

GRANVILLE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
March 18, 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 7:01 p.m. Chair Timothy Karan called the meeting to order. Commissioner Zelodis Jay had the invocation and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

CONSENT AGENDA

Motioned by Commissioner Russ May, seconded by Commissioner Zelodis Jay, and unanimously carried, the Board approved the consent agenda as follows:

A. Approved Budget Amendment #8 for fiscal year 2023-2024.

BUDGET AMENDMENT #8
March 18, 2024
Legal Document

Be it ordained, the FY 2023-2024 Annual Budget Ordinance is hereby amended as follows:

GENERAL FUND

Expenditures	Increase	Decrease	Total
Public Safety			\$ 32,780
Emergency Management	\$7,780		
Animal Control	\$25,000		
Community Services			\$ (100,000)
Economic Development		(\$100,000)	
Human Services			\$ 50,968
Veterans Services	\$10,000		
HCCBG & Transportation	\$12,500		
Oxford Senior Center	\$25,568		
Senior Center - North	\$400		
Senior Center - South	\$2,500		
Education			\$ 30,000
Granville County School System	\$30,000		
Area Projects and Other Appropriations			\$ 100,000
Non-Departmental	\$100,000		
		Total Expenditures	\$ 113,748
Revenues			
Ad Valorem Taxes	30,000		
Restricted and Intergovernmental	1,075,968		
Appropriated Fund Balance		(\$992,220)	
		Total Revenues	\$ 113,748

CONVENIENCE SITE FUND			
Expenditures	Increase	Decrease	Total
Landfill Operations	\$36,000		
	Total Expenditures		\$ 36,000
Revenues			
Collection Fees	\$36,000		
	Total Revenues		\$ 36,000

B. Approved the following tax refunds, releases, and offsets:

- Refunds February 22, 2024 – March 6, 2024: \$ 16.36
- Releases February 22, 2024 – March 6, 2024: \$3,364.08
- Write-offs (\$2 and less) February 22, 2024 – March 6, 2024: \$ 36.60

C. Adopted Resolution Identifying Additional Review Officers for Granville County.

Resolution Identifying Additional Review Officers

for

Granville County

WHEREAS, G.S. 47-30.2 requires that the Board of County Commissioners in each County to appoint one or more persons to serve as Review Officer to review each plat before it is recorded and certify that it meets the statutory requirements for recording; and

WHEREAS, it is the desire of the Granville County Board of County Commissioners to insure an expeditious review of all maps and plats as required by G.S. 47-30.2 before they are presented to the Register of Deeds for recording;

WHEREAS, Scott Phillips, Director of Development Services, Barry Baker, Planning Director, Jenny Griffin, Tax Administrator, and Eric Dodson, GIS/Tax Mapper were previously appointed as Review Officers as required by G.S. 47-30.2.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Angela Blount, Planner and Carlton Thornton, Assistant Planning Director are hereby appointed as additional Review Officers as required by G.S. 47-30.2.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a copy of this Resolution be recorded in the Granville County Register of Deeds Office.

ADOPTED, this the 18th day of March 2024.

D. Approved LinkedIn Learning one-year subscription renewal in the amount of \$13,125 and authorized the County Manager to execute the order and contract.

Chair Karan emphasized that every Granville County citizen with a Granville County library card can access free LinkedIn Learning services through the County, aiming to improve staff and citizen professional development.

INTRODUCTIONS, RECOGNITIONS, AND PRESENTATIONS

Fair Housing Month Proclamation

Realtor and Broker Penny Alford Rogers of Northern Point Realty came forward to receive the Fair Housing Month Proclamation. Ms. Rogers is the 2024 Kerr Lake Region Director and a member of the 2024 Durham Regional Association of Realtors Board of Directors. Commissioner Cozart presented the following proclamation on behalf of the Board:

Proclamation Recognizing Fair Housing Month

WHEREAS, The Fair Housing Act, enacted on April 11, 1968, enshrined into federal law the goal of eliminating racial segregation and ending housing discrimination in the United States; and

WHEREAS, The Fair Housing Act prohibits discrimination in housing based on race, color, religion, sex, familial status, national origin, and disability, and commits recipients of federal funding to affirmatively further fair housing in their communities; and

WHEREAS, Granville County is committed to the mission and intent of Congress to provide fair and equal housing opportunities for all; and

WHEREAS, our social fabric, the economy, health, and environment are strengthened in diverse, inclusive communities; and

WHEREAS, more than fifty years after the passage of the Fair Housing Act, discrimination persists, and many communities remain segregated; and

WHEREAS, acts of housing discrimination and barriers to equal housing opportunity are repugnant to a common sense of decency and fairness; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, THAT the Granville County Board of Commissioners does hereby declare the month of April 2024 as

Fair Housing Month

In Granville County as an inclusive community committed to fair housing, and to promoting appropriate activities by private and public entities to provide and advocate for equal housing opportunities for all residents and prospective residents of Granville County.

Small Farms Week Proclamation

Chair of the Granville County Cooperative Extension Advisory Leadership Council and small farmer Laura Gable came forward to receive the Small Farms Week Proclamation. Chair Karan presented the following proclamation on behalf of the Board:

Proclamation Recognizing Small Farms Week in Granville County

WHEREAS, small farms are integral to Granville County's agricultural heritage, embodying resilience and tradition, and Granville County farmers contribute to a diverse agricultural landscape, producing crops such as fruits, vegetables, field crops, and livestock; and

WHEREAS, Granville County cherishes its agricultural roots, celebrates the innovation and resilience of its small farmers, who continually seek new paths to profitability and sustainability, and recognizes their vital role in driving economic growth, promoting food security, and fostering community resilience; and

WHEREAS, it is imperative to honor the dedication, hard work, and contributions of small farmers in Granville County, who enrich our local food systems and cultural heritage; and

WHEREAS, the Cooperative Extension at North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University, in partnership with North Carolina State University, the United States Department of Agriculture, and the North Carolina Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, has played a pivotal role in providing support and resources to small farmers; and

WHEREAS, the Granville County's Cooperative Extension has provided invaluable support to small farmers recognizing its contributions to our community;

NOW, THEREFORE, the Granville County Board of Commissioners proclaims March 24-30, 2024 as

Small Farms Week

Urging all residents to celebrate the diversity, innovation, and resilience of our small farm communities and to support local farmers in their pursuit of profitability and sustainability.

Board Updated on 2024 Revaluation

Tax Administrator Jenny Short presented an update on the 2024 property tax reevaluation process for Granville County. Appraiser Emmett Curl from Pearson's Appraisal Service was in attendance. Tax Administrator Short noted that the last reevaluation occurred in 2018, and since then, the real estate market in Granville County has significantly strengthened. The purpose of the reevaluation was to align property tax values with their true market value as the 2018 values did not reflect the current market. Consequently, property values experienced a substantial increase, with the typical property owner seeing about a 70% rise in their property's assessed value.

Tax Administrator Short explained the concept of a revenue-neutral tax rate and mentioned that it would be determined and published by mid-May of 2024. The Board of Commissioners could adopt this rate, but it was not mandatory. The actual tax rate would be adopted in June 2024, as part of the fiscal year 2024-2025 budget. There are 33,882 parcels in Granville County, with an overall increase in assessed value of about 80%. The total assessed value of real property in Granville County before revaluation was \$4,147,775,491.00, increasing to \$7,564,846,757.00 after revaluation.

Ms. Short explained that the assessment notices sent to property owners, which included information on how to appeal and the deadlines. She also mentioned the Comper for Citizens tool, an interactive map-based tool for accessing comparable sales data used during the reevaluation process. The three steps of the appeal process were outlined: an informal appeal with the Tax Administration office, a formal appeal with the Board of Equalization and Review, and an appeal to the North Carolina Property Tax Commission.

Ms. Short concluded by mentioning property tax relief options available to Granville County citizens, including relief for the elderly, disabled, and disabled veterans, along with the Circuit Breaker Tax Deferment Program. She encouraged individuals with questions to contact the Tax Administration office or visit the Granville County website.

Commissioner Jay inquired about the start date for the elderly discount, to which Ms. Short clarified that individuals must be 65 as of January 1, 2024, and must apply by June 1st for it to take effect on their bill.

Commissioner Williford inquired about the process for obtaining applications for the elderly discount. Ms. Short explained that individuals could acquire these applications in three ways: by visiting the Tax Administration office, accessing them on the North Carolina Department of Revenue website, or requesting them by phone to be sent via mail.

Commissioner Hinman expressed gratitude for Ms. Short and her staff's handling of concerns about tax bills, acknowledging the challenges they face and praising their responsiveness and reassurance to concerned citizens.

Commissioner Williford echoed Commissioner Hinman's sentiments and encouraged audience members to inform seniors about available tax relief programs and assist them in accessing the necessary information.

Commissioner Gooch inquired about the assessment of motor vehicle taxes, which Ms. Short explained is conducted at the State level through Tech Data Services, with opportunities for appeal through the County.

Commissioner Gooch inquired that programs for the elderly, disabled, and veterans are set and regulated by the State, with the County facilitating them and any changes needing to come through the State legislature. Ms. Short confirmed.

Commissioner May asked about assistance for veterans, to which Ms. Short confirmed that veterans are referred to the Tax Administration office for assistance as needed.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

No one came forward for public comments.

RECESS

Chair Karan called for a brief recess at 7:28 p.m. in order for Tax Administrator Short, Appraiser Emmett Curl of Pearson's Appraisal Service, and attendees with questions or comments regarding revaluation to go to the meeting room next door. Attendees were encouraged to reconvene in the main meeting area after the discussion. The meeting resumed at 7:34 p.m.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

After Holding a Legislative Public Hearing, Board Approved Rezoning Map Amendment Petition from Steven Hayes of Gatekeeper Investments, LLC, for Property Frontages on NC Highway 56 and NC Highway 96 and Adoption of Comprehensive Plan Consistency Statement

The purpose of the next item was to conduct a legislative hearing for Gatekeeper Investments rezoning application for properties located at both NC 56 and NC 96 Highways. Chair Karan declared the public hearing open and recognized Planning Director Barry Baker for a brief overview.

Planning Director Baker stated that all public notices as required by local and state law have been accomplished. He presented a proposal for rezoning a property located at Wilton Crossroads from Agricultural Residential (AR-40) to Neighborhood Business (NB) zoning. Mr. Steven Hayes of Gatekeeper Investments, LLC petitioned to rezone 4 lots (Lot #1, Lot #2, Lot #3, and Lote #5) recorded in Plat Book 52, page 179. He spoke from the presentation included in the agenda packet, which included pictures of property frontages on NC Highway 56 and NC Highway 96.

Planning Director Baker reported that the Planning Board held a public hearing on February 15, 2024, and unanimously recommended approval of the rezoning. He mentioned that the written consistency statement, reasonableness statement, and spot zoning analysis were provided for reference in the agenda packet. He said that the Comprehensive Plan encourages commercial development, particularly in key areas, aiming to prevent retail leakage to neighboring counties. This leakage occurs when residents shop or work elsewhere, resulting in lost sales tax revenue for Granville.

Mr. Baker reiterated that the Planning Board concluded that the proposed rezoning aligns with the adopted Comprehensive Plan and is reasonable, given its location along two major highways. They also determined that approving this rezoning would not amount to spot zoning.

Mr. Baker explained that there are two main types of general-use commercial zoning: Neighborhood Business (NB) and Highway Business (HB). Neighborhood Business zoning is stricter than Highway Business zoning, primarily because it imposes significant restrictions on outside storage of goods at commercial properties. He referred to the screen, displaying the allowed land uses in Neighborhood Business zoning. In zoning, there are permitted uses, permitted uses with specific conditions, minor special uses, and major special uses, each requiring different levels of approval.

Chair Karan opened the floor for anyone wanting to make comments.

Anna Elliott, 2486 Patton Lane, Franklinton, NC, expressed her support for the development of the land across from her residence in Copper Creek subdivision. While she acknowledged the developer, Steven Hayes, for his reputable work, she voiced concerns about potential traffic issues resulting from the development. Ms. Elliot emphasized the dangers posed by fast-moving traffic near the intersection and highlighted the safety risks, especially for teenage drivers in the area. She expressed a desire for carefully planned growth to prevent the area from becoming congested like Highway 42 in Johnston County. Ms. Elliot also raised concerns about the lack of State-maintained roads in her neighborhood and urged the Board to advocate for safety measures with the Department of Transportation (DOT). Additionally, she mentioned security concerns at local businesses and emphasized the importance of maintaining property values and community safety. Ms. Elliot implored the Board to prioritize safety and vigilance as development progresses, especially given the presence of schools along NC Highway 56.

Steven Hayes, 28 Hayes Court, Franklinton, NC, introduced himself as a local resident and developer with extensive experience building in Granville County. Through his company Gatekeeper Investments, he expressed his commitment to providing businesses that benefit the community. Mr. Hayes acknowledged the traffic concerns in the area and reminisced about the changes he has witnessed due to growth over the years. He emphasized the inevitability of growth continuing and expressed his intention to address the community's needs through the development project in Wilton. Mr. Hayes highlighted his track record of responsible development and reaffirmed his willingness to contribute positively to the community.

Chair Karan declared the public hearing closed and then retracted it to see if Board members had questions.

Commissioner May disclosed that the applicant, Mr. Hayes, had built his home before he became a commissioner and currently had standing in their subdivision homeowner association, noting it was a potential conflict. Commissioner May noted that he sought guidance from County Attorney Wrenn who confirmed that his recusal was appropriate under statutory requirements. Attorney Wrenn suggested noting Commissioner May's recusal in the minutes, and affirmed that it was fitting according to the statute as an associational relationship.

Motioned by Commissioner Robert Williford, seconded by Commissioner Tony Cozart, and unanimously carried, 6-0, the Board recused Commissioner May from voting on this matter.

Chair Karan then declared the public hearing closed.

Commissioner Hinman raised a concern about the potential impact on traffic and asked if there was any action that could be taken to involve the Department of Transportation (DOT) more extensively. Chair Karan mentioned that there would be a comprehensive traffic impact analysis conducted as part of the process. Planning Director Baker explained that if the area were rezoned to commercial, each use would need a driveway permit, giving DOT the opportunity to review and require improvements before issuing permits. He also mentioned involvement by Capital Area Metro Planning Organization (CAMPO) in the area, starting in July, and encouraged community involvement. Additionally, Mr. Baker suggested considering lowering the speed limit near schools, although no contact had been made with the DOT about this issue yet.

Commissioner May sought clarification from Planning Director Baker regarding the potential impact on traffic. When Commissioner May asked, Attorney Wrenn affirmed that Commissioner May could inquire about traffic matters without conflicting with his recusal. Mr. Baker explained that when additional roads are constructed, it may trigger a traffic impact analysis. He mentioned

that the local traffic impact analysis threshold is 800 trips per day, but the specific land uses and their timing are uncertain in this rezoning case. The DOT has standards and can require improvements when issuing driveway permits for connections to state roads. He emphasized that the DOT studies areas for new driveway connections and can mandate improvements as necessary before issuing permits.

Commissioner Gooch inquired about the nature of the improvements, such as turn lanes, that the DOT could require. Mr. Baker confirmed that such improvements could include items such as turn lanes, and he emphasized that the DOT would determine the specific requirements.

Attorney Wrenn asked whether the public hearing had been officially closed. Chair Karan affirmed that it had indeed been closed.

Attorney Wrenn noted that the recused member should refrain from participating in the debate once the question was called.

Motioned by Commissioner Zelodis Jay, seconded by Commissioner Sue Hinman, and unanimously carried, 6-0 (Commissioner Russ May was recused), the Board approved the zoning map amendment petition from Steven Hayes of Gatekeep Investments, LLC to rezone 4 lots (Lot #1, Lot #2, Lot #3, and Lot #5) recorded at Plat Book 52, Page 179 that have frontage on both NC 56 Highway and NC 96 Highway in Wilton as follows:

APPROVED AN ORDINANCE THAT AMENDS THE GRANVILLE COUNTY ZONING MAP FOR PROPERTY IDENTIFIED AS TAX MAP #182700507440, TAX MAP#182700600358, TAX MAP #182700602140, AND TAX MAP #182700605089 FROM AGRICULTURAL RESIDENTIAL 40 DISTRICT (AR-40) TO NEIGHBORHOOD BUSINESS (NB) AND SERVES AS THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS' WRITTEN PLAN CONSISTENCY AND REASONABLENESS STATEMENT AND SMALL-SCALE REZONING ANALYSIS

EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS MATTERS

Board Approved 911 Board Radio Grant

Emergency Communications Director Trent Brummitt discussed a grant proposal from the 911 Advisory Board. Mr. Brummitt explained that the grant aims to purchase five new portable radios, one for each authorized position in the 911 center, to serve as backups in case of onsite radio failure. These radios would provide an added level of redundancy and could be used during evacuations or when transitioning between locations.

Chair Karan read the recommendation. Mr. Brummitt added that the matter had been reviewed by the County Attorney.

Motioned by Commissioner Russ May, seconded by Commissioner Robert Williford, and unanimously carried, the Board approved the purchase of five portable radios from Mobile Communications America in the amount of \$41,654.45 from funding that will be reimbursed with 911 Board grant funds, and authorized the County Manager to execute the contract once finalized by the County Attorney.

SHERIFF'S MATTERS

Board Approved Adjustments to Part-Time Courthouse Security Classification and Part-Time Pay Rate of \$22 Per Hour

Chief Deputy Kevin Buster reported that Sheriff Robert Fountain had a death in his family and was unable to attend. He then addressed the Board regarding a proposed adjustment to meet the

current and future needs of the courthouse. He proposed changing the part-time courthouse security pay rate to \$22 per hour.

Chair Karan referred to the background information and recommendation in the agenda packet.

Commissioner May expressed a concern that the Board would be assured that positions would be filled by certified law enforcement officers, specifically those who are BLET certified and fully capable physically and through their training to take on the task at the proposed rate. Chief Deputy Buster confirmed that only certified deputies meeting all state requirements would be hired for these positions.

Mr. Cummings explained that the transition to the North Carolina E-courts system, of which Granville County is part of the fourth wave of courthouses in North Carolina, may cause significant backups and longer lines, especially initially. As a result, the County has reviewed security measures and is preparing to add more staff to assist with crowd control and security throughout the courthouse.

Chief Deputy Buster clarified that the specialized court officers being hired will have full arrest authority and will be responsible for maintaining security inside and outside the courthouse. These officers will work alongside bailiffs, but their role is an enhancement rather than a replacement for the bailiffs.

After Commissioner Gooch sought clarification, County Manager said he would get more clarity about the position to the Board tomorrow.

When asked it was explained that the transition to the E-courts system is expected to start at the end of April.

Commissioner Cozart made a motion to approve the recommendation and it was seconded by Commissioner Williford.

Commissioner May asked that the motion be approved based on the interpretation as it is written and understood in the agenda packet so there is not a conflict later. County Manager Cummings agreed.

Motioned by Commissioner Tony W. Cozart, seconded by Commissioner Robert Williford, and unanimously carried, the Board approved a new Specialized Court Officer classification and part-time pay rate of \$22 per hour effective immediately.

Board Pulled Request to Surplus Weapons

Chair Karan announced that this item was pulled from the agenda as additional background information needed to be reviewed.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Board Approved Asphalt Walking Trail repairs for Granville Athletic Park (GAP)

Development Services Director Scott Phillips presented a request to consider a unit price construction service contract for asphalt walking trail repairs in Phase One of the Granville County Athletic Park (GAP), which was built 22 years ago. He explained that asphalt trails in Phase One require substantial repairs due to root undergrowth causing pavement separation and trip

hazards. Withers Ravenel, an Engineering firm, evaluated the conditions and proposed methods of repair, identifying three areas needing substantial repairs and root remediation, along with two areas needing minor repairs. Unit prices were received for these categories, and Blacksail Construction LLC was recommended for the contract based on their bid amounts. The total estimated cost for the base bid and two alternates is \$127,734.00. Funding for the project is in the 2023-2024 fiscal year capital funding for the Granville Athletic Park (GAP). Mr. Phillips recommended awarding the contract to Blacksail Construction LLC and authorizing the County Manager to execute the contract, along with requesting authorization for a contingency fund not to exceed \$10,000 for unit price changes.

Commissioner Hinman sought clarification on whether the allocated funds for the project were included in the budget, to which Mr. Phillips confirmed that they were indeed budgeted for this purpose.

Motioned by Commissioner Sue Hinman, seconded by Commissioner Jimmy Gooch, and unanimously carried, the Board approved awarding the unit-price construction service agreement for asphalt walking trail repairs at the Granville Athletic Park to Blacksail Construction, LLC for the Base Bid of \$91,091, Alternate #1 and Alternate #2 for a total amount of \$127,734.00, and a contingency fund for unit price changes not to exceed \$10,000.00, and authorized the County Manager to execute the contract.

APPOINTMENTS

Board Approved Appointments to the Agricultural Advisory Board

Motioned by Robert Williford, seconded by Commissioner Zelodis Jay, and unanimously carried, the Board reappointed Jimmy Crews to the Agricultural Advisory Board District 2 seat.

Motioned by Commissioner Tony W. Cozart seconded by Commissioner Sue Hinman, and unanimously carried, the Board appointed Harold Overby to the Agricultural Advisory Board District 4 seat.

**Robert Lawrence was listed incorrectly in the agenda packet as serving for District 5. Jeff Preddy was serving for District 5.

COUNTY MANAGER'S REPORT

County Manager Drew Cummings expressed appreciation for Commissioner Hinman's acknowledgment of the Tax Administration staff's hard work in assisting citizens with inquiries about tax bills. He highlighted the staff's dedication to handling numerous inquiries, providing clarifications, explanations, and assistance with informal appeals. Mr. Cummings publicly thanked Tax Administration staff for their efforts in ensuring citizens received the necessary assistance, acknowledging their overtime work and commitment to addressing citizen concerns.

Additionally, Mr. Cummings recognized the presence of Adam McConnell, CEO of Granville Health Systems, and commended the organization for the successful hosting of the Ambulance Chase 5K and 10K races. He noted that this event, which had not occurred since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, was well-received by the community. Mr. Cummings expressed gratitude for its positive impact on Oxford and Granville County, highlighting the enjoyable atmosphere, good weather, and post-race activities like grabbing lunch at a food truck.

COUNTY ATTORNEY'S REPORT

Attorney Wrenn announced that he had an economic development matter for closed session.

PRESENTATIONS BY COUNTY BOARD MEMBERS

Commissioner Gooch attended a forum on law enforcement and human trafficking organized by Representative Frank Sossamon, finding it informative and recommending others to attend similar events. He also participated in budget retreats for Butner and Creedmoor, noting Butner's strong financial position and future plans. Overall, he expressed satisfaction with Butner's progress and his appreciation for living there.

Commissioner Jay attended the human trafficking forum, emphasizing the importance of awareness. He encouraged others to attend future events on the topic. Additionally, he mentioned that Lisa Harrison, the Granville Vance District Health Director, was awarded Director of the Year for North Carolina, praising her for her exceptional work statewide.

Commissioner Williford expressed appreciation for the tour of the North Carolina State University Plant Science Building attended by several commissioners, noting it was informative and enjoyable. He also praised the Tax Administration staff, particularly Tax Administrator Jenny Short, for their excellent assistance to citizens navigating the tax process, especially the elderly. Additionally, he extended kudos to District Health Director Lisa Harrison, acknowledging her commendable work.

Commissioner Hinman shared her experiences, including voting at a dangerous dog hearing, a Veterans' Appreciation event where she gave away quilts to elderly veterans, and the Granville County Chamber of Commerce membership banquet where she interacted with local businesses. She also expressed her enthusiasm for the new NC State University Plant Sciences Building tour, particularly enjoying the greenhouses and educational aspects due to her background as a master gardener.

Commissioner Cozart expressed gratitude for various community events and meetings. He acknowledged Mr. Larry Eaton who was in attendance. He spoke well wishes for former J. F. Webb Principal Dr. Michael T. Fuga and his family. He highlighted upcoming forums hosted by Representative Frank Sossamon focusing on the challenges of early childhood and shared insights from attending the retreats in Butner and Creedmoor. He also commended the highway patrol for their increased vigilance regarding child safety during traffic stops and praised the touching moments at the veterans' event, particularly noting the significance of the flag-folding ceremony.

Commissioner May shared updates from various meetings and events, including a school operations meeting where he suggested consulting with Kerr Area Regional Transit Authority (KARTS) for shuttle services, the Veterans Appreciation event, and a meeting with Cooperative Extension focusing on farms and farm protection. He emphasized the importance of progress on athletic projects at J. F. Webb High School and South Granville High School, urging cooperation between the County and schools. Commissioner May also highlighted the challenges facing the agricultural community, such as the decline in organic tobacco production, and stressed the significance of farmers' autonomy in determining the destiny of their land.

Chair Karan highlighted the importance of Granville County's rural character and its agricultural community. He emphasized the crucial role of the Cooperative Extension, particularly mentioning Field Crops Agent Mikayla Berryhill. He underscored the significance of farmers' feedback to NC State University and the importance of resources provided by organizations like the Voluntary Agricultural District and the Cattlemen's Association. Chair Karan also mentioned Granville

County's strong Agricultural Advisory Board. He then talked about innovative initiatives, such as making fertilizer from water, spearheaded by interdisciplinary teams at NC State University's Plant Sciences initiative and praised the collaboration between different scientific fields and the availability of research facilities in the region.

Additionally, Commissioner May expressed gratitude to County Attorney Wrenn for his dedication to the Upper Neuse River Basin Association (UNRBA). He recounted a recent tour of Martin Creek and Lake Creek tributaries, located in Durham but affecting Falls Lake. During the tour, they observed water flow, turbidity, and stream bank erosion, noting the sediment settling in the creeks, which could eventually impact Falls Lake. Commissioner May emphasized the importance of the Board's ongoing efforts, led by County Attorney Wrenn and with guidance from County Manager Cummings, to protect the County's interests and ensure that activities in Falls Lake do not adversely affect taxpayers.

ANY OTHER MATTERS

There we no other matters.

CLOSED SESSION

Motioned by Commissioner Sue Hinman, seconded by Commissioner Zelodis Jay, and unanimously carried, the Board went into closed session as allowed by North Carolina General Statute 143-318.11(a)(3), (4) and (6) for attorney-client, economic development, and personnel matters at 8:35 p.m.

RETURN TO OPEN SESSION

Motioned by Commissioner Robert Williford, seconded by Commissioner Tony W. Cozart, and unanimously carried, the Board returned to open session at 9:38 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Motioned by Commissioner Sue Hinman, seconded by Commissioner Russ May, and unanimously carried, the Board adjourned at 9:38 p.m.

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