

CASWELL COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Work Session

January 6, 2025

MEMBERS PRESENT

OTHERS PRESENT

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Tim Yarbrough, Chair
Frank Rose, Vice Chair
Finch Holt
Greg Ingram
Tony Smith
David Wrenn
.....

Renee Paschal, County Manager
Melissa Williamson, Deputy County Mgr.
Russell Johnston, County Attorney

The Board of Commissioners for the County of Caswell, North Carolina met in a Work Session meeting scheduled on Monday, January 6, 2025 at 5:00 pm at the Gunn Memorial Public Library, 161 E. Main Street, Yanceyville NC.

Welcome:

Chairman Yarbrough called the meeting to order. All were invited to pause for a moment of Silent Prayer and to recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

There were no public comments.

Recognitions:

Commissioner Smith and Vice Chair Rose recognized the Maintenance Department for their efforts.

Agenda:

A motion was made by Commissioner Wrenn and seconded by Commissioner Rhodes to approve the Work Session agenda. The motion carried unanimously.

Action Items:

Manager Paschal explained that NC General Statute 153A-111 required the Board to appoint a Clerk to the Board or designate another position to serve as clerk. She noted that minutes preparation had been contracted to Michelle Parker-Evans until the County hired a new Clerk.

A motion was made by Vice Chair Rose and seconded by Commissioner Ingram to appoint Renee Paschal as Interim Clerk to the Board. The motion carried unanimously.

Discussion Items:

Chairman Yarbrough reiterated the purpose of the Work Sessions would be to discuss items before voting on them at the regular meeting. Action items would not normally be presented during a Work Session. The Action Item presented at the Work Session was a statutory necessity.

Rules of Procedure Amendment

Manager Paschal explained that the proposed amendment concerned Rule 27 – Consideration of Unbudgeted Expenditures. She explained that the current language posed logistical issues for staff due to budget amendment timelines. She proposed the additional language, *“The Rule shall not apply in cases where budget amendment increases revenue and expense by an equal amount and there is no other impact on the general fund.”*

Commissioner Wrenn questioned grant money being a part of the rule. The Board discussed whether grants should be included. It was agreed that the rule would only apply to grants if matching funds were required or the grant required the county to pick up expenses in future years.

Adoption of Purchasing Policy

Manager Paschal stated that the current Purchasing Policy lacked State and Federal requirements. She presented a new policy for the Board’s consideration. The current policy set a \$500 threshold for purchase orders. Staff recommended a purchase order limit of \$2,500. This would cut down on staff time being used to obtain purchase orders for small amounts of spending. The proposed policy referenced a vacant position in the Finance Department that would assume some of the duties of purchasing.

Procurement card purchases would be allowed at \$2,500, but a blanket purchase order would be required for amounts exceeding \$2,500. The Finance Officer would ensure there is money in the budget before purchase orders were approved. Manager Paschal noted that the workload would be increased. The purchase cutoff dates will take place between May 1-15. She noted that the policy had been reviewed by the Attorney and several departments. The policy would be placed on the next regular meeting agenda for action.

Commissioner Smith expressed concerns regarding the recommendation to change from \$500 to \$2,500. Commissioner Ingram questioned what the transactions would be with the \$1,000 threshold. Manager Paschal responded that there would be a 500+ increase in transactions. After further discussion, the Board’s consensus was to recommend increasing the purchase order limit to \$1,000 instead of \$2,500.

Contract Management Policy

Manager Paschal stated that the purpose of the policy was to develop guidelines for approving and storing contracts in a centralized location. She added that electronic signatures would be allowed in the proposed policy. The policy would require the County

Manager and County Attorney to review the policy annually to make sure it remained viable.

There were no questions from the Board.

Co-Square Student Fee

Manager Paschal proposed forming a partnership with Piedmont Community College (PCC) where a lower membership fee would be \$25 per month for students. The current membership fee is \$50 per month. PCC supported the idea and would be expected to promote the reduced membership fee to their students. The Board would need to approve the reduced membership fee as well as a Memorandum of Understanding between Caswell County and Piedmont Community College. She suggested that bringing in college students may encourage potential entrepreneurs and local businesses to become members.

Commissioner Wrenn inquired about the number of paid memberships. Manager Paschal responded that there were approximately 20 members. She added that staff was working on ways to increase membership. She added that Co-Square was an attractive environment for collaboration. Staff will conduct a survey of former members to see why they left and what would encourage them to return as members. The results will be shared with the Board at a later Work Session.

Commissioner Wrenn expressed concern about the expenses related to the facility. The Board would like to see a revenue/expense report for the facility.

Chairman Yarbrough inquired about the benefits of the student memberships. Manager Paschal explained that the membership would have the same benefits as a regular membership. She felt it would be good for PCC students who may need a place to gather during the day or to access broadband after hours.

Commissioner Holt concurred with Ms. Paschal regarding the students being able to use the facility.

Commissioner Ingram asked if students from other surrounding colleges could receive the student membership costs. Manager Paschal stated that the intent was only for PCC students.

After further discussion regarding the student membership, the Board felt that any students who lived in Caswell County and attended any college should receive the \$25 membership fee.

Board and Committee Appointments

Manager Paschal presented a proposed assignment list and asked Board members if there were any Boards and/or Committees they wished to serve on for 2025. The proposed assignments were based on prior commissioners' assignments.

Chairman Yarbrough polled the commissioners. Vice Chair Rose was fine with his assignments. Commissioner Holt asked for information on the Cyber Security Committee. Ms. Williamson, Deputy County Manager, replied that the committee was put in place before an IT Director was hired. Commissioner Ingram concurred with his assignments. Chairman Yarbrough was good with his assignments. Commissioner Wrenn asked why the Cemetery Board was needed.

Manager Paschal noted that Commissioner Gwynn was interested in serving on the Social Services Board.

Chairman Yarbrough asked Commissioners Wrenn and Holt to work with the County Manager and Attorney and divide the at-large assignments.

Commissioner Wrenn noted that many counties in North Carolina had combined the Social Services and Board of Health boards.

Updates

Manager Paschal shared a draft agenda for the Boards' Budget retreat. The retreat will be held January 25, 2025 at 8:00 am in the Gunn Memorial Library. Amy Cannon and Johnna Sharpe will facilitate the retreat. The Chair and Vice Chair met with the facilitators and helped to develop the agenda.

Manager Paschal outlined items for discussion including expectations of Board members and staff; Caswell County demographics; and envisioning the future. Board members were asked to complete a questionnaire and return it to the facilitators by January 15. Board members will have a priority setting session based on the results to identify the top five priorities.

The Manager highlighted other items:

- there will be a 6 percent increase in health insurance premiums so staff is exploring other options. A work session will be held to focus on insurance.
- She spoke about the appeal process for flood maps.
- There is no budget impact with the Riverside grant. Although they have met the investment target, they have not met the employee target but expect to consolidate personnel and meet that target in February.
- Michelle Waddell has been hired by the DSS Board as the new DSS Director. Kudos to the former director who retired after 46 years of service.

Chairman Yarbrough asked if the Attorney and Board had additional updates. There were no updates. The Chair announced that the next regular meeting will be held January 21, 2025 at the Gunn Memorial Library. The Budget retreat will be held January 25, at 8:00 am.

Closed Session:

Vice Chair Rose made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Smith, to adjourn to Closed Session pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11(a)(3) to consult with an attorney employed or retained by the public body in order to preserve the attorney-client privilege between the attorney and the public body. The motion carried unanimously.

The Board returned to open session and the following action was taken:

Commissioner Wrenn moved, seconded by Commissioner Ingram, to approve the settlement letter with Kone Elevator. The motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Rose moved, seconded by Commissioner Smith, to approve the release of the November 18, 2024 Closed Session Minutes pertaining to George Daniel's delinquent taxes and to approve the press release announcing the release of the minutes. The motion carried unanimously.

Adjournment:

Commissioner Wrenn moved, and Commissioner Rose seconded, to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Renee Paschal
Interim Clerk to the Board

Tim Yarbrough
Board Chair