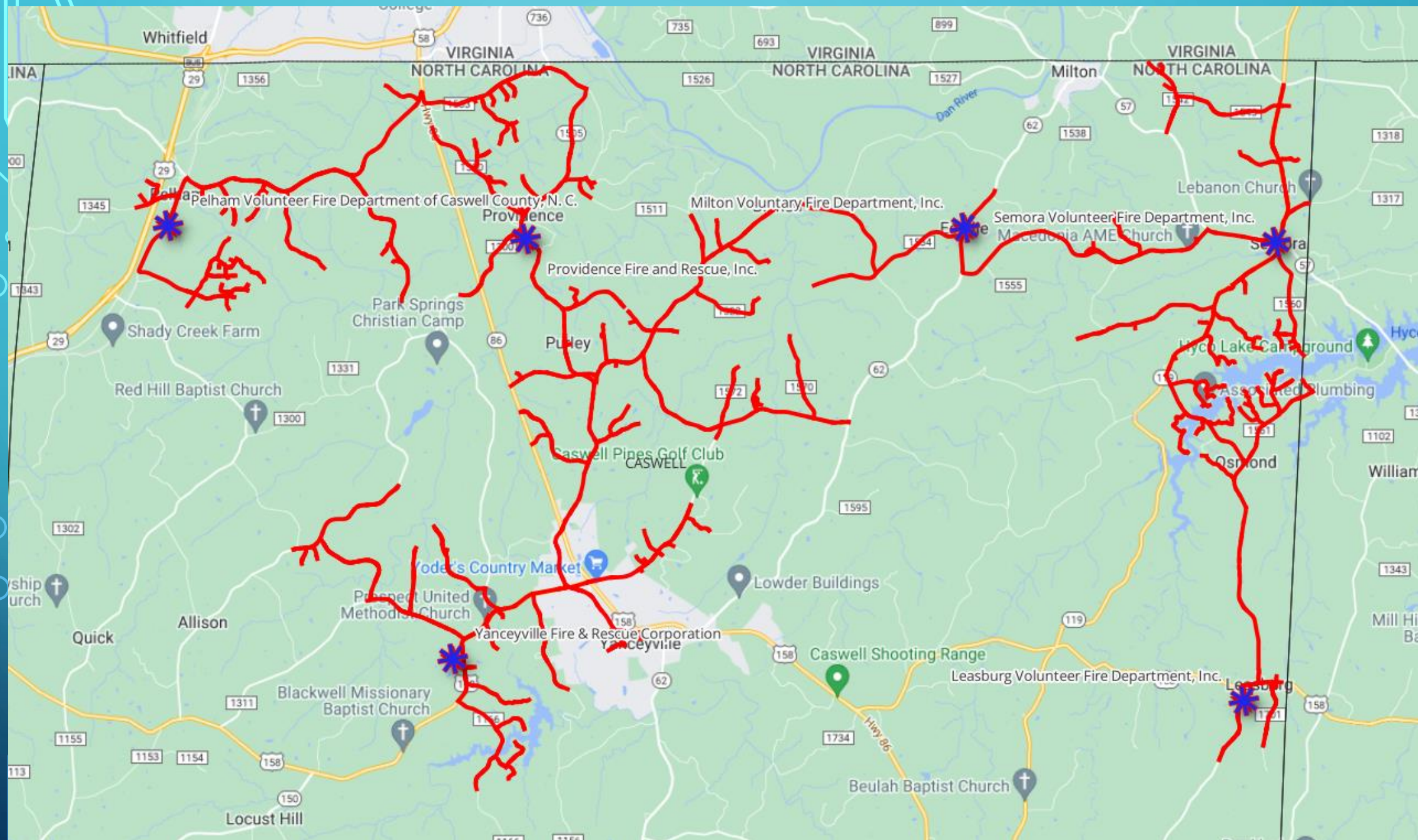












# Current Pricing and Service Structure

## Residential Essentials 100

**54.99 / Month**

Up To 100 Mbs Download

Up To 100 Mbs Upload

## Residential Deluxe 300

**\$69.99/ Month**

Up To 300Mbs Download

Up To 300Mbs Upload

## Residential Extreme 1000

**\$97.99 / Month**

Up To 1Gbs Download

Up To 1Gbs Upload

## Business Essentials 100

**89.99 / Month**

Up To 100 Mbs Download

Up To 100 Mbs Upload

## Business Ultimate 500

**\$159.99/ Month**

Up To 500Mbs Download

Up To 500Mbs Upload

## Business Extreme 1000

**\$279.99 / Month**

Up To 1Gbs Download

Up To 1Gbs Upload

**- Enterprise Rates Vary based on Construction, but approximately fall at \$1.00 per Megabit**

Free Basic Installation

Free ONT (modem) usage

\$10.99 per month Equipment Fee – Wi-Fi Router

\$12.99 per month Equipment Fee – Wi-Fi Extender

\$149.99 – Enhanced Installation

## New Offerings \*Coming Soon

- **Television Services**
- **Residential Basic 50  
29.99 / Month**

Up To 50 Mbs Download

Up To 10 Mbs Upload

Double the FCC Definition of Broadband

**This Plan is only available to those that qualify for the ACP (Affordable Connectivity Program) for low income families and will be a completely free internet package.**





## WHERE COUNTRY ROADS AND FIBER MEET

# ZiTEL

We understand the issues of building in the rural areas of Virginia and North Carolina.

- 1000' drop included for free
- \$1 per foot cost above the 1000' mark
- Flexibility on cost to work with our customers
  - Enter into a contract term – receive a 25% discount on the drop cost.
  - Will divide that cost monthly over the length of the term with NOTHING due at the time of install.

The background is a blue gradient with decorative white circuit-like lines in the corners. The word "QUESTIONS?" is centered in a large, white, bold, sans-serif font.

# QUESTIONS?



## **Conflict of Interest**

# CASWELL COUNTY LOCAL GOVERNMENT

*"Preserving the Past – Embracing the Future"*



## CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY

As members and participants in county government, one must be diligent in avoiding unethical conduct and/or conflicts of interests. Every action and vote taken must not be affected by personal gain.

This policy is intended to supplement existing North Carolina Law dealing with unethical conduct and/or conflicts of interest by county commissioners and other members of county government.

In addition to this policy, public servants are bound by all state laws concerning these topics, including but not limited to:

- a. G.S. §14-234., Public officers or employees benefiting from public contracts; exceptions.
  - b. G.S. §14-234.1., Misuse of confidential information.
  - c. G.S. §133-32., Gifts and favors regulated.
1. A conflict of interest occurs when a personal interest of a public servant places him/her in a position where he/she cannot execute his/her public duties without affecting his/her private interests. Caswell County Commissioners and others covered by this policy shall never use any County information coming to him/her in the performance of governmental duties for the purpose of unlawfully making a personal profit, gain or other benefits.
  2. This policy's prohibition of unlawfully seeking personal profit, gain or other benefits extends to profits sought by or received by the public servant's immediate family.
  3. Those covered by this policy shall not unlawfully dispense special favors or privileges, and never unlawfully accept for himself/herself or his/her immediate family, personal favors or benefits under circumstances which might be constructed by a reasonable person as influencing the performance of his or her governmental duties.
  4. It is the duty of all individuals subject to this policy to expose unethical conduct and conflicts of interest within Caswell County.
  5. Persons believing a violation of the ethics policy may have occurred may report it in writing addressed to the Chairman of the Board of Commissioners, or if the allegation is against the Chairman to the Vice-Chairman. Such complaints shall be investigated as determined by the Board of Commissioners.
  6. Violation of this policy may result in appropriate action including, but not limited to, those remedies provided by State laws.

Effective: 04/07/2017  
Reviewed: 07/17/2023