

The Board of Commissioners for the County of Cabarrus met for an Agenda Work Session in the Multipurpose Room at the Cabarrus County Governmental Center in Concord, North Carolina at 4:00 p.m. on Monday, March 4, 2024.

Public access to the meeting could also be obtained through the following means:

live broadcast at 4:00 p.m. on Channel 22  
<https://www.youtube.com/cabarruscounty>  
<https://www.cabarruscounty.us/cabcotv>

Present - Chairman: Stephen M. Morris  
Vice Chairman: Lynn W. Shue  
Commissioners: Christopher A. Measmer  
Kenneth M. Wortman  
Timothy A. Furr

Also present were Mike Downs, County Manager; Richard M. Koch, County Attorney; Kelly Sifford, Assistant County Manager; Aalece Pugh, Assistant County Manager; and Lauren Linker, Clerk to the Board.

**1. Call to Order**

Chairman Morris called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

**2. Approval of Agenda**

Updated:

Discussion Items for Action

4.9 Facilities Design & Construction - Presentation of Equipment Procurement for GMP for Behavioral Health Building

4.13 Human Resources - Public Safety Market Study

UPON MOTION of Vice Chairman Shue, seconded by Commissioner Furr and unanimously carried, the Board approved the agenda as amended.

**3. Discussion Items - No Action**

None.

**4. Discussion Items - For Action**

**4.1 Active Living and Parks - Senior Center General Purpose approved by Centralina AAA**

Byron Haigler, Active Living and Parks Assistant Director, on Behalf of Ian Sweeney, Active Living and Parks Project Event Manager, reported Centralina AAA has approved Active Living and Parks Senior Center General Purpose proposal for FY24. The approved funds are \$310 more than in the budget. These funds are used to provide free programming for participants during May - Older Americans Month. General purpose funds are reimbursements that require a 25% county match. The match is allocated as Active Living Center Staff Salary.

**4.2 Active Living and Parks - Swimming Pool Agreement**

Jacob Wentink, Camp Spencer Park Manager, reported that the current Camp Spencer pool operating contract with Trident expired December 31, 2023. A bid was opened to find a new contractor that provided operational maintenance and lifeguards. Three quotes were received. A new company that could provide more consistent lifeguards was chosen. There had been issues with the prior contractor securing lifeguards, which meant the pools were either closed early or not opened at all. Mr. Lee, Cabarrus County General Council, worked with the company's attorney to create the agreement as written. The agreement covers initial preparation, daily operations, lifeguards, and maintenance.

UPON MOTION of Commissioner Measmer, seconded by Commissioner Wortman and unanimously carried, the Board approved to suspend the Rules of Procedures due to time constraints.

UPON MOTION of Commissioner Furr, seconded by Commissioner Measmer, and unanimously carried, the Board approved the motion to allow the County Manager to execute the agreement after review by the County Attorney.

Byron Haigler, Active Living and Parks Assistant Director was also present.

#### **4.3 BOC - Appointments to Boards and Committees**

Chairman Morris stated information for March appointments to boards and committees has been provided to the commissioners. He asked if anyone had any questions, comments, or concerns regarding the upcoming requests. There were none.

#### **4.4 BOC - Economic Development Grant Program Policy**

Chairman Morris provided a brief overview of the Economic Development Grant Program Policy. He asked if anyone had any questions, comments, or concerns regarding the upcoming requests.

Commissioner Measmer requested to move the agenda item to New Business at the BOC Regular Session on March 18, 2024.

#### **4.5 Cabarrus County Schools - Transfer Funds**

Jim Howden, Finance Director, advised that the W.M. Irvin Elementary School Roofing Project is over budget as the Cabarrus County Schools Facilities and Maintenance Department (CCS FMD) have discovered severe water damage. CCS FMD has requested an additional \$147,675 to complete the project. There are three other projects where the bids have come back under budget. Therefore, budgeted projects' funds could be transferred to cover the request of additional funds for the current project and would not cost the county any additional funds.

A discussion ensued. During discussion, Mr. Howden responded to questions from the Board.

#### **4.6 County Manager- Proposal to Purchase Part of Hickory Ridge High School Property**

Kelly Sifford, Assistant County Manager, reported The Multiply Church of Harrisburg approached the Cabarrus County School Board regarding purchasing a portion of the Hickory Ridge High School property. It is approximately 3.67 acres the church has identified for use. The school has confirmed they do not have an identified use for the property. After an appraisal of the property was conducted, the property was valued at \$52,000 as some of the property lies in a floodplain. David Thrift, Tax Administrator, has reviewed the appraisal and agrees with the value.

Ms. Sifford advised that the sale would need to go through the upset bid process.

A brief discussion ensued.

#### **4.7 County Manager - Purchase of a Temporary Easement for Foresting at Stonewall Jackson Property**

Kelly Sifford, Assistant County Manager, reported bids have gone out for the purchase of a temporary easement to the Stonewall Jackson property. Staff had a discussion with the owner of the adjacent property regarding the temporary easement. However, an agreement has not been reached. Ms. Sifford advised bids should be in on March 28; she will bring the information to the Board at next month's meeting for consideration.

A brief discussion ensued. Ms. Sifford responded to questions from the Board.

#### **4.8 Department of Human Services - Emergency Placement Fund - Child Welfare**

Sharon Reece, Department of Social Services Program Manager, reported the state of North Carolina has issued an Emergency Placement Fund to assist in paying for placements for youths with severe emotional behavioral needs. A budget amendment will be required to accept the funds.

A discussion ensued. During discussion, Ms. Reece and Mike Downs, County Manager, responded to questions from the Board.

#### **4.9 Facilities Design & Construction - Presentation of Equipment Procurement GMP for Behavioral Health Building**

Michael Miller, Director of Design and Construction, reported Cabarrus County has a pre-construction contract in place with Messer Construction for Construction Manager at Risk services on the new behavioral healthcare facility. On February 22, 2024, Messer received bids on a scope of work referred to as Bid Package #1, which is for the early procurement of certain equipment for the

project. If accepted, it will be a change order to the existing pre-construction contract, GMP #1, totaling \$2,634,903.

Mr. Miller introduced Jason Harris, Messer Construction Senior Project Executive, who provided information regarding delivery times of equipment to meet the completion schedule.

Mr. Miller requested consideration of the GMP #1 bid award and authorize the County Manager to execute the contract change order to the existing pre-construction contract between Cabarrus County and Messer Construction subject to review by the County Attorney.

#### **4.10 Finance - Audit Contract for Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2024**

Jim Howden, Finance Director, advised that the Local Government Commission (LGC) requires the board to approve the audit contract annually. The audit services include auditing major programs and will not exceed \$74,770.

A brief discussion ensued. During discussion, Mr. Howden responded to questions from the Board.

#### **4.11 Finance - Capital Project Grant Interest Budget**

Jim Howden, Finance Director, reported that the county receives grant funding for capital projects including Frank Liske Park, Courthouse, and the Behavioral Health Center. These projects' grant funding requires the interest earned to be allocated back to the projects for use. A budget amendment will be required along with approval of the associated capital project ordinance.

A brief discussion ensued. During discussion, Mr. Howden responded to questions from the Board.

#### **4.12 Human Resources - Continuation / Modification Request for Sign-On and Referral Bonus Programs**

Lundee Covington, Human Resources Director, presented a PowerPoint presentation regarding an update on the Sign-on and Referral Bonus programs. Topics included were as follows:

- Sign-On & Referral Bonus Overview
- Sign-On & Referral Bonus Utilization
  - Utilization by Department
  - Hiring Manager Feedback
- Recommendations
  - Sign-On Bonus
    - Currently \$2,500
    - Increase to \$3,000 but divide into two payments of \$1500 at hire and after 1 year
    - Addresses the need for up-front payment, but reduces risk of non-payback from those who leave
    - Still subject to payback provision
  - Referral Bonus
    - Currently \$1,500
    - Reduce to \$1,000
    - Change the payment timeline to coincide with the hire/first pay period of the referral
    - Recognize current staff
    - Addresses the fact referrer often has limited involvement after referral is made
    - No payback provision required
  - Retention Bonus
    - Add \$1,500 retention bonus for limited positions where internal transfers may be best resource
    - Require employee to fulfill one year of service in the identified position prior to payment of bonus
    - Goal of leveling the playing field with external applicants that receive sign on for these positions
  - Payback Provision
    - Employees who do not fulfill the 2-year work requirement (resignation for example) are required to repay 100% of the sign on bonus in year 1 and 50% in year 2
    - Limited exceptions for medical/inability to complete duties

- Retain this as a way to recoup from those who term and a deterrent to leaving employment
  - Payback for Job Changes
    - Propose modification of payback for those that promote up with the County.
    - Payback cycle (2 years) in effect
- DSS Funding
- Funding

A lengthy discussion ensued. During discussion, Ms. Covington responded to questions from the Board.

#### **4.13 Human Resources - Public Safety Market Study**

Lundee Covington, Human Resources Director, introduced Ashley Dobbins, Human Resources Strategy Manager, and Dr. Victoria McGrath, CEO of McGrath Human Resources Group. Dr. McGrath provided a recap of the recent project for the market study for Public Safety positions in Cabarrus County. Dr. McGrath started a PowerPoint presentation to include the following topics:

- About us
- Study Objectives
- Methodology
- Public Comparable Organizations
- Market Analysis
- Minimum Rate Analysis - Public Safety
- Midpoint to Market Analysis - Public Safety
- Incumbent Analysis - Public Safety
- Public Safety Market Study

Ms. Covington and Ms. Dobbins continued the public safety market study presentation with recommendations, which included:

- Reclassification Methodology
- Recommendation
  - Bring Full Time and Part Time employees to the new recommended pay grade based on market data
  - Provide a 5% increase per pay grade to impacted employees
  - The initial cost estimate of this methodology for pay increases is \$7,230,500
- Benefits of the 5% method
- Impacts of not using the 5% method
- Compression
- Paramedic Example: 5% method
- Paramedic Example: Moving only to minimum
- Deputy Example: 5% method
- Deputy Example: Moving only to minimum
- Sheriff Van Shaw
  - Market
  - Current and Anticipated Turnover
  - Overtime
- Next Steps

Ms. Dobbins introduced Van Shaw, Cabarrus County Sheriff, provided additional information regarding the necessity of the Public Safety Market Study.

There was discussion throughout the presentation. During discussion, Ms. Dobbins, Ms. Covington, Sheriff Shaw and Chief Tessa Burchett, Cabarrus County Sheriff's Office, responded to questions from the Board.

Chairman Morris recognized Jimmy Lentz, Emergency Medical Services Chief, who spoke on regarding the Emergency Medical Services department and the Public Safety Market Study.

Lastly, Mike Downs, County Manager, advised the Board Contingency Fund has a balance of \$1,080,022 should the Board choose to use to fund sign-on and referral bonuses.

#### **4.14 Planning Department - Odell School Road Abandonment and Closure Request**

Susie Morris, Planning and Development Director, reported s received a road right-of-way abandonment and closure petition. The County does not build or maintain infrastructure; however, the County is part of the process when

needed. Odell School Road and NC 3 recently installed a round-about project; the rights-of-way are typically abandoned. However, in this case it was not. The adjacent property owners contacted the county to go through the abandonment and maintenance process with the North Carolina Board of Transportation. A public hearing will be required if the board approves the resolution of support, signed by the Chair and forwarded to the North Carolina Department of Transportation Board.

A discussion ensued. During discussion, Ms. Morris responded to questions from the Board.

#### **4.15 Sheriff's Office - Acceptance of Grant from State 911 Board for back-up Radios**

Tessa Burchett, Chief Deputy, reported that the North Carolina State 911 board offered a grant opportunity to purchase a backup radio for each authorized console in the 911 center at a reimbursement. The quote is approximately \$77,000 and the state will reimburse the county \$75,000. A budget amendment will be required.

### **5. Approval of Regular Meeting Agenda**

#### **5.1 BOC - Approval of Regular Meeting Agenda**

**UPON MOTION** of Commissioner Measmer, seconded by Commissioner Wortman, and unanimously carried, the Board approved the agenda as follows for the March 18, 2024, regular meeting with changes made and to schedule all public hearings.

#### Consent

- (Appointments) and Removals - Mental Health Advisory Board
- Active Living and Parks - Senior Center General Purpose approved by Centralina AAA
- Cabarrus County Schools - Transfer Funds
- County Manager- Proposal to Purchase Part of Hickory Ridge High School Property
- Department of Human Services - Emergency Placement Fund - Child Welfare
- Facilities Design & Construction - Presentation of Equipment Procurement GMP for Behavioral Health Building
- Finance - Audit Contract for Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2024
- Finance - Capital Project Grant Interest Budget
- Human Resources - Continuation / Modification Request for Sign-On and Referral Bonus Programs
- Human Resources - Public Safety Market Study
- Planning Department - Odell School Road Abandonment and Closure Request
- Sheriff's Office - Acceptance of Grant from State 911 Board for back-up radios
- Tax Administration - Refund and Release Reports - February 2024

#### New Business

- BOC - Economic Development Grant Program Policy Reports

### **6. Closed Session**

#### **6.1 Closed Session - Pending Litigation and Acquisition of Real Property**

**UPON MOTION** of Commissioner Wortman, seconded by Commissioner Furr and unanimously carried, the Board moved to go into closed session to discuss matters related to pending litigation and acquisition of real property as authorized by NCGS 143-318.11(a) (3) and (5).

Prior to the start of closed session, Chairman Morris thanked the audience for attending, announced the Primary Election Day and encouraged everyone to vote. Voting hours will be 6:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.

#### **Return to Open Session**

**UPON MOTION** of Commissioner Measmer, seconded by Commissioner Wortman and unanimously carried, the Board returned to open session.

Mike Downs, County Manager, advised Rosh Khatri, Budget Director, reported \$400,000 of the Boards' Contingency Fund is flexible and available to use toward funding the Sign-On and Referral Bonus program. The remainder of the contingency fund (\$680,082) will be used for charter schools.

**6. Adjourn**

UPON MOTION of Commissioner Wortman, seconded by Commissioner Measmer, and unanimously carried, the meeting adjourned at 6:50 p.m.



*Lauren Linker*  
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Lauren Linker, Clerk to the Board