

GRANVILLE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
April 1, 2024
GRANVILLE EXPO AND CONVENTION CENTER
4185 US Highway 15 South, Oxford, North Carolina

PRESENT:

Chair Timothy Karan
Vice Chair Jimmy Gooch
Commissioner Zelodis Jay
Commissioner Robert Williford
Commissioner Sue Hinman
Commissioner Tony W. Cozart
Commissioner Russ May

County Manager Drew Cummings
Deputy County Manager Korena Weichel
County Attorney James C. Wrenn, Jr.

CALL TO ORDER

At 7:00 p.m. Chair Timothy Karan called the meeting to order. Chair Karan noted the revised agenda for adoption.

Motioned by Commissioner Robert Williford, seconded by Commissioner Zelodis Jay, and unanimously carried, the Board adopted the revised agenda.

Chair Karan explained the trial of a new visual system for recording, instructing Commissioners to activate their microphones when speaking and turn them off afterward, mentioning the cameras' zoom function to track active microphones, and expressing excitement about the technology and future live streaming plans.

Commissioner Williford introduced Pastor Glenn Stallsmith from Oxford United Methodist Church, by way of Salem Methodist Church, who had the invocation for the meeting.

Commissioner Williford led the Pledge of Allegiance.

CONSENT AGENDA

Motioned by Commissioner Tony W. Cozart, seconded by Commissioner Jimmy Gooch, and unanimously carried, the Board approved the consent agenda as follows:

A. Approved the following tax refunds, released, and offsets:

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------|
| • Refunds | March 7, 2024 – March 20, 2024: | \$ 11,695.00 |
| • Releases | March 7, 2024 – March 20, 2024: | \$ 548.20 |
| • Write-offs (\$2 and less) | March 7, 2024 – March 20, 2024: | \$ 4.62 |

B. Approved minutes:

- January 29, 2024 Joint Meeting with the Granville County Board of Education

INTRODUCTIONS, RECOGNITIONS, AND PRESENTATIONS

Board Introduced Economic Development Director Joe Stallings

County Manager Drew Cummings introduced Economic Development Director Joseph Stallings who commenced employment on March 18, 2024. Mr. Cummings highlighted Mr. Stallings' extensive experience and qualifications in economic development. He emphasized Mr. Stallings' ability to rebuild the department and capitalize on upcoming opportunities, praising his familiarity with State programs and his track record in both urban and rural settings. The following key points were included in the PowerPoint presentation:

- Over thirteen years of economic development leadership experience.
- Spearheaded initiatives like the Build Ready Sites program at the North Carolina Railroad Company.
- Notable achievements include securing the City of Garner's largest industrial investment.
- Holds a Master of Public Administration from Appalachian State University.
- Focuses on strategic growth and creating a business-friendly environment.

Mr. Stallings expressed gratitude for the warm welcome and conveyed his eagerness to collaborate with the County and its partners to fulfill their vision for Granville County's development.

Board members thanked and welcomed Mr. Stallings.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Amor Agdeppa, 514 Lake Road, Creedmoor, NC, raised concerns about Granville County's perceived lack of growth compared to neighboring counties like Wake, Durham, Alamance, and Vance. Despite nearly 30 years in the county and interactions with past commissioners, Mr. Agdeppa observed minimal development during drives across the area. He mentioned Wake and Durham's rapid growth and questioned why Granville County appeared stagnant. Additionally, he inquired about the proposed Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) building, a \$250 million project slated for the area, and sought clarification on its status.

John E. Markley, 1622 Garrett Farm Road, Stem, NC, shared concerns about the efficiency of the permit system for landowners in the area. He proposed streamlining the process to include all necessary permits in the initial building permit application, particularly highlighting the financial burden on retirees. Mr. Markley suggested offering cost reductions for seniors applying for building permits as an incentive for retirees to settle in the area. He emphasized the potential economic benefits of attracting more retirees to the region. Additionally, Mr. Markley proposed utilizing digital technology, such as digital images or drone footage, to streamline the inspection process for licensed and insured contractors, reducing costs associated with multiple site visits.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

After Holding a Public Hearing, Board Approved Issuing an Order Amending the Property Assessment Manual (pages 352 to 360) for Neighborhood Adjustment Factors

Chair Karan stated the purpose of the public hearing was that Granville County seeks to amend the Granville County Real Property Assessment Manual (2024) which is the schedules real property for market and use value in Granville County as required by General Statute 105-317 by replacing pages 352 through 360. The reason for the replacement of these pages is that the 2018 neighborhood adjustment factors were included in the 2024 Property Assessment Manual in error. North Carolina General Statute 105-317(c)(2)(b) requires the Board of County

Commissioners to hold a public hearing at least seven days before making this change in order to receive comments from the public.

Tax Administrator Jenny Short provided an update on the real property appraisal manual. Ms. Short explained that the proposed manual was presented to the Board of Commissioners on October 16, 2023, and made available for public inspection on the Tax Administration website and a hard copy in the Tax Administration Office. A public hearing was held on November 6, 2023, and then the real property appraisal manual was formally adopted on November 20, 2023, at the Board of Commissioners meeting. However, it was discovered in late February 2024 that the 2018 neighborhood adjustment factors were erroneously included in the 2024 property assessment manual. The correct 2024 neighborhood adjustment factors were used to calculate assessed values for all assessed values mailed to property owners, but the printed manual that was approved contained the 2018 data. The purpose of the current public hearing was to consider modifying the previously approved 2024 real property assessment manual to replace the 2018 neighborhood adjustment factors with the correct 2024 neighborhood adjustment factors, pages 352-360. The proposed modified pages were made available for public inspection on the Tax Administration website and a hard copy in the Tax Administration Office.

Chair Karan declared the public hearing open and noted that Tax Administrator Short's comments would be included in the public hearing.

Chair Karan opened the floor for public comments.

Jaycee Georgiev, 1174 Smith Creek Way, Wake Forest, NC, expressed concerns on behalf of her neighborhood regarding the appraisal process, particularly highlighting the methodology behind land valuation and the need for stability and accuracy in mass appraisals for taxation purposes. She questioned why land is valued differently in various neighborhoods and emphasized the importance of considering factors beyond just land value, such as topography and neighborhood maturity. Ms. Georgiev urged the Board to ensure that values are credible and supported by mathematical models, and she emphasized the need to determine the highest and best use of properties based on relevant legal and policy considerations. Additionally, she raised concerns about using developer land purchases as the basis for tax assessments, suggesting that such transactions may not accurately reflect market value for taxation purposes. She provided a *Standard 6: Mass Appraisal, Reporting* document from the USPAP 2020-2021 edition highlighting these points for the board's consideration.

Sandra Bishop, 1535 Trailwood Drive, Creedmoor, NC, raised several concerns regarding the assessment process and the accuracy of property evaluations in Granville County. She began by addressing the neighborhood multiplier, noting discrepancies in increases and reductions across different neighborhoods, especially regarding homes exceeding certain values. She also questioned the consistency and accuracy of the data in the Granville County Real Property manual, highlighting discrepancies in dates and potential errors within the manual.

Furthermore, Ms. Bishop expressed concerns about property record card errors, emphasizing the need for an audit to correct these errors and ensure fairness for homeowners, particularly senior citizens, the disabled, people of color, and those with diminished capacity to be done by the County and not the citizens themselves. She advocated for a revenue-neutral rate adoption and criticized the lack of transparency regarding market conditions used in assessments.

Ms. Bishop also discussed issues with the Comper for Citizens tool, citing examples of inadequate comparisons for property evaluations and questioning the validity of single-sale comps. Additionally, she highlighted the complexities of complying with Falls Lake watershed rules and the financial burdens placed on property owners due to environmental regulations and water contamination concerns.

Overall, Ms. Bishop argued that the current assessment practices in Granville County lack transparency, consistency, and fairness, leading to unjust taxation and financial burdens for property owners.

Katie Sellgren, 1098 Lake Ridge Drive, Creedmoor, NC, referenced a study from the UNC School of Government regarding equity in North Carolina property tax appraisals. She highlighted that in 2022, 81 out of 100 counties in North Carolina were considered regressive, meaning that higher-value properties were under-assessed while lower-value properties were over-assessed beyond the acceptable range of error. She emphasized that this phenomenon leads to a higher property tax burden for low-income homeowners and communities throughout the state, including in Granville County. Ms. Sellgren shared her personal experience of having her property value and neighborhood multiplier both increase significantly, leading to a disproportionate tax burden on smaller homes and low-income households. Furthermore, she pointed out that this issue is not isolated to 2022 but has been observed consistently from 2019 to 2022, with no counties considered progressive during this period. Ms. Sellgren urged against adopting the proposed neighborhood adjustment factors, arguing that they exacerbate the systematic overvaluation of lower-income homes and recommending alternative solutions to address equity concerns in property tax assessments.

Alice K. Meise, 1103 Lake Ridge Drive, Creedmoor, NC, expressed her concern about the significant increase in her property assessment, which went from \$158,000 to \$333,000 with a 1.5 neighborhood multiplier. She mentioned the absurdity of such a steep increase and questioned the justification behind it, suggesting that perhaps there should be gold under her house to warrant such a valuation. She raised issues related to developments in her community, including concerns about water scarcity due to community wells, as well as the lack of a well-interference ordinance. Ms. Meise pointed out discrepancies in assessments between her subdivision and another development by the same builder, where similar houses were assessed at significantly lower values without the 1.5 multiplier. Additionally, she highlighted inconsistencies in how assessments are calculated based on lot size, with some subdivisions having a uniform price per acre while others are prorated based on lot size. Ms. Meise urged the Board to thoroughly investigate these discrepancies and reassess the valuation process to ensure fairness and accuracy.

Chair Karan asked if the Board had any questions.

Commissioner Cozart asked if there was anyone present from Pearson's Appraisal who could respond to the questions that had been raised.

Appraiser Emmett Curl, Appraiser with Pearson's Appraisals, highlighted that the primary surge in property value was observed in the lower-end properties, contrasting with the slower inflation rate in higher-end properties. He attributed this trend to the affordability factor, noting that properties priced around \$300,000 experienced more demand compared to those priced above \$600,000 or \$700,000. This pricing threshold created a market limitation for higher-end properties, resulting in fewer sales. Additionally, Mr. Curl pointed out that the shortage of inventory had a more pronounced effect on driving up prices in the lower-end property segment compared to the higher-end segment.

County Manager Cummings requested that Mr. Curl provide an introduction and background regarding his expertise in tax appraisal. Apologizing for the oversight, Mr. Curl proceeded to introduce himself. He outlined his extensive experience in the field since his departure from Appalachian State in 1972. He elaborated that he had served as the Tax Administrator in Wake County for 35 years before retiring. However, realizing his continued passion for work, Mr. Curl returned to the field and had been engaged in private contracting for approximately 17 to 18 years.

Mr. Curl continued his explanation, emphasizing the unprecedented inflation rates witnessed in the past four years across the state, not confined to the immediate jurisdiction. He highlighted the significant surge in value primarily concentrated in the lower-end property categories. Using a specific example, he noted a neighborhood where homes of approximately 1,350 square feet had seen remarkable appreciation. Just five years prior, these homes were available for \$150,000, whereas currently they were valued at over \$350,000 to \$400,000, underscoring the substantial increase in lower-end property values.

Transitioning to the concept of the neighborhood factor, Mr. Curl explained its role in the appraisal process, saying that initial valuations were based on a standardized base rate per square foot, catering to a wide range of property values. Subsequently, the analysis delved into specific neighborhoods, characterized by homogeneous and generic attributes. Factors such as the size of homes, sales prices per square foot, and other neighborhood-specific variables were considered to determine valuation adjustments. This detailed approach ensured that the appraisal process accurately reflected market dynamics and trends within each neighborhood.

Commissioner May inquired about the ongoing nature of the appraisal process, seeking assurance regarding the accuracy of the information presented to citizens. Mr. Curl affirmed that the process was indeed ongoing across all 100 counties in the state. Commissioner May then raised concerns about discrepancies identified by a citizen regarding information in the system versus the printed manual for public display. In response, Mr. Curl and Ms. Short clarified that discrepancies typically pertained to features such as storage sheds and garage lean-tos, which were not factored into valuation changes.

Expressing the Board's commitment to ensuring transparency and accuracy, Commissioner May emphasized the importance of addressing citizen concerns comprehensively. Mr. Curl reassured the Board that once the process was complete and the state conducted a sales ratio study, the resulting data would instill confidence in the fairness of the valuation system. He anticipated that the regressivity and progressivity numbers, though technical, would align neutrally, signifying accuracy in assessment.

Further addressing concerns raised about the accuracy of tax cards, Mr. Curl affirmed the commitment to rectifying any inaccuracies and ensuring that citizens paid taxes based on correct information. Acknowledging the complexity of assessing square footage accurately, Mr. Curl reiterated the office's dedication to employing every measure to provide accurate valuations, recognizing heated square footage as a crucial determinant of property value.

Mr. Curl emphasized the challenges associated with obtaining accurate information, particularly regarding square footage, especially in properties with multi-level or partially finished structures with cathedral ceilings. He proposed a solution wherein building plans submitted to the inspection department should be made electronically accessible to every tax office in the state. Drawing from his experience, he highlighted the difficulties faced in Wake County despite their expertise, suggesting that access to these plans could greatly enhance accuracy in property assessments.

Commissioner Williford questioned Mr. Curl regarding the factors that determine the neighborhood multiplier in property valuation. Mr. Curl confirmed that factors such as the type of wells, road infrastructure (paved roads, curb, gutter), and lot sizes are considered in determining the multiplier. He emphasized that these factors are derived from actual sales data within the neighborhood.

Commissioner Williford further inquired about the significance of the multiplier in property valuation, to which Mr. Curl explained that the multiplier is crucial for predicting property values accurately. He clarified that without the multiplier, the sales ratio would be highly erratic.

In response to a hypothetical scenario raised by Commissioner Williford involving a neighborhood with a wide range of property values, Mr. Curl indicated that if such anomalies occurred, adjustments would be made to ensure accuracy. He reiterated that the multiplier is solely based on sales data, without any subjective opinion involved.

Commissioner May raised a final question regarding equity concerns related to the UNC School of Government study. Mr. Curl explained that efforts are made to address equity with each evaluation. He noted that while lower-end properties may have been affected more significantly, equity is still maintained through the ratio of high-end to low-end properties. He expressed confidence in the work done and assured Commissioner May that the questions raised would be appropriately addressed. Commissioner May emphasized the importance of ensuring that citizens have confidence in the evaluation process and suggested that the county attorney and county manager stay vigilant in addressing any doubts that may arise.

County Manager Cummings highlighted the complexity of addressing individual circumstances for the over 34,000 parcels in Granville County. He encouraged residents to reach out to the Tax Administration Office with questions or concerns and mentioned that many people have already done so since the new statements were sent out. He commended the efforts of Pearson's Appraisal and the tax staff in addressing inquiries.

Mr. Curl affirmed their commitment to correcting any incorrect information and emphasized the importance of having specific details to address issues effectively.

Commissioner Hinman inquired about the dates for filing appeals. Mr. Cummings clarified that informal assessor's appeals can be filed until April 29th, while formal appeals can be filed until June 3rd, which is the first meeting of the Board of Commissioners acting as the Board of Equalization and Review. He mentioned that there is still a decent amount of time for residents to file either type of appeal. Additionally, Commissioner Hinman raised a previous arrangement where residents could discuss their concerns directly with representatives after the meeting, and Mr. Cummings informed that another public information session is scheduled before the next meeting on April 15th, followed by an opportunity to meet with representatives from Pearson's Appraisals and the Tax Administration Office.

Commissioner May's final question pertained to the value trend of smaller-sized homes in neighborhoods since 2022. Mr. Curl acknowledged that there has been some increase in value, but not at the same rapid rate as in previous years. He mentioned that 2022 saw the highest inflation in that cycle, and while there has been inflation in 2023, it has not been nearly as significant. Commissioner May referenced an example provided by a citizen whose home was previously valued at \$158,000 and had increased to around \$330,000. Mr. Curl explained that while there has been some increase, it has not maintained the same rate as before due to factors like inventory shortage and reduced competition. He expressed a personal preference for a more stable increase in value.

Chair Karan declared the public hearing closed. He asked the Board if they needed further clarification and they did not. He then stated the recommendation in the agenda packet.

Commissioner Gooch noted that the purpose of the public hearing was to replace pages 352 through 360, and then made a motion to replace those pages.

Motioned by Commissioner Jimmy Gooch, seconded by Commissioner Sue Hinman, and unanimously carried, the Board, after holding a public hearing, approved issuing an order amending the Property Assessment Manual (pages 352 through 360) for neighborhood adjustment factors that will be published as required by law.

After Holding a Public Hearing, Board Approved Resolution Supporting an Application to the Local Government Commission for its Approval of a County Financing Agreement – 2024 North Granville Senior Center

Chair Karan introduced the agenda item to consider a preliminary resolution in support of the planned financing of the North Granville Senior Center.

Chair Karan declared the public hearing open.

Chair Karan recognized Ted Cole, Senior Vice President of Davenport, for a brief overview of the planned financing of the North Granville Senior Center.

Mr. Cole began by acknowledging the presence of Finance Director Steve McNally and Bond Attorney Bob Jessup. He referenced a memo provided in the agenda packet, detailing the financing process for the North Granville Senior Center. Mr. Cole highlighted the project's priority status and the submission of requests for proposals (RFPs) to various banks for funding up to \$3 million over a term of up to 20 years. Proposals were received from four banks: Capital One Public Funding, TD Public Funding, Truist Commercial, and Webster Bank, emphasizing their experience in local government debt transactions. Mr. Cole referred to a table in the memo outlining interest rates provided by these banks for both 15-year and 20-year terms.

Mr. Cole analyzed the interest rates provided, distinguishing between fixed and floating rates, and provided insight into the considerations for term length and prepayment options. Further discussion revolved around prepayment terms and the potential for refinancing in the future to capitalize on lower interest rates. Comparisons were made between 15-year and 20-year terms, aligning with long-term capital planning goals. The rationale behind the recommendation to proceed with Capital One at a 20-year term and a 4.67% interest rate was presented, considering factors such as prepayment flexibility and adherence to planning assumptions.

Mr. Cole outlined the proposed timeline for approval, including the current public hearing adopting a Final Approving Resolution on April 15th, and final approval by the Local Government Commission (LGC) on May 7th, to close the financing by May 21st.

Commissioner Williford sought clarification on the disbursement of funds, querying whether the County would receive 100% of the funds upon selection and deposit, whether invoices would be paid as needed, and if funds can draw interest.

Mr. Cole affirmed Commissioner Williford's understanding, elaborating that funds would be received on the day of closing and would be held in an account accruing interest until expended for project costs.

Commissioner Williford noted an additional fee charged by TD Bank, amounting to \$12,000, which was not explicitly listed in the comparison provided. He noted his awareness of the fee from his participation in a Zoom meeting.

Mr. Cole acknowledged Commissioner Williford's observation, confirming that TD Bank did indeed impose an origination fee, or a fee for legal counsel, which was factored into the comparison, although it was not separately itemized as it was unique to TD Bank.

Chair Karan opened the floor for public comments, inviting those present to address the Board.

Jean A. Lawson, 324 Owens Street, Stovall, NC, expressed sentiments regarding the Northern Granville Senior Center. She mentioned her daily attendance and volunteer work at the center, emphasizing its importance to her since retirement. Ms. Lawson recalled the anticipation

surrounding the promised expansion and renovation of the facility, dating back to last year's announcements and the groundbreaking ceremony. However, she expressed confusion and disappointment that discussions regarding the center's construction were still ongoing in 2024. Ms. Lawson highlighted the need for increased space, improved facilities, and privacy for visitors and staff. She urged the Board to prioritize the needs of elderly citizens in northern Granville County, emphasizing their contributions as taxpayers deserving of equitable resources and support.

John Owens, 8563 Conway Elliot Road, Oxford, NC, expressed gratitude to the commissioners for their longstanding support of the Senior Center program in Granville County, which he described as one of the most outstanding in the state. He credited this success to the commissioners' support over the years and the dedicated staff, particularly Senior Services Director Kathy May and her team. Regarding the North Granville Center, Mr. Owens, a resident of the area, shared his personal connection with the center, including delivering Meals on Wheels to homebound community members. He expressed concern about his ability to continue traveling to the Senior Center in Oxford as he approaches 80 years old, highlighting the importance of providing equal opportunities for all citizens in northern Granville County. Mr. Owens emphasized the positive impact of the Senior Center on its attendees, noting the sense of community, companionship, and enjoyment of various programs. He advocated for additional space, a better building, and expanded programs, urging the board to support the construction of a new facility in Stovall.

Margaret Hart, 9568 Grassy Creek Road, Bullock, NC, shared her positive experience attending the Senior Center with her husband for about a year, noting that they were initially invited by a couple and subsequently met many friendly individuals they otherwise would not have known. She expressed gratitude for the variety of activities offered at the center, including games, bingo, parties, and Bible study, which her husband leads twice a month. Mrs. Hart highlighted the enjoyment of meals provided at the center, as well as the outreach efforts to deliver meals to shut-ins in the community. She acknowledged the challenges posed by increasing attendance, noting that the room feels smaller as the groups grow larger. She commended the efforts of employees Phyllis Blackwell and Tammy Williamson, emphasizing their dedication to treating every senior as special. She mentioned that there have been presentations depicting the proposed Senior Center, and despite discussions about the need for improvements in the northern part of Granville County, progress often seems to shift to other areas. Ms. Hart appealed for support and assistance for the Senior Center in northern Granville County.

Jeff Stovall, 209 Lewis Street, Stovall, NC, a Town of Stovall Commissioner, expressed his gratitude to the county commissioners for their dedicated work, acknowledging the often-unacknowledged tireless efforts they put in. He conveyed the full support of the Town of Stovall for the proposed Senior Center, informing that a public hearing was recently held to rezone the property for its intended use, demonstrating their commitment to facilitating its development and prosperity. Mr. Stovall highlighted the positive community sentiment surrounding the Senior Center and emphasized its significance not only for the seniors but also for the broader community, including younger generations. He invited those in support to raise their hands, showcasing widespread community backing for the project. Mr. Stovall described the Senior Center as more than just an amenity, but rather a vital hub for community interaction and engagement. He assured the County Commissioners that investing in the Senior Center would yield significant returns, both socially and economically, emphasizing its importance for the entire community. Mr. Stovall concluded by thanking the commissioners for their dedication and encouraging them to continue their good work.

Don Fick, 607 West Quail Ridge Road, Oxford, NC, disclosed that he is a candidate in the November 2024 election as a District 3 Granville County Board of Commissioner, before expressing his support for the proposed Senior Center. Despite the geographic distance between

District 3 and the Stovall Senior Center, Mr. Fick visited the center to assess its condition firsthand and concluded that it was functionally obsolete and inadequate for its purpose. He affirmed that building a new senior center was the right choice. Mr. Fick then turned his attention to the financing aspect of the project, noting that the offered interest rate of below 5% was favorable, especially considering current market conditions. He noted the opportunity to refinance after ten years if there was a decrease in interest rates. Despite the project being outside his district, Mr. Fick emphasized that the decision should be guided by the collective interest in the welfare of Granville County as a whole. He concluded by expressing his support for the project, recognizing its potential long-term benefits for the community.

Annette P. Myers, 6587 Alvis Brook Road, Oxford, NC, acknowledged the diverse population and agrarian nature of northern Granville County, emphasizing the community's tradition of relying on neighbors before County services. She underscored that while the area may not heavily burden County finances, there are times when it requires attention. Ms. Myers highlighted the multi-generational culture of self-sufficiency instilled in the residents, noting that many are descendants of the Greatest Generation and were raised with similar values. She emphasized the growing senior population nationally and in Granville County, emphasizing the importance of social engagement for emotional, mental, and physical well-being. Expressing gratitude for the proposed Senior Center, Ms. Myers acknowledged former Board of Commissioner Chair Tony Cozart's statement regarding the need to expand services in Stovall to align with those offered at other centers in the County. Despite delays in the project timeline, Ms. Myers expressed appreciation for the Board's attention to the matter and urged continued progress.

Leroy Anderson, Kinton Fork, NC, referenced the historical context of the building, highlighting its age and original purpose as a three-classroom structure built in 1940. Mr. Anderson emphasized the need for action, urging the Commissioners to do what is right and good.

Tiana Royster, 209 Gillis Street, Stovall, NC, expressed her support for the construction of the new senior center. She emphasized that it is not just the senior population, but also the younger generation who desire this facility. Ms. Royster shared personal anecdotes about her family's connection to the center, highlighting its significance in their lives. She acknowledged the increase in property taxes for residents like herself and stressed the importance of approving the loan for the new center, asserting that the community deserves it.

Patricia Boyd, 9027 Grassy Creek, Road, Bullock, NC, spoke from her seat in the audience and stated that she enjoys attending the Senior Center in Stovall and suggested that if the building had been constructed six to seven years ago when it was first discussed, \$340,000 might have been sufficient to cover the costs.

After hearing public comments, the public hearing ended. Chair Karan asked if the Board had any questions.

Commissioner May expressed appreciation for the discussion but emphasized the importance of unity within the county. He cautioned against dividing the county into regions, stating that such divisions could lead to a loss for the entire community. He highlighted that while the southern Granville area did not receive a brand-new senior center, there was a substantial investment of \$340,000 in the Creedmoor Community Center to accommodate senior activities. Commissioner May underscored the need to avoid pitting different regions of the county against each other and emphasized the importance of unity in decision-making.

Commissioner Hinman requested assistance from the audience in finding a suitable candidate to fill the vacant position on the Senior Services Advisory Board, emphasizing the importance of having representation to make decisions concerning senior citizen affairs.

Commissioner Jay expressed gratitude to the attendees from the northern end of the county for voicing their concerns and emphasized the importance of addressing the long-standing need for a new senior center. He recounted a past visit to the Stovall Senior Center where he observed the overwhelming attendance and the challenges faced due to limited space, highlighting the necessity for improved facilities. Commissioner Jay recounted an experience playing bingo at the Senior Center and expressed the commitment to enhancing the amenities to better accommodate the community's needs.

Chair Karan noted that the commitment to the Senior Center project has been unwavering, acknowledging that timelines can sometimes be extended due to various priorities. He mentioned some adjustments made to the project scope but expressed excitement about its potential impact. Chair Karan metaphorically described the allocation of resources as a pendulum, highlighting the need to balance various needs across different areas. He emphasized the stability of tax rates in recent years and concluded by calling for a vote.

Motioned by Commissioner Zelodis Jay, seconded by Commissioner Robert Williford, and unanimously carried, the Board, after holding a public hearing, approved adopting the Resolution Supporting an Application to the Local Government Commission for its Approval of a County Financing Agreement for the North Granville Senior Center and tentatively accepting the proposal for 20-year financing from Capital One (with first principal payment made on 4/1/25) subject to the Board's final approval of all financing terms at a subsequent meeting as follows:

**RESOLUTION SUPPORTING AN APPLICATION TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT
COMMISSION FOR ITS APPROVAL OF A COUNTY FINANCING AGREEMENT
2024 NORTH GRANVILLE SENIOR CENTER**

Introduction --

The Board of Commissioners of Granville County has previously determined to carry out a project to acquire, construct, equip and finance a new senior center.

The Board has also made a preliminary determination to finance this project through an installment financing, as authorized under Section 160A-20 of the North Carolina General Statutes. In an installment financing, the County's repayment obligation is secured by a mortgage-type interest in all or part of the property being financed, but not by any pledge of the County's taxing power or any specific revenue stream. In this case, the County expects that the senior center will serve as the collateral.

State law requires that the County's financing be approved by the North Carolina Local Government Commission, a division of the North Carolina State Treasurer's office. Under the LGC's guidelines, this governing body must make certain findings of fact to support the County's application for the LGC's approval of the County's financing arrangements.

1. THE GRANVILLE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS RESOLVES, AS FOLLOWS:

(a) The County makes a preliminary determination to finance up to approximately \$3,000,000 to pay project costs.

(b) The Board will determine the final amount to be financed by a later resolution. The final amount financed may be slightly lower or slightly higher than \$3,000,000. Some of the financing proceeds may represent reimbursement to the County for prior expenditures on project costs, and some

proceeds may be used to pay financing expenses or to provide any appropriate reserves.

2. THE BOARD MAKES THE FOLLOWING FINDINGS OF FACT IN SUPPORT OF THE COUNTY'S APPLICATION TO THE LGC:

(a) The proposed project is necessary and appropriate for the County under all the circumstances.

(b) The proposed installment financing is preferable to a bond issue for the same purposes. This financing is for a discrete facility and is therefore particularly suitable for installment financing.

The County has no meaningful ability to issue non-voted general obligation bonds for this project. This project will produce no revenues that could be used to support a self-liquidating financing. The County expects that in the current interest rate environment for municipal securities there would be no material difference in the overall financing costs between general obligation bonds and installment financings for this project.

(c) The estimated sums to fall due under the proposed financing contract are adequate and not excessive for the proposed purpose. The County will closely review proposed financing rates against market rates with guidance from the LGC and the County's financial adviser. All amounts financed will reflect either approved contracts, previous actual expenditures, or professional estimates.

(d) As confirmed by the County's Finance Officer, (i) the County's debt management procedures and policies are sound and in compliance with law, and (ii) the County is not in default under any of its debt service obligations.

(e) Given the County's need for the project, the Board believes that the effect on the County's budget and the tax rate from repaying the borrowed money will be reasonable under all the circumstances. The Board will work to minimize the tax rate impact in a manner consistent with moving forward with the project and addressing the full range of County needs.

(f) The County Attorney is of the opinion that the proposed project is authorized by law and is a purpose for which public funds of the County may be expended pursuant to the Constitution and laws of North Carolina.

3. ADDITIONALLY, THE BOARD RESOLVES AS FOLLOWS:

(a) The County intends that the adoption of this resolution will be a declaration of the County's official intent to reimburse project expenditures from financing proceeds. The County intends that funds that have been advanced for project costs, or which may be so advanced, from the County's general fund, or any other County fund, may be reimbursed from the financing proceeds.

(b) The Board directs the County Manager and the Finance Officer to take all appropriate steps toward the completion of the financing, including (i) completing an application to the LGC for its approval of the proposed financing, and (ii) soliciting one or more proposals from financial institutions to provide the financing. The Board ratifies all prior actions of County representatives in this regard.

(c) This resolution takes effect immediately.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Board Approved Award of North Granville Senior Center Construction Project

Development Services Director Scott Phillips presented an update on the construction project for the North Granville Senior Center. He spoke from a PowerPoint presentation detailing the project's background, design, and construction details. He explained that on March 19th, sealed bids were received by Granville County for single-prime, fixed-price construction services of the facility. Eleven (11) proposals were received and the certified bid tabulation was included in the agenda packet. Mr. Phillips highlighted the following:

- Recognized the project architect and discussed the need for a single prime fixed-price construction service contract for the center.
- Outlined the need to replace the existing aging facility due to space constraints and projected future needs.
- Discussed the design phase conducted by Oakley Collier Architects over the last 10 months.
- Presented architectural illustrations of the interior spaces, including the cafeteria, arts, and crafts areas, were presented.
- Shared details of the energy-efficient design, including the layout and amenities of the center, were provided.
- Showed a site plan and floor plan of the facility, including restroom facilities with extra-wide stalls for mobility issues, were shown.
- Discussed the bid process and the range of the 11 proposals received.
- Outlined four alternate options for consideration, including canopy roof, floor tile substitution, generator installation, and decking material substitution.

Mr. Phillips then gave his recommendation.

Commissioner Gooch sought clarification on the necessity of alternate number three, the generator, and its capability to power the entire building automatically during emergencies. Mr. Phillips confirmed the generator's capacity and automatic switchover capability, adding that it could run on diesel or propane.

Commissioner Williford inquired about the possibility of preparing for the generator installation in the future. Mr. Phillips affirmed the feasibility of such preparations.

Commissioner May then asked for Mr. Scott's recommendation regarding the additional alternates. Mr. Scott expressed the importance of all four alternates, particularly highlighting the significance of the generator for emergency shelter purposes.

Commissioner Jay agreed concerning the generator, emphasizing the importance of having emergency shelter facilities in the northern part of the county.

Chair Karan restated the recommendation, including the four add-on options.

Motioned by Commissioner Robert Williford seconded by Commissioner Zelodis Jay, and unanimously carried, the Board approved awarding the single-prime, fixed-price construction services contract to Racanelli Construction South, Inc. for the base-bid amount of \$3,060,000 and add alternates in the amount of \$221,300 and authorized the County Attorney to finalize the contract and the County Manager to execute the contract document.

1. (ADD) Alternate G-1: Provide a Canopy Roof for the outdoor deck; \$38,500.
2. (ADD) Alternate G-2: Substituting Vinyl Floor Tile with Ceramic Quarry Floor Tile within the Kitchen area; \$7,600.

3. (ADD) Alternate G-3: Providing a 150-kW standby generator and Automatic Transfer Switch; \$152,000.
4. (ADD) Alternate G-4: Substituting Treated Wood Floor Decking with Composite Floor Decking on outside deck; \$23,200.

PURCHASING

Board Approved Granville Athletic Park (GAP) Security Enhancements

Chair Karan introduced the agenda item concerning additional security measures at the Granville Athletic Park (GAP), stating the purpose of considering the installation of security camera systems.

Deputy County Manager Korena Weichel addressed the Board regarding the proposal, recommending Newcomb Tech for the project due to cost-effectiveness and ownership rights of surveillance footage.

Commissioner Williford reported that a \$15,000 contribution had been received from Bailey Farms, Randy and Debbie Bailey, toward the project.

Commissioner Hinman inquired about whether the proposed security cameras could have helped in a previous incident where a park user collapsed. Ms. Weichel explained that while the cameras wouldn't cover the trail system, they would monitor parking lots and entrance areas.

Commissioner May asked about live monitoring and the capability to capture license plate details, to which Ms. Weichel confirmed that while live monitoring might be limited, the cameras are designed to capture license plate details from both directions at each location. Ms. Weichel also said that the selected cameras have high resolution, potentially capturing the necessary detail.

Motioned by Commissioner Russ May, seconded by Commissioner Tony W. Cozart, and unanimously carried, the Board approved contracting with Newcomb Tech for installation of a security camera system at the Granville Athletic Park in an amount not to exceed \$30,000 (to allow for incidentals) and authorized the County Manager and County Attorney to finalize and execute a contract.

COUNTY MANAGER'S REPORT

Board Approved Lease Agreement for 204 Williamsboro Street, Oxford

County Manager Cummings presented a proposed lease for additional office space at 204 Williamsboro Street, explaining that due to growth in administrative staff since October 2022, there's been a need for more space beyond the already full 104 Belle Street administration building. He detailed the addition of four new positions and the significance of the new location, ideally situated near the existing office. The lease is considered a short-term solution with hopes for a longer-term agreement for the entire building before July 1st.

Commissioner Williford inquired about the ownership and potential use of the parking lot adjacent to the proposed office space, clarifying that it is owned by the city. Mr. Cummings confirmed that the lot comes with the building and would be available for exclusive use when renting the entire building, but currently, they have access to it regularly. County Attorney Wrenn mentioned the need for legal agreements.

Commissioner Jay asked about the location of the parking lot, which Mr. Cummings confirmed to be behind the building.

Motioned by Commissioner Robert Williford, seconded by Commissioner Jimmy Gooch, and unanimously carried, the Board approved a short-term lease for the second floor of 204 Williamsboro Street and authorized the County Manager and County Attorney to finalize and execute the lease.

COUNTY ATTORNEY'S REPORT

County Attorney Jim Wrenn did not have any matters to report.

PRESENTATIONS BY COUNTY BOARD MEMBERS

Commissioner Jay reported that KARTS and DSS met earlier that morning and resolved some transportation issues. Additionally, he reported that he attended a ribbon-cutting ceremony and met a gentleman who will be doing some work at the Granville Athletic Park (GAP). He wished everyone a Happy Easter.

Commissioner Williford expressed gratitude for the turnout at the meeting and the community's interest in Granville County. He extended thanks to the Bailey family for their contribution towards the cameras at Granville Athletic Park (GAP).

Commissioner Hinman informed the audience that the Granville County Library Board of Trustees meeting for the month has been rescheduled to April 12th at 4:30 p.m., emphasizing that it is an open meeting. Additionally, she mentioned the community listening session for Communities in Schools scheduled for the next morning, April 2, 2024, at 10:00 a.m., inviting attendees to participate.

Commissioner May extended a warm welcome to the new Economic Development Director, expressing anticipation for the positive contributions that he will bring to the County. He expressed gratitude to the County Manager and interview team for the selection. He also reiterated his interest in receiving an update from KARTS and emphasized the importance of developing a more service throughout the county.

Commissioner Gooch extended a warm welcome to the new Economic Development Director and expressed gratitude to all attendees, especially those who contributed to discussions on tax matters and public comments, as well as visitors from Stovall. He highlighted the significance of the North Granville Senior Center project initiated in 2017, which concluded with the approval of financing and contracts during the meeting. He thanked the board for supporting all options, emphasizing the importance of having a generator for emergency shelter purposes. He said he hoped everyone had a good Easter.

Chair Karan reflected on the quality of services offered through senior services, attributing the attendance at the meeting to the value of these services. He acknowledged the less-than-desirable current location but praised the dedicated staff. Chair Karan then highlighted the success story of a local event, the Viking Experience, organized by community members. The event grew from a small gathering to a large-scale two-day event attracting over 6,000 attendees. He commended Angela Allen, the Tourism Development Authority Director, for her role in supporting and facilitating the event's growth, expressing optimism for its continued success.

ANY OTHER MATTERS

Notice of 2024 Tax Revaluation Information Session

Chair Karan announced the upcoming tax revaluation information session:

A Tax Revaluation Information Session will be held on Monday, April 15, 2024, at 5:30 p.m. at the Granville County Convention & Expo Center, 4185 Highway 15, Oxford, NC. After a presentation, Tax staff and representatives from Pearson's Appraisal Service, Inc. will be available to answer any questions.

Any questions should be directed to Jenny Short, Tax Administrator, at 919-603-1317 or emailed to reval.2024@granvillecounty.org.

ADJOURNMENT

Motioned by Commissioner Robert Williford, seconded by Commissioner Russ May, and unanimously carried, the Board adjourned at 9:11 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Debra A. Weary, NCMCC, CMC
Clerk to the Board