

CASWELL COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
MEMBERS PRESENT

April 21, 2023
OTHERS PRESENT

John Dickerson, Chairman
Tim Yarbrough, Vice Chair
Finch Holt
Jeremiah Jefferies
Rick McVey
Frank Rose

Bryan Miller, County Manager
Carla Smith, Clerk to the Board
Melissa Williamson, Deputy County Manager
Jennifer Hammock, Finance Director
Melissa Miller, Deputy Finance Director

The Board of Commissioners for the County of Caswell, North Carolina, met in regular session on Friday, April 21, 2023 at 9:00 am at the Gunn Memorial Library.

WELCOME:

Vice Chairman Yarbrough called the meeting to order, and turned it over to the County Manager.

BUDGET WORK SESSION:

County Manager Miller said Commissioners, you'll see your budget books. They flip horizontally. A little bit different look than maybe in a different year or in previous years, but we think this is going to make it a whole lot easier to go through the budget. We think it'll provide you with more information and give you a clearer picture of what's being asked for by each department, as well as the changes that each Department's made.

CASWELL ARE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM (CATS):

So if you're opening books to the first tab, the Area Transportation CATS department and the ROAP dollars. You'll see your first page is pretty much a summary. That summary gives you a broken down or a general picture of what both the revenues and the expenditures are. First thing I'll say about CATS is our CATS system uses zero county tax dollars to support itself. So their funding is intergovernmental, special revenues, permits and fees, sales and services, investment earnings, and you'll see fund balance appropriated. The fund balances appropriated is from their fund balance, CATS fund balance, from money that they've built up over the years. It's not from county tax dollar fund balance. So as you can see this year there's a \$76,976,963 decrease in their budget line items. If you'll flip to the next page, you can see a little bit more in detail of what those intergovernmental revenues are associated with. Vice Chairman Yarbrough said just a question because I don't know. ROAP, what is that? Deputy County Manager and CATS Director, Melissa Williamson said ROAP, it's Rural Operating Assistance Program, and that is a grant that we apply for that brings in funding to the county for citizens of the county to be able to ride transportation at either a very low cost or no cost at all. It includes elderly and disabled, and it includes rural general public funds which are referred to as RGP. Chairman Dickerson said what is the work conversion? Melissa Williamson said that is through the Department of Social Services, and that's if they have anybody that's on the Workforce Program that we maybe are

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taking to PCC or to do volunteer hours or whatever they're kind of needing them to do in order to meet the criteria of their program. But we provide very little service over the last few years for them because I know the program just does not have the members it once did have. County Manager Miller said so if you flip over to the next page, you'll see the revenues. The revenues continue, and I think what you see here is a lot of the special revenues declining. Those special revenues were basically associated with ARPA funding. Melissa Williamson said we will not receive any of that this time. The previous year we got CARES, and then this year, the year we're in now, we got ARPA dollars. We went after every dollar that we could get through the public transportation side that was completely separate from what the county receives. These were specifically through NCDOT that we got. These funds helped offset some of our operations because a lot of us were still struggling. Then County Manager Miller said so if you flip to the next page, you see the expenditures begin. This is just a broken down line item view of all the expenditures that make up the expenditure categories for Caswell Area Transportation Systems. Chairman Dickerson said on the prior page where it says fiscal year 23 adopted \$838,049. County Manager Miller said yes sir. Chairman Dickerson said do you have to figure of what it was a year prior to that without the influx of all the COVID money and the other special funding given to the department? What was their normal budget before all that was infused? Melissa Williamson said it really is going to vary with us because it depends on if we have capital like for vehicles and stuff. The state gives us 90%. They pay 90% of all of our buses that we get, and in this fiscal year and also upcoming FY 24, we're not eligible for any buses because you have to meet the 100,000 mile criteria. We have not met that because all of our buses are newer. But unfortunately in FY 25 we're going to have several of come together, but that's the state requirement that they have to meet a threshold in July. I'm working on FY 25 for the state now, and in July they will look and see where my miles are and that will determine for FY 25 which buses will get replaced. Chairman Dickerson said okay let me see. Maybe I didn't... County Manager Miller said so that number is \$616,406. Melissa Williamson said but it does vary with the capital because that gives us extra revenue that we report again when I do this because they're going to send us 90% of the reimbursement. Chairman Dickerson said so if I'm looking at the figures right, basically from the prior year without all the infusion of federal funds, you got \$616,000, and what they're asking for this year is \$596,000. Is it that simple or am I missing something? Mrs. Williamson said it is that simple, but capital does affect that because I would include that as a reimbursement on my end like I do the 5311 admin. That would be considered a reimbursement from the state, and that would make the revenues more on my end and make the expenditure more. So it all depends on the capital that we're requesting each year as well. Because if I had requested a bus, that's going to be an additional or that could be an additional \$52,000 that I would have in revenues. I would show probably close to \$60,000 on the expenditure side.

County Manager Miller said one thing the Board probably needs to be aware of not necessarily for this year's budget but for next year's budget is Melissa will need several additional buses, and

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the price of those buses have just got doubled. So we will get a decent amount of funding next year from the State to cover those expenses, but she'll have to use more of her fund balance as a match to be able to receive that. Here again that's CATS fund balance that they've been able to accumulate over the years. This does not include any Caswell County taxpayer dollars. This department does not use Caswell County taxpayer dollars. Chairman Dickerson said what did you say the ratio of the match is that the state gives us to buy these vehicles? Melissa Williamson said 90%, and then we have to come up with 10% match. But unfortunately with these vehicles doubling, it's almost like we'll now have to come up with double than what we used to have to come up with. This year we will not be affected because I'm not asking for any this one, but I know in FY 25 it'll be a few we will be replacing. Chairman Dickerson said you say that the vehicle price has doubled, are there any alternatives to get something different. Mrs. Williamson said we're already buying off the state contract. With them paying 90%, they go out to RFP, and they have certain specs that have to be met, so we have to buy within the selection that we have. All of them vary around the same price, but it's just which vendor you want to go with. Whether it be Palmetto or Carolina Thomas, the price is pretty much the same. It's just the way that everything has went up. The buses have just really doubled, and they said they hoped that they've even captured close to what it will be. Chairman Dickerson said thank you. County Manager Miller said are there any other questions about CATS? If not, we will move on to Court Facilities.

Commissioner Rose said one question. How many full time employees do you have? Mrs. Williamson said I'll just give you a breakdown of our staff. We have 15 staff members. We have one director, which is me, Melissa Williamson. We have an administrative assistant, a transportation coordinator, three full-time drivers, and nine part-time drivers. Commissioner Yarbrough said add those numbers for me, and Mrs. Williamson said we have 15 staff in all. Commissioner Rose asked are you fully staffed? Mrs. Williamson said yes, right now we are, but we will probably look at bringing on a new part-time driver with the way Medicaid is now with the Brokers and stuff. We have very little control over trying to set days where we go places and the times that we go. It's almost like you're at their mercy now. So we're doing a lot more, kind of back and forth, and in more days of the week than we typically did to some of the outside areas. So we are possibly looking at bringing in another part-timer, but the good thing about part-time is there's no benefits to pay. Commissioner Rose said one last question I have. On that \$616,416 that was the previous year. Mrs. Williamson said right. Commissioner Rose said so basically if you took that figure, and you added this CARES Act money you would get the \$838,049. Mrs. Williamson said yes. County Manager Miller said so if there's no other questions about CATS, we'll move on to the Court Facility.

COURT FACILITIES:

County Manager Miller said I see that we have our Clerk of Court with us today, John Satterfield. You can see it's pretty much outlined exactly the way the last department was. You

got a summary for your revenues and expenditures, and after your summary you see a little bit more in depth breakdown of your revenues and expenditures.

Chairman Dickerson said Mr. Satterfield, what is other services, and has a 984% increase in your budget from \$2,500 to \$27,100? Mr. Satterfield said that is for technology upgrades related to upgraded Business Systems that the North Carolina Administrative Office of the courts are requiring of all 100 counties. The system is called Odyssey, and it is bringing the courts into what I would say the 21st century in that we're going to have electronic filings and going paperless. Albeit, we have three counties that are actually live on it right now. There are major problems with Tyler Technologies, who writes this program. We have been told that Mecklenburg County has suspended their pilot program because of problems. However, that is not or shouldn't affect the train that's in motion because I think once the errors are fixed, Caswell will certainly go electronically for all filings. The technology upgrades are the County's obligation for putting in low voltage cabling systems which are a cost to the courthouse, upgrading some of the electrical components, and things that are fixed. The AOC provides the hardware like computers, TV screens, and things like that, but the materials that will be permanently put into the courthouse is what we're asking for the Commissioners to approve for this fiscal year. They asked for it last year. Brian and I had lengthy conversations, and said it is not budgeted. We are not going to move forward with this this fiscal year. Chairman Dickerson said is it wise to move forward with this now based upon the experience that they are having in Mecklenburg. That's a big county and you would think they would be able to medal it all out and get it streamlined where we wouldn't have to reinvent the wheel. You would have a pattern. Mr. Satterfield said well it's not... If you think about the County's obligation, what we're talking about is new cable drops within the walls because we would need more data ports throughout the entire building. We have already morphed into most employees having laptops. Part of this component that we're asking for the county is for everything to be completely wireless. So there will be a benefit to the general public and to County employees who actually work in the building too. So the entire building will have Wi-Fi ports throughout so that we've got coverage there. As to whether I believe it to be wise, I would say yes because it is coming. I do believe that they will resolve whatever software issues they have, but I would not want to delay it for another year because part of this is also expanding our ability to do remote hearings. Obviously just like your Commissioners' meetings are live stream now, we have based upon the pandemic and how it changed many people's operations, we're having more and more remote hearings rather than physical hearings in the courthouse. There may be parties that are in the far reaches of this state that remote in for a five-minute hearing. I would agree to let them remote in rather than driving four hours for five minutes or a court proceeding. Chairman Dickerson said you mentioned that this is being mandated by the State. Mr. Satterfield said yes. Chairman Dickerson said so this is what equates to an unfunded mandate, if they're not providing the money to carry through with it. Mr. Satterfield said that is correct. However, statutorily all 100 Counties have an obligation to fund adequate court facilities for the state courts, and that is providing for the

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facility itself and the ability to support the State's Business Systems. Again it the county's obligation will be for fixed assets that are in the County's building. Again wiring for electricity, data ports, and things like that, but not the actual hardware that is owned by the State. The hardware and software. Commissioner Holt said you are talking about putting this in this courthouse? Mr. Satterfield said well our court facility at 139 Church Street. But that is where you see the significant increase of \$24,600, and that would be a new line item to the court facility budget. Chairman Dickerson said but this is not a recurring thing? Mr. Satterfield said it is not a recurring line item. Chairman Dickerson said thank you, sir. Mr. Satterfield said I will be glad to entertain any other questions.

Commissioner Rose said it looks like the that revenues, permits and fees are up. Mr. Satterfield said revenues are up. We've got to be mindful that in the previous fiscal year we were right in the middle of the pandemic. Albeit the courts were operating, it was just different. Now we're back into some sense of normalcy, so we've had increased revenues. It may be helpful for those that are new to the Board to understand revenues for the court facilities. Going back to the 1970s when North Carolina became a unified court system, and we no longer had individual county courts. We all came under one umbrella. It created the Administrative Office of Courts and kind of standardized our courts throughout the state. The legislature wrote in the law where a portion of all court costs that are receipted by my office or any clerk's office goes into a special fund. Once a month we send a creditor's check to the County Finance Office for all of the accounting fees that we've collected through our court costs. For example, you come to criminal district court, court costs might be \$183 the base cost. Ten dollars of that goes towards the county to help support its statutory obligation to provide an adequate court facility. So through our court costs, we help pay for utilities and things like that which are in our budget. However, with the increased cost of things plus two situations like we've got now for upgrades and needed for a new business system, there will be a need for ad lorem tax dollars to help supplement that because there's just not enough revenue through standard court fees just to save that budget. County Manager Miller said Commissioners are there any additional questions on the court facility funds? If not, we'll move on to Section 8 Housing Authority.

HOUSING AUTHORITY:

County Manager Miller said Commissioners, much like CATS, Section 8 Housing Authority is one of the departments within the county that uses no Caswell County tax dollars to support its operations. You do see fund balance appropriated. That's fund balance held by Section 8 and specifically designated for Section 8 through their past operations. So you can see just a general breakdown or summary of revenues and expenditures. You turn the page, and you see a little bit more in depth breakdown for the revenues. Turn the page again, and we see a little bit more in depth breakdown for the expenditures. Commissioner Yarbrough asked are these revenues all Federal? County Manager Miller said Federal and State. Unfortunately, our Section 8 Housing Director was not able to be with us today for this meeting. She had a prior commitment. I'm happy to answer any questions you may have. Chairman Dickerson said on page 11, under

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administration, it was like \$11,000. On the next page I see that the benefits total went up as well. Explain to me how that works? Is that them getting more employees or is that the county's obligation on that to provide the cost of their benefits? County Manager Miller said no, once again they're self-sufficient. They use no County tax dollars to support their operations, their benefits, or salaries, so on so forth.

Commissioner Yarbrough said I see on page 12 down near the bottom on maintenance and repairs for vehicles there's a \$1,000. Those are not County vehicles I take it. County Manager Miller said they are. Commissioner Yarbrough said but they are not county fund used for those. County Manager Miller said that's right. They are leased by the County, but they are expensed to Section 8. Commissioner Rose said how many did they have assigned to Section 8? County Manager Miller said I think they have one, and its for Section 8. As you know, they help residents with housing, and before that housing can be used by Section 8 and during the course of the year, an inspector has to go out periodically and inspect those houses to make sure it's up to code and it meets the requirements for Section 8 housing. That's what the vehicle is used for.

Commissioner Yarbrough said and all these benefit increases are just related to salaries increases. A percentage causes those to go up as well. County Manager Miller said yes. Then County Manager Miller asked Commissioner Yarbrough to ask that question one more time? Commissioner Yarbrough said when the benefits or the increase in benefits: FICA, retirement, and health, that's because of salaries? County Manager Miller said yes, you're correct. When the salaries increase the benefits increase.

Commissioner Rose said one more question I got. I guess we'll get in here on page 12 under supplies and expenses. It looks like it is asking for the same thing it was in the previous year. Would that change with these gas prices? County Manager Miller said well the gas prices tend to fluctuate quite a bit. They fluctuated last year. I know they're going up again, but they tend to ebb and flow. So I think it'll be pretty steady. Yes. County Manager Miller said all right if there's no other questions, we can move on to Family Services.

FAMILY SERVICES:

County Manager Miller said here again Commissioners, you see the summary, the revenues, and expenditures, and unlike the other two departments we looked at today, Family Services does require a county match. Their county match this year will be twenty thousand dollars, but their budget as you can see, you're looking at partial budget for Family Services. They have two different types of grants that they deal with. One set of grants run on a fiscal year. One set of grants run on the calendar year, if I'm correct. Jennifer correct me if I'm wrong, but you're looking at the grants that run on a fiscal year. Right? Jennifer Hammock, Finance Director said on an annual basis. County Manager Miller said on an annual basis on a fiscal year. And the other information will be provided later on as part of the larger budget package. Commissioner Rose said what was the supplies and expenses in 2023 for \$16,499 and then the request is \$3,207. What caused that drop? County Manager Miller said we have our Family Services

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Director with us today and also Assistant County Manager, Aisha Gwynn. Mrs. Gwynn said could you repeat that question? Commissioner Rose said on the 2023 adopted budget under the supplies and expenses were \$16,499. On the 2024 part requested is \$3,270. I was just asking what would cause that dramatic drop. Mrs. Gwynn said we have other grants that are not listed, and so they cover more supplies than are provided on that paper. So that's why there's a difference between 23 and 24. County Manager Miller said Commissioners, if you jump over to page 16 and look at supplies and expenses, you'll see many of those supplies and expense lines are gone all together. A four thousand dollar increase at 21, a \$2500 increase, \$2800 increase, so on and so forth. So some of those lines are gone all together. Jennifer hammock said decrease. County Manager Miller said yes decrease. Thanks. I'm sorry.

Chairman Dickerson said on page 15, Governance Crime Commission, could you explain that to me? Mrs. Aisha Gwynn said that is a part from the Department of Public Safety for Victims of Crime Act. It's a Federal fund that administers grant funding to States, and is administered by the Governance Crime Commission to the Department of Public Safety. So we have been getting that grant probably since 2014 as far as I can go back. However, the amounts have decreased each year as the amount that has gone into the fund has decreased. So it is a multi-year grant. It runs not the fiscal year, but it runs from October through September 30th. It follows a federal fiscal year, and we have another Federal grant that falls in that same category as well. Commissioner Rose said what does that help with? Mrs. Gwynn said it helps with salaries. It helps with direct assistance to clients, survivors of domestic violence, and for victims of crime. So they can help with relocation assistance, moving, court costs, medical expenses, transportation, provisions as simple as providing like somebody who may have lost income because they left an abusive relationship or are a victim of a crime, diapers for their young children or pull-ups or something like that.

Commissioner Yarbrough said under the listing of other services where you had a reduction. Flip on back to page 17 where it's better broken down. Are these services you just no longer provide, or they like transportation, job placement, rental assistance. Mrs. Gwynn said we do provide those. What happened is the grantors, they all have moved from an individual like line item for bill assistance, relocation, and that type of stuff to one line item that is easier for us to call client services/DB services. So those lines now fold into Client Services/DBS. So it's like instead of multiple line items doing the same thing, we just have one line item, and that's the move that the grantor has moved to. All the grantors have moved to one line, and it helps us in finance and family services with the administration of the grants. Commissioner Yarbrough said I see the client services/DB listed this year was \$15,486, and requests for next year is \$14,281, which is just a reduction of \$905. Those other funds that are being reduced were not included in that DB section there. So what I'm asking is are these services that you will no longer provide because you still have the \$14,281 number DV. Whatever DV stands for? Mrs. Gwynn said domestic violence. County Manager Miller said so I think the answer to that question is no, those services will still be provided. They'll be provided through different grants that maybe you're not looking

at. Mrs. Gwynn said that's correct. We received another multi-year that is quite significant, and that did not require a match. That is strictly for client services in domestic violence.

Commissioner Yarbrough said the dues and subscriptions? Mrs. Gwynn said yes. Commissioner Yarbrough said what's the reduction in that related to? Aisha Gwynn said during the pandemic, we adopted DocuSign, to have paperwork signed digitally by our clients so they didn't come into the office. We have ceased that subscription. So that was a significant reduction. Commissioner Yarbrough said thank you.

Chairman Dickerson said on page 16, the salaries, they went from \$87,000 to \$113 with a 29% increase. How did that figure in? Was it additional staffing in that. Mrs. Gwynn said yes. We added or we grew from five to six. So that was additional staffing for that. County Manager Miller said that was 100% grant funding. Mrs. Gwynn said all this is grant funded. We're split kind of percentage-wise between different grants. For example, somebody may be funded by four different grants, or some of them might be funded by two grants. If we don't get the grants, they understand that they do not have a position with the county, but it's all grant funded.

Commissioner Yarbrough said Mr. Miller back it up to something that you said when we started on this section. Did you say the county match was twenty thousand dollars? County Manager Miller said that's correct. Commissioner Yarbrough said regardless of all these other numbers? County Manager Miller said that's correct. Commissioner Yarbrough said so the county is going to be asked to contribute twenty thousand dollars? County Manager Miller said that's correct. So the County is going to be asked to contribute \$20,000 if that number decreases, then we won't get the grants that are included in what you're looking at now or the other grants to come that require a match. If we don't have enough money to provide the match, then we don't receive the grants. Commissioner Yarbrough said what was the county asked to contribute in the current fiscal year? Mrs. Gwynn said well it's kind of a story because the grants waived the match fees during the pandemic. So we normally have to contribute maybe 8% to 15% prior to the pandemic up to fiscal year 2019-20. This year because we are now exiting the public health emergency, they are now no longer waiving the match fees. So there are only two grants out at maybe six that we received, and some of them are not listed that require a match. That is Council for Women and Youth Involvement, Domestic Violence, and Family Violence Prevention Service Act, and they request or require a county match., and it came out to \$19,872. So I just rounded it to 20,000.

Commissioner Rose said I may have missed it, but what are the amounts of these grants? Mrs. Aisha Gwynn said \$51,856.72 for Domestic Violence or Council for Women and Youth Involvement Domestic Violence or DB, \$17,500 for Council for Women and Youth Involvement Marriage License Fees or MLF, Council for Women and Youth Involvement (it's a lot of them) Divorce Filing Fees \$19,000. There's several more so let me know you're ready. Commissioner Rose said all right. Mrs. Gwynn said Family Violence Prevention Service Act and we call FVPSA, it is \$47,500. Governor's Crime Commission, GCC, \$52,077.28, FVPSA ARPA \$149,853.36, and some of these are not listed because they are multi-year. Then there's

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Human Trafficking Commission, the multi-year \$86,950, and we received a \$15,000 grant from the Community Foundation of the Dan River Region that we were able to use for the match for 23. I believe that might be all of them. Chairman Dickerson said very good to call those out like that. Mrs. Gwynn said I look at them every day. County Manager Miller said I'll tell you that Aisha does a great job managing those grants, but those grants require so much reporting. We signed off on expenditure reports and payroll reports on a monthly basis. So because there's so many of them, she's working with those grants from day one of the month to the end of the month. She really does a good job, but they require a huge level of reporting. Commissioner Rose said so basically on these numbers to bypass a \$20,000 match. County Manager Miller said that's correct. If you'll remember I think two meetings ago or three meetings ago, I told you about some other grants that were going to be applied for through Family Services. They're looking at doing a new strategic plan this year. They're kind of looking at rebranding themselves and creating a new mission for Family Services, and funny enough Aisha and I had this conversation yesterday. I received a phone call saying there was a family that appeared to be in need at one of our local businesses. So I called Aisha and spoke with her about it briefly and asked her to send someone up to visit the family and see if there was any way that we could help them and they did. During that conversation, Aisha was explaining to me that the individual or one of the individuals had to have some linkage to domestic violence for them to be able to assist them in the way that they probably needed assistance. So as we went through that process, we spoke a little bit more in depth about just the name Family Services. If you've got an organization named Family Services, it doesn't really provide that linkage to you can only get assistance if there's domestic violence involved. So they are going through that. Aisha is also exploring reopening a domestic violence shelter here in Caswell. One of the grants was an up to three million dollar grant that provide multi-years of service, but it also would allow them to purchase a domestic violence shelter and open a domestic violence shelter. We used to have a domestic violence shelter, but we no longer have that shelter here in the county. But that's something that we will speak about a little bit more in depth as we go through the budgeting process. So just want to make everybody aware of those issues.

Chairman Dickerson asked does this county have any involvement with Crossroads? Mrs. Aisha Gwynn said no, they are a private agency. We have a memorandum of understanding or agreement with them where we have coordinated response team or multiple disciplinary response team. Excuse me. We have that, but the county itself, they may have some outpatients at Crossroads. I'm not sure, but I know they are a private agency. They are the sexual assault victim service provider, and we are designated as the domestic violence service provider. I'd like to see all the cooperation we can have with that group. Mrs. Gwynn said definitely. County Manager Miller said Commissioners, are there any more questions on Family Services revenues or expenditures? If not, we'll move on to the library.

LIBRARY

County Manager Miller said here again page one, you'll see a summary of the revenues and expenditures. Chairman Dickerson said question number one. Salaries increased from 245 to 325, an 32% increase and benefits are up 42%. County Manager Miller said so yeah. Do you want to talk about that a little bit? The Library Director, Haley Walters, said yes. We are requesting the addition of a position for the library. This would be an entry level position. We feel like we can better serve the citizens of Caswell County with services, materials, and perform more outreach, which is one of the goals of the library with an additional staff person. So we have factored in an entry-level position with a starting salary of \$30,000, which is from my understanding the base minimum for the county. Correct? And we were also asking for raises for the staff who are already here. As far as the increase with the prices and materials that reflects the increase with inflation the prices of goods, materials, and services that we are currently using for the library. Chairman Dickerson said what will the new position do? Mrs. Walters said that's a good question. I'm glad you asked that. This is a position that would be a low level, or we shouldn't say low level, entry level circulation position. Currently we have employed aside from myself, four full-time people and each person has a designated job in which they are doing library programming, collection development, we're trying to do outreach into the community, and we need somebody full time to work the Circ desk. What I call front of house staff. This would be somebody when you come in or your family members come in and they need help printing, using the computers, copying, shelving books, or anything else that the library needs. They would also be filling in as needed with programs, programming, and outreach. Currently, we do not have anybody in this role. We have a couple of pages, who are high school students, and they are on a one year term contract. That money, their salary, or I should say their pay is actually coming out of state funds. The previous director arranged for them to have positions through state funding, and so when their term is up, that's it. So in other words, what we have right now to do those kinds of duties, they're all temporary people. A full-time circulation person would allow us to better serve and provide more opportunities for the citizens with programming, outreach, and also classes that I see are much needed in this community.

Commissioner Holt said you keep saying outreach, what is outreach? Mrs. Walters said I'm glad you asked that. Mrs. Walters said outreach, I want to work with the schools. I also want to do some mobile library services in the county. I have already been approached by people in the county about providing books and materials to people who cannot make it to the library. They maybe shut-ins or homebound. Also some mobile spots within the county where we could take maybe the existing van or SUV that belongs to the library, go out on a regular basis, and drop off books and other materials to people when they cannot make it to the library because currently this brick and mortar building is the only way people can get library services right now. They have to actually come to us. So we would like to take the library into the county, and I'm also working with schools partnering with them to provide some programming to the students because students can't always get to the library either.

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Commissioner Rose asked what is your name. Mrs. Walters said I'm Haley Walters. I'm the new director. Commissioner Rose said a couple questions I have. One is you fully staffed? Mrs. Walters said right now, we are not. Commissioner Rose said how many positions are you from being fully staffed? Mrs. Walters said we are going to be hiring two people. So we have two positions open that we need to fill. Commissioner Rose said you have two openings, and Mrs. Walters said yes. Commissioner Rose said second question. One this increase, what percentage are you asking for? Mrs. Walters said which one are you referring to, the salary? Commissioner Rose said the salary. Mrs. Walters said we are asking for a 10% increase. This is to go in line with cost of living adjustments.

Commissioner Yarbrough said so and maybe I missed this during the conversation. How many full-time employees do you have when all positions are filled? Mrs. Walters said this will be including myself; it would be seven. Commissioner Yarbrough said seven total. Mrs. Walters said seven total. Commissioner Yarbrough said when you hire? That's including the vacant positions? Correct? Mrs. Walters said that is correct. That would be the position that we were asking for. So there would be actually with all if we get the position asked for that would then be a total of eight. Commissioner Yarbrough said but you have seven currently, correct? Mrs. Walters said yes, we have two which are vacant. We are trying to fill. They've just been posted to be filled. Commissioner Yarbrough said okay. So the salary number that you requested at \$325,440 that is for a total of eight employees, correct? Mrs. Walters said yes. That number, I apologize, we were in a hurry to get this done. That number is actually incorrect because we did not have a chance to go back and check the math on all this. We just had to get this in so that number is incorrect. I sent the updated sheet to Bryan and Jennifer Hammock this morning. Chairman Dickerson said what is that number? Mrs. Walter said that would be, again please double check my math, this would be \$339,441.05. Commissioner Yarbrough said \$339,441, and Mrs. Walters said yes. Commissioner Yarbrough said okay, and the position that you're asking for has a starting salary of \$30,000, correct? Mrs. Walters said yes.

County Manager Miller said so Commissioners, just as a note. Several years ago or two years ago, the Board decided that the minimum salary for any county employee to be \$30,000. So that's the minimum starting salary for county employees. Commissioner Holt said would this person get a 10% raise on top of that or would they get what she said. County Manager Miller said no, I don't believe so. Commissioner Rose said because right now you're two full-time positions vacant. County Manager Miller said no they are hired in at the base rate.

Chairman Dickerson said here is my question. The new figure is \$339,441 and in the 23 year the budget adopted amount was \$245,638. You're asking for an increase of \$93,803, and only thirty thousand just for the new position. So \$63,803 for the proposed raises amount. Right? Mrs. Walters said that would be... I would have to check that, but that would be with the 10% for all positions. Commissioner Yarbrough said that's a lot more than 10%. Mrs. Walters said please double check the math. Commissioner Yarbrough said 10% would be \$24,563.80. You're looking at 27-28% there. My math is going off Mr. Dickerson's. County Manager Miller said are

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you including... Commissioner Yarbrough said if you take the new position off, you're down to \$309,441 starting that position at \$30,000. The difference between that is \$63,803. County Manager Miller said okay. We'll make sure and double check that math. We can revisit this the next time we come up. Chairman Dickerson said and with those figures, that's going to greatly impact that benefit amount as well. That's going to change and go up drastically based upon that being corrected. County Manager Miller said that will.

Commissioner Rose said Jennifer do you have new spreadsheets. The two positions, that you are looking to fill right now, are those both full-time positions. Mrs. Walters said yes.

Commissioner Yarbrough said the supplies and expenses have a \$44,000 reduction. What's that attributed to? Mrs. Walters said the supplies and expenses. A lot of that got rearranged by finance and coded differently. So some of this had already originally been set up previously under different codes by finance and the categories that didn't really apply to us or our needs at the library. So a lot of that was just more of a matter of them recoding and renaming the supplies that we actually do use.

Commissioner Rose said on page 23 under tools and equipment there is nothing in this year's request. Mrs. Walters said that goes back to Finance moving some of this stuff around. They recognized that some of these categories don't apply to us, and the money got reallocated out of that into other categories. Deputy Finance Director, Melissa Miller said small tools went to supplies. Commissioner Rose said library books \$26,840 under the 23 budget was zero. Mrs. Walters said that money all comes from the State. we do not use any funds from the county to purchase the library books or periodicals. Commissioner Rose said why would it have been listed in 2023. Mrs. Walters said you would have to ask Finance. They're the ones that put it there so we were told we had to go with this format that they had set up.

Chairman Dickerson said maybe it was mentioned, but please forgive me if I did not catch that. I was writing some notes. What percentage of the budget for the library is provided by State funds or grants, and what percentage of it is paid for by the Caswell County tax payers. Mrs. Walters said I don't know the actual percentages, but I do know that the amount the State gives us is not a set in stone amount. The State when they divvy out money to all the localities and all the libraries, they never say this is the exact amount. In other words, it's not a set in stone recurring amount. That varies from year to year obviously depending on the budget the State Legislature passes. I know that it has varied anywhere between 82,000. I think last year was like \$82,000-ish. This year it could be around that much. It could be a little bit more, but it could also be that much or it could even be less. All of those are variable depend on what the State Legislature allocates for library expenditures. So that's never a set in stone amount. Chairman Dickerson said let me ask you a different way. Maybe it'd be simpler for me to understand it. How much money, in what you're requesting for operating this year is coming from the county taxpayer? Mrs. Walters said basically it would be the operating expenses that would include running the facility. That would be all the maintenance costs, utilities, etc. County Manager Miller said

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Commissioners, if you look at your revenue sheet, the first sheet, you can see your transfers in and transfers in general fund that would be \$438,063. Chairman Dickerson asked what page is that Bryan, and County Manager Miller said it's page 19. Chairman Dickerson said what was that figure again? County Manager Miller said \$438,063. It's down at the bottom of the page transfers in. Commissioner Holt said did you mean \$448. County Manager Miller said \$438 is what I have. Then County Manager Miller walked around the room to be sure the Commissioners saw this in their budget book.

Commissioner Rose said one last question. On those two positions you said you were short, how long have they been vacant? Mrs. Walters said one her last day was the end of March, March 29th. She ended at the end of March, and the other one has just been posted. This was a position that had been left unfilled. From what I understand, there's been a lot of structural changes with a lot of people. Personnel coming and going, and within that positions did not get filled during the shuffling of employees within the library. So we are going to try to fill that position, this open position, as well. So that was one I guess you could say was existing, and now we're going to try to fill that one. Commissioner Yarbrough said how long has it been open though? Mrs. Walters said it just opened yesterday. Commissioner Rose said no, how long has it been unfilled? Mrs. Walters said oh I'm sorry. County Manager Miller said probably about eight months. Chairman Dickerson said eight months. Let me just be the one that states the obvious in the room. No one has been in that position for eight months, it's operated right on time, and we still have the library open; why are we talking about adding another position to your department? If you've been able to do it with two openings...Mrs. Walters said, we actually have not. We are struggling to fulfill all the services and programs that we feel like will better serve the citizens of Caswell County, and we are open seven days a week. We are available to the public. I'm sorry. I'm sorry, we're open six days a week. We are trying to serve citizens of Caswell County with educational resources, learning opportunities, and entertainment because we are kind of a main hub for the county as far as things to do and a place to learn. We also provide a lot of internet services, computer classes, and one-on-one help to the citizens of Caswell County. When I mean one-on-one help, I need one-on-one help. We can't just say do this. Here are my instructions. You do this. We have to actually almost hold their hand and help people with things like job building, learning skills, and learning how to use the computers. We're trying to help people improve their lives and the lives of their families. This is why I really want to reach out into the community beyond the library walls to reach as many people as we can with the services that we can offer.

County Manager Miller said so Commissioners, I'll just added this. The position that's been open for about eight months, it was a real technical position. They did a lot of technical things for the library. It's one of those positions that I couldn't necessarily fill. You really needed a library director to be able to fill those type of positions or that type of position. We also wanted to wait until we were able to hire a new library director, and let the new library director formulate the internal structure of the library the way they wanted to put that together. So that's one of the reasons that that position has remained open for as long as it has. There was a pretty large

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backlog of work associated with catching up, and there still is. I'll point out that Jackie's done a wonderful job keeping things in check and going, but there's still a lot of work that needs to be done. So it's not like we haven't felt the loss of that position. I would say that we greatly felt the loss of that position. Jackie is now serving in the role that the person that left was working in. So we're actually looking to feel Jackie's role, right? Mrs. Walters said yes. County Manager Miller said that position is adult...Jacqueline Jones said it's supposed to be adult services librarian. County Manager Miller said right. So they provide the adult programming here in the library.

Chairman Dickerson said I understand your explanation. I understand yours, but in the ever expanding world of government providing more and more services, more and more benefits, and more and more wish list items to improve the lives of our community something gets lost. Because when we look at this and you talk about \$93,000 increase, you talk about increasing this other department, and you talk about increasing another one pretty soon when you add all these together the county taxpayer is going to get stuck with an increase. At some point in time, we got to look at those county taxpayers and say, hey they're struggling to put food on their family's tables. They need to take care of what's important in their lives. Every time we reach our hands in their pockets and say you've got to give us more, we're taken away from their quality of life. We're making it hard for them to provide for their children. I'm very much not trying to rake you over the coals ma'am. You've never been in here before, but my job as a commissioner is to look at this budget and find out what is necessary, what's important, what we can do with what we have. We have limited funds. So don't feel like I'm singling you out; it'll be a recurring theme as we go through this process. Nothing personal. Mrs. Walters said well we have the same goal. This is what the library is trying to do. We are trying to improve the lives of the people in this community, and I believe you get what you pay for. People will see that, and they do see what a wonderful difference we make in their lives. We see this all the time when people come in here requesting help and participating in one of our programs. I think this is something that we can continue to provide and even take it to a higher level. We have so many things that we're being asked to do, both inside the library and outside the library, that we cannot do just because we don't have the necessary help or resources to do that. All we're saying to the citizens of Caswell County and these agencies in Caswell County is I'm sorry, we cannot be there to do that. We cannot help you with that because we don't have the resources as well. This is something that should benefit everybody, and the library is a community facility. We do not discriminate in who we allow in. Anybody can come in and use the library. It is called the public library for a reason. We never charge except for when people come to make copies on the copy machine and so forth. All of this stuff is free of charge to them. So they are getting entertainment for free. They're getting an education for free when they come in for classes, we teach them how to use computers, and we teach them other things when they come in and hear the speakers that we pay for who present to them. All of this is something that they are getting. Yes, they're paying for it through their taxes, but still a whole lot cheaper than other means if they were to get this education going from college, subscribing to some other type of service and so forth, or

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entertainment through these authors and things that we have coming in. These are things that I think really reflect well on this County, and I'm really trying to work hard to make this a more global center within the state and within the country. I don't think that we should have the attitude that this is just a rural county, we shouldn't expect much. I totally disagree with that. I think that we can have all that here, and I believe the people here see that and appreciate what we're offering. We look forward to and embrace everything that we want to offer them. County Manager Miller said thank you Mrs. Walters. Are there any other questions? Chairman Dickerson said Mrs. Walters I appreciate your zeal when protecting your department and trying to push your vision forward. I respect that, and I'll be as equally astute in my job as a commissioner to watch the expensive going forward. We'll be on the same page. Mrs. Walters thanked the Board and they thanked her.

SPECIAL APPROPRIATIONS:

County Manager Miller said Commissioners, if you'll turn one more page or turn one more tab to page 22, you'll see Special Appropriations. These are the Special Appropriations that you made to 501C-3s throughout the course of the year: the Animal Protection Society, the Cooperative, the Forestry Services, the Arts Council, the Caswell County Partnership for Children, the Historical Association, Caswell Horticulture Club, Local Foods Council, Caswell Parish, and County Outreach Ministries. Commissioner Yarbrough said what is that CGMBA in front of County Outreach Ministry? Finance Director, Jennifer Hammock said that is the program that Mr. & Mrs. Robinson wrote to the Board about. Mrs. Aisha Gwynn said it stands for Cedar Grove. Chairman Dickerson said that's the hot meals program.

Chairman Dickerson said how about the Historical Association's increased of seven thousand dollars. Finance Director, Jennifer Hammock said that is for gutters for the building. County Manager Miller said the Historical Association received a grant for about \$32,000 to have a lot of work done to the outside of the building. You can see a lot of that's going on now. They received that I think from the Community Foundation. So what they've asked the increase this year for is for gutters to help preserve the building and keep it up. Chairman Dickerson asked does Yanceyville contributed any money to the Historic Association? County Manager Miller said I'm not sure. The County Manager asked the Finance Director do you have that? Commissioner Holt said \$4,000 for gutters on a house? County Manager Miller said that's the quote. I think they need the larger round gutters rather than just the regular gutters. Commissioner Holt said I want to reconsider that.

Commissioner Yarbrough said the \$45,000 increase to the animal shelter. Commissioner Holt said we don't pay anything on that animal shelter, do we? I was surprised when you said it, that's why I'm bringing it up. County Manager Miller said no, we make an annual appropriation to them, but they're not a County department. Commissioner Holt said I thought that when you told me you said that it was self-funded, and it was a great deal. I thought you told me and I was like how in the world are they doing that. So maybe I'm wrong or misunderstood you. Finance

Director Hammock said they are asking for an additional \$45,000 to provide for spay and neuter service to be of assistance to the citizens of Caswell County. Also to help cover the rising cost of inflation and the much needed repairs to the facility. Commissioner Yarbrough asked did they give you any details as to what those repairs are or needed? The Finance Director said they do not. It does say repairs made for the safety of employees and animals. Commissioner McVey said a lot of its fencing. Commissioner Rose asked does the county own the building? County Manager Miller said no. This is one of those departments, so Commissioners, if we didn't have an organization providing that service for us, we would have to provide that service ourselves as a County department. Many counties do that. Luckily we have the Animal Protection Society that's willing to provide that service for us, and we appropriate funding to that organization to help support those services. Commissioner Rose said we'd like to see what the maintenance they are needing rather than just saying big money for upgrades. We'd like to see what they need it for. Is it for kennels, roofing, fencing or what the actual need is. Deputy Finance Director Melissa Miller said we have a full copy of their application rather than just a summary that we can make available for you. Commissioner Yarbrough said I think that is a good idea rather than just coming up with this large number.

Commissioner Holt said does this include the vehicles? County Manager Miller said no. Animal Control is a county department. So when we pick up dogs or pick up whatever, we take it to the animal shelter. They house it.

Commissioner Yarbrough said the Local Foods Council is asking for 166% increase. I know it is only \$2,500, but it's still \$2,500. Why are they asking for that much more and what is it going to be used for? County Manager Miller said so the Local Foods Council, Jennifer do you have their information? The Local Foods Council has changed directions. Now it's, I think, headed up by the Director of Cooperative Extension and they're working a little bit different manner than they have been before. They're trying to plan additional activities. If you remember the county awarded them a \$25 or \$35,000 grant in this past fiscal year. The Finance Director said \$35,000. County Manager Miller said a \$35,000 grant. So when you add that \$35,000 in to the \$2,500 or the \$1,500 award that they received, you actually see that it really should be more like it's a \$35,000 grant that they receive not a \$3,500. So the amount that they've requested is really about one-tenth of what we've given in this previous year. Commissioner Yarbrough asked what did they use that grant money for? County Manager Miller said it was to help set up the Farmers Market. Finance Director hammock said and they were working with different local food delivery companies and setting up programs with them to get more options for residents that are considered food insecure.

Commissioner Holt said Caswell Horticultural Club, is that the group that had the little thing yesterday. County Manager Miller said yes, and just for you all's information. I don't know that everybody understands this, but they maintain the square for us other than mowing, they put out the pine needles, and that's what that money goes to. It's actually goes to keep up property owned by the county. I think they take care of some of the areas down around the Sheriff's Office. They

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also maintain the Arboretum behind the courthouse, and they take care of the Courthouse grounds and the square.

Commissioner Yarbrough said what is the Cooperative Forestry Service? County Manager Miller said that's the Forestry Service here on Fire Tower Road. Commissioner Rose asked is it a 501C3? County Manager Miller said no, they're not all 501C3s. It's an appropriation made to an agency outside of the county. Commissioner Yarbrough said okay. Commissioner Yarbrough said I was thinking they may be a 501C3 but I didn't. County Manager Miller said no they are a state agency. Yeah, that's who they are. Commissioner Yarbrough said this money is used for what as far as they go? County Manager Miller said for forestry related things. Commissioner Yarbrough said is there any salaries related to this money? County Manager Miller said I believe there is. Commissioner Rose said turn over to the third page from that and it says \$85,824 was for salary increases. Commissioner Holt said so that was like Steve Thompson, correct? County Manager Miller said yes. Commissioner McVey said that's Brian Singleton. Steve retired. Commissioner Holt said that's almost a ...the state plays a lot of it though right? Finance Director Hammock said yes. Commissioner Yarbrough said this is a reduction? Finance Director Hammock said that's correct. Last year they had purchased a vehicle. Commissioner Holt said so we did like a percentage of it? Commissioner Yarbrough said of what they had? County Manager Miller said I think it was half of the bill. Commissioner Yarbrough said do we pay half on salaries? Finance Director Hammock said it's a portion, but I don't know the percentage right off the top of my head. I will find out and get back to you. Commissioner Rose said getting back to Forestry Services, do we pay anything of theirs as far as salaries or anything like that? County Manager Miller said no, we don't pay any of their salaries. We give them funding. We fund their operations, and that money goes to the State. Then the State allocates it the way they need to allocate it. So for me to say that none of the money goes towards salaries, I can't necessarily tell you that. The State allocates those funds, but I would say if it says on their page that salaries or what other things that we're seeing increase for, I would say that some of that is allocated towards salaries. But it's just like Cooperative Extension. We pay NC State, and NC State pay the Cooperative Extension.

Commissioner Yarbrough said on the risk of me sounding ignorant which I will attest to right now, the way this budget process works for the three of us in the room that are new to it, we're sitting here and looking at these numbers, but we will not make an approval or disapproval on these numbers? County Manager Miller said absolutely not. Commissioner Yarbrough said this is more or less for discussion purposes. County Manager Miller said yes, that's for you to be able to ask any questions you want to ask, for you to get a good understanding of what's contained in the budget, and later on in the process you all can have your deliberations. I'll present my manager's recommendation after we've gone through some of this stuff, and you'll be able to take the manager's recommendations and have some deliberation on what you want to do as a Board. Commissioner Yarbrough said so these are not your numbers? County Manager Miller said no. These are the department requests, and Commissioner Yarbrough said okay, got you. County

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Manager Miller said this is what the departments had requested. Commissioner Yarbrough said yours may or may not mirror these request. Right? County Manager Miller said that's correct. Most of the time, I'm going to say there's significant changes, but there are changes one way or the other that I'll make to the budget. Commissioner Yarbrough said thank you.

County Manager Miller said Commissioners, unless you have other questions that's all we had scheduled for today. Commissioner Holt said this is from not knowing, how long do we need to start preparing for on these days? County Manager Miller said that's a good question, and it really depends on the amount of questions that you guys have. I would say that we would go no more than three hours. I would say from my experience any budget meeting or any meeting that goes longer than three hours becomes very, very unproductive. Deputy Finance Director Miller said we have divided them up this year pretty good. So it shouldn't take all day. County Manager Miller said so I would imagine no more than three hours. Commissioner Holt said I know it's a hardship for Commissioner Dickerson to get here during the day. Then Commissioner Holt asked Commissioner Rose if it is doable for him to come in the mornings like this? Commissioner Yarbrough said we have some that are scheduled in the evenings. Commissioner McVey said some are scheduled in the morning and some in the evenings. Commissioner Holt asked if we could send out the schedule. County Manager Miller said it was included in the last agenda packet. County Manager Miller said I think the next one is at 5:30 pm. Commissioner McVey said it is at 5:30. Sit tight and I'll tell you exactly. Commissioner Holt asked if they were all on Friday, and the County Manager said that's correct. The Clerk said April 28th is at 5:30 and the following one is May 5th at 9. County Manager Miller said there were two 9:00 am meetings that were back to back. Commissioner McVey said May 5 and May 12 are at 9 and May 19 is 5:30. The Clerk said she will email the schedule to the Commissioners again. Commissioner Holt said thank you.

Commissioner Rose said the library presentation, I know she said sent a new sheet in. County Manager Miller said that'll be updated and you will get a new sheet for your book. You just take that one out and put the new one in. Commissioner Rose said I want to apologize if I had a lot of questions, I know how County Government runs. I worked here 30 years, but this is the first time I sit in a budget session. I ask a lot of questions because that's the only way I learn. County Manager Miller said well look, we want you to ask questions. That's the only way that you can make good important decisions. So we want you to understand.

County Manager Miller said Commissioners, one more question that I do have before we um before we go. I know we have quite a few of these budget sessions that we're going to move forward with. My question is there's a lot of staff time involved in the technology and being able to Zoom these meetings. You can see today we've had two staff members here practically the entire time. So my question to you as a Board is do you want to continue to Zoom the budget sessions, or do you just want to stick to Zooming regular meetings? Commissioner McVey said just Zoom the regular meetings. No need to have to Zoom these discussions I wouldn't think. County Manager Miller said so today we've had six people on Zoom. How many are employees?

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Five of which are county employees. Commissioner Yarbrough said since we're not making any official decisions, it shouldn't have to be. Commissioner Rose said the meeting is open so they can come and sit and listen. You have these two over here and they could actually be working to get stuff done that they need to get done throughout the day. Chairman Dickerson said I have no problem not Zooming the budget sessions. County Manager Miller said okay. So moving forward we will just Zoom the regular meetings. That's all I have.

The Budget session ended and the next Budget Session will be April 28, 2023 at 5:30 pm at the Gunn Memorial Library.

Carla R. Smith
Clerk to the Board

John Dickerson
Chairman

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